

# The Information

November - December 2003



## Christmas Message From the P.E.C.

Greetings Sisters & Brothers in Christ!

At this Christmas Season the PEC greets you with the Hope of Immanuel! God's message to Joseph was that the Child born to the world would represent God's presence with us. This spells Hope for all the world.

As a Province we are in need of such hope. As a world we are in need of such hope. As individuals we are in need of such hope. The vices and violence around us, the despair of many, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in our societies, the political and economic uncertainties all compel us to recognize a Hope outside of ourselves. This Hope is Jesus Christ, whose very presence changes all things.

Within the Province we have entered a new inter-synodal period – a new era. God is our Hope for this era. We have reflected on Consecration and Dedication in this past year. Have we demonstrated that Hope in Christ and so truly given ourselves in service? We have begun beseeching God for Financial Restoration. Have we exercised that Hope in Christ to

believe that He is able to help us achieve the same? And do we claim such faith that will enable us to be used in the process of Financial Restoration? We have prayed for spiritual growth. Have we allowed ourselves to be fully sanctified by Christ through His presence in our lives?

In the New Year we will, as a Province, be focussing on Evangelism – evangelizing others. Do we possess the Hope which we ought to share? Are we willing to lead others to this blessed Hope? Are we enthusiastic enough to share the Hope which we claim? These questions must be answered – and answered positively – if we are to follow Christ's command to make disciples of all people.

For Watch Night we have again called the Church to prayer. This prayer must be for both spiritual and financial restoration. It is only when we have been revived spiritually that we can be revived financially! It is only when our hearts and souls have been converted that our wallets and bank accounts can be converted. It is only as we have first sincerely experienced God that we gain the

faith to prove Him with our tithes and experience His blessings also.

As we experience the Hope of Christmas let us launch out in faith and experience the spiritual and financial restoration the Christ of Christmas has in store for us. And let us rejoice in the song of Mary saying:

***“My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour”***

for He has regarded us and lifted us up.

We wish for you and your loved ones the Blessed Hope of the Christ Child during this Season of His Nativity. May His Peace and Joy be yours always. And may He lead you through the year ahead in the Faith which issues from the Hope He offers.

Therefore, Sisters & Brothers, let us meet at the Midnight Hour of Prayer on Watch Night 2003, so that we may enter the year 2004 assured of God's ever-abiding presence and His power to restore all that we give to him.

May His Blessing Be Upon You All, especially throughout this Christmas Season of Hope.

*Provincial Theme 2003 - Submitting To Christ in Service*

## Caribbean Christmas Celebration on the Lawn

The second annual Caribbean Christmas Celebration on the Lawn is scheduled for Friday, November 28 and Saturday, November 29, 2003 on the grounds of the Spring Gardens Moravian Church in Antigua. This provincial fund-raiser will feature the Christmas Putz, a Christmas Pageant, a showcase of talent from the youth of the Antigua Conference, and food and craft from three (3) of the Conferences in our Province.

Strategically scheduled to usher in the Advent Season, this Festival will seek to share the Christmas story with a Caribbean flavour, and foster fellowship amongst Moravians and our neighbours, whilst at the same time raising much needed funds for the Province. It is hoped that next year's Festival will have all Conferences participating.

We look forward to your support and participation in this venture, and encourage all Moravians to contribute by way of food and craft items, the sale of tickets, and assistance in the booths during the two (2) nights of the Festival. Tickets for Friday, November 28 from 6-9pm and Saturday, November 29 from 2-8pm are on sale for \$12 each and are available from Moravians throughout Antigua.

We look forward to your support throughout the Province and anticipate sharing special fellowship with Moravians during the Caribbean Christmas on the Lawn. You may contact your Pastor or your Superintendent to contribute towards this Festival.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

## Watch Night Sacrificial Giving

The 2004 budget which you are already considering has issued a call for you to be part of the process of Financial Restoration for which we have besought God.

As suggested in that Budget, we again this year invite you to share in the Watch Night Sacrificial Giving at three levels:

1. Firstly, we ask individuals to make a Sacrificial Offering of \$100.00 or whatever you can afford, as the Lord leads you.
2. Secondly, we invite congregations to sacrificially contribute the Watch Night Offering to the Province.
3. Thirdly, we invite the entire Province to be specially unified in prayer at the turn of the year, placing the Church, spiritually and financially, in the Master Potter's hand to be remoulded.

We pray that you will be a faithful steward in this endeavour and prove the Lord according to Mal. 3:10, thus experiencing His overflowing blessings as a result. Let us all endeavour to fulfill our current call to Dedication.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.



