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**THE HISTORY OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH ROOTING IN UNITAS
FRATRUM OR THE UNITY OF THE BRETHERN (1457-2017)**

BASED ON THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO SETTLEMENTS

OF CHRISTIANSFELD AND SAREPTA

Christensen C.S.

The article deals with the history and the problems of the Moravian Church rooting back to the Unity of the Brethren or Unitas Fratrum, a Czech Protestant denomination established around the minister and philosopher Jan Hus in 1415 in the Kingdom of Bohemia. The Moravian Church is thereby one of the oldest Protestant denominations in the world. With its heritage back to Jan Hus and the Bohemian Reformation (1415-1620) the Moravian Church was a precursor to the Martin Luther's Reformation that took place around 1517. Around 1722 in Herrnhut the Moravian Church experienced a renaissance with the Saxonian count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf as its protector. A 500 years anniversary celebrated throughout the Protestant countries in 2017. The history of the Moravian Church based on the description of two out of the 27 existing settlements, Christiansfeld in the southern part of Denmark and Sarepta in the Volgograd area of Russia, is very important to understand the Reformation in 1500s.

Keywords: Moravian Church, Reformation, Jan Hus, Sarepta, Christiansfeld, Martin Luther, Herrnhut, Bohemia, Protestantism, Bohemian Reformation, Pietism, Nicolaus von Zinzendorf.

**ИСТОРИЯ МОРАВСКОЙ ЦЕРКВИ, БЕРУЩЕЙ НАЧАЛО
В «UNITAS FRATRUM» ИЛИ «ЕДИНОМ БРАТСТВЕ» (1457-2017),**

ОСНОВАННАЯ НА ОПИСАНИИ ДВУХ ПОСЕЛЕНИЙ:

КРИСТИАНСФЕЛЬДА И САРЕПТЫ

Христенсен К.С.

Статья посвящена исследованию истории и проблем Моравской Церкви, уходящей корнями в «Unitas Fratrum» или «Единое братство», которое

представляло собой союз чешских протестантских церквей. Братство возникло в 1415 году в королевстве Богемия под руководством священника и философа Яна Гуса. Моравская Церковь является одним из старейших протестантских объединений в мире. Благодаря наследию Яна Гуса и Богемской Реформации (1415-1620), Моравская Церковь стала предтечей Реформации Мартина Лютера, имевшей место около 1517 года. В 1722 году в саксонском поселении Гернгут началось возрождение Моравской Церкви при поддержке ее протектора графа Николая фон Цинцендорфа. В 2017 году в протестантских странах отпраздновали пятисотлетие Реформации. История Моравской Церкви, основанная на описании двух из 27 ее городов, Кристиансфельда в южной Дании и Сарепты в Волгоградской области, имеет большое значение для понимания Реформации 1500-х годов.

Ключевые слова: Моравская Церковь, Реформация, Ян Гус, Сарепта, Кристиансфельд, Мартин Лютер, Гернхат, Богемия, протестантизм, Богемская реформация, благочестие, Николай фон Цинцендорф.

Unitas Fratrum, Jan Hus and the Bohemian Reformation (1457-1722)

In the year 2017 the Protestant Church celebrates the 500 years jubilee of the Martin Luther's 95 Theses. The Martin Luther event with these 95 Theses, on the front door of the local church in Wittenberg, on October 31 in 1517, is regarded as the beginning of the Reformation. However, Luther was not the first reformer; this honour belongs to the Czech minister and philosopher Jan Hus and the Bohemian Reformation in the beginning of the 15th century. Jan Hus opposed the Roman Catholic Church, which sent him on the stake in 1415 in Konstanz, where he was burned alive as a heretic [4, p. 19-22].

Jan Hus attacked in his sermons the denials of the monks, the priests and the papacy, and did not consider the Church of Christ to be a hierarchy, but a society of those for salvation predetermined. Furthermore, he preferred to keep the sermon in Czech and not in Latin. On the other hand, he did not accept the transformation of the sacrament, but was nevertheless accused of it and for that reason convicted of heresy.

