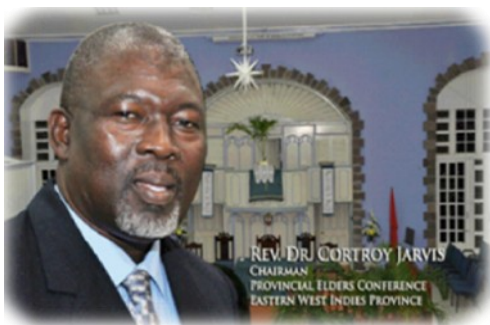


The Information

The Role of the Church in Society



The Church exists in every society. Why is there a Church? Every society, which honors basic human rights, has a role for the Church and the State. Nations and governments come and go. The Church endures; it is the oldest living institution known to man.



Christ entered into our humanity and into human history when He took on our flesh. He came among us to save us from our sins. He taught us the ways of God, a way of life that leads to eternal life in the Kingdom of God. He established His Church to continue His mission on earth throughout the ages, generation after generation, from one culture to another.

What is the difference between the Church and the State? Why can't we combine the two, or eliminate the one for the other? Recall the statement of our Lord when the Pharisees asked him if it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not. He replied: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mt 22:17). Clearly there is a difference between Caesar's state and God's Church. Who gets what? What is the role of the Church and the role of the State in any society? If a healthy society requires a vibrant Church and an energetic State, what services do these two provide? What are their distinct functions?

The Church continues the work of her Lord and Master. It continues its work throughout the centuries. The aspect of the Church which concerns us here is its role as a teacher and moral guide. It stands as the vanguard of the society. Indeed, it stands like a watchman and spokesman. Jesus himself sets out his manifesto in this way:

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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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The Role of the Church in Society
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"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4: 18-19).

The clearest articulation of the role of the Church in society can be found in Pope Pius XI social encyclical, pronounced in 1931, when the world was in the throes of a depression. In paragraphs 41-43, Pius explains: **"the Church proclaims the moral order of the human universe. She is to proclaim and explain every aspect of the moral order. The moral order is something like the plan of an architect for a great project. God is the architect and the human race is His great project. God has a design for His human universe. We are free agents, with intelligence and free will. We can discover the moral order and choose to abide by it, or we can ignore it and make up our own plan. Attempting to improve upon God's moral order is a dangerous undertaking. We have seen many examples of social engineering in this century alone, and know the disastrous results of Nazism, Fascism, and Marxism".**

From the beginning, the Church in the Caribbean has recognized the importance of education, not only for equipping the minds, but also for building the character of young people. It has therefore in the course of its development established schools and colleges wherever this lay in its power.

The nature and scope of these schools has changed considerably over the years, and today they serve the needs of a community far beyond the confines of the Church. In this respect they have a special task to fulfill and a distinctive role to play in the modern world.

However, while aiming to maintain the highest standard possible, our schools must also foster Christian ideals.

Apart from educating our people, the Church must remain in the trenches in the community where our people live. It must seek not only to give our people fish, but to teach them to fish. In other words, the Church must empower our people where they can develop themselves rather than having a dependency syndrome.

With the challenging financial and economic situation the Church more than ever must use its resources like land and human beings to develop our people. The lands can be available for persons to get involved in agriculture so that persons can feed themselves. This will help in food security and food sustainability. In addition, the Church can play a vital role in assisting farmers with seeds, seedlings and fertilizers to encourage them to produce as much as is humanly possible.

A line in the National Anthem of Antigua and Barbuda, speaks forcefully about another very important role of the church. The line in the Anthem says, "Each endeavouring, all achieving". The establishment of Cooperatives and Credit Unions can help our people to see how important it is to work together and by supporting each other, we can move mountains.

Family life is critical, because without the family there would be no society. Family life programs must be developed to help families to cope with every conceivable crisis that families face. Parents must know how to be parents, that is, their role and responsibility. They must know how to raise their children. In addition, children need to know the dynamics of family and their role in such an institution. The Church must be at the centre of all of these programs. Part of the Church's role is to ensure that the machine is well oiled.

Finally, persons must know that the Church is a hospital for sinners and not a museum for saints. The Church deals with broken humanity and to give hope that healing and restoration takes place every day. The Church therefore must continue to play its role in a society which has become very selfish. In addition, with the upsurge of crime and criminal activity, the Church must continue not only to tell, but to show that there is a better way.

Our society and country can be a better place but all hands must be on deck.



**Hymn of the Month
for November, 2013**
**Mikie Roberts (Rev.) Chair,
Provincial Hymnal Committee.**



Over the next three months the hymns will focus on three separate seasons within the Church. In October we focussed on the mission of the Church as we observed missions throughout the Province. For the month of November we will bring into the spotlight the theme of Thanksgiving as many congregations will celebrate their harvests ingathering. As will be expected, for the month of December, we will highlight the Advent Christmas seasons.

The hymn of the month for November is **Lord, Behold Our Glad Rejoicing**. This is a 20th century Caribbean hymn that has been included in the final edition of our new hymnal. It was written by the late Rev. Dr. Sir Hugh B. Sherlock (1905 – 1998). He was considered as one of the Caribbean's outstanding educator and clergyman. As a Methodist minister, he was the first to serve as President of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (Connexional President). He was also the writer of the song "*Jamaica Land We Love*" which became the national anthem of Jamaica when it gained its independence 51 years ago. The primary message of the hymn is centred on giving thanks for the natural beauty of the Caribbean lands and the bountiful crops with which we feed ourselves. Though some of the fruits and images mentioned in the hymn may be unique to Jamaica, we can still give thanks to God for all that God has blessed us with here in the Caribbean. Below is the text for this hymn that has been appointed for the month of November:

Lord, behold our glad rejoicing
On this glorious harvest day.
Hear thy people praises voicing,
Listen as we humbly pray.
May our land with all its treasure,
Know the gently falling rain;
Yield its crops in fullest measure:
Citrus, pears, bananas, cane.

