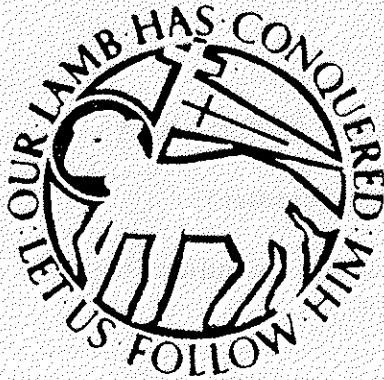


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FOREWORD

This issue was planned to be special. It marks the 550th anniversary of the founding of the Moravian Church, by fulfilling one of our celebratory tasks and honouring our pastoral legacy.

In the long and noteworthy history of the Moravian Church and in the context of the western Canadian Moravian Church in particular, the service of the pastors over the years has been exemplary and worthy of special recognition. Their role has

been both vital and pivotal. We who follow in their wake are blessed beyond measure or verbal description. It was the pastors who nurtured us, shaped our lives, and helped us to develop spiritually. Their work is lasting and of eternal value. Praise God!

In addressing our task of recognizing the importance of this legacy, we chose to invite a representative sampling of pastors to send us their stories. These pastors either served in Canada or they were born here and served elsewhere. Seven of those stories appear in this issue. We did not have space for more, so others will appear in the next issue.

Each account tells a unique story. Each pastor's story reveals special giftedness. A common thread is how God calls women and men and uses each one to accomplish his purposes. The work of the church goes forward in each age and generation. Blessings flow.

The willingness of the authors to take the time and expend the effort to write these accounts is deeply appreciated. Spare time is not a luxury enjoyed by pastors who are in service or by those who are retired. This involvement falls directly into the mandate of the Historical Society. We are recording these stories and making them available to a wide audience. By doing this we are not only recording important history, but we are allowing these words to speak to others with the faith and hope that others will be inspired to serve God in like manner.

Wm. G. Brese
Editor

HERBERT ARTHUR HARKE, BA, MDV
His Spiritual Journey

Written by Beatrice Harke
March 2007
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

It was New Year's Eve 1946. I was at the traditional "Watch Night" service in my church in Mohnton, Pennsylvania, in the choir, awaiting mid-night. Hymn singing, testimonials, preaching and praying by the congregation were all part of thanking God for the year soon to end and praying for God to lead us in the year ahead. A friend of mine sitting in the congregation had a college classmate with him for the holidays who was introduced to me after the service. The friend said he would like to meet "that young lady in the choir". We chatted. New Year's Day I was invited to the Kramer home after we all attended a basketball game. When it was time, the very polite young man kindly offered to walk me home. So it was that I met Herbert Harke from Canada. Bethlehem being some distance from Mohnton, a weekend visit to Mohnton did not happen again until Easter and then not again until the end of the college year. However, a genuine interest in each other developed, and there began a certain amount of curiosity on my part as to who was Herbert. One fact was clearly understood. He was at Moravian College in preparation for the Christian ministry. A Christian was number one on my list of requirements for a lifetime partner.

I am deeply honored to write an account of Herbert's spiritual journey as requested by the Canadian Moravian Historical Society since after we married in 1952 it is my journey as well. Herbert's life experiences previous to our meeting I learned through him and others, and I relate them here to the best of my ability. I accepted the challenge with joy and I know it will do me good to think back over our years of ministry together. May it be a blessing to those who read.

It was springtime, 1926. Martin and Olga Harke were expecting their third child. Their first, a little girl, was waiting too, for the new baby. The second, a boy, had died at a year-and-a-half so this new baby was eagerly anticipated. Mom and Dad were committed Christians and very active in the New Sarepta Moravian Church. Their concern for the new baby was that it be a healthy child and that if it was a boy and God willed they would dedicate him to the Christian ministry. It was a boy. They named him Herbert Arthur and of course presented him for baptism. Now there was a new minister at the church, Rev. William Kroening, who in his personal commitment to God prayed that, if God so willed, the first male child he was to baptize God would call to the Christian ministry. So it was. Herbert was predestined to become a minister.

School in 1931-32 was held in English. German was the language used at home. The adjustment was tough. But God had a plan and the transitions were made. Camrose

Lutheran College became his first experience away from home for grade 12--a wee step in view of the long leap to be made from one country to another in 1946 for college and seminary where tuition was free to members of the Moravian Church.

Learning all of this as a "girl from the city" as Herbert would call me, I really never got the picture clearly until I lived in Alberta permanently in 1953. What a cultural shock. The farm in New Sarepta had no running water, central heating or electricity. Farm produce, of course, was fresh and plentiful but hard work went into every bit of product.

When they set off for college, the families and friends of minister's son, Eric Schulze, farmer's sons, Lorenz Adam, Marvin Henkelmann and Herbert Harke gathered for the farewell. I'm told it was quite the "Moravian send off". They boarded the train headed East out of the North Side CN Edmonton station well stocked with their mothers' home cooking. When it was time to eat, suitcases were laid on the seat then topped with the white linen lunch cloth Herb had brought along. All the mothers had packed food for the journey. There was home canned chicken, homemade sausage, pickles, bread, butter, jam, fresh fruit, cookies and cake, spread on the clean, white cloth, a souvenir which I still have today. I can imagine there were plenty of interesting glances toward these young travelers.

There were quite a number of Alberta young men at College and Seminary at the same time. He wasn't completely alone. Herbert made a wonderful adjustment to his new life in the States. He was hard working, well organized and focused on the task at hand. Working each day in the kitchen for his room and board, he was loved and well-treated by the staff. He also mopped floors and was a meticulous housekeeper himself. During the seven years spent in Bethlehem, he traveled home during the summer only twice. The first was quite an experience hitchhiking. During the school year he was a YMCA leader. For three summers he was hired as a YMCA camp counsellor, practical preparation toward setting up the first junior camp program at Camp Van-Es.

By the final year of Seminary, big changes were in the offing. We married, May 31, 1952. As a couple we lived in an apartment off campus where he worked for our rent as night watchman at an alfalfa dehydrating plant. His main concern - spontaneous combustion. All went well under his watch but a week after we moved the place burned, including our apartment. The other major change would be the first call to a congregation. God's faithfulness to us left no doubt He would lead us. We felt we were ready.

The year in Bethlehem helped me to make the transition from the non-liturgical Evangelical Congregational Church to the liturgical Moravian worship. Herbert interned at Edgeboro Moravian where I sang

in the choir and attended Women's Fellowship. We absorbed the wonderful Christmas experiences to be had only in the Christmas City--music, the putz, candle services, love feasts. We also had Herbert's Uncle Albert Harke at Schoeneck Moravian nearby. It was a joy to meet and visit often the senior Albert Harke's in Pennsylvania. Uncle Albert assisted at our marriage ceremony in Mohnton. (It would be another year before I met Herbert's parents, and my own parents had just moved to Florida.) Uncle Albert and Aunt Pearl became our role models.

Herbert was a student, first and foremost. Extra activities were many. I was employed in clerical work full time. Typing a thesis on his portable was my evening job at home. We looked forward to weekends when there was time for visitors and visiting. Always, we considered the future. All this seemed to take shape as word was sent from the Canadian District for Herb to serve the Calgary Moravian congregation. Believing this to be an answer to our prayers, there was no hesitation accepting. Now it was my turn to leave my country and start anew.

Summertime, our journey to Alberta was in a 1939 Chrysler loaded with all our personal belongings. Herb's intention was to celebrate his birthday, June 26, 1953, in Alberta. Along the way we visited in Fargo, North Dakota. While there, two international students from Seminary asked us if they could ride with us to Alberta. They agreed to crate and ship our cedar

chest which had been traveling in our back seat. It became quite the quartet. German, English, American and Canadian got along, even at the border where we were told no entry for the then-to-be landed immigrant who had to declare her worldly goods. Those forms would have to be filed during business hours in the morning. It was midnight, and the hotel owner could only offer us one room with two beds, with a folding screen between. There was no food service at that hour; however, we convinced her to sell us some ice cream which we enjoyed along with birthday cup cakes bought earlier in the day. We celebrated in the USA!

Calgary was a wonderful initiation into the ministry. The people welcomed Herbert as their pastor. He had just been ordained by Bishop Helmich at Camp Van Es along with Eric Schulze and Marvin Henkelmann. The senior, German members were adjusting to all English services and the younger folks were beginning to take active roles on the board. Young children responded to Vacation Bible School and junior choir.

After five years, when membership had hit its highest, the call came from the new work in Jasper Place, including biweekly services at Hobbema. Herb's organizational skills had been noticed and it was thought he was the right man for this work at this time. It became evident that this community would likely not become self-sustaining due to its transient nature. Within eight months of our being there, the work was closed. (The neighborhood of

Rio Terrace then became the focus of a new church.)

At the time of closing there was a vacancy in Bruderheim and we settled in a beautiful country home. It was here much soul-searching began and again the big question, "What will God want me to do with my life?" The field of service lay open. Options were many. He was full of energy at 34 years of age, had moved away from my family but had already made many close friends and had Herbert's relatives. Moving away from Alberta did not seem wise either since we enjoyed the climate and the wonderful mountains.

The United Church of Canada welcomed us without any doubts. Quoting from his memories submitted to the 75th Anniversary of the Rockyford Congregation:

"I was repeatedly reassured from many leaders in Alberta Conference of the UCC that the strengths and faith of the ancient Moravian Church (1457) which I brought into the United Church would be very much appreciated. My first five years in the UCC here at Rockyford were indeed enjoyable and meaningful to me. With the foundations laid in my life by the Moravian Church, United Church ministry helped me experience and believe more fully the concept of "Church Catholic" (Universal). When a minister serves a three-point Pastoral charge, one becomes aware of all three congregations being in

total mission for Christ. Wisely, the UCC has called this local unit a "Pastoral charge", with one official board. A major emphasis of my Moravian background was that of evangelism, pastoral care and mission. In my coming to the UCC in 1961, I identified with the Division of Evangelism and Social Services. I served on this division in the Drumheller Presbytery and attended a number of conferences on evangelism in Parksville, BC."

Our move to Rockyford, Rosebud and Carbon United Churches meant three Sunday services on the 56-mile circuit with the evening service in Rockyford where we lived. Pastoral visiting covered 800 square miles. "In 1963 three youth and three adult confirmation classes were held weekly for eight weeks. On Palm Sunday, 65 people, youths and adults, were admitted into the membership of the three congregations on the Pastoral charge. This was truly a highlight event in my ministry."

After five years, he accepted the Call to Grace United Church, Wainwright, with responsibility for only one congregation. Always, always, we felt that we were living and working at the right place at the right time. Both children attended school here and the family looked forward to month-long trailer trips which provided quality family time. Angela was ready for grade 7 and Lowell grade 9 when yet

another move presented itself. After seven years in Wainwright, it was difficult to leave.

There were several appealing aspects to answering the call to Avonmore United Church in Edmonton. The minister would be responsible for his own housing, which we were considering. A suitable home was found nearby the church. There was a well-established, committed congregation, and a wonderful church building with beautiful appointments. Many, many marriages were the focus of his time. He also spent much time in Presbytery and administration and for the second time he was elected chairman of a Presbytery.

It was after seeing the overall work in the City of Edmonton that he felt he could provide the needed leadership to a struggling congregation meeting in M.E. LaZerte High School. He had served on the New Church Development Committee, UCC, and became aware of new communities and the need to provide worship centers. He had a genuine interest in evangelism and what better place to work at it. The opportunity came after serving 5 years at Avonmore. This was a move of contrasts: from a beautiful building with all the furnishings to a school with desks to sit at; no place for brides to be married; no office, secretary or interview room. Volunteers typed at home. A popular song at the time held this philosophy:

"The Church is not a building
 The Church is not a steeple
 The Church is not a resting place
 The Church is a people.
 I am the Church
 You are the Church
 We are the church together
 All of God's people
 all around the world
 Yes, we're the Church together."

Before long, a housing unit at Belvedere Center became the office and meeting room. Quoting from Herbert's "HIGHLIGHTS OF MINISTRY OF RETIREES" (UCC):

"...The church office in a community centre in low cost housing gave me and the congregation an opportunity to participate with presence and programs with a group of people we learned to love and respect. An experience I would have cherished at the beginning of my ministry."

Herbert was flexible, imaginative, energetic and most of all willing to let God lead him into this field of service. The need for a church home was evident. The people were there, ready and waiting, and willing to work. After 10 years under Herbert's prayerful pastoral care and preparation, their own church building became a reality. There was great satisfaction seeing the congregation grow and helping to organize programs in a new way involving dedicated, committed

followers of Jesus Christ. To God be the Glory.

Herbert's retirement followed the 13 wonderful years at McClure United. It was time to relax. After nearly a year of cross-country trailer travel, a delightful situation was waiting at Heimtal Moravian. There could not have been a more suitable posting for a man who had given everything he had to ministry. The requirements were minimal and he loved serving as pastor to this country congregation.

Throughout his ministry, he always loved working with the people of each congregation and community. There was never a doubt as to his sincerity or the basis of his faith. His administrative and enabling leadership was valued and is evidenced in the work which continues to this day.

He now rests with his Maker. His Memorial Service, still a very vivid memory, was truly a tribute to a wonderful servant of God. The following are quotes on cards from friends and members of his congregation:

(1) ... "Reverend Harke served both the Moravian and the United Church with compassion, deep faith and enthusiasm. He had a wonderful way with people engaging them in both faith and action. He had a long distinguished career and will

certainly be missed by all who knew him...."

(2) "Herb was a gentle and wonderful man of deep faith. Upon meeting him for the first time as a teenager, I knew he loved his Lord and Saviour. My mother, upon hearing of Herb's death stated, 'When he preached I knew he meant what he said. I will forever cherish the memories of this man.' I recall when we were paraded towards where McClure United was to be built, Herb was encouraging the cross bearer to go ahead of the banner. I knew Herb was a man of action as well as a man of faith!...."

(3) "Rev. Harke was a great influence in my life and I can honestly say helped me form my relationship with God.

"Herb Harke became our minister in the late 70's. I was part of the Worship Committee at the time. First impression was a good one. He seemed like someone that would put 100% effort into his ministry and so it was. He was patient and kind and always available when needed, always took his time to answer questions and always had an answer. In due time, I became chairperson of Worship at McClure and so my relationship with Herb became even closer. We became real good friends. I did

learn a lot from him about the church and about Christianity and what it takes to make everybody to volunteer and be good stewards. His belief was deeply rooted in Jesus Christ. He was generous with his time, never interfered unless it was needed, but always ready to help if asked. But at the same time he never took no for an answer. He was a devout Christian and deeply devoted to his ministry. Herb was what I call a real shepherd to his sheep."

Yours in Christ,
Adolf Hannweber

I have tried to create a basic tapestry depicting the spiritual life of my husband and yet there are many bright strands of various colors missing.

He appreciated music which was felt through appropriate choices of hymns for services. He was raised with the chorales. Moravian trombone choirs, Bach choirs and organ, on LPs and later CDs were his choices most often. Gardening was done with a passion. From our first home in Calgary to our last in Edmonton, gardening was a wonderful way for him to be out in nature or to observe in the confines of our basement under grow lights, the miracle of rebirth. He often said, "My gardening tools are my golf clubs". When we moved to Edmonton, a full growing garden was left behind but a new farm garden was also fully planted at Hay

Lakes. We were not without a garden that year. That 39-mile trip was made for the first nine years we lived in Edmonton and provided vegetables for the year.

