"Jesus, Still Lead On:"
Count von Zinzendorf (1700–1760)

Poet and Master-Singer of the Moravian Church.

Gerhart Teuscher

In the introduction to his edition of Nikolaus Ludwig Count von Zinzendorf’s Nine Public Lectures on Important Subjects in Religion, George W. Forell hails the eighteenth-century religious leader and founder of the famous Herrnhut Brüdergemeine as “The most influential German theologian between Luther and Schleiermacher.” This is high praise for a man who may not be well known today but who counted amongst the great religious figures of eighteenth-century Europe and who has been described, in the context of hymnological research, as “the first ecumenical hymnologist.”

In the following study I intend to trace Zinzendorf’s fascinating career, including his contacts with English-speaking countries and his influence on English-language hymnody, and to examine some of his poems and hymns.

Born at Dresden in Saxony on May 25, 1700, Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf was descended from a family of ancient nobility in Austria. His father, Georg Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1662–1700), was a high-ranking official in the Archduchy of Saxony; Nikolaus was the only son of his father’s second marriage, to Charlotte Justine von Gersdorf (1675–1763), a well-educated and refined woman.

Following the death of his father, Nikolaus and his mother rejoined the household of her father, the Freiherr Nicol von Gersdorf (1629–1702), and his wife, Henriette Katharina, at the family estate of Großhennersdorf in the Upper Lusatia (Oberlausitz) region. When his mother remarried a few years later, the boy was given into the care of his maternal grandmother, who then became the major influence on young Zinzendorf. As Zinzendorf himself said later, he owed all his principles to her. “Had she not been,” he acknowledged, “our entire cause would not have come about. She was a person who was committed to everything in the world that was of concern to the Saviour. She distinguished not amongst the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed denominations; rather, what came from the heart and touched her, that was neighbourly to her.” There is no doubt that Zinzendorf’s own ecumenical leanings

Vol. 47, No. 3 • July 1996

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1 The preparatory work for this study was done at Princeton’s Theological Seminary, where I gratefully accepted the valuable help of Paul R. Powell, Cataloger for Special Collections, Speer Library. I was able to work at Princeton in the summer of 1994 after receiving an Arts Research Grant from McMaster University.


3 In A. J. Lewis, op. cit. Lewis makes his assessment in the context of his examination of the Moravians’ “pioneering contribution to the development and spread of congregation-singing and music in the church life of the eighteenth century” (p. 183).

4 Zinzendorf’s published works comprise some 20,000 printed pages. There are the Jugendschriften, i.e., the writings of his younger years, the speeches in and about America, the writings of the 1750s originating in London, as well as numerous other publications, among them a great many hymnic writings (poems and hymnals). For other works on Zinzendorf see e.g. the very useful Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf in Selbstzeugnissen und Bildenden Arbeiten (republished by Eich Beyreuther, Rowohlt, 1964, and the excellent Count Zinzendorf (New York & Nashville, 1956), by John W. Weinlick; both contain illustrations. Many of my own biographical data are drawn from Beyreuther’s work.

5 Zinzendorf’s published and unpublished writings (the latter are for the most part stored at the Herrnhut Archives) constitute a treasury of knowledge for those interested in the spiritual life of the eighteenth century.

6 In a painting by Johann Kupetzky (reproduced in Beyreuther’s biography, p. 6) the Count looks every inch a true representative of the best that European high nobility produced in its day.

7 The Zinzendorfs had for centuries played an important role in Austrian history, both at the court and in the military. After turning Lutheran during the Reformation, they could have maintained their ancestral estates near Vienna, since the Treaty of Osnabrück and Münster of 1648 assured full freedom of religion to Lower Austria’s and Silesia’s nobility. As it was, one of Otto Heinrich’s sons converted back to Catholicism; the other, Maximilian Erasmus, left his native Austria and acquired an estate within the territory of the Free City of Nuremberg.

8 Following his early death, his oldest daughter, Margarethe Susanne, and the two sons, Otto Christian and Georg Ludwig, resettled in the most powerful Lutheran territorial stronghold, the Archduchy of Saxony. Both sons had distinguished careers at the Saxon Court. However, in contrast to his brother and sister, Georg Ludwig was not attracted to Dietrich’s courtly splendor and easy morals, embracing instead the ideals of the Pietist reform group and its spiritual leader, Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1792), court chaplain to the Elector, Johann Georg III (1647–91), and a severe critic of these morals. Georg Ludwig died at thirty-seven, only ten weeks after the birth of his second wife’s only son, i.e., Nikolaus von Zinzendorf.
and his religious tolerance can be traced to the influence of this most remarkable model.

The boy's formal education was put in the hands of a series of private tutors. Bible studies began at age four; reading lessons at six. At the age of ten, Nikolaus was sent away to boarding school at Halle, where he spent the next six years at A. H. Francke's famous Paedagogium Regium. Although the great majority of the students at the Paedagogium came from noble families, the young Imperial Count was set apart from them all from day one. He was given separate living quarters and dined every day at Professor Francke's table, sitting between the famous educator and his wife. Nikolaus seems to have held his own amongst the other students, among whom were a number of problem youths who had been sent there because their parents could not control them at home; in fact he acquired amongst the teaching staff a reputation as a "trouble-maker." All in all, however, the boy benefited greatly from the progressive teaching methods and strict discipline employed at Halle.10

The missionary spirit that characterized Francke's movement at Halle left an indelible mark on the young Count. His own awakening missionary zeal is revealed in a comment he made to a fellow student, the Swiss Friedrich von Wattenwyl11 (1700-77), later one of his closest associates, that they would have to hurry up to share in the missionary conquest of the world. At the Paedagogium Zinzendorf apparently first became acquainted with the activities of the British Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge—through students from England studying at Francke's school, most of them supported by Society scholarships—and it was probably through these students that Zinzendorf learned about the world-wide missionary efforts of the Society. It was this British model which Zinzendorf wanted to emulate.

In 1716, about a month before his sixteenth birthday, Zinzendorf left Halle and the Paedagogium. He was about to enter the world of the European high aristocracy. Like other young noblemen, he would first embark on the obligatory Kavaliersreise (Grand Tour) through Europe. There was also the question of his further academic studies, which were to prepare him for an official position corresponding to his status as an Imperial Count.

