

May, 2012

A COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF PEC - EWI PROVINCE

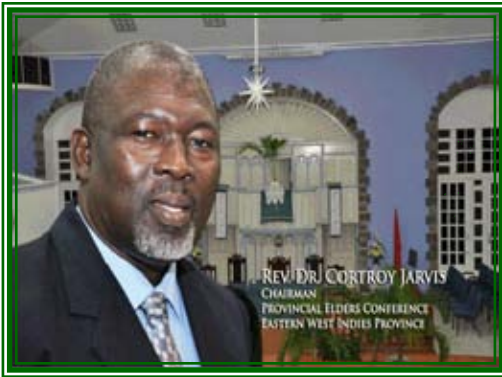
The Information

Then the man said, "**Let me go, for it is daybreak.**" But Jacob replied, "**I will not let you go unless you bless me.**" Genesis 32 vs. 26 [NIV]



Convening of Synod 2012

The PEC held its last meeting before the convening of the 30th Provincial Synod in St. Thomas. The meeting took place on Friday April 27 and Saturday April 28, 2012. It was a very refreshing meeting as the PEC sought to wrap up all outstanding matters that came before us. Many decisions were taken that will impact the life of the Church for its growth and continued development.



As we continue to make final preparations for the Provincial Synod, the PEC met with the "Synod Planning Committee" to examine the

details of all the facets of the Synod. It was critical for us to ensure that plans were progressing smoothly for the hosting of this most important Synod. Most things are going well as planned, however, it is in the execution of those plans that one will know for sure that things went as planned. We anticipate approximately 120 Delegates and Observers to be in attendance at the Synod, which will be held at the Sugar Bay Hotel from July 13-19, 2012. The PEC commends the Synod Planning Committee and by extension, the Virgin Islands Conference of the Moravian Church, for the work done so far in preparation for the Synod.

As a Church, I challenge us to continue to pray for the success of this most important Synod. As we prepare to travel to the birth place of Moravian Missions, let us Reflect on the past; Examine the present and Plan for the future. God is calling upon us to make a difference. As we pray, let us ask God to show or point us in the direction that He wants us to go. Let us be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Psalmists declares, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, who makes heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2). We ought to look to no other person but Almighty God for guidance and direction as we come to our Synod.

Our Provincial theme, PURSUING THE BLESSING is very instructive for us, as we hear Jacob declaring, "I will not let you go until you bless me" (Genesis 32:26). At the Jordan River, Jacob held on to or grabbed on to God and refused to let Him go. He realized his dependence upon God who continued to bless him. His relationship to God became very essential to his life and so his name was changed from Jacob to Israel, "he struggled with God".

Continue on Page 2

VISION STATEMENT

A Church - Transformed,
United, Victorious in Christ

MISSION STATEMENT

By the grace of God, we seek to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ; without distinction, we use all that we possess to call all peoples to the truth of the Gospel through worship, evangelism, discipleship and service

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Cont'd from Page 1

From the onset, Jacob was pursuing something, however, when he started out he had the wrong motive and so he was not depending upon God. In spite of his pursuits, he realized that his longing, hunger and thirst were not satisfied for his wielding and dealings were not of God. It was then that he was awakened to the fact that he was pursuing the wrong thing. When he encountered God, even though he did not know it at the time, God pointed him in the right direction. His pursuit then became so intense that the Presence, Power and Proclamation of the Blessing were all wrapped up in one. When he was awakened to the reality of who he was wrestling with, he pronounced, "I will not let you go until you bless me". May this truly be our desire to enfold God as He does His work in us and make us the people He wants us to be. God can use the worst of us to accomplish His Will.

As we therefore prepare for the up coming Synod, I share in this issue some important aspects of the structure and organization of this assembly of the Church.

Authority

The Provincial Synod is the highest authority in the Province, with supreme legislative powers in all matters not committed to the Unity Synod; and shall consist of elected delegates and official members; shall have power to determine the number and qualifications of its own membership, to prescribe the bodies which shall be entitled to representation in its membership, the basis of representation, the manner of election, and the persons who shall be entitled to membership by virtue of office.