The PEC announces the following staff changes, effective January 01, 2004:

1. Bro. Ralph Prince has accepted a call to serve as Pastor of the New Herrnhut congregation in the Virgin Islands;
2. Bro. George Bedford has applied for service in the full-time pastoral ministry of the Church, and has accepted a call to serve as Associate Pastor of the Memorial congregation and the Tortola Fellowship in the Virgin Islands Conference;
3. Sis. Roslyn Hamblin has accepted a call to serve as Pastor of the Greenbay and Five Islands congregations in the Antigua Conference;
4. Bro. Troy Watson has accepted a call to serve as Associate Pastor in the Greenbay and Five Islands congregations in the Antigua Conference;
5. Bro. Patmore Smith has accepted a call to serve as Associate Pastor with special responsibility for Music in the Spring Gardens congregation, and Minister of Music in the Antigua Conference;
6. Bro. Romeo Challenger will proceed on furlough and study leave as of January 01, 2004.

Kindly bear these pastors and their families in prayer as they assume their new responsibilities on January 01, 2004.

### New Secretary General for WCC

On August 28 the central committee elected Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia as the new general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Currently the WCC special representative for Africa, Bro. Kobia will succeed Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser and will take office in January 2004.

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Kobia said that the Council's primary purpose as a fellowship of churches is "to call one another to visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, and to advance that unity so that the world may believe. To do that, member churches must not only work together, but also be seen working together".

Born in Kenya in 1947, Bro. Kobia is an ordained minister in the Methodist Church in Kenya. He and his wife Ruth have two daughters and two sons. He was responsible for the WCC Urban Rural Mission desk from 1978-1984, and headed the National Council of Churches of Kenya from 1987-1993. He helped reorganize the Zimbabwe Christian Council after Independence, chaired Peace talks for Sudan in 1991, and in 1992 chaired Kenya's National Election Monitoring Unit. He returned to Geneva in 1993 to become Executive Director of the WCC's Justice, Peace and Creation Unit. He is the author of books dealing with social and theological issues in Kenya, and on the future of Africa.

### Unity Youth Conference

The Unity Youth Conference is scheduled for the period July 26 to August 7, 2005, in Kingston, Jamaica. Each Conference will send a four representatives to this seminar. Activities include: group discussions, cultural evening and working on projects. For more information, kindly contact your Minister of Christian Education or your Superintendent.

### 250th Anniversary celebrations concluded

The Moravian Church in America Northern Province concluded its year long 250th anniversary Celebration on November 16. This event had been in the planning for more than five years. This service of worship is the cornerstone of a year of events which began in September of 2002 with a birthday party at historic Bethbara, the arrival site for Moravians who walked from Pennsylvania in 1753. The speaker for the the service was Dr. C. Daniel Crews, Archivist of the Southern Province). He was joined by Dr. Robert E. Sawyer, (President of the PEC in the South), and Rev. Angetile Y. Musomba, from Tanzania, Chair of the Unity Board.

Activities in this anniversary year included a Commemorative Concert Series, the 21st Moravian Music Festival, and a history symposium entitled "*Moravians in the American South*".

### The Nativity Seen!

Mary and Joseph, not a perfect family,  
Does it really matter, soon there would be three.  
An angel appeared, to say it was okay,  
This child born, will show you the way.

The innkeeper said, "no room in the inn,"  
As we in our lives, say no room for him  
So away in a manger, this child started life,  
No excuse for us, not even in strife.

We celebrate his birth, it is Christmas day,  
Born on this earth, to show us the way.  
The shepherds arrived, to learn what they could,  
We too can learn, if only we would.

The Magi came, bringing him presents,  
And God came to us, by His child's presence  
If only we would see, as we celebrate, he is the reason  
The total purpose for this season.

A star, a light, need we have more,  
Yes this child, the teachings of God brought to the fore.  
A child of God; as we all are,  
If only we would see the light, and follow the star.

So remember the manger, not only today,  
But throughout the year, as you go on your way.  
For as God has blessed you, with the gift of his son  
May you thank God, for all that He has done.

Amen!

*Ken Poyser  
Rio Terrace Moravian Community Church  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada*



...Rev. Hilton Joseph, whose aunt, Mrs. Ivy Samuels, died in the USA and was buried in the Five Islands Moravian Cemetery following a Funeral Service at the St. John's Anglican Cathedral in Antigua on Thursday, November 06, 2003.

...Rev. Jeremy Francis whose aunt, Mrs. Jean Bastian, died on November 21, 2003. The funeral was held on Tuesday, December 02, 2003 at the Bethel AME Church, Christiansted, St. Croix, US Virgin Islands.

