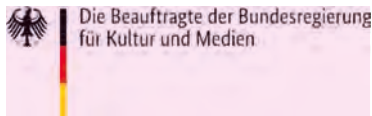




# SETTLEMENTS OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH IN EUROPE

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## SYMBOLS



### Brüderunität

Unter diesem Symbol finden Sie die Adresse der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine vor Ort.



### Museum

Sehenswerte Museen, Gebäude, Ausstellungen und Führungen.



### Attraktion

Ausflugsziele vor Ort oder in der Nähe der Herrnhuter Siedlungen.

# FROM SAXONY TO EUROPE: THE MORAVIAN CHURCH AND ITS SETTLEMENTS

The Moravian Church (also known as Unitas Fratrum, or in German the Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine "Brethren's Congregation from Herrnhut") has its roots in Upper Lusatia in Saxony. The first brothers and sisters were driven out of Moravia (today in the Czech Republic) because of their faith, for which reason the community is known in many languages as the "Moravian Brethren" or "Moravian Church". Today the Moravian Church is a worldwide Protestant free Church.

### Count Zinzendorf and the Moravian Church

The foundation of the Moravian Church is closely bound together with Nikolaus Ludwig, Count von Zinzendorf und Pottendorf (1700–1760). He was a member of a noble family, originally from Lower Austria, that became Protestant during the Reformation. His father moved to Saxony when the reprisals during the persecution under the Roman Catholic Habsburgs worsened. The son attended a boarding school run by the theologian August Hermann Francke (1663–1727) in Halle (Saale) where his education was influenced by Pietist principles, which were supported by his grandmother, Henriette Catharina Freifrau von Gersdorff (1648–1726), wife of the Landvogt of the Margraviate of Upper Lusatia. As a young man he had already developed a



deep spiritual Christianity and wanted to overcome the boundaries of the different confessions. In 1722 he married Erdmuthe Dorothea, Countess Reuss zu Ebersdorf (1700–1756). She belonged to an important family that ruled over several small lands in Thuringia, and would become 'mother' of the Moravian Church. The young count, more or less destitute, received the manor Berthelsdorf in Upper Lusatia from his grandmother.

Nikolaus Ludwig, Count von Zinzendorf und Pottendorf. Painting, c. 1740. The Herrnhag settlement can be seen in the background to the right.





Berthelsdorf,  
Zinzendorf  
Manor

In June 1722 he allowed Protestant refugees from Moravia who were looking for a new home to settle here, and allowed them to build a new settlement of craftspeople along the road from Löbau to Zittau. This was placed "in the care of the Lord" Jesus Christ ("unter die Obhut des Herren") and was given the name "Herrnhut". The name possibly also has a connection with the "Hutung" or "pasture-land" found there – the sheep pastures of the manor.

According to tradition, Christian David, a carpenter who had been expelled from Moravia, felled the first tree and laid the foundation stone for the new settlement on 17 June 1722. Under the influence of Count Zinzendorf a pious community developed, which grew as Protestants from different denominations joined the settlement. On 13 August 1727 the inhabitants of Herrnhut took part in a Communion service in the Berthelsdorf Church, during which they experienced a

spiritual awakening. Since then, 13 August has been the foundation day of the congregation, which understood itself to be a fraternal community of awakened Christians. In the beginning Zinzendorf saw the Brethren as a "Church within a Church", a supra-confessional brotherhood, whose members live their Christian faith deep within themselves and carry it out into the world.

Gradually the community developed the structure of a church. Count Zinzendorf saw his flock of awakened Christians as successors to the Bohemian Brethren and had himself ordained bishop by Bishop Daniel Ernst Jablonski (1660–1741), the last bishop of the Polish branch of the Bohemian Brethren. The Bohemian Brethren had developed in 1457 in the north Bohemian Eagle Mountains, when supporters of the preacher Petr Chelčický (c. 1390–c. 1460) founded an (initially) radical Christian community. This community separated from the Hussite Church

and appointed their own priests and bishops. In the 16th Century the Bohemian Brethren were influenced by the Reformation but remained an independent Protestant church. When the Catholic Party came to power in Bohemia in 1620 the Habsburg Emperor put a violent end to the Bohemian Brethren and forced them either to recant their faith or to leave the country. The important theologian and paedagogue John Amos Comenius (1592–1660), the last Bishop of the Bohemian branch of the old Brethren, was one of those forced to leave.

Count Zinzendorf retained this legacy but also developed new belief practices that had nothing to do with the former Brethren, for example, the idea of spiritual communities who lived together. His followers formed themselves into "**choirs**" according to marital status and gender. This term, taken from the French "corps" referred to the division of the community into smaller groups according to gender, age and marital status. The unmarried brothers and sisters and also widows formed individual choirs. Choir houses were built for these communities, in which the brothers and sisters lived, ate, and carried out their crafts. Zinzendorf also developed various forms of spiritual gatherings: love-feasts, singing sessions (Singstunden) and reading of the Daily Watchword either in groups or singly. This last is a short Bible verse set to music which is drawn by lot for each day of the year as "spiritual sustenance". The Daily Watchword is still drawn by lot in Herrnhut all year round, and used throughout the world by the Moravian Church. Members often used lots to help with their decision-making, as they believed that they were thereby guided by



Stone commemorating  
the foundation  
of Herrnhut

God. For example, being chosen as a missionary, or even marriage, was arranged by lot.

With these beliefs and ways of living the Moravian Church deviated from the rules of the Lutheran Church, which was the only permitted confession in the Electorate of Saxony. Zinzendorf and his community were viewed with suspicion and in the end the Count had to leave Saxony in 1736. He, along with a few companions, found shelter in Wetterau, where Count Ernst Casimir zu Ysenburg und Büdingen (1687–1749) allowed him to build a settlement near to the Marien-born mansion. The young community did not remain there however. Zinzendorf and some young companions went to England where they came across, amongst others, John Wesley (1703–1791), the later founder of the Methodist Church. Similarly to Wesley, Zinzendorf and his friends turned to the British parliament with a petition for recognition. In 1749 they were recognized



View of  
Herrnhut from  
the Hutberg,  
1810

as an “ancient apostolical and episcopal Church” by the King of Great Britain. This gave them the right to settle in Britain and in the American colonies.

The recognition of the Augusburg Confession, the primary confession of faith of the Lutheran Church, by the Brethren made it possible for Zinzendorf to eventually return to Saxony, where he established himself as Bishop in Herrnhut in 1755. However, the Moravian Church was establishing settlements not only in Herrnhut, but also throughout Europe and even in north America and the Caribbean, making the Brethren an international community. This was thanks not only to Zinzendorf’s charisma, with which he convinced people everywhere of his devout ideals, but also to the many brothers and sisters who went out as missionaries to parts of the world that had never been touched by Christianity and spread the joyful message of Jesus Christ. In 1732 the first Moravian missionaries arrived on the island of

St. Thomas in the Caribbean. Just a few years later the Moravians had founded missionary stations in north and south America, in Greenland, Labrador and in South Africa. There was much communication between the settlements and the missionary stations. Artisans, missionaries or teachers from one settlement would move to another settlement, or they would come back and then be sent to yet another settlement or missionary station. The Moravian Church is still an international church today. It is true that the settlements throughout the world are no longer subordinate to Herrnhut, but numerous connections between the 20 independent provinces still exist. The worldwide mission also remains an important concern. Not all the traditions of the Moravian Church are still in use. The division into choirs and choir-houses was stopped at the end of the 19th century. The traditional costume, worn particularly by women and girls, is

seldom used today, for example only for celebratory Church services. And strict gender-segregation, long a distinctive feature of the Moravian Church, is no longer common practice.

The confidence in their convictions that the members of the Moravian Church displayed is fascinating. They didn’t allow themselves to be disheartened by failure and in spite of resistance or exile they were always bold enough to make a new start. They overcame boundaries of country, language and confession effortlessly. For their way of life they developed model towns, as it were places between heaven and earth, that reproduced all segments of earthly life, such as preschools and schools, houses for sisters and brothers, houses for widows and also houses for young married couples.

#### The settlements and their similarities

The settlements of the Moravian Church are a cultural heritage, and have continuing influence. Generally speaking, the settlement-structures were usually designed according to the Herrnhut-model: a closed, separate settlement for the members of the Brethren. For this reason most of the Moravian settlements around the world were built from scratch. The European settlements shown in this booklet were mostly built between 1740 and 1790 and are often baroque “ideal cities”, built against a Christian background and with common traditions of building and belief. The settlement Königsfeld in the Black Forest dates from 1806. Neugnadenfeld, built in 1946, is the most recent development which, although it comes from a completely different epoch, repeats various basic elements. Of course all of these Moravian settlements,



including city districts, have their own character and history, but they are bound together by many commonalities.

The settlements were, where possible, laid out geometrically. Blocks of buildings are grouped together like a chessboard along right-angled streets around a rectangular town square, which is named after Zinzendorf in all German settlements. Usually the communal buildings, the most important of which was the meeting hall (also church hall, or prayer room), were close by. We shall use the term “church hall” here, although it is not a church in the traditional sense. In the church hall there is no altar, and pulpits are only usual in the meeting rooms of the British province. The church hall is used for liturgical services, as a community meeting room and a place for meals and celebrations. At the front end there is a raised stage with a table and chair for the Liturgus (preacher). In front of it are rows of simple, often moveable benches. The halls and the benches are kept in a distinguished shade of white. The exception are British church halls, in which natural wood

Count  
Zinzendorf  
with awakened  
Christian from  
all continents,  
painting by  
Johann  
Valentin Haidt,  
c. 1747





Children from the Boys' and Girls' Institutes of the Moravian Church quarter of Neuwied going to Church, painting by Wilhelm Steffens, c. 1830 – 1840

Kleinwelka, sisters' house



Further indispensable community buildings are the choir houses. In every settlement there was at least one sisters' house, a brothers' house and a house for widows. The choir houses usually comprised dormitories, single bedrooms, a meeting room and workshops. The brothers' houses often had a "business park" with various workshops. The products were sold in the community shop. Today many of these earlier choir houses are used as social buildings or schools.

As well as the choir houses, emphasis can be laid on the schools. The Brethren have an excellent tradition of education, which is based on the educational theories of Amos Comenius and August Hermann Francke. Boarding schools for boys and girls were typical, mostly known as Boys' and Girls' Institutes. These schools often drew pupils from far and wide, even internationally. Many pupils were not members of the Brethren but were brought up with their values. In the 18th and 19th centuries many Protestant noble families sent their children to Moravian boarding schools. There were also schools for children whose parents who had been sent away to be missionaries.

Further typical buildings are the community house with the rectory, the community lodging house (guesthouse and hostel of the Brethren) and the diaspora house (accommodation for travelling preachers or missionaries). There were also dwellings for married brothers and sisters. Until the 19th century inhabitants of such settlements had to be Brethren members, creating a closed community. The houses were of different sizes and had either workshops or shops, according to profession. The Moravian Church settlements



were fundamentally artisan settlements – there wasn't enough land for agricultural work – and the inhabitants were either craftsmen, merchants or businessmen. Some settlements were particularly entrepreneurial, so that factories were incorporated into the structure of the settlements.

Noticeable is the similar building style of these building-ensembles, which was seldom diverged from. The simple, restrained, but distinguished building style deviated from Baroque architecture, which had been predominant in 18th century Saxony. The style is known as "Herrnhuter Baroque" or "civic Baroque". The steep mansard roofs are typical. Less often, simple saddleback roofs were also

built. The buildings mostly have two-storeys and have smooth, symmetrical façades with uniform rows of windows. The entrance is on the central axis. Decoration is widely avoided and is found mostly only on house doors and door-frames and in stairwells. The Moravian settlements followed this pattern until the 19th century with only occasional regionally influenced exceptions. Building materials were not prescribed, meaning that local conditions could be taken into consideration. For example, Gracehill was built in black basalt and Christiansfeld in yellow brick. Some distance from the settlement is the graveyard, which is known as "God's Acre" to the Moravians. This term is taken from

Neudietendorf, church hall





Neudietendorf, sealing wax factory Liliendahl

a Bible verse (John 12.24): the deceased brothers and sisters are the „seeds in God's Acre“. The entrance is usually marked by a simple archway decorated with a Psalm. According to the principle that in death all people are equal before God, all the graves are the same. Each grave is covered with a stone block set into the grass. The brothers and sisters are buried, mostly separated from each other, in the order of their passing. The graves are permanent, for which reason the graveyards are often extended. Today some of the rules are no longer kept so strictly. In some God's Acres married couples are buried next to each other, and the genders are no longer separated. The Moravian settlements were visited by guests as early as the 18th century. They marvelled at the austerity and simplicity of the buildings as much as at the diligence, orderliness and cleanliness of the inhabit-

ants, and Herrnhut become an ideal for a model society based on industriousness, peace and order. Some settlements only came about because the ruler of the area hoped for economic stimulation. Today the Moravian settlements set emphasis on cultural tourism, and the transmission of education and values in a society increasingly distant from its Christian roots.