He simply meant that common churchgoers were entitled to receive both bread and wine at the sacrament. The same thought as those of Martin Luther, a hundred years later and the fundament of the Unity of the Brethren's interpretation of the bible.

The Moravians emphasize conduct rather than doctrine, and their church is governed by provincial synods, the bishop having only spiritual and administrative authority. However, the music in Moravian churches is famous, especially the part-singing of the congregations. Famous is also God's daily watchword, each day one single verse from the Bible to be reflected upon during the day. It was a normal procedure to use watchwords in all Moravian towns, and the watchwords had a unifying function on all the Moravian colonies all over the world. Finally, their relationship with Jesus was decisive for their church. The congregation agreed all on a religion that was based on each human's personal and hearty relation with Jesus, because he took all sin in the world on his shoulders when he died on the cross.

The historical background and the religious thoughts of the Moravian Church begin near the city of Kunvald in Bohemia near the current Polish border. At the time of Jan Hus' death, after the martyrdom on 7 July 1415, he had more than 150.000 followers in Bohemia and Moravia. In 1457, a small group of followers secretly founded the independent church of the Unity of the Brethren or *Unitas Fratrum*, and they continued where Jan Hus had left them. Therefore, the Brethren executed the first Czech Bible translation from the original languages in 1564. The Brethren's bishop, Jan Blahoslav, who translated the text from Greek, initiated this work. The final break between *Unitas Fratrum* and the Roman Catholic Church occurred in 1467, and persecution drove many of the members out of Bohemia and Moravia into Poland, Austria and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

During the Reformation by Martin Luther (1517-1546), the Brethren supported him heartily and helped him, in any way they could. In the year 1532 they sent Martin Luther the confession of faith, which was printed in Wittenberg in 1533. An act that should haunt the Brethren for more than 150 years, and they were deeply hatred by the Roman Catholic Church even longer. *Unitas Fratrum* had also good connexions to other reformers like for instance the minister of the Church of the

French refugees in Strasbourg, John Calvin, and the French evangelist, William Farel [4, p. 40-44].

For almost 200 years, during the so-called Bohemian Reformation, the entire Bohemian community, from peasant to nobility, became protestant in the footsteps of Jan Hus, until the Catholic Counter Reformation and the Habsburg Emperor unified and besieged the Protestant Bohemian nobility in the battle of White Mountain (Bílá Hora) near Prague in 1620. The Protestant clergy became all exiled together with the members of other protestant congregations, the so-called exulants, who refused to be part of the compulsorily recatholicization of Bohemia and Moravia.

Moravian Church, Herrnhut and count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf (1722-1765)

From 1457 until 1700 Unitas Fratrum recruited many members in all sections of the Bohemian population. Sometimes the church was tolerated in Bohemia and Moravia, but most often, the members were persecuted and driven in captivity. Furthermore, the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) had almost wiped out all the followers of the Moravian Church and Jan Hus' followers were scattered to the winds.

In the early 18th century the brothers experienced a pietistic revival in a very pietistic northern Europe. A small part of the members of the church, around 200, sought refuge approximately 20 kilometres from the Czech border in the county of Berthelsdorf in Saxony, in 1722. The possessor of the county was the young imperial count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, who was supposed to receive a special love for the Moravian Church, as Unitas Fratrum was called now. The Count himself was raised in a very pietistic home, first with his grandmother and later on at the boarding school in Halle, whose principal, August Herman Francke, was one of the great personalities of Pietism. When the Brethren sought refuge in the County of Berthelsdorf, they got permission to settle on the fields of the castle. Together with Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, the Brethren established the first Moravian settlement in world, called Herrnhut. In 1727 Nicolaus von Zinzendorf quitted his job in the central

administration in the Saxony capital of Dresden to devote himself to the Moravian Church [4, p. 63-69].