December 13<sup>th</sup> The beginning of the Moravian Missions, St. Thomas West Indies, 1732

**The Provincial Theme for 2004 is Making Disciples of all People with a thematic focus on Evangelization.**

**Scripture references: Matt. 28:19-20 and 2 Tim. 4:5.**

## **AIDS and the Church**

Submitted by:

Tasia Gonsalves-Barriero

As we celebrate World AIDS Day on December 01, the question must be asked: How is the church affected by this pandemic? <sup>1</sup> "In the 1980s there were about 225 000 persons infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Today, there are more than 40 million persons living with this disease. Although the figures are impressive, it is not the statistics that need attention, but the individuals and the real suffering that lie behind them".

As Christians, how are we prepared to deal with persons who, inevitably will come to us looking for help?

<sup>2</sup> "It is noted that AIDS cannot be contracted by casual contact, coughing, sneezing, sneezing, touching or hugging a person infected with the virus".

We need to accept the fact that at some point we will come in contact with persons infected with this disease. The question is what will we do then?

We should not be afraid to help those who are in need. Many persons whether they are heterosexual or not are often ignored and shunned by their families and friends. We are to do quite the opposite. Here are a few pointers on how to help those in need:

1. Be compassionate
2. Be a shoulder for

that person to lean on, and a sounding board for him or her to express his or her feelings

3. Pray for those who have been infected, and for those who may be in danger of being infected.

We are not here to judge anyone, but to be witnesses of Christ's love and light. I pray that we will see ourselves not as passive members of our society, but as christian men and women brought here for a purpose.

*footnotes:*

1. *Figures taken from the magazine of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement; Issue 1 2003.*

2. *BBC News*

Please don't hesitate to send us news about your congregations and other activities happening in your Conference. Send them to us and we will be happy to share with the rest of the Province.

**A very merry Christmas to all and best wishes for the new year, 2004.**

## Birthdays/Anniversaries

**Birthday Greetings are extended to the following persons:**

### November

Sis. Florence Isaac	7
Bro. Rowan Simmons	15
Bro. Ezra Parris	21
Sis. Myrtle Miller	21
Sis. Jacqueline Christopher	23
Sis. Geraldine Roberts	23
Sis. Joyce Walters	24



### December

Sis. Eloise Stephen	2
Bro. Alban St. Hill	2
Tevye-Kaori Parris	11
Sis. Cicely Athill-Horsford	12
Sis. Zenobia Lomax	13
Bro. Hilton Joseph	18
Sis. Maureen Lewis	23
Bro. Matthew Crooks	25
Bro. Rudoph Holder	31

### The Information

**Anniversary greetings are extended to the following:**

### December

Rev. Cortroy & Mrs. Pearlline Jarvis	7
Mr. George & Zenaida Ramsey	18
Revs. Algernon & Denise Lewis	20
Rev. Errol & Mrs. Joycelyn Connor	22
Rev. Samuel & Mrs. Gwendolyn Jacobs	31



### Humour

They had lived together in the backwoods for fifty years. To celebrate their fiftieth anniversary, he took her to a large city and they checked into a plush hotel.

She said to the bellman, "We refuse to settle for such a small room. No windows, no bed, no fan," she complained.

"But madam!"

"Don't madam me," she continued. "You can't treat us like we're a couple of fools just because we don't travel much, and we've never been to the big city, and never spent the night at a hotel. I'm going to complain to the manager."

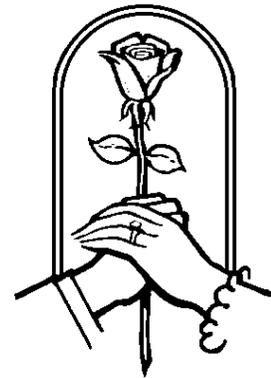
"Madam," the bellman said, "this isn't your room; this is the elevator!"



We invite your prayers for the following staff members as they enter upon married life:

Bro. Winston Jones, who will be joined in marriage to Sis. Karen Bowers at the Cana Moravian Church in Antigua on December 13, 2003. Sis Bowers is a member of the Cana congregation.

Sis. Nasel Ephraim, who will be joined in marriage to Bro. Patrick Cadogan at the Cedar Hall Moravian Church in Antigua on December 22, 2003. Bro. Cadogan is a member of the Sharon congregation in Barbados.

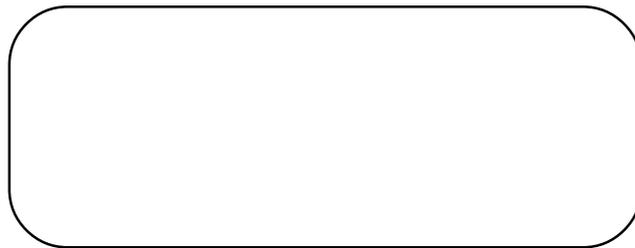


# The Information Newsletter

See us on the Web: <http://moravians.faithweb.com>



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**Our Lamb Has Conquered; Let Us Follow Him**