Duties and Powers

1. To carry out and give effect to the principles of the Moravian Church as laid down by the Unity Synod of Constitution, Doctrine, Worship and Congregational Life.
2. The power of legislation touching Constitution, Worship and Congregational Life.
3. To settle the Provincial undertakings and fields of work; the giving up of existing and the taking in hand of new fields of work; the admission

of or the giving up of congregations.

4. Election of members of the Provincial Elders' Conference (P.E.C.); election of members of Provincial committees.
5. Oversight of the undertakings carried on in the name of the Province as a whole.
6. Election of Bishops of the Moravian Church.
7. Election of delegate(s) to Unity Synod.
8. Discharge of tasks which fall to the Synod as a Court of appeal. The Provincial Synod is responsible to Unity Synod for the principles on which it adopts resolutions and supervises its Executive Board and undertakings. The resolutions of the Provincial Synod are binding on all boards, congregations, Ministers and individual members in the Province. Notice of constitutional changes affecting the Synod or the administration of the Province must be given to the P.E.C. at least three months prior to the date of the Synod at which they are to be discussed and voted upon.

Convening of Synod

The Provincial Synod shall be convened every three years at a place and time to be arranged by the P.E.C. Notice for the calling shall be given by circulars six months before the date fixed for the meeting. In extraordinary cases or if two-thirds of the conferences in the Province request a synod, the P.E.C. must call a synod.

Attendance at Sessions

It is expected that members of Synod shall attend all sessions. Leave of absence must be obtained from the Chairman of Synod, who shall announce when and to whom such leave of absence has been granted. Any member of Synod who is unable to attend must send an explanation of his/her absence to the P.E.C. before Synod. Three-fourths of the members of Synod with full voting powers shall constitute a quorum. Members of the Moravian Church not being members of Synod, may be present at the ordinary sessions of Synod, but Synod may declare any session to be a closed session, in which case only members of Synod and such persons as are especially called by Synod may be present.

Continue on Page 3

Con'td from Page 2

May God Bless us all, as we continue to lift up our Church in prayer. Let us be faithful and true to God as He prepares to put a new song in our mouth. The Psalmist in Psalms 40 sums it up this way, "He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord" (Psalms 40:3).



Prayers



Your prayers are requested for the Rev. Jeremy Francis who was hospitalized on Monday night April 30, 2012 in St. Kitts. Bro. Francis has reported that the Doctor has placed him in the hospital for some test and further observation.

Let us remember Bro. Francis and family in our prayers.



THE 30TH PROVINCIAL SYNOD

The 30th Provincial Synod convenes in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands on July 13, 2012 at the Sugar Bay Hotel at 8p.m. and will conclude on July 18, 2012, with The Synod Communion Service and Installation of the new PEC. Delegates will leave the Synod venue on July 19th, 2012.



GOSPEL

On Steel

The Montgomery Moravian Steel Ensemble, will be LIVE in concert, as they present GOSPEL ON STEEL on Saturday, June 23, 2012. The Concert takes place at the Sharon Moravian Church in Barbados. A Choir from the Moravian Church in



Barbados will also perform at the concert.

The Montgomery Moravian Steel Ensemble, presented a powerful concert in October 2011 at the Montgomery Moravian Church in Tobago. This is a concert, the Barbados community should not miss. It begins at 6:00p.m.



STATEMENT TO BE READ

Moravian Music Sunday, May 6, 2012

On May 6, 2012 we celebrate the rich musical heritage God has given to the Moravian Church, a heritage that stems from the Ancient Unity in Bohemia and Moravia in the 15th century, expanded in the 18th century in Germany, and continues to thrive in the worldwide Moravian Church today. Music can be a wonderful means of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ, speaking to the heart in ways that words alone cannot. When we sing together or play instruments, we share in the song of the church triumphant in heaven, those saints who have gone before us and sing their praises to God and to Jesus Christ our Savior.

