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## Herrnhuter Mission *aktuell*

### Nachrichten der Herrnhuter Missionshilfe

Ausgabe 2026-13 vom 09. Juli 2026

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## Container Campaign for Malawi Successfully Launched



Our container campaign for Malawi came to a successful start. Since it began, we've received numerous inquiries and already many donations of goods in good condition. We're very pleased by this outpouring of generosity, which shows just how many people want to support our educational projects. Among the items being collected are tools, machinery, school supplies, laptops, sewing machines, and other technical

equipment and materials that are urgently needed at our vocational schools in Malawi. There, these items will help improve the practical training of young people in a sustainable way. The tremendous response encourages us and shows what is possible when many people work together. We thank all donors from our hearts. Every in-kind donation will find a home in Malawi where it is needed—and will open up new opportunities for young people's futures.

## Children in SMRC are now learning to play soccer



The soccer World Cup currently underway in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. has made this possible: In collaboration with the Palestine Association for Children's Encouragement of Sports (PACES), regular soccer training sessions began last week for the children at the Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center (SMRC) near Ramallah (Palestine/West Bank) and for the

children at the Al-Karama Center in the Jalazone Refugee Camp. The training sessions take place in a gym at the camp's children's club, in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm and joy. The SMRC staff would like to thank PACES and the coaches

present for their wonderful support and their dedicated efforts to make this initiative a success. The initiative aims to help improve the children's skills and promote their social inclusion. Photos [here](#). A video [here](#).

## End of the 2025–26 Kindergarten Year at SMRC



The 2025/26 kindergarten year recently came to a close at the inclusive, international, and interfaith kindergarten of the Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center (SMRC) near Ramallah (Palestine/West Bank). The center recently posted on Facebook: "In an atmosphere filled with joy, gratitude, and cheer, we bid farewell to three proud children from our kindergarten

program. In addition to games and dancing, the farewell celebration naturally included the distribution of small treats and symbolic gifts to all the children. The center's administration wrote: 'Our rehabilitation center extends its warmest congratulations to the children and their parents and wishes them continued success and the progress they hope for in their future school careers.' The kindergarten is housed in a modern, spacious building that was completed in June 2020 following extensive planning, funded in part by donations from Herrnhuter Missionshilfe. Ten photos [here](#).

## Dr. Tolk's Newsletter: Encouraging News from Tanzania



Dr. Jochen Tolk's donor group reports encouraging developments in the support and education projects in Tanzania. Thanks to numerous donations, construction of a carpentry shop can now begin in Ilindi, opening up new training opportunities for young people. At the same time, the water supply is being improved with a new well. In Tenende, too,

support for over 300 children continues. They have once again been provided with school clothes, shoes, and school supplies—for many, a prerequisite for being able to attend school regularly. Herrnhuter Missionshilfe is delighted by this positive news and thanks Dr. Jochen Tolk's donor group, as well as all supporters, for their great commitment. Read the full newsletter [here](#).

## Products from the sewing workshop in Burrel



Under the heading Love That Takes Shape, the Moravian Church in Albania showcases a sewing workshop where electric sewing machines are used to create shoulder bags, shopping bags, and other fabric containers from various materials, some featuring sewn-on buttons and appliqués. See [here](#). The sewing workshop is located in the small town of Burrel in the mountainous region of central Albania. It helps

the women working there generate their own income. An accompanying Facebook post on July 3, 2026, stated: “Our sisters in Burrel have golden hands.” Indeed, the products they create demonstrate artistic taste as well as the sewing skills of the Albanian women and girls who are supervised in Burrel by Shpresa Gjestila. Burrel was one of the very first outposts of the Moravian Church in Albania in the second half of the 1990s. In this town, which has always been shaped by mining (chromite extraction and smelting), there was great social hardship following the fall of the communist dictatorship.

## About the Activities of the Moravian Church of Albania in Burrel



Even during the summer and vacation season, the Moravian Church in Albania offers many activities for children and women at its locations throughout the country. Groups have been active for 30 years in the small town of Burrel in the mountains of central Albania. Shpresa Gjestila, the group’s leader, not only showcases the building on Facebook—which was renovated

by the Moravian Church with donations from Herrnhuter Missionshilfe—but also invites people to join various activities: “It’s worth taking part in the fun and entertaining activities on the grounds of our center in Burrel and in the fresh air.” 17 photos [here](#). Shpresa Gjestila, a nurse, will soon be retiring. She was both a mother and a father to her three children. She comes from a Muslim family and initially had a hard time finding her way to the Moravian Church. This happened through her daughter Doruntina, who attended a children’s group run by the Moravian Church and found the Christian faith there.