### The importance of the legacy of the Moravian Church for Europe

The Moravian settlements stand for basic values that are founded upon the communal life of people of different languages, confessions and cultures within Europe. Zinzendorf's followers spoke up for equality of the sexes as well as for people of different language and skin colour as early as the 18th century. Beginning with the basic principle that all people are equal before God, they refused to discriminate against people on the grounds of language or culture. Their openness and compulsion to share their religious experience affected their strong dedication as missionaries. The Moravians respected other native languages and researched foreign cultures and traditions, so that they could bring the message of Jesus Christ to the people. Their prayers, songs and Daily Watchwords were constantly translated into different languages. Notable is also the ecumenical approach: the free Church considers itself to be a community seeking to overcome the narrow bounds of the Christian confessions, rather than being bound by them. Today the worldwide Moravian Church has around a million members.

The foundation and survival of the Moravian Church is closely connected with the religious wars in Europe.

The Counter-Reformation quashed the Protestant movements in the Habsburg Monarchy, particularly in the Kingdom of Bohemia, where the Roman Catholic faith was the only religion allowed after the Thirty Years War. Only when the Protestant Christians had fled from Bohemia was the founding of the new community in Herrnhut possible. Their experience as refugees conditioned the behaviour of the Moravian Church, which ever after spoke out for religious tolerance and against state-enforced religion. In the 20th century the community experienced flight and persecution again, when members of the Brethren in the areas east of the Oder-Neisse line were exiled after 1945. Neugnadenfeld, close to the German-Dutch boundary, was founded as a result of this.

If the communication routes of the Moravians were drawn onto a map it would reveal a close network across

Europe and further. Not only Moravian settlements belong to this map, but also places that were affected by the Pietist movement, such as the Francke Foundations in Halle (Saale), the Danish royal court in Copenhagen, or the Evangelical Revival in 18th century Britain. National boundaries were no obstacle to this Moravian network; it bound states and continents together without difficulty as early as the 18th century. The notion of a European accord was based upon this network idea. The Moravian settlements are the anchors of a trans-European network which exemplify the vision of unity among diversity. Count Zinzendorf's legacy is used and perpetuated not only in Herrnhut but also in other places, by the Moravian Brethren and also by non-religious people. In this way the Moravian settlements could become models for European understanding.

Neuwied, God's Acre



# THE MORAVIANS IN SAXONY AND THURINGIA



Herrnhuter  
Sterne GmbH  
visitor centre  
in Herrnhut

Herrnhut, the first settlement to have been founded by the Moravians, is in Upper Lusatia. Upper Lusatia has been connected with the Electorate of Saxony since 1635 but has retained its own statutes. Count Zinzendorf's religious experiment was only possible in this marriage because here the patron of the Church could decide the confession of his parish, within certain limits. Zinzendorf used this liberality in matters of belief to found a Protestant community which was tolerated by the administrative institutions of the Electorate of Saxony, as it was seen as a "confessionally-related" Church. Two further settlements were founded in Upper Lusatia: Niesky, for Czech-

speaking religious refugees, and Kleinwelka, for Sorbian members of the Brethren. In 1749 the Moravian Church took over the palace in Barby in the north of the former Electorate of Saxony, which was no longer needed by the Saxon court. The settlement Gnadau was founded nearby in 1767.

Count Zinzendorf had married Erdmuthe Dorothea von Reuss-Ebersdorf from the county of Reuss-Ebersdorf in 1722. This made it possible for Moravians to also come to the small residency town of Ebersdorf, where a "Moravian colony" was founded not far from the palace. A further settlement was successful in the duchy of Sachsen-Gotha, where the Brethren acquired a farm at Dietendorf in 1742 and later built the settlement of Neudietendorf. The Thuringian petty states became part of the Free State of Thuringia in 1920.

These six settlements from the 18th century form the core of the Moravian Church in central Germany. Between 1945 and 1990 they were part of the Soviet zone of occupation, or GDR. Through the partition of Germany after the Second World War the European Continental Province was separated into two districts, which were reunified in 1992.



View from  
Altan on  
the Hutberg  
towards the  
town centre

## HERRNHUT

Nikolaus Ludwig, Count von Zinzendorf, took on several Protestant German-speaking families in Berthelsdorf, some from northern Bohemia, some from Kuhländchen in northern Moravia. They built an artisan settlement along the road from Zittau to Löbau, which was rapidly extended owing to the flood of new settlers. The first community buildings were built around a town square, today called Zinzendorfplatz: a guest-house, a school and the manor in which Count and Countess Zinzendorf lived. The original wooden-framed building was replaced in 1781 by a two-storey baroque building with three wings. When the settlement was extended the street was lengthened and rectangular blocks of buildings were built in a mediaeval chessboard pattern. By 1727 around 220 inhabitants lived in Herrnhut. At the front of the square a new community house with the first meeting room was built in 1746. When there was no more space around the square, the church hall was built behind it in 1756/57, according to the plans of Siegmund August von Gersdorff (1702 – 1777). Both buildings were connected via side wings to a central four-wing structure. Further buildings rapidly followed. The idea of choir houses developed in Herrnhut, and the first community buildings for brothers and sisters were built. The first brothers' house was built in 1739/40. The widows' house (1759 – 1761, also built according to plans by Siegmund August von Gersdorff) is a still-existing example of this early type of building, and completes the square behind the church hall.

Along with the small artisan houses and the larger community buildings, manor-like properties were also built. For example, the core of the Vogtshof on the Zittauer Strasse was built in 1730 by a Baron von Maltzahn. The extension of the side-wings resulted in an imposing three-wing building with a ceremonial courtyard. The Schutzvogtei, a body that administered the manorial duties, was based here from 1756. The Provincial Board has been based here since 1913. The Daily Watchwords are chosen in the baroque hall of the Vogtshof.

The God's Acre was laid out in 1731 to the north-east of the settlement on the slopes of the Hutberg. An avenue of lime trees leads to Comeniusstrasse in the settlement. The God's Acre has been extended several times. In the central avenue the sarcophagus-like stone monuments of the graves of the families von Zinzendorf and von Watteville are raised up above the ground. The small shelter on the Hutberg was replaced in 1795 by an octagonal look-out tower (Altan).

Herrnhut,  
church hall.  
The wing  
facing Zinzen-  
dorfplatz was  
destroyed in  
1945.







Herrnhut,  
widows' house

The success of Herrnhut was influenced more than anything else by factories and business. Zinzendorf brought the Alsatian merchant Abraham Dürninger (1706–1773) to Herrnhut in 1747. The former community shop on the corner of Löbauer Strasse and Dürningerstrasse can be seen as the original shop of Abraham Dürninger & Co. Dürninger traded in cotton, tobacco, canvas and other such “colonial wares”. He ran a calico factory and founded a factory for tobacco products and sealing wax. He skilfully used the contacts and structures of the free church for his business. The company founded by Dürninger eventually operated intercontinentally. By 1777 Abraham Dürninger & Co. were the largest trading house in Upper Lusatia. The company is still owned by the Moravian Church, albeit with a different business focus. From the beginning, Herrnhut had the appearance of a town but not the rights. Not until 1895 was the settlement sepa-

rated from Berthelsdorf, and in 1929 its status changed to that of a town. On 9 May 1945, the day after the end of the Second World War, Soviet troops burned the town centre to the ground. Two thirds of the buildings on Zinzendorfplatz were destroyed, including the church hall, the manor house, the sisters' house and the brothers' house. From 1951–1953 the church hall was rebuilt, albeit with a simpler interior. The community house facing Zinzendorfplatz was never rebuilt. Today the former boundary of the town square is marked with a wall. In the 1970s, the south side of the square was rebuilt. While the manor house was rebuilt as it had been externally, the earlier sisters' house was replaced with a modern building. These buildings were used by the Moravian Diakonie as a school and lodgings for the mentally disabled. The new building of the Protestant Zinzendorf School was completed on the western side of the square in 2018. The façade is based on the buildings of the 18th century. One plot on Zinzendorfplatz, the position of the earlier community guesthouse, remains empty. Herrnhut is one of three bases of the Province Borad of the European Continental Province of the Moravian Church, and seat of the Diakonie, the social welfare organisation of the Moravian Church. The Diakonie runs care homes for ill and elderly people, an establishment caring for people with learning disabilities, a kindergarten and a hospice. To revive the educational traditions of the Moravian Church, a private Christian school has been founded, the Protestant Zinzendorf school, including an secondary school and a grammar school. Several firms remain under the control of the Moravian

Church. Abraham Dürninger & Co. is a textile-printing company today. Next door the Comenius bookshop and the Herrnhut Holzmanufaktur GmbH offer their services. The Herrnhuter Sterne GmbH make the world-famous Moravian stars, which, as symbols of the star of Bethlehem, proclaim the message of Christmas. There is a visitor centre with a workshop where people can experience how the famous stars are created and view a small exhibition about their history. Two museums tell the story of the Brethren and their worldwide appeal. One is the Heimatmuseum (local museum), which has an exhibition about the history of Herrnhut, and one is the Völkerkundemuseum (ethnological museum), which contains objects brought back by Moravian missionaries from their journeys to different peoples since 1732. Additionally, there is an exhibition in a side wing of the church hall, “From Herrnhut out into the world”, about the Moravian Church and their Daily Watchword. The elaborately restored Zinzendorf manor in Berthelsdorf close to Herrnhut can also be viewed. It contains an exhibition about the beginnings of the Moravian Church. A particular treasure is a door with a Daily Watchword supposedly painted in 1724.



**Evangelische Brüdergemeine Herrnhut**  
Zinzendorfplatz 4, D-02747 Herrnhut  
[www.bruedergemeine-herrnhut.de](http://www.bruedergemeine-herrnhut.de)



**Church hall with the exhibition  
„From Herrnhut out into the world“**  
Zinzendorfplatz, D-02747 Herrnhut

**Local museum (Heimatmuseum)**  
Comeniusstraße 6, D-02747 Herrnhut  
[www.herrnhut.de/42.html](http://www.herrnhut.de/42.html)

**Ethnological Museum  
(Völkerkundemuseum)**  
Goethestraße 1, D-02747 Herrnhut  
<https://voelkerkunde-herrnhut.skd.museum>

**Zinzendorf Manor, Berthelsdorf**  
Herrnhuter Straße 19, D-02747 Berthelsdorf  
viewing only by appointment  
[www.zinzendorfschloss.de](http://www.zinzendorfschloss.de)



**Visitor Centre Moravian Stars**  
Oderwitzer Straße 8, D-02747 Herrnhut  
[www.herrnhuter-sterne.de](http://www.herrnhuter-sterne.de)

Herrnhut,  
Vogtshof



## NIESKY

Niesky was the first permanent settlement after Herrnhut. In 1742 Siegmund August von Gersdorff (1702 – 1777) made the farm not far from his estate Trebus available to religious refugees from Bohemia and Moravia, mostly Czech-speakers. The name of the new settlement was chosen by lot on 16 May 1742, and is the Czech translation of “humble”, referring to lowliness and humility before God. Accepting Bohemian refugees was forbidden from the 1750s and only German-speaking members of the Brethren moved to Niesky.