Johannes Herbst, who lived from 1735 to 1812, was a faithful servant of God, a minister, teacher, and school administrator, as well as a musician. He was an organist and a composer, and he copied the pieces of many other composers for his own private music library. He also wrote some 200 musical compositions of his own, all for use in worship services. Brother Herbst was born in Germany, and joined the Moravian Church at age 13. He came to America at the age of 50, and served in Lancaster and Lititz, Pennsylvania, for twenty-five years before he was elected a bishop and called to move to Salem, North Carolina – yes, at the age of 76! He and Sister Herbst obeyed this call, but he only lived to serve seven months in Salem, where he died and was buried.

God has given to us in the Moravian Church a heart for music, and special gifts in composing music, writing words, and singing and playing from that heart. On this Sunday, set aside for us to recognize the value that our music has played in our worship and in our lives, we are thankful that God gave us this gift, which can draw us closer to one another and to our God. Through music, may we learn to love one another more fully, and in so doing, to love our Savior more deeply. Thanks be to God!

A man may lose the good things of this life against his will; but if he loses the eternal blessings, he does so with his own consent. Augustine



Tribute by Rev. Charlesworth Edwards

My earliest memory of Romeo Challenger was as a member of the K.D.S. Movement at a rally at Greenhay Moravian Church in the 1960s. You couldn't miss him. Boys were a rare commodity at Church functions, in those days. So the presence of one or two in a sea of girls was unmistakable. I can see him now. He had a big head, a wiry frame, tall skinny legs, in platform shoes and stepping ever so gingerly. You had to notice him, because as Antiguan people say: "He was Science".

We didn't speak on that occasion, but it seems that we were destined to meet again. That meeting took place in 1974 when he turned up again as my travelling companion. He was on his way to UTCWI, Kingston, Jamaica to begin his long journey to sacred ministry. I was returning to begin my third year. We both travelled on the same BWIA flight to Kingston and though I had some idea of what awaited him, I was sworn to secrecy. I made sure he arrived safely but when we arrived and the initiation ceremony began, he was on his own. I knew better. The Holy Woods has its sacred traditions and I didn't want to run afoul of them. Let me leave it at that.

At the end of his first year and my third, we went to Miami, stopped for a few days for a little R&R, on our way to our summer assignments; acting on a tip that I received from Irvine Edwards that the fare to Kingston is the same as the fare to Miami. The key was to book your flight straight to Miami with a stop in Kingston. Then before the year ended use the same ticket to Miami. Miami provided its own excitement. Until then we did not realize that there was place in the United States where English was a foreign language. Miami is such a place, practically. We found out the old fashion way, by trial and error. We found that out on our first evening at supper. We were looking for a reasonably priced restaurant where people understood English. In Miami there was none within walking distance. We had to settle for a Spanish restaurant. I ordered a dish with chicken and rice. He ordered a fancy meal but when the food arrived he found out it was as foreign as the language in which the menu was written. The look on his face spoke volumes. And he was not happy. That was our first joke for the night but it would not be the last.

After supper, we ran into this Jamaican brother. I recognized him as a member of a popular choir that performed at the University Chapel on big occasions like Christmas and graduation. He was staying at the same Ramada Inn at which we were staying. The sun was still shining brightly in the summer sky and we were outside in the city of Miami listening to this Jamaican telling joke after joke to our delight. We were having so much fun that we didn't even notice the time had passed. It was almost midnight. Maybe it was that time that he remembered where he was headed before he met us and began telling jokes. He suggested we go to the ice cream parlor to get some ice cream before it closed. We went along. When we approached the counter, he told us to order what we wanted. Thinking that he was treating us to ice

Continue on Page 5

Cont'd from Page 4

cream, we placed our order, but when the bill came he put his hand in his pocket and told us he only had \$2.00. That announcement told us all we needed to hear. He was still fooling around, but this time he was messing with our reputation. We paid the bill, but that incident in Miami remains, to this day, a standing joke seared forever in his consciousness. And mine.