For the glory of our sunshine
Giving warmth to all our days;
For our lovely palm-fringed coast-
line,
Gracious God accept our praise.
See the host of flaming flowers
Set our gardens all ablaze,
Red hibiscus, golden showers,
Poincianas, sing thy praise.

Mountains stand in awesome
grandeur;
Valleys lie serene below,
Telling of Creation's wonder,
Of the gifts thou dost bestow.
For our country great Creator
We would render praises due.
Fair as morning thou didst make
her,
Make our people lovely too.



**Attendance at the
WCC 10th General Assembly**

The Rev. Dr. Errol Connor, is representing the Eastern West Indies Province at the World Council of Churches (WCC) 10th General Assembly, which is been held in Busan, Republic of South Korea, from October 30th to November 8th, 2013.



The Assembly is be held under the theme: "God of life, lead us to justice and peace". The Theme is relevant for the context of a divided Korea. It also addresses the continuing violence and poverty

around the world that disrupts societies and people.

The WCC is the most diverse international gathering of Christians in the world and meets every 7-8 years to set the future agenda of the council, elect governance officials and speak with a common public voice on behalf of the churches around the world.

Let us remember Bro. Connor in our prayers as he travels and participates in the Assembly.



PEC MEETINGS

The scheduled meetings for the PEC in 2014 are as follows:

January 29 – 30 in Antigua
April 24 – 26 in St. Kitts
July 03 – 06 in Trinidad
October 02 – 04 in St. Thomas

In addition, the Superintendents Conference for 2014 will take place in Antigua from January 31 – February 01, 2014.



Book of Order 2012

Copies of the New Book of Order are now available and can be purchased from the Provincial Headquarters for EC\$20.00 or US\$8.00 or BDS\$16.00 or TT\$48.00.

The Book of Order has been revised and updated with all the new resolutions from the 30th Provincial Synod held in St. Thomas in 2012.

Implementation of the Rite of Blessing

Resolution 21 of the 30th Provincial Synod is captioned, “The Blessing of Infants”, and it reads thus:

...That the 30th Provincial Synod admits and allows for the blessing of infants as a recognized practice in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province. Even though permission is granted, it is understood that implementation of the practice should not come into effect until careful study and preparation which includes teaching. The PEC will indicate the time of full implementation.

With due regard to the mandate and intent of this resolution, the PEC requested Bishop Kingsley Lewis to develop a study document that can facilitate the requisite careful study and preparation, leading to full implementation. The PEC believes that the document is very well researched and equally well written. A careful reading of the document will reveal its conversational style, punctuated with questions that are answered by means by means of discussions of arguments for or against infant baptism. Moreover, one should observe that its Biblical warrants, theological foundations, and historical frames make the document well suited to the kind of study (careful reflection and open discussion) of the pastoral and personal responses to the sacrament and the ever present call to faith and faithfulness. Additionally, the document makes mention of three significant things that elevate both the sacrament and the requisite careful study:

- 1) the need for training all members in faith and fidelity,
- 2) the covenantal basis for baptizing children, and
- 3) the grace that the sacrament bestows.

In committing this study document to careful study within all congregations, the PEC affirms and/or recognizes the following:

- ♦ The practice of Infant Baptism is biblical, spiritually valid and theologically sound.
- ♦ The embrace of the sacrament is a call to faith and discipleship, and as such requires that the congregation and the home should be prepared to continuously and consistently provide the necessary godly instruction, admonition and example, bathe in prayer.
- ♦ The provision of Resolution 21 permits the “Blessing of Infants” as an added pastoral response. Yet, it is observed that what the resolution permits is but a little more than a topical treatment to a much deeper problem which shall persist if not directly addressed.

In fact, just as one does not put out a fire by taking the fire escape, no more can we put out this fire without a direct assault on the flames that arise from a low appreciation of faith and practice. Moreover, the need to directly attack the fire does not invalidate the necessity of the fire escape. Therefore, by “admitting and allowing the practice of the blessing of infants,” the resolution also becomes an opportunity to answer the greater call to purposefully pursue training in faith and fidelity.

- ♦ The greater call as implied by “careful study” is a call to review the practice of ministry and to directly address the emphases or mindsets that perpetuate less than dynamic or effective evidences of faith and discipleship within congregations. In other words, there is a need to effectuate change through thoughtful and continuous education; to more adequately disciple members and prepare the congregation to fulfill its mission.
- ♦ Admittedly, many persons who request baptism of infants may be confused about the intent or goal of the sacrament. Such persons often do not fully appreciate the deep call to faith that is the Christian’s vocation: a call to embrace, practice and share faith at home, at church, at work and at play. Like so many others, they may be drowning in the sea of ritual practice without a lifeline. Therefore, all need to be challenged, convicted and converted. However, it is useful to remember that a drowning man may need help but, overwhelmed by the sea, may miss the fact that his rescuer is his lifeline. There may be a need to get to them before they get to us. This is likely best accomplished through careful study and purpose-driven Christian Education.

In other words, as we seek to admit and allow the blessing of infants, we must strive even more to **present all persons mature in Christ** (Col. 1:28). That’s the grander vision; that is what the sacrament envisions.

The PEC commends this document prepared by Bishop Lewis to careful study by the congregations and prays that as a church we rise both to confront the challenge and to seize the opportunity that are inherent.

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Implementation of the Rite of Blessing Cont'd from Page 4

The PEC grants full implementation of the Blessing of Infants within the Eastern West Indies Province with the understanding that this document will be used as a point of reference as we move forward.

Infant Baptism and Blessing in the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kingsley Lewis

The Position of the Moravian Church on Infant Baptism is well represented in the teaching of both Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg and Augustus Schultze.



In this paper we will first draw out the main points in Spangenberg's Exposition and Schultze's Lectures and then go on to consider the Biblical basis of his exposition and the teaching and understanding of the Moravian Church's practice of the sacrament, while consider-

ing wider ecumenical insights which are in agreement with Moravian teaching.