The Rocky Mountains inspired and rejuvenated. Before the wonders of computers, his own financial spread sheets presented the picture he needed to track our personal finances as well as the needed information for congregational progress/decline. Lists of things to do were ongoing. Herb had a very determined, serious attitude toward life and his faith in God but also enjoyed a good laugh. One incident turned quite funny when he went to the Canadian Customs Office to pick up a supply of English Passion Manuals. There was some concern as to the legality of this literature. They needed to see for themselves!

Travel opened new vistas overseas where as a group we experienced "Roots of Western Christianity" in Italy. After retirement, as a couple we led tour groups to the British Isles and to Europe, following "The Footsteps of Luther". A highlight of that trip was visiting Herrnhut and Zinzendorf's grave.

As our children came to us through adoption, again God was faithful and we gave thanks. Lowell came to us in Bruderheim and was baptized by the Reverend Wm. Kroening, the same minister who had baptized Herbert. Angela arrived two years later.

When the time came to search for and find his birth mother, Lowell had our complete support and encouragement. His other siblings were welcome into our home along with their mother, grandfather and grandmother (who told me she always prayed for but thought she'd have to wait until she got to heaven before she knew what had happened to her grandson). Herbert presided at the funeral service for the very special mother.

Herbert always reached out to folks in every community who were not necessarily connected with the local church he was serving and worked closely with ministers and priests ecumenically. Angela's life would be entirely different if her Dad had not befriended a young, immigrant minister and his family in Wainwright, for as families we became friends and it was their eldest son who became her husband many years later. Both dads conducted the ceremony at the first wedding held in the new McClure United Church. Her birth family roots have recently been uncovered, too. It is regrettable that her Dad never got to fully appreciate the wonderful way God worked for us in this adoption, even before we knew we had needs. Angela and Phil Cutting have two delightful children, Alyssa and David, as well as an extended biological family.

Lastly, an accounting of Herbert's spiritual journey would not be complete without paying respect to his family who nurtured him in the faith even before he was born. I will share with you a portion

of a letter Herbert received from Clement Hoyler, retired Bishop of the Moravian Church, written from Northfield, Minnesota, May 15, 1953. In talking about Grandfather Ferdinand Harke he said:

..There is no doubt in my mind that his blessing still rests on his children and children's children. You as a grandson must not forget this as you enter upon the work at Calgary..."

To Martin and Olga Harke's memory I pay tribute for the wonderful Christian heritage passed on to their children. The tapestry's underlying basic threads provide the strength to withstand many of life's pressures. Herbert's, as well as my own, Christian heritage provided that support.

Herbert and I have said many times, "Life has been good. We would do it all over again, God being our helper."

KELLY HUCKLE'S STORY

I have a t-shirt that almost sums up the basics of my life...
."Roots Canada since '73". That's where my life started and it's
grown from there!

I was born in Woodstock Ontario in July of 1973 to James Tennant and Rhoda Ann Huckle. I was baptized in September of 1973 with my sister at a New Apostolic Church but went to church very rarely in my early years. In the early 80's my mom, being a courageous single mother in pursuit of a better life for her 2 children, followed the oil boom and moved across the county to Alberta. We moved to a town which I couldn't pronounce and lived with my aunt, uncle, and their 5 children. Little did I know that town with a strange and difficult name would have such an impact on my life. Bruderheim became the place where I would learn to love, grow, and begin to become and claim who God created me to be.

One day my aunt asked all 7 of us children who wanted to go to Sunday School. I had no idea that Sunday School would be different than "school". Because I loved school I joyously exclaimed "I do"! So the next Sunday she put a sign in the front window that said "BUS". A school bus (how cool was that I thought), stopped and picked me up. Instead of taking me to school it took me to the church at the 4 way stop – Bruderheim Moravian Church.

That Sunday morning I walked into the church to the sound of music and general excitement all around. I don't remember much of that day except singing, crafts, and then going into the sanctuary for church where the Rev. Kurt Vitt was wearing a 'white dress'. I do remember thinking that was a bit odd (now,

some 20 years later, I often wear a similar white dress as I administer the elements of communion or officiate at a baptism or wedding).

I quickly grew to love that church and the many people who made it what it was. I remember countless hours that I spent in Sunday School with Ruth and Vern Bartz not only as teachers but as mentors in my life and my faith. Then as I grew into my teen years there were the Friday evenings in youth group with faithful leaders: Karen & Ted Bohaychuck and Allan & Caroline Bartz – they led a youth group built on the foundation that had been laid in Sunday School as well as provided an excellent vehicle for the development of leadership skills. Oh yes, and the many lunch hours, summer vacations, and school holidays that Tricia Brant (now Peterson) and I spent in the church office helping Janice Vitt in anyway we could (those lessons and experiences have greatly paid off as I've now served two churches without secretaries). Then the trips to and from church with Karen and Blake Martin once my family moved to Fort Saskatchewan – trips full of conversations about school, church, and life. Lastly the relationship that was formed with Linda Schneider, the mother of my best friend Tricia, further let me explore who I was. These are only a few of the faithful members of Bruderheim Moravian that helped shape my life.

Not only was I blessed with committed lay people that served Christ through the church but Bruderheim's church boards called many pastors that also had tremendous impact on my life, my faith and my exploration of my call from God into the ordained ministry.

I was confirmed on Pentecost Sunday, May 18, 1986 with the Rev. Kevin Frack officiating. My confirmation text: "Whoever, serves me must follow me; and where I am, my

servant will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.” John 12:26. That day as I heard my text for the first time, I had no idea where serving God would take me. Before Kevin left Bruderheim, he asked me a question that allowed me to hear for the first time God’s call for my life. I remember sitting in his office and him asking if I had ever considered giving my life to church service and in particular ordained ministry. At that time in my life, the only thing I wanted to do when I grew up was become a teacher. But I tucked that question into the back of my mind and I would contemplate it often.

I spent a lot of time in Bruderheim Moravian’s parsonage after Revs. Rick and Wendy Beck accepted the call to serve as our pastors. I babysat Tyler and Kelsey and experienced first hand the busy schedule and multiple tasks that pastors take on. With their love and care I further explored my call into ministry and even served as Youth Representative on the Elders and Joint Board. I also traveled with them to Northern Province Synod to baby-sit and visited Moravian Theological Seminary. By the end of their pastorate I had accepted my call and headed off to the University of Lethbridge (planning to get an education degree with a major music). At that time I had no idea that their ministry would not only impact my personal life but also serve as a model for husband and wife serving in team ministry.

While I was in University, 7 hours from home, Rev. Steve Gohdes accepted the call to serve as Bruderheim’s pastor. Being that far from home and involved in a church in Lethbridge, I didn’t anticipate getting to know Steve or him having an impact on my life. But I was wrong! In college I had the opportunity to explore my call to ministry in new ways with my involvement in Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, in relationship with some very good friends (Heather and Corianne), and in almost weekly conversations with the Rev. Blair Couch. I began to realize that I couldn’t put God off any

more and after reading an article in the *Moravian* about someone who had done an internship at a church prior to going to seminary, I began to explore that option. I thought maybe if I did an internship God would realize that I really didn't have what it took to be a minister and then I could go about pursuing my life long dream – of being a music teacher.

When Steve heard that I was considering doing an internship he worked with Bruderheim's board, the Canadian District and offered me the opportunity to come home for the summer of 1994 and work with him. With his guidance, leadership and patient spirit, I preached my first sermon, assisted in worship, attended board meetings, made pastoral calls to hospitals and homes, attended my first private communion for a shut-in, and for the first time truly accepted my call into ordained ministry. I will never forget the endless encouragement, insight, wisdom and impact he had on my life!

Also that summer I had the opportunity to attend Convo in Bethlehem, PA where I further got to explore my call to ministry. To remind us how small the Moravian Church is at that Convo my roommate, a girl from North Carolina – Tracy Pryor -- would become one of my closest friends when we meet up again in seminary!

In addition to having special people in our lives, I believe that we all have sacred places that leave great impressions on our hearts. I would be leaving out a huge part of my story if I didn't mention one of those places – Camp VAN-ES! Many Moravian ministers can trace their calls back to their camping experience as young people and I must be added to that! I'm not even sure I have the words to express or explain how deeply this sacred place affected my life. But anyone who has ever worshiped in the chapel, been at a vespers down by the lake, been a camper or a counselor at Van-Es, witnessed the Northern Lights

dancing over the lake, knows what I'm getting at. What a precious place and a great gift to all Moravians in the Canadian District.

It was through the countless camps and retreats that I attended that I encountered many other clergy and lay people serving Christ in the Canadian District. People that in their own way would serve as role models and play an important part in my life – Rev. Dave Bennett, Rev. Carol Vogler, Rev. Murray Laverty, and Warren Gericke to name a few!

Following my summer internship at Bruderheim, I returned to the University of Lethbridge and made my way to the academic advisors office and changed my course of study from a Bachelor of Education with a major in music to a Bachelor of Arts with a major in music – making my degree program 4 years instead of 5. I graduated from the University of Lethbridge in the Spring of 1995. I returned home to work for the summer and to prepare to move to Bethlehem, PA to begin seminary at Moravian Theological Seminary. That summer in addition to working at Fabricland and Safeway, the board at Edmonton Moravian offered me an exciting opportunity. Following the Rev. Blair Couch leaving they invited me to come and fill the pulpit during the summer. This opportunity once again confirmed my call into the ministry – I loved what I was doing and I grew to love the people to whom I ministered. I was encouraged by the members of Edmonton Moravian and am very grateful for the opportunities for growth that they provided. I will never forget going into the office each week and having a new book from Les and Emily Westwood (books that remain a part of my library today), the countless words or wisdom and love from many members especially the Breeses, the Riskes, Mrs. Laverty, the Westwoods, and the list could go on.

That summer came to an end and it was time to pack up and head to seminary. We loaded my parent's van and made the long journey to Bethlehem. Many emotions filled me as I made that trip – sure I was excited about this new adventure and I knew that I was doing what the Lord had called me to do but in all honesty I was a little apprehensive and a bit scared. As we were nearing the US and Canada border in Saskatchewan, on one of the many railroad tracks, I saw the blue train with yellow writing reading “Take An Alberta Break....Visit Bruderheim!” I was so excited and tears swelled up in my eyes. I felt as if it was God's way of giving me one more embrace of encouragement and affirmation. It gave me the opportunity to thank God, once again, for the many people that God had placed in my life to love, support, teach, and guide me!

Arriving in Bethlehem, in mid August, was a shock to my system. I had never experienced such heat and humidity in my life and to live in a third floor seminary apartment with little air conditioning. I already missed some of the comforts of Canada – the long summer nights, the cool weather, *Smarties*, and the familiar sound of another Canadian speaking. But there was little time to worry about the heat or any of the other things with classes starting in a few short days.

As I sit here today, twelve years later, I'm still not sure how to describe my seminary experience. It was three years of stretching and growing. Three years of challenging classes but remarkable learning experiences. I spent hundreds of hours in classes and just as many studying and writing papers. There were so many late nights when I wondered what had I gotten myself into and trying to convince God I wasn't really cut out to do this. But time and time again, God said “Yes, you are!”.

I was blessed with two wonderful student internships while in Seminary. My first year I served at West Side Moravian with

the Rev. Denny Rohn as my supervisor. The summer following my first year, I began to serve at East Hills Moravian Church, with the Rev. Gary Marsh as my supervisor, and I remained there until my graduation in 1998.

There is no way I could conclude my seminary years without mentioning some of the people that God blessed my life with. Living on campus I got to know most of the other full time students at MTS and many of them have become valued colleagues and irreplaceable friends. Being a small seminary I was also blessed with the opportunity to get to know professors and there have been numerous times in my ministry where I've stopped myself and realized I learned something from one of them. I believe that everyone needs a mentor, someone who will be honest with them, believe in them, pray for them and walk with them – I met one of these people when I did some counseling with Louise Young, something I hope I'll never be embarrassed to admit. During my seminary years I also developed a relationship with the Rev. Dr. Gordon Sommers and his wife Susan – a relationship that is treasured to this day (by me and my family)!

It was on my first day of classes that I meet Joe Moore – a nice guy from North Carolina. I had no idea that before I graduated from seminary that the nice guy from North Carolina would be my husband. Now Joe and I have different versions of that meeting and what happened after that – I suspect that the truth is somewhere in the middle of the two stories. What I do know for certain is that God not only gave me a wonderful friend and husband but also my partner in team ministry. Joe and I were married at Ardmore Moravian Church on August 16, 1997. Again, I received another reminder of just how small the Moravian church really is, as the pastor of Ardmore who performed our wedding was none other than the Rev. Kevin Frack! Following our vows, the congregation joined Joe and I

in singing a Moravian hymn that has been foundational in our life together:

*"We covenant with hand and heart to follow Christ our Lord;
with world, and sin, and self to part, and to obey his word;
to love each other heartily, in truth and with sincerity,
and under cross reproach, and shame, to glorify his name."*

(Moravian Book Worship page 183)

During our last year of seminary East Hills Moravian was willing to take on both Joe and I as students, this allowing us to begin to learn what it would be like to be in team ministry with one another and we will be forever grateful for the role they played in forming our model for team ministry.

Not long before Joe and I graduated from seminary we received and accepted our first call to Palmyra Moravian Church in Cinnaminson, New Jersey. Our call was announced the day after graduation! The Rt. Rev. Percival Henkelman officiated at my ordination held at Bruderheim Moravian Church during morning worship on Sunday, June 28, 1998.

Joe and I were installed in early July as co-pastors of Palmyra Moravian Church and we served there until May 2002. It was here that we began our list of all the things they don't teach you in seminary: how to locate plots in the cemetery and mark out a grave site, how to clean water out of church basements, that sometimes the most important ministry can be done drinking coffee before Sunday School, and how to do pastoral care while learning to crochet. It was here that we also officiated at our first baptism and marriage, consecrated the elements of communion and wrote our first memoir in preparation for our first funeral. We were blessed with a congregation that welcomed us and allowed us to learn, grow, and even stumble. While Joe and I served here I also was given the opportunity to work as on-call chaplain for Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

and I also served as volunteer chaplain for the Palmyra Fire Department. I loved being able to care for and share Christ's love with people in their moment of need.

In March of 2002 we received the call to become pastors of Mayodan Moravian Church, in Mayodan, North Carolina. Mixed emotions filled our hearts as we prayerfully considered this call. We were experiencing first hand both the joy and sadness of following the call of the Lord. Just as God had called us to Palmyra, God was now calling us to Mayodan and we concluded our ministry in Palmyra and moved to Mayodan in May of 2002. Mayodan brought us more opportunities for growth as pastors and we served there until February 2005.