On July 8, 1716, young Nikolaus was asked to report to his uncle and guardian, Otto Christian von Zinzendorf, at Gavennitz Castle, to receive directions for his further education. He was told that he would study at Wittenberg University, and he was not to study theology—which would have been his preference—but law, in order to prepare himself for the Saxon state service. Nikolaus was not given any say in the matter. Otto Christian, who had previously opposed the plans to send Nikolaus to the Paedagogium, ruled out the Pietist stronghold of Halle. (Francke had actually made inquiries at Gavennitz Castle and had been informed that the boy would not go to Halle.) Otto Christian insisted that his nephew should be cured of his "Pietistic antics"; the prospective law student was told not to attend lectures on theology. All this meant that Zinzendorf was put on a short leash; his then tutor, Crisenius, would be monitoring his conduct closely and would even inspect his private correspondence.

In spite of the required emphasis on legal studies, and in spite of the various restrictions placed upon him, Zinzendorf seems to have enjoyed his time at Wittenberg, even joining in the convivial student activities, up to a point. Up to a point, that is, because although he readily participated in horse riding and hunting parties on horseback, played billiards, cards, and chess, he drew the line at rude language, drunkenness, immoral behaviour, and, like the Halle Pietists

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4 Henriette Katharina von Gersdorff, née von Freisen (1648-1726), was an unusual woman by any standards. Descended from old and widely esteemed Saxon nobility, the Freisens were highly educated people. Henriette herself painted and wrote poetry, knew French and Italian, and was versed in the classical languages. Amongst her learned correspondents—in Latin—was the philosopher Leibniz. Henriette assisted Catholic refugees from Austria and helped them resettle in Brandenburg, in contravention of a specific decree by August the Strong of Saxony. She is noted for her pioneering efforts to establish institutes of higher learning for girls, and she lent her support to August Hermann Francke (1663-1727), the well-known Pietist and educator, and his famous "ragged school" (Waisenhaus) for orphans.

7 Quoted from Beyreuther, op. cit., p. 15 (my translation).

8 Under A. H. Francke, the city of Halle became the center of Pietism in Germany. The beginnings of the Paedagogium go back to 1695; the famous orphanage was founded in 1715. In 1716, 134 orphans were housed in Francke's "Institutions"; the various training schools instructed well over 2,000 students.

9 According to his own testimony, Zinzendorf suffered the punishment of being pilloried more than once, donkey ears attached, and was cautioned in front of the entire teaching staff.

10 A well organized and highly innovative teaching schedule was adhered to at the Paedagogium. Academic subjects were stressed; Zinzendorf learned Latin, Greek, history, and geography. On special occasions, he impressed his school audience with his presentation of short talks in Latin, Greek, French, and German. This rigorous schooling would stand him in good stead later on, e.g. in England in the 1740s, where he was able to demonstrate his thorough classical knowledge in his learned criticism of Thomas Hobbes.

11 For more on Zinzendorf's faithful friend and assistant see Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, vol. 41, pp. 246-49 (under Friedrich von Wattenwyl).
Zinzendorf generally disapproved of attending theater and opera performances. Not only did he reject inappropriate conduct for himself, but he also would not tolerate it in others. He would even draw the attention of students’ parents to such behavior, at the risk of making himself unpopular amongst his confrères.

At the university Zinzendorf quickly gained the respect of those who observed him as a brilliant, knowledgeable debater, and even those who could not emulate his rigorous, uncompromising moral conduct had to acknowledge his high moral standards and his selflessness. And he remained interested in religious matters, seeking contact with Wittenberg’s theological professoriate, studying both Lutheran and Reformed writings, and—early expression of his ecumenical leanings—seeking to bring together the Lutheran and Pietist factions. Wittenberg’s Lutheran-Orthodox faculty of religion were at odds with the Pietist faculty at Halle, and Zinzendorf took it upon himself to mediate between the two. He even sought to bring about a meeting between the leading exponents of the two factions, Francke of Halle and Wernsdorf of Wittenberg.11 These efforts had to be abandoned when his mother suddenly arrived in Wittenberg to remind her son of the obedience required of him “before becoming master of your own affairs.” It was decided that Nicolaus should leave Wittenberg and join his half-brother, Friedrich Christian, on a Kavaliersreise to the Netherlands.

The two brothers arrived in Utrecht on May 26, 1719. Nicolaus spent approximately three months in the Netherlands, continuing legal studies at the famous Dutch university and meeting numerous interesting people. Foremost among them were Jacques Basnage, the Huguenot and very close friend of the late Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), to whom Zinzendorf felt specially attracted because of the French philosopher’s brilliant sarcasm and his rigorous quest for truthfulness and clarity. Zinzendorf thoroughly read Bayle’s three-volume Dictionnaire historique et critique (written between 1695 and 1697) and adopted the French critic as his favorite author.

Zinzendorf also enjoyed his association with young Catholic and Reformed noblemen and was impressed by their commitment to their faith. Such encounters heightened his interest in other denominations and further strengthened his ecumenical leanings. He resolved to discover from that time “das Beste in allen Religionen,” i.e., the best that all denominations had to offer. The peaceful co-existence in the Netherlands of the many different denominations and sects made a lasting impression on the young Count and led him to embrace an attitude of religious toleration.

After Holland, it was on to Paris, where Zinzendorf arrived in late September, accompanied by his tutor, Riederer, and a servant and where he stayed for more than half a year.15 The time spent in the French capital was characterized by ups and downs. Zinzendorf experienced health problems and, even worse, contracted smallpox when the disease swept the French capital late in the year. He planned his days meticulously, going for regular horse rides in the mornings and spending the noon hours studying the Bible. In the afternoons he took private dancing lessons, but refused to dance with lady partners. Zinzendorf

12 There exists an interesting study by Mary B. Havens which investigates “Zinzendorf’s relationship to confessional Lutheranism and the extent to which it informed his ecumenical vision.” Havens comes to the conclusion that “Zinzendorf was faithful to both the intent and content of the Augsburg Confession” and that “it was the Augsburg Confession which established for Zinzendorf the parameters of tolerance and intolerance as he sought dialogue with other religious traditions.” See Mary B. Havens, “Zinzendorf and the Augsburg Confession: an ecumenical vision?” Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1990.

13 That Zinzendorf was not merely an obscure young foreign nobleman visiting the French metropolis is shown by the fact that during his stay he was introduced to the French Regent, Philippe III, the Duke of Orleans, by the Duke’s mother, Elizabeth Charlotte, Louis XIV’s sister-in-law (who had been acquainted with Zinzendorf’s father).