Miami was also the place where we really bonded. I could still see these two young Antiguan, from very humble beginnings, skipping in and out of stores like kids in candy store, spending what little money we had managed to save on the deals we found in Miami, a good camera among them, to record some of the places we visited. The Jamaican dollar was big in those days but our monthly student allowance was only \$6.00 or \$6.60 US. That we had money to spend was a miracle, but we were in the business of miracles. What else could explain our good fortune?

After Miami we journeyed to St. Thomas. When we landed in St. Thomas we proceeded to look for an immigration officer. It was not necessary but we found one anyway. We told him who we were and where we were going. The officer called the local Superintendent, Bro. Carlyle Sampson and he came; picked us up; gave us a brief tour of Charlotte Amalie, including a stop at Memorial Moravian Church, on Main Street, and then took us home to rest our feet. It was Saturday. The next day Sunday, we were in Church, twice: Nisky at 9:00 AM and New Herrnhut at 11:00 AM. I was the liturgist at Nisky and Romeo was the preacher. When we got to New Herrnhut, the roles were reversed.

Shortly after, I left St. Thomas for my 1975 summer assignment in the St. Kitts Conference. After a month of service there, I proceeded to Synod in Tobago. At that Synod I requested and got assigned to the Finance Committee, the committee that had the power to solve a pressing problem of the group I represented, struggling students. The committee heard my case and agreed that the student allowance should be raised \$6.00 to \$25.00 per month. Romeo was among the first group of students to benefit from that increase. And he always expressed his gratefulness.

Things settled down; we finished our training; proceeded through the ups and downs of ministry and have been friends ever since. I was at his side when he was ordained and his best man when he took Carol's hand in marriage. For reasons beyond our control, I was unable to attend his wedding when he was united in marriage to Deborah but when I eventually met her, she received me warmly and we have been friends ever since.

Since June of last year when Romeo has either been sick or pretending he wasn't, Deborah has been doing the heavy lifting, keeping her family together, running a business and rearing a teenage Shanna. And so although the last six months have been very frustrating, for me personally, I have been trying from Staten Island, to offer advice and support to her on the

Continue on Page 6

Cont'd from Page 5

phone or in writing, as the need arose. Our friendship has only grown stronger in sickness and now that Romeo has passed, in death. We do the long talking, these days, on the telephone only because, you guessed it, Romeo couldn't any more. Mostly, I would just listen and give support.

Over the years, we have preached in each other's pulpit on multiple occasions. He visited me when I served in Antigua, St. Croix and New York. He stayed at my house on Staten Island, New York whether he came on vacation, furlough or just on study leave. We were always welcomed at each other's home and in each other's pulpit. We knew we could call on each other if we needed help, at any time of day or night. Weeks would pass, even months but when the phone rang or we were together in person, somehow, we would know just where to continue the conversation. He would tease me about a piece of land I have at Herbert's Estate, I suspect because he wanted me to visit Antigua and relive old days but I believe he understood my situation was more than a little complicated by a stroke I suffered almost 9 years ago. I could still hear his voice teasing: "When was the last time you checked on your land?" He would start the conversation that way when he wanted to scare me about some fraud that occurred with people paying for land only to find out later the same piece of land was sold to someone else. When I replied with an expression of disbelief, he just laughed.

I am going to miss that playful banter and deep belly laugh because that was the essence of who he was. He wouldn't hurt a fly. He would rather make a joke and invoke your laughter than to you fight with you. That is a rare gift. I suspect he discovered that, over time, to be a very disarming behavioral tool. Maybe he discovered early that it is impossible to laugh and be angry at the same time. Hence his frequent employment ^{of} that devise.

