



Herrnhuter Mission *aktuell*

Nachrichten der Herrnhuter Missionshilfe

Ausgabe 2023-24 vom 14. Dezember 2023

Merry Christmas



Dear readers of the Herrnhuter Missionshilfe newsletter,

I would like to thank you very much for remaining loyal to us over the past year and for subscribing to and reading the newsletter. Thank you very much! Over the course of the year, we report on many people and regions that are otherwise often sidelined and receive little attention. Thank you for taking an interest in them and giving them appreciation and dignity. We were able to report on many wonderful things, such as the opening of the vocational training center for tourism in Zanzibar and the inauguration of the Walani Women's Education Center in Malawi. Here, many young people are given the hope of a good and self-determined

life. But at the same time, we have also had to report on natural disasters that have deprived people of their livelihoods and, of course, the violent and hopeless situation in Palestine around Star Mountain. It is good when we share joy and sorrow.

I wish you a blessed Christmas and a few peaceful and reflective days. Let us ask God that we can report more hope, joy and confidence in 2024 than this year. The next newsletter will be published in the new year on January 11.

Niels Gärtner

Become a sponsor for the "Walani" project

The Atsikana Walani Technical College in Malawi offers young women a safe place to live and the opportunity for vocational training. Many of the trainees come from the UNHCR refugee camp



Dzaleka. With a sponsorship, you enable a girl from the Dzaleka camp or the surrounding villages to receive vocational training at Walani College. It covers the costs of training, accommodation, food, basic medical care, school materials and access to clean water. Our local partners look after the women during their 12-month training. As a sponsor, you accompany a young woman during this time and receive

letters and photos. The cost of a sponsorship is 60 euros per month. But even smaller amounts can help. For further information, please contact

markus.kuhn@ebu.de

Christmas at Star Mountain



This year, Christmas at Star Mountain will be different than usual. Many churches in Palestine have canceled large events in connection with Christmas, such as bazaars. You can't celebrate when people are suffering and dying in the surrounding area, in Gaza. We would probably feel the same way. Christmas is also being celebrated on a smaller scale at Star Mountain this year. Will the nativity scene be as magnificent as in 2019? The Lutheran pastor

from Ramallah, Rodny Said, came as usual during Advent to celebrate and remember Christmas. Especially in this time of hopelessness, fear for relatives and friends and hopelessness about how things will continue economically and socially, the people of Star Mountain urgently need Christmas: God comes into our world and places himself at the side of the poor, the marginalized and the hopeless. In our Christmas prayers this year, let us especially remember the people at Star Mountain who work every day for peaceful and dignified coexistence!

Isaac Ononga from Uvira is now attending university

The Brødremenighedens Dansk Mission BDM in Denmark tells a special success story: the story of Isaac Ononga from the D.R. Congo. Isaac



came to the Knudsen Center, the orphanage of the Moravian Church in Unvira in the D.R. Congo (50 places), at the age of 15. Here he, who has a physical disability, began physical and psychological rehabilitation. As a child, he had lost his father in the civil war; he left behind a mother with seven children. The mother did not have the means to care for all seven children and

pay for their schooling. This is where the Knudsen Center came into play. The orphanage provided Isaac with the material support and encouragement he desperately needed. Isaac recently received his diploma. He is now the first pupil from the orphanage to be admitted to university in Uvira. He would like to become a doctor one day and help other children and young people with disabilities. The whole sunshine story in Danish [here](#).

In operation for 40 years: "BDM Butikken" in Christiansfeld



On 3 December 1983 - exactly 40 years ago - the missionary organization of the Moravian Church in Denmark opened its first store, called **BDM Butikken**. This was duly celebrated on December 3, 2023 in the UNESCO World Heritage town of Christiansfeld. See [here](#). The numerous volunteers who have been involved in the trade in second-hand goods and fair trade products

(many from the worldwide Moravian Church) - some for decades - were also recognized, starting with purchasing, cleaning, pricing and presentation of the goods and ending with sales and bookkeeping. The store on Prætoriestorvet is considered clean and cozy. In good years, its turnover was between 800,000 and 1 million Danish kroner (1 DKK = 0.13 EUR), of which up to half a million kroner went to missionary work. Visitors praise the good spirit that prevails in the approximately 100 square meter fair trade and second-hand store in the city center.

