

2005 MOSES LECTURES
**Writing a Moravian Hymnal Companion:
Walking in the Footsteps of Müller, Erxleben, Adams and Williams**

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LECTURE ONE

Introduction

I am deeply conscious of the responsibility which is mine today as I enter the line of those who have presented the Walter Vivian Moses Lectures in Moravian Studies at the Seminary. Not only is the subject area of vital personal importance, but the opportunity to share the story of writing the *Companion to the Moravian Book of Worship* is a welcome joy.¹

The legendary Bishop Moses was respected and somewhat feared among the student body of this institution which he served for over thirty five years, but that did not remove him from the realm of student pranks during the 1920's. One student was well-known for stretching curfew and sneaking in just before the Bishop, who was then the resident professor, secured Comenius Hall for the night. One evening the students determined to teach their peer a lesson and laid for him with a bucket of cold water at the top of the open center stairwell. Patience had its reward and they finally heard the front door open and footsteps cross the first floor. At the right moment, they upended the

bucket and heard an appropriate exclamation in Latin from below. Knowing it to be their revered professor, they hid away and escaped the ire of the modern-day Moses who had not escaped the waters of the sea.

My lectures today begin as a story which might be told adapting the imagery of the American poet Robert Frost (1874-1963). "Two roads converged in a yellow wood..." is a good expression of the background of this project.

American Moravian Hymnals

We travel first the Autobahn of American Moravian Hymnals: The first American Moravian hymnal was the *Hirten Lieder von Bethlehem*, published in Germantown by Christoph Saur in 1742 during Zinzendorf's visit to North America. Originally 112 pages with 368 hymns, it was expanded and reprinted in 1754 in London. From that time until 1876 various text-only format hymnals in both German and English were used in the American Moravian congregations, with some Danish hymnody used in Wisconsin in the mid-19th century.

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Most of these were revisions or reprints of worship books from Europe, with editorial changes made in the liturgical forms to fit the egalitarian life of the United States. The preface to the 1876 hymnal notes that the first English hymnbook of the Moravian Church printed in the United States appeared in Philadelphia in 1813.² However, even the 1876 book was another volume with words-only format providing 930 hymn texts and 28 doxologies and benedictions.

Yet the content was decidedly different. Several factors can be identified that explain these changes.

1) Many more Moravians hymns had been written since 1742. These had found their way into general usage in the American congregations, e.g. hymns of Christian Renatus von Zinzendorf, Christian Gregor, James Montgomery, and Christian Ignatius La Trobe.

2) English hymns had been in use and were favored among non-German members. The texts of Charles Wesley, Isaac Watts, and Frederick Wm. Foster were used frequently so that the members would be understood as Americans rather than strange European transplants, tenaciously clinging to their former ways.

3) American hymns were beginning to be used furthering the “we belong” attitude. Hymns such as “Softly now the light of day” by George Washington Doane from New Jersey, “I love thy kingdom, Lord” by Timothy Dwight of Massachusetts, “More holiness give me” by Philip P. Bliss of Pennsylvania, “My faith looks up to thee” and “Yield not to temptation” by Ray Palmer of New England, and “Pass me not, O gentle Savior” by Fanny Crosby of New York

all appeared in the 1876 Hymnal indicating the acceptance of American texts and tunes.

4) There was a brief section of four hymns headed REVIVALS reflecting the frontier phenomenon, and the non-denominational approach to collections of worship songs which were often oriented to revivalist outreach ministries and frequently did not even include any Christmas or Easter selections.

The 1876 *Liturgy and Hymns of the American Province of the Unitas Fratrum or the Moravian Church* was prepared by a committee consisting of Edmund A. de Schweineitz, Lewis R. Huebner, Lewis F. Kampmann, Herman A. Brickenstein, and Amadeus Abraham Reinke. The 1878 Provincial Synod thanked the committee for their work and called for a new tune book by a working committee to be chaired by F. F. Hagen.³ This was never published, nor have I found any manuscripts of such a volume in the archival collections. While Hagen had presented a study paper to the 1878 Synod calling for the abandonment of German chorale hymns in favor of American gospel music, he does not seem to have seized an opportunity when it was presented to him. In fact, the last American Moravian tune book which is in the collections was that prepared by Peter Wolle in 1836.

One of the major contributions, however, of the 1876 hymnal was the inclusion of evening and seasonal liturgies. These had not been previously available in the worship books of the congregations, and their inclusion was a step toward some standardization and enrichment of worship. While they were an adaptation of the liturgical-song (*Liturgische Gesänge*) format used in the European congregations,

they were more spoken than sung. In many smaller congregations this moved the Church Litany aside as the normative Sunday morning liturgy and allowed for variation and the use of “shorter” forms which came to be favored in the morning services. Some of the hymn stanzas that appeared in those liturgies were new, but were never acknowledged as to authorship — a good Moravian practice, although it drives a scholar to distraction [or single malt Scotch]. It should also be noted that the introduction of the pulpit as standard American Moravian church furniture was a universal phenomenon by this time.

In 1891, the *Liturgy, Offices of Worship and Hymns* appeared giving the tunes in numerical sequence according to the amplified Gregor chorale system with multiple texts given for each tune. A valuable and cherished resource for musicians and hymnologists, it was an awkward book for congregations because of its length and small type-face. The addition of the school-oriented Offices of Worship, largely developed by John Taylor Hamilton, made the work useful for the parochial schools. Moravian musicians John Frederick Wolle and Massah Miksch Warner were involved in this work.

A final American German language hymnal appeared in 1901 largely to serve the congregations in the Fourth and Fifth Districts, now known as the Western and Canadian districts. That the German language was still in use among many of the recent immigrants was a normal phenomenon. We must also acknowledge the influence of Karl A. Mueller, longtime (1903–1941) field secretary and subsequently president of the 4th and later Western District, who was remembered as having said that he felt himself to have a divine commission to

preserve the use of the German language in the American Moravian Church. And Bishop Mueller was partially successful. The Ladies Aid group of the Bruderheim Moravian congregation in Alberta still had meetings in the German language into the 1960’s lamenting that younger women were not joining the group.