The plan of the settlement was developed by Siegmund August von Gersdorff. In the centre is the large, oblong town square, today named after Zinzendorf, which is crossed by the main axis. Narrow streets leave the square on the narrow sides, creating right-angled parcels of land. The foundation stones for the first three houses on the eastern side of the square were laid on 8 August 1742. The middle house, the home of the weaver Johann Raschke (1702 – 1762) from Bohemia, survives in its original condition. It is an

“umgebinde” house, a particular type of house found in upper Lusatia. On the ground floor is a living area built with planks, where once the looms stood, surrounded by a wooden-framed post construction supporting the upper level. Wooden-framed houses were also built later in Niesky, but the façades were plastered. The community house with the prayer room was built on the long side of the town square. Gersdorff developed a hall with a mansard roof and turret, thereby creating the pattern for many more Moravian church halls. However, the 18th century church hall no longer exists – it was demolished in 1874 and replaced by the neo-Gothic Bräderkirche, which, with its 41 metre high tower, really resembles a church. The brothers’ and sisters’ houses completed the front of the square to the left and right of the church. The inhabitants of Niesky lived from handicrafts and weaving and the Brethren ran a trading company and a varnish factory. In addition, Niesky was above all known as a Moravian “school town” nationwide. In 1751 Count Zinzendorf

moved the Boys’ Institute from Herrnhag to Niesky. The oldest school building is the Alte Pädagogium (Old Schoolhouse) on the eastern long-side of Zinzendorfplatz, directly opposite the Brethren Church. In Niesky there was a theological seminary, a boarding school for boys, a mission school and a seminary for teachers. The system of education was influenced by the theories of John Amos Comenius (1592 – 1670) and the pietist educational concepts of August Hermann Francke (1663 – 1727). The most famous boarder was the Berlin theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768 – 1834). The tradition of education ended in 1944 when the Alte Pädagogium was closed. Today the school building is used by the Friedrich Schleiermacher Gymnasium. The Moravian stars also have their roots in Niesky. The oldest example can be seen as a geometrical figure in the exercise book of a maths teacher from 1773. In 1883 Dr. Hermann Plitt (1821 – 1900) grounded the Diakonissenhaus “Emmaus”, that is still in use as a hospital today. The nuns worked in Niesky or at the mission stations (including in Palestine and Surinam). „None-Brethren” were first allowed to move into the settlements in 1842. At the end of the 19th century Niesky grew rapidly through the growing industrialisation of the area. In 1835 Johann Ehregott Christoph (1810 – 1887), from Christiansfeld in Denmark, took over the copper-smithy of the brothers’ house and expanded it into an engine-building factory. In 1887 Christian Ferdinand Cristoph (1846–1932) together with the architect Christian Rudolph Unmack (1834 – 1909), founded a factory specialising in the construction of sheds and



Niesky, house of the weaver Johann Raschke (today the museum)

prefabricated houses. The companies amalgamated in 1922 to Christoph & Unmack AG, and for a while employed more than 4,000 people. Niesky was badly damaged in the final weeks of the Second World War. Two thirds of the buildings on Zinzendorfplatz were destroyed. The buildings on the sides of the square were replaced with modern buildings. The plot where the sisters’ house used to stand remains empty. Although today only two percent of the inhabitants of Niesky belong to the Brethren, the strong Moravian influence on the townscape cannot be overlooked. The Diakonissenhaus hospital “Emmaus” is the largest employer. Johann Raschke House, the oldest house in the town, serves as visitor centre and museum.

Niesky, Zinzendorfplatz with the Bräderkirche



**Evangelische Brüdergemeine Niesky**  
Zinzendorfplatz 2, D-02906 Niesky  
[www.bruedergemeine-niesky.de](http://www.bruedergemeine-niesky.de)



**Local Museum (Johann-Raschke-Haus)**  
Zinzendorfplatz 2, D-02906 Niesky  
[www.museum-niesky.de](http://www.museum-niesky.de)



## KLEINWELKA

Kleinwelka (Sorbian: Mały Wjelkow) lies in the settlement area of the Slavic minority of Sorbs (earlier also known as Wends). "Awoken Wends" had gathered as a community in the manor of the neighbouring town Teichnitz. Matthäus Lange (1704–1786), the Sorbian administrator for Count Friedrich Caspar von Gersdorff (1699–1751), bought the estate of Kleinwelka as a central point for the diaspora work among the Sorbs in 1747. He left the manor to the brothers and sisters and allowed them to build a complete settlement outside the village. Zinzendorf named the settlement "Wendisch-Niska" or "Niska of the Wends", which was, however, not taken on.

Siegmund August von Gersdorff developed plans for the „Kleinwelka Colony“, although it is not laid out as regularly as other Moravian settlements. A small, oblong town square, today called Zinzendorfplatz, was laid out at the western end of the main road to the Manor of the Kleinwelka estate. It was bounded on the western long-side by the church hall. Zinzendorfstrasse created a further street-axis leading to Zinzen-

dorfplatz. The church hall was built in 1757–8 as a meeting room and underwent several conversions once Kleinwelka had received permission by lot in 1764 to become an official settlement. The God's Acre, laid out in 1756, is on the southern edge of the settlement.

In the 19th century the Sorbian character of the settlement was lost as more and more German-speaking brothers and sisters moved into the colony. Kleinwelka was also an important education centre for the children of missionaries, who grew up here, separated from their parents, in the Missionary Boys' Institute. The pilgrim house served as a recovery or retirement home for missionaries, for which reason around 50 Moravian missionaries are buried in the God's Acre.

Economically Kleinwelka did not develop greatly, because it was too close to Bautzen which kept disagreeable competition at a distance. The inhabitants lived mostly from local crafts. The single women and older girls in the sisters' house made ribbons, robes and knitwear. Only the Friedrich Gruhl (1778–1852) foundry, which made more than 2,000 church bells

Kleinwelka,  
Zinzendorf-  
platz with  
church hall



between 1803 and 1896, was important outside the village. The Boys' and Girls' Institutes, two boarding schools, were closed in 1942 and turned into temporary military hospitals.

The Brethren in Kleinwelka have experienced a strong reduction in members in recent decades. The boys' school building now has a modern extension and is used by the Moravian Diakonie as a care home for the elderly. The brothers' house (1765) is empty. The sisters' house (1770) has been rented by the Moravian Church to an artist who holds cultural events there. The former boarding quarters of the girls' school, which was used after the Second World War as a Sorbian teacher training institute with lodgings, has been sold to South African family.



### Evangelische Brüdergemeine Kleinwelka

Zinzendorfplatz 5

D-02625 Bautzen OT Kleinwelka

[www.bruedergemeine-kleinwelka.de](http://www.bruedergemeine-kleinwelka.de)



### Saurierpark Kleinwelka

Saurierpark 1

D-02625 Bautzen OT Kleinwelka

[www.saurierpark.de](http://www.saurierpark.de)

The theme park directly next to the colony of Kleinwelka is the largest dinosaur theme park in Germany.

Kleinwelka,  
aerial photo.  
The God's  
Acre is in the  
foreground



## EBERSDORF

Ebersdorf was the residence of the ruling family of Reuss–Ebersdorf from 1678 to 1848. The palace was the home of a younger branch of the ruling family of Reuss until 1945. Count Zinzendorf was friendly with Count Heinrich XXIX of Reuss (1699–1747) from youth, and married his sister Erdmutha Dorothea in 1722 in Ebersdorf. Many members of the pietist-influenced family joined the Brethren, and they founded a community of awakened Christians in Ebersdorf, which rapidly grew and was recognised as a community of the Brethren by sovereign decree in 1746 and 1751. 16 October 1746 is taken as foundation date, as the community house was dedicated on this day. The God's Acre was laid out in 1740.

The Moravian colony was founded as an independent entity on the slope above the palace. The buildings are grouped around the rectangular Zinzendorfplatz

(1762), which is edged on the south side by Lobensteiner Street. The community buildings are on this side of the street: the large brothers' house (1796), the small brothers' house, once the orphanage (1737), the community house, which has the church hall on the first floor (1746), and the sisters' house (1746/47). The church hall cannot be recognised as such from the outside. Inside the space is divided into three by a load-bearing wooden construction. As there is no gallery owing to the low ceiling height, the organ, which has a baroque backdrop from Ebersdorf palace, can be found in a later extension opposite the liturgical table.

Earlier there were several workshops in the brothers' house complex. Weavers, hosiery makers, shoemakers, hatters, tailors and button makers worked in the workshop building. The large brothers' house was built as a factory for woven cotton and cardboard packaging. The



Ebersdorf,  
Church hall

Ebersdorf,  
Zinzendorf-  
platz

right:  
community  
house



Brethren ran a pharmacy and a shop for colonial wares. Ebersdorf was untouched by industrialisation and so the colony did not grow. The businesses had to be gradually dispensed with.

Until 1936 there was a girls' boarding school for domestic science. Since 1946 it has been used as a care home for the elderly. The Institute is run today as "Seniorenzentrum Emmaus" by the Saale Neckar Diakonie, social care foundation Weimar Bad Lobenstein. The Saale Neckar Diakonie also runs an integrative childcare centre "Gottesschutz" ("God's protection") on the opposite side of the street. An out-building belonging to the brothers' house is used by the Brethren in Ebersdorf as the retreat centre "Sonnenschein" ("Sunshine"). In 2009 the exhibition and meeting centre "Johann Amos Comenius" was set up in the large brothers' house. Various exhibitions can be viewed, including one about the history of the settlement.



### Evangelische Brüdergemeine Ebersdorf

Lobensteiner Straße 16  
D-07929 Saalburg-Ebersdorf  
[www.bruedergemeine.net](http://www.bruedergemeine.net)



### Exhibition and meeting centre „Johann Amos Comenius“

Lobensteiner Straße 10  
D-07929 Saalburg-Ebersdorf  
[www.comeniuszentrum.de](http://www.comeniuszentrum.de)



### Palace park with the prince's grave memorial

by the sculptor Ernst Barlach (1870–1938). The country park, Zinzendorfplatz and the God's Acre will be in the Erfurt entry for the Bundesgartenschau (a Germany-wide garden show) in 2021.



## NEUDIETENDORF

After the founding of Herrnhut, awakened Christians who wanted to live together according to the rules of the Brethren also gathered in Thuringia. Count Friedrich Balthasar von Promnitz (1711 – 1744), a member of the Brethren, purchased a fief close to Dietendorf in the Duchy of Sachsen-Gotha, the Alte Hof, as well as a row of empty houses that had once been built for Dutch weavers. The new inhabitants called their settlement "Gnaden-thal" ("Grace Valley"). The authorities in Sachsen-Gotha had allowed them to hold their own Moravian meetings as long as they formally belonged to the Lutheran state church. However, the settlement was abandoned when the main consistory in Gotha decided to stop all Moravian practices in 1747. A few years later, in 1752/53, the settlement was inhabited again, when Duke Friedrich III von Sachsen-Gotha ensured that Brethren meetings were permitted. In 1764 the government of Gotha made a concession, for which reason this year is taken as the official foundation year of the settlement, which now flourished as Neudietendorf. As a consequence of the concession, the

community of Moravians in Neudietendorf were an independent Brethren as well as part of the Lutheran state church. Neudietendorf was released from the state church in 1849, although a close relationship still exists. For example, the minister of the Brethren was also minister for the Lutheran inhabitants of Neudietendorf until 2015.

The settlement was then built around the Alte Hof which was combined with a thoroughfare, today called Zinzendorfstrasse. A street at right angles was built to close the settlement off from the land behind, today Kirchstrasse. The church hall (1780) was built on this street; this building also contained the rectory. The God's Acre and sisters' house (1784 – 1786) were built behind the church hall. There is a small square in front of the main entrance to the sisters' house, Zinzendorfplatz, which is the main square of the settlement, although it is far smaller than the main squares of other Moravian settlements. Bahnhofstrasse was built in line with the church hall as a second main street. It was surrounded by baroque houses towards the end of the 18th century.