Parts of Honduran Mosquitia flooded again

Many regions of the world suffer significantly more from climate change and the associated



socio-economic changes than Europe. Because government action and insurance are often lacking, people in many regions of the world are affected by recurring natural disasters more directly and in a more totalitarian way than in the western world. Record rainfall and prolonged flooding are now almost part of everyday life in Central America. As a result, the water quality in

Honduran Mosquitia has also deteriorated significantly in recent years: Hurricanes, modern agriculture and the felling of old rainforest trees are causing severe soil erosion. In November 2023, large parts of Honduran and Nicaraguan Mosquitia were once again under water and contaminated with pollutants. Obtaining drinkable, healthy water is increasingly becoming a problem. Drinking water must be filtered. See [here](#).

Anglican Church in Canada wants to learn from the Moravian Church



"In the Anglican Church, we have a lot of nice words and liturgies, but we don't do much to make our communion visible ... The Moravian Church comes together in a physical, tangible way to experience communion." This is what Anglican minister Danielle Key had to say after taking part in an ecumenical workshop in the summer of 2023. She continued: "The Anglican

Church can learn a lot from the Moravian Church about what it means to actually create community and not just talk about community." The Anglican pastor was particularly impressed by the Moravian love feast. Matthew Puddister reported in the Anglican Journal on the desire for increased cooperation between the Anglican Church, the Moravian Church and the Lutheran Church in Canada in community building and mission. See in English [hier](#).

Invitation to a Unity day of prayer on January 6, 2024

In view of the current crisis-ridden world



situation and with reference to the Unity prayer watch that began in old Moravian Church on August 27, 1727, the Moravian Church in Great Britain has called for January 6, 2024 to be an additional Unity Day of Prayer. Call in English and all kinds of practical suggestions [here](#). Liturgical elements from the Epiphany and mission liturgy [here](#). The appeal states: "We want to consciously place ourselves under God's rule. We want to refresh, strengthen and revitalize the current church with our prayers so that we can be a sustainable church in the 21st century ... Let the day be a day of communal encounter with God and getting to know his view of our reality and problems. It is about - in this order - listening to God and being heard by God. It's about allowing God to change our perspective and the size of our heart (our heart's capacity)."

Unity Youth Committee UYC collects Moravian Advent and Christmas traditions



On its Facebook pages (see [here](#)) and on its website, the globally active Unity Youth Committee UYC invites people to share regional Advent and Christmas traditions. Jiřina Kaletová-Čančíková from Nová Paka (CR), the coordinator of the office, writes: "How do you prepare for the Advent season? What do you do with your young people during Advent and Christmas? Do you have resources to share? We are trying to collect your contributions and upload them to our website if possible. Take a look at the site - which is currently under construction - from time to time (see [here](#)) and write to us if you think of something special! Also, if you have songs, plays, special services or other materials for Christmas and would like to share them with other Unity provinces, please contact us at the following e-mail address: contact@unitasfratrumyouth.org."

Human chain against gender-based violence in Genadendal



Unfortunately, gender-based violence is still a problem all over the world, especially in South Africa. According to a WCC campaign from 1988, *Thursdays in Black* is the day of the week on which violence against women is particularly in the public eye. On Wednesday, 5 December 2023, several public and private organizations around the Moravian Congregation Genadendal called for a widely visible sign against all forms of gender-based violence. More than 250 children and young people, as well as a number of adults, informed themselves about the scandalous problem of violence and formed a long human chain in front of the Moravian Church Mission Museum under the motto Breaking the silence. For a 90-second video by Richard Lapperts (also with drone footage) accompanied by music, see [here](#).

How the Moravian Congregation Genadendal came to have its first church



It was an arduous journey before the Moravian Congregation Genadendal received permission to build its own small church. The mission museum in the village commemorates this with a longer article. See [here](#). The Dutch Church Council under the leadership of Rev. Meent Borchers in Stellenbosch vigorously opposed the first church building in 1796 because it felt disturbed by the bells in Genadendal, which allegedly echoed over 75 kilometers. However, the new British colonial government then permitted a church for Genadendal, which concealed its purpose on the outside. It was built in a T-shape in the Cape Dutch style with elegantly rounded gables and resembled a colonial town house. By 1800, however, a larger church had to be built. The former church was transformed into a public library. At the time, the Cape Literary Gazette named it the best lending library in the country. Only the separate bell tower remains from the early days.