Spangenberg on Infant Baptism

1. *Paedo-baptist and those who believe only in Believers' Baptism*

INFANT baptism, though the manner of administering it is various, is in the Holy Scripture, neither expressly commanded nor forbidden. It is universally practised in Christendom (unless by those who are generally known by the name of Baptists, and who are divided into several parties). These "maintain that children should not be baptized, because Christ commanded his disciples, first of all, to preach the Gospel, and, then to baptize such only as believe in it. Therefore a man must first have faith, before he can be a proper subject for baptism, Paul says, "How should they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?" Now as children have not heard the Gospel, so neither can they have faith; and because they do not believe, they ought not to be baptized.

2. The plausibility of objections to Infant Baptism

This objection is very plausible; but if we take all circumstances into consideration, it is easy to explain why the practice of infant baptism became nevertheless so universal. At the time when our Lord and Saviour sent his disciples forth into all the world, the Christian church was to be first formed. The Lord therefore told them how they should proceed in collecting his church. They were not to preach the Gospel to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles also; and then to baptize such as believed the Gospel, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The baptized kept afterwards together, and became congregations of Christ, and these congregations collectively formed the church of Christ. Thus preaching preceded, faith followed, and then baptism was administered.

3. What about children of parents from the Old Covenant who were joined to the New Covenant?

But when congregations of Christ were thus formed, what was then to be done with the children? And how were they to be looked upon? Paul tells us, that the children are holy, if either the father or mother were believers, 1 *Cor. vii. 14*. How? are not the children of believers sinful creatures also by nature? And doth not the Lord our Saviour say, that "What is born of the flesh is flesh?" Certainly; and in this sense they are not holy. How then are they holy? When from their very infancy they belong to the people of the New Covenant, whom the Lord has separated unto himself from the rest of the world, to be his property, which he has sanctified for himself. Surely children are a property of our Lord Jesus Christ, he having bought them, not with gold or silver, but with his own holy blood. Children are also capable of receiving the Holy Ghost even in the mother's womb, as we read expressly in the case of John, the son of Zacharias. May not faith take place in very little children? "Jesus took a child, and set him in the midst of them (his disciples), and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me," Mark. ix. 36, 37. Doth he not immediately subjoin: "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones *which believe in me*, "it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about "his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Matt. xviii. 6. Mark ix. 42. Doth not Peter say to the Jews, when speaking of baptism for the remission of sins, and concerning the promised gift of the Holy Ghost, "The promise is unto you, and *to your children*?" Acts ii. 39. Were not the males circumcised upon the eighth day, and by it received into the covenant which God had made with Abraham and with his posterity? Doth not our Saviour say concerning "the young children whom they brought to "him, that he should touch them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God?" Mark x, 13, 14.

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Infant Baptism and Blessing in the Moravian Church EWIP
Cont'd from Page 5

4. How Infant Baptism became so universal in the Christian Church

Now if we take all this together, we may thence comprehend how infant-baptism became *so* universal in the Christian church, There is reason to believe that the hand of God hath thus disposed it, and that the Holy Ghost, continued to teach the disciples of Jesus, and led them to baptize their children also, And if a child be baptized, in the name of The Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, should not this act convey a blessing to it? If a congregation of Jesus presents such a child with prayer and supplication to the Lord, shall that be in vain? Does not also a child put on Christ by baptism? Gal. iii. 27. And shall the Father not receive it as his child, and the Holy Ghost as his habitation, and temple? Most certainly. A child may likewise experience what Paul says, "*God saveth us by the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*" Tit. iii. 5, 6.

5. Three observations about Infant Baptism

BUT we have still farther to observe: (1.) That infant baptism being a holy transaction, performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, ought to be administered in a way suitable to its importance. (2.) That it is also incumbent upon *us* to show therein all possible fidelity; to train up the children for our Saviour from the very hour of their baptism; to preserve them from all evil, which might be hurtful to their hearts; to excite them to every good thing, which is well pleasing to God; to put them in mind of the covenant of God with us, into which they have been received by baptism; to encourage them to have confidence towards their Father in Heaven, who has adopted them for his children; to paint Jesus Christ before their eyes, who, by his bitter sufferings and death, hath redeemed them; and to make them acquainted with that which Jesus Christ has commanded his disciples; to lead them into a child-like and confident converse with Jesus Christ, especially in prayer; to accustom them to an attention to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who brings all things to our remembrance, whatsoever our Saviour hath said, &c. (3.) That when children follow after the wicked one, and **devote** [emphasis mine] themselves to sin (which, alas! is but too often the case) we, by the grace of God lead them back again out of the error of their way. For when they are converted, they are always sure to find, that God, on his part, keeps his covenant inviolably, and most willingly renews it with everyone with whom he has once engaged in Holy Baptism. As many men have no regard for the covenant, which they have entered into with God, by bap-

tism, and as almost all those who have been baptized in their infancy, devote themselves again to the service of sin and Satan; therefore a preacher in Christendom, if he would observe rightly the duties of his function, dares do no otherwise than constantly direct men to return to Christ, beseeching them in Christ's stead, to be reconciled unto God.

Augustus Schultze, *Christian Doctrine*

CHAPTER XLI. BAPTISM.

1. The Meaning of the Word.

The Baptists and related denominations generally hold, that the word "baptism" means nothing else but *dipping* or immersion, but according to the understanding of other Christians it means an application of water, a *washing*, irrespective of the mode of procedure. In classic usage βάπτω and βαπτίζω certainly mean "to dip," but they also denote to dye, to cover with water and to wash; men are said to be "baptized" (overwhelmed) with debts, with puzzling questions, showing that the effect rather than the process is expressed. In the Septuagint translation of Dan. 4 :30 we meet the word in the sense of Nebukadnezzar's body being *wet* with the *dew* of heaven, and in Mark 7:4 we read, that the Jews when coming from the market, do not eat, "except they bathe themselves" βαπτίσονται. In Acts 2 :41 it is recorded that 3000 persons were baptized in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, although there is no running stream in summer time in or near the city for immersing people. The "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," which dates from the first half of the second century, has this direction: "If thou hast neither (living water nor standing water in sufficient quantity), pour water on the head three times, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." Add to this, that where the element is mentioned in the New Testament we find "baptized *with* water or *in* water and in the Holy Spirit (Luke 3 :16; Acts 1:5; John 1 :26), not *into*, except once "into the Jordan." In the baptismal formula of Matth. 28:19, "baptizing them into the name," "binding or consecrating *unto* the name," rather than a dipping into, is evidently intended. Compare I Cor. 10:2, "were all baptized unto Moses."