Neudietendorf was a business town. The largest Brethren business was the sealing wax factory, Liliendahl. The impressive factory building with its loading tower (1778) still exists today. The factory supplied business and authorities with different coloured sealing wax. Part of the building is currently used as a daycare facility. The former sisters' house is today an important religious training centre. In 1949



the Protestant Lutheran state church of Thuringia took over the empty building as a retreat centre. The renovated and extended Zinzendorf House is today a conference centre for the Evangelical Church in central Germany as well as the seat of several religious establishments such as the Evangelical Academy of Thuringia and the Paedagogical Theological Institute. A new building opposite the church hall is used as a Protestant media centre.

The Local museum in neighbouring Ingersleben tells the story of the Moravians in Neudietendorf and that of their businesses, and has many exhibits.



### Evangelische Brüdergemeine Neudietendorf

Kirchstraße 13, D-99192 Nesse-  
Apfelstädt OT Neudietendorf  
[www.neudietendorf.ebu.de](http://www.neudietendorf.ebu.de)



### Local Museum (Heimatmuseum) Ingersleben

Karl-Marx-Straße 40  
99192 Nesse-Apfelstädt OT Ingersleben  
Viewings by arrangement via  
+49 362 02/8 22 11

Neudietendorf,  
Zinzendorf-  
platz and  
sisters' house  
(today Zinzen-  
dorf House)

Neudietendorf,  
houses on  
Bahnhof-  
strasse behind  
the Church  
hall





## GNADAU

Once the status of the Brethren in the church law of Saxony had been clarified with the recognition of the Augsburg Creed, Count Heinrich XXVIII von Reuss-Ebersdorf, a nephew of Zinzendorf's, rented the empty castle in Barby (Elbe), close to Magdeburg, from the Saxon state in the name of the Brethren in 1748. Barby was one of the most important Moravian centres until the early 19th century. The Brethren leadership, the Pädagogium (a seminary) and the printing house of the Brethren were based here. As the settlement was never built at the palace, it was built not far away, in the meadows of the (also rented) farm Döben in 1767, and named Gnadau ("Grace Meadow"). Barby was given up by the Moravians, but Gnadau remains.

Gnadau,  
church hall  
and rectory



The foundation stone of the first house was laid on 17 June 1767. The plan of the settlement was made according to an "ideal plan". The settlement is formed as a square divided into nine smaller blocks, like a chessboard. The square in the middle is reserved for the park-like town square, Zinzendorfplatz. The town square is bordered by straight streets that cross each other, so that 8 square blocks are created. The entire settlement is surrounded by avenues of lime trees (1783). On the east side is the community hall (1780/81) with a house on each side. The gardens behind lead to the God's Acre, which has been extended beyond the greater area of the settlement. The sisters' house (1774, extended several times) and brothers' house (1769) continue the row of houses, although they are in the neighbouring blocks. Several houses from the end of the 18th century, mostly two storey, remain on Zinzendorfplatz and in the side streets.

The most important businesses in Gnadau were the printing house, the Brethren book shop and the bakeries, famous for Gnadau prezels. The most important establishment belonging to the Brethren were the Gnadau Institutes, a girls' boarding school. Up until 1950 girls from all over Germany were educated here. Since 1951 the buildings of the Gnadau Institutes, including the former sisters' house, have been used as a care home for the elderly. Today they are used by the Maria Heyde Home, a care home for the elderly belonging to the Moravian Diakonie, along with a daycare centre. In order to revive the Moravian school tradition, a private

primary school was opened in 2002: the Gnadau Protestant Zinzendorf Schule. The school is housed in the former brothers' house.

Gnadau is famous outside of the Moravian Church because several movements in the Protestant Church began here. In 1841 the "Friends of the Light" ("Lichtfreunde") movement was founded here, a community committed to theological rationalism. In 1888 followers of the "Gemeinschaftsbewegung" (the "community movement"), a pietist movement in the Protestant state

Church, founded the Evangelical Gnadau Association in Gnadau. Today it comprises 37 member groups, 16 deaconess houses and several missionary societies.



### Evangelische Brüdergemeine Gnadau

Barbyer Straße 6

D-39429 Barby OT Gnadau

[www.bruedergemeine-gnadau.de](http://www.bruedergemeine-gnadau.de)

Gnadau,  
aerial photo





## THE MORAVIANS IN SILESIA

Until the Prussian conquest in 1740/41 Silesia was a Bohemian crown land and so part of the Habsburg Monarchy. There was no freedom of conscience: Protestant services were only allowed in a few churches. When King Friedrich II of Prussia (1712 – 1786) conquered Habsburg Silesia and made almost all of it part of Prussia the Protestants gained freedom of

faith and conscience. At the instigation of the Silesian Count Friedrich Balthasar von Promnitz (1711 – 1744), King Friedrich II allowed the Brethren to practice public church services in Silesia on 25 December 1742. In 1743 concessions followed for the settlements of Gnadenberg, Gnadenfrei and Gnadeck, along with permission to found a settlement in Upper Silesia. In

addition, the king offered the Moravians a settlement in Neusalz (Oder), as a way of supporting the rebuilding of the badly damaged town. The settlement of Gnadeck in Burau (Borowe) close to Sagan (Żagań) was given up after one year. The foundation of a settlement in Upper Silesia in Rösnitz (Rozumice) close to Leobschütz (Głubczyce) failed due to persistent resistance from the Lutheran clergy, but in 1780 the foundation of Gnadenfeld close to Pawlowitzke (Pawłowiczki) was successful.

There were four Moravian settlements in the Prussian province of Silesia, all of

which had boarding schools and other educational establishments of national importance. In Neusalz the business activities of the Brethren were also economically very important.

At the end of the war in 1945 two of the four settlements were heavily damaged as the Red Army advanced. After the war the areas to the east of the Oder and the Lusatian Neisse were given to Poland. When the German inhabitants were expelled all of the Moravian settlements in Silesia ceased to exist. The expelled members of the Brethren often found new homes in other Moravian settlements.



Gnadenberg,  
around 1800

## GNADENBERG (KRUSZYN)

The Silesian aristocrat Hans Friedrich von Falckenhayn (1681 – 1745) purchased the estate Gross Krausche (Kruszyn) close to Bunzlau (Bolesławiec) in Lower Silesia and collected a community of awakened Christians in his manor house. In 1743 a settlement for followers of the Brethren predominantly from the domain Jauer was founded here with permission of the Prussian King. The settlement was built outside the estate, close to the road from Görlitz to Breslau, and named Gnadenberg, "Grace Hill" after the small hill ("Bergel").

Similarly to Gnadau later, a regular and geometric network of streets was

designed. Two sets of horizontal and vertical parallel streets crossed each other so that 9 squares were created. In the middle was the town square, in the centre of which was the church hall (1781). On the edges of the town square were the community house (1743), the brothers' house (1758) and the sisters' house (1752) as well as dwelling houses. After the Seven Years' War (1756 – 1763) increased numbers of people came to the settlement. The God's Acre was on the southern side of the settlement and was closed off by a row of houses.

Gnadenberg made its living from business and trade. A particular branch of business

was production of textiles and leather. Additionally there was a ham and sausage factory. The area was untouched by industrialisation in the 19th century and remained more or less its original size. The most important establishment was a boarding school for girls, which had to be closed in 1939 for political reasons. The area was seized in February 1945 by the Red Army. Some houses were destroyed by artillery fire, and some were selected to be burnt. The last remaining Moravian members were deported in May 1947. The Polish settlers lived at first in the ruins. Only in the 1960s were the ruins removed and new buildings constructed.

The former Zinzendorfplatz is no more recognisable as a town square, but has been covered over with four houses. The church hall, sisters' house and brothers' house were all destroyed. The widows' house (1783), a side wing of the former girls' boarding house and several dwellings remain. The God's Acre is today a public car park; all the gravestones were removed.

Nothing remains of the Moravian past. Even the Polish name Godnów, introduced in 1946, has been forgotten. The earlier Moravian settlement is part of Kruszyn in the rural municipality of Bolesławiec.

Gnadenberg, house on the former Zinzendorfplatz

Gnadenberg, Kirchensaal, vor 1945





## NEUSALZ (NOWA SÓL)

Neusalz („New Salt”), on the banks of the river Oder, dates back to a salt works founded by Emperor Ferdinand I (1503 – 1564). Here, sea salt was brought up the river Oder (which was then still navigable) and processed into table salt. King Friedrich II of Prussia gave the settlement city rights in 1743. He suggested that Moravians should settle in the city in the hope of boosting the city. The Moravians were given a part of town close to the Oder harbour. Siegmund August von Gersdorff, the Brethren’s architect, divided the building plot into two parallel streets (Gruschwitzstrasse, today ul. Muzealna, and Breslauer Strasse, today ul. Wrocławska) and joined these together via a street running through the north of the quarter (Brüderstrasse, today ul. Wróblewskiego), forming an axis in the central quarter. The church hall (1746, rebuilt 1768/69) was built facing the Brüderstrasse. Behind was a garden which opened out into the God’s Acre, laid out in 1745.

Russian troupes plundered Neusalz during the Seven Years’ War and the Moravian

quarter in Neusalz was burnt to the ground. When the war was over the Moravians, who had fled to Gnadenberg, returned. The Moravian quarter was rebuilt under the direction of Gersdorff. However, the original settlement plan was never completed, and plots on the Gruschwitzstrasse remained for the most part empty.

Neusalz grew to an industrial centre in the 19th century. Members of the Brethren played a significant role in this development. Johann David Gruschwitz (1776 – 1848), who joined the Brethren in Gnadenfrei in 1801, founded the Gruschwitz textile works. The factory was built directly next to the Moravian quarter. The trading, freight company and bank Meyerotto & Co. developed out of the Moravian community shop. In 1940 there were 19 companies either owned or run by Moravians. These firms were either expropriated or shut down in 1945. The Gruschwitz Textilwerke AG began production again in Neu-Ulm in West Germany in 1950 and is today based in Leutkirch (Baden-Württemberg). The textile factory

Moravian quarter in Neusalz, engraving, c. 1780



in Nowa Sól continued to function under the name “Odra” until 1994.

In January 1945, as the front came closer, Neusalz was evacuated. The inhabitants were taken in refugee transports to the west. The remaining German inhabitants were expelled in 1946, with which the Moravian community in Neusalz disappeared. The buildings of the earlier Moravian quarter mostly still exist but have other uses. The church hall is today used as a sports hall and the adjoining garden is a backyard. The former God’s Acre is part of a green space, which contains a memorial. The former guesthouse of the Brethren is still used as a restaurant. The museum is housed in the villa of the manufacturing family Gruschwitz and has information about the Brethren and the

important Moravian firms in Neusalz. Since 2012 a missionary family from the Czech Province of the Brethren has been living in Neusalz, who purposely chose the town because of its Moravian history.

Church hall in Brüderstrasse (today ul. Wróblewskiego)



### Fundacja Braci Morawskich

Żeromskiego 7A, PL-67-100 Nowa Sól  
<https://bracia-morawscy.webnode.com/>



### Town Museum

(Muzeum Miejskie w Nowej Soli)

Muzealna 20, PL-67-100 Nowa Sól  
[www.muzeum-nowasol.pl](http://www.muzeum-nowasol.pl)



## GNADENFREI (PIŁAWA GÓRNA)

In 1734 the pietist-minded Ernst Julius von Seidlitz (1685 – 1766) purchased the Oberpeilau (Piława Górna) estate in the foothills of the Eulengebirge (Owl mountains). The stately home was a meeting point for awakened Christians, in the main from the predominantly Protestant principality of Brieg. In 1739 Seidlitz was imprisoned for his activities in favour of religious freedom. He was freed in 1740 after the Prussian conquest and began anew to gather a community according to the Moravian example. In 1743 the foundation of a settlement was approved and the name "Gnadenfrei" ("freed by grace") was given. The name is a reminder of Seidlitz's release from imprisonment by God's grace. Count Zinzendorf personally chose the site on the farmland of the estate Oberpeilau in 1743. The main axis of the settlement was the existing road from Reichenbach in the Eulengebirge (Dzierżoniów) to Nimptsch (Niemcza),

to the left and right of which houses were soon built. A large town square on sloping ground was laid out roughly in the middle of the streets. The community house with a church hall (1746) was built on the south side of the square. Soon the town square was too small, and a second, larger church hall was built behind it (1768). The two meeting rooms were connected by side wings and were the "heart" of the settlement.