## Invitation to the Bible Camp in Pogradec



Under the theme We Bring the Peace of God, the Moravian Church in Albania is hosting its 18th children's and youth camp, which will take place from July 9 to 12, 2026, in Pogradec-Buçimas. The camp focuses on the Bible verse Philippians 4:7: "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." The

invitation poster is available [here](#). The event will be held at the Moravian Church's campground, just a few meters from the vast Lake Ohrid, which is almost as large as Lake Constance. The campground was purchased and prepared for use primarily with donations from Denmark. The site, located at an elevation of 735 meters, offers space for 20 to 25 tents as well as areas for games and recreation. In addition, there is a sturdy wooden house with twelve beds in four rooms, as well as a large common room and dining area complete with a kitchen and restrooms.

## Nasel Ephraim and Brion Dixon Elected Bishops of the Moravian Church



On June 1, 2026, the Unity Women's Desk (UWD) website stated: "We are pleased to announce that Pastor Nasel Ephraim has been elected a bishop of the worldwide Unity. The newly elected bishop serves in the Northern Province of the Moravian Church America North and is the first Black woman to hold the office of bishop from the Northern Province. Nasel

Ephraim was a delegate from the American Northern Province at the recent Unity Women's Consultation in Arusha, Tanzania. – May God bless you in your ministry, Sister! May God's blessing be with you and with those you serve all over the world in times like these." An ecumenical congratulatory poster [here](#). - - Brion Dixon was also elected by the Synod of the Northern Province as a bishop of the Unity. A photo of both newly elected bishops is [here](#). The Synod took place from June 24 to 26, 2026, in Minneapolis/MIN. A group photo of the new church leadership is [here](#).

## Program for the Tanzania Exchange Finalized



In its summer 2026 newsletter, the Moravian Congregation Rhein-Main published the program for the visit of its guests from the Tanzanian partner congregation of Ibungu. The newsletter states: “We have been working toward this for three years, planning within the partnership committee and raising funds through the ‘Karibu Ibungu’ campaign to

finance our guests’ trip. Now the time has come, and Zainabu Cheyo, Joyce Ghambi, Martin Mwiba, and William Mashimbi will be visiting us from August 3 to 17, 2026. We will spend two weeks in Herrnhag—first at the Sozietät, then at the ‘Lichtenburg’—and go on themed excursions. Good opportunities to meet our guests include the “Meet the West” weekend from August 14 to 16, 2026, the “Meet the West” Day on August 14, 2026, and the “Summer Evening Behind the Sisters’ House” on August 8, 2026.” The Ibungu Parish is located at an altitude of 1,000 meters in the southwestern highlands of Tanzania. The detailed visit program is available [here](#) (page 2f).

## Missionary Kirsten Thomsen Has Passed Away



Kirsten Thomsen, a native of Denmark and a missionary for the Moravian Church in Tanzania (Western Province), passed away on June 5, 2026, just two days after her 89th birthday. She lived in Tanzania for nearly 37 years. Her funeral took place on June 27, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. in Christiansfeld, Denmark. She was held in high regard by fellow missionaries and her Bible

students until the very end. She also cared for the hospital in Sikonge and the leprosarium in Kidugalo. A photo of the deceased can be found [here](#). Bishop Ezekiel Yona of the Western Province of the Moravian Church in Tanzania recently wrote on Facebook: “Kirsten Thomsen will be remembered for her great contribution to general and religious education. She played a key role in ensuring that Bible schools and theological colleges trained capable leaders who later served both the church and society.”

## Three Highlights at the “Shristi Academy” in Kathmandu





- The International Kindergarten & Shristi Academy of the Moravian Church in Kathmandu-Baneshwor reported on Facebook about three highlights from the second half of June 2026. First, they celebrated World Music Day, observed on June 21, 2026, with a school program. Photos of the performances can be found [here](#). The diverse performances show

how well the children have already mastered their instruments—including their own voices. It was clear to see: music brings people together across cultures and generations.

- On June 23, 2026, the fourth-graders enjoyed outdoor school as part of a field trip to Marble Dada, Godawari. The theme of the day was: Explore the Earth's Treasures! During breaks on the hike, they learned about rocks and minerals. Photos of the landscape and the school can be found [here](#).
- On July 1, 2026, students in grades 1 through 5 competed against each other in an in-school spelling bee. The teachers cheered on the winners, saying: Keep up the excellent work! Keep aiming high! See photos [here](#).

## “Valedictory Service” at Bethlehem Moravian College



Prospective professionals in the fields of education (early childhood, primary, and secondary education), social sciences, business studies, office systems and administration, robotics and AI, criminal justice, and hospitality and tourism management celebrated their graduation from Bethlehem Moravian College in Malvern, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica, on July 1, 2026.