Our next call was to First Moravian Church of Georgia, in Stone Mountain. Joe and I were excited about the ministry possibilities that First Moravian presented -- a relatively new congregation (chartered in 1975) that is culturally diverse and located in Metro Atlanta. Serving here for two years now, we've experienced great joy in our ministry and our personal lives. In December of 2005, after several years of wanting to be parents, we were blessed with a son. During the previous summer we had begun to look into adoption and on December 16 one of the ministries that we had consulted called us and told us they had a baby and asked if we would meet with the birth mother the next day. They informed us that there were two potential problems. The first being the mother was homeless and had not received any pre-natal care and the second the mother had done drugs. Once we met the mother both Joe and I felt it was right. The birth mother had an ultrasound on December 20 which indicated the baby was healthy and she had about six weeks left in her pregnancy. Of course we were relieved the baby was fine but a little concerned about keeping the mother safe and clean for that long. But at 2:30 AM on December 21 the phone rang and the voice on the other end said

“Congratulations Mom, you have a healthy baby boy!” Joe and I left immediately for the hospital and were the first to hold our son. What a Christmas that was and Zachary remains our Christmas miracle, a child that beat the medical odds of a “crack” baby, was released from the hospital early and although he tested positive to drugs in his system never had one withdraw. We are so blessed and I never dreamed that being a mom would be so wonderful and amazing.

Much has happened in the twelve years since I spotted the “Take an Alberta Break...Visit Bruderheim” train car and crossed the Canadian and United States border to begin seminary. I would never have imagined that I would be where I am today – a wife, a mother, a pastor, and a child of God. Today I live in Lilburn, Georgia with Joe, Zachary and our dog Leonard Dober. I love being a pastor and feel so blessed to have been invited into so many people’s lives having dreams and fears shared with me, and been asked to sit with them in life and in death. These times are indeed sacred ground. During these twelve years God has stretched me, called me, encouraged, and guided me. There’s no doubt that I’ve grown and changed but a few things remain – “Roots Canada Since ‘73” and for that I am eternally grateful!

Reflections on the Life and Ministry of WILLIAM F. KROENING

by Rev. Donald Kroening

My father was ordained to the ministry in 1926 and shortly thereafter was called to serve the Moravian Church in New Sarepta, Alberta. He married Emma Stelter in 1929, and I was born a year later. When the time arrived for my birth, Dad and Mom set out for the Misericordia hospital in Edmonton. It was already late in the day, so that by the time they reached the outskirts of the city all the businesses had closed. At this point they ran out of gas! Dad tried to find help at a service station, but no one was there. Providentially, a policeman came by, and learning about the predicament took us to the hospital in his cruiser. I was safely born early the next morning!

My earliest memories go back to Calgary, Alberta, where we moved after Dad completed his ministry in New Sarepta. Calgary was home base from which Dad traveled to country churches on a rotation basis. Every weekend Dad would go to one of the three or four churches he served. He would leave on Saturday, minister on Sunday, and return on Monday. On occasion Mother and I would go with him. During this time he served Didsbury, Carstairs, Champion, and for a brief period Torrington.

The early thirties were difficult years. These were the years of the great depression. We were all poor. This was especially true of the parishioners that Dad served. The congregations were located in farming communities, meeting in country schoolhouses, and made up of farming families. With little cash to give, they did not have much to pay the preacher. They did

help by often sending home meat, cream, and eggs. In later years I learned that on one occasion Dad had to pawn off some valuables in order to be able to buy milk for me!

Travel during the winter months was especially hazardous. Dad drove a 1932 Chev coupe and would take along tire chains and a shovel since country roads were often covered with big drifts. Many times he had to dig himself out! Since cars did not have heaters, Dad wore a heavy buffalo coat, covered himself with blankets, and filled a special earthenware container with hot water to help keep the feet from freezing.

The families of the churches took turns in hosting the pastor. I remember how happy the children were when the pastor came to their house. It meant some special meals, usually including a roasted chicken. A joke common among the people involved the rooster that would take up his perch on top of the hay stack when the preacher would come. Here he would wait with watchful eye, hoping it was not his turn to be the offering and calling out, "Is the preacher gone? Is the preacher gone?"

Staying over the weekend meant sleeping at the host home. Conditions were quite primitive, and without indoor plumbing, using the outhouse in cold weather was a chilly experience! Having made the rounds to the various homes, Dad was aware of those situations into which he would not want to take the family. For example, some homes had problems with bedbugs and so we would avoid these.

Besides the regular weekends, Dad would conduct Vacation Bible Schools in the summer months. I recall accompanying Dad and Mom to Champion for their vacation school. World War II had just begun. Since the congregation was primarily made up of families of German origin, there was concern in the community that the vacation school might be used to teach German propaganda. Also the fact that services were held in

the German language aroused suspicion. One afternoon after school hours the local RCMP officer came to the home where we were staying. He asked to speak to Dad, and spent some time seeking to determine what Dad was teaching the children. He left, apparently satisfied that the material being taught was not political but solely concerned with the Bible and the gospel of Jesus Christ. I do recall, however, that one of the families was convinced that Hitler was right!

Because Dad was fluent in both English and German, he was assigned to churches where ministry in both languages was required. The older generation, some of which had very limited skill with the English language, shared a concern that German language be preserved. This created some tension as the younger generation desired change. Dad was very patient and tried to introduce English with care and consideration. He was aware, however, that numbers of young people were gradually drifting away from the church because the transition was slow. World War II did help to accelerate the change. This was a difficult time for pastors who found themselves in the middle of what sometimes was a period of heated conflict.

Dad was a skilled carpenter. This was a special blessing as he used this ability to create toys for special days such as Christmas. These easily competed with manufactured ones (which we didn't have money to purchase!). Dad was also a musician, playing the violin. Dad and Mom (who played the piano) enjoyed classical music and purchased a few 78 rpm records. I recall sitting by the gramophone listening to the Poet and Peasant Overture, composed by Franz von Suppe, and my parents helping me to identify the various instruments by their sounds. At an early age I loved to imitate my Dad playing the violin, using a ruler and pencil. As a result Dad built a small violin from apple box wood which was an amazing replica of his own instrument. It had real strings and could be played!

When I turned five, Dad bought me a regular quarter sized violin, and I began violin lessons.

The Lord blessed Dad's ministry to the country congregations and the exciting day arrived when the group in Didsbury decided to construct a church building. Property was acquired twelve miles west of Didsbury, central to where the parishioner's farms were located, and a building was completed with volunteer labor. It was at this location that one of the first Moravian district youth camps was held. A large tent was erected and granaries brought in on skids to be used as cabins for the campers. Dad loved to work with young people and was among the first leaders that envisioned the development of a permanent camping facility.

Since Dad had grown up on a farm (in Bruderheim), he was especially qualified to relate to parishioners who were farmers. During the harvest season, Dad was available to help. Since he was in good physical condition, he was hired to "stook" (erect the sheaves into tent-like pyramids). This not only provided needed help for the farmer but was also a source of much needed income for us.

Dad enjoyed nature, and since we lived near the mountains we would go camping during vacation time in the summer. I have many wonderful memories – emerging from the tent in the morning to smell the scent of the pine trees mingled with that of bacon frying in the pan on the Coleman stove! Dad would stand under the trees taking in deep breaths, and I would stand beside him doing the same! He also enjoyed hiking. We enjoyed the marvels of Johnson Canyon and climbed Sulfur Mountain (before the days of lifts!). Standing on the top of Sulfur Mountain, Dad looked across the Spray River Valley to Rundle Mountain and said, "Some day we will have to climb

that!" Many years later we did! It was in the Upper Hot Springs swimming pool that Dad taught me to swim!

When Rev. C. A. Gutensohn retired as pastor of the the Calgary Moravian Church, Dad was asked to fill that pulpit. Since the house we rented was right across the street from the Calgary church, the move was relatively easy. We now occupied a huge brick parsonage beside a large red brick church. Settling into ministry in a city church was a welcome change from traveling to churches in the country every weekend. The congregation lived close to the church, and so Dad sold his car since he no longer needed to travel out of the city. Not having the expense to maintain a vehicle also helped to balance the accounts. The church was located on the brow of a large hill overlooking the Bow River valley and downtown Calgary. Because of its visibility, many transients came to the parsonage for help. Mother prepared many sack lunches, and Dad had occasion to hear many stories of hardship and requests for assistance.

Dad enjoyed ministering to the congregation in Calgary as the Lord continued to bless. His work was appreciated by the members, and so when he was asked to take charge of a congregation "up north," it was with great reluctance that he agreed. The district board felt that Dad had the qualifications and experience to help a congregation that had problems. Two previous pastor's ministries had been terminated under difficult circumstances. Both had suffered under insufficient financial support. One had passed away from sickness that appeared to be related to serious neglect. Little did Dad expect that the challenges of this assignment would eventually result in his becoming ill and unable to continue to minister.

During this time Dad was involved in the building of camp Van-Es. His carpentry skills were employed as the various buildings were erected. He was actively involved in the

camping program, assuming various leadership roles. The camping program was not without its critics. Some said, "Why do we have to take the kids out into the bush to give them spiritual instruction? Isn't the church good enough?" However, Dad, together with other pastors and leaders shared a vision which over the years proved to be a great blessing to many. Young people committed their lives to Christ and a large number answered the call to serve as ministers and missionaries.

Since I had not entered my teens when we first arrived "up north," I was not able to register as a camper at Van-Es. However, Dad took me to the camp for an evening service. It was in this service that I was challenged to dedicate my life to Christ, and later after returning home I knelt beside my bed and said "yes" to the Lord. Immediately I had the assurance that God was calling me into the ministry. The next morning when I shared this with the folks, they informed me that before I was born they had prayed that if the Lord gave them a firstborn son they would dedicate him to the ministry!

Dad ministered faithfully for a number of years in the Bruderfeld church, however the problems that the district hoped would be resolved persisted. In a board meeting, when Dad inquired about the possibility of an increase in salary it was suggested that a pastor's work was to feed the sheep and not fleece them! This hurt Dad so deeply that he had to leave the meeting, and he suffered what was then called a "nervous breakdown." Upon the advice of his doctor, he resigned and took a leave of absence from the ministry for a number of months. I was a high school student at Prairie Bible Institute at that time, so Dad and Mom joined me at the school and took Bible College classes. Dad gradually recovered but never entirely recaptured the kind of enthusiasm that he had formerly.

Dad returned to Calgary where he had served before. While he was gone, the Moravian and Lutheran churches which were located within blocks of each other traded facilities. The Lutheran congregation required a larger facility, and the Moravian congregation fitted nicely into the smaller building. Dad enjoyed working with the musicians of the church using a variety of instruments including guitars. When the church celebrated its 50th anniversary, Dad organized a special choir including singers from the country Moravian churches.

The Moravian congregation at Didsbury had never had a resident pastor. The District felt that if the work were to survive it needed one. The families there were interested in having Dad move out to Didsbury and serve them. Once again Dad left a city church to minister in a rural area. A farm house was moved onto the church acreage and the task of moving began. Since Dad had been previously invited to Germany to minister to churches there, he traveled there prior to taking over the work in Didsbury. Having just graduated from Prairie, I was asked to serve until he returned.

Dad went into retirement after serving in Didsbury, living with Mother in an apartment in Edmonton. Since he was skilled in mechanical work (he had overhauled the motor in his 1929 Graham Page car!) and was also good at keeping books, he was hired by Art Henkelman to work in his garage. While working there he was approached by the Heimtal Moravian congregation to preach for them while they were looking for a regular pastor. After some time the congregation said, "Why continue looking for someone else? We appreciate Pastor Kroening. We would like him to become our pastor!" A call was extended to Dad and he accepted. Mom and Dad moved out to the parsonage at Heimtal to begin what proved to be his happiest years of ministry. The congregation was kind and appreciative. He and Mother developed a close relationship with the families there.

Dad enjoyed working with them and the love for ministry was reborn in his heart. It was thus a great shock and a cause for deep sadness that his time of ministry at Heimtal was cut short.

During winter months, Dad would join a group of ministers in Edmonton to curl on Monday mornings. As he was driving into the city he noted a strange feeling in his left arm. He had recently been having discomfort in his stomach and had gone to his doctor. Everything, seemed to be alright. He was planning, however, to check into the Baker Clinic for a thorough examination. After arriving at the curling rink he did not feel well so laid down on a bench. The ministers saw that something was not right, so immediately took him across the street to the Royal Alexandra hospital. It was quickly determined that he was having a heart attack. He recovered from the attack, and the doctor felt that with proper care he should recuperate. However, after two weeks, on Palm Sunday, he suffered another attack and entered into the presence of his Lord.

The funeral service was held in the Edmonton Moravian church with nephew Rev. Percival Henkelman officiating. The service concluded with the words of the hymn:

Servant of God, well done!
 Rest from thy loved employ;
 The battle fought, the victory won,
 Enter Thy Master's joy.

Rest from thy labor, rest,
 Soul of the just set free;
 Blest be thy memory,
 and blest Thy bright example be.

Dad was an example of a minister with a deep sense of his high calling, a love for the Savior, a steadfast commitment to the duties of his ministry, and a loving devotion to the people he served. He found joy in proclaiming the good news of the gospel, and had a special place in his heart for the young people in his confirmation classes. He recognized the primary importance of having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and so through counseling people individually, planning special evangelistic services, or preaching on Sundays, he sought to bring people to Christ.

January 13, 1970

Jacob Redberger (Jacobus Roethlisberger)
Compiled by Wm. Brese

Reverend Jacob Redberger was a pastor whose life of service to the Moravian Church in western Canada lived on long after him in the memories of his parishioners. An outstanding feature of this pastor's service was how many of the people spoke lovingly about "Redberger" and how his ministry had blessed their lives. This was particularly true of those whom he confirmed or whom he had taught in Sunday School.

Jacob Redberger was born in Switzerland, where he studied for the ministry. Upon his graduation he encountered few prospects for ministerial service. His attention was drawn to possibilities in Canada by his brother-in-law to be, Paul Hediger, who was a pastor with the United Church in Medicine Hat, Alberta. After visiting Paul, Jacob accepted an invitation to serve the United Church at Beiseker, with additional responsibilities at Trochu and Didsbury. Services at these places still used the German language, which Redberger was proficient in, with his distinctly Swiss accent.

Jacob arrived in Canada, in 1930, and was processed by the Immigration Officer at the port of entry. The Officer had difficulty with Jacob's family name which was, "Jacobus Roethlisberger". The officer said that he thought this young pastor would make out much better in Canada with a simpler name, so he changed it on his Canadian entry papers to read, "Jacob Redberger".

When Jacob Redberger left Switzerland, he not only left his homeland, but also his fiancé, Rose Hediger. She was in nurse's training at the time. Rose joined Jacob after he became

established at Beiseker. They were married in Calgary, Alberta on January 3, 1934, in her sister Elsie's home.

It surely must have been the hand of God which brought Jacob Redberger to Bruderheim. This happened in 1937. The Bruderheim Moravian Church Joint Board met on May 6th. In attendance were: Aug. Schultz, Gus Schwanke, A. Schneider, A. Frauenfeld, W. Arndt, and F. Stelter. The following is a quote from the Minutes of that meeting: "Brother Stelter informed the board that Bro. Gutensohn (District President) so far was not able to secure a minister, which the board did not receive kindly. The next problem was our sick minister, Bro. Schattschneider, and his salary. It was discussed from every angle. A motion of Bro. Schwanke and A. Frauenfeld that we pay Rev. Bro. Schattschneider in full during his illness from February to May 5, 1937, and after this date discontinue same. The motion was unanimously carried. It was then agreed by the board that Bro. F. Stelter would inform Bro. Schattschneider of this decision. Bro. Stelter, W. Arndt, and A. Frauenfeld visited Bro. Schattschneider to advise him of the board's decision. Bro. Schattschneider's prayer was that the congregation would soon have a new minister. He was very thankful for the kindness from the congregation during his sickness.

