



# 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)



Rev. Algernon Lewis  
Chair of PEC

January, 2025 Issue

## Re-igniting our Passion

New Year's resolutions are still "a thing" for many people. Even when they are not articulated, some may harbour thoughts of changing/improving. A new year provides an opportune time to redirect or even rethink how we would show up on the next phase of the journey.

For the EWI Province, we should think about showing up passionately and being more intentional and enthusiastic about the church's ministry. This enthusiasm should naturally flow out of our renewed understanding of God's purpose for the church. The church has a divine call to follow the mission of God in the world, helping people to have meaningful encounters with God in Christ by the Holy Spirit.

The Provincial Board identified three categories for passionate ministry – souls, service, and sustainability. These are not exhaustive. However, they offer a place to begin. Souls for the Lamb is not a new rallying cry for Moravians. This was used when the first missionaries came to these parts. We need to discover what that looks like for us in 2025. Within the Moravian context, it spoke to a determined desire to reach people for Jesus. "Souls for the Lamb" was a reminder that each person needs to have a personal relationship with Jesus to prepare them for their eternal destiny.

The mission of God in the world is to establish/facilitate that relationship so that no soul is lost. The church is the primary agent of God's mission in this endeavour. For all the centuries of the church, priority number one has been reaching people for Jesus. Notwithstanding, there have been times when the priority shifted, and other things were emphasized.

We get this time to think clearly about what souls for the Lamb should look like. We must remember that Jesus ministered to people in varied circumstances. He pointed them to God and the principles of the Kingdom. All his actions were aimed at making people regain the image of God in them. Without knowing it, efforts to win souls for the Lamb are often tainted with the notion that these souls must look like us. As Rev. Dr. Winelle Kirton-Roberts puts it, "created in our own image.

As we go on the mission to re-ignite our passion for souls, I suggest the following non-academic approach, based on personal observation:

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### Vision Statement

**A Church - Transformed,  
United,  
Victorious in Christ**

*Re-igniting our Passion*  
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- ♦ **A personal life-transforming encounter with Jesus must be the fire shut up in the bones of anyone on this mission.** The mission will fail if we are not driven by a desire to have people experience the internal reordering of their lives that Jesus brings. It may produce church people rather than disciples of Jesus. Reaching people for Jesus must be personal for the people involved.
- ♦ **We must also genuinely love people.** Sometimes, soul-winning is laced with guilt. There is an unmentioned expectation that you must witness once you claim a relationship with Jesus. It is biblical that we are witnesses, but something is not right when sharing from a place of guilt. Fear is born out of insecurity in one's ability to share the gospel effectively, and how it is received is normal, but guilt should be avoided.
- ♦ **People on the mission need some level of preparation before they go on an official mission.** Our communities have changed, and people are more resistant to our evangelistic efforts. We must be prepared to deal with the resistance. Some of that resistance might come from people who were in church and were hurt by the experience. Others may have had experiences with church folk that left them stunned, while others may be on another plain of reasoning. We must learn to actively listen to understand what people are saying and not listen to respond. We must also listen to the Holy Spirit for the next steps. The Holy Spirit does the work of conversion in people's hearts. Nothing we do will matter if the Holy Spirit has not touched the person's heart. Therefore, we must intentionally build relationships with people as we might get another opportunity to share and water the seed that was planted.

We must be careful not to push people beyond where the Holy Spirit has led them or where they are ready to go.

- ♦ **We must live our witness genuinely.** Lip and life must go together. There is no room for inconsistency or hypocrisy. Of course, we will make mistakes, but we must own them and strive for better. The best witness is often the statement of our lives. "Live so that when people get to know you they will want to know Christ".

This may seem like another thing that we are being asked add to our "to do" list and that is a reasonable response. However, reaching people for Jesus is not a "thing" the church does, it is who we are. All the other ministries and activities of the church are to be culminate in "souls for the Lamb." If our activities are not directed towards reaching others, then its time to redesign everything or shutdown everything until we get this right.

"Souls for Lamb!" Let us be deliberate, let us be passionate, let us be faithful.



### Provincial Watchword for 2025

May 26, 2025

Each year, the European Continental Province draws a Watchword for each Province. The 2025 Watchword for the Eastern West Indies Province is from May 26, 2025 in the Daily Text:

**Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit says the Lord of hosts. Zechariah 4:6**

As we reflect on the Provincial Watchword for 2025, may we draw fresh courage and hope as we trust God to hear our cry and deliver.

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### *Choosing Curiosity Over Certainty*

#### **Gretchen Roeck**

Gretchen Roeck is a bi-vocational Episcopal Priest in the Twin Cities of Minnesota.