The denomination's Latin name became *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of Brethren). This name was and is still very important for the self-understanding of the members of the Moravian Church. In the self-understanding of the Moravian Church, the church is the body of Jesus. Each member was one in him (Joh. 17, 21). Therefore, *Unitas Fratrum* is only one Church of Christ in which the different congregations are part of the indivisible body of Christ.

On 13th of August 1727 Nicolaus von Zinzendorf and the rest of the members celebrated the new declaration of "Statutes, Injunctions and Prohibitions" in accordance to which the inhabitants of the settlement Herrnhut should live. During the religious arrangement, or more precisely the sacrament, the congregation had a great spiritual awakening – the Holy Relevation. An awakening so strong that the most important purpose of the Moravian Church became to spread the words of the Bible and to exercise missionary work all over the world.

The Moravian Church perceives life as a unity where the spiritual and the secular cannot be separated. Everything belongs to God and is to be used in His ministry. Life is a worship service. Therefore, it was a matter of living in a liturgical way, which is, always being in the service of the Saviour, always being with God. It has something to do with prayer and Bible reading. A practical result of this is the *Book of Solutions*. It contains a Bible word to every day of the year from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. In addition, a continuous Bible reading plan, a prayer plan and a stanza of a hymn. Bible texts and plans were and are still the same throughout the world, while the salmon verses are chosen in the different congregations. There are no rules as to how often you have to frequent the church. You simply go there when you feel like it. This also applies to non-members of the Moravian Church [7, p. 85-86].

The Moravians do not actively look for new members, who are already members of other churches, however if a member of another church is active in the congregation, this member can become member of the Moravian Community, too.

Therefore, native peoples all over the world got first priority in the missionary movement. The Community of Herrnhut grew rapidly following the abovementioned revival and actually became the centre of a major movement for Christian revival and mission during the 1700s. Under the direction of August Gottlieb Spangenberg, who later became the founder of the Moravian Church in America, and along with the Royal Danish Mission College, the Moravian missionaries all over the world were the first large-scale Protestant missionary movement.

Because of count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf's close relations to the Danish royal family, the two first Moravian mission settlements were placed in Danish colonies. In 1732, the first mission ever was established on St. Thomas; an island in Danish West Indies and the year after, New Herrnhut (Noorlit) in Greenland was established. This missionary colony was the establishment of the modern capital of Nuuk [4, p. 148-151].

Hereafter the most interesting area for the Moravians was North America, the native Indians, and the white settlers. Already in 1734 the Moravians directed their course towards Georgia on the east coast. In 1741 the mission colony of Bethlehem in Pennsylvania was opened. Other early settlements in the USA included Bethabara (1753), Bethania (1759) and Old Salem near the present city of Winston-Salem in North Carolina in 1766. Even in South Africa, two colonies were established, Genadendal in 1737 and Elim, 150 kilometres southeast of Cape Town, in 1824. Twenty seven of these identical religious settlements were build all over the world [1, p. 70-79].

The Danish Moravian settlement of Christiansfeld (1772-2017)

Because of the close relations between Denmark and Saxony, a Moravian deputation visited Copenhagen as soon as 1727. Here the Crown Prince Christian of Denmark, himself a very eager follower of Pietism, treated Nicolaus von Zinzendorf's deputation in a gracious manner. The year after Crown Prince Christian and his wife Sofie Magdalene visited Herrnhut in Saxony and was very satisfied with what they saw. They were so thrilled that the Danish Prince invited Nicolaus von

Zinzendorf to his coronation in 1731. The count became so popular in Denmark, that King Christian VI even wanted him to be a candidate to the job as Prime Minister.

All his life, however, Nicolaus von Zinzendorf had a dream of a Moravian settlement in Denmark. Count Zinzendorf had many opponents in Germany. Some of them warned the Danish king about the count's more free interpretation of Christianity and Pietism. King Christian VI then turned his back on Nicolaus von Zinzendorf and his ideas of a Moravian society, and he rejected the count as long as he reigned. His successor Frederick V had no interest in the missionary project, and when count von Zinzendorf died in 1760; there was still no Moravian settlement in Denmark.

