



THE INFORMATION

A communication from the Chair of the PEC of the Moravian Church Eastern West Indies Province

To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12-13)

September, 2024 Issue

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Rev. Algernon Lewis
Chair of PEC

The New School Year

The beginning of the new school year comes with a mixture of excitement and dread. For those who are excited, they may be looking forward to being with friends, creating new memories and experiences. Some may also look forward to the year because it is bringing them closer to the end of their final year in school.

There are students who dread going back to school. The reasons may be as varied as the students. For some with learning difficulties, it is not a pleasant experience. For those who are repeating a class, they must endure what comes with that. There are still others who dread attending because their experience of that school has not been good.

There are increasing complaints of bullying and other forms of violent behaviour that have visited our schools and negatively impacted the culture. This article will explore school violence and share how the Moravian Church is responding to this reality.

School Violence

“School violence, as a special type of violence, refers to behaviors that take the school as a background, occur inside the school, and cause physical and/or psychological harm to school members” (Zhang, 2021, p. 48). School violence take different forms. Once someone is being deliberately threatening or harming someone within the school environment, that is violence (Gupta, 2023) .

It may be physical - , involving aggression and weapons; psychological – involving emotional and verbal abuse, name calling, ridicule, threatening; sexual – sexual harassment, unwanted touching, coercion, rape; bullying which may be characterized by repeated aggression towards another; and cyberbullying which is similar to bullying but takes place online by people within the school system (Gupta, 2023) . The methods vary but the results are the same – emotional and psychological trauma.

Vision Statement

A Church - Transformed,
United,
Victorious in Christ

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Causes of School Violence

Like every other facet of human behaviour, there is little by way of direct cause and effect. Notwithstanding, risk factors have been identified that may predispose a student to perpetrate school violence. These include poor academic performance, prior history of violence, hyperactive or impulsive personality, mental health conditions, witnessing or being a victim of violence, alcohol, drug, or tobacco use, dysfunctional family dynamics, domestic violence or abuse, access to weapons, delinquent peers, and poverty (Gupta, 2023). Students may be exposed to any or all of these and may offer a counter intuitive response.

An ecclesiastical response to the cause of violence might be the prevalence of sin in the world. Truth is, all behaviours categorized as school violence results from sin in the heart (Mark 7: 20-23). It is no secret that less people participate in the worship life of the church and less live by the values and principles of the Bible. With lower adherence the values that contribute to human flourishing and practicing less of the essentials of Christianity, such as forgiveness and kindness, the result is likely to be behaviours that exemplify the evil thoughts and disposition of the heart.

Addressing School Violence

There is a general lament about the violence that happens in school. Many people look for technical fixes that will make the problem go away. However, addressing this issue requires an adaptive approach that looks into the lives of those involved in school violence with the hope of understanding the source of the problem and address the source.

That has been the approach of Rev. Neilson Waithe, a pastor, counsellor, family life therapist Rev. Waithe has worked extensively with students in Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis and other Caribbean territories and is the primary mover behind the creation of "Project Eirene."

Eirene is the Greek word for peace. Rev. Waithe has diagnosed that there is a lack of emotional competence in the areas of conflict resolution and anger management. Project Eirene is aimed at helping

students gain mastery of self so as to manage their responses to the various stimuli they may encounter.

This is a new ministry of the Moravian Church to meet the current needs on the ground. We believe this is an opening provided by the context that the Spirit of God is leading us to fill. No one programme answers all the questions, but this programme goes a long way.

This programme will train volunteers – schoolteachers, congregation members, and personnel from interested organizations – how to work with students to be effective mentors and to manage anger and resolve conflicts.

Each volunteer will receive twenty hours of training provided by a professional counsellor/psychologist who works with Project Eirene. The training is provided at a nominal cost.

Project Eirene is based on a book "Managing Anger: Resolving Conflicts" by Rev. Neilson A. Waithe and each trainee gets a copy of the book. Further, it is expected the students will also receive copies of the book. Congregations are encouraged to purchase copies of the book for the school in their area.

Our communities are experiencing many challenges that require new approaches. The church will continue to preach the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ, seeking the spiritual wellness of the members of our community.

Addressing to the psycho-social needs of our communities in an effort to bring wholeness, is part of the new thrust. This is a new way to evangelize and show what it means to have life and have it more abundantly.

Conclusion

Whereas school violence is as unwanted menace to our schools and society, it is providing an opportunity to understand the factors that create this problem and how to reach people where they are in our communities. We see this as a call from God and our context and our answer is, here we are, we will go. Come and join us!