These facts show that, although doubtless immersion was the most frequent and in some respects the most expressive mode of baptism, it was *not* the *exclusive* form and it is not the only possible Christian baptism.

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So far as the Sacrament symbolizes a dying and "being buried with Christ through baptism" (Rom. 6 :4), this idea evidently is best expressed by immersion. On the other hand, the "washing of regeneration" (Tit. 3:5) and the "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our body washed with pure water" (Heb. 10 :22) will be better typified by pouring or sprinkling.

The real value of the Sacrament as symbolical of the *cleansing* of the soul cannot depend upon the quantity of water that is used, or the manner of its *application*. Immersion in an ocean of water cannot make a black man white nor a sinner clean, but one drop of the blood of Christ cleanses the soul from all sin. Since the rite of baptism is designed for all climes of the earth and for all classes of men and immersion would be fatal to some and impossible to others, we conclude that in administering this rite such application of water is required as will make the act sufficiently typical of the cleansing of the heart.

2. Origin of the Rite.

Christian baptism has its *historic ground* in the command which Christ gave 'before his ascension to heaven, Matth. 28:18-20. The rite as such is older. Christian baptism was preceded by the baptism of John which, in turn, can be traced further back to the ablutions prescribed in the Mosaic Law, for the cleansing of body and soul. In the last instance, the ordinance is founded on the general sentiment of mankind, that an outward cleansing of the body is emblematic, if not a part 'Of the cleansing of the soul. Illustrations of one kind or another have been used at all times also by heathen nations. The Christian sacrament differs from other rites of ablution mainly in this respect, that it pledges to the candidate a share in Christ's salvation and connects him with the person and work of the Redeemer. When Christians are baptized in or rather unto the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, this means in the first place, that they confess *belief* in the revelation of the triune God and willingness to *consecrate* themselves to his service. In virtue of this willingness the candidates are received into the fellowship of the Christian Church.

3. Significance of the Rite.

So far all Christians agree, as to the significance of this rite; but not on the more important question, in what sense the Sacrament pledges *admission* to the *invisible Church* or the kingdom of God. The Church of *Rome* teaches, that baptism is equivalent to *regeneration*, the Sacrament by which salvation is imparted to the candi-

date. The Baptists and others hold that *regeneration* must *precede* baptism, the Sacrament being simply the sign of the salvation received and a confession of faith. Most Protestant Churches take a *middle* view, which neither identifies baptism and regeneration, nor sunders them, but makes the Sacrament the divinely appointed *sign* and *pledge* of *admission* to the covenant relation with God in Christ Jesus. Peter, in Acts 2 :38, adds to the admonition: "Repent ye and be baptized," the distinct. promise, "unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" and quotes our Lord as saying:

"Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:16). Paul declares, in Gal. 3:27, "As many of you as were 'baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

On the ground of these and similar teachings of the New Testament, we find the significance of Baptism in the following points:

a. Baptism is a *sign* typifying that the candidate, who is being "baptized unto Christ," is thereby set apart from an unbelieving world for Christ and is cleansed from the guilt of sin by the washing of the blood of Christ.

b. Baptism is a *pledge* of the promise of salvation. Our Lord instituted this ordinance after the work of redemption had been accomplished, for the evident purpose of offering a tangible seal of this salvation, as applied to each individual.

c. Baptism is a *medium* of salvation, a means of grace, by which the salvation thus signified and pledged is actually conveyed to the candidate.

In Acts 10:44 we read that the Holy Spirit was given to some Christian converts before they were baptized and in Acts 8:16 the opposite, viz., that an additional laying on of hands was needed to impart the power of the Spirit to baptized Christians. How much of divine grace, therefore, precedes the sacrament, how much goes with the administering of the rite, and how much is left for later time, cannot be determined by a general rule.

4. Conditions for Baptism.

The question, who are the proper *candidates* for baptism, must be decided by the design of the ordinance and the example of the early Christian Church. In Acts 8:37, the Evangelist Philip says to the Ethiopian: "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest (be baptized) and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and in Mk. 16:16, we read:

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"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." It is true, that both these declarations are wanting in the oldest Greek manuscripts of the New Testament and may be later additions. But they certainly express the fact that in the Apostolic Church a confession of *faith in Christ*, as the Saviour from sin, was required of the candidates for baptism. Such a confession presupposes a preparatory *instruction* in the truths of the gospel and a corresponding evidence of an earnest *desire* to be delivered from the guilt and power of sin. It is not in accord with this principle to baptize the heathen in crowds, with the idea that the administering of the sacrament will make them Christians; as has been done now and then.

On the other hand, it does not appear necessary to wait with the rite until the candidate has proved the genuineness of his conversion by a *Christian life*. If the sacrament of baptism, as we understand it, marks the establishment of the covenant relation between Christ and the believer, and the *'beginning* of spiritual life, its proper place is at the commencement of the new life, not in the middle or at the close.

All additional ceremonies and *ecclesiastical usages*, which have been introduced in certain Churches, such as anointing with holy oil, dressing the candidates in white robes; abjuring the service of the devil, changing the *name*, may be valuable accessories, but are not essential to the sacrament.

CHAPTER XLII. INFANT BAPTISM.

The great body of Christian denominations, viz., the Greek and the Roman Churches, as well as most Protestant Churches, administer the rite of baptism to *infants* as well as to adults. This custom can be traced back with certainty only to the year 200 A. D., when Tertullian speaks of it as being in vogue in his day, but himself disapproves of it. His younger contemporary, Origen, declares, that it had been practiced since the days of the apostles.