In the beginning of the 1770s the Danish Prime Minister, the German Johan Friedrich Struensee got into contact with the Moravians in Herrnhut. On the initiative of his brother Carl August Struensee, the Moravian Minister Johannes Prætorius and the leader of the Moravian missionary work and later the first principal, Jonathan Briant, the Herrnhut congregation was allowed to establish a Moravian settlement in Denmark near the farm of Tyrstrupgård in the southern part of Jutland. On April 1st 1773 the foundation stones for the first four houses were laid down and the settlement was named Christiansfeld after the Danish king Christian VII [2, p. 248-251].

Like in other countries, the Danish King offered the Brethren special privileges during the foundation of Christiansfeld. Some of the favourable conditions were: a) partly no tax during the first 10 years; b) 10% contribution for buildings built during the first 10 years; c) no military service; d) full internal freedom to run schools and trade and e) duty free trade the first 10 years – a period later prolonged to 1802. The reason for these privileges was that Denmark lacked skilled craftsmen and, in general, growth in the country. The Herrnhuts had a very good reputation in Europe of being good and very skilled craftsmen.

Founded by the Moravians as a colony and organized as an independent Moravian Lutheran congregation, Christiansfeld was like the 26 other Moravian settlements, a unique religious designed city. The town was planned according to a very tight and stringent town plan in order to make it become a Christian ideal town.

The original town plan and the authentic yellow brick houses with red tile roofs represent a special building quality expressing simplicity and harmony. Baroque, Rococo and Classicism often inspire the styles. Everything was planned for the Moravians to live a mutual and simple life in Christiansfeld. Furthermore, the town structure reflects the Moravians' social structures, i.e. the Kor-houses (i.e. houses run by independent and autonomous people of one gender, age and marital status).

In the streets of the city, there is one house for unmarried men (Brother's House), woman (Sister's House) and widows (Widows' House). The Moravians were sleeping, eating, praying, reading and working in these houses and thereby they took care that the members got an academic education and that they got a workman profession, too. The houses thus held several workshops. The Brother's House was holding a tannery, carpentry and bakery; the Sister's house a sewing workshop, weaving mill, wool and cotton spinning mills, candle and soap factories. Moreover, family houses, schools, the Hall Room (Church), God's acre, hotel, Fire Station, workshops, the Green Town Garden, Girl Boarding School and Boy Boarding School etc. were carefully placed in the different streets. The church also named the Hall Room, as well in Christiansfeld and as in the 26 other Moravians settlements, had and still has a special story.

In 1794 the settlers in Christiansfeld established water supply from an area called Kohave, 2-3 kilometres north-west of the colony. The water was led through dugout oak logs all the way into the well in the middle of square in front of the Hall Room. At that time, only few cities in Denmark had clean drinking water, and many Danes died of dysentery in the end of the 1700s. However, in Christiansfeld they enjoyed clean drinking water due to the supply from a clean source in the forest. Quite exceptionally, the Moravians also had gutters for wastewater in the settlement.

The Hall Room reflects the Moravian interpretation of Christianity. The Hall Room is very large without supportive columns in anyway and white painted benches across the room. The church decoration reflects the Moravian's humanitarian vision, the walls are all painted white and there are no icons, paintings or religious symbols at all. The pietistic way of life is the ruler of the faith. Furthermore, the decoration of

the church is very Spartan and signals that it is not the church itself, which is holy. There is no altar either. Normally an altar is where you make sacrifices. However, Jesus was crucified once for all. Consequently, there is no need to bring new sacrifices.