A number of the joint board meetings took place at which no minutes were kept. On July 5, 1937 at 8:00 p.m. a meeting of the joint board was held. The following brethren were present: Ad. Schultz, Aug. Schultz, L. Nering, G. Schwanke, As. Frauenfeld, Wm. Arndt, A. Schneider, and Bro. F. Stelter who informed the board that the District Executive Board had a meeting in New Sarepta on Saturday, July 3rd and reported that a minister for Bruderheim could not be secured from the U.S.A. at this time. The board suggested that Bro. Redberger, who is a minister for the United Church at Beiseker, could be considered a possible prospect. After a considerable and serious discussion

it was decided to ask Bro. Redberger for one year's trial. A motion by Bro. Arndt and Bro. L. Nering that we ask District Executive Board for Bro. Redberger for our Congregation for one year's trial salary not less than \$1,000 per Annum was carried unanimously. These arrangements were apparently acceptable to the Redbergers because Rose and Jacob arrived in Bruderheim with their one year old son, Peter, who had been born in a Calgary hospital while they were in Beiseiker. The Redbergers would serve at Bruderheim from 1937 – 1945. During this time the children Andrew, Rosemarie and Jacqueline were added to the family.

At first the Bruderheim congregation had difficulty in understanding Redberger's German. He spoke German with such a decidedly strange Swiss type of pronunciation. But in due course they got used to him and found this to be another charming aspect of this man's ministry. Some people still remember that in Sunday School class Rev. Redberger would not only treat them to stories about Switzerland, but he would yodel for them. It was truly a memorable experience to be in his classes.

Life in the late 30's in Bruderheim was rural and rustic, with coal and wood for heat, no electricity and no telephones. When the pastor made visits, he would take Rose and Peter along in the car and just drop in on his parishioners. If someone was missing on Sunday the pastor would immediately make a home visit to see if anything was wrong. Rev. Redberger did not hesitate to visit non-members of the church that were ill in this small community.

Olga Prochnau recounts how much they enjoyed pastoral visits. Redbergers would arrive unannounced. No matter what was going on Jacob would pitch right in and help with the farm work. If they were grinding chop he would help shovel grain.

If the harvest was underway he would pitch bundles. If chickens were being killed, both Rose and Jacob would help with plucking and the drawing of the chickens. Or if butchering was taking place they would help with that too. Of course they would go home with meat or chickens as a gift to the pastoral family. This was commonplace at that time. People supplemented the pastor's modest salary with gifts of food.

In 1945 Rev. Redberger was called to serve at the Moravian Church in Vancouver. From the Vancouver Moravian Church Diary, Rev. Redberger's first entry on October 4th, 1945 states, "We arrived today after a wonderful trip with the car from Bruderheim to take over this work of our church. Brother Gutensohn served this congregation during the vacancy. May the Lord bless and reward him for his fine and wonderful work. We found the house nice and clean and very inviting to move into. May God grant that our work for Him in this congregation be fruitful and blessed." October 7th, "Installation Day. Bro. Gutensohn was in charge of both services: he preached a very impressive sermon in the morning. In the evening a Harvest Thanksgiving service was held." October 10th, "The congregation gave us a fine reception tonight; all the leaders of the various organizations spoke to welcome the new pastor and his family. Refreshments were served by the Ladies." During many of the years in Vancouver the Redberger home often had needy people at their supper table or spending the night. Rose worked in a greenhouse across the road from the church for extra income. Gardening was a joy for her.

In the summer of 1956 Rev. Redberger was called once again to serve the church in Bruderheim where the Redberger family was welcomed back lovingly by the Bruderheim congregation. Peter was in college in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and Andrew remained working in Vancouver so just Rosemarie and Jacqueline accompanied their parents to Bruderheim. Jacob

Redberger died suddenly of a heart attack in his 55th year on September 2, 1958. The people keenly felt this loss. It must have deepened their sense of what might have been a long and blessed pastorate, had this tragic event not occurred.

In researching material for this article, the writer interviewed several people who had living memories of Jacob Redberger's service at Bruderheim. These memories linger on in their minds with a freshness and fondness which speaks of deep appreciation for the personal blessing which flowed from associating with him. Perhaps these sentiments can be summed up in the reminiscence of one woman who is now in her 80's. She succinctly said, "He was the kindest minister we ever had."

The author asked two people who have living memories of Jacob Redberger's ministry to share some recollections.

Bishop Percy Henkelman supplied the following account:

"Here is a short vignette re. The Rev. Jacob Redberger: As a child of the Bruderheim Moravian Church I recall waiting with eager anticipation for the time the Rev. Jacob Redberger would assume leadership of our Church. We were not disappointed when he and his lovely little family moved into the parsonage. While our new Pastor had a decided Swiss accent when he spoke in German, he spoke with such clarity and conviction that he soon won over the entire congregation.

I was blessed when the time came for me to enroll in his classes preparing for Confirmation. He soon demonstrated his skill in communicating with young people. I recall his wonderful stories of climbing the Swiss Alps and making Bible stories relevant to each of us. We made our confessions of faith on Palm Sunday with a full understanding of what that commitment meant. It was eminently worthwhile for me to

travel seven and a half miles each week to the classes by horse and wagon or sleigh.

A pastoral visit to our home was always a much anticipated and exciting time for us. My folks were supportive of all the Bruderheim pastors and especially appreciated the care of Jacob Redberger.

As I attended Youth fellowship I truly honoured our Pastor. His messages at Camp Van-Es were especially inspiring. He was a great role model for me as I considered my call to ministry.

His ministry long outlived him at the Bruderheim Church. My nephew, the late Reg Hennig often quoted Brother Redberger's sayings at catechetical classes.

His pastoral ministry took him to Vancouver where he and his family took on extra duties to supplement their income from that small congregation. I was honoured to serve as a colleague to Jacob Redberger and remember inviting him to speak on several occasions at the Edmonton Moravian Church. I often thought I would like to be a blessing to my Church and to my confirmation class as he was to me.

Rev. Elmer Stelter officiated at the funeral of this beloved Pastor and man of God. (Percival R. Henkelman)"

August Frauenfeld contributed the following:
A TRIBUTE TO REV. JACOB REDBERGER

I consider myself very fortunate that, during my most formative years, Rev. Redberger was the pastor of the Bruderheim Moravian Church. His smile and his gentle sense of humour made him such a favorite to the entire congregation. I took two

years of confirmation under his tutorship. He always left us wanting to hear more and we always looked forward to his three hour lectures on Saturday mornings. I was one of the confirmands in 1939. It was a very moving occasion as Rev. Redberger impressed upon us that we have promised to serve our Lord for the rest of our days. Our confirmation song was, "Oh Jesus I Have Promised to Serve Thee To The End."

I always felt very blessed that he took a very personal interest in my spiritual life. He encouraged me to start teaching Sunday School when I was sixteen. Then at eighteen he asked me to teach in Daily Vacation Bible School. Eventually I was in charge of running D.V.B.S. every summer until I finished University. He also encouraged me to take a leadership role in our Young People's Program.

I was fortunate to be one of the campers at Camp Van-Es when it opened in 1941. Still more fortunate to have both Rev. Redberger and Dr. Sam Marx sleeping in our cabin. What a blessed time of cabin prayer we had before we went to sleep.

In the 1940's we used to have Youth Rallies from time to time in the various Moravian Churches. I got a ride with Rev. Redberger in 1941. When it was time to leave he told me that he was planning to stay in Edmonton for some meetings and he wanted me to drive his car, with a full load of passengers, back to Bruderheim. I was sixteen at that time and had never driven in the city. We did get lost once and ended up at the Edmonton Bus Barns, but eventually arrived in Bruderheim safely. That is just one example of how he trusted young people. Then when he requested you to help him out, how could you ever say no to such a caring person. I am forever grateful for his nurturing and mentorship in my life. He was known as a small town Pastor, but he was more than that. He was a SPIRITUAL GIANT." (August Frauenfeld)

Unfortunately this Spiritual Giant had a physical weakness of the heart, which at first only slowed him down, but later would end his life. As his heart condition worsened, Rose took over driving the car. Jacob was forced to curtail his activities. But his death at 55 years of age was none the less a huge shock to Rose and his family as well as to the church at large. The funeral service filled the church to overflowing.

Understandably Rose Redberger was devastated. Peter, the eldest of the Redberger children, was in Switzerland visiting relatives following attending Moravian College in Bethlehem Pennsylvania. He could not make it home for his father's funeral. Rose was on her own to make arrangements. Left with two daughters of school age, the prospect of a very limited widow's pension from the church, Rose faced the stark reality of having to carve out a new life for herself and her family.

In due course, the Redberger family moved into a small house in Edmonton. The girls got established in new schools. Rose enrolled in a nurse's assistant course which she completed successfully with a major amount of effort and some coaching help from former parishioners who lovingly did their best to provide practical and moral support. (Alma Prochnau).

Rose was able to support her family and carry on with her life. She worked nights in the nursery at the Royal Alex hospital for many years before enjoying a long and productive retirement.

Both Rose and Jacob live on in the memories of the people whom they served. The inscription on their headstone, in the Bruderheim Moravian Church graveyard, reads: "Well done my good and faithful servants".

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

By Rev. Barbara Rich (formerly Almon)

I truly believe my call to ministry began when I was twelve years old. I grew up in El Paso, Texas, and was raised in the Lutheran Church. The year I turned twelve a missionary couple, on furlough, came to our church and told us all about their work in Liberia. I was fascinated and decided right then that I wanted to be a missionary. Obviously, at that time there were no known avenues for women to enter the ordained ministry, and in fact ordination didn't even occur to me. My plan was to go to a Christian college and meet and marry a man who was going into the ministry and who wanted also to be a missionary.

I held on to that plan (my plan, not God's) all the way through high school and into college. In college I began to go through my first "sifting period". I hadn't been able to go to a Christian college after all. Instead I attended our local college (Texas Western, now known as UTEP) and I met, fell in love with and married my first husband, Bert Almon, who had no interest in the church at all. I pretty much forgot about "my" plan, but still determined to remain active in church and insisted on raising our children in the church. That was fine with Bert as long as I didn't push him or make him feel guilty for not attending church with me.

Our first child, Margaret, was born in New Mexico where Bert studied for his Ph.D. in English literature. She was just turning one year old when Bert was offered a job as professor at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. What a move! What a change! It wasn't culture shock, so much as weather shock, moving from the sunny warm Southwest to six months of short, albeit mostly sunny days, and minus degree temperatures. I sought warmth in any way I could. The first year in Edmonton

we lived on the West side and there I joined a Lutheran Church and became as active as I could. We moved to the East side a year later. I was expecting our second child and I found it very difficult to drive all the way across town to the Lutheran Church where I was a member.

Now here's where I became more and more aware of God's gracious will and guidance in my life. During Bert's first year at the University, he became quite involved in encounter groups, so I decided I'd better go to one, too. There was warmth there and also something spiritual about it. It provided a place to discover oneself and certainly helped to make friends, life-long friends in some cases. When I walked into the first session of that week-long encounter group in the spring of 1969, I was quite nervous. Everyone was in a circle sitting on pillows, and music was playing in a dimly lit room. I sat down next to a young woman and we almost immediately struck up a conversation. Over the week we became good friends, and she began telling me about her church, a church I'd never heard of before – the Moravian Church.

As I look back at that time now, I know for sure that God works through every avenue possible to get us to listen to God's calling. That young woman was Sandra Schwanke and she was a member of Edmonton Moravian Church. She told me about her favorite pastor, Lew Thomas, and about Christmas Eve candlelight services and lovefeasts. Moving over to Kennelworth wasn't an accident either. I was very interested in visiting Sandra's church, but I wasn't sure if I wanted to change denominations, so I visited every Lutheran Church in the area. I was looking for friendship and warmth, a sense of belonging and feeling welcomed. None of those churches satisfied my longing, and finally, on a cool autumn Sunday I got my two-year old daughter ready and we went to the Edmonton Moravian Church. It happened to be Lay Sunday and I seem to

remember that Klaus Gericke was one of the worship leaders. I sat toward the back on the same pew where Rev. Ed Ullrich and Rose and their family were sitting. Marg and Sieg Harke were sitting nearby as well. Marg, Rose, and I were all expecting.

What happened after that I'm not sure I can do justice to in mere words, but the heart of this lonely southwestern Lutheran was strangely warmed. I was warmly welcomed, with a genuine spirit of joy and love, smiles and handshakes, not just from one person, but from what seemed to be from everyone who was there. It was like Jesus himself had extended His hand toward me, and I was welcomed home! Still, it wasn't until after our second daughter, Catherine, was born in January of 1970 that I finally decided to join Edmonton Moravian Church, and soon after my baby was baptized there.

This was all before I really knew Jesus. I loved the church, I had faith, I was committed to my membership and to training my children in the faith, but how to tell others about what my faith was all about was still to come. I went through another sifting period, and believe me, Jesus really means it when He says He is praying for you during those times. He has saved my life so many times. So one Sunday after really struggling for weeks with my sense of sinfulness and impending doom, I sat in church and heard the Word spoken powerfully to me. I had such a thirst for the truth and for spiritual food and Rev. Ed's sermons always fed me well. But this one Sunday he said something very simple in the middle of his sermon on salvation. He said emphatically, "The forgiveness of Jesus Christ is there for the asking!" Mine for the asking? Those words shot like an arrow right into my soul, an arrow of light and joy and new life. I knew right then and there that I was forgiven and unconditionally loved and that I could leave all my burdens at Jesus feet. I went home that day feeling quite light on my feet.

After that joyous morning I became more and more involved in church activities. I joined Bible study groups and prayer groups, where I always experienced the warmth and genuineness of deep spiritual faith. I taught Sunday School and VBS, sponsored the youth group, sang in choir, joined Women's Fellowship and served on the Board of Elders. I got my children involved in the youth choir and Sunday School, and before long, began to feel God's nudging and calling once again. I read in the Moravian magazine about Mary Matz's ordination and I was intrigued that a woman had been allowed to enter the ministry. Then Blair Couch was ordained and came to Edmonton. I heard her preach one Sunday, and I thought, "Could I do that?" I began praying and fantasizing about being a pastor. I still thought maybe it was just my idea and I prayed fervently that somehow maybe God could make it happen.

Then, in addition to Murray Laverty going off to seminary, Eleanor Stebner went too--another woman! When those two came back home to tell us about their experiences in seminary, I became very interested in the idea of going, too. But I had no idea how that could happen. How can a person be a pastor when her husband has no interest in church? But my fantasizing and praying went on for several years and during that time I never ever told anyone about my thoughts, but it was becoming a passion from deep within me.