The influx of settlers meant that the settlement had to be enlarged. The streets leading southward were extended and a second square and a second parallel street were laid out. On the corners of the oblong central square were the brothers' house (1746), the sisters' house (1746) and the widows' house (1790). In 1792 part of the settlement burnt down, but was rebuilt. Avenues from both squares led to the God's Acre which had been laid out on the sides of the slope above the settlement in 1743.

The inhabitants lived from crafts and textile work. Primarily linen and cotton from the neighbouring weaving villages were processed and sold. Additionally Gnadenfrei became an important school town. The Boys' Institute, a boarding school for boys, received a monumental new building close to the God's Acre in 1896.

The town was not destroyed in the Soviet invasion of Silesia in 1945, but the central group of buildings together with the church hall burnt down in 1946. Since then a meaningful part of the settlement has been missing. The two town squares and the earlier position of the church hall today give the impression of a large, throughgoing open space, which is set out as a small carpark. The town was renamed "Piława Górna", the Polish equivalent of Oberpeilau.

In spite of the loss of the church hall Gnadenfrei is the best preserved Moravian settlement in Silesia, even though some buildings, such as the brothers' house and the former community guesthouse are derelict. In the municipality of Piława



Górna the Moravian roots are very clear. There is a memorial plaque about the settlement on the former sisters' house. The former God's Acre is now a public park; the few remaining gravestones have been gathered together to make a symbolic graveyard, and in 2006 a memorial stone with Polish and German text was erected.

Gnadenfrei, remaining houses on Kirchplatz (today pl. Piastów Śląskich), to the right the widows' house

Gnadenfrei, former Kirchplatz (today pl. Piastów Śląskich), to the right the widows' house





## GNADENFELD (PAWŁOWICZKI)



Gnadenfeld, in the hills of Leobschütz and close to Oberglogau (Głógówek), was the only Moravian settlement in Upper Silesia. In 1766 Ernst Julius von Siedlitz (1685 – 1766), the founder of the colony Gnadenfrei, purchased the estate Pawlowitzke (Pawłowiczki) for his son Christian Friedrich von Siedlitz. Followers of the Brethren who had followed Siedlitz to Upper Silesia built the first artisans' houses. In 1777 the lord of the manor left the estate to the Brethren, and the settlement Gnadenfeld ("Gracefield") was founded in 1780.

The settlement follows a rectangular grid pattern. Between the main road from Cosel (Koźle) to Leobschütz (Głubczyce) and a parallel street a rectangular, green town square was laid out. In the middle was the church hall with the rectory (1781). The brothers' house (1783) and sisters' house (1785) were on the narrow

above:  
Gnadenfeld,  
Ansicht,  
um 1820



below:  
Gnadenfeld,  
main street  
with remaining  
houses of  
the Moravian  
settlement, to  
the right the  
community  
guesthouse, in  
the front the  
corner house  
of the former  
Zinzendorf-  
platz



sides of the square. Houses, the Boys' Institute (1810) and Girls' Institute (1790) were on the long sides. Further houses and businesses stood on the side streets and on the main street. Behind the sisters' house, an alley of lime trees led to the God's Acre.

Gnadenfeld was the only Moravian settlement in otherwise Roman Catholic surroundings. The settlement was founded in the hope that it would provide a home for religious refugees from nearby Bohemia. This did not however happen, as the Habsburg Monarchy approved the Lutheran and other Reformed confessions in 1781. Gnadenfeld never experienced much growth, although the theological seminary of the Brethren, located here

from 1818–1920, was of importance across the continent. A factory for stoves developed out of the Brethrens' pottery produced Gnadenfeld tiles. In addition, the Brethren farmed the Pawlowitzke lands and managed the forest.

Two thirds of Gnadenfeld was destroyed in hostilities in March 1945. The inhabitants were expelled and the German placename eliminated. Today hardly anything remains of the former Moravian settlement. The site of the destroyed church hall was built over and the larger buildings have vanished. Only the former Boys' Institute building remains. Today it is used by the municipal administration. The God's Acre is overgrown with trees and the gravestones have vanished.

Gnadenfeld,  
boys institute  
(today the  
municipality  
administration)

## THE RETURN TO BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA

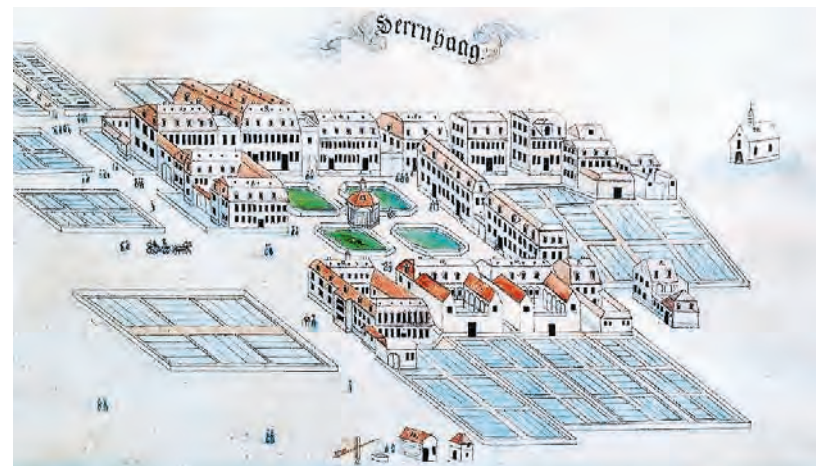
In Bohemia after the Reformation only the Roman Catholic Church was allowed. Emperor Josef II, who had visited Herrnhut in 1766, granted the Lutheran and Reformed Churches freedom of worship in 1781, but not the Moravians. Only when the Protestant Church had achieved full equality in the Habsburg Monarchy in 1861 could the Brethren plan to return to the "homeland of their fathers". In Pottenstein (Potštejn), in the foothills of the Adlergebirge (Eagle Mountains), a small community, mostly Czech speaking, was formed. They joined with the Brethren while they were gathering together a German-speaking community in Dauba (Dubá) in northern Bohemia. In 1880 the "Protestant Church of the Brethren" was officially recognised. By the beginning of the First World War there were 8 very small communities, which only had simple church halls, although they were, as in Eisenbrod (Železný Brod), connected with

outhouses. However, it never came to independent settlements. In the first Czechoslovakian Republic there were ten Czech-speaking communities and five German-speaking communities. The German-speaking Moravians were expelled after the Second World War, and the Czech Province, independent from 1957, had to hold its own in an environment hostile to religion. In the 1990s there was a painful division in the Czech Brethren. The communities were divided into one group in favour of a charismatic, evangelical orientation and another in favour of traditional practices. This second group joined the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren where they have a Moravian Seniority, containing nine communities. The larger Czech Province of the Brethren comprises 29 communities, mostly in northern Bohemia and northern Moravia. Both branches are independent Provinces within the worldwide Moravian Church.

Pottenstein,  
church hall,  
built in 1899



## MORAVIANS IN WESTERN AND SOUTHERN GERMANY



Herrnhag,  
view pre-1750

The Moravians could only settle in areas of the Empire where Protestant rulers allowed the revival movement outside their state churches. This included Wetterau in Hessen, the principality of Wied in the Rhineland and the Kingdom of Württemberg.

In the 1730s the pietist-orientated Counts of Ysenburg, who ruled in Wetterau, supported Count Zinzendorf and his revival movement. Zinzendorf had been expelled from Saxony and at the invitation of Count Ernst Casimir von Ysenburg und Büdingen (1687 – 1749) lived for a while in Ronneburg castle. In 1736 he rented the Marienborn estate not far away. There he developed a settlement that was abandoned in 1759, but which played host to several Brethren synods until 1769. In 1738 Zinzendorf laid the foundation stone of the nearby

settlement Herrnhag, which had to be given up in 1753 following arguments with Count zu Ysenburg, mostly over taxes. Most inhabitants moved to the Moravian quarters of Neuwied and Zeist.

Only in the early 19th century was it possible for the Brethren to build a settlement in south Germany: Königsfeld in the Black Forest. In 1920 the Brethren were given the Kurhaus in Bad Boll close to Stuttgart, although no settlement was built. Bad Boll is today one of the seats of the Provincial Board of the European Continental Province of the Moravian Church along with Herrnhut and Zeist. The most recently built settlement was founded after the Second World War in north west Germany. Neugnadenfeld was built on the site of a former prisoner of war camp.



## HERRNHAAG

In 1738, with permission from Count Ernst Casimir von Ysenburg und Büdingen (1687 – 1749), Count Zinzendorf founded the settlement Herrnhag on a hill near Büdingen. The place name means something like "enclosed place of the Lord". An ideal model was developed that informed the style of the structure of later settlements as well as the architecture of the buildings.

In the middle was a green square, in the centre of which was a spring, covered by a pavilion with a glockenspiel on the roof. The spring was not there to provide water, but rather as a symbol of Jesus Christ as the spring of life. Twelve blocks were constructed around the square, of which eleven were built between 1738 and 1747. Further houses were built on two side streets. An important construction was the manor, or Lichtenburg, built in 1744. It is a baroque structure with four wings and contained residential space for Count Zinzendorf and his family along with the church hall and meeting room. The impressive meeting room on the upper floor of the main wing extends across two floors and into the roof.

The remaining buildings show that two storey houses with simple plaster façades

and high mansard roofs were preferred. This simple but elegant basic design, "Moravian Baroque", has been used often elsewhere.

Herrnhag was the cultural and administrative centre of the Moravian Church for about ten years. When Count Gustav Friedrich von Ysenburg und Büdingen (1715 – 1768), who had been ruling since 1749, restricted the rights of the Brethren, the inhabitants refused to swear allegiance to him. The Count commanded that the settlement be dissolved and the inhabitants leave within three years. The nearly 1,000 inhabitants moved to other Moravian settlements such as Neuwied, Niesky and Zeist, or to various places in north America. The majority of the buildings became derelict or were demolished. The manor was retained as a summer home by the Count of Ysenburg und Büdingen.

The „rediscovery“ of Herrnhag began in 1959 when members of the Brethren and other interested people founded the Society „Friends of Herrnhag“ (Verein der Freunde des Herrnhag e.V.) and purchased the northern part of the settlement together with the derelict buildings. The buildings were rescued



and new cultural and spiritual uses were found. The manor is not yet completely restored and reconstructed. The Herrnhag youth workshop (Jugendwerkstatt) work here, an establishment run by the Diakonie helping unemployed young people. The excavated but not yet completely restored church hall is used for concerts and events. The Rhine-Main congregation of the Moravian church also have event rooms here. The former sisters' house was made usable between 1985 and 1990. Today it is home to the Herrnhag Society, founded in 1982 – a community of Moravians who live together.

The God's Acre can still be found below the settlement. 429 members of the

Brethren are buried here, including the three deceased children of Count Zinzendorf and his brother-in-law Heinrich XXIX Reuss-Ebersdorf.

Herrnhag farm, opposite the sisters' house, contains parts of the walls of the former brothers' house. There are also remains from the pharmacy, bakery and orphanage. The former community lodging house of the Brethren is now a simple dwelling.

Herrnhag, the former church hall in the manor

Herrnhag, to left the sisters' house, to the right the manor „Lichtenburg“



**Verein der Freunde des Herrnhag e.V.**

Herrnhag 2, D-63654 Büdingen

<https://herrnhag.de>

## NEUWIED

Neuwied on the Rhine was founded in 1653 by Friedrich III Count zu Wied (1618–1698) in order to improve the economic life of his domains. He concentrated on religious minorities who were persecuted elsewhere and allowed them to practice their religions freely. Neuwied became a sanctuary for religious refugees: Mennonites and Jews. When he heard that the Moravians had to leave their colony of Herrnhag, Count Johann Friedrich Alexander zu Wied (1706–1791) offered the Brethren the chance to settle in Neuwied. The first settlers arrived in 1750, including many Swiss people and Protestants from the south of France who had joined up with the Brethren. In 1754 the congregation was officially founded. The Moravians were one of seven religious communities in Neuwied, but they were the only ones to have their own quarter. They were granted a square in the geometric plan of the town to build on. Two-storey houses were built around the edge of this square, surrounding an

enclosed garden with a wellhouse. Included among the houses are the community house (1758), the brothers' house and the sisters' house (1759).