The Northern Provincial Synod of 1913 appointed a committee of nine (Morris W. Leibert, chairman; Samuel H. Gapp, Francis E. Grunert, Ernest S. Hagen, Frederick R. Nitzschke, Maurice F. Oerter, William N. Schwarze, Christian A. Weber, and J. Fred Wolle) to prepare a new hymnal, plus a committee of five (John S. Romig, chairman; Henry A. Gerdson, Albert G. Rau, Augustus Schulze, and Arthur D. Thaeler) on liturgies. Southern Province brethren later joined the committee.

The 1920 Synod continued the committee and the book appeared in 1923 with 952 hymns, new communion liturgies occasioned by the wide-spread use of individual communion cups, and some liturgical revision. Yet, by and large it continued the long heritage of *revision* and owed much of its content to the 1876 hymnal. The enlargement of the section of evangelistic hymns to eight titles reflected the climate of the country at the time of Billy Sunday, Dwight L. Moody and others. This was the big black book on which anyone of my generation grew up and which served the church until 1969.

The need for a new hymnal was apparent by the early 1950’s when post-war America was experiencing revitalized interest in church life and resultant growth. A fourth printing of the 1923 hymnal was not the desired answer, and

a committee chaired by Raymond S. Hauptert worked from 1952 until 1969 when a new *Hymnal and Liturgies* appeared. It was out-dated by the time it was printed, although it served the church until the *Moravian Book of Worship* appeared twenty-six years later. While the 1969 red book provided better biographical data than any previous book, it took a step backward in restoring all of the chorales to the Gregor harmonies. Unfortunately, it appeared on the eve of the hymn explosion that changed the worship thoughts of the wider church. *In quick summary, all of the worship resource books which had appeared through 1969 were peas in one pod.*

A New Book of Worship

Early in the 1980's the Northern Province determined that a new worship resource book was needed and a preliminary committee was formed, chaired by Albert H. Frank, to make recommendations to the Provincial Elders' Conference. The Southern Province joined the committee as a venture in faith on the part of their PEC. Following the report of the committee that new materials were essential, an inter-provincial committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Bishop Warren A. Sautebin and the rest, so to speak, is history.

As indicated, the previous worship books of the American Moravian Church had mainly been a series of revisions of what had gone before. A common practice of the life of the wider Moravian Church as well, this led committees to function by testing the usage of the then current hymns, desires of congregations to include new hymns and revision of liturgies, and basically print a newer

collection of the elements of worship within a well-defined and understood tradition.

Every hymnal since 1876 was an expression of what had gone before, and each book had its own problematic issues to solve. That the books would lag behind the times was not a new phenomenon since that gave reality to the tendency of things liturgical to lag thirty years behind current language usage and culturally driven change. Two examples of the issues which had to be faced might be helpful. Many people had indicated their desire to include "How Great Thou Art" that had become known through the Billy Graham crusades of the 1950's in the 1969 *Hymnal*. This hymn didn't make it in the 1969 *Hymnal* because of expensive copyright considerations. Until the *MBW* appeared, copyright cost structures had changed and it is now included. The 1969 hymnal included "God Save the Queen," recognizing that the Canadian congregations are part of our provinces. While no one would argue of the need of salvation on the part of the British Royal family, it must be noted that "O Canada" had already replaced the British national anthem in Canadian life by 1969.

Dr. John R. Weinlick (1908-1980), former dean and professor of historical theology at Moravian Theological Seminary, identified several characteristics of Moravian hymns which were as true for the 1969 American Moravian hymnal as they were for the 1754 British edition. Among the entries on Weinlick's list were 1) the hymns are basically of the German-chorale style, 2) the hymns are predominantly Christocentric, and 3) four-part congregational singing is facilitated by the long-standing familiarity of the congregations with a basic body of tunes used for and with

several different texts. That has now become an historic description of former things.

Each successive edition of the American Moravian Hymnal, like those of the British Province, moved a step further away from the standard corpus of “our” hymns. The German and Czech hymns of previous generations were reduced in number as the books included more and more of the English language hymns which “everyone” was using. As I mentioned, the 1923 American edition contained a section of evangelistic hymns which reflected the revival movements in the United States in the early 20th century. When the revision of that edition was undertaken, at least one member of the 1923 committee who had agreed to serve on the committee leading to the 1969 hymnal resigned because of the deletion of what he considered to be essential Zinzendorf texts that were destined for the circular file by the new committee. Change did not always come easily or with universal approval.

A first look at the 1995 *MBW* shows that something new has happened in Zion and the tried and true isn't necessarily any longer the norm. While it was understood that the 1995 book would be a transitional worship resource for the Northern and Southern Provinces, the road has in fact taken a 45° turn. Only two hymns from the *Hirten Lieder von Bethlehem* appear in the *MBW* — “Once He Came in Blessing,” (270, 273) and “The Savior’s Blood and Righteousness” (776).

“Once He Came in Blessing” by Jan Roh/Horn has been expanded from two to four stanzas while “The Savior’s Blood and Righteousness” has been reduced from seventeen to five stanzas. When one considers that the original “Zinzendorf” text for “The Savior’s Blood and Righteousness” had

33 stanzas one can begin to understand what has happened in Moravian hymnological disciplines and usage.