Finally, one Sunday, a few years after Rev. Ed had left, and Rev. Doug Kleintop was our pastor, and Margaret was to be confirmed in a couple of months, Doug did a strange, "not very Moravian," thing and extended an altar call at the end of his sermon. It wasn't just a "come and be saved" kind of altar call. It was for anyone who wanted to commit something to the Lord, to receive renewal, to ask for prayer, etc. We sang a hymn and a few people started going forward. I was never one for going forward for altar calls, but through each verse of the hymn I

kept remembering Jesus words to Peter. "Do you love me?" "Barbara, do you love me?" "Do you love me, Barbara?" "Yes, Lord, Yes, Lord, Yes, Lord!" "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs, tend my sheep." I finally said prayerfully to the Lord, "I have no idea how this can happen, but I'm going forward just to let you know that I'm willing just in case you find a way for me to answer your call to ministry." We were singing the last verse of the hymn, I put my hymnal down, walked down from the choir and began to open the door into the sanctuary. I paused as I heard footsteps coming down the stairs behind me. It was my daughter Margaret! And we walked together to the front of the sanctuary. She explained that she had wanted to do something like that before she confirmed her faith on Palm Sunday.

It was then I knew I was going to have to talk about this to someone, so just a day or so later I went to Doug Kleintop's office and for the first time in my life I heard myself say out loud that I thought I was being called to the ordained ministry. What an experience that was! I wasn't even sure it was my own voice I was hearing. I explained that I didn't know how I could do it since my husband wasn't a Christian. Doug responded, "I wouldn't let that stop you!" Doug was extremely helpful and encouraging, and he pointed out many options and possibilities for answering a call from God. When I accepted the office of president of Women's Fellowship, Doug encouraged me to think of that as being "pastor" to the women.

That all happened in the early 80s, and for a couple of years life wasn't getting easier. My marriage was failing and I didn't even know it. Still there were many amazing things happening. I spent hours in prayer, devotions and reading the Bible and the Daily Texts. I was born on April 1, 1943, and on April 1, 1983, I turned forty. My birthday fell on Good Friday that year and the watchword for the day was from Deuteronomy 8:2 --"You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led

you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart." I was flabbergasted! I read that one out loud to anyone who would listen, even to Bert. I have so very often found the Daily Texts meaningful and applicable to my own life, but that had to be the most pertinent and personal verse I ever came across. The words seemed to actually come off the page, enter my soul, and assure me more than ever of God's presence and God's call.

It was only six weeks later that the dreadful bottom fell out of my marriage. Bert and I separated and I went through a long period of weeping and wailing and questioning and trying to reconcile. The heart break was devastating and I felt I was losing a large piece of my identity. I was proud of being a "professors wife." I wasn't a preachers wife, but at least I had the "pr" part. I guess I had been prideful and needed to be humbled like God said in Deuteronomy. The amazing thing about the separation was that I prayed even more and experienced God's presence more than ever, and I could see the light and the goal of seminary more and more clearly at the end of the tunnel.

Once again Pastor Doug was extremely helpful, pastoring me, recommending a marriage counselor for the two of us, and being non-judgmental of either of us. Eventually, as I came to realize and accept that the marriage was clearly over, Doug pointed me to options and took me through all the steps necessary to apply for seminary and candidacy.

During the spring of 1984, I had the privilege of choosing the hymn verses and writing the prayers for one month of the 1985 Daily Texts. What a beautiful and meaningful experience! By the summer of 1984 I had completed the process for moving to Bethlehem, PA and attending Moravian Seminary, a dream come true! My daughter, Catherine, came with me and started

high school in Bethlehem, and I allowed Margaret to stay a year longer in Edmonton to complete her senior year of high school. She joined us then in the summer of 1985. During that fall semester I remember walking to classes, and as I walked past the Comenius statue, I felt like I had to pinch myself in order to convince myself that I was really, truly, actually there! A lot more has happened since that wonderful first semester, a lot of struggles and doubts and pitfalls. But the Lord just kept standing beside me and pulling me through, reminding me over and over that it wasn't I who was "good enough" to answer the call, rather, it was God who made me good enough and gave me the gifts and strength to answer the call.

There is one other significant event, which I would like to share. At the end of the first year of seminary, I was privileged to work as a student intern at Third Moravian Church in Philadelphia. Rev. Dave Henkelmann was pastor there at the time and he and his wife, Mel were a great help to me. It was a great summer but I had no car. Margaret was coming to Bethlehem, but was also planning on going to Quebec for a few weeks to visit with a high school friend, and Catherine was going back to Edmonton to spend the summer with her father.

I knew the move had been hard on Catherine so I had permitted her to adopt two cats. As a result I wanted to keep the apartment that I had been renting that first year so I hired a young man to come in and feed the two cats and check on the house. I would borrow a car every few weeks or so and drive up to Bethlehem to check on the house and cats. Unfortunately, at the end of the summer, about a week before I was to finish up my internship I got a call from Buildings and Grounds telling me that there had been a fire in my house. Rev. Henkelmann drove me up to Bethlehem that evening and I was devastated by the extent of the damage. I wasn't sure I could go on and began to doubt if I had done the right thing to make such a move.

After someone suggested that maybe I should take off a semester in order to recover, I realized that that would never be an option. No one knew what caused the fire. Perhaps it was the cats. Perhaps it was the lamp that had been damaged in the move.

But once again God's grace and strength carried me through. I found myself praising God for so many gracious interventions. The seminary community proved to be a true community of love and support, helping me move into a new apartment just around the corner that had just recently been vacated, and helping me wash all the salvageable furniture. The Red Cross came through with beds and special detergent that would wash out the smell of smoke from clothes and linens. And not one life was lost! My daughters were happily in Canada, the cats escaped harm and my one little Philodendron plant began growing back within weeks after I cut off the wilted leaves and watered it well.

In the living room, where the fire damage was the worst, I had left a stack of bulletins on the top of one of my bookcases. I had kept them from the previous year, including bulletins from Third Moravian during the summer and had put my sermons folded in half inside each one. They were still there, not in ashes, although charred quite black on the top. Somehow a small cross had been left on top of the stack of bulletins. I have no idea how it got there and I don't know where it is now. But when I picked it up, there under the place where it lay was the clear, uncharred shape of the cross. The fire almost completely destroyed the paper, but the cross which I think was wood was still intact. As I carefully turned the page the next page was just a little lighter but the white image of the cross was still clear. With each page that I turned, the pages got lighter, from darkest brown to a lighter tan, but still the imprint of the cross shone white. This continued through six or eight pages. I could have

sworn there had been angels in the midst of the fire watching over things that needed to be saved, like family members, pets, plants, photo albums and once again, not only my call but my faith was confirmed and strengthened.

The cross of Jesus conquers all things, and I had received a clear, physical message of that truth! And it is Jesus who has brought me through these past twenty-three years, through mountain tops and valleys, through failures and successes, through children getting through college, through re-marriage, through the call process and finally ordination. I graduated with the M.Div. in May of 1987, and again in 1993 with the M.A.P.C. (a pastoral counseling degree). I was ordained in 1994 by the Rt. Rev. Arthur Freeman at Advent Moravian Church and after serving on loan with the United Methodist Church for six and a half years, I received my first call to serve in the Moravian Church in 1999. I was installed as a half-time pastor at the Reading Moravian Church in Reading, PA, in November of 1999, where I am still serving. In addition I have a small private practice in marriage and family therapy, putting my M.A.P.C. to good use.

My husband of 19 years, Rev. Bill Hosking, is also a pastor and now serves the Lancaster Moravian Church in Lancaster, PA, where we live in the parsonage. Yes, I finally married a pastor and he's interested in missions! But God's call was unique to each of us as individuals well before we ever met. God's call affirmed me, a woman created in the image of God, as one chosen to serve in the ordained ministry. And I praise God every day and continue to ask for God's leading and guidance every day. The task is not complete yet.

I pray that my spiritual journey can be an inspiration to those of you who read this and who may be contemplating your own call to ministry, ordained or in other ways.

**MY STORY:
A LIFE IN THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL OF
JESUS CHRIST**

By GORDON L. SOMMERS

I PREPARATION

1. Roots
2. Youth
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II MINISTRY

1. Missionary
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The invitation of the Canadian Moravian Historical Society to write a reflection on my life in faith in the Savior and my ministry in the Church of Jesus Christ fills me with a deep sense of awe. To have this opportunity and to be requested to put in

words the memories and observations of a lifetime of experiences should be – but regrettably is not – available to all. Each of us has a story. We need only to be prodded into telling it.

Of course the urge to complete an autobiography has been in my mind as the years progressed. My friend, Philip Lythcott, urged me to do so and with an insistence that overwhelms me. In a recent missive, in which he reflects on drastic, and momentous, changes in his life, he nevertheless has the magnanimity to conclude with his usual coaxing: “Gordon, how is your book coming along?” Thank you Philip. With this paper I am a little nearer this goal!

I have long thought that it is important to record the events and experiences of one’s life for the benefit of one’s children, grandchildren and future generations. I recall speaking with my father, Henry, in his 80th year and recording on tape the memories of his early life in Russia. My father was functionally illiterate, and English was his third language. What saddened me most in this conversation was the full realization that he had had no means to record his experiences. Much of his life was no longer clear to him because of the varied places he had lived in his earlier years, the dimming of memory and even needing to forget the harsher experiences of his life.

Moravians have attached great value in the LEBENSLAUF, the story of one’s life. Such a recounting of experiences and blessings serves as the word of God’s grace, since we believe that God speaks to us when we recall the lives of the faithful. At the funeral or memorial service, the memoir recounts the “lebenslauf” for loved ones and the gathered Church. Prepared by that person when remembrance is clear, the “lebenslauf” is both accurate and helpful to future generations.

These words also serve as a spiritual discipline. I am blessed as I reflect on my life. These are the determinative events by which I wish to be remembered. The blessings of my life become the blessings of all who will read or hear my story. Praise be to the Lord God, the giver of life and the preserver of the community of the faithful!

A further impetus to writing comes from the practice and history of the Moravian Church to leave diaries. As I browse through the Moravian Studies section of Moravian Theological Seminary or visit and work at Moravian archives in the many worldwide locations of the Moravian Church, or read the diaries of our congregations maintained by Moravian pastors I am in awe of the rich legacy left to us. The temptation for today's pastors (including me) is to say: I write my sermons. We have weekly bulletins, monthly newsletters, annual reports to Church Council and the Provincial Elders—what more is needed to be written? I rationalized, as Provincial Elder: My letters, reports and minutes of Board meetings will be open for public review in 50 years. The Synod transactions are available to all. No more is necessary.

However, all that said, we fail to record personal observations and reflections that diaries afford. So, for this high privilege of my reflections, and to satisfy all of the above circumstances, I proceed, gratefully, with the request of the Historical Society. The encouragement of my life-long friend and mentor, Bill Brese, is acknowledged with deep and humble gratitude. I will only pray that all who read will be as richly blessed as I am in the actual writing.

Gordon L. Sommers
April 1, 2007

I PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

1. Roots

Family, faith, farm and land of birth specifically define my roots. They provided me with a clear sense of who I am and where I am going. This foundation served me well in subsequent years living as I have in a great variety of places and in working in varied circumstances and cultures. The strength and practical influence of my earliest years never left me even though they seemed so disconnected to subsequent experiences.

My mother, Bertha Lentz, was born to immigrant parents soon after their immigration to Canada from Poland and Russia. (How my maternal grandparents met, given their differing birthplaces was never made clear to me.) Their German language and heritage reflected the social and political turmoil of Northern Europe in the 19th century. She was the youngest of 14 children, born to Christopher and his second wife Christina (Schmidtke) Lentz. Much could be said about this family configuration spanning 2 continents and 2 centuries. Even more could be said about the sheer hardship of my widowed grandmother with the second family of 6 children. The youngest, my mother, was 3 years when her father died at 58 years of age.

Two details of my mother's early life represent the pathos and demands of their circumstances. On the gravestone marking my grandfather's burial in the Millwoods Moravian Church Cemetery (then named Bruderfeld Moravian Church) his name is given as LENZ. When my grandmother, Christina was buried 42 years later, her name is noted as LENTZ. (Final "z" in German is pronounced "tz", hence the change for practical purposes.) Under pressure to blend in with the dominant English culture immigrants felt compelled to do all they could to "blend," even to losing their identity. What other pressures

must be felt as immigrants are compelled to leave their homeland for a new place of refuge, since the plight of refugees and the need for many to immigrate continues?

The second insight that comes from my mother's early life is that of the great kindness of earlier English settlers where she grew up. They had become established. They knew the language. They showed compassion for the immigrant widow Christina with 6 children. My mother worked hard to straddle the two worlds of the German immigrant and the dominant English culture. She gratefully acknowledged the value of both for her life and her children.

My father Henry came of roots that paralleled my mother's, even though separated in place of birth. He was born in Maschke, Russia in 1902 in a German community that traced its arrival from the time of Catherine the Great. The days of Czar rule in Russia were nearing an end. The promises to the German settlers, in exchange for the productive farming of the rich Volga region, that they would not be conscripted to military service was being eroded. My father's older brothers sought escape by immigration to Canada and the USA. That Germans could maintain their language, culture and religion was also under siege. With the outbreak of WW I, when my Dad was 12 he and his sisters, with their parents, were deported to Siberia. The stories my father recounted of their hardships were sobering.

WW I ended and the Marxist Revolution in Russia was complete. The refugees returned to their home. They found that their land and home had been confiscated. They fled to Germany, to Pomerania. The post World War I economy and subsequent inflation in Germany was chaotic. The loss in value of currency gave no hope to those who were considered Germans, but, in reality, were strangers in their own land.

Through the help of 3 brothers who had successfully emigrated earlier, my father, along with sister and parents, arrived in Canada. He worked hard to establish himself and to buy land.

My mother's 8 grades of education helped compensate for my father's lack of schooling as they began their married life in a strange land. His strong work ethic and love for the land enabled them to thrive as farmers despite the economic depression of the "the dirty thirties,"--as the 3rd decade of that century came to be called--and the challenge of shaping the future without any financial base. We went to church and interacted with extended family, all rooted in German, pietistic tradition and language, but attended grade school with mostly English-speaking children and lived in an English-speaking community. This provided me with a marvelous blending of cultures, and experiences and friends.

My first 8 years of schooling (kindergarten was unheard of) was in a one-room school, Fultonvale, with one teacher and 8 grades. Can you imagine the stamina of that teacher? We all listened to the same "story" after the noon recess and my love for reading was born. Our library was a box of books 2 feet by 3 feet, which opened for shelf display. It stayed at each school for 4 weeks before being rotated to another in the District. Miss Geary was my only teacher for Grades 1 – 4. Our friendship continued until her death recently at 92. What a marvelous lady! My only problem was to call her by her first name, Mabel, at her insistence, when the honorific title "Miss" remained so ingrained. She set a record with her tenure. It took 3 teachers to see me through grades 5-8. Ninth grade at 2-room Colchester was a good transition to Strathcona, a large Edmonton High School. My cultural connections in a city school remained very church, rural and family.