3. The Meaning of Infant Baptism.

What is true of the sacrament of baptism in general, must apply also to infant baptism, viz., that it is *not regeneration*, not equivalent to personal salvation, nor on the other hand is it simply a *church rite* admitting to the membership of the visible Church. But it is the symbol and *seal* of the *objective redemption* accomplished by Christ and at the same time

the *means of grace*, by Christ's appointment, for conveying the "benefits of this redemption so far as that can be done objectively, without taking away the right and duty of personal self-determination. Hence baptism, objectively speaking, marks the *beginning* of personal salvation through the application of the merits of Christ's redemption. This objective offer of saving grace includes *two things*, viz., acquittal from the guilt of sin or justification, and the implanting of the divine life or regeneration. Can an infant receive these?

a. As to the former, we know that every child, as "flesh born of the flesh" has its unavoidable share of *inherited depravity* and a corresponding share in the displeasure of God against all defilement of sin, as Paul writes, "we were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest" (Eph. 2 :3). Accordingly, aside of any personal sin, the child needs the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, for a cleansing of the heart (compare Ps. 51:5, 7). Thus the infant as such is a *proper subject* for the manifestation of the grace of God. As the *sin* of Adam is objectively transmitted to every child because it cannot resist, so the *saving grace* of Christ, so far as it means an objective offer of acquittal from sin, can be transmitted to every Christian child, of whom the apostle writes in I Cor. 7:14, "Your children are *holy*," i. e. set apart for the kingdom of heaven. This promise and pledge then of an objective share in Christ's redemption is the first thing which the sacrament of infant baptism expresses.

b. As to the other aspect of personal salvation, the *infusion* of the divine life or regeneration, we again know that all spiritual life comes to man as a *gift* of the Holy Spirit. It is not man who regenerates himself and quickens his heart. The sinner cannot even repent or believe by his own strength. "It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do." All that is required of man, is that he renounce his natural enmity and pride, and accept the divine life which is given. The child, though it feels as yet no longing for salvation, at least offers *no resistance*. It was doubtless partly for this reason, that the Saviour commanded the little children to be brought to him that he might bless them and said, "To such belongeth the *kingdom of heaven*" and "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18 :3).

It is true that Christ did not directly command that children should be baptized. But if to such (even to infants and "babes," Luke 18 :15) belongeth the kingdom of heaven, why should they be denied the sacrament which Christ ordained to be the sign and pledge of admission to that kingdom? If infants are excluded from this rite because they have no conscious faith, they are to the same extent debarred from the kingdom of heaven, because "without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing to God." It is the same Jesus who said: "Except a man be born anew he

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cannot see the kingdom of God" and who speaking of little children declared, "To such belongeth the kingdom."

The fact that many who were baptized in infancy, afterwards show no signs of spiritual life, merely proves that the sacrament does not work mechanically, but that baptismal grace is *conditional* in infants, as well as in adults.

4. Reasons for Preferring Infant Baptism.

The foregoing arguments would prove only, that the sacrament of baptism *may* also be administered to infants. It remains for us to give reasons why the great majority of Christians *prefer* infant baptism to waiting until the children have come to a mature age. *Three* such reasons may be stated:

a. The desire of Christian parents to *secure* to their children as early as possible the *objective sign* and pledge of their share in the blessings of redemption. This is a part of the loving provision which devoted parents make for their children, in the form of gifts and preparations, which are intended mainly for future use. They consecrate their children to the triune God, praying for their salvation, and they are resolved, by word and example, to lead them to the Saviour, as soon as there is the first sign of an awakening consciousness, so that the spiritual life may be implanted and may grow in them, simultaneously with the natural life.

b. As the sacrament of baptism marks the *beginning* of a Christian life, no time in later years seems better or even as well suited for receiving this *initiatory* rite, than the earliest infancy. For the work of the Holy Spirit manifests itself even in infants, Children do begin to love the Saviour, as well as they love their parents; they learn to give thanks, to pray to him and to feel the need of divine help; in short, they make an experience of divine grace, in proportion to their understanding...

c. As regards the visible *results* of the sacrament, the Churches which administer infant baptism can claim at least so much, that persons who are baptized in infancy and afterward brought up in Christian training, are not in any way behind the members of Churches which baptize adults only, in Christian graces, and that the most faithful and efficient servants of Christ, throughout many centuries of the Christian era, have been baptized in infancy.

5. Whose Children are to be Baptized?

It should be understood, however, that infant baptism is a *privilege* and a sacred trust granted to church members and

it must be regarded 'against abuse. Unfortunately, the sacred ordinance too often is degraded into a meaningless ceremony, or else into a superstitious *opus operatum* of supposedly magical effect... The administering of infant baptism is in place only, where there is a reasonable hope that the sacrament will actually mark the beginning of Christian discipleship and that the operation of the Holy Spirit will have a free course in the heart of the child. Hence infant baptism is out of place, where there is *no prospect* whatever of the child receiving such a Christian training, that is among the children of heathen, or where parents and relatives are outspoken *unbelievers* and where the Church cannot expect to exercise the needful influence, through the Sunday School and otherwise. The rite is out of place, where it is merely asked for on superstitious grounds.

The Concept of Covenant

(Excerpted from R. Scott Clark, *A Contemporary Reformed Defence of Infant Baptism*, 2005)

The term

The term covenant is a very frequent word in the Bible. In fact, God's covenant with believers is so important that it is nearly impossible to correctly understand the Bible while ignoring it.¹⁵ The covenant of grace describes the way God relates to his people. It involves a binding oath between the LORD and his people in which he promises his people to be their God and his people, in response to God's grace, swear complete fidelity to the LORD. The covenant of grace was signed and sealed in blood.