Contemporary hymn texts have been included in the *MBW* which are much more issue-oriented — peace and justice, recon-ciliation, the Reign of Christ replacing Ascension and Second Coming, and stages of life all find their places. New tunes appear which are in unison, and do not allow for four-part harmonization. Canons and camp-type songs have been added. Texts have been altered for reasons of inclusive language and to remove imagery which is no longer readily acceptable, e.g. “Fatherland” in Zinzendorf’s “Jesus, still lead on”. And I must note that while those changes are justifiable for newer members of the church and outreach concerns, the alterations in familiar texts from the 18th and 19th centuries have caused a degree of discomfort for older members who only used the hymnals as prompters when memory didn’t suffice. Then, too, one can enter into the endless debate over theological changes in the texts which occur when imagery is altered and newer language is adopted.

Truly, this blue book is a new worship resource which needed careful introduction in the congregations and there was an acknowledged need for explanatory information presented through the genre of a handbook/companion such as is available for those of the Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and Methodist denominations. Workshops were developed under the leadership of Jill Bruckart and many suggestions provided for a smooth transition. These worked in some places, although we find some congregations that still cling loyally to the red book and where some

older members still speak longingly of the black hymnal of 1923.

Other Worship Resources

We must also note that there is an obvious unspoken assumption connected with the *MBW*. Some hymns having long pedigrees and still in use in some of our congregations are not within the covers of the *MBW*. One such stanza “Bethany, O Peaceful Habitation” is found at the end of the Acts of Sunday in the *Readings for Holy Week* and in that place only. The preacher choosing to speak on the opening verses of John 12 may well want that stanza, and so must reproduce the words or words and tune from the supplemental resources.

This all-too-common practice led to the conclusion that the *Companion* should provide information on all hymn stanzas in the *MBW*, supplemental Holy Communion liturgies, occasional services found in the Manual, and the *Readings for Holy Week*. I am happy to report that with one exception in the Acts of Easter Sunday, something has been found about every stanza. This is not to say that all of the puzzles have been solved, but at least first uses found.

As good examples, the stanzas “Lord God of hosts, O may our praise” and “An Infant We Present to Thee” which are found in the Liturgy of Grace, and Baptism liturgy respectively can be traced to the 1876 Hymnal where they first appeared. They do not appear in the hymns sections of any of the hymnals, indicating that they were written for the 1876 liturgies by a member of the committee who remained anonymous. We know that both Edmund de Schweinetz and Lewis

Kampmann were capable poets, but that is where we must stop. The records of that committee are almost non-existent and the PEC minutes are in a virtually illegible German script and even less helpful.

Previous Hymnological Studies

To help German Moravians understand our heritage, a reference book about the hymns, *Das Hymnologisches Handbuch zum Gesangbuch der Brüdergemeine*, had been prepared and published in 1916. This was the work of Joseph Theodor Müller (1854-1946), historian and archivist of the European Continental Province. Müller had previously written the articles on the Bohemian Brethren’s Hymns and those on Renewed Moravian Church hymns which had appeared in the first edition of Julian’s *Dictionary of Hymnology* in 1888, and prepared the *Handbuch* as a seventh-inning stretch in the midst of writing his larger three volume *magnum opus* on the history of the Ancient Unity.

An unpublished supplemental manuscript work is *Die Kleine Choralkunde* prepared by Gottfried Theodor Erxleben (1849-1931), a German Moravian minister. That manuscript work can be found in the Moravian Archives at Herrnhut. Erxleben had prepared an edition of the earlier work on hymns and anthems suitable for various occasions of the church year published in the revised 1891 edition of the *Hilfsbuch für Liturgen und Organisten in den Brüdergemeine* for organists, choir directors and clergy. His *Choralkunde* was a work produced in retirement.

The Müller work came into my library in 1999 when I spent several months working on

the staff of the Herrnhut archives, and a copy of the Erxleben arrived in the Northern Music Foundation office in 2002. Both have added greatly to the details of Moravian hymn studies which had been a serious topic of interest since I had first discovered the indices and citations in the 1923 American Moravian hymnal.

The establishment of the Moravian Music Foundation in 1956 provided an agency which could be of assistance in the introductory tasks of new worship resources as well as the recycling of older musical treasures. The Hymn of the Month series which had run for many years as a tool to help congregational music leaders and pastors provided a background. The engagement of the director of the Music Foundation as musical editor for the *MBW*, and involvement of board members and staff as consultants and committee members added to the partnership. After several years of experience and discussion, it was determined that the Assistant Director of the MMF should be commissioned to prepare a handbook for the *MBW* and the work began in 2001.

Connection between Researcher and Research

Returning to Frost's imagery, and being very aware of the need to let you in on the full hermeneutical circle of things, I must report my own walk along the Personal Lane of Moravian Hymnals: How does one become interested in hymn studies and the worship treasury of the church? I would have to identify several influences leading to this for me.

First, I was born into a Moravian family whose members were musically involved. My

maternal grandfather was a brass choir member, and his wife an organist. My mother and her sisters were choir members. My father was both an instrumentalist (violin and clarinet) and singer. Participation in the junior choir, school choruses and drama developed my interest in performing. A love of history and the discovery of the musical source notes in the 1923 hymnal were inexhaustible sources of fascination when sermons were not arresting for my wandering mind.

Second, I know and value the musical work of Henry L. Williams (1923–1996), librarian of Moravian College and Theological Seminary. A friend from my youth in the Delaware Valley, his commentaries at Delaware Valley Moravian Music Festivals, vast hymnological library which lined one entire wall of his dining room, a ready sharing of his most recent findings, and long evening conversations over the requisite cup of tea in front of a cozy fire all added much to that growing mass of trivia which might one day be worth something.

Third, there was an opportunity for hymnological studies at Moravian Theological Seminary when three of us (John Christman, Daniel Crews and I) worked with John R. Weinlick in the spring of 1970. A careful historical review of Christian hymnody through the centuries and an introduction¹⁰ to the sources of hymn studies provided an interesting semester of intellectual food to say nothing of Georgine Weinlick's freshly baked apple pies topped with cheddar cheese and served with a good cup of coffee.