14 The descendants of a great French family, the Noailles go back to the thirteenth century. Antoine (1564–62), seigneur de Noailles, was at one time admiral of France and later served as ambassador to England, his great-grandson Anne was a protégé of Cardinal Mazarin and was created Due de Noailles and a peer of France in 1665. Cardinal de Noailles was at that time under attack from the powerful Jesuits at the French Court for his pro-Jansenist leanings.

15 During his return trip from Paris, Zinzendorf met two other prospects, Juliane von Polheim and Theodor von Castell, both of them daughters of two aunts of his. Both turned him down. Juliane married his step-brother, Friedrich Christian, Theodor chose one of Zinzendorf’s friends, Count Heinrich XXIX von Reuß-Boisendorf. An early widow, Theodor moved to Hennihe, serving the Brethren’s cause faithfully for 28 years; Juliane died in 1727, following the birth of her fifth child.

16 For more information on this unusual woman, see the comprehensive treatment (507 pp.) in W. Jannasch, Ernsteile Dorothee Gräfin von Zinzendorf, gehörige Gräfin Reuß zu Plauen. Ihr Leben als Beitrag zur Geschichte des Pietismus und der Brüdergemeine dargestellt (Hemnit, 1915).

It is interesting to note that no less a person than Franz Kafka was greatly impressed with Dorothy’s life story. In his letters to his fiancee (the famous F. = Felice) Kafka mentions Dorothy several times. After drawing Felice’s attention to the humility of the young Countess who felt embarrassment at moving into lavish married quarters at Dresden, Kafka returns to the subject a little later, praising Dorothy as a devoted mother (who lost most of her children in infancy) and an efficient, unselfish organizer who "was in charge of the entire financial side...to some extent of the spiritual side of the Moravian Church, at that time rapidly spreading across the whole of Europe and North America." (In a letter from Prague on October 6, 1915; see Franz Kafka, Letters to Felice, ed. by E. Heller and J. Born, transl. by J. Stern and E. Duckworth, New York: Schocken Books, 1973, p. 516-17.)

17 An immensely prolific writer of hymns, Zinzendorf composed more than 2,000 hymns and songs in the course of his life. While the quality of these spontaneous productions was bound to be unequal—and many are deservedly forgotten today—the beauty of some of them was later praised by no less a poet than Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. See also below.
lived up to his high moral and religious standards throughout his Paris stay, in a city known for its frivolous lifestyle and its many thousands of non-believers. (An estimated 60,000 atheists lived in Paris at that time!) Once again the young Count displayed his ecumenical interests, attending Catholic church services, studying Catholic writers and—most noteworthy—seeking the friendship of Cardinal Louis-Antoine de Noailles (1651-1729), the then Archbishop of Paris, who was almost fifty years his senior and who sought to draw the nineteen-year-old over to the Catholic faith. Their encounter and the many conversations that followed led to a true friendship and to a correspondence which continued until the Cardinal’s death.

Zinzendorf left France in April, 1720. Traveling via Switzerland, he stopped over at Basle, where he met with Samuel Werenfels (1657-1740), an internationally known biblical scholar and a professor of theology. Then he made his way through Franconia and Thuringia, where he stopped to visit relatives, before returning to the Upper Lusatia region, near Dresden. In the following year, in accordance with the wishes of his family, he entered the service of the State Court of Saxony.

At that time Zinzendorf also met his future wife, the Countess Erdmuthe Dorothea von Reuß (1700-56). While Dorothea was not the Count’s first choice, it soon became apparent that he could not have chosen better. The Countess proved to be a most devoted wife, who was content to dedicate her life without hesitation to her husband’s religious work, enduring many hardships and deprivations as a result.

Following his official declaration of maturity at age 21, which he celebrated at his stepfather’s in Berlin, Zinzendorf purchased from his grandmother the estate of Berthelsdorf, some 40 miles east of Dresden, investing his entire fortune of 20,500 Thalers and leaving a debt of another 5,500 Thalers. At the insistence of his grandmother, he also accepted the unpaid government position of Hof-und Justizrat (King’s Councillor) at Dresden. However, he reserved the right to take leave of absence during the summer months, gradually dedicating more and more time to his religious activities at Berthelsdorf, a place he hoped would be turned into “a place of refuge for oppressed and persecuted Christians of every kind and denomination.” Efficient and faithful helpers saw to it that the run-down property soon began to flourish.

While not excelling as an administrator, Zinzendorf was respected for his honesty in the midst of much corruption at the Court of August II (August the Strong; 1670-1733), and he acquired during these years a thorough knowledge of dealing with people. At Dresden, he also started gathering a circle of religious friends around him, many of whom felt unhappy within the rigid structure of the official church. Before long Berthelsdorf became a center of Christian activity and a haven for religious refugees from Moravia: “Herrnhut” (meaning “The Lord’s Watch”) was born. Magister Johann Andreas Rothe, a highly educated theologian, was appointed as local minister. Rothe was a gripping preacher who attracted people from far and wide. Following Rothe’s sermons the Count and other “assistants” led biblical discussions, and the service ended with an informal singing of hymns, with Zinzendorf himself and his “Song Master,” Tobias Friedrich, actively participating.

The Count excelled at improvising hymns, which he would often compose during Rothe’s sermons. Sometimes, while the congregation was singing the first stanza, Zinzendorf would be writing the next stanza, and so forth. Out of this spontaneous and improvised singing arose the famous Singpredigt, where one hymn followed the next one and where one melody took over from another.

One day in 1722 a Moravian carpenter, Christian David (1690-1751), a convert from Catholicism preaching stealthily and elusively in Moravian villages, slipped across the Bohemian border into Upper Lusatia and, in Zinzendorf’s absence and with the Count’s grandmother’s permission, settled on the Berthelsdorf estate, together with a family he had led secretly from the Moravian village of Sehlen. Christian had already met the Count and had received his assurance that the refugees would be welcome on his estate.

On his return from Dresden, Zinzendorf welcomed the new settlers. More followed, and five years later the new Herrnhut had as many as 300 inhabitants, half of them from Moravia. The rest hailed from other parts of Germany; they consisted mainly of sectarian elements who were seeking a place where they might practice their faith. Following a screening process designed to weed out undesirable troublemakers, those chosen were allowed to make Herrnhut their new home.