Our lamb has conquered let us follow him – this is the slogan of the Moravian Church, where the lamb represents Jesus. Thereby you follow the lamb by having a personal relationship with Jesus, just like count Zinzendorf. At a very young age he started to talk with Jesus. The slogan is written around the Moravians symbol portraying a lamb carrying a victory flag with a cross and a glory around its head. The Old Testament describes a custom of sacrificing a lamb to God in order to be forgiven your sins. The picture of the conquering God's lamb derives from the Revelation of John. The lamb lets itself get slaughtered without fight. Jesus was crucified and did not fight back. Thereby, Jesus took all his sin in the world on his shoulders when he died on the cross. Therefore, there is no need to bring new sacrifices.

You will also notice that the minister is not elevated above the congregation in a pulpit, as he is one of the Brethren. The minister sits at the long side behind a table called the Liturgy table. This table is only slightly above the church floor, because the Hall Room is meant as a place where everybody is equal. Instead of the classic communion, the Moravian minister serves bread and wine to the seated churchgoers. This act symbolizes that Christ meets with each individual person.

Christiansfeld was in centuries the only town in Denmark with freedom of religion and not subject to any vicar or bishop. The free-congregation only had one thing to obey, and that was having the same confession as the Danish Lutheran State Church. Beside the liberty, the equality means everything to the Moravians, both in their minds as well as their doings. Everybody is equal, clerics, working people, counts, bakers, shoemakers, brothers and sisters. In the cemetery, the God's Acre, all graves look the same as a symbol that to God we are all equal.

The Russian Moravian settlement of Sarepta (Old Sarepta) (1765-1891)

The first specific contacts between the Moravian Church and Russia took place in 1735. In this year Count Zinzendorf sent his delegated David Nitchmann to St. Petersburg to make some inquiries concerning Russia. The Russian civil servants reported to Nitchmann that it might be worth the effort to send missionaries to the Kalmyk's area near the city of Volgograd. In the next 5 years, several attempts to establish a new Moravian settlement were undertaken, but they all proved unsuccessful. It would take more than 30 years before anything happened.

In August 1765 the first group of Moravian colonists arrived in Saratov. From there they launched their search for an appropriate Brethren settlement location. At the edge of the steppe were to be feared plundering of the Kalmyk tribes and attacks from nearby Turks. For this reason, the town was fortified in 1769 with a wall and moat, 6 bastions and 12 cannons. Twenty men formed a patrol. The serene co-existence with the Kalmyk people contributed decisively to the fact that these nomads became settled. In 1767 Tsarina Catherine II the Great herself of German origin donated a house in St. Petersburg. The house should serve as a residence for their local agent of the church, as well as accommodation for the colonists travelling to from Saxony to the new settlements in Russia and as a location for the new Moravian society in St. Petersburg [6, p. 129].

In 1767 Catherine II the Great signed the deed of a donating granting land and privileges to the Moravian Church for their colony on the Volga. They chose a location 350 kilometres south of Saratov, Zarizyn, where the Sarpa River flows into the Volga. On 23 August 1765, the Moravian Brethren began laying out their new settlement. The name Sarpa inspired the settlers to name their new colony Sarepta after the Biblical site of Sarepta in nowadays Lebanon (1 Kings 17, 7; Luke 4, 26) [6, p. 131-132].

Like Christiansfeld, the Moravian Church founded Sarepta, in a unique religious design with yellow bricks and red tile roofs and the same organization of the houses in streets: the Hall Room (church), houses for single brothers, single sisters and widows, house for the warden and family houses. The two most important streets

ran parallel East- west and between the two streets, you could find the Hall Room square also being the town centre. The square was shaped like a cross with the fountain well and life giving water in the middle [5, p. 139-140].