The sign of the Old Covenant

God made a covenant of grace with Adam, after the fall, in the garden. (Gen. 3.14-16) He made a promise to save and preserve Noah through the flood, and us after it. (Gen. 6.18; 9.9-17) He promised to be a God to Abraham and his children. (Gen. 15.1-18; Gen. 17; 1 Chron. 16.16; Rom. 4; Rom. 9; Gal.3) With each promise God attached conditions. The first is **saving faith**, which God works in us (Romans 4:3). The second is to make use of the **covenant signs and seals**. In Genesis 17 the LORD spoke to Abraham about his covenant: I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner - those

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who are not your offspring....My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant. (Gen. 17:10-14) The LORD gave a bloody mark as a sign to Abraham that he and his children belonged to the LORD. Similarly, in Exodus 12:1-13; vv.21-29, 43-51; God remembered his covenant with Abraham. (Exodus 2:24; 6:4-5)

The sign of the New Covenant

To grasp the background and origins of Infant Baptism we must understand the original recipients of the New Covenant. During the first years, the members of the Church were exclusively Jewish. The Jews practiced infant circumcision, as mandated to Abraham (Gn 17:12), reaffirmed in the Mosaic Law (Lv 12:3), and demonstrated by the circumcision of Jesus on his eighth day (Lu 2:21). Without circumcision no male was allowed to participate in the cultural and religious life of Israel. The rite of circumcision as the doorway into the Old Covenant was replaced in the New Covenant with the rite of Baptism—both applied to infants. St. Paul makes this correlation: “In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with him in baptism” (Co 2:11-12). (Steve Ray: An article written for the soon-to-be-published *Catholic Dictionary of Apologetics and Evangelism* by Ignatius Press)

The Covenant of Grace

Just as God made a covenant with Abraham, he promised a new covenant to come later. (Jer. 31:32-33; Ezek. 34: 35) He made this new covenant in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Luke 22:20; 2 Cor 3:7-18; Heb. 8:1-10:18) The Lord Jesus consciously and specifically established “the new covenant.”²⁵ The Apostle Paul said he was “a servant of the new covenant.” (2 Cor. 3:6) How can this be if there is but one covenant of grace? The new covenant is new, as contrasted with Moses, but not as contrasted with Abraham or Adam. (Luke 1:54-55, 72-73; Acts 7)

This is the point of Galatians 3:1-29; 4:21-31, and 2 Corinthians 3:7-18 where Paul says that the glory of the Old Covenant was fading but the glory of the New Covenant is permanent. The message of Hebrews chapters 3-10 is that the Old Covenant (under **Moses**) was **preparatory to the New Covenant. The fundamental theme of Hebrews 11** is that Abraham had a new covenant faith, that is, he anticipated a heavenly city and to the redemption which we have in Christ. (1 Peter 1:10-12) (Scott Clark)

Peter's Sermon on the Day of Pentecost

When Peter preached under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost he was speaking to a Jewish audience (Ac 2:5-35). Peter announced, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children” (Acts 2:38-39). The Jews would have been dismayed had the New Covenant not included their children, especially since it was promised to them, and the New Covenant was to be an improvement over the Old in which they were included. Jesus was circumcised at eight days without his consent and by that circumcision made a member of the covenant people of God.

The New Testament frequently implies that adults and children were included in the rite of Baptism. For example, when the head of a household converted and was baptized, his entire household was also baptized with him (Acts 16:15, 33; 1 Co 1:16). The inference of course, especially based on Jewish understanding of the family and covenants, would include the aged, the adults, the servants, and the infants. If the practice of Infant Baptism had been illicit (unlawful) or prohibited it would surely have been explicitly forbidden, especially to restrain the Jews from applying Baptism to their infants as they did circumcision. But we find no such prohibition in the New Testament nor in the writings of the Fathers—a **silence that is very profound**. There was no rebuke for the early practice of Infant Baptism, because it was regarded as a teaching passed on by the apostles. (Steve Ray)

The Secular philosophical background to the rejection of Infant Baptism

Jordan Bajis, in his paper. Entitled **Infant Baptism** makes a salient point which is useful for us to note as follows:

“Larry Christenson, in his pamphlet *What About Baptism*”, quotes Edmund Schlink (author of *The Doctrine of Baptism*) as stating that the rejection of infant baptism was based on the secular philosophy of the sixteenth century which assured man's individuality, and was not the result of a new Scriptural inquiry:

“Belief was seen in rationalistic and volitional terms, as an act of the mind and the will. 'Because an infant cannot think or decide, it cannot have faith, and therefore should not be baptized.' To this day, that is the only argument raised against the validity of infant baptism. One tosses off the sentence as though it were self-evident truth: 'A child can't believe.' But that 'truth,' upon examination, is neither self-evident, nor is it Biblical.”

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As Christenson goes on to say, faith is not merely a product of reason but relation. It is a relationship of love and trust, a relationship which is not limited to the mind. Some Scriptures which support the possibility of an "infant faith" are these:

"Yet Thou are He who didst bring me forth from the womb; Thou didst make me trust when upon my mother's breast." (Psalm 22:9)

"And whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea." (Mark 9:42)

"For behold, when the sound of your greeting [Theotokos] reached my ears [Elizabeth], the baby [John the Baptist] leaped in my womb for joy." (Luke 1:44)" (1990-1996 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Infant Baptism, Jordan Bajis,)

What it means to live in Covenant relationship with Christ

The making of Covenants

Circumcision was the sign given to Abraham. (Gen. 17:10-14) The covenant and the sign were so closely identified that the Lord called the sign of circumcision, "My covenant." Anyone who did not take the sign would be "cut off" from the covenant people. (Moses nearly lost his life because he failed to circumcise his second son.) In the old covenant Scriptures the phrase "to make a covenant" was expressed with the words: "to cut a covenant," that is, to perform the cutting away of the foreskin of the penis of the uncircumcised adult male or the eight-day old Hebrew infant. (See Gen. 15:18; Exod. 24:8; 34:27; Deut. 4:23) To be circumcised was to be identified with God and to be "cut off" from the world and to be included with God's visible covenant people. (Scott Clark)

Scott correctly observes that, "Implied in the act of circumcision is the taking of an oath: 'If I do not keep the covenant, may the destruction which is illustrated by the cutting of the foreskin, actually happen to me.'" This is why the Lord spoke of covenant breakers being "cut off" in Genesis 17:14. In Exodus 4:25, 12:15,30:33,38; Leviticus 7:20-25; Psalm 37; Ezekiel 14:8-17, 25:7-16. Scripture used the same verb for "cutting off" of covenant breakers as it did for the "cutting" of a covenant in Genesis 15:18.