As more and more religious refugees arrived, the Count resigned his position at Dresden and dedicated himself fully to his new task of building a settlement where religious tolerance and freedom of conscience were to be the guiding principles.

In helping these refugees Zinzendorf was an active partner in a network that existed among the Pietistic nobility from Saxony and Upper Silesia; this network was designed to assist residents of the Habsburg lands, among them noblemen, clerics, peasants, and tradespeople, Czech or German, to escape to religious freedom in Prussian Brandenburg. This subversive activity naturally found no favor at the Court in Vienna, and it was watched suspiciously at Dresden, where the government had to be sensitive to Habsburg policy and where the Elector, August II, had converted to Catholicism. Matters came to a head in 1731 when an infuriated Habsburg Emperor, Charles
VI, sent a strongly worded note to Dresden protesting Zinzendorf's subversive activities. August II then personally prohibited the further admission of Imperial Austrian subjects from Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia and directed his Council to see to it that the Count, because of his "improper and disturbing" conduct, be asked to sell his properties and remove himself from Saxony. Only the subsequent death of August II in 1735 prevented Zinzendorf's expulsion at that time. A few years later, in 1736, when he experienced renewed difficulties in Saxony and was asked to leave the country forthwith, Zinzendorf moved on to the recently acquired Marienborn Castle, east of Frankfurt on the Main, in the Wetterau region, which then became his base of religious operations for a while.

In 1731, Zinzendorf also traveled to Copenhagen to attend the coronation of his cousin, Christian VI. Having relinquished his position at Dresden, he was hoping at that time for an important position at the Danish court, possibly that of Chancellor. While these hopes were dashed, Zinzendorf had one momentous meeting in Copenhagen: he talked to a black slave from the island of St. Thomas and was struck by his urgent plea to spread the Gospel amongst the slaves in the West Indies. The implication was clear to the Count; he would redirect his efforts towards worldwide Christian mission, and he would do it from his base at Herrnhut.

One year later, on August 21, 1732, Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann set out from Herrnhut to become missionaries at St. Thomas. Many more were to follow on the path to worldwide Christian mission: by 1740, the number had risen to 68; in 1760, the year of Zinzendorf's death, as many as 226 missionaries had traveled to places from the Arctic to the tropics, from the Far East to midwestern North America.

In 1734, Zinzendorf took a major step towards "official" Christianity: he appeared before a committee of examining theologians at Stralsund, a city on the Baltic then under Swedish rule, to undergo an examination of Rechtgläubigkeit (true faith), which he passed with distinction. In December of the same year he gave his first public sermon as a "theologian" at Tübingen, thus signifying his official entry into the ministry. Then followed a period of missionary activity in the Baltic.

In Berlin, on May 20, 1734, Zinzendorf was consecrated a Moravian Bishop by Jablonski and Nitschmann. This consecration meant that Zinzendorf was now authorized to ordain missionaries who would in turn be able to baptize, to officiate at weddings, and to administer Communion. A year later, also in Berlin, Zinzendorf held his famous Berliner Reden (Berlin Lectures) before large crowds of listeners from different societal strata, among them students, bourgeois, and tradespeople, scholars and high-ranking representatives of the military and the bureaucracy.

It may be useful at this point to sketch a brief outline of the Congregation of the Bohemian Brethren, or Unitas Fratrum. (My outline is based on Lewis, op. cit., pages quoted in parentheses.)

The origin of the Unitas Fratrum goes back to 1457, when a small band of Hussites left Prague and fled to Konwald, in northeast Bohemia, carrying with them their fervent desire to worship according to their own conscience and to have, as individual believers, "direct access to Christ and the benefits of his passion" (p. 35). For their congregation, the direct fellowship of Christ was symbolized in the sharing of the cup at the Lord's Supper; indeed the cup symbolized for the Brethren "the claim for equal rights of all believers before God and the Church" (p. 36).

Although the Brethren did not see themselves as breaking away from the established (Roman Catholic) Church, persecution by church and state was inevitable and followed swiftly, but this was unable to quench the spirit of the community. By the late 1460s, the Brethren had chosen their own ministers, and the Unitas had become an independent Protestant church. Continued persecution notwithstanding, their congregation grew, and by 1500 the Brethren counted a membership of almost 100,000 in Bohemia alone.

From the outset, the Brethren's faith was characterized by a strong ecumenical thrust, and as early as 1474, the community sent deputies as far as Greece, Russia, and Egypt to look for "godly men, and a truly Apostolic Church to which they might turn, and not live solitary and alone" (p. 40). In 1491 their Bishop Luke of Prague headed a mission to the East to look for like-minded spirits. (Luke was the editor, in 1501, of the first Christian hymnbook.)

It was with keen interest that the Brethren movement observed the new spirit of Reformation emanating from Luther's Wittenberg. In 1520 their emissaries contacted Brunschitz in Antwerp, two years later, they visited Luther; in 1540, the Strasbourg reformers Bucer, Fabricius, and Calvin were approached. During the latter part of the sixteenth century, the Unitas movement developed into a major force in the struggle for Protestant unity and national liberty in Bohemia, only to face destruction in the aftermath of the defeat of the Protestants in the Battle of the White Mountain on November 8, 1620, two years into the Thirty Years' War. By the late 1620s, after a wave of ruthless persecution, the Unitas was no longer an organized Church in Bohemia and Moravia, and their exiled Brethren were once more searching for refuge in other lands. One of these exiles was a young priest, John Amos Comenius (Jan Amos Komensky, 1592-1670), the famous bishop and educational reformer who had been exiled for life and who became the shepherd of his Brethren in exile. His son, a Peter Jablonski, was appointed bishop in 1662; his son, Daniel Ernst Jablonski, was consecrated in 1699, and passed on the episcopal office in 1735 to David Nitschmann, who thus became the first bishop of the Renewed Unitas Fratrum (or Moravian Church), linking the Brethren to Zinzendorf and his congregation.

See Beyreuther, op. cit., p. 103-102. The Berlin Lectures have been translated into English, French, Dutch, and Czech.

Three years earlier, he had crossed the North Atlantic for the first time. Then, his destination had been St. Thomas, in the West Indies, where things weren't going well for the missionaries from Herrnhut. The majority of them had succumbed to malaria and other diseases, and there was considerable opposition from the colonial farmers to their work amongst the black slaves. Zinzendorf stayed on until February, 1739, and was able to overcome the white colonists' resistance. On his return from the West Indies the Council received assurances from the Danish king of complete religious freedom for the Moravians in the Danish West Indies.