The settlement was a copy of Herrnhut in Oberlausitz. In 1767 the brothers built a water line from the mountains to Sarepta. From the same year, tax exempt for 30 years, they devoted themselves mainly to trade and industrial development, to the delight of the Russian government. In 1768 a factory was established, which imported and processed half as much regional tobacco. The processing of cotton was the most rewarding. Sarpinka, named after the place, was known as a textile beyond the Volga region. The Herrnhut colony was also known for its winegrowing and flourishing crafts. A mineral-containing source discovered in 1773 brought many visitors and promoted the growth of the settlement. The Herrnhuts brought new craft techniques to Russia, and all work, including the craftsmanship, was carried out with the same passion as if it was a church service. In fact doing ones job in the best possible way was considered a daily church service. Sarepta became the most important and most famous of all German colonies in Russia.

In the beginning of 1770s the population in the colony was around 200 peoples. In 1774, however, the Russian commandant in Zarizyn warned the Moravians to escape from Sarepta, because of the leader of the Russian peasant uprising 1773-1775 the Cossack Yemelyan Pugachev attacks on the Volga Germans in the Volgograd area in August 1774. Those Moravians fleeing from the battlefield arrived by boat and land in Astrakhan on 27 August, where they stayed until the end of the battles. Sarepta was severely destroyed and the candle factory and church had been plundered. In both 1801 and 1803 and later in 1822, there were severe fires that destroyed parts of the colony. Around 1812 the population of the colony was 535 and in the same year the Russian Bible Society established a branch in Sarepta and two years later the Society received permission to translate the bible into the Kalmyk language [3, p. 99-102].

In 1889 the colony had around 1550 settlers, but the fundament under the Moravian city was beginning to crumble. Two years later the Unity Elder's

Conference seated in the manor house of Berthelsdorf near Herrnhut, made a dramatic decision. In the months to come, it was decided to call back all Moravian church officials in the Sarepta colony and an official termination of the Church Membership. The warden and the ministers accepted the call back to Saxony from Herrnhut and after this the Unity Elder's Conference terminated the status of Sarepta as a Moravian Church. Some years later the remaining inhabitants of the settlement joined the Russian Lutheran Church.

The decision made a rift between the congregation in Sarepta and the church officials in Herrnhut and the consequences of the decision was an official separation of Sarepta from the Unity Elder's Conference. 126 years of history of the Moravian Church's colony Sarepta – the easternmost Moravian colony in the Volga area has abruptly ended.

The Moravian Settlements in the year 2017

Sarepta

In the nineteenth century, secularization made a Herrnhuter life more and more difficult. In 1892 the last brothers were recalled to Herrnhut and Sarepta was given up as a branch of the brothers' community. There remained a German Protestant church community of 30,000 Russians. The mustard factory, which was founded by the Herrenhutern, still exists and produces, among other things, mustard oil. The mustard is very beloved in the Volgograd area.

Several factors played a role in the decline and the dissolution of the Moravian settlement: 1) interference by the Russian government in the management of church properties in 1891; 2) also in 1891 the Russian government administration of Saratov declared the properties of the Moravian Church communal property; 3) all over Europe, the Pietism was declining; 4) the missionary work with the Kalmyks was a failure, because the Kalmyk's were nomads and therefore were not steady and 5) the members of the Moravian congregation were not all members of the Moravian Church but members of other religious communities.

In 1891 Sarepta had finally lost its status as a Moravian settlement and became a Lutheran community under the jurisdiction of the established German Lutheran

Church in Russia. For more than a decade before the dissolution of the colony, the German Lutheran Church had tried to take over the Moravian congregation in Sarepta. Many of the Brethren objected to this and left the colony. The city was renamed Krasnoarmeisk in 1920 and became a district of Volgograd (then Stalingrad) in 1931.

German families left Russia to go back to Herrnhut, while other families remained near the bank of Sarpa. During the deportation of the Volga Germans and the battle of Stalingrad (Volgograd) in 1942 and 1943 the original settlement buildings were threatened. However, the central parts of Sarepta survived whereas the Germans destroyed Volgograd. In the last decades the former Moravian colony became a part of what is now the southern suburb of Volgograd.