At a Valedictory Service, dozens of young men and women in their blue and gray school uniforms or capes gathered alongside the faculty in a rented event hall to hear celebratory speeches and words of farewell. The top graduates of the college were honored with certificates, trophies, and small gifts. A video can be viewed [here](#). The soon-to-be professionals expressed their gratitude, saying: Bethlehem Moravian College was a home to us, even though it was far from our actual homes.

## Two church leaders in Chiclayo completed a three-year training program



Two church leaders from the Moravian Church in Peru, Walter Calle Peralta and Leslie Monica Guerrero Gonzales, have completed a three-year theological and missionary training program. Their church is the Iglesia Misión Al Mundo de Moravian Church de la Cruz de la Esperanza in the city of Chiclayo. They completed their training at the transnational educational

organization *Harvester ministries - opening the way*, founded in 1998, whose mission is: To plant one million churches—train one million pastors—evangelize 100 million believers and invite them to discipleship—by the year 2030. Walter Calle Peralta wrote on Facebook on June 27, 2026: “I am very grateful that I was able to accomplish this. God’s grace was my greatest help. Peru belongs to Jesus Christ. I hope to see a revival in Peru as early as 2026.”

## Herrnhut Völkerkundemuseum Focuses on the Nicaragua Mission



Starting July 3, 2026, the Herrnhut Völkerkundemuseum will present the special exhibition *Spirits and Spirituality: On the Mission History of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua*. The exhibition explores the conflict between Christian missionaries and the indigenous population. This was announced by the *Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden*, of

which the Völkerkundemuseum is a part. The exhibition features 40 objects from the museum in Herrnhut and will be on view through September 15, 2027. It illustrates how missionaries from the Moravian Church and traditional healers in Central America negotiated their respective concepts over generations and how new cultural practices emerged as a result. When the Moravian Church expanded its mission network to the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua in the mid-19th century, different conceptions of health, spirituality, and community came into contact. Among other items, a newly acquired medical bag belonging to the Herrnhut missionary Guido Großmann (1871–1945) is on display. More [here](#) and [here](#).

## News in Brief

1. During National Youth Month in June, which is celebrated annually in the

Republic of South Africa, the Moravian Church Mission Museum in Genadendal commemorates the heyday of the rugby team from the local Emil Weder High School in the late 1990s and early 2000s. A photo from that time can be found [here](#).

2. On June 14, 2026, the pastors of the Eglise Morave Burundi in the Kirundo District gathered at the Kimeza congregation for a ministry conference, at the suggestion of Pastor Emmanuel Ngeze. Jean Damascene Rurangwa, the head of the Kirundo District, was also present. He thanked everyone in attendance for the inspiration the pastors provide in spreading the Kingdom of God. Some photos [here](#).
3. A 100-second video offers a brief glimpse into the celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of Medische Zending – Primary Health Care Suriname, which took place in mid-June 2026. See [here](#). A website detailing the long history of Medische Zending in Suriname can be found [here](#) ((please scroll down to “Geschiedenis vanaf het prille begin”).
4. A short video by some schoolchildren from the G. V. Callender School of the Moravian Church in Paramaribo, in anticipation of the upcoming 163rd anniversary of the emancipation of slaves in Suriname on July 1, 1863, can be found [here](#). On Facebook, the school writes: “On June 24, 2026, students in grades 7 and 8 explored the lives and work of the early Black residents of the La Prosperite plantation. We learned how our ancestors survived the system of slavery in this region.”
5. From August 16 to 22, 2026, an eight-member international group from the Moravian Church will be visiting Switzerland. Brothers and sisters from South Africa, Germany, and Switzerland will participate in a work camp at the Montmirail Estate near Lake Neuchâtel.
6. The Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America has elected three of its members—Nola Reed Knouse, John D. Rights, and Dion Christopher—as bishops of the worldwide Moravian Church. With the election of Andrea Williams, for the first time in the province’s 273-year history, a woman and a non-theologian has been elected president of the church leadership. More [here](#).
7. The Moravian Church America North has launched a website where you can register for the Moravian Young Adult Convo 2027. See [here](#). This youth event will take place from June 27 to July 6, 2027, in England and Ireland. The event’s theme is From Island to Island and offers participants the opportunity to explore historic sites of the Moravian Church in England and Ireland and to meet Moravians today.
8. The H.-M.-Bielke School, an elementary school run by the Moravian Church in Leliëndaal in the Commewijne region (Suriname), celebrated its 105th anniversary on June 29, 2026. Just in time for the anniversary, a comprehensive



renovation of the school worth approximately 5.2 million SRD (122,000 euros) was completed with support from the Staatsolie – Suriname's National Energy, Oil & Gas Company, which included the replacement of the school buildings' roofs and the refurbishment of the classrooms. Many photos [here](#).

## **Impressum**

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