August Gottlieb Spangenberg, 1704-92. See also Spangenberg's The Life of Nicholas Louis Count Zinzendorf, by the Rev. August Gottlieb Spangenberg, translated from the German by Samuel Jackson, Esq., with
In 1736, he encountered the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm I (1688-1740), whom he impressed greatly and who opened up his territory—the largest in Germany—to the missionary efforts originating from Herrnhut.

On August 7, 1741, Zinzendorf set out for a journey to North America.20 His intention was to go to Pennsylvania, with its more than 20,000 German immigrants who were without proper spiritual guidance and many of whom had been attracted to one or the other of the numerous religious sects flourishing there. However, in spite of his efforts to restore religious life amongst the many small German immigrant communities and to remove the tensions existing between the local Lutheran and Reformed groups—he even agreed to being elected Superintendent of the German Lutheran congregation in Philadelphia—he failed, and his work was subsequently taken over by clergymen sent over from Pietist Halle.

While in Pennsylvania, Zinzendorf undertook three journeys to the Indians in the surrounding forests, accompanied by an immigrant from Württemberg, Konrad Weißer, who enjoyed the trust of the natives. However, his bold vision of creating some kind of Christian association consisting of German and Indian communities was not to be realized. After Zinzendorf's return to Europe it was August Gottlieb Spangenberg who worked with great success amongst the German immigrants.21

The years from around 1745 to 1750 were characterized by what has come to be known as the Brethren Movement's Sichtungszeit, or "Sifting Period." The events of this period took place especially at the Brotherhood community of Herrnhag, not far from Frankfurt on the Main, which Zinzendorf had purchased in 1738 from the Count of Bünningen. Many of the settlers there "were in the grip of an emotional, sensuous Christianity at the time of their arrival."22 There developed at Herrnhag an almost playful piety centering on a cult-like rejoicing at the image of Christ Crucified. The redeeming death of the Savior was expressed even more realistically, more drastically. Christ's "Blut und Wunden" (blood and wounds) were the central expression of such fervent devotion, and the wound inflicted upon the crucified Savior by a soldier's spear became the cultic symbol of these Brethren during this period: Christ's suffering and death on the cross was to be portrayed as realistically as possible. At the same time, and following contemporary colloqual speech, the events at the cross were expressed in seemingly trivialized style employing playful diminutives such as the infamous "Höhlichen" (little cavity) and the "Kreuzluftwögelchen," describing the soul circling the cross like a little bird.23

Zinzendorf, who was away on travels a great deal during these years and who had initially encouraged the extravagance through certain sermons and hymns he delivered and wrote during those years, was not fully aware of the seriousness of the situation and had to be urged to take action. He finally did take a stand, reining in those most responsible—among them his son Christian Renatus, who was pastor at Herrnhag and whom he called to London—and taking corrective measures. It was this period in particular and Zinzendorf's own involvement in it which led one researcher to make a bizarre attempt at interpreting the intensity and fervour of the Count's piety as "sublimated libido."24 The community of Herrnhag itself did not last much longer. When Count Casimir's son demanded an oath of allegiance from the Brethren and asked them to renounce Zinzendorf and the Moravian Church, the settlers resolved to move away. Before three years had passed—the time allotted by the young Count Casimir—the community of Herrnhag was deserted.

21 This is how Beyreuther (op. cit., p. 120, my translation) describes a typical Easter celebration at that time: "Good Friday was celebrated with illumination...an (Easter) Saturday the entire settlement was invited to the illumination ceremony. The Count and Countess were present for this. The Brethren's Hall was decorated for the Communion celebration with fir branches and white cloth. The decoration representing Christ's wound. In His side became ever more inventive, playful, and bizarre...At one point, the entrance door to the Brethren's House was decorated and illuminated. 'Blood splashed' from a representation of Christ's wound. This wound was represented in such large sizes that by stooping one could enter...through this opening."
22 Another image used was that of "little bees who suck on the wounds of Christ" (Weinlick, op. cit., p. 200-201). This image is strongly reminiscent of the mystical passion expressed by Catharina Regina von Greiffenbg (1633-94), the well-known religious poet of the Baroque, in her poem: "Ich will ein Bienlein sein, dem Jesus-Klee zuliebe" ("I wish to be a little bee, to fly to the Jesus clover"). See C.R. von Greiffenbg, Gedichte, ed. by H. Gesch (Berlin, 1964), p. 70; see also A. M. Browning, German Baroque Poetry, 1618-1723 (State College, Pa: The Penn State University Press, 1971), pp. 72-73.
23 See Oskar Fischer, Die Prömünigkeit des Grafen Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Ein psychologischer Beitrag zur Kenntnis des religiösen Sublimierungsprozesses und zur Erklärung des Pietismus (Leipzig R. Vennla, 1910). Fischer speaks of "studied sexualization" (p. 21) and of a "homosexual relationship with the Savior" (p. 66). As far as I could determine, such misguided psychology has not found much credence amongst Zinzendorf scholars.
24 For more on this Sichtungszeit period, see Weinlick, op. cit., chapter 19 (Costly Enthusiasm, pp. 198-206); and Beyreuther, op. cit., pp. 114-23.

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The year 1749 was marked by Zinzendorf’s return to England, a country which he had first visited in 1737 and where he had since returned several times: in 1739 (on his return from St. Thomas), in 1741 (while traveling to Pennsylvania), in 1743 (while returning from New York), and again in 1746. He now stayed more than five years, except for several trips to the Continent, until the spring of 1755, when he returned to Herrnhut for good. In June of 1750, he acquired Lindsey House, on the Thames River, in the Borough of Chelsea, which he had expanded and which became a religious center that drew its members mainly from English Brethren. Peter Böhler (1712-75), a student from Jena University and a follower of Zinzendorf’s, pioneered the contacts with the English adherents.

The Court had by then become sufficiently proficient in the English language and preached at Fetter Lane Chapel to large audiences. For a time, John Wesley himself became a close companion of the Count’s, and though the two religious giants parted ways before long, Wesley’s Methodists received a great impetus through John’s contacts with Zinzendorf. As Lewis puts it (op. cit., p. 124), “The Moravians contributed mightily to the religious awakening in Great Britain. Indeed they were midwives to the Evangelical Revival and to the great Methodist movement.”