Since the covenant of grace was made by God, it is God

who gets to set its terms—not us. God's Word says that before we were "in Christ" we were dead in sins and trespasses. As dead people we could no more save ourselves than Israel could get herself out of Egypt. (Ephes. 1:1-15; 2:1-10) Because God is sovereign, he has the final say about who receives Baptism and the Lord's supper and how they receive it. (Scott Clark)

One of the reasons that Paul so strongly opposed the imposition of circumcision upon Christians by the Judaizers is that, by faith, we have already been circumcised in Christ, of which baptism is the sign and seal. (Acts 15:1-21; Gal. 2:12; 3:13-14; 5:15 and 6:12 teach that the circumcision has been fulfilled) We were already identified as belonging to God and we have undergone the curse in Christ. So actual physical circumcision is, in the new covenant, unnecessary. Paul tells those who wish to circumcise themselves, to go the whole way and emasculate themselves. (Gal. 5:12)

Acts 2:38,39 equates circumcision and baptism. In Acts 2:38 the Apostle Peter calls for repentance, faith in Christ and baptism by Jews who are hearing his preaching. In v.39 he gives the reason for this action: "the promise is to you and to your children, and all who are far off...." The Apostle Peter consciously uses the same formula in his preaching as the LORD himself used when he instituted the sign of circumcision in Genesis 17, which the Jews listening understood precisely. (Scott Clark)

The Relationship between Faith and Baptism

Acts 2:38,39 says,

"Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for *you and for your children* and for many who are-for all whom the Lord our God will call" (italics mine).

For adult converts, baptism is a sign of what Christ has done for them, forgiven them and washed them. Adult converts are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness is through faith in Christ. Baptism is a sign of our new standing with God through faith. **Notice, v.39 "The promise (of salvation to those who believe) is for you and for your children."**[Emphasis mine]

Our faith is in the Christ who died for us. Baptism is a sign of being united to him in his death by faith. Peter says that the flood waters of Noah symbolize baptism, because baptism is a sign of dying to sin, the washing away of sin by Christ's blood, and living by faith in Christ. (1 Peter 3:21)

Everyone, (adults and children), who has been baptized must be united by faith to Christ for salvation.

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Unbaptized, adult converts, profess their faith before baptism. Children of believers who received the sign in infancy profess their faith as soon as they are able. Both are responsible before God to be faithful to the grace represented by the sign and seal they have received. (Scott Clark)

The Apostles and Household Baptisms

In fact, there is a good deal of positive evidence in the New Testament Scriptures that baptism was applied to infants.

In both the old covenant and the new covenant, God speaks to households and "saves" them. In the language of the Bible, one's house does not refer incidentally, but primarily to the children. (See ! Samuel 22.16,19; Gen 17.12,23;18.19;45.17-19; 46.6-7 for the Biblical concept of 'household'). The emphasis on "household" or "family" points to a continuity between the Old Covenant corporate view-point and that of the New covenant. (See Rom. 5) Children are viewed as being part of a covenant household, a covenantal unit. The sign, in Scripture, is applied to the whole household unit. (Scott Clark)

The following historical note is instructive: From the beginning of New Testament Christianity at Pentecost to our time, unbroken and uninterrupted, the Church has baptized babies. Polycarp (69-155 AD), a disciple of the Apostle John, was baptized as an infant. Justin Martyr (100-166 AD) of the next generation, about the year 150 AD, states in his Dialog with Trypho the Jew, that Baptism is the circumcision of the New Testament." Irenaeus (130-200 AD) writes in Against Heresies II 22:4 that Jesus came to save all through means of Himself -- all, I say, who through Him are born again to God -- infants and children, boys and youth, and old men." (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod- Frequently Asked Questions –Web)

Baptism and Confirmation

Remember we said that in Genesis 17 the LORD spoke to Abraham about his covenant:

I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or

bought with money from a foreigner-those who are not your offspring....My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant. (Scott Clark)

Remember also that we said that when Peter preached under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost he was speaking to a Jewish audience (Ac 2:5-35). To them Peter announced, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children" (Acts 2:38-39). The Jews would have been dismayed had the New Covenant not included their children, especially since it was promised to them, and the New Covenant was to be an improvement over the Old in which they were included. Jesus was circumcised at eight days without his consent and by that circumcision made a member of the covenant people of God.

Remember we also made the point that if the practice of Infant Baptism had been illicit (unlawful) or prohibited, it would surely have been explicitly forbidden, especially to restrain the Jews from applying Baptism to their infants as they did circumcision. But we find no such prohibition in the New Testament.

Faith of the Child

- The child does not have faith at the time of baptism
- The Parents exercise faith on behalf of the child and God does respond to the faith exercised on behalf of someone else – e.g. the paralytic brought by friends and also Jairus' daughter.
- Christian parents have a responsibility to bring their children into the covenant and to lead their baptized children to the point of faith where they can exercise faith and decide on their own to follow Jesus - that is why no one should come for confirmation simply because a parent sent them.

Origin of Confirmation

- Originally part of the initiatory rite in which the candidate was baptized after confession of faith in Christ when a prayer was offered for the strengthening (confirming) of the Holy Spirit in the candidate's life: The roots of the practice of confirmation are found in the Acts of the Apostles:

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“Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.” Acts 8:14-17

Assumption of the Covenant

“Confirmation is not the topping up of baptism as the entry into the Christian life. There is no justification for such a view anywhere in the New Testament. It is no supplementary rite.” (Green, 102) This is so because there is nothing deficient or lacking in Infant Baptism in the first place. Infant Baptism, let us remember is a covenant initiated by God himself.