One other feature to my childhood was the addition of a final “s” to our surname to become “Sommers”. This was in contrast to relatives, who retained the original spelling of “Sommer”. Why was Henry’s family the only one to make the change? This has never been clearly established. It happened during World War II when being “English” seemed to be a priority of my family. Somehow, the change, in our minds, seemed to make us less German.

2. Youth

The dominant force for my youth was work on the farm. This was in no way to be considered abusive child labor. It was expected that you did the work appropriate to your age and strength. The earliest task was to herd the cows or fetch them home from the pasture for milking. You picked the stones on the field in spring following winter frost. You weeded the garden and removed the potato bugs in summer and picked potatoes in fall. Farming dominated family life. You had to work despite your strongest protest.

Extended family was important. Cousins compensated for a small family of one sister, Irene, 5 years senior. (Another sister, Carol Ann, came when I was 12, and did not really count for playtime.) I was blessed with 4 cousins close to me in age—the 5 of us from the 5 sisters of my maternal roots. On my father’s side were 3 boy cousins of my age. While getting together may have been restricted by travel conditions in winter, summer was a grand time for play, and did we have fun! We created games, in addition to the pickup softball games and “shinny” (hockey without skates). Riding the play-wagon on the concrete barn floor provided hours of entertainment. The relationships continue today, despite the distance that has separated me over the years.

Church life was significant. The Christmas Eve program was uppermost. Our recitation verses were command performances and had to be given flawlessly. The “bag” (nuts, candy and mandarin oranges) was the treat that made the tensions of performance before the critical eyes of peers and adults worthwhile. Other highlights of church included:

- The Anniversary Festival each June when the weather had become more reliable and when lunch could be eaten outdoors from PAPER PLATES.
- Dreaming that one day I could ring the bell in the Church tower like Sven, the ever present sexton.
- The orchestra in high school days (I played violin) and the camaraderie that developed with older “youth.”
- The annual Mission Festival each October when the harvest season was ended.
- Youth Rallies with other Moravian congregations.

Worship, including the liturgy, hymns and sermon, was in German until Grade 10. When the shift to English finally came, many of the “oldsters” felt that the church was not quite true to the Gospel, or at least to our German heritage.

3. The Call

The foundation for my spiritual life laid by my Church involvements led me to experience a call from God to the ministry of the Church. Two factors are dominant: a spirit of evangelical revival and the nurturing impact of Camp Van-Es.

The Moravian Church was formally established in Alberta amongst refugees from Volhynia, Russia who appealed to the Northern Province for pastoral leadership. The history of the earliest congregations, Bruderheim and Bruderfeld, is documented elsewhere. I was fortunate to have learned much from the 50th anniversary celebrations in 1945 when I was 10

years old, when some of the early members still lived and when Bishop Clement Hoyler, the revered founder of the Churches in Alberta, visited. The history apropos to this account is a significant spiritual revival within the first 25 years of the Church's life. I recall annual weeklong revival services that continued into my childhood. A result of that spiritual renewal was the calling of young men into the ministry of the Moravian Church. I was the last of a significant "wave" that resulted in a large number of pastors and missionaries with Canadian roots serving in the Northern Province. The spiritual fervor generated in that period of revival amongst German speaking Alberta Churches and that lingered for 2 generations resulted in the focus on the "call" to ministry that impacted me.

In later years I often reflected that I considered only 2 vocations in my youth, in a time when a career was chosen for "life": ministry and farming. The impulse to farm, of course, came from my father. He dreamed that his only son would take over the thriving farm and dairy, which he had created by sheer hard work. And what an accomplishment it had become for an immigrant whose early life had been filled with hardship and loss! I am always grateful that he gave me the freedom to make my own decision despite his ambitions for me to succeed him as a farmer.

The only vocation alternative, in my thinking, was ministry. For the moment I will state only that my mother, in later years, spoke to me of what might be seen as a subtle exertion over my freedom. She related that during her pregnancy with me she had prayed to God and, like Hannah, who had dedicated Samuel to the Lord even before he was born, she had committed me to the service of God.

I recall the constant encouragement of my mother, despite her tearful reluctance to give me up when I left for Moravian

College at age 18, believing she would not be seeing me for the next 9 months. She was truly a dedicated and selfless servant of the Lord! The tensions that surely must have existed between my parents on this issue were never made known to me. I knew only fullest support from both of them.

The second force shaping my vocation was Camp Van-Es. (The name is an acronym of the Moravian Church Motto, "Our Lamb Has Conquered Let us Follow Him", in Latin: VICIT AGNUS NOSTER EUM SEQUAMUR). What a powerful force for the spiritual nurture of Moravians in Alberta the Camping programs have been! I knew it in its earliest days. I first attended residential camp at 13 and discovered the wonder and joy of Christians eating and living together, studying the Christian faith and worshipping together. I next attended Youth Camp. I learned to sing bass and I sang in the Octet to lead the entire group in singing. Evening vespers, with the cross silhouetted before the lake, and campfires with songs echoing across the water became a setting for powerful spiritual formation. And so it was, at 17 year, that I dedicated myself to serve Christ and the Church (when "fagots" were pieces of wood thrown on the campfire as symbols of one's commitment and pledge). I never looked back from that choice and decision.

Today, career or vocational choices have become more complicated. The possibilities before my grandchildren seem limitless. I recall my 12th Grade Chemistry teacher suggesting that I might explore other options than the two which I had named. I would not even entertain that possibility. In his wisdom, Mr. Dineen did not try to challenge my resolution.

4. Preparation

Here, given my context, there was even less choice. To be a minister in the Moravian Church you went to Moravian College in Bethlehem. It was a 7-year commitment. I knew little about

the distinction between College, or undergraduate study, and the three years to follow at the Theological Seminary. In fact, the College preparation seemed almost an intrusion in my vocational quest. Fortunately, the value of a liberal education for a lifetime of learning finally lodged in my thinking and I am most grateful for all that I have learned and experienced.

The shift in social and cultural setting from rural Canada to even a small city, such as Bethlehem, was pronounced. The work ethic lingered with me and, as a result, I did not fully capitalize on all the opportunities made available to me at College. However, I had experiences that contributed to enduring values and skills:

- Youth Leadership at the YMCA.
- Singing in the Bethlehem Bach Choir.
- Leadership roles in clubs and societies at Moravian College.
- Participation in local Moravian Congregations.
- Work during the school year with the Matz family construction crew.
- Two summer vacations spent conducting Vacation Bible School and preaching in Alberta congregations and serving on the Camp Van-Es staff.
- Discovering the History and beauty of the Pennsylvania countryside.
- A relationship with Carol, my first wife and her family that helped me in the loneliness of separation from my family and the communities of my origins.

Theological Seminary was more demanding and stimulating than college. That my faith could be examined systematically, historically and biblically was a wonderful learning time. The World Mission outreach of the Church was strong. Bishop Edwin Kortz provided leadership at that time and knew how to

cultivate candidates at an opportune time. So it was that I spent a summer in Nicaragua living with an experienced Missionary family, Canadians John and Violet Befus. When, after another year at Seminary, I was given the opportunity to interrupt my Seminary training for an internship year to work in Bluefields, Nicaragua, I took it. The practical experience in ministry, following six years of academic preparation, was life changing. My final year of study became the richest and most rewarding of all. Finally, the preparation came together for me in tools for practical service.

Amongst all the benefits of Theological Education two are foremost:

- I learned that education is a life-long adventure. Practically, this resulted in continued academic work. I took an additional Master's Degree in Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary during the 2 six-month furloughs (as they were then known) granted to me during my 10 years of service as a Missionary. How stimulating and refreshing it was to be at this great institution of higher learning! Later I took on the Doctor of Ministry Program at New York Theological Seminary for study focusing on Leadership Issues that related to my work as Provincial Elder.
- I was introduced to the Ecumenical expression of the Church as I participated in an Inter-Seminary Seminar, bringing together one professor and students from six Seminaries of the Bethlehem region.

Our overall theme in my senior year was "Man" and I compared a Christian understanding of Humanity with that espoused by Karl Marx. As in other courses, it was the stimulation for a lifetime of valuable research and interest on this subject.

II MINISTRY

1. Missionary

(The following chapter was written for the Canadian Moravian Historical Society for its historical magazine in April 2006. The writer apologizes for any repetitions or differences in style.)

MY CALL TO MISSION SERVICE IN THE MORAVIAN CHURCH by Gordon Sommers

Recently I undertook a 14 month assignment as Interim Executive Director of the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church. In addition to assisting the Board to redefine its role and to reestablish focus for the Church in World Mission I provided routine administrative work for the Board. A phone call one day came from a man in Florida reporting that he was executor for the estate of Alice Elzinga. In that capacity he was to fulfill the last will and testament of Sister Elzinga that a sizeable portion of funds be invested with the Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church in North America and the proceeds be regularly forwarded to the Moravian Church in Suriname for support of its Orphan ministry. We were able to add the funds to our portfolio and to arrange with the Church in Suriname for regular payments in accordance with our investment policies.

Moravians in Alberta will recognize the Elzinga name. Alice, born in the Netherlands, had served under the Zeist (Netherlands) Moravian Mission Board in the mid-twentieth Century in Dutch Guiana where the Moravian Church had extensive and multifaceted Mission Work. Alice eventually emigrated to the US, had served with the Reformed Church of America (RCA) in a variety of lay ministries, lived in a retirement community connected with the RCA and, at the end of a long and fruitful life, passed on to her eternal rest.

This brief routine exchange also brought back to me childhood experiences at Millwoods Moravian Church of Edmonton (then named Bruderfeld) that were determinative for my life and call to the Mission service of the Moravian Church. It was the practice of the Moravian Church in the Canadian District, in its more rural days, to have Mission Fests in the fall of the year. Mission speakers came for morning and afternoon Mission Worship Services. Offerings were received. The bounty of the Harvest and the depth of thanksgiving determined the generosity of the farming faithful. Visitors from other congregations were invited to homes of members for the noon meal and for fellowship. Congregations sought to do their best, perhaps even to outdo the others in a friendly rivalry and certainly exceed the previous year's offerings for Mission work.

It was such a Mission's festival when I was 12 years old that our congregation was privileged to have 2 Missions speakers: Sister Kate Hetasch of Labrador and Sister Alice Elzinga of Dutch Guiana (now Suriname). (Alice was visiting in Edmonton at the time with her brother, a feed store owner, who previously had immigrated to Canada.) Both of those missionaries were to figure in my adult life. Kate, in her retirement, lived next door to our home in Bethlehem. Susan provided loving care in her terminal days. And now, after many years, I was to assist in meeting the intention of Alice Elzinga's legacy.

Back to the Mission Fest of my childhood. The fall weather was glorious and sunny, as only October in Alberta can be. The wonderful witness of Kate and Alice opened my mind to new vistas of Christian service. God spoke to me and I felt that I was called to serve in the Mission Field. (I later recalled that Samuel of old heard God's call at 12 years. Fortunately, for me, mine came in the daytime.) It was a moment of spiritual insight never previously known. I received God's call with some fear

and anxiety, uncertain as to how this could be applied in my life, since I wanted to be a farmer, like my father. But it was a palpable and memorable awareness of God and vocation that shaped the rest of my life.

The call from God was further strengthened by the Youth Camps at Van Es. At the Saturday evening Campfire and dedication service, when I was seventeen, I declared publicly that I would give my life in the service of Christ and the Church as a missionary. In those days, any preparation for Moravian Church service came through attending Moravian College and Theological Seminary in faraway Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. This necessitated uprooting from home and culture, a traumatic and life-shaping act.

While pre-theological and theological studies were preparation for general Church service, more specific Missionary preparation came through practical cross-cultural experiences. Mission direction for our Church in the period of 1950 to 1970 came from The Rev. Dr. Edwin W. Kortz, later a Bishop of the Church. He found creative ways to draw potential missionaries into service, encouraging them by degrees to explore more specific application of their spiritual call. And so, as a Seminarian, I had my first cross-cultural experience in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua was a good place to begin. The Mission was still dependent on Missionaries from North America. In 1958 I lived in the home of Violet and John Befus and their family for 3 months in Puerto Cabezas and profited from their spiritual maturity and wide experiences as missionaries. Later, I had a year-long internship with another seasoned missionary, Conrad Shimer, in Bluefields where mission work began in 1845 in what was then called The Miskito Coast. I was privileged to know the Rev. Joseph Harrison, first ordained Nicaraguan in the

Church, and now retired. When I arrived in Guyana I soon came to know of the revered Rev. John Dingwall, a native of Barbados, who revived early Moravian Church activity in the city of Georgetown in the first half of the 20th century. Brother Harrison wrote to say that he, as a lad, had been house boy for Brother Dingwall who also had begun his missionary work in Bluefields.

Upon my completion of what had become an 8-year training and preparation I volunteered for Mission service. My wife, baby and I were sent not to Nicaragua, where we had presumed we would serve, given previous experiences, but to British Guiana (now Guyana, following independence from British Colonialism, in 1966). I recall that upon first receiving the formal call, my first question was: Where in the world is British Guiana? a question I shared with many others unfamiliar with this tiny country on the northern coast of South America, with connections more British and West Indian than with Latin America.

Mission responsibility in Guyana for North American Mission Board was relatively recent, along with the transition of the East West Indies Province from British Mission supervision. The British heritage both in the Church and the local life survived the transition to self-government for the nation and for the Church. We were the last missionaries to serve. It was a wonderful ten years of service, a good time to be a part of that culture and to have 3 children to spend their earliest years there. God blessed us, enabled me to grow spiritually and to develop an essential understanding of Church leadership that served me for the coming years. Ministry must always be in context. Thus it was that the challenges for both the Church and the nation to be Independent and self-governing following a history of Colonialism and dependence needed to be shaped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How do we see our faith in the Lord

Jesus and our Church life and mission where we live and in this time? My understanding of the world beyond my own culture and nation are highly-prized and lasting gifts from those missionary days.

I was blessed also to discover that the Unity of the Church and the Mission of the Church are inseparable imperatives of the Gospel of Christ. How can we proclaim Jesus in a divided and alienated world except the people who bear the name of Christ model unity and reconciliation in their life together? How can we receive the full benefit of being in Christ except we enjoy the fellowship and strength from our unity in Christ? My early missionary years shaped my future ministry to call the Church to bind all people of Christ together. That seems such a contrast to our current competitiveness and business-driven models of Church life. Moreover, it seemed historically congruent with the Moravian Church's Missionary spirit and purpose.

My 46 years of Church leadership as missionary, pastor and President of the Moravian Church have been a rich blessing to me. They began with the initial sense of God's call at a Fall Mission Fest. I lived and worked in 4 distinct cultures and nations. I worked on the board of World Mission for 24 years. But my early life experience in the Moravian congregations of Alberta provided the spiritual nurture and vitality that introduced me to the Lord Jesus. Thanks be to God for this inexpressible gift.

2. Pastor

After 11/2 years of service in Nicaragua and 10 years in Guyana it seemed time to leave Missionary work. Mission, as conceived when I began, had changed. We knew ourselves to be co-workers with an established church. In the 1970's we knew that the Church in Guyana needed indigenous leadership

and an indigenous life. Both the Church and the political/social context required us to return to our own culture.