In 1989 the teacher Aleksandr Petrow formed a citizens' initiative for the restoration of the historic German houses. Petrov drew the attention of the local administration to the condition of the houses, and tried to finance them. The church was built around 1780 and is the oldest building in Volgograd. The year after Sarepta was turned into an open-air museum and thereby the original structure of the colony was preserved. Furthermore, some of the ancestors of the original Moravian families returned and the church was restored. The German community ensures the preservation of the houses and uses the church for their German-speaking services. Today the open-air museum, called the Old Sarepta Museum of History and Ethnography, has about 15 houses, eight of which were renovated.

Christiansfeld

Everything was planned for the Moravians to live a mutual and simple life in Christiansfeld. The major part of the houses is still standing enabling the spectator to see the values, the unique craftsmanship and feel the special atmosphere of the town.

From 1773 until 1864 Christiansfeld was a Danish settlement, but in the Second Schleswig War, one of the most grievous consequence of the defeat of the War, was the loss of Northern Schleswig to Prussia. From 1864 until 1920, it was therefore situated on German territory. In World War I (1914-18) young men from Christiansfeld were forced to carry out military duties on the German side. This

caused many soldiers to desert and cross the border to Denmark. A Danish-German border, which was five kilometres north of Christiansfeld.

Christiansfeld also suffered from the horrors of the war. The Germans sent soldiers to the settlement and in 1917 they took the church bell, which was to be melted and turned into cannons. The organ pipes and huge amounts of brass and copper went the same way. Towards the end of the war Germany had to give back part of Northern Schleswig back to Denmark. At the election, where the population was allowed to decide whether to be Germans or Danes, on 10 February 1920, 67% of Christiansfeld's population voted Danish.

However, one thing survived all the disasters. In 1783 the tradition of honey cakes in the Moravian settlement began. Half of the local Pharmacy House was turned into a bakery. Since then the honey cakes of Christiansfeld have been so popular that only a decline in honey production was able to stop the cake production shortly. In 225 years the cakes were baked in the original 18th century bakery, which was then renovated because of new national sanitary standards, but still uses the original recipes.

During recent years, many of the historic houses of the town centre have been renovated. During the renovation process, it has been important to let Christiansfeld remain a living town. Institutions of Christiansfeld and the Municipality of Kolding are working together to preserve the special authenticity and integrity of Christiansfeld.

Today the city is a tourist attraction: the old city core, the Moravian Church with its light, simple and impressive hall and the special cemetery draw thousands of tourists each year. Its well preserved architecture is one of the reasons it was nominated as a tentative UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993. It was finally inscribed on the main list on 4 July 2015. Christiansfeld being on the the World Heritage List means that the Moravian community works together with the Danish Agency for Culture, relevant professionals and the Municipality of Kolding. A co-operation with the Danish state and a management group is to preserve this site of outstanding universal value for posterity.

Postscript

Today the Moravian Church has around 1,300,000 members. The Church continues their long traditions of missionary work all over the world. In 5 different continents and 50 countries you will meet the denomination in 2017. In Africa and here especially in Tanzania you will find the biggest congregations. Also in South Africa and Congo in Africa and in Nicaragua and Honduras in Central America you will find bigger congregations. Furthermore, the Moravian Church continues to draw on traditions established during the 18th century renewal. In many places, it observes the convention of the love feast, originally started in 1727. It uses older and traditional music in worship. Brass music, congregational singing and choral music continue to be very important in Moravian congregations. With other words 600 years of history show that even a very small church community, which was basically the pioneer of the Lutheran Church and the precursor of the Reformation, can survive under very difficult circumstances and continually try to live the true message of freedom, equality and fraternity of the Reformation.

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Data about the author:

Christensen Carsten Sander – Doctor of History (PhD), curator of Billund Museum (Billund, Denmark).

Сведения об авторе:

Христенсен Карстен Сандер – доктор истории (PhD), куратор Музея Биллунда (Биллунд, Дания).

E-mail: csc@billund.dk.