In 1781 the Brethren were granted a second neighbouring square of land, making Friedrichstrasse, which joined the two plots, the main street of the Moravian quarter. The church hall (1782–85) stood on this street. The hall was set back from the street a little, making space for a small town square. A larger town square was not possible. The God's Acre, laid out in 1750, had to be closed in 1794 as it was full and had to make place for the extension of the town. The new God's Acre was laid outside the town and is still used today.

The Moravians lived primarily from their own crafts. The cabinet makers Abraham Roentgen (1711–1793) and David Roentgen (1743–1807) made high-quality furniture for European ruling houses. In 1758 a pottery was built in the brothers' house, specialising in high-quality stoves. This stove factory developed into the



firms Klimatechnik GmbH and Ofenbau des Brüderhauses GmbH which are still partly owned by the Brethren. The brewery and the bakery were closed, the latter in 2016.

Neuwied was an important Moravian educational centre. Children, initially mostly from Switzerland and the Netherlands then later from England, were educated in the Boys' Institute, opened in 1756. The "Turnanstalt", built in 1874 for the school, is the oldest girls' gymnasium in Germany. In 1936 the schools were closed. The Brethren still run a kindergarten, possibly the oldest in Germany. The "Herrnhuter Kinderhaus" (Moravian childrens' house), founded in 1756, today uses several buildings next to the church hall.

From 1984–94 the rows of houses and the space inside the block were refurbished and carefully modernised. Today

only a few Moravians live in the Moravian quarter. Most flats are rented. The Moravian care home for the elderly is run by the Rheinischen Gesellschaft für Innere Mission und Hilfswerk.

Neuwied, houses in the Moravian quarter

Neuwied, Moravian quarter, Friedrichstrasse with the church hall



### Evangelische Brüdergemeine Neuwied

Friedrichstraße 41  
D-56564 Neuwied/Rhein  
[www.ebg-neuwied.de](http://www.ebg-neuwied.de)



### Moravian Museum (Herrnhuter Museumsstübchen)

Friedrichstraße 30, D-56564 Neuwied

Registration under  
Phone +49 26 31/24044 or  
[archiv@ebg-neuwied.de](mailto:archiv@ebg-neuwied.de)



## KÖNIGSFELD

In Württemberg, a heartland of pietism, there were awakened Christians who felt they had a connection with Moravian piety, although in the 18th century there was no suitable property to found a settlement or a school. A settlement was only successful in the early 19th century. In the vicinity of Villingen on the eastern edge of the Black Forest two members of the Brethren purchased a farm: Hörnlshof. King Friedrich I of Württemberg (1754 – 1816) allowed a settlement to be founded there and gave it the name "Königsfeld" ("Kingsfield") in 1806. This referred to the status of Württemberg being raised to a kingdom, but was interpreted by the Moravians as referring to Jesus Christ as King. In 1810 the settlement was transferred to the grand duchy of Baden through an exchange of lands.

The building plan follows the pattern of older settlements such as Herrnhag and Gnadau. In the middle is a town square laid out as a garden, Zinzendorfplatz, around

which are eight square blocks of buildings. The north front side is made up by the church hall and connecting rectory and meeting rooms (1810 – 1812). The blocks on the sides should have been the brothers' and sisters' houses but only the sisters' house was built (1810). Houses were built where the Friedrichstrasse opens onto the south side of the square. Some plots remained empty for decades, so that the west side of Zinzendorfplatz was only closed when the widows' house was built in 1861. The God's Acre was laid out outside the settlement and is today a graveyard for all Christian inhabitants.

Königsfeld has been an important Moravian school town since 1809. The Boys' and Girls' Institutes were run as boarding schools, and are now the Königsfeld Zinzendorf schools. The biggest church school complex in south west Germany, it comprises nine different schools including a grammar school and a vocational training school, and has

lodgings for boys and girls. To some extent the last remaining schools with Moravian influence are in Königsfeld. The former sisters' house is today one of the many school buildings, with the name "Erdmuthe Dorotheen House".

Königsfeld has a supra-confessional Christian community. The Moravian Church and the congregation of the Protestant state Church in Baden make up the Königsfeld Protestant parish, which is supervised by a Moravian minister. The Brethren maintain a care home and a care home for the elderly (Christoph Blumhardt House) as well as a Kindergarten, and manage their own area of forest.

At the end of the 19th century Königsfeld developed into a popular rest and recuperation venue. Villas and sanatoriums were built around the centre. Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965), the theologian, philosopher and "jungle doctor" chose this area in the Black Forest as his Euro-

pean home on account of its restorative climate. His house, built for him in 1923, is now a museum.

Königsfeld,  
Luftbild



Königsfeld,  
Kirchensaal



**Evangelische Brüdergemeine Königsfeld**  
Zinzendorfplatz 2, D-78126 Königsfeld  
[www.evik.de](http://www.evik.de)



**Ausstellung der Evangelischen Brüdergemeine**  
Zinzendorfplatz 2, D-78126 Königsfeld



**Albert-Schweitzer-Haus**  
Schramberger Straße 5  
D-78126 Königsfeld  
[www.albertschweitzer-haus.de](http://www.albertschweitzer-haus.de)



## NEUGNADENFELD

The last independent Moravian settlement was built directly after the end of the Second World War when many Moravians had been expelled from the now Polish areas to the east of the Oder and had to find new homes in the west. The Brethren were permitted to use the former prisoner-of-war camp, Alexisdorf, in a thinly populated moorland area close to the Dutch border. The wooden huts were suitable for accommodation. Mostly exiles from central Poland moved into this "shed camp". The largest groups came from Leonberg (Lwówek), whose forebears, mostly from the Leonberg district in Württemberg, migrated to Poland in around 1800.

The council of elders of the Brethren gave the "shed camp" the name

'Neugnadenfeld', meaning "new grace field". By degrees the sheds were torn down and replaced by secondary occupation settlements. Away from the centre of the settlement 17 agricultural establishments were built. The individual detached construction did not follow the tradition of Moravian settlements of the 18th century, which were mostly conceived as artisan towns with compact construction. Instead farms were built, in the hope that settlers would make the moor usable, or would at least be able to have some kind of agricultural sideline. The church hall (1959) was essential and was built, as in older settlements, in the centre of the settlement in an otherwise empty town square – Zinzendorfplatz. With the building of

Neugnadenfeld, church hall and village community house (today the museum)



Neugnadenfeld, settlers' houses

the first village community house in Lower Saxony the development of Neugnadenfeld was more or less complete. The Moravian God's Acre and the graveyard of the prisoner-of-war camp, occupied mostly by Soviet prisoners-of-war, lies a little way outside the settlement.

A kindergarten and the John Amos Comenius House, used for conferences and retreats, are included among the Brethren's institutions. There is a history path with twelve information pillars about settlement on the moor, war, flight and persecution, and the construction of the Moravian settlement. There is an exhibition in the village community house, next to the church hall, where the history of Neugnadenfeld can be experienced. Amongst other things, there is a replica of the interior of one of the sheds from the postwar period.



### Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine Neugnadenfeld

Herrnhuter Ring 22  
D-49824 Neugnadenfeld  
[www.neugnadenfeld.de](http://www.neugnadenfeld.de)



### Ausstellung des LAN e. V.

Herrnhuter Ring 25  
D-49824 Neugnadenfeld  
[www.lan-neugnadenfeld.de](http://www.lan-neugnadenfeld.de)



Two **art installations engaging** with the history of Neugnadenfeld are part of the international "Kunstwegenroute" ("Artways route").  
[www.kunstwegen.org](http://www.kunstwegen.org)



## THE MORAVIANS IN SWITZERLAND

Count Zinzendorf attended the boarding school of the Franckeshe Institute in Halle together with Friedrich von Wattenwyl (de Watteville, 1700–1777), who came from a patrician family from Bern in Switzerland. They became lifelong friends. Wattenwyl helped to build Herrnhut, was leader of the Moravian community while Zinzendorf was exiled from Saxony, and was ordained bishop in 1743. In 1739 Zinzendorf visited the estate of the family von Wattenwyl in Montmirail in the domain of Neuenburg (Neuchâtel) for the first time. Here they had the idea of founding a community in Switzerland in the hope of attracting Huguenots and Waldensians from France. In 1742 a baroque house was built next to the manor as the centre of the new settlement. But the Reformed state church in Neuenburg forbade the Moravians to settle, and the settlement had to be dissolved. Many

moved first to Herrnhaag, and then after the persecution to Neuwied. In 1766 the Moravians founded a girls' boarding house in Montmirail, in which up to 150 school-girls lived and were educated. The baroque main wing was extended several times for the business of teaching. The school had to be closed in 1988 because of severely reduced pupil numbers. Today the buildings are used by the Don Camillo community, a monastery-like community of Reformed Christians. By 1740, following visits from Zinzendorf, there were small communities of Christians in Bern, Basel and Zurich who felt a connection with the religiosity of the Moravians but were still part of the Protestant Church. Today there are four Moravian Societies across Switzerland. Once a year the Swiss Societies meet in Montmirail for a communal celebration.

Montmirail,  
manor and  
main building  
(Corps Central)



## THE MORAVIANS IN DENMARK



Christiansfeld,  
Zeichnung,  
vor 1800

Count Zinzendorf, who had good connections with the Danish royal court in Copenhagen, was given permission to build a settlement in the then Danish Duchy of Holstein in 1736. Immediately the settlement Pilgeruh ("Pilgrim's rest") outside the small town of Oldesloe was founded, and rapidly inhabited by up to 150 people. In 1741 the settlement was closed because the Danish King wanted, amongst other things, the community to disassociate themselves from Herrnhut and stop going on missions, but the community refused. The Brethren sold the plots with the abandoned buildings in 1752. Today nothing of the settlement remains.

The conservative attitude to the Moravians at the Danish court changed when King Christian VII (1749–1808) made acquaintance with the Moravian settlement and its businesses in Zeist. He wanted to establish a similar settlement in Denmark, in the hope of revitalising the economy in the weakly structured northern part of Schleswig. In 1772 he granted permission for the foundation of the colony Christiansfeld ("Christians' field"), named after himself.

Although Christiansfeld lay in a mostly Danish-speaking area of Schleswig, German was the dominant language, as many inhabitants came from German communities and the cross-border exchange continued. In 1864 Schleswig-Holstein became part of Prussia. The border between Germany and Denmark was now to the north of Christiansfeld, until, after a referendum, Northern Schleswig was united with the Kingdom of Denmark in 1920. Since then, Christiansfeld has been a solely Danish-speaking community.

The Moravian congregation of Christiansfeld is the only Moravian settlement in Denmark. There are around 300 members, of whom, however, only some live in Christiansfeld and its environs. From 1733 to 1900 the Moravian Church ran a successful mission among the Inuit in Greenland (today an autonomous part of Denmark). In 1900 all the settlements, including Neu-Herrnhut (Ny Herrnhut, today part of Nuuk), were given to the Protestant Lutheran church of Denmark.

## CHRISTIANSFELD

With permission from the Danish King Christian VII, the Brethren purchased the estate Tystrupgård to the north of the harbour town Haderslev in the northern Duchy of Schleswig and founded the settlement Christiansfeld there in 1773. The final settlement plan was most likely developed by the Copenhagen Brethren member Johannes Prætorius. The foundation stone for the first house was laid on 1 April 1773. The settlement comprises two parallel main streets (Lindegade and Nørregade) which are connected by a rectangular town square. On the western long side of the square is the church hall (1776, extended 1796/97); it is the largest hall without supporting pillars in Denmark. The largest buildings are the sisters' house

1776) and the widows' house (1780) on the Nørregade along with the brothers' house on the Lindegade. The guesthouse of the Brethren (1773) is situated on the Kongensgade, built in 1853 orthogonal to the Nørregade and Londengade. All of the buildings are built in yellow brick with red roof tiles. This gives the ensemble a very uniform appearance. The town square is occasionally bathed in warm sunlight and in a certain light regularly appears to glow. The God's Acre, opened in 1773, lies to the north east of the settlement and is still used today.