I discovered the source from which he acquired that gift when I was called to Gracehill Moravian in the fall of 1978 and met his mother, Sister Ida Challenger, who predeceased him in October 2002. She possessed that same sweet and gentle and jovial spirit that Romeo so effectively used in ministry, to teach those he met in life, by example, not to take life too seriously. That spirit, I believe, is the best tool a pastor can deploy. It is invaluable in most ministering situations. And he mastered that craft before he ever attended any training institution. No institution of higher learning has the time or resource to teach those skills. Seminary just deals with the basics. You need a life of learning to master those skills, those skills acquired in the University of Hard-knocks, that vital crucible out of which we fashion the professional skills required for effective ministry: of building, molding, caring and healing. In Bro. Romeo Challenger's case, it involves those and more. It involves also a culture of family prayer and suffering; bantering and playing.

I don't have to wonder where that spirit comes from. I know his mother, Sister Ida Challenger's heart and saw it at work. The privilege was mine to be her Pastor for better of five years. She

Continue on Page 7

Cont'd from Page 6

served with me on the Board of Elders at Gracehill Moravian Church in Liberta Village, Antigua. You could not desire a better servant of God. Romeo not only stole her face but he stole her gentle, caring, joyful spirit as well. She passed on in October 2002, the last funeral I attended in Antigua. Now her son has gone to join her in that space where sickness and sorrow are ended; death itself is past and he has entered rest, eternal rest, for his tired broken, sick body.

So to Deborah, Shanna, Christopher, Varis, Fancilla, Meryl, Maurice, Joyce, Aaron, friends and the rest of Bro. Romeo's extended/pumpkin-vine family, I offer you the comforting words of Jesus, speaking through the extended corridors of time: "Let not your hearts be troubled.. Believe in God." I know you would want your loved one to return so that you can say one last time, something as simple as, 'I love you' or to do something you never got the opportunity to do, but life goes by its own rules. Bro. Romeo is now free to come and go, unencumbered by time and space and circumstance. Sometimes when you least expect it, he might appear to guide your feeble steps. So I urge you to continue to trust God, for if in our hour of maximum danger, we cannot trust God, whom can we trust?

This is my word for you at this hour, in hope that it may bring some measure of comfort as you work to put your troubled lives back together again.

Lovingly Yours,

Rev. Charlesworth A. S. Edwards, joined by his wife Maria daughter Naomi

The Hymn of the Month

Rev. Mikie Roberts,
Chair, Provincial Hymnal Committee

Over the next two months as we continue observing within the Province our hymn of the month, we will give attention to two (2) canticles. One dictionary defines a canticle as "*one of the nonmetrical hymns or chants, chiefly from the Bible, used in church services.*"

They are mainly drawn from the Psalms though in some cases the texts are non-Biblical but date back to early Christian worship. Not having a regular metre is the one feature that makes the chanting of canticles sometimes challenging as opposed to hymns which have a consistent metre with each verse. However, the canticles have always been a part of Christian worship and serves as a bridge connecting us to the Hebrew/Jewish heritage as expressed in the Psalms. Mindful that the correct chanting of canticles can be a



we are reminded to carefully read the note on chanting that is given on pages 145–147 at the front of the hymnal we now use. Contained within those pages are some very important guidelines that need to be followed to aid in the correct execution of chanting the canticles.

The Provincial Hymnal Committee has not included all of the canticles for use in the new hymnal. A few have been removed. Of those that have been retained the following is being recommended to be used as the hymn of the month for the month of **May, 2012.**

Canticle # 5 Sursum Corda is the hymn of the month for **May.** The text of this canticle as well finds its origins in the 3rd century. It is Roman Catholic *versicle* which is "*a short verse said or sung by a priest or minister in public worship and followed by a response from the congregation.*" As a result the canticle can be done in a responsorial style between the cantor (lead soloist) and the congregation doing the responses in italics.

This is an option that could be considered during the performance of the canticle. As stated above it allows the congregation to have a better appreciation for the canticle and not become overly discouraged as they attempt to chant all of the verses. This is a single chant, meaning that when we sing through the entire tune, we would have completed one verse.