Leaving at a prescribed time (July 1971) meant we needed a specific location for living and working. Pulling up roots of 10 years, where 2 of our 3 children were born and they knew no other life, was no easy task. The call to York, Pennsylvania seemed a call from heaven. The USA Consulate in Georgetown, Guyana provided me with a work permit enabling me to take up residence in the USA. The children had been registered at birth for both US and Canadian citizenship. We were ready to relocate.

When I arrived at First Moravian Church of York, it had a venerable history of 255 years. At the time of my service there the Rev. Reinhold Henkelman, Canadian born, but long retired, was honored and warmly remembered. Like all downtown churches the membership base at York I had diminished as the suburbs grew. Its future was thus challenged (even more so today) despite its rich heritage. It was a wonderful place to serve. My US cultural reorientation went forward. People of my own culture affirmed me in my pastoral leadership. The church held its own and we were able to institute long range planning that became a staple approach to church leadership for me. (I first was introduced to the concept of Long Range Planning in the church by Lloyd Hinds of the Moravian Church in Guyana who had been intrigued with its possibility through his work with a YMCA Board in Guyana.) Our children began the adaptation to the culture where they needed to live out their future, even though they greatly missed Guyana. We soon learned that 2 incomes were essential to support a growing family with the demands of music lessons and orthodontia. We lived near to Carol's parents and discovered the joy of extended family, especially at holiday times.

Our stay in York of less than 3 years, was too short, but the call to St. Paul's Church in Maryland in suburban Washington DC was compelling. I was their second pastor. They had been organized just 3 years previously and had a new first unit building. The church was in the center of a new and rapidly growing community and served a vital purpose for contributing to the community's life. It was an exciting place for ministry which matched my understanding of the nature and mission of the Church. We thrived! We were energized and our outlook as a church was expanding by:

- Living in the shadow of Washington where international events were local.
- Being exposed to many cultures and coming to know African Americans in the congregation.
- Having a congregation that became self-supporting and doubled in membership in 4 years. Providing leadership for the community was an important ingredient in its mission and purpose. The congregation responded readily to my leadership.

3. Congregations

It was truly an unanticipated, fully surprising, humbling development when, in the District and Provincial Synods of 1978 I was elected to be President of the Eastern District of the Moravian Church, Northern Province and Vice President of the Provincial Elders Conference. Our Church names Elders to be its leaders at every level, including a regional judicatory of congregations. (It is helpful to recall the process by which the Moravian Church was led to name Jesus Christ as Chief Elder of the Church September 16, 1741.) I truly had never imagined myself in this service.

The call of the Church is always to be heeded. This meant an immediate move for us:

- From the house we had just purchased 6 months before through the generosity of St. Paul's congregation out of the concern that we be able to build up equity, and from the community we had come to love and where we felt much involved.
- From schools and friends for all of us. Kristel was entering 9th grade and Paul, grade 12. (David, having just graduated, was bound for Moravian College and thus was already making the break.) This became a very difficult adjustment for all of us.
- Back to a community and church connections we had previously know and treasured.

The President of the Eastern District had responsibility for the supervision of congregations and the deployment of pastors to serve them. Here was a task for which I had no direct and specific preparation. But this would have applied to anyone whose previous work was parish leadership, so I was in the pool of inexperienced candidates from which the Synod chose its leader. There are routine tasks in this position, and there are emergencies to meet head on and solve.

Among the leadership issues I faced was the increase in the vocation of women pastors and the number of pastors from the Caribbean. To place pastors of color in white congregations and women pastors in congregations inclined to a male pastor became critical issues for the Church in this time. We made some strides to achieve such acceptance of diversity, but slowly. In addition, congregations felt they needed greater involvement in the selection of the pastors when they had a vacancy. All of these issues led me to focus the calling of pastors as the subject for my Doctor of Ministry study. I learned much from examining the process of leadership selection in communities of faith, going back to Moses and Aaron, as well the specific question of choosing pastors for our congregations. One

innovation that emerged, facilitated of course by increasing ease of travel, was the interview of the pastor by the church boards prior to reaching a decision. Thus emerged mutuality consistent with our Church's conferential system of decision-making that has resulted in greater morale for both congregations and pastors.

I came to realize also that a long-held conviction about the Moravian Church could also be addressed—that the Church needs to grow by establishing more congregations. I encouraged and created fellowships of Moravians in scattered communities. Five of these led to the chartering of congregations in Queens, NYC; Toronto, Ontario; Washington, DC; Columbus, Ohio; and Toms' River, New Jersey. Of these, Grace Church, Queens had already begun to meet. Evangel, in Tom 's River no longer exists. The time was right for Church Planting and fruits from these efforts in those 8 years have become vibrant congregations.

4. President

In the course of events I became the most senior of candidates for Provincial Elders and it seemed inevitable that, at 51 years of age, I become its President. We did not have to move! The most profound change was the loss of direct contact with pastors and congregations. I truly became an administrator. However, that I was called to be a minister of the Church in the name of Jesus Christ never left me. I considered my tasks to be pastoral in nature. I was truly blessed as new opportunities in ministry presented themselves:

- I managed a staff appointed to carry out the work assigned to the Church by the Provincial Synods.
- I was privileged to institute and lead the formation of the Inter-Provincial Faith and Order Commission. The challenge was to clarify the Church's understanding of

children taking Holy Communion. This led to the option still available to children of 8 years, after instruction with them and their parents, to take Holy Communion. Even more, we clarified our theology on Baptism, Holy Communion and the admission to full communicant membership in time for it to shape the Service in the current Moravian Book of Worship. Many more theological issues were laid before the Commission and it continues its high place in the Church today.

- I interacted with the Southern Province and, through the Unity Boards, with all Provinces of the worldwide Moravian Church. The exposure to the African Provinces and the new Mission undertakings in Central and East Africa was especially rewarding. A highlight for me was my four weeks of travel through South Africa in 1987 for the Moravian Church's 250th anniversary. Apartheid prevailed and it was sobering to see both how the church struggled with the issue and how the society was afflicted by it. I am privileged to have had a post-apartheid visit and to savor the freshness of the new South Africa.
- I met with the many Boards and agencies of the Church assigned with specific tasks and ministries in the Northern Province or representing the institutions created by the Church in the past, now independent, but still needing the Church's leadership.
- When the Synod of 1994 legislated a new Provincial structure, I facilitated the process by which congregational needs were identified and a new structure was created. I know I have strengths to conceptualize and effectuate the organizational process by which a faith community shapes its life and witness most effectively.

5. Ecumenical

My initial exposure to the ecumenical life of the Church came in my days in Seminary. However, the experience of Conciliar Ecumenism came when I went to Guyana. I met there the Christian Social Council made up of all Communion churches that had primary schools from colonial and missionary days, including Roman Catholic and Anglican. (Moravians had only 2 such schools remaining from an earlier missionary era. One was named COMENIUS, to honor the famed Moravian Bishop and Educator, invited to organize Harvard University. It had a high scholastic reputation.) When the takeover of the schools became likely with the nation's Independence in 1966, the primary purpose for this ecumenical association seemed ended. It provided a marvelous exposure for me to older and more authoritarian Church leadership including the Archbishop of the West Indies (Anglican) and the Roman Catholic Bishop. The former, an austere man, represented the British Colonial power at its greatest. The latter was quintessentially pre-Vatican II, before the dawn of a new ecumenical interaction with Roman Catholics.

One interesting action of the Christian Social Council was to respond to the invitation of the new Government to name 2 Christian holidays. This task underscores that Colonial rule had been almost totally focused on the British and Christian heritage. But the new Guyana needed to acknowledge its multi-racial and multi-religious population. Muslims and Hindus each named 2 religious holidays. We Christians named Christmas and Good Friday, giving up Easter Monday, famous for kite flying, and Whit Monday (the day after Pentecost.)

The new effort at Ecumenism created the Evangelical Council of Churches, embracing communions that historically had no schools and, eventually, Anglican and Roman Catholics. Following Independence, it became the Guyana Council of

Churches. It connected with the World Council of Churches and, following, my departure, with the Caribbean Council of Churches.

Conciliar Ecumenism represented a 20th Century effort of some Christians Churches throughout the world to give visible expression to the Unity of the Church. It reflected my essential theology that Mission and Unity are inherent in the life and gospel of Jesus Christ. How can an unbelieving humanity believe in the Savior when its apostles and advocates give a divided witness? The Conciliar effort at unity has dissipated now in the early 21st century.

So it was that my ministry in the USA included such ecumenical involvement: In York, PA with the County council of Churches; as District President in State Councils of Churches; and then as President of the Moravian Church in the National Council of Churches. I recall that early in the shaping of New Dawn Church in Toronto a meeting with a representative of the Canadian Council of Churches, but nothing permanent came of that. Churches in Alberta seemed too far removed and never were involved. I attended 3 World Council of Churches Assemblies: Vancouver V (1983), Canberra VI in 1991, and Harare VII in 1998. These were rich experiences of learning, fellowship and worship! To be at an assembly with such diversity of peoples and countries, each praying the Lord's prayer and reciting the Creed in their his or her own language was a veritable Pentecost when "all heard in their own tongue."

My involvement with the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC) led eventually to my being named President, the first president from the Moravian Church. It was an exciting time of learning. Those contacts also led to significant visits to:

- South Korea and North Korea, via Beijing, in 1991 as President-elect, in a delegation to explore ways to unite the 2 Koreas and provide support for the small Christian witness in Pyongyang. The once vibrant Church in North Korea had been reduced to small house Church movements by the Communist dictatorships.
- The Vatican, in 1992, to present a copy of the New Revised Standard Version of the Scriptures, a translation and publication under the NCCC sponsorship, to His Holiness John Paul II. The time in the Vatican Archive, museum (including the Sistine Chapel) and with the Pontifical Council on Christian Unity was rich and instructive. My wife, Susan accompanied me. We worshiped also with the Waldensians, a Protestant group from 13th century Italy that provided the apostolic connection for the Bishop of the early Moravians. I gave greetings in the large Church near the Vatican and presented them with a Moravian Advent Star.
- Attending the elevation of William Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore and a Pennsylvania ecumenical colleague, as Cardinal at St. Peter's Basilica.
- Along with representatives from the Middle East Council of Churches, visits to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Jerusalem, the Gaza and Cyprus. The lands where Christianity had its roots and where now it is a small minority surrounded by Islam have much to teach us. The political tensions of the day call us to connect with the muted but faithful witness of Christians living in adverse circumstances in the Middle East.
- The 50th Anniversary of the birth of the NCCC in Cleveland in 1999. I coordinated planning for this effort in the year when my work with the PEC ended.
- Activities with the Center for Education, Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) in Washington, DC, including attending the UN Conference on Population

and Development in Cairo in 1994. This contact had come about through friends Dr. Maxine Garrett and Dr. Yvonne Maddox, both of whom I had first known at St. Pauls and who were leaders in CEDPA.

I continue in this ecumenical task by coordinating an annual Lectureship funded through the Lehigh County Conference of Churches and held at DeSales University (Roman Catholic) nearby. My mind was sharpened not only by the lectures given by strong and diverse speakers but by the contact with active workers in the cause of Christian Unity.

6. Community

The realization that, as a minister, I had responsibility not only for my congregation but also for the community, in which it was located, came only gradually. Nothing in my upbringing in Canada would have pushed me in that direction. Political awareness was not keen for my years at Moravian College. My one "outreach" effort was through the YMCA in Bethlehem.

The political life I met in Nicaragua sparked my interest in Marxism as a means of change amongst oppressed people. The political changes in Guyana helped even more in my growing political awareness. Being an "ex-patriot" complicated this involvement, but did not diminish my determination to help prepare my rural congregations for Independence in 1966. I felt it my responsibility as pastor to help my people to see that Independence was more than a political movement. The "Freedom" trumpeted by political leaders in the pursuit of independence from colonial rule also imposed tremendous responsibility upon the citizens of the emerging new Guyana. Christians needed to couch political freedom in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Ultimately Christ sets us free in a totality of life of which political freedom is only a small element.

When I arrived at York, I learned that a philanthropic member of the Church, Beauchamp Smith, provided the fees for the pastor to be a member of the local Rotary Club. My reaction? "What would I have in common with the capitalists and industrialists that I would find there?" I nevertheless determined to keep quiet and to try Rotary meetings. I enjoyed it! I enjoyed the people—their commitment to "Service Above Self" (the Rotary motto), the fellowship over a meal and the informative programs provided each meeting. I stayed!

When I moved to Bethlehem I again joined a local Rotary club. When, on the Board of Directors, I was asked to carry out a feasibility study for an additional club. Signs were positive and I was asked to launch it. Women were now admitted in this circle, which formerly was only for men. It became MORNING STAR ROTARY CLUB OF BETHLEHEM. Eventually I took on District-wide involvements and led a Group Study Exchange to Uttar Pradesh in North India. That was another learning experience!

Currently I have initiated a new Rotary Club in a growing community nearby. Experience in Rotary as well as Church leadership give valuable insights for this task.

One other community experience of value was the ZONING HEARING BOARD OF BETHLEHEM where citizens wishing to make changes in their residences or businesses that do not conform to the Building and Zoning Code must seek an exception or variance before an impartial board. Imagine a Pastor/Theologian dealing with such issues! Nevertheless, I learned as I listened and watched. I soon became chairman of the Board (with 2 others voting members) and returned this service as a contribution to my community for 14 years. It was an experience in essential democracy and Solomonic decisions taking into consideration both homeowners' needs and the

preservation of the security and beauty of a 250-year-old community

III VALUES

Values is a much-used expression that enables us to blend philosophy with practical choices and decisions. Of course, values, while universal as a concept, are shaped by particular circumstances and ideas. For me, my faith in the Lord Jesus and commitment to the Church and its mission has been the primary determinative factors. Included also are all of the forces that have shaped me as have been named earlier.

1. Nature and Mission of the Church

My commitment to the Church of Jesus Christ was made for me by my parents and registered publicly in the Bruderfeld Moravian Church at my baptism at 4 months. I sealed, or "confirmed", that decision when I declared my personal commitment to Jesus as Savior and Lord at 14 years in the Edmonton Moravian Church. Other "spiritual" experiences -- particularly at age 21 when I felt a strong need for repentance and recommitment to the Lord -- further strengthened my faith.

The commitment to the Church, the community of believers called into being by the Holy Spirit, grew. I knew I needed to be at Sunday Worship in a sharing/studying small group, involved in a mission or act of outreach in the name of Christ, and to tithe my earnings. Here is the way in which Jesus Christ, who created the Church with the 12 apostles, is given visibility in the world today. The Holy Spirit empowers the Church to demonstrate the presence, the teachings and the ministry of Christ in the world. The Church embraces all people without regard to gender, race, language, culture or nation. Indeed, such diversity enriches the believers beyond their individual lives

and exhibits unity to the world that is fractured and broken by human sin and division.

Could I have given such a description of the nature and mission of the Church at the time of my confirmation when I took on adult responsibility for it? No. I am so glad that now I can articulate what earlier I could only feel. Even more, I am grateful to God for the privilege of committing my years of learning and working to the task of carrying out the Church's life and mission. The understanding I have here articulated has motivated me and shaped my life.