#### **What do we do now?**

That was the question the poet Andrea Gibson received from a friend the day after the election.

Andrea writes back to her friend, “I understand that people are frantic for a clear and direct answer. But it’s so important to choose curiosity over certainty in a moment that asks us to create something entirely new. This is that moment.”

#### **Curiosity while reading the Bible**

Choose curiosity over certainty. What a sacred invitation—to move closer to [mystery](#), closer to the unknown, closer to vulnerability. And yet ... How do we make that move when we don’t trust our neighbors?

It begins with practice. **Curiosity is like a muscle. If we want it to grow, we need to use it.** A place to practice curiosity is reading the Bible. The perfect place to start is the [Song of Songs](#), a slim book in the Old Testament that often goes unread.

Earlier this year, a reading from the Song of Songs came up in the Revised Common Lectionary: Song of Songs 2:8-13. These six verses are the only verses read from the Song in the entire three year lectionary cycle. I was preaching that Sunday and I jumped at the chance to preach on the Song, my first chance in 18 years of preaching.

When I preach I usually try to have a clear and concise takeaway point. Then I shape my sermon around that point. But as I sat with the Song, clarity wouldn’t come. Which in some ways makes sense, the Song is one of the great mysteries of our faith tradition.

Its authors are unknown. We don’t know who it was written for or why it was written. We don’t even know when or where it was written. We don’t know why it was included in the Bible. In fact, it is the only book of the Bible that does not mention or refer to God.

There is one thing we know for sure about the Song: it is a collection of beautiful love poems between two people. And I’ll be real: it’s pretty poetically saucy. It’s a celebration of young, physical, passionate, romantic love.

Most people today don’t know what to do with it. The snippet in the lectionary is pretty tame and taken out of its poetic context. Because we don’t know what to do with the Song, we avoid it. But that hasn’t always been the case.

#### **A vision of romantic human love or divine love?**

Once upon a time in the Christian tradition, the Song was one of the most often read and commented upon parts of the Bible. “There are more Latin manuscripts of the Song than any other Biblical book, and there are more medieval sermons on the Song than all other Biblical books except the [Psalms](#) and [\[the Gospel of John\]](#). For these ancient men and women, the [Song of Songs](#) was their fifth gospel. It was read more often in some contexts than the Gospels of [Matthew](#), [Mark](#) and [Luke](#)” (Carr).

These ancient readers read the Song as an allegory - a poem with hidden meaning. They believed the two lovers in the text represented the relationship between God and humanity. Other Christians believed the book depicted Jesus’ relationship with the Church. Within the

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## Choosing Curiosity Over Certainty Continued from Page 3

Jewish community the lovers were understood as Yahweh and the people of Israel.

In the 1800s interpretations started to change. Biblical scholars started arguing that the Song was not about the love between God and God's people. Instead it was about the love between a woman and a man. The relationship it described was not spiritual; it was sexual (Carr).

So what is it? Is it a vision of romantic human love or divine love? Based on my own study, I tend to think it is a vision of romantic human love. Still, is it a vision we can incorporate into our faith lives or is it a part of our faith tradition we tuck away and ignore? Ignoring problems is never a good solution, but I still didn't know what I was going to preach. How could I speak with certainty about a book few people agreed on how to interpret?

I decided to lean into curiosity and instead of offering my congregation a solid answer; I gave them a tool instead. I introduced the idea of literary interpretation, which is studying the text as a piece of literature, in the case of the Song, as a piece of poetry.

There are many ways to study poetry, but in this context I narrowed it down to three things. I asked my congregation to circle the nouns (people/places/things), the verbs (actions, occurrences or states of being) and the adjectives (description words). And then I asked them: When we look at these building blocks: the nouns, verbs and adjectives, where do you hear God calling us? What is God inviting us to do? **What does life with God look like?**

Here's what my congregation had to say:

"God is inviting us to get involved with the world around us."

"We are being sent."

"We are being invited into action."

"God is inviting us to get out into nature."

"It's an invitation to push back against inaction and complacency."

"A call to move across thresholds: going from outside to inside, from winter to spring."

"It's a call to joy."

"It's a call to dive into and celebrate creativity, fertility, and abundance."

My congregation and I got curious. Because we leaned into curiosity, we were able to reach deeper truths in this text. Our community conversation led us to a richer understanding of the Song than any of us (most of all myself) would have gotten to on our own.