Singing Faith Lyrical and Truthful

Written by [Dr. Walter Brueggemann](#)

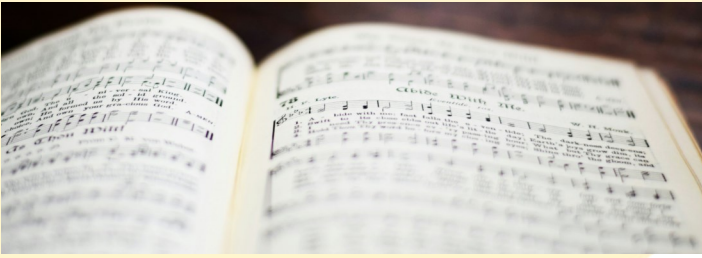


Photo by [Zack Smith](#) on [Unsplash](#)

In my frail old age, I have come to rely more and more on the hymns of the church to sustain my faith, and therefore to fund my hope and undergird what is left of my life. There is something teasingly elusive about such singing; we are able to sing what we cannot say. Just now, my exercise of hymnody (with my feeble singing) is in the dialectic of verses in two hymns that together tell the truth of my life.

The first requirement of a good hymn is that it should tell the truth and not gloss over the reality of our life. (Of course, it follows that conservative “praise hymns” and liberal “love ballads” fail this test.) I find such truth-telling in a verse of the hymn, “Strong Song of God, Immortal Love.” It is surprising to me that I cannot find it in any of the “main line” hymnals I have at hand; but I am able to remember it from my younger years of church singing, and so could recover it from older sources...

The other element of this hymnic dialectic that now occupies me is a better known hymn:

Fight the good fight with all thy might,
Christ is thy strength and Christ thy right.

Lay hold on life, and it shall be
thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race through God’s good
grace;
lift up thine eyes, and seek Christ’s face.

Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside; lean on thy guide.
God’s boundless mercy will provide.
Trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

Faint not nor fear; God’s arms are near.
God changeth not, and thou art dear.
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.

(*Glory to God* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013, 846).

Two things are immediately obvious in the hymn. First, it is framed in athletic images: fighting (boxing) and running. The hymnal, *Glory to God*, adds as an annotated note:

The opening phrase here (based on I Timothy 6:12) is not a military image, but an athletic one, from a Greek verb meaning “struggle” or “grapple” or “wrestle.” The sports context continues in later stanzas reflecting the experience of a runner recalling (Hebrews 12:1-2).

We might also add that the imperative of the epistle:

Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come (I Timothy 4:7-8).

Those who practice a disciplined faith are in competition to perform lives in the most compelling ways.

Second, the hymn is saturated with imperatives. It is as though the congregation, speaking in one voice, offers an invitational imperative to each member of the congregation:

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Singing Faith Lyrical and Truthful
Continued from Page 3

**Fight, lay hold, run, cast, trust,
 faint not, fear not, believe.**

The imperatives in sum are a summons to mobilize one's energy for a life deeply rooted in the power of the gospel, and so free from every impediment that may lead to passivity. Taken together, these two images bespeak a practical faith that is filled with energy, with an eye on the good outcomes that arise from such glad obedience.

It is, however, the fourth stanza that occupies my attention. At every moment of our lives—and certainly in old age—our lives provide grounds for fear or for faintness that readily issues in resignation or passivity. This verse powerfully refutes such a temptation. The ground for not being faint or fearful is the ready availability of the God who embraces us in unconditional love.

The everlasting arms of the creator uphold and comprehend and assure the entire creation and every creature. More than that, this God does not change. This does not mean that God is immutable. Rather it asserts that God's fidelity persists in and through every circumstance. And the ground for such confidence is that the "thou," the one addressed by the creator, is "dear." The one summoned to fearlessness is cherished by the God of all eternity. This is a practical articulation of "justification by grace" cast in the most intimate imagery of parent and child. This "Thou" is declared by God to be a "dear daughter" or a "dear son," the one welcomed home as a prodigal, or the one who remained faithfully at home who inherits all that the father/mother possesses. Either way, first sibling in fidelity or second sibling in waywardness, every child is a beloved child, held dear by the Lord of all eternity. The final lines of the verse affirm that "Christ is all in all," fully adequate, leaving us to need or desire nothing more than the bodily embrace of the creator God. Nothing more needed; nothing more desired; nothing more required.