Confirmation is, “first and foremost, a profession of faith. The one element in baptism which is denied the infant is that of confession...He needs an opportunity to make public profession of his own personal surrender to the Lord...Confirmation gives him this opportunity. There are basically two parts to it. He confirms the vows and the faith expressed for him by his godparents [and parents] as a child. And the [minister] lays his hands upon the candidate to assure him by this sign that God can be relied on to confirm and strengthen him in his Christian life to which he has openly committed himself. So there are two confirmations, not one. The candidate confirms his Christian profession. The Lord confirms his protection and strength for the battle ahead. (Green 104-105)

It is important to recognize that there are some things which are biblically mandated and others which are of human origin, but that does not necessarily mean that there is anything wrong with the latter.

Second, confirmation is, “a domestic rite bringing the candidate into full accreditation and recognition within a particular branch of the Christian church. Baptism is *never* denominationally orientated.” (Green 105)

Does Confirmation make a difference?

Yes it does.

- We talk about a person walking for confirmation. It is not simply time spent, but it is a life walked (in Christ)

- It follows a period of instruction or teaching in the Christian Faith so that the candidate can learn and experience what it means to be a Christian
- Ratification of the covenant into which a person entered at baptism: You cannot fulfill the promises by yourself. You cannot live the Christian life by yourself you need the gift and power of the Holy Spirit in your life.

After Confirmation?

- We are to live by the terms of the covenant
- We are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, following after Christ
- We are to continue steadfastly in the teaching and fellowship of the Church

The Blessing of Infants

The 30th Provincial Synod of the Eastern West Indies Province of the Moravian Church passed a resolution which admits and allows for the blessing of infants as a recognized practice of the Province.

What is the significance of this in the Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province?

The Church by this action recognizes that there are some parents who do not qualify to have their children included in the covenant because for one reason or another they are not living in covenant relationship with Jesus Christ, or are not ready to enter into such a covenant relationship at that point in time. Yet there are some of those parents who still wish their children to receive a blessing from God and who wish as much as they are able to bring up their children according to Biblical and Christian precepts.

There are some churches which practice the blessing or dedication or “offering up” of infants as an alternative practice to infant baptism because they do not accept infant baptism as biblically based. Consequently, for such parents blessing or dedication or “offering up” of an infant constitutes a rejection of infant baptism.

Not a rejection of the validity of Infant Baptism

In the Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province, however, the practice of the blessing of infants is not a rejection of infant baptism, for we do not reject infant baptism.

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Further, it does provide an alternative for those parents who, while not rejecting infant baptism, wish to postpone the baptism of their children as provided for in the Church Order of the Unitas Fratrum #865.2. The congregation also accepts a responsibility for the nurture of such children.

How Blessing differs from Infant Baptism

The essential difference between blessing and baptism is that in infant baptism the child receives the sign of the New Covenant through the membership in that covenant of their parents and those who are blessed are not incorporated into that covenant.

Belief in Believer's Baptism

It only remains to stress that the Moravian Church does believe fully in Believer's Baptism. The practice of Infant Baptism neither conflicts with nor repudiates Believer's Baptism.

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Koreans tell their stories through music performance at WCC Assembly

Participants in the World Council of Churches (WCC) 10th Assembly witnessed a vibrant artistic performance filled with music and drama, telling the story of the national and Christian mission history of Korea.



The dramatic opera presentation was performed in three acts, sharing the story of the journey with the God of life, the quest for justice and the hope for peace.

This performance on Wednesday 30 October was a special feature of the opening plenary of the WCC assembly held at the Bexco Auditorium Hall in Busan, Republic of Korea.

The presentation began with a stirring solo flute beckoning all to the "land of the morning calm".

This acknowledged the 5000 years of national history in Korea. Dancers and singers then filled the stage to tell of the sowing of the seeds of the gospel in Korea at the end of the 19th century.



The performance showed how the first Korean churches were planted by foreign missionaries through the work of medical and education missions. The Korean national story has also included periods of conflict and war. The performance through compelling visuals, dramatic music and stirring songs portrayed the pain and suffering of conflict, the period of colonization under imperial Japan, the 1945 national liberation celebrations, followed by the Korean War of 1950 to 1953.

The performance moved into the energetic representation of massive growth in the Korean church today, bearing witness to the love of Jesus Christ in prayer and service. The performance closed with a stirring vision in praise, song and dance looking forward to the reunification of the Korean peninsula, and expressing a commitment to peace in the region and the world.

Assembly participants rose to their feet in applause. The performance included lyrics and compositions by Lee Geon-Yong.



Birthday Greetings for the month of November is extended to:

Sis. Onita Samuel	01
Bro. Rowan Simmons	19
Bro. Ezra Parris	21
Sis. Myrtle Miller	21
Sis. Geraldine Roberts	23
Sis. Joyce Walters	24
Sis. Patricia Nicholas	15
Bro. Nevin Lewis	27



Anniversary Greetings for the month of November is extended to:

Bro. Alban and Sis. Cynthia St. Hill	24
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Condolences



Our prayers are requested for Pastor Onita Samuel on the passing of her Grandfather, Mr. Edwington Lewis in Antigua. He passed into the nearer presence of God on Tuesday October 29, 2013 at the age of 96 years.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been made.



Quote of the Day

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

Thomas A. Edison

Joke of the Day



Three old maids die and arrive in heaven at the same time. When they get there, St. Peter says, "We only have one rule here in heaven: don't step on the ducks!"

So they enter heaven, and sure enough, there are ducks all over the place. It is almost impossible not to step on a duck, and although they try their best to avoid them, the first woman accidentally steps on one.

Along comes St. Peter with the ugliest man she ever saw. St. Peter chains them together and says, "Your punishment for stepping on a duck is to spend eternity chained to this ugly man!"

The next day, the second woman accidentally steps on a duck and along comes St. Peter, who doesn't miss a thing. With him is another extremely ugly man. He chains them together with the same admonishment as for the first woman.

The third woman has observed all this and, not wanting to be chained for all eternity to an ugly man, is very, VERY careful where she steps.

She manages to go months without stepping on any ducks, then one day St. Peter comes up to her with the most handsome man she has ever laid eyes on... very tall, dark hair, and muscular.

St. Peter chains them together without saying a word and walks away.

The happy woman says, "I wonder what I did to deserve being chained to you for all of eternity?"

The guy says, "I don't know about you, but I stepped on a duck!"



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