The United States, and other countries as well, are deeply divided. Our future as a nation is unclear and uncertain. While we do not know the future, we can choose how we act in the here and now. We can investigate fear. We can lean into mystery. We can choose to react with curiosity instead of certainty. We can choose the way of the Song, moving closer to mystery, closer to the unknown, closer to where God is calling us to go.

### References

Gibson, Andrea. "Post-Election Letter to a Friend." [Substack, Things That Don't Suck](#).  
Carr, David M. *The Erotic Word, Sexuality, Spirituality and the Bible*. Oxford University Press, 2003, page 4.

Reprinted from Luther Seminary News December 2024

### Quote of the Day

**Live so that when people get to know you  
they will want to know Christ.**

**The only way is Christ's way. Listen to him.**





## Young People in the Ecumenical Movement (YPEM) First In-person Meeting by Tia Phillip November 13-19, 2024

I greet you in the name of Jesus the Christ.

I bring you greetings from the World Council of Churches Youth Engagement office, the Asian Council of Churches (ACC), the National Council of Christian Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), the youth member organizations of Kalipunan ng Kristiyanong Kabataan ng Pilipinas (KKKP) [Christian Youth Association of the Philippines], and youth representatives from the various denominational traditions and world regions.

The Young People in the Ecumenical Movement (YPEM) [Youth] Commission within the World Council of Churches (WCC) held its first in-person meeting on November 13-19, 2024, in Manila, Philippines, under the theme 'Pilgrimage of Justice, Unity, and Reconciliation'.

### The Young People in the Ecumenical Movement

The YPEM aims to:

- ◇ Facilitate the voices of the young people to be heard in the ecumenical movement.
- ◇ Advocate for sustainable and active participation of young people so that the voices of young people impact and influence the development of programmatic priorities of the WCC.
- ◇ Advocate for leadership development opportunities and to encourage ecumenical formation of young people.
- ◇ Enable the sharing of ecumenical experiences, challenges and questions among young people in order to stand in solidarity and advocate on urgent contextual issues.
- ◇ Embody intergenerational partnership and dialogue.

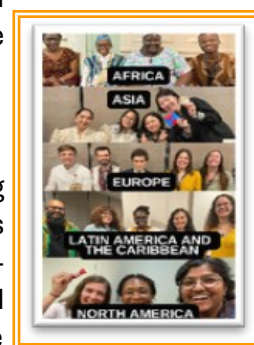
### About the Meeting

On November 13th, 2024, twenty (20) Youth Commission representatives from five world regions: North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Africa, and Asia, gathered in Manila, Philippines. The meeting commenced with a period of corporate worship led by the NCCP.

The purpose of the November 2024 in-person meeting was to:

- Revisit the 2030 mandate 'Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation and Unity' made by the WCC General Assembly of 2022.
- Establish key leadership and commission structure.
- Devise action plans for the period 2024-2026 in light of the 2030 mandate.

As an outcome decision of the meeting, we celebrate a fellow Caribbean representative, Rev. Bjorn Ward of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago, on his election as a Vice Moderator [Vice Chair] of the YPEM.



Meeting attendees in their regional groupings.

### The Discourse

Periods of mutual sharing among youth representatives about their regions and denominational traditions, and intense discussions on the concerns of youth and the church filled plenary sessions, unofficial pre and post session discourses, and conversations over shared meals. As I reflect on these discussions, some topics appeared to transcend geographical and denominational divides, including:

1. Declining Youth Involvement & Leadership
2. Trends toward Secularism
3. Discrimination: Age, Gender, Disability, Illness, Poverty

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## Young People in the Ecumenical Movement (YPEM) Continued from Page 5

4. Child Abuse, Neglect, and Abandonment
5. Exploitation & Human trafficking
4. Sex, Sexuality, and Reproduction in the 21st Century
7. Mental Health Challenges
8. Climate Change
9. Violence and War



WCC Thursday in Black Campaign paraphernalia. Thursday in Black- a campaign towards a world without violence against women.

I look at these topics, in recognition that this list is not extensive, and I ask us as a church to consider:

- To what degree are we willing and prepared to meaningfully engage these topics/ people?
- How do we understand/interpret these matters in the context of faith?
- How do we present and represent Christ in each context?
- What can ministry/service look like [Collaborative, Cooperative, Competitive, Obscure]?
- What is the role of youth in these contexts?

## The Pilgrimage

When I think of the word 'pilgrimage' two other words come to mind: journey and transformation. Inherent to the idea of a pilgrimage is to move from one location to another. The start and end location are usually known, and the destination usually holds spiritual significance. I consider the yearly journey of the Israelites to Jerusalem for the Passover (Luke 2:42-47).