This verse commands us to look beyond the daily vexations that are sure to beset us, to remain fixed and focused on the ultimacy of God's love for us...

It is my hope and invitation that you as well, dear reader, have such poetry available that defies and overrides our conventional practices and commitments. I am reminded yet again of the parental affection of the great South African novelist, Alan Paton, who wrote to his son at confirmation:

-Do not pronounce judgment on the Infinite, nor suppose God to be like a bad Prime Minister,

-Do not suppose him powerless, or if powerful malignant,

-Do not address our mind to criticism of the Creator, do not pretend to know his categories,

-Do not take his Universe in your hand, and point out its defects with condescension,

-Do not think he is a greater potentate, a manner of President of the United Galaxies,

-Do not think that because you know so few human beings, that he is in a comparable though more favorable position.

-Do not think it is absurd that he should know every sparrow, or the number of the hairs of your head,

-Do not compare him with yourself, nor suppose your human love to be an example to shame him.

He is not greater than Plato or Lincoln, nor superior to Shakespeare and Beethoven, He is their God, their powers and their gifts proceed from him, In infinite darkness they poured with their fingers over the first word of the Book of his Knowledge.
 ("Meditation for a Young Boy Confirmed").

Paton's lines teem with imperatives no longer to be practiced:

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Singing Faith Lyrical and Truthful
Continued from Page 4

Do not pronounce, suppose, suppose,
address, pretend, take in hand, point out,
think, think, think, compare, suppose,

Rather "trust and obey";

Trust in the ultimacy that thou art dear;

Obey in the pen-ultimacy that our systems will soon
cease to be.

The hymns invite one to truth-telling and
hope-telling that defy prosaic logic. That is
why we meet to engage in poetic imagination
outside the logic of either despair or
pride. We sing and if we cannot sing, we
hum, that our lives may bask in this other
world of truth and hope.

(Excerpts from [Dr. Walter Brueggemann](#))

Call Advisory

The Rev. Dr. Anique Elmes-Matthew has accepted a
call to serve as Minister of Christian Education in the
Virgin Islands Conference. This call takes effect on
September 15, 2024.

Please pray for Sis. Elmes-Matthew and family as
they move into this new season of their lives.



God calls us to seek justice AND to love mercy.
**One way we seek justice is by advocating for human
rights in our local and global communities.**

Article 5 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to
cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Violence against women, and all gender-based
violence, is an injustice that currently affects girls and
women throughout the world. The Unity Board of the
worldwide Moravian Church has tasked the Unity
Women's Desk with working to end this injustice in our
congregations and communities.

The Unity Women's Desk is eager to collaborate with
diverse organizations and agencies working to protect
the human rights of women. It is critical for women to
be part of leadership in the organizations that have
power to give and take away such rights. This includes
leadership in congregations, provinces, our Moravian
Unity, and our workplaces...

We live in a complex world, and seeking justice, loving
mercy, and walking humbly with our God requires mul-
ti-faceted, diverse responses. If we start feeling over-
whelmed by all the complexity of rights and power and
organizational structures, we can always step back and
remember how Jesus simplified the call for us: "'Love
the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your
soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and great-
est commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your
neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets
hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22: 37-
40....

Excerpts from The Unity Women's Voices
Unity Women's Desk

Unity Board Meeting

The Eastern West Indies Province will host the biennial meeting of the Unity Board. This is a meeting of the Chairs/Presidents of all Provincial Board throughout the Unity.

Leaders came together from the four regions of the Unity – Africa, Europe, North America, The Caribbean & Latin America. The meeting was held from September 24-30, 2024 at the St. James's Club in Antigua.



North American Region



British Province with Asian Region



Caribbean and Latin America Region



African Region

PROVINCIAL ELDERS CONFERENCE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PROVINCIAL THEME: RECLAIMING OUR IDENTITY, RENEWING OF PURPOSE, AND RE-IGNITING OF PASSION

The focus for 2024 is Renewing our Purpose. This draws from Jesus's mission statement in Luke 4: 18-19 where Jesus shares his reason for coming. What is the purpose of the church –why are we here? The Book of Acts and the ministry of Jesus in the gospel provide rich resources to help us answer "why" there is need for the church and what we ought to do.