Zinzendorf benefited from the sympathies the Moravians enjoyed in England. The Count clearly recognized the importance of securing for his missionary efforts the support of the greatest Protestant colonial power of the day. For its part, Britain saw the advantage of promoting Protestant missionary undertakings to counter the respective Catholic efforts in North America.

It is worth noting that Zinzendorf’s success was in no small part due to the fact that as an Imperial Count, he was able to gain access to the English high nobility and to use this influence among the representatives of the British clergy and nobility to further his case in Parliament. On March 25, 1749, leave was given to submit a bill “for encouraging the people known by the name of Unitas Fratrum, or United Brethren, to settle in His Majesty’s Colonies in America.” This bill was passed by Parliament on May 12, and on June 6, the Acta Fratrum was signed by George II. The Brethren’s Movement or Renewed Moravian Church was henceforth recognized in Great Britain and her territories as “an ancient Protestant Episcopal Church, which has been countenanced and relieved by the Kings of England.”

Zinzendorf’s great public success during those London years was contrasted by private tragedy: In 1752 his only surviving son, Christian Renatus, who had served as his personal assistant and whom he envisaged as his successor, died of tuberculosis just shy of his twenty-fifth birthday. He was buried at God’s Acres, the burial grounds of Lindsey House, as one of the first Brethren to be laid to rest there.

In 1754 the Count was joined in England by his wife and their daughter, Elisabeth, now fourteen years of age. In the following year, the family returned to Herrnhut, where they took up residence again in the same Herrschaftsbaus (manor house) they had moved into when he arrived from Dresden in 1727. From then on, an increasingly weary Zinzendorf withdrew more and more from public life, handing over the day-to-day responsibilities to others. Dorothea died on June 19, 1756, the Count followed her four years later, on May 9, 1760. His coffin was carried to the cemetery by 32 preachers and deacons from the world-wide Brethren’s Church, including delegates from Holland, England, Ireland, North America, and his own German congregation.

**Zinzendorf the Poet**

In conclusion let us take a brief look at Zinzendorf’s contribution to poetry, hymn writing, and hymn singing. First, Zinzendorf the poet:

In his Preface to his edition of “German Poems” (Deutsche Gedichte Neue Auflage) Zinzendorf explains that the collection contains few poems written “zu eigner Erbauung,” i.e., for his own edification, the majority having been composed for a particular occasion. He is publishing the poems himself, he continues, in order to avoid arbitrary editorial changes. He calls his poetry “ungekünstelt,” or unaffected, and he admits

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29 In 1757 Zinzendorf secretly entered into an Anseide, or “official marriage,” with Anna Nitschmann (1715-60), one of his closest companions and most valuable helpers. This move has given rise to some speculation and is described by one of his biographers as “the greatest oddity in the Count’s life” (Beyreuther, op. cit., p. 134).

Following her family’s arrival at Herrnhut in 1725, Anna soon took a very active part in the religious life of the community and became a “senior sister” at age fifteen. For his part, Zinzendorf openly expressed his sympathy for the young woman and, with Countess Dorothea’s approval, had himself adopted as Anna’s father, in order to avoid any possible awkwardness in his association with her. Anna became a close friend of the Zinzendorfs and accompanied various family members on extended journeys in Europe and North America.

Zinzendorf’s second marriage was officially announced in the Brethren’s church more than a year after it took place, presumably because the Count felt that even his closest associates might have difficulty with it. Anna died less than two weeks after her husband, on May 21, 1760, and was buried next to him, sharing the burial site with Countess Dorothea. In the context of this second marriage see also Wetslick, op. cit., p. 225-28.
that he is taking liberty with syntactic rules, for the sake of [poetic] emphasis: "Ein Haus, dem Herrn bequem" sounds better to him than the [prosaic] "ein bequemes Haus für den Herrn." (It seems significant that Zinzendorf should use the phrase "läuft mir... besser," i.e., he hears the poem spoken, or perhaps even sung, an indication of his poetic talent.)

Zinzendorf then demonstrates his knowledge of French poetry by drawing attention to his—in German less common—occasional use of identical end rhyme (as e.g., in erwartet/umarmt, in Auf seiner Gemahlin 29sten Geburts—Tag, p. 235, and in Armen/unarmen, in the poem on Judith Kunerita, p. 291) and quotes an example from Bayle, Zinzendorf's favorite writer, whose Dictionnaire historique et critique he studied extensively:

Il alla chez Binsfeld & chez Basile Ponce
Sur l'heure à mes raisons chercher une
réponse. (my italics)

He also makes it clear that as he himself turned away increasingly from worldly matters to embracing wholly "Jesus and His Congregation" (Vorrede, p. 3), the "chimerical" description of a happy marriage in Bayle, Boileau, and S. Evremond appeared nowhere close to the true happiness of "der Unzirgen" (presumably a reference to his own union with Dorothea) and that S. Evremond's distinguishing qualities of "true love" had their perfect equivalent in "our devotion to the Savior" (p. 4).

The edition is dated Herrnhut, at the beginning of the year 1735. Let us look at two of Zinzendorf's poems.

Perhaps one of the more interesting ones is entitled, "Bey einer Doctor-Promotion" (On the Awarding of a Ph.D. Degree, Teutsche Gedichte, p. 16).

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28 The following comments draw on Lewis, op. cit., especially Chapter 9, Ecumenical Outworks, pp. 161-69, and on G. Meyer's Introduction to Zinzendorf's poetic works, in Nobiles Ludwigs von Zinzendorf, Erinnerung an und Zugaben I-VI zum Herrnhuter Gesangbuch, edited by E. Beyerlether und G. Meyer (Hildesheim: Olms Repr., 1964), VII-LXVII. The analysis of the individual poems and hymns is my own.

As Meyer points out, Zinzendorf's poetic works are housed in the archives at Herrnhut. Among the most important publications, Meyer lists (1) the Teutsche Gedichte; 2nd edition, 1766 (1st ed., 1735), containing poems from 1714 to 1754; (2) the Herrnhuter Gesangbuch of 1735 (2nd edition, 1737), including a number of supplements and additions; (3) the Londoner Gesangbuch, vols. VII, 1753 to 1754; (4) the Gesellschaft Gedichte des Grafen von Zinzendorf, containing the lyrical production of the years 1712-40, collected and edited by A. Knapp in 1845. According to Meyer, Knapp "rewrote" or "improved" numerous stanzas, following the taste of his own time, and as a result these poems have lost their originality.
zeigen/ich; hassen/fassen; verlacht/kauen/schauen/macht; schänden/Händen; aus/haben/graben/Haus, etc., my emphasis).