Fourth, there were four and a half years of service to the Moravian Church on the island of Tobago in the southern Caribbean. During those years, the present British Moravian Hymn Book was introduced replacing the 1911 edition.

This meant changes in both liturgy and hymnody which necessitated working with musicians and lay preachers on how to transition to the new book and win people to it. The road was rough and filled with pot holes because the new tune books were not available as quickly as the hymn texts, and the educational process continued for several years. I must note that the hymn texts were sold as soon as they arrived because of the need to put something in the hands of congregations and to keep the new stock from mildewing in the tropical climate. How does one lead in that sort of process without studying the material along the way?

Finally, there was the work by Charles B. Adams entitled *Our Moravian Hymn Heritage* which appeared in 1984 providing a wealth of data about the “Moravian” hymns in the 1969 *Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church*. Adams had served as piano player for the work of the hymns committee, as well as previously chairing the committee which produced *The Moravian Youth Hymnal* in 1942. The first of its kind for an American Moravian hymnal, the Adams work utilized the monumental six volumes of Johannes Zahn on German hymn tunes as well as English Moravian sources, although not dealing with either Müller or Erxleben.

Occasional hymn studies appearing in the church publications of both the American Provinces and the British Province continued to keep my appetite whetted. The introduction of the *MBW* in 1995 again called for transitional leadership and learning yet more. In 1996 the Moravian Church was invited to showcase the new book for the Annual Convocation of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada

at Oberlin, Ohio, and I was privileged to lead an evening Singstunde which allowed us to feature our best amid a great group of singers and scholars.

In retrospect then, I can see the hand of the Savior preparing me for a task which I would never have dreamt of embracing until retirement and then probably as another set of undisciplined rough notes. Bits and pieces of the puzzle only became clear as focus was provided by the call of the church through the Music Foundation to pursue an avocation for disciplined reasons in the service of the denomination. The prospect of spending two years researching and writing about the hymns of the church was too enticing to refuse, and so the great venture began in 2001 a few months after another one had begun in my life. It was time to travel a road heretofore not taken.

Research Process

After the decisions concerning what was to be included and what format to adopt, the painstaking, detailed work began. It was determined that every hymn should be presented with data about the writer, translator, composer, and additional information provided concerning occasions that called forth the text and usage details of interest. Realizing that there are many repeat authors, composers, and/or tunes, the decision was made to provide information for the first use and refer to prior entries for subsequent appearances. While necessitating the turning of pages more frequently, it still beats a wheelbarrow to carry the book.

Then there came the challenge to find sources and data for every entry. The printed sources such

as Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, the German Moravian sources previously referred to, and standard hymn-story works such as Bailey's *The Gospel in Hymns*, and denominational hymnal companions were obvious. The Henry L. Williams *Hymnological Collection* that had been relocated to the Archives following his death in 1996 is conveniently located and a rich storehouse of information not only of printed material but of marginal notes. Manuscript sources such as the Erxleben *Choralkunde* and personal sharing on the part of colleagues in the USA, Germany, England, South Africa, and the Caribbean also were utilized.

In this area of consideration, a decision was made that the *Companion to the MBW* would have primary focus on Moravian hymns and tunes. Information for ecumenical worship material is usually available in other resources that are available in local Christian bookstores, libraries, or the internet. Moravian entries would need more attention since the sources for information are often at some distance and in other languages.

About that time, Herrnhut Archivist Paul Peucker sent me a copy of the Erxleben manuscript work that gives background for the tunes and their sources that accompanies the 1916 Müller *Handbuch*. David Blum and Barbara Strauss of the Moravian Music Foundation Board offered their assistance tracking down internet material. Specialized questions from German and British Moravian sources could be willingly answered by Christoph Waas, a German Moravian pastor who serves on their hymnal revision committee, Paul Peucker, and Joseph Cooper, a British Moravian bishop and former fellow student of Henry

Williams, whose contacts and knowledge always proved helpful.

And so the work began, writing entries, revising, emailing back and forth between the MMF offices (Nola Knouse and I long ago lost count of the number of emails and faxes) and learning the Hamiltonian lesson of the need for trusted colleagues to manage the dangling participles, gerunds, and grammatical loose ends. Two members of the MMF Board willingly joined the team. John Bullard is a retired United Methodist pastor with Moravian roots who taught religion at Wofford College in Spartanburg, S.C. An organist and hymn-afficionado himself, his years of reading undergraduate papers had honed his grammatical skills to a finely sharpened edge. A longtime friend of both John's and mine, Graham Rights joined us to read, make substantive suggestions from his vast Moravian collections and recollections, and added his good wife to the team. Sybil is a retired English teacher whose experience and guidance helped all of us and whose consistent search for excellence kept us from falling into the morass of confusion and easily-made errors.

The issue of scripture referencing is always difficult. If this is to be done, what format should be used? While some denominational and commercial publishing house hymnals list a scripture text above every hymn, there are two obvious objections to that format:

1. What about hymns with multiple references?
2. What about hymns for which there are only far-out connection texts that might have some influence if they had the bubonic plague? Additionally, one must ask what is to be done with

stanzas for which there are multiple references in the King James translation (recognizing that most of our older English hymns were written when the King James was the standard biblical translation available), but which are not clear in the newer translations or paraphrases? And it must be noted that textual alterations occasionally change imagery that eliminates a clear scriptural reference, e.g. in the case of “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” (772) which lost the image of Ebenezer, the Old Testament stone of help. Also, can scriptural attribution be done consistently for every hymn under consideration? A quick look at Bailey’s *The Gospel in Hymns* provides a clearly negative answer to that.

After several false starts on that road, it was determined that scriptural indexing was outside the scope of the *Companion*. The *MBW* contains a section entitled “Biblical References and Allusions in Hymns,” that must suffice. Additionally, the team was very aware of David Blum’s concordance to the *MBW* that provides internal listings for words and images in the texts. To include further scriptural apparatus would only serve the cause of lengthening the volume, multiplying work and preparation time and increasing the cost.