Review of the "Elim Heritage Festival 2023"



For several years now, there has been a Facebook page dedicated to the history and historical heritage of the [Moravian Congregation Elim](#) in South Africa - very close to the Cape of Needles, the southern tip of the African continent. Founded in 1824 for members of the Khoi people, the station is home to the first and possibly only memorial in South Africa commemorating the liberation of slaves. Dozens

of enslaved people from the Overberg region found refuge in the Elim mission station in 1837/1838. Today, around 2,500 people live here, most of whom are descended in some way from the former enslaved and are referred to as colored people. At the end of October 2023, a Heritage Festival was once again held in Elim, at which many of the approximately 1,100 members of the Moravian Congregation - children, young people and adults - took part in singing, dancing and fashion shows. Some pictures by Isaac Anthony Engel [hier](#).

Five years after the major fire in Wupperthal, South Africa



It has been five years since a major fire devastated large parts of the Wupperthal mission settlement in the Cederberg Mountains of South Africa. Help with the reconstruction of the village, which is now well advanced (see [here](#)) came from home and abroad, including Canada. On October 28, 2023, the Azrieli School of Architecture & Urbanism in Ottawa reported on the work of its students in Wupperthal: "How

Carleton architecture students helped a South African village rebuild after a fire". To the article in English [here](#). The article states: "On two trips to Wupperthal, the students documented the remains of burnt houses in the traditional Cape Dutch style by measuring, photographing, sketching and recording what was left in 2018. The documentation utilized observation and analysis skills developed in the study of architecture."

"Radio Baraka FM" about the Synod of the Tanzanian Northern Province



"The election of a bishop also failed in the third round of voting" is the title of a *Radio Baraka FM* report on the recent synod of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church in Tanzania. It continues: "The Northern Province of the Moravian Church in Tanzania held a synod because a new church leadership and a new bishop were to be elected. The bishop election did not produce a result as no candidate

achieved the required number of votes. The position was not filled until further notice. However, the synod elected a new chairperson, Rev. Isaac Siame. Rev. Erick Mponzi was elected as his deputy. Rev. Jeremiah Kibona now serves as General Secretary. The three districts of the Northern Province are now headed by the following persons: Rev. Merio, Rev. Esther Mwasoyoge and Rev. Yohana Parkpuny. Bishop Kenan Salim Panja from the Tanzanian Southern Province conducted the service to inaugurate the elected officers."

Church construction in Masolo on Lake Tanganyika finally completed



Following a Bible study on Matthew 25:31-46 (parable of the talents), Christians in the Moravian Congregation of Masolo and Katongolo on Lake Tanganyika realized that it was time to abandon a permanent poverty mentality and become aware of their own strength. They soon began to take the initiative to build a church in Masolo. They dug out strips of foundation, they

shaped and fired bricks, they brought in clay, sand, wood and water and they climbed scaffolding, because God had given them talents. The church, which had been delayed for a long time, was built. The apprentices from the Moravian Church's carpentry school in Sumbawanga came to put the roof on as part of their practical training. At the end, a celebration was held with a joyful church service. A newsletter from the Moravian Church's mission organization in Denmark reports on all this. See [here](#).

Presentation of congregations of the new "Mission Province South Asia"



In the Moravian Messenger, the information magazine of the British Unity Province (issue for December 2023, page 144), some congregations of the new Mission Province South Asia, which was elevated to this status by the Unity Synod in Cape Town in September 2023, are presented. See [here](#). The page headline reads: Church services in South Asia. It continues: "This month

we introduce you to some churches in Nepal, Ladakh and New Delhi. When we meet for our Sunday services, our brothers and sisters in Nepal have already met because their service day is Saturday. In India, the time difference is generally 4.5 hours. A variety of music can be experienced in the church services. The church rooms are usually carpeted and the congregation sits on the floor. As you can see from the photos, it is not always warm in India and Nepal; you have to dress warmly. Please think of our brothers and sisters in Christ when they celebrate their services and have fellowship."