But what will a pilgrimage of justice, unity, and reconciliation require? Who is this journey for? I dare to posit that it is a journey for all of us. We have each experienced, inflicted, or remained silent in the face of some form of injustice. We have discerned the impact of division, and we have felt the hurt that comes from broken relationships. I further posit that this journey will require some things of us:

- A. Acknowledgement of wounds inflicted and received, and willingness to address them.
- B. Recognition of historical, social, political, and personal factors surrounding these Wounds
- C. Vulnerability, Honesty, Accountability to ourselves, to each other, and before God.
- D. Christ-centered hope and focus, recognizing that the Holy Spirit empowers us.
- E. Readiness to forgive, taking lessons from the past with us, and choosing to journey together from a place of healing.

## The Community

We accompanied the ecumenical youth of the Philippines in their ongoing work of mission and advocacy. In this accompaniment, we encountered people who were:

- displaced from their homes and communities red-tagged (labeling individuals or groups as communists or terrorists)
- impacted by the war on drugs [extrajudicial killings]
- affected by reclamation efforts
- living with HIV

*[To be continued in the next Edition of the monthly Newsletter]*



## Theological Education Sunday

Sunday March 23, 2025 is Theological Education Sunday.

Special prayers are requested for our Theological students who have answered the call to God on their lives and offered themselves for Ministry. They are Sis. Chioma Henry and Bro. Wycliffe Morton from the Zion Moravian Church in St. Kitts and Sis. Melissa Bart from the Bethesda Moravian Church in St. Kitts .



## Birthday Celebrants

### January 16 - 31

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Sis. Judy Winspeare Philip | 23 |
| Sis. Beverly Job           | 24 |
| Sis. Andrea Lord-Smith     | 29 |



### Feb 1—14

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Sis. Adelyn Mgonela | 03 |
| Bro. Cortroy Jarvis | 07 |



## Ordination Anniversary



### January 1– February 14

|                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Sis. Winelle Kirton-Roberts  | January 10, 1995 |
| Bro. Daniel Mark             | January 13, 2019 |
| Sis. Elva Richards-Goodwin   | January 15, 2017 |
| Sis. Alicia Ross-Floyd       | January 19, 2007 |
| Bro. Kirk Barker             | January 21, 2007 |
| Bro. Delroy Burley           | January 22, 2017 |
| Sis. Belinda Manswell-Daniel | January 23, 2005 |
| Sis. Denise Smith-Lewis      | January 29, 1995 |

Sis. Onita Samuel-Warner February 04, 2014



## Unity Sunday

March 2, 2025 is Unity Sunday. At this time of year, we remember the birth of the Unitas Fratrum, the Moravian Church, on March 1, 1457 (568 years ago). Please continue to pray for the work and witness of our Church.

A special Unity offering will be taken in all Moravian Churches worldwide on Sunday March 2, 2025. This offering will go towards the Common Moravian Theological Education Curriculum.

## Annual PEC and Superintendents Conference/ and Provincial Day of Prayer

The Provincial Board makes the following announcements:

1. The Provincial Board and Superintendents will meet in Antigua for their annual meeting from January 27 – 31, 2025. The Provincial Board will meet January 27, 30, and 31 while the meeting with Superintendents will be January 28 & 29. Please pray for our deliberations.
2. The Provincial Day of Prayer continues on February 1, 2025 at 6:00 am. As we pray for the work of the Province, our focus will be on strategic initiatives such as Project Eirene, the Moravian Institute, and the Provincial Theme.

The link for our prayer meeting will be shared in due course. Let us pray!



## Unity Prayer Watch

The Unity Prayer Watch is a special service to the world, offered by the worldwide Moravian Church. The Eastern West Indies Province will participate in the Unity Prayer Watch from April 03 - April 17, 2025. The Schedule is as follows:

Tobago 12am, April 3 - 11:59pm April 5, 2025  
 St. Kitts & The Grenada Mission 12pm, April 5- 11:59pm - April 7, 2025  
 Trinidad 12am, April 8 - 11:59am - April 9, 2025  
 Barbados 12pm, April 9 - 11:59pm - April 11, 2025  
 Antigua 12am, April 12 - 11:59pm - April 14, 2025  
 Virgin Islands 12am, April 15 - 11:59pm - April 17, 2025

Conferences are asked to observe the time allotted for our members to engage in this unbroken prayer chain.

This prayer meeting began on August 13, 1727 when the Moravian Church had its Pentecost experience. Prayer is still a vital part of our walk with God and the life of the church. Let us therefore be in readiness for this prayer event as we continue to seek God's guidance and direction for our Church, the world and ourselves.



# 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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