Long days, occasional nights and very early mornings at the computer kept the process moving. Encouragement came from the entire team both in the USA and Europe, and byways were traveled which would have been overlooked had it not been for the questions which my colleagues raised, as well as answered. To each of them, a special word of thanks has to be repeated, as must the role of my wife be lauded for encouragement and language skills.

Publication

Finally in 2003 the end of the work was in sight, and we felt good that we had identified information for all but one of the writers, translators and composers whom we could identify. Hilda Margaret Dodd, writer of the text “Hands to Work and Feet to Run” (649) had been elusive, but our number one computer researcher came through. It was too late to make the printing of the book, but the information is in hand as an addendum and will be added when a reprint happens. And other information keeps appearing. By the beginning of 2004, the book was taking final shape and ready for printing decisions.

An idea to issue the work as a spiral volume was considered and rejected by the MMF team. The likelihood of another companion appearing in the next fifty years is slim, and the need for some permanence in format was obvious. The Adams work is no longer in print and copies of the paper back format which exist are falling into pieces. A generous gift to the MMF from the Butterfield Trust provided the funding to enhance a revolving publications fund and the *Companion* was deemed the first project. Goslen Printing in Winston-Salem was engaged and the baby was delivered late in June 2004 after an elephantine pregnancy.

So, how does one write a hymnal companion? With a lot of good partners in the venture, a supportive organization behind the venture of meeting an identified need, a wealth of data upon which to draw, and in the case of the Moravian Church international interest and informational support. And I must gratefully acknowledge the contribution of modern technology which allowed for rapid interchange of information, and

processing which is a lot easier now than in the days of handwritten manuscripts or carbon-paper copying. I constantly marvel at Müller's work which was all done by hand and as a detour along the journey to his *magnum opus*, the 3-volume *Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder* which was his primary focus for over 40 years.

As one last note, I must acknowledge the death of Bishop Joe Cooper this year after a lengthy struggle with cancer. Joe's ability to track things down, provide genealogical notes on some of our British Moravian hymn writers, and cheerful encouragement were always just an email away and reminded all of us of the need to work our mines of information while the sun shines.

LECTURE TWO

Lessons Learned And Stories To Be Told

Working on the *Companion* brought to light a lot of hitherto forgotten, unknown or overlooked discoveries that have proven to be grist for the mill. Humor and insights have been found adding to the significance of the texts. In this lecture, I will share some of them with the hope that they may inspire folks to do more digging and sharing.

1. Hymns are the Work of the Community

While John Wesley and followers have advocated singing hymns in their unaltered entirety, Moravians have never had such hang-ups. A quick glance through the *MBW* indicates the presence of many composite Moravian hymns, i.e. hymns with stanzas by various authors brought together into one "hymn."

A hymn such as "The Savior's Blood and Righteousness" is a classic example. Long-touted as a "Zinzendorf hymn," it is known that the first stanza was written fully a century before Zinzendorf's mission trip to the Caribbean in 1739. It appeared in 1638 at Leipzig as the last lines of a stanza beginning, "*In Christi Wunden schlaf ich ein*," by Paul Eber. This was known to the Count who added an additional 32 stanzas while on shipboard in the harbor of St. Eustatius in 1739 on his return voyage from Saint Thomas⁴. The 1783 German Moravian *Gesangbuch* (399) has a total of 20 stanzas which were often thought to have been original work by the Count, but it has since been shown that not only the first, but also the fifth stanza was an addition to the Count's poetry. That same stanza, again appearing as stanza five in the 1967 German *Gesangbuch*, came from the pen of Christian Gregor who edited the 1778 *Gesangbuch* (1036) where that stanza does not appear. Some later editor included it with no attribution until the 1967 book.

All of which is to say that *hymns are often the work of the community that uses them*. It also points out the need for committees producing hymnals and worship resource books to do their scholarly work well. The committee for the 1969 *Hymnal and Liturgies* had Henry Williams as its secretary. He secured the services of Jean Woodward Steele of Westminster Press to do research and preparation for the authors' and composers' indices. Williams had met Steele during his years as a pastor in Philadelphia and his association with the Hymn Society chapter in the City of Brotherly Love. The current hymnal revision committee of the Continental Province

includes scholars who are doing their painstaking research at each step of the process. To do this work after a book has appeared is needlessly more complicated and often leads to mistakes and omissions.

Let me return, however, to a practical application of this. Moravians have never felt bound to sing an entire hymn at one sitting. In some cases such as Zinzendorf's hymn-commentary on the Augsburg Confession with its 162 stanzas, no congregation would ever have dreamt of doing so. Single stanzas are often adequate for a situation or the omission of a stanza can strengthen an occasion. At one time, a service of dedication was held on Saint Croix for new buildings at the conference campsite. "Jesus Still Lead on" was one of the hymns used. But since the buildings included two new cabins and a bath facility, the use of the third stanza beginning "When we seek relief from a long-felt grief" was a bit of a hilarious mistake. Lesson: *Use the stanzas you need and choose them wisely.* The use of more short hymns is to be encouraged, rather than singing all nineteen stanzas of Thomas of Celano's *Dies Irae*.

2. Global Moravian Hymnody

How do hymns make their way to other places in the Unity? There was a time when this was a clearly defined issue. The mission personnel carried tunes and worship materials with them wherever they went. Christian Gregor visited the North American congregations from 1770 to 1772 and had musical influence here. Christian Ignatius La Trobe made school inspection visits in South Africa where his work is still known.