The author comes to the point immediately and unequivocally: he hates and avoids those who do not center their studies on God the Giver; he loves and honors those who do. Those who despise transitory things and lift themselves above earth’s dust, will learn how to contemplate those things that “keine Zeit verzieh,” that time cannot consume, and their fortune and well-being are in God’s hands alone. Making a pledge of his own to condemn hypocrisy and “the service of vanity” and to walk before the Lord throughout his life, the poet admonishes the scholar about to receive his degree to rely solely upon the Lord’s benevolence. It is this benevolence, he assures his “Freund,” which will assure his “Glücke.”

What appears to be typically Zinzendorfian about the otherwise conventional poem is the special and personal spiritual strength and determination it expresses: “Ich halß” and “meide die”; “den lieb’ und ehre ich,” “Hier schreib ich, wie mein Herz,” “Wie ich mein Lebenlang” (my emphasis): This is how I intend to act and live “mein Leben lang.”

The second poem I have chosen is entitled “Auf seines Sohns, Christian Friedrich, Entschlafen,” “On the Death of His Son, Christian Friedrich.”

O Bräutigam der zwei verbundenen Herzen, Die Dir das Pfand der Eh’ ertingereicht! O Du, durch Angst und Schmach und Todes=Schmerzen, Bewährter Freund! Dein Liebes=Rat ist leicht, Du forderst nichts, was man nicht hat, Und gibst Dich immer selbst ans eingebüßten Statt.

Elf Monden sind bereits dahin gefahren; Wir lebten und unser Kind noch nicht: Doch stunden wir schon seit geraumen Jahren, Fü vieles Heil in Deiner Schuld und Pflicht; Wir kaufen Wartzen = Köner ein, Um etwas Dir zu Dienst auf Hoffnung auszustreuen.

Was gibt man doch dem König der Herzen, Das Jhm so viel Gewinn als Mühe macht? Es findet sich bey denen hellsten Kerzen Doch eine nie und da beschmutzte Pracht: Wo ist ein Lämmlein ohne Fleh’? Es wäre dann, daß sichs die Liebe selbst erweilt.

Das sahest Du, Du immer offnes Auge, Du dichst wol, die Kinder meynens gut; Zum Zeichen, daß ihr Herze vor mir tauge, Weil mir mein Volk mit Wollen alles thut, So will ich mir ein Schaf ersehn, Ein zartes Kind! nehms hin, geblt her, so ists geschehn.

O wenn Dich nur die Seelen recht verständen, Sie gäben sich nicht halb so viele Müh, Mit mancherley Bedenken und Ergründen; Sie merken nur, wohin die Liebe zieh, Und dächten dann, wie jener Knecht, Der Herr machts wie Er will, so ists dem Knechts recht.

Mein Freund! Du gabst auch distal, eh Du nahmest, Wohl dir, mein Kind, das Du zur Ruhe bringst. Gesegnet sey der Sabbath, da du kannst; Gesegnet sey der Sabbath, da du gingst; Dein Kampf war kurz, die Macht war klein, Und dennoch ist der Sieg um Jesu willen dein.


Wenn dieses Kind kein Schaf gewesen wäre, Du mühested dich doch, du ruhtest nicht. Allein, der Herr besahe die Altäre, Darauf man ihm die Opfer zugericht’t: Bey unserm merkt Er Seinen Zwek, Drum fiel das Feur herab und fraß das Lämmlin weg.

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2 From Deutsche Gedichte, pp. 232-34, No. LXXXIII, dated 1729. Christian Friedrich was born on September 18, 1729, and died on October 30 of the same year. Altogether the Countess bore Zinzendorf twelve children, six sons and six daughters, within a span of seventeen years. It is difficult to make a choice amongst the "personal" poems, as the edition contains many of them, written on the occasion of the Countess's or their children's birthdays or on the death of children of theirs. Some of those poems are quite long (more than 20 stanzas), and all of them are expressive of Zinzendorf's strong faith. There are also two beautiful morning and evening poems (Morgen=Gedanken, 15 sts., pp. 28-30, No. X; Abend=Gedanken, 6 sts., pp. 31-32, No. XI; both are dated 1721). In the first of these poems, the poet celebrates the morning's "Strahlen heiterer Sonne" (rays of bright sun, stanza 2), which immediately remind him of "Einem Strahl von grünen Kräften" (a ray of greater strength, stanza 3), i.e., "Zions Sonnen=llicht" (Zion's sunlight, stanza 3). In Abend=Gedanken, darkness falls ("Die Luft verfinstert sich," stanza 2) as humans grow weary and needful of rest ("Der Mensch... Begehret ausstaren, steht schläfrig und gebukt," stanza 3). Stanza 5 finds the poet—and everyone else ("man")—on bent knees in a meditative prayer to Him who is the creator and owner of our minds and spirits. Stanza six ends with the complete assurance that we rest sheltered in the hands of Him who "alles hebt und trägt" (who lifts and carries everything) so that we remain, trembling skies notwithstanding, "wohl bewacht" (well protected).
Kommt Schwester! kommt, wir wollen niederfallen.
Wir fragen nicht erst lang: Wie heisset E?
Jhm soll in uns ein Hallelujah schallen.
Er ist der Herr, Er kommt zum Sabbath her.
Drum machen wir die Augen zu,
Und Israel zeugt mit dahn zu seiner Ruhe.

"Auf seines Sohns" is a fairly long poem, including nine stanzas of six lines each, iambic meter being used throughout. All stanzas are constructed symmetrically: lines one to four have five metrical feet, line five has four; the sixth line has six. End rhyme prevails throughout, according to the scheme: ab ab cc etc., so that each stanza ends in a rhyming couplet. It is a very artfully crafted poem. "Through seines Sohns," the death of the child is accepted unquestioned; the child is seen as God's gift, returned to Him by His servant: Der Herr machs wie Er will, so ists dem Knecht recht (last line of stanza five, in italics to emphasize the author's unconditional obedience).

The image used is that of a lamb, or sheep offered up to God: "So will ich mir ein Schaf ersehn, Ein zartes Kindl nehms hln, gts beyt; so ists geschehn." God is speaking here, as He did to Abraham, in Genesis 22 (stanza 4, lines five and six).