200 years ago: Primary education in Jamaica began with the Moravian Church



The Ministry of Education in Jamaica recently marked a milestone anniversary at the Lititz Moravian Congregation in St. Elizabeth: the Bicentennial Celebrations of Primary Education in Jamaica 1823-2023. Nevadeene Gallimore Miller, a director in the Ministry of Education, thanked the Moravian Church for its contribution to the development of national primary education. This began 200 years ago with the

opening of the first elementary school for slave children in what is now St. Elizabeth. The pioneering work of the former Moravian missionaries is indelibly anchored in the minds of the country's educators. To this day, the Moravian Church is an important partner of the Jamaican state in the transformation of the education system. Today, there are 33 elementary school in Jamaica that are affiliated with the Moravian Church. To a longer newspaper article in *The Gleaner* [here](#).

"Maidstone Museum" in Jamaica tells the story of slave emancipation



Every fall, the Maidstone Museum in the northwest of Manchester (Jamaica) offers special tours for schoolchildren. During these tours, the children learn about the history of the liberation of slaves of African descent in Jamaica. The museum - opened in 2015 - houses hundreds of artifacts used by slaves and slave owners in the 19th century. The former coffee plantation Maidstone, also known as Nazareth, developed

under the influence of the Moravian Church into one of the oldest free villages in Jamaica. The museum displays, among other things, a list of the names of the Jamaican pioneer slaves, the first slaves to become landowners after their liberation. The Nazareth Moravian Church (1834, new building 1890, National Heritage Site), the churchyard of the Moravian Church, the ruins of an old slave hospital and Trial Hill, the place of trial and execution for slaves, are also located in the vicinity of the museum. Watch the video of museum curator Ava Frith [hier](#). Article from *The Gleaner* newspaper [hier](#).

Cuba Foundation of the Moravian Church sends new container with relief supplies



The [Moravian Church Cuba Foundation](#) (Armando Rusindo Mission Foundation) called for special donations during Advent. It found a person who is willing to match all individual donations received by Christmas that are needed for a new aid shipment to Cuba to the sum of 5,000 US dollars. In a [post from Joe Jarvis](#), the foundation's director, dated December 5, 2023, it says: "With Thanksgiving behind us and the

celebration of our Savior's birth approaching, I want to say: We are blessed! I am happy to inform you that our Foundation will soon be sending another container of relief supplies worth \$3,500 to Cuba (mainly 20-pound bags of rice and beans, as well as drinking water and solar systems) to strengthen our brothers and sisters there ... We are working closely with the Chairperson of the Moravian Church in Cuba and the General Secretary of the Cuban Council of Churches. The majority of the container contents will benefit families from the Moravian Church; some relief supplies will also go to Christians of other denominations and non-Christians."

Advent singing by school children in Paramaribo



For the children at the Marcel-Ria Samuel School in Paramaribo-Beekhuizen, Advent caroling is already a small tradition. Last year, some of the children came to the deaconess house in Paramaribo with a hosanna (short video [hier](#)), was paid a visit to the 65 senior citizens in the Catholic *Fatima Oord* in the second week of Advent 2023. Small gifts and food parcels were also handed over during this visit. Three videos

and two pictures here. The elderly people and the nursing staff at the facility were delighted with this change of pace, as there is often little time for meaningful leisure activities in everyday life. Some of the senior citizens were able to sing along to the songs sung by the children. Due to the ongoing economic crisis in Suriname, the country's retirement and nursing homes are generally poorly equipped.

Nico van Wageningen acts as interim coordinator of the ZZg



The Zeister Zendingsgenootschap *ZZg*, the Dutch sister organization of Herrnhuter Missionshilfe, had invited to an extraordinary general meeting in Zeist on 18 November 2023. This had become necessary because no new Secretary General could be elected to succeed the retiring Secretary General Ewald Hunsel at the regular General

Meeting on June 17, 2023. Ewald Hunsel had thankfully continued his duties until October 1, 2023. As no new Secretary General had been found by the time the Annual General Meeting was held again, the ZZg Board asked Nico van Wageningen, who has a degree in agricultural science, to fill an interim position. He accepted. He has a great deal of experience in project and management work at home and abroad. He was given the mandate to examine the structure and policy of the ZZg and make recommendations for its future.

New historical journal of the Lenape people in Moraviantown



The **Lenape** (formerly Delaware) people, who lived in close association with the Moravian mission for 175 years and whose remnants today reside in Moraviantown, Canada, where the Fairfield Museum is located, published a new historical journal for the first time in November 2023: the Weelihk Thupeekw Heritage Journal.