In 1894 Ernst Johannes Theodor Enkelmann went from Ebersdorf, Thuringia to serve as book

and music manager for Kersten and Company in Paramaribo, Surinam. Can one believe that he didn't take materials with him or have them imported from the Moravian printerries of Germany when need arose? This entire process has now been speeded up by cassettes and CDs. Recent close contacts with the Brass Bands in South Africa have shown that there is a core group of tunes which are identical in Europe, the American Provinces and South Africa as indicated in the *Companion* article on the Herrnhut Tunes. A CD from Neu-Gnadenfeld in northwestern Germany has demonstrated that not all of our churches in any province have the same traditions making the study more fascinating.

Then, too, many of us have heard that Bishop Edward Rondthaler learned our present tune for "Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand" (494) on a visit to England, and brought it back to the United States where it was included as a second tune for the Alford text in the 1923 *Hymnal and Liturgies*. Research has failed to add anything more to this oft-repeated attribution. We know that Bishop Edward attended five General Synods of the Unity from 1879 to 1914 and that his travels often took him through the British Isles, but I can find no evidence for when he would have learned the tune or brought it back across the pond with him. That it first appeared in the 1923 *Hymnal* suggests that it might have been on his trips in 1909 or 1914, but that is conjecture based on the lack of any documentation.

Bishop Kenneth Hamilton was responsible for the Bortnianski tune that appeared in the 1969 *Hymnal* for the Bickersteth communion text "Till He Come, O Let the Words" (413) which Hamilton remembered from his years in

Nicaragua (1919-1937.) He held out for that tune which the committee eventually found in Ira Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos*.

Roy Ledbetter served as assistant pastor in Königsfeld, Germany where he learned the hymn "Sonne der Gerechtigkeit" which we now have in translation done by Ledbetter and Daniel Crews (521). Why the *MBW* committee chose to use a Lutheran musical setting rather than that of our own European Moravian *Gesangbuch* is an ongoing puzzlement.

A hymn of significant interest is what we now know to be the ordination hymn of the Bohemian Brethren (519), "Come, let us all with gladness raise." The *MBW* indicates that the *Radujme* was written either in 1457 or 1467. If in 1457, it was written to celebrate the founding of the Unitas Fratrum. If written in 1467, it was prepared for the ordination of the first ministers of the Unity. The text was translated into German by Michael Weisse for the 1531 Hymnal of the Brethren, and then into English for the 1911 British Moravian Hymnal by Evelyn Renatus Hassé, bishop of the Moravian Church and great-grandson of Henry Cossart who was Zinzendorf's agent leading to the Parliamentary recognition of the Moravians as "an Ancient Protestant Episcopal Church" on May 12, 1749.

It was unfamiliar in the United States until 1952 when it was sung at an ordination service on April 20 in Central Moravian Church, Bethlehem (Sunday bulletin). On that day, Henry L. Williams and Paul de Schweinitz. Couch were ordained Deacons by Bishop S. H. Gapp. Williams had studied at the British Moravian ministerial training college in 1949-1950 during which time he learned the hymn and its historical

importance. Bishop Gapp had participated in the consecration of Bishop Va lav Vancura at Mlada Boleslav in July 1946 when the hymn was sung (*Moravian Messenger* account of the service), as well as the consecration in London of Bishop Soren Ibsen two weeks earlier when it was probably used and so the request from Br. Williams was easily agreed to by the old bishop who had served as chairman of the 1923 hymnal committee following Leibert's death in 1919.

And what about the supposed second translation of the same Czech text which we know as "Join we all with one accord" (525)? The British nor American Moravian hymnals offer any solutions beyond the ubiquitous M or Moravian 1904. This was a topic of some interest for Henry Williams who found an anonymous translation in the Moravian of 1904. His best guess was that this was done by the editor S. H. Gapp or one of his younger brothers, J. Walter Gapp, who was a student at Moravian College and Theological Seminary at the time, but no information has come to hand to further the solution of the puzzle. Bishop Gapp's papers are silent as one would expect and we have none from J. Walter. Succeeding generations are invited to join the team of researchers, but in the meanwhile we must satisfy ourselves by accepting a Pauline mystery (I Cor. 13:12).

But, let's retrace our steps a few feet here. In working further on this hymn for another assignment, I recently found that there is some scholarly question about the authorship. While the British Moravian Hymn Book notes that the text was written by Gabriel Komarovsky in 1467, the Czech hymnal and that of the Continental Province both use the 1457 date and assign it to

Matthew of Kunwald. Müller in his article on this hymn in Julian's Dictionary looked at a copy of the 1561 Kancional in the Herrnhut Archives with the marginal notes by John Blahoslav (Bishop, historian and hymn editor of the Brethren) who noted it as from Matthew. Since none of the other worship books give any indication of their source for Komarovsky, I believe we are safe in asserting that the *Radujme* should be attributed to Matthew of Kunwald.

3. Translations

This is as good a place as any to raise the issue of hymn translations. The various worship resource books have listed translators where known or used the standard M for an unknown Moravian translator. At times hymns will pass through several translations to get to the person in the pew. Yet, a few words must be said about the translation discipline.

1. It is difficult. Idioms often defy a literal translation and can be used in a variety of ways. In 1931, members of the General Synod that met in Herrnhut could see the Böhmisches Berge (Bohemian Mountains) by looking south. They also knew the Böhmisches Berge as the difficult problems of mission administration facing the synod.

2. Language changes through the years. e.g. The German *Fräulein* which I learned in high school as the correct word for an unmarried girl/young woman is now no longer in general use. The shop girls make it very clear that they are to be addressed as *Frau*. Further, eighteenth century texts often contain diminutives that we would understand as nicknames. They are

no longer in regular usage and to translate into contemporary language with that sense would be incorrect. That is a concern with the alternate translation for "Morning Star" which was done by Martin Houser (323)... *Jesulein* may be cute and authentic in a 17th century text, but it simply will not do in 21st century German usage and hence English translation.

3. I have been working on translating a favorite German hymn-text "Du meine Seele singe" off and on for over two years now and struggle every step of the way. There are no predictions when, if ever, it will be finished. Bishop Kenneth Hamilton once wisely observed in conversation that to translate poetically is a gift and a discipline all its own.