The poem is essentially a humble prayer to the Almighty, who is alternately addressed as "Bridegroom of the two hearts joined together" who are offering up what they have held as their marital pledge as "Proven Friend" (st. 1), as the King of our hearts (st. 3), or simply as "My Friend" (st. 6). Both wife and child are addressed as well: Dorothea is called "Oh sister, dear wife" (st. 7), who accepts the sacrifice of her child on God's altar; the child is addressed in a manner that balances joy at his birth with acceptance of his death: "Blessed be the Sabbath when you came; blessed be the Sabbath when you left" (st. 6).

All in all, the poem is powerful testimony to the spiritual strength of Zinzendorf (and his wife) in being able to accept without question and with complete humility, the will of God who first gave and then took away their beloved Christian Friedrich!

**Zinzendorf the Hymn Writer**

Finally, a look at Zinzendorf the hymn writer and hymn singer. In his study of *Zinzendorf the Ecumenical Pioneer*, A. J. Lewis pays tribute to the major contribution of the Moravian Church to "the development and spread of congregational singing and music in the church life of the eighteenth century" (op. cit., p. 161), emphasizing Zinzendorf's large share in this hymnological effort. Lewis continues (p. 164): "Zinzendorf knew well the ecumenical power of hymn-singing and its contribution to the united witness of Christians of all traditions... Hymns and music were poured out and sung on every possible occasion, on land and sea throughout the far stretches of the Moravian enterprise... verses were often composed on the spot to celebrate the return of a 'pilgrim' or the reception of a letter from the mission field."

At the Herrnhut Brüdergemeine, Zinzendorf introduced a special Singstunde (song-service) at which numerous hymns were sung and where individual stanzas were selected "to continue a spontaneous theme" in the course of an evening. He also encouraged the publication of hymnbooks to be used amongst the Moravians both in Europe and America as well as for missionary purposes. Indeed Zinzendorf wanted the new Christians to have their own hymn collections, and in time hymnals were created for the converts amongst the Eskimos, the blacks, the American Indians and the Creoles of Surinam. The 1735 *Gesangbuch der Gemeine in Herrnhut*, the "parent hymn book of the Renewed Moravian Church," influenced James Hutton's *Collection of Hymns for Moravian Societies*, published in London in 1741. The first two church hymnals in the English language, i.e., the Wesleyan hymnbook of 1741 and the English Moravian hymnbook of 1742, were influenced by the Herrnhut *Gesangbuch*.50

Zinzendorf also promoted the playing of music and the composition of hymn tunes in the Moravian Church. Orchestral and chamber music were greatly valued. Lewis mentions that early on at Herrnhut, "informal gatherings of the people performed music for their own pleasure and enlightenment" (p. 166). On a more formal level, weddings, baptisms, funerals, and other important occasions were introduced by a trombone ensemble or a choir.51
Zinzendorf himself became the master singer of his Church, writing a total of more than 2,000 hymns in his lifetime, many of them extemporized during the Moravian meetings. Lewis says about his hymns that they exhibit "a noble simplicity, directness and strength" and proclaim "the redeeming Cross of Christ and his reconciling power, the utter devotion of the true Christian to Christ, and the reality and joy of the fellowship of all men in him" (p. 168).

Even today, hymns of Zinzendorf's resound in more than ninety languages, among them such powerful creations as "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness" and "Jesus, still lead on." I shall now examine these two hymns, of which Lewis says that no one can sing them "without realizing again the glory and greatness of the Saviour who joins us all together of every race and every land, in the one all-embracing fellowship of his love."  32

The first hymn, "Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit," was based on 1 Peter 1:18-19 and was written in 1739 while Zinzendorf was returning from the West Indies. In its original version, it consisted of 28 stanzas. The hymn is commonly reproduced in John Wesley's English translation, first published in 1740 in Hymns and Sacred Poems, in 24 stanzas, and is further abridged in most other collections. First, Wesley's version. 34

1. JESUS, thy Blood and Righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

2. [3] The holy, meek unspotted Lamb,
Who from the Father's bosom came,
Who died for me, even me, 't alone,
Now for my Lord and God I own.

3. [4] Lord, I believe thy precious blood,
Which at the mercy-seat of God,
For ever doth for sinners plead,
For me, even for my soul, was shed.

4. [8] Jesus, be endless praise to thee,
Whose boundless mercy hath me -
For me, and all thy hands have made,
An everlasting ransom paid.

Now, for comparison, the four German stanzas which are identifiable as a basis for Wesley's version:

1. Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit,
   das ist mein Schmuck und Ehrenkleid,
damit will ich vor Gott bestehen,
en ich zum Himmel werden eingeihen.

2. Das heilige, unschuldige Lamm,
das an dem rauen Kreuzestamm
   fur meine Seele gestorben ist,
erkenn ich für den Herrn und Christ.

3. Ich glaube, daß sein teures Blut
   das allererschatzbarste Gut,
   und daß es Gottes Schätze fuißt
   und ewig in dem Himmel gilt.

4. [10] Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ,
daß du ein Mensch geboren bist
   und hast für mich und alle Welt
   bezahlt ein ewig Lösegeld!

In the above stanzas Wesley kept fairly close to the original, rendering both images and spirit. The first stanza parallels the Zinzendorfian emphasis on Christ's blood as the sinner's guarantee of salvation "(damit will ich vor Gott besteh'n), i.e., with this I will pass before God, line three; "in these array'd...shall I lift up my head"; lines three and four) as well as the image of the "Schmuck und Ehrenkleid" (literally, "adornment and coat of honor," line two, more freely translated as "beauty...glorious dress," line two). The end rhyme scheme of the original (aa, bb, cc, d-dee) is retained in Wesley's translation (Righteousness/dress, array'd/head, as is the German iambic meter (four metrical feet per line), although strictly speaking, the first lines of both (first) stanzas start with an accented syllable: Christ+i Jesu (as does the English stanza four).

In the remaining stanzas, the German end rhyme scheme is again maintained, and so are the most important images and messages, i.e. the innocent Lamb and the ransom paid by the crucified Christ for the author and for all humanity ("für mich und alle Welt," "For me, and all," stanza four, line three). There is the same personal perspective throughout (e.g. "mein Schmuck," "will ich,"

Collegium