2. Nature of Ministry

Upon leaving Theological Seminary and being called and ordained by the Moravian Church I was chafing at the bit to get started. After 19 years of education and preparation I wanted out of the ivory tower of the classroom and into the real world. I soon learned how little I really knew about the world into which I was "sent" (Jesus' word) and the Church which I was to lead.

I happened across a booklet entitled WE HAVE THIS MINISTRY prepared for the study of Moravian Women in 1967 and written by John S. Groenfeldt. I found there an explanation of the many-faceted role of the ordained minister. At the time (in Guyana) I was sufficiently aware of my need to grow in my understanding of ministry and found his book to be very helpful. John Groenfeldt was only a name to me. I had no idea that years later he was to become a valued mentor and helpful friend during his final 4 years as President of the Northern Province and my first term as Provincial Elder. Our offices were next door to each other. Upon his death, I was privileged to give the memoriam at the memorial service in Bethlehem.

Ministry of the Church is grounded in the understanding that God calls some persons to lead the community of faith. There is some mystery in the calling of ministers known only to God. The example of Jesus choosing the first 12 apostles gave primacy to Peter. Paul is another story. What ultimately qualifies a minister to speak for God and confirms the divine appointment is the process designed by the community. In short, the Church ‘validates’ the individual’s call. Years after reading Brother Groenfeldt’s book, my doctoral thesis enabled me further to articulate this process.

Brother Groenfeldt examined the roles of a minister that shape these functions. They find their basis in Holy Scripture. The work of PRIEST seems particularly centered in the Hebrew scripture. The priest represented the people before God and served to administer the grace and forgiveness of God to humans. The individualism of contemporary people and the Reformation principle of the “priesthood of all believers” makes this office of less significance for today’s minister. However, the importance of the priestly function is crucial for all persons must know and feel and even hear the “I forgive you” essential to our relationship with God.

The role of PROPHET is also rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures. The challenge for all would-be prophets is to speak for God with courage and with the clarity of discernment shaped by the sense of God’s justice in human affairs. And where such prophetic utterance is intimidated by human hardness of heart, the people will not be happy with the prophet. I came to realize that the prophetic word is more readily heard when the prophet is known, trusted and loved—but not always. There are times when the minister must step on some toes and that was never a good place for me.

PASTOR is a much more accurate description for my role in “ministry” (what the whole Church does) than “minister” (what all Christians are to be). The word “pastor” has agrarian roots and thus is close to me. The encouraging, supporting, relational, nurturing functions, whether in a parish or administering the Province seemed to belong naturally to me. Moravians readily fit into this function for the whole Church.

To be TEACHER, another defining role, was always a challenge for me. The parish provides great opportunities for teaching. Even meetings of elders and trustees provide teaching moments. I’ve attended a Wednesday morning Men’s Bible Study since coming to Bethlehem. For the past 21 years I have been the “teacher” and value both the fellowship (average of 16 in attendance) and the teaching opportunity. The passing of time has enabled us to cover not just the Books of the Bible (including a look at the Apocrypha) but also stimulating study books. While the teaching role need not be confined to ministers, my life-long experience and theological grounding have been put to work in this class.

Perhaps the essential meaning of the old English word MINISTER best describes my work. The contemporary word for that meaning is “servant”. To minister means, “to serve.” So it is that I have sought to shape my leadership as servant. I respond to people in honesty. I seek to stimulate their vision and to empower them to serve God. I can think of no more honorable definition of my life’s work than “servant”.

3. Family and Relationships

Earlier I had alluded to the loneliness and sense of loss I experienced when I left the security of my close-knit family and Church community in Alberta to go to the United States. I can never forget the difficulty of that separation nor the subsequent loss of self-identity. Thus it was quite a change when I came to

know Carol, my first wife, and we began to date. I was a second-year student, she a freshman, at Moravian College. After 2 years she undertook a 3-year nursing program to receive degreed nursing qualifications. We dated for 5 years, waiting until her studies were concluded, and then we married. Immediately after our marriage, we left for the yearlong internship in Nicaragua.

In getting to know Carol I also came to know her family. Indeed, her family became a substitute for the family which I missed. This new development changed my life, and my happiness returned. I realized how crucial warm and personal relationship was to me at that stage of my life.

Carol and I were blessed with David, Paul and Kristen within the first 5 years of our marriage. It was also then that difficulties in our marriage emerged. Despite our efforts over the next 15 years to find an enduring love and life together our marriage ended. Had we been at a location to receive counseling early in these struggles the outcome may have been different. It was not my wish but eventually I too came to accept that we could not mutually enjoy each other. We were divorced. Fortunately, in one sense, the separation was not plagued by acrimony. We had very little assets, thus nothing to argue about. Dave and Paul were living in dormitories at College, although my home remained theirs. Next to my loss of Carol, the loss of Kristel from my home was deep and sorrowful. We have since been restored to a wonderful relationship.

The fear of what the Church would say about my divorce was deep. In fact I had been living with it for 15 years. The Church had only recently struggled, after many years, with growing incidence of divorce, and accommodated to the reality of remarriage. This had also applied to ministers in a couple of

instances. To have a Provincial Elder in such circumstances was very difficult for the Church. The objections were severe, although not always expressed. They were evident at the Synods in the voting for the Provincial Elders. Far more prevailing, thank God, was the love and acceptance I knew, especially from lay people, who increasingly were experiencing the reality and the effects of divorce within their own families. Thus I came to know, in a fresh way, the grace of the Lord Jesus. In the process, I know, I became a more effective pastor.

My upbringing made me to abhor the thought of divorce. It was to be avoided at all cost and hence my determination to remain faithful to my first marriage. My parents and sisters were wonderfully accepting of me, quite contrary to my worst fears. I recall that, when the actual separation was immanent, I visited my parents then living in British Columbia. It was Easter. My confident, Bishop Edwin Kortz, who, as Executive Director of the Board of World Mission had known the struggles of our marriage, suggested I go to see them since it was the time when District President responsibilities were light. I recall the first morning of my arrival at my parents' home. It was time for morning prayers. I cried in their presence as never before. For my father it was the sign of the reality that my marriage was really ended. My mother put her arms around me. For me, it was the beginning of recovery.

Some months after the divorce was final I met Susan. We began a friendship. She too had been divorced and she also shared my abhorrence of divorce. She understood what I was experiencing and helped me. It took me 2 more years to recover enough to feel confident that I could truly be a husband again. We decided to marry. She moved into the large house on Church Street provided for a Provincial Elder. David and Paul still named our house as theirs, as did Judith, Susan's daughter. Jimmy, her son, had graduated from University and was on his

own. Jill was married and Steve was our son-in-law. Paul and Laura were to marry a year later. We sold Susan's house in a time of low housing values. But we began our life together. Susan, Executive Director for a local Red Cross chapter, looked towards fulfilling her ambition of being a myotherapist. Life was good.

Just 4 years into our marriage Jill developed brain cancer. She received surgery. Her twin boys had to be aborted so that radical treatment could continue. The 5-hour drive to her home in Rochester, NY to support Steve and 3-year old Marisa, our first grandchild, became very familiar. Her debilitation was steady, despite her excellent health and good health habits. She died just 2 years later. I recall calling Susan en route to a meeting in Arizona and got the news that Jill had died. We had memorial services in Rochester and in Bethlehem at the church of her childhood. I gave the memoriam and shared the grief of Susan and Jill's dad.

If there was one sign of redemption at the loss of this wonderful, beautiful young woman of 30 years it was that Steve, her widower said to us: "Will you accept me as your son?" What a faithful nurse he had been to Jill and a wonderful single parent he was to Marisa! We spent good summer trips with her. When Steve remarried, Bonnie graciously accepted us and Tyler, their child, is our granddaughter in every way.

Our family seems complete with Joe as Dave's partner and Jim Seagreaves as Kristel's husband. Jim Fraivillig is single. In addition to Tyler and Marisa, our grandchildren are Tim, Kurt, Maxine, Collin, Jacob, Andrew, Gabriel, Trevor and Julia. We enjoy the company of all of them. Early in our life together on Church Street we were blessed with a large house that could accommodate them all when they came home for vacations. Most fascinating is the diversity of their political views. When

discussion among them became energetic we parents went to bed. Leaving the Provincial Elders also meant leaving the house with the spacious back yard for a more modest retirement home. One of the grandchildren asked that we be sure to take the second floor stairway banister with us. With twelve-foot ceilings and a 2-level stairway the hard wood banister was the invitation for the children to slide down.

The joy of marriage to Susan was further enhanced for me as a pastor because she brought the perspective of an experienced, committed lay person to every issue which I faced, whether as pastor or as Provincial Elder. I can say that the Moravian Church benefited richly through her input. She gave up music leadership at East Hills Moravian Church, which she had given for years so that she could be available to travel with me. Gratefully, she has been able to pursue these interests in retirement.

We share an interest in travel. Trips related to my work took us to the Caribbean several times, Moravian communities behind the Iron Curtain, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Rome. We've traveled in Canada on numerous occasions, Eastern Europe, Russia, Scandinavia, France, Egypt and Jordan.

In very recent days our life together is enriched by our dog, Montezuma (Zum Zum), a wise and affectionate Chihuahua.

4. World and Politics

We were of an era when interest in politics came late. My parents, immigrants and not knowing the lingua franca, voted, but otherwise showed little interest in the government at all levels. Canadian-born, English neighbor Tom Reed, participated in local politics, and was admired for his involvement. These seemed unattainable for us.

Living in Nicaragua and Guyana introduced me to me a new world, the world of politics. Nicaragua was under a dictatorship. I could see how Marxism/Leninism would appeal to those who saw no hope for freedom from tyranny. It was the time of the Cold War and the world was sharply divided in Communism and the “free world.” The Third World was emerging—desperately poor, unaligned and disenfranchised. With the end of European colonialism already on its way out self-determination became the mantra. The challenge for me as an expatriate was to relate my faith and theology to the dawning political realities. It was a growing time for me.

Guyana (British Guiana) was to have its first elections 2 days after our arrival in 1961. The People’s Progressive Party (PPP), supported by the East Indian community, gained the majority vote. They had Marxist/Soviet/Cuban sympathies. The leader was married to a woman related to the Rosenbergs, tried and executed in the USA for Communist sympathies. A full-scale strike in 1963, fomented by the opposition, and supported by the US, brought economic and social havoc. Indians were divided from African Guyanese for the first time. Political allegiances were readily identified on the basis of race. The challenge for the Church was to find a meeting ground in the Gospel.

Independence from Britain’s colonial rule was to follow and the rewards would go to the party in power. The trappings of Independence included the shaping of a constitution, selection of a flag and a national anthem. The severing of British ties brought challenge and change. Indigenization went forward. It was exciting to participate in such activities and events. My political awareness dawned. My life has been the richer.

I sensed that with these developments my time in Guyana was coming to a close. After 10 years and 3 children, Guyanese language and ways it felt like home. However, the seeds of change had already been planted in the Moravian Church and we needed to leave. With the call of the Church to a US congregation I needed a visa. After 5 years I became a US citizen. At that time I was required to “renounce” Canadian citizenship, and this I did with deep regret, for I saw no immediate opportunity to return to Canada. As a responsible citizen, and never having been stationary enough to vote, I wanted to participate in the political process. My interest in politics, fostered by international experiences, has been a never-ending source of interest and Christian responsibility.

5. International

My life in 4 countries and cultures has shaped me to an awareness of the whole world, God’s world. I am grateful for my Canadian heritage that readily embraces diversity and bipartisan approaches to solving problems. A bilingual country has great experience and background in reaching across human barriers. The global market and awareness that essential human problems require universal attention are values that the whole world needs to espouse.

A paper of such length as this needs a compelling close. I offer none, except to thank God for a life of service that has been rich and rewarding. As I write, I am in my sixth assignment for interim leadership in the church since my retirement at 65 seven years ago. I continue to learn and grow. I am glad for the fellowship of the church that continues to nurture me in my love for the Lord Jesus. Thanks be to God!

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
April 1, 2007

My Intern Year in the Canadian District

by Craig Troutman

In this year (2007) in which the Moravian Church marks its 550th anniversary, I am celebrating the 25th anniversary of my ordination as a minister of the Moravian Church. An anniversary invites reflection on a beginning and all that flows from it. In my case, the anniversary of an ordination brings to mind memories of an internship which helped to form me as a pastor.

After two years of study at Moravian Theological Seminary, I participated in a year-long internship that allowed me to engage in pastoral ministry in two different settings: an urban congregation (Edmonton Moravian Church) and a rural parish (New Sarepta Moravian Church). The opportunity to learn more about ministry in two different contexts in another part of the Moravian world was very appealing to my wife, Anna, and me. As southerners traveling to the Great White North, we considered ourselves to be people on an adventure—one made all the more exciting because Anna and I were expecting our first child as we set out for Edmonton in the fall of 1980.

The Rev. Doug Kleintop, pastor of the Edmonton congregation, assumed the role of field supervisor for my internship. I also received help and support from the faculty at St. Stephen's College, a theological school affiliated with the University of Alberta. The internship gave me the opportunity to learn by doing, and there were a number of pastoral "firsts" for me: the first Communion, the first wedding, the first Confirmation Class, the first—and last—revival series. And, of course, there was the first baptism—our oldest son, Andrew, was baptized in June of 1981 in a service of worship at the New Sarepta church.

Thankfully, I did not experience my first funeral in Canada. I am also grateful that my first pastor-parishioner conflict came later in my life when I was more experienced and had thicker skin. Sadly, I did have one unpleasant first—and last—experience. As the part-time pastor of the New Sarepta Church, I was present when the congregation decided to close its doors. Having been kept alive through the services of part-time interns like myself, the New Sarepta Church was not given this option after my service with them ended.

I chose the intern experience because I wanted to improve my professional skills, but my lasting impressions of this experience have more to do with relationships than specific events in ministry. I am indebted to all the people who willingly offered guidance and encouragement. While I benefited from the formal supervision and instruction, I also benefited greatly from the wisdom and generosity which came from individual members of each congregation.

In hindsight, it occurs to me that my “ordaining moment” happened months before I was officially ordained. It happened as I began to see myself as parishioners saw me. Slowly, but surely, over the days, weeks, and months of service I began to claim a pastoral identity. Though not fully formed, I became more comfortable in my role as pastor.

Sitting on a wooden rocker in a sunlit living room, I shared some cake and coffee with one of the older members of the congregation. The conversation began with comments about the weather—farming people always spoke about the weather—and then we moved on to discuss matters related to the church and its members. We continued to talk as neighbors or friends sometimes talk but then the conversation turned. There was a problem, a lingering pain over the health and well-being of a family member.

Seeing the concern in this woman's face, I realized in that moment that she wanted more from me than a listening ear; she wanted some spiritual guidance. She wanted to talk with one who was called to care for souls. Inexperienced as a spiritual guide, I shared from the meager wisdom I possessed. Was it sufficient? Only God knows. To this day, I cannot recall the outcome of our conversation, though the memory remains of a closing prayer blessed by her tears and mine.

As I reflect upon my time in the Canadian district, these words from Paul's letter to the Philippians seem appropriate: "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now" (Phil. 1:3-5).

The gospel—as communicated through the faith and witness of the good people of the Edmonton and New Sarepta congregations—continues to have its effect on me. Grace, mercy, and peace to you all in this anniversary year.