See [here](#)! Weelihk Thupeekw means Beautiful Place in the Lenape language. The Lenape used this name for all the places they founded on their long, difficult journey to the present day - always along rivers and always in community with the Moravian Church - and which they had to abandon again and again due to external pressure. This long, hard road led them from Manahatta (now the Manhattan peninsula) to Moraviantown on the Thames (formerly Old/New Fairfield; now officially Moraviantown). In the fall of 2015, a delegation from Lenape visited the home of the Moravian missionaries in the Czech Republic and Germany and also stayed in Herrnhut and Bad Boll.

Family lantern festival heralds Advent season for the Moravian Church in Latvia



A highlight of the Moravian Church's work with children and families in Latvia is the Lantern Festival at the beginning of the dark season, which takes place at different locations each year. Usually 100 to 120 people come together. This year's invitation to the Latvian capital Riga reads: "You are the light of the world. The city that lies on a mountain cannot be hidden. Let your light so shine before men, that they may

see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14, 16). We cordially invite you to the family lantern festival on December 2, 2023 at 4:00 pm. So that the fall winds do not extinguish the lights right away, it is recommended that each family bring a protective lantern or lampion. In addition, a small treat should be prepared for the start of Advent." This year's meeting place was the parish of the Evangelical Lutheran Trinitatis congregation in Riga. See [here](#).

News in brief

1. The number of dead, missing, injured and homeless people continues to grow following the flooding disaster that has hit northern Tanzania - and other parts of north-east Africa - since the end of November 2023. On December 4, 2023, 47 people were reported dead, 85 injured and thousands homeless in Tanzania. After a long drought, East Africa is now suffering from torrential rainfall in connection with the El Niño weather phenomenon. Short video from the Manyara region [here](#).
2. On December 2, 2023, a five-hour Advent bazaar was held in the church hall of the Moravian Congregation in Zeist (NL). The proceeds were intended for the purchase of new furniture for the schools of the Moravian Church in Suriname - especially for the schools in the underdeveloped inland areas. See [here](#).
3. A few impressions of a worship service of the youth of the Moravian Church in Suriname - the so-called Power Hour - on November 25, 2023 at the youth center in Paramaribo are available in two short videos [here](#) and [here](#).
4. To mark the 57th Independence Day of the island republic of Barbados on November 30, 2023, a small exhibition of historical objects was presented in the Calvary Moravian Congregation in Bridgetown to the delight of numerous visitors. 30 photos [here](#). In front of the church, a number of stalls ensured that the children also had their festive fun. See [here](#).
5. Pictures of the family lantern festival of the Moravian Church in Latvia, which took place in the early evening of December 2, 2023 in the Lutheran Trinity Church in Riga, can be found [here](#).
6. On December 5, 2023, Surinamese television broadcast the funeral service from Paramaribo for the 15 people who died after the recent collapse of a gold mine deep inland. Church representatives and the current Surinamese president, Ronnie Brunswijk, spoke at the ceremony and found moving words for the mourners. See [here](#).
7. Rafael Abaas, stage name Raff Chanco, born in Paramaribo in 1992, the first Surinamese gospel singer to reach more than one million views on Youtube, recently recorded his latest song Remorse in the parking lot and gymnasium of the Moravian Church Youth Center in Paramaribo, Suriname. See an excerpt [here](#). The singer had served a six-month prison sentence for a moral offense.
8. The Memorial Moravian Church on St. Thomas, Unity Province West Indies East, congratulated their pastor Cortroy Jarvis and his wife Althea on their 40th wedding anniversary on December 6, 2023. See [here](#).
9. The Calvary Moravian Congregation in Bridgetown on Barbados, Unity Province West Indies East, invites you to a Christmas concert with singing and steel drums on December 17, 2023 at 7 pm. The motto is: Arise, sleepers awake! (Awake, you who sleep / Eph. 5:14).
10. The Advent Bazaar of the Moravian Congregation Zeist/NL in the Great Church

Hall on Saturday, December 9, 2023, generated proceeds of almost 3,500 euros. The proceeds will be used to purchase new furniture for the Moravian Church's preschools and elementary school in Suriname. A photo of the bazaar [here](#).

Impressum

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