The Moravians in Christiansfeld supported themselves with crafts and trade. The Christiansfeld stoves produced by the family Schmidt from 1786 were famous.

Christiansfeld,  
God's Acre



Emil Achtnich founded a honeycake bakery in 1802, possibly inspired by the gingerbread famous in Upper Lusatia, and still offers the only honeycake in Denmark. The well known company founder from Niesky, Ehregott Christoph, and later, Christian Ferdinand Christoph, both came from Christiansfeld. In 2015 Christiansfeld was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the former sisters' house there is an information centre with an exhibition about the Moravians in Denmark and a shop. The Comenius Garden (Comeniushaven), laid out in 2015, is an example of what a Moravian private garden would have looked like in around 1800.



### Brødremenigheden i Christiansfeld

Lindegade 26, DK-6070 Christiansfeld  
<http://brødremenigheden.dk>



### Christiansfeld Centret, Søstrehuset

Nørregade 14, DK-6070 Christiansfeld  
[www.christiansfeldcentret.dk](http://www.christiansfeldcentret.dk)



### Honey cake from the Brødremenighedens Honningkagebageri

Lindegade 36, DK-6070 Christiansfeld

Christiansfeld,  
Stown square,  
to the right the  
church hall



## THE MORAVIANS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Ansicht von  
Zeist, Ende  
des 18. Jahr-  
hunderts



Count Zinzendorf visited the Netherlands on numerous occasions on his way to England or America. Zinzendorf won many followers for the Brethren in the Netherlands, including wealthy merchants from Amsterdam. In 1736 the Count made an agreement with Princess Maria Louise van Oranje to settle Moravian religious refugees in the Rhine delta. Near IJsselstein, on the banks of the river IJssel, the settlement 's Heerendijk ("dyke of the Lord") was founded in 1737. However, the settlement did not meet expectations, leading to its abandonment in 1752.

In 1770 the Brethren sold the empty buildings for building materials, for which reason hardly anything remains of the settlement today. The second attempt at founding a settlement was successful, with the purchase of the palace and estate of Zeist by a follower of the Brethren. From 1748 a Moravian settlement was built in front of the palace,

which differs from other settlements through the two squares to the left and right of the main axis leading to the palace. Zinzendorf hoped to create a centre for the worldwide revival and missionary movement. This was unsuccessful, but Zeist nevertheless developed into an economic and cultural centre of the European Brethren.

An important missionary destination for the Moravians was Suriname, which was a Dutch colony in South America until 1975. Once the country had become independent many Surinamese relocated to the former mother-country. The 13 communities, or missionary stations, of the Moravian Brethren in the Netherlands are characterised by members from Suriname. The Missionary Society of the Brethren in the Netherlands (Zeister Zendingsgenootschap), founded in 1793, have their seat in Zeist.

## ZEIST

In 1745 the Amsterdam businessman Cornelis Schellinger bought palace Zeist, close to Utrecht – a baroque residency from the last third of the 17th century. Together with Count Zinzendorf, who lived for a short time in Zeist palace, he developed a plan to build a Moravian settlement in the large palace park. The axial plan of the park was respected. The entire settlement is laid out with the palace as visual reference point. Between the palace and the village of Zeist, to the left and the right of the avenue leading to the palace, two blocks of buildings were built, both of which are surrounded by water-filled ditches. The buildings in both cases encircle large, square, internal courtyards: the Zusterplein (sisters'

square) and the Broederplein (brothers' square) – named after the brothers' and sisters' houses which were found at the fronts of the respective squares. It was planned to completely surround the courtyards with buildings and for each to open towards the avenue in the middle. Although members of the community purchased individual building plots, the aim was for the homogenous construction of houses and community buildings with the front of the square closed. According to local building tradition, the houses were built with red brick, thus differing greatly in material and style from other Moravian settlements. With their large, white-surrounded windows and the projecting central porches the houses are more

Zeist,  
Broederplein





similar to Dutch palaces, although the interiors could vary greatly in usage and room size. In this way a singular settlement with a harmoniously uniform appearance could be obtained.

The church hall (1768) was built in the centre of the long side of the Zusterplein. Built according to a plan by Moritz von Schweinitz, this building retained a palace-like impression. This was achieved by the creation of a central axis through a false main porch, which was first opened in the 1990s as a fire-safety measure. The ridge turret was added in 1853. Until then, churches not belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church were forbidden from being externally recognisable as such. The God's Acre was laid out in 1747. Although the community grew rapidly until around 1780, the idiosyncratic settle-

ment plan was never fully completed. The lack of breaks between the buildings made it possible in 1967 for a fire to rapidly take hold and almost destroy the brothers' house and neighbouring buildings. Once it had been rebuilt, the national memorial authority moved into the brothers' house, and then continued with construction that had been planned 200 years ago, so that the construction on Broederplein was completed in 1973. Around a third of the plots on Zusterplein remain empty. Today the palace is used by the municipality of Zeist, but the buildings around Broederplein and Zusterplein belong to the community of the Brethren of Zeist. The houses that are not inhabited by members are rented out. The girls' school built in 1909 is now the seat of the Zeist missionary society.

Zeist,  
Zusterplein  
with church  
hall



Zeist,  
church hall

The Zeist settlement was an economic hub, especially for England. The businessman Ludwig Wilhelm Schütz from Kleinwelka, son-in-law of the renowned manufacturer of church bells Friedrich Gruhl (1778–1852), founded an art-foundry in 1834 which was of national repute. The building of stoves also flourished. "Zeist stoves" were status symbols in the royal palaces and in the villas of Amsterdam merchants in the second half of the 19th century. In 2018 the Moravian museum was opened in the former home and workshop of Schütz, directly at the entrance to the palace and settlement. It contains objects pertaining to the Brethren in Zeist and to missionary work.



**Evangelische Broedergemeente Zeist**  
Zusterplein 20, NL-3703 CB Zeist  
[www.ebgezeist.nl](http://www.ebgezeist.nl)



**Museum Het Hernhutter Huis**  
Lageweg 27, NL-3703 CA Zeist  
[www.hethernhutterhuis.nl](http://www.hethernhutterhuis.nl)



**Denkmal für die Schlacht von Austerlitz**  
EN Pyramid of Austerlitz  
Zeisterweg 98, NL-3931 MG Woudenberg  
<https://pyramidevanausterlitz.nl>



## THE MORAVIANS IN ENGLAND AND IRELAND

Wellhouse, settlement with a row of houses (formerly brothers' house and school) and the meeting room (1970)



In the 1730s the Moravians collected more and more followers in England. In 1739 Peter Böhler (1712 – 1775), bishop of the Brethren and missionary in north America, founded a community of awakened Christians in London. John Wesley (1703 – 1791), later founder of the Methodist Church, found spiritual enlightenment with them. In 1742 the first city congregation on the British Isles was founded in London. Zinzendorf lived in Great Britain for a long time during his exile from Saxony. Along with some fellow travellers he managed to persuade the British Parliament to recognise his community of believers as an "ancient Protestant Episcopal Church" in 1749. Lindsay House in Chelsea, near London, was the centre of the Moravian Church for some years. Even

after Zinzendorf left, Britain and Ireland remained of great importance for the worldwide mission and the international influence of the Brethren. The Moravians were part of the revival movement, which was attractive to many people in the British Isles in the 18th century. Lay preachers like Benjamin Ingham (1712 – 1772) or John Cennick (1718 – 1755), who had a close relationship with the Brethren, preached inner conversion and demanded a Christian lifestyle. In the places where they sent missionaries, small communities, called Societies, sprung up. The members of these communities did not live together but were spread out over small or a large areas. Only in four cases were settlements founded according to the Moravian



Gomersal, in der Mitte Schwesternhaus und Kirchensaal

pattern, that is, settlements in which only members of the Brethren lived and which were planned and built for their purposes. Some Societies, especially in Yorkshire, built "minimal settlements" in the 18th century. These mostly comprised a meeting room according to the Moravian pattern, a rectory, a God's Acre and one or two community buildings. They were not closed settlements as the necessary residential buildings were not built. In 1755 the "minimal settlements" in Gomersal, Wellhouse and Lower Wyke were founded, which still partly exist. The 18th century church hall along with the sisters' house (1782) and the girls' school (1794) buildings still remain in Lower Wyke. In Gomersal an earlier sisters' house (1751) is today used as a dwelling house. The church hall was redeveloped in new Gothic style from 1863–1870. In Wellhouse the church hall, opposite a row of houses, was replaced by a new building in 1970.

The Moravian Brethren in England and Ireland make up the British Province of the worldwide Moravian brethren. The number of members has reduced in recent years. The mostly very small communities are divided into five Districts. The church leadership resides in Moravian Church House in London. Two boarding schools in Fulneck and Ockbrook are closely connected with the Moravian church.

Lower Wyke, church hall and rectory (1776). God's Acre in the foreground.



## OCKBROOK

The farmer Isaac Frearson from Ockbrook, close to Derby in central England, brought the wandering preacher Jacob Rogers to Ockbrook in 1739, where he preached in one of Frearson's sheds. By 1740 a community of awakened Christians had joined together. In 1750, Peter Böhler, bishop of the Brethren, decided to found a settlement in Ockbrook. The Brethren acquired a hill outside the village of Ockbrook for this purpose. On 2 July 1751 the foundation stone of the church hall was laid, the oldest extant meeting room of the Brethren in England.

Ockbrook remains a very small settlement. A row of buildings along Settlement Road, which used to be closed off by gates,

included a church hall, a rectory (1822), a sisters' house (1759), a girls' school (1804) and a boys' school (1821). They are separated from the street by long front gardens. Two further rows of houses were built, extending from the right hand corner of Settlement Road. On the eastern edge of the settlement four houses were built. The director's house (1752) housed the church leadership of the British branch of the Brethren from 1826 to 1875. The second group of buildings on the western edge of the settlement comprises the community guesthouse (1792), the oldest building of the girls' school, and dwellings of the married brethren. The community shop (1768) was built on the site of the

Ockbrook,  
houses on  
Settlement  
Road



shed in which the first sermon was preached. All houses are built from red bricks and have grey-blue slate roofs. The settlement has never been extended or swallowed up by a city; it is still surrounded by green countryside today. The God's Acre, consecrated in 1752, is behind the church hall. While the exterior of the church hall still recalls the beginnings of the Moravian Church in England, the interior was changed in 1898. The benches are no longer aligned with the long side but rather with the narrow side, facing the pulpit and the organ. The members of the Brethren in Ockbrook were predominantly involved in textile production. There were no large businesses in the settlement. The boy's and girls' boarding schools were of national

importance. Today several buildings in the settlement are used by Ockbrook school, a private school in the Moravian tradition for children of 2–18 years. Until 2013 it was a school for girls.

Ockbrook,  
church hall



### **Ockbrook Moravian Church**

10 The Settlement, Ockbrook

Derby DE72 3RJ

<http://www.moravian.org.uk/index.php/ockbrook>



### **Guided tours of the settlement**

can be booked via ###.