D. Bohemian Brethren's hymns are another issue to be considered. We Americans have been largely dependent on the German translations of the original Czech texts. Most of what we have come through the work of Michael Weisse in the German hymnal of 1531, and Weisse was known to be a less than slavishly literal translator when his purposes lay in a different direction. Comenius' hymn texts were written a century later and the only Comenius hymn that appeared in the 1969 *Hymnal* "When my lips can frame no sound" has been dropped from the *MBW*.

With the renewed interest in Comenius connected with his educational work and the 400th anniversary of his birth in 1992, several of his hymns were translated into German by Theodor Gill. These could be readily gotten by an energetic translator and made available, plugging a leak in the ship of our worship resources. Or even better, a Czech speaker such as Jaroslav Vajda could translate them from the original texts.

And the process continues in reverse. The beloved hymn text “Sing Hallelujah, Praise the Lord” was written in English by John Swertner as filler for the 1789 British Hymnbook. It appeared as “Conclusion,” and was sung to a strange British tune. It was finally omitted in their 1975 hymnbook. Meanwhile, it was coupled in America with a tune by Johann Christian Bechler that he wrote on Staten Island around 1814. Its earliest manuscript copy has the words for a hymn that celebrated the return of peace after the War of 1812. It has regularly appeared in American Moravian hymnals since the *Offices of Worship and Hymns*, a happy marriage of text and tune.

In 1999 Johann Christian Bechler was discussed at the music conference “In himmlische Harmonie” in Herrnhut and three of his hymn tunes were sung, including 159, D. All of them were instantly encored by an overwhelming request. Bechler who died in Herrnhut in 1857 was slightly remembered in Europe as a bishop of the church but not as a composer prior to that conference. A Moravian Theological Seminary student had heard that presentation, translated the text into German in 2000 and it was used bilingually for her wedding celebrations in Bethlehem and Ebersdorf in May and July 2001. It has arrested the attention of European Moravians including members of their currently working hymnal revision committee, and so the story continues.

4. Ordination Doxologies

The last two hymnal committees in the American provinces have struggled with the ordination doxologies. The musical settings are not easy and have severely challenged some

smaller church choirs to the point that they have been sung by soloists or even omitted at times. While we know that musical settings have been in use since the mid-eighteenth century and that Gregor’s settings were published with his 1784 Choralbum, those in current use were composed by Christian Ignatius La Trobe ca. 1795. There is also a setting of the doxology for the ordination of Deacons composed by Bishop Peter Wolle for an ordination he conducted at Gnadenhütten, Ohio on April 2, 1854.

But my Sherlock Holmes nature also led me to ask questions concerning the source of the texts. Since these doxologies and the Festival Doxology both appear anonymously in the liturgical collections of the church, were they written by the same person? When did they first appear?

Edwin Kortz in his study on the development of the American Moravian liturgy noted that the Festival Doxology “Unto the Lamb that was slain,” appeared first in the *Liturgien Büchlein* of 1757 where it was attributed to the *Cantore Fratrum Ordinario* who has been identified by Hanns-Joachim Wollstadt in his 1966 study as Count Zinzendorf. A musical setting was composed by Christian Gregor as early as 1755.

So with that part of the puzzle solved, can we attribute the ordination doxologies to the *Cantore Fratrum Ordinario* as well? Holmes had his Watson and Frank has his Peucker and Waas, both of whom had valuable suggestions to make.

The *Jüngerhausdiarium* records an ordination service in Herrnhut on May 12, 1758 at which Zinzendorf presided and preached, 45 deacons and deaconesses were ordained, 9 presbyters and

2 bishops consecrated. Let your imagination wander a bit and consider how long that service must have lasted? In the entry, the diarist noted that the ordination doxologies “*aus der Liturgien unserer alten griechiches Kirche*” (from the liturgy of our old Greek church) were sung. These are the doxologies as we know them textually today.

Why the Greek Church? David Cranz in his history of the Brethren’s Church wrote that the Brethren always sought to prove their connections with the Eastern Church to link up with Cyril and Methodius and thus disclaim any connection with corrupt Rome. This can be seen in the claim that the Easter Morning Liturgy was adapted from the Greek liturgy as well as the hymn stanza “Most Holy Lord and God” coming from the Trisagion of the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. It also finds expression in the idea that our surplices have some relation to those of the Greek Church. The connection with the Greek Church would have appealed to Zinzendorf, as well as the radical anti-Roman Bohemian/Moravian refugees who had their roots in the Bohemian Brethren.

Does it change anything? Not really. But it sheds light on how we understand our tradition and how that sense of historical connectedness keeps us involved with ecumenical activity even when we deal with internal criticism for doing so.

5. Alterations

A word about the all-too regularly encountered abbreviation “alt.” following information about the hymn-writers and/or translators. In many cases, the indication of textual alteration is there to alert the singer that archaic language has been

edited out: thee and thou have been replaced as much as possible. At times, one might wish that the original text had been left alone, but as James Russell Lowell reminded us in his hymn “Once to Every Man and Nation”... “Time makes ancient good uncouth.” At times, “alt.” can also refer to a recasting by the author himself. My own Passion Week hymn text “Jesus in Geth-semene” (347) was reworked at the request of the committee.

I just heard of yet another possibility for an alteration. On Easter Sunday morning we were waiting for the throngs to take their places on the God’s Acre in Winston-Salem. Jay Hughes told me that Bishop J. Kenneth Pfohl had advocated an alteration in the text of “Sleep thy last sleep.” The last lines of the text currently read: “though dark waves roll- o’er the silent river,/thy fainting soul Jesus can deliver” (805). Bishop Pfohl felt strongly that the last words should be “Jesus will deliver” — not a possibility but an assurance of the care and redemptive activity of the Savior.

6. Texts and Tunes

There is one last area of illumination: how do we determine the marriage of texts and tunes? This can be done by the text writer who writes with a specific, existing tune in mind. I do not compose music, and so my texts are always written with a tune in mind which provides the meter and mood. I shall never forget a day at college chapel when the stanza “What language shall I borrow” appeared in the liturgy, and the organist chose a tune which fit the meter. However, singing “What language shall I borrow,” which we normally sing to the Passion Chorale, to “Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus” was more than the Moravian students

could handle. So, the task of a hymnbook committee is a delicate one.

In the early work for the *MBW*, copies of many of the hymn texts written by Bishop Allen Schattschneider were sent to the committee. One stanza especially appealed to them and made the cut of several rounds of decision making. It appears as “Bless, O Lord, this Congregation” (442). The originally chosen tune had wide intervals, making it somewhat challenging for congregations. So it was changed to the Haydn tune “Austrian Hymn,” which was long associated with the Austrian National anthem “*Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser*.” (God preserve the Emperor Franz Joseph). It was later commandeered by Hitler and Company as the German national anthem *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. We Americans meanwhile have long identified this with the text by John Newton “Glorious Things of You Are Spoken.”

Well and good, until the Sunday morning one pastor used the Schattschneider text to the total chagrin of a member of the congregation who confessed weeks later that she almost had to leave the service. She had grown up in Alsace during the years of World War II and the flashbacks that the tune caused were overwhelmingly non-spiritual. Does this indicate that the *MBW* committee should have foreseen such an occasion. No, but it certainly reinforces my understanding that hymnology is a fluid discipline and one which cannot be carefully regulated. The human element will always be present.

One final study example: the lovefeast grace “Lord Jesus, for our Call of Grace” (*Wir halten vor dir Liebesmahl*) is familiar to many of us and poses an interesting set of questions for further study.

This appeared at Herrnhut in 1734, and according to Müller’s *Hymnologisches Handbuch* originated for “a Sunday lovefeast”.⁵ It is a composite of two earlier stanzas and appeared in this form in *das Kleines Brüdergesangbuch* of 1763, and then appeared in English in the 1789 British Moravian Hymn Book with no attribution. Müller indicated it is by Count Zinzendorf. This is not unusual so far, except for the note that this was for “a Sunday lovefeast.” Why such a note?

While I have not had opportunity to consult the Herrnhut diary itself, research in the Bethlehem Diary clearly indicates that lovefeasts were held on any day of the week for which an occasion presented itself. Saturdays were favorite days for congregational lovefeasts, while choir and individually significant ones occurred at the drop of a hat. And occasions were often mundane — such as the time the Single Brethren celebrated because there were to be no changes in assignments of labor within Bethlehem. Was this Sunday lovefeast in Herrnhut such a unique occasion that the Count was moved to write a particular blessing or is this simply another instance of the ever-industrious work of an unknown scribe in copying every word which came forth from the heart of the *Ordinarius*? If the latter, who was functioning as the amanuensis at that time? We know that one of the David Nitschmanns was known as Syndicus, but he was not in Herrnhut at the time this text first was sung.⁶ Who then was the scribe of the moment? That is something to play with the next time I have some free time at the Unity Archives.

In conclusion, I want to share two observations which I believe to be of importance for anyone who would provide this type of study for the

Moravian Church in the 21st and succeeding centuries. First, such work can no longer be insular or limited to the concerns of one or two provinces. The easier and more rapid exchange of information made possible by the changes in the European political structures and the electronic age, make it imperative for Moravian scholars to know and share works which a generation ago were unknown or misattributed.

One example must suffice. The stanza “Bethany, O peaceful habitation” appeared in the 1923 American Moravian hymnal (520) with the text credited to Christian Gregor. Already in 1916, the Müller *Handbuch*⁷ had provided newer scholarship indicating that the 18th century text was by an anonymous Moravian author, and had been expanded by Karl Bernhard Garve with another four stanzas making it a more significant hymn. Garve, incidentally, was one of Müller’s favorite Moravian hymnwriters, to the point that Müller named his eldest son Karl Bernhard. The works of Garve are still represented by 30 texts in the 1967 *Gesangbuch* and are another rich source for study and possible inclusion in other hymnals of the Unity.

Secondly, I am very aware that none of us can issue a complete hymnological resource book at any given time. Adams’ work was only partial when it appeared in the 1980’s, and I am the first to tell you that my work is, too. I know of another set of manuscript hymn notes compiled by J. Norman Libbey for an older British Moravian hymn book which should be studied and gleaned for its insights, as well as hymn studies done by Werner Burckhardt (1901-1989) which exist in manuscript in the Herrnhut archives.

While we have a copy of the Libbey notes in the Williams collection at the Archives in Bethlehem, I hope to study the Burckhardt notes in two weeks when I am scheduled to spend a few days in Herrnhut. One new insight may mean changes in my opinions and have possible ramifications for the Companion.

Finally, every hymn study, every hymn usage, every decision of hymnal committees adds to the variety and richness of our worship traditions and helps us connect or disconnect from our heritage as God is working His purpose out. And every decision and new edition provides more opportunities for generating educational materials to enlighten our worship.

(endnotes)

¹ Albert H. Frank, *Companion to the Moravian Book of Worship* (Bethlehem and Winston-Salem, Moravian Music Foundation, 2004).

² *The Liturgy and Hymns of the American Province of the Unitas Fratrum or the Moravian Church* (Bethlehem: Moravian Church, 1876), p. v.

³ Journal, 1878 Synod of the Northern Province, Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, p.182-83.

⁴Peter M. Gubi, Ep. Fr. in conversation with the writer, 1966 at Brimstone Hill, St. Kitts.

⁵ Müller, *Handbuch*, 223,241.

⁶ See Dienerblätter in Moravian Archives, Herrnhut.

⁷ Müller, *Handbuch*, 188.