It is our intention to have a midi file of these canticles circulated by then so that congregations can hear them being performed. As a reminder, it is recommended that where feasible the canticles be introduced to the congregation first by the choirs and that thereafter they be used as often as possible during the designated month.

Let me again encourage all of our congregations to continue partnering with us as together we move ahead with the compilation of our Provincial Hymnal. The main purpose of having the hymn of the month is to bring to our attention aspects of our hymnal that are either unknown or underused. But this activity is also to keep in the forefront of your mind, the ongoing work of the Provincial Hymnal Committee. We continue to crave your prayers that we will be guided by the Holy Spirit as we endeavour to produce our own hymnal.



Response to April Information Newsletter by Rev. Glenvil Gregory

I appreciate your article, "**Resurrection-----Jesus is still the way, the truth and the life**" in which you addressed the seeming enthrallment of the Antiguan population by Louis Farrakhan.

Continue on Page 8

Response form April News letter Cont'd from Page 7

While it must be acknowledged that he is a dynamic orator, with the ability to rapt his audience, you have rightly suggested that Farrakhan does not have a new message. Indeed, he must be applauded for keeping the issues of the day at the front and center and for treating the Christian faith with some respect, but as you have rightly suggested, Farrakhan does not have a new message. I will say that in general his good sounding speeches does not offer a way of liberation, but rather draws one into an ideology which does not promote oneness among peoples. Here the words of Martin Luther King Jr are applicable: *"[W]e must never substitute a doctrine of Black supremacy for white supremacy. For the doctrine of Black supremacy is as dangerous as white supremacy. God is not interested merely in the freedom of black men and brown men and yellow men but God is interested in the freedom of the whole human race, the creation of a society where all men will live together as brothers."*

Through your responses the obvious were expertly stated: there is an inability in some instances and in others a refusal by our people to accept responsibility for their own lives and the lives of each other. Some have ignored the voice of prophets among them and continue to look for a Savior. Others have refused to exercise faith and believe that a new day is possible because of Jesus the Christ in their midst.

Your article is relevant and serves as a good pastoral letter to the churches, as we continue to celebrate Easter. Be encouraged as you minister to your generation.

Birthday Greetings for the month of May is extended to:



Bro. Samuel Jacobs	08
Bro. Patmore Smith	10
Sis. Joan Thomas	10
Sis. Ivy Vessup	10
Sis. Karen Bowers-Jones	21
Sis. Camille James	27
Sis. Deborah Challenger	27
Sis. Menelva Samuel	31



Anniversary Greetings for the month of May is extended to:

Bro. Adrian & Sis. Andrea Smith	14
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On behalf of the Eastern West Indies Province, we offer words of congratulations to:

Sis. Stacey and Bro. Devon Mannix as they celebrate the birth of their second child and daughter - Shaunea Denecia Shadeh Mannix. She was born on

Thursday, April 5, 2012 at 7:46pm. She was 8lbs 4.5ozs at birth. Both mother and daughter are out of hospital and doing fine.

The EWIP offers its congratulations and best wishes to brother and sister Mannix. Let us hold them up in prayer at this time.



Condolences

We express condolences to the Rev. Junior Sean Roberts and family on the passing of his grandmother Elizabeth Peters of Pares Village, Antigua. She became one of Antigua's Centenarians on July 29, 2011. Elizabeth Peters passed into the nearer presence of God on April 11, 2012.

The Funeral service took place on Friday April 27, 2012 at the St. Peters Anglican Church in Parham Town, Antigua at 3.00p.m.

Let us remember the family in prayer



Fun Corner

There were three men on a hill with their watches.

The first man threw his watch down the hill and it broke.

The second man threw his watch down the hill and it broke.

The third man threw his watch down the hill, walked all the way to the bottom, and caught it.

The other two men were puzzled and asked the third man how he did it.

The third man said, "Easy. My watch is 5 minutes slow!"



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