

A letter for Church Service Sunday to  
the members and friends of the Moravian Church - British Province

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Feelings and moods affect us all to some degree. Happiness is difficult to achieve and may come suddenly and unexpectedly, but most people are content to drift happily as long as they are not depressed or feeling sad and angry.

Anger is something that seems to be very prevalent at the time of being invited to write to you. Anger about all manner of things - but often seemingly petty and insignificant. Some we know have a continuous anger, we might call it a burning anger, which easily leads to mental health problems as they are consumed by negative thoughts. Blocking negative thoughts may help our mental health, but is hard to do and uncontrolled anger soon leads to fury which then becomes rage which leads to nothing positive. I was so glad that President Joe Biden urged the Israelis “not to be consumed by rage.”

It is recorded in all four Gospels that Jesus had occasion to be angry. And perhaps that gives us a good guide, for there are things about which we should be angry in a positive way today. On my list I would have things like warfare and wastefulness, indifference to the needs of the poor and lonely. Racism, religious intolerance and the treatment of women in all countries. Fundamentalism and the promotion of feelings of guilt. There is need for our generation to listen to the theologians and to re-think our theology, teaching and what we believe. Change has to come and needs to come quickly for the good of the Church and its Gospel message.

I remember being angry, and being ashamed of it, some seventy years ago when the God I was trying to serve, kept reminding me that he wanted me to serve him as a minister in the church. This feeling of resentment and anger at his call continued while in the Royal Air Force until I said to God well ok I will serve you but it will be in your strength and with your support.

I am so grateful that with God’s help and the support I have had from my wife, family and friends, I have been greatly helped; and to all you Brothers and Sisters I say thank you today for helping to make my life so full and interesting.

I still believe that in the church there is a need for anger but there is an even greater need for love and all the other gifts of the Spirit as St Paul puts it in Galatians 5/22 & 23 “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.”

We have had many special church campaigns and projects over the years to support and encourage the work of the Church. Project 32 is the current

programme which needs wholehearted support. However, the church still needs committed people who are willing to serve as ministers. The church needs people who may sometimes be angry but who are always full of love. Men and women, who are ready to be trained, are invited to join the team of dedicated leaders who are serving the Lord in so many wonderful ways today. The need is great. Would you consider offering to serve in the ministry of the church ?

All good wishes as you consider this request.

John McOwat    Ep. Fra.

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