## FAIRFIELD

In Dukinfield near Manchester in north west England a community of followers of the Brethren came together in 1743, and built a church hall and the first houses. There was, however, no further building work, as the owner of the land forbade it. With the cooperation of Benjamin Latrobe, elder of the British congregations, it was decided to found a new settlement in 1783. The Brethren bought a farm on the outskirts of Droylsden, Broad Oaks Farm, around four miles from the centre of Manchester, and founded the settlement Fairfield there. The foundation stone of the church hall was laid on 9 June 1784, and by May 1785 the church hall, the choir houses and the first 13 dwellings were complete. At Fairfield only a rudimentary symmetrical diagram with rectangular blocks of buildings can be recognised. Rather, the settlement was laid out according to an individual plan based on the separation of the sexes. A canal, built in 1795, encompasses two sides of the settlement. The settlement, which was earlier shielded from its surroundings by a gate, is reached

via a lane branching off from Fairfield Road. This leads to a wide, town square-like main street (North Terrace). Two wide side streets branch off at right angles from here, Brethrens' Street and Sisters' Street, which in turn open into a road parallel with North Terrace. In the middle of the south side of the block formed by these streets is the church hall (1784–1785). With its high rectangular windows and triangular gable it faces a garden which joins onto the God's Acre. On the southern end of the neighbouring block are the brothers' and sisters' houses. The whole plan of the settlement is informed by the separation of the sexes: the brothers' area is to the west of the central axis, the sisters' area to the east. Similarly, the western sides of the church hall and God's Acre are reserved for the brothers, the eastern sides for the sisters. The entire settlement is built in red brick. Some tiles are stamped with the date of the building and can still be seen today on the house façades. Dark slate was used for the roofs. The two-storey buildings

on both sides of North Terrace are simple dwelling houses, as well as small workshops and a weaving room. At the entrance to the settlement were stables and a community shop. Many brothers worked in a nearby cotton factory, owing to the early industrialisation in the area. A number of inhabitants lived by farming the land of Broad Oaks Farm. Many sisters from Fairfield were missionaries in the Caribbean, Labrador, South Africa or East Africa (today Tanzania). When the brothers' and sisters' houses were closed the buildings were used as boarding schools for boys and girls. The boys' school closed in 1891. The girls' school, founded in 1796 and housed in the brothers' house, was turned into the state-run Fairfield High School in 1922. This school, however, no longer has any connection to the Moravian Church. The Theological Seminary of the British Province of the Moravian Church was housed in the earlier sisters' house from 1906 to 1964. Since 1973 this building has served as the community house, containing function rooms as well as the museum, opened in 2009. The museum tells the story of the Moravian Church and their settlements in Fairfield and exhibits objects that missionaries brought back from various parts of the world. The interior of the church hall was altered in 1908, although the original brown wood fittings were retained. The orientation of the room was changed so that today it no longer faces the long front of the building, but rather the narrow eastern side, with its built-in wooden liturgical table, pulpit and monumental organ. Only a few of the current inhabitants are still members of the Fairfield community. Part of the settlement belongs to the



British Province of the Moravian Church, part belongs to a building society. A bronze memorial was erected at the entrance of the settlement in 2009. It shows a Moravian woman in traditional costume turning towards a schoolchild and illustrates the Moravian tradition of education.

Fairfield,  
North Terrace

Fairfield,  
view from the  
south, early  
19th century



### Fairfield Moravian Church

28 Fairfield Square, Droylsden  
Manchester M43 6AE  
<http://www.moravian.org.uk/index.php/uk-congregations-list-for-the-moravian-church/lancashire-district/fairfield>



### Fairfield Museum

Sisters' Street, Droylsden  
Manchester M43 6AD  
Guided tours of the settlement can be arranged via ###.

## FULNECK

The wandering preacher Benjamin Ingham travelled through West Yorkshire from 1738 and began a revival movement in the north of England. The Moravians in London took over the Societies and arranged the first preaching positions. When Count Zinzendorf visited West Yorkshire in 1743 and rode along the valley from the little market town of Pudsey he recommended that the first settlement in England should be founded on the Fallneck Estate. The settlement, founded in 1744, was initially named "Lambs Hill". In 1763 the name was changed to "Fulneck", connecting the earlier name with the north Moravian town Fulnek, where Johann Amos Comenius, the last bishop of the Bohemian Brethren, had lived before he was banished from the kingdom of Bohemia. Initially the German members were predominant in Fulneck; until 1824 all ministers came from Germany. One of the ministers, Count Moritz zu Dohna (1737–1777), was married to Count

Zinzendorf's daughter and was related to Countess Zinzendorf through his mother.

The settlement was built on the sides of a steep slope, leading to an unusual layout. A road was cut into the side of the slope. There are buildings on both sides of the street, those on the northern side being far higher than those on the southern, lower side. In spite of the narrow street and steep slope, there is a town square. The square was originally planned for the western end of the settlement, but was never built on that spot. The most important community buildings are in the southern, lower row. The church hall (1746–1748, "Grace Hall") was accentuated in 1779 by an extended porch with a triangular gable, clock and clock tower. Built onto the eastern side of the church hall is the former Boys' Institute and on the western side the former Girls' institute. A little further away are the sisters' house (1749) and the brothers' house (1749). The gaps between the buildings had

been filled by other buildings by the 18th century, so that there is an imposing continuous row of houses. On the valley side the houses have large front gardens. To the east of the gardens is the God's Acre, opened in 1749. In the 1770s the settlement was extended along the road to the west with the community shop, community guesthouse and hostel. The row of houses to the north of the street is mostly made up of small family homes. The Sunday School building (1874) stands further up the slope.

The inhabitants of the settlement lived from trade and business, and partly also from farming. There was a smithy and small household spinning and weaving works, some reliant upon the nearby centres of cloth manufacture, Leeds and Bradford. The brothers made gloves while the sisters completed complicated embroidery. Fulneck was an important musical centre. The baroque organ in the church hall (1748), built by Swiss organ builder Johann Snetzler (1710–1785), is the oldest surviving organ in the Moravian Church. The Brethren hold a baroque music festival every year in August.

Today, nearly all the houses are in the possession of the British Province of the Moravian Church. Fulneck is an important school town. The Moravian boys's and girls' schools were turned into Fulneck School in 1992, a private school for boys and girls from 3 to 18 years. The school uses several buildings in the settlement, including the former brothers' and sisters' house, and a new building from 1981. The former Sunday School is now the Comenius Centre and contains function rooms. The Fulneck Dramatic Society, a theatre club connected with the Moravian



Church, also rehearses here. In 1969 two small weavers' houses on the northern side of the settlement were converted into a museum, which is open from Easter until September. It presents information about the Brethren in Fulneck, and shows furnishings and clothes mainly from the 19th century, as well as ethnographic objects from missionary work. One is a memorial to Benjamin Latrobe (1764–1820), who was born in Fulneck and grew up in Niesky, and was the architect of the Capitol in Washington, USA.

View of  
Fulneck,  
pre 1763

Fulneck  
settlement,  
right of the  
Grace hall



### Fulneck Moravian Church, The Parsonage

38 Fulneck, Pudsey, LS28 8NT  
[www.fulneck.org.uk](http://www.fulneck.org.uk)



### Moravian Museum

55/57 Fulneck, Pudsey  
[www.fulneck.org.uk/?page\\_id=16](http://www.fulneck.org.uk/?page_id=16)  
Guided tours through the settlement can be booked through [dearside@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dearside@hotmail.co.uk)



## GRACEHILL

The charismatic preacher John Cennick travelled to Ireland in 1746, where he found many followers in the Protestant countryside. These awakened Christians founded local Moravian Societies and looked for ways for the unmarried members to live together in brothers' and sisters' houses. In order to bring four Societies together in north west Ireland, an area strongly influenced by the Revival movement, the settlement Gracehill was founded in 1759, not far from the small town of Ballymena. The Unity Board of the Moravian Church approved the settlement plans and authorised a loan to build the settlement.

The settlement, with its grid layout, rectangular plan and the central town square, resembles its counterparts on the European mainland. The square was built to the west of the river Main, opposite a Jacobean stately home, Galgorm Castle. On two sides of the town square were

parallel streets along which dwellings were built. The community buildings were gathered around the green square. On the western side was the church hall (1765), which was later extended with side buildings, including the minister's house. It can be recognised by the large round-arched windows and the roof turret. To left and right were the first brothers' house (1767) and the first sisters' house (1765). The God's Acre (laid out in 1761) lies behind the church hall, extending the central axis, and can be reached via two parallel access roads. The houses are built in dark grey or black basalt and have simple saddle roofs with slate tiles, giving a friendly, very homogenous appearance. The east side of the town square, towards the river valley, remains empty. From here down to the River Main the settlement is still given over to gardens. The settlement remains relatively unchanged today, owing to its remote location. For this

reason Gracehill was declared the first Conservation Area in Northern Ireland in 1975.

The up to 300 Gracehill inhabitants lived from their craft work and trade. The brothers made linen, amongst other things, and the sisters made lace and embroidery. There was also a boys' school and a girls' school. In spite of its remote location Gracehill had international connections. Several ministers and inhabitants came from Germany. Johannes van Watterville (1718–1788), bishop of the Brethren and Zinzendorf's son-in-law, visited the Irish settlement on several occasions.

The church hall contains brown wooden benches and a pulpit. Glass windows, probably made by Bohmeian glass-makers for the church hall in Dublin around 1900 and transferred to Gracehill in 1962, contain images of Count Zinzendorf, the preacher John Cennick and Bishop Peter Böhler along with Jan Hus, John Wycliffe and Johann Amos Comenius. A modern event hall (Cennick Hall) stands between the church hall and the cemetery and is used by the school and the Brethren.

The former sisters' house next to the church hall was turned into a girls' school in 1873. It has been a state school since 1931. Once the Gracehill Primary School had moved into a new building, the old school building was turned into a visitors centre by the Gracehill Old School Trust. There is a restaurant, an exhibition about the Moravian Church and a small school museum. The town square, which has been fenced and grassed over, is bordered on the sides by other buildings. There is the girls' school (1797), which was used as a sisters' house from 1873, the community



View of Gracehill, early 19th century

shop (1787) and the new brothers' house (####), which was home to a boys' school and building society in the 19th century. A stone column on the town square serves as a memorial that Gracehill provided a place of peaceful understanding between the insurgents and the British troops in the Irish Rebellion of 1798.



### Gracehill Moravian Church

25 Church Rd, Gracehill, Ballymena,  
Co. Antrim BT 42 2NL  
[www.gracehillmoravian.org.uk](http://www.gracehillmoravian.org.uk)



### Museum in the Old School

Church Road, Gracehill  
19 Church Rd, Gracehill, Ballymena,  
Co. Antrim BT 42 2NL  
For opening times see  
[www.gracehillvilage.org](http://www.gracehillvilage.org).  
Guided tours can be booked through  
[gracehilltours@gmail.com](mailto:gracehilltours@gmail.com)

left:  
Gracehill,  
church hall

right:  
Gracehill,  
houses on the  
main square,  
to the left the  
last remaining  
sisters' house



## SOME MORAVIAN TERMINOLOGY

**Brothers and sisters:** Terms used for the adult men and adult women respectively of the Moravian Church.

**Choir:** A living and working community of members of the Moravian Church, divided into choirs of brothers, choirs of sisters, choirs of married couples and choirs of widows, according to age and gender.

**Choirhouse:** Community house with bedrooms, workshops and a meeting room. There are brothers' houses for single brothers, sisters' houses for single sisters and widows' houses for widows.

**Christingle:** Moravian tradition, pre-dominantly in English speaking areas. An orange with a candle and other decorations that symbolise the light of Christ. Used during family church services during Advent.

**Daily Watchwords:** A collection of short Bible verses with thematically connected hymns as a spiritual text for each day. In 1728 Count Zinzendorf introduced the custom of choosing Christian watchwords every day. The Daily Watchwords have been published annually since 1731 and are also used by other confessions and currently appear in 61 languages.

**Diakonie:** The ancient Greek "diakonia" translates as "service" or "ministration" and is used in a general sense in German to refer to works of Christian charity. It is also the name of organisations which provide social work and support.

**Diaspora work:** Support for members of the Moravian Church who do not live in a Moravian settlement.

**God's Acre:** Cemetery. The graves are usually all marked in the same way with a single stone laid into the grass. The graves may not be removed or reused but should remain untouched.

**Moravian Star:** Advent and Christmas star with 25 points which can be lighted from within. Originally it was to have been used as a geometric figure for schools but it was later used as a symbol for the star of Bethlehem by the Moravian Church. Today it is known worldwide as a Christmas decoration.

**Love-feast:** A community meal in the church hall. Servers in festive clothing, often in Moravian traditional costume, share out currant buns and drinks (tea, and, outside of Europe, coffee). The love-feast is accompanied by readings, community songs, words of greeting and a prayer. Love-feasts are also used in the role of a wake after Brethren funerals.

**Liturgus:** A member of the Brethren who performs the liturgical diegesis, also called community helper or pastor.

**Mission:** The spreading of Christian belief. The Brethren have been sending missionaries all over the world since 1732.

**Singstunde:** A sung church service in which the congregation sings songs that has been chosen to fit a Bible verse.

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# SETTLEMENTS OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH IN EUROPE

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