Provincial Watchword for 2024 – July 20, 2024

Consider then and realize how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake the Lord your God and have no awe of me. Jeremiah 2:19 (NIV)

JANUARY

1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (During the watchnight service) 29 - 31 – PEC and Superintendents Conference at Cashew Hill

FEBRUARY

1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Led by Superintendents)
1 - 4 – PEC and Superintendents Conference at Cashew Hill – cont.
14 – Lent begins (Feb 14 – March 31)
29 – Staff Development Session

MARCH

1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Virgin Islands Conference)
1 – Unity Sunday Offering
15 – Provincial Newsletter with focus on the Tobago Conference
24 – Palm Sunday/Theological Education Offering
29 – Good Friday
31 – Easter Sunday

APRIL

1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Antigua)
Unity Prayer Watch
Tobago/Grenada Mission 12am, April 3 11:59pm April 5, 2024
St. Kitts 12am, April 6 11:59pm April 7, 2024
Trinidad 12am, April 8 11:59am April 9, 2024
Barbados 12pm, April 9 11:59pm April 11, 2024
Virgin Islands 12am, April 12 11:59pm April 14, 2024
Antigua 12am, April 15 11:59pm April 17, 2024
15 – Provincial Newsletter with focus on the Trinidad Conference

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PROVINCIAL ELDERS CONFERENCE CALENDAR OF EVENTS
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MAY

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (St. Kitts)
- 5 – Moravian Music Sunday
- 15 – Provincial Newsletter with focus on the Barbados Conference
- 19 – Pentecost
- 30 – Staff Development session
- 23-29 – PEC meeting Trinidad

JUNE

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Barbados)
- 15 – Provincial Newsletter with focus on the St. Kitts Conference

JULY

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Tobago)
- 15 – Provincial Newsletter with focus on the Antigua Conference

AUGUST

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Trinidad)
- 15 – Provincial Newsletter with focus on the Virgin Islands Conference
- 15-21 – PEC meeting Tobago
- 29 – Staff Development

SEPTEMBER

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Provincial Intercessors)
- 16 – Ministers Covenant Day
- 22 – Widows' Offering

OCTOBER

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Men)
- 25-31 – PEC meeting Antigua
- 31 – Staff Development session

NOVEMBER

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Women)

DECEMBER

- 1 – Provincial Day of Prayer (Province)



Birthday Celebrants



September 16—30

Sis. Callisha Greenidge Mark	16
Bro. Devon Mannix	23
Sis. Lynda Prout	29

October 1—15

Sis. Shanele Chase St. Hill	04
Sis. Nicole Wellington-Barker	09
Bro. Joseph Nicholas	15

Wedding Anniversary
September 16—30



Bro. Delroy Burley & Sis. Katrina Reece Burley	19
Bro. Conrad Spencer & Sis. Sonia Spencer	24
Bro. Frank Barker & Sis. Gloria Barker	27
Sis. Cicely Athill-Horsford & Bro. Keith Horsford	30

Sincere Condolences



As previously announced, the Rev. Winston Jones who was seconded to the Moravian Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, died on August 18, 2024 in Jamaica. The final arrangements, as decided by his family, are as follows:

1. A Celebration of Life and Thanksgiving to God will be held at the Trinity Moravian Church, Richmond Park, Kingston, Jamaica on Saturday, October 5, 2024 at 11:00 am.

2. The Funeral Service of Thanksgiving and Interment will take place at the Sharon Moravian Church, St. Thomas, Barbados on Friday, October 11, 2024 at 3:00 pm.

The Celebration of Life and the Funeral Service of Thanksgiving and Interment will be streamed on the respective congregations' platforms. All Conferences are expected to be represented at the funeral as we salute and celebrate the life of a colleague and friend.

Please keep Sis. Karen and children, Gabriel and Michael, and the wider Jones family in prayer.

Moravian Multipurpose Complex

Conference Center & Apartments



Graduations
Conferences
Weddings
Banquets
Meetings
Dinners

- ◆ Only ten minutes away from the stores, shops and banks in St. John's. Our International airport is also just ten minutes away.
- ◆ Our balcony provides a refreshing view of undulating hills and valleys.
- ◆ The Conference Center has a seating capacity for 200 persons.
- ◆ We are situated on a hill over-looking the picturesque out-skirts of the city of St. John's, Antigua.
- ◆ There are EIGHT LARGE APARTMENTS which are available for rental. Each room is self contained with kitchenette. The rooms are air-conditioned with available internet cable TV. All utilities are included with the exception of telephone.

Mission Statement

By the Grace of God we seek to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ; without distinction, we use all that we possess to call all peoples to the truth of the Gospel through worship, Evangelist discipleship and service.

Our Mailing Address

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