

## MORAVIAN MOMENT #11...

### Indigenous Leadership, for an Indigenous Church

The Moravian Church, in its early days in Herrnhut, had a passion and a zeal for souls. They had the conviction that the God who had saved them, was calling them to share the good news to the whole world, especially those who had never heard of Jesus Christ. It was a passion and zeal that was so strong, that their small numbers did not deter them. It is truly a wonderful example for us, that we do not allow the lack of numbers to prevent us from touching lives for the Master. Numbers is not always the most important factor in evangelism; but intention, sincerity, desire, dedication and a willingness to be used by God.

The giant leap of faith therefore, taken by the Moravian Church after it was renewed in Germany, is testimony to the fact that God has used and can use our Church, to accomplish his will and purpose. In the first hundred years of missionary work, for example, the Missionaries came not only to the Eastern West Indies in 1732, but also went to Greenland in 1733, to Lapland in 1734, to the North American Indians in 1735, to Suriname in 1735, to South Africa in 1737, to Algiers in 1739, to Labrador in 1752 and Jamaica in 1754. By 1832 we are told that the mission numbered over 45,000 persons under the care of about 200 Missionaries. The Church was small and it found itself unable to maintain the exponential growth of the mission work. It was a powerful statement of a Church that focused on mission and nothing was going to hinder the work of the Lord.

The rapid spread of the work meant that the Moravian work had to be divided into geographical regions called PROVINCES. The development of Provinces was necessary if the work was going to spread and the development of indigenous Pastors to concretize the work. This was supposed to be a multiplier effect that as indigenous persons was trained; they were expected to train others to send on the Mission field. If any Church is going to grow, the local indigenous persons must not only endorse it, but they must claim it as their own, where it becomes a self supporting, self governing Church. The question was, were the Local indigenous people in the Caribbean ready for this gigantic responsibility? Were they equipped and empowered for such a task? This was the time when the people belonging to the Mission needed patient and intensive training, so that an educated and well trained ministry and Laity could assume such responsibility. There were many challenges ahead. We will begin to look at them next time.

*25<sup>TH</sup> March, 2007*