

## **MORAVIAN MOMENT#26...** **MORAVIAN WORSHIP**

Moravian worship has always been a joyous spirit-filled worship from the heart. As men and women were converted, their mouths were opened and their lips proclaimed the praises of Almighty God. There was much spontaneity in their worship, their prayers, their singing, their fellowship and their testimonies. Members were always eager to tell of the wonders of God and His goodness in their lives. The Psalmist declares: "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God". (Psalm 40:3). Moravians have always had a song in their hearts and a testimony on their lips to praise God. However, as the Church developed, persons sought for a more formal type of worship which took some of the spontaneity out of the experience. The spontaneous worship of the Moravian Church was so deep, that it is said that Zinzendorf composed a hymn of 67 verses during worship. While the congregation was singing the first verse, he was busy composing the second, until they sang all 67 verses.

The baptism with the Holy Spirit upon our fathers two centuries ago produced such spiritual floodtide of sacred songs as had not been experienced in the Christian Church before or since. The majority of our best Moravian hymns may be traced to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1727. The constant themes of the hymns that run throughout are: Praise to Christ, adoration of Him as God, and proclamation of His virtues and work.

One of the peculiarities of Moravian hymns is that they are generally addressed to our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Thus honouring the Son, they honoured the Father who sent Him as well as the Holy Spirit whose chief mission it was to glorify God the Father. Indeed, nearly all of the great hymns of the Moravian Church are prayers addressed to Jesus. A truly converted Moravian, when he or she is baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire often breaks out into sacred songs, prayer and praise to Jesus. The chief singer when the revival broke out was Zinzendorf. One verse of one of his hymns tells this story forcefully:

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,  
My beauty are my glorious dress;  
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed  
With joy I can lift up my head.

Justification by faith and the new birth are to be found at the cross of Jesus, and therefore this dominates Moravian worship. The great revival that started on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1727, so transformed the Moravian Church that it continued like a mighty river overflowing its banks. It continued with the unbroken prayer meeting which lasted for 100 years, from 1727-1827.

The Moravian Church as it seeks renewal in worship, need a core of godly people deeply committed to seeing worship come alive. The kind of worship we want in our church ought to grow out of the spiritual life of the congregation and feeds back into that life. The challenge for the core of committed people in our church is to begin to pray for worship renewal. If we take measures towards this, the gates of hell shall never be able to prevail against us. Is there another witness?

*8<sup>th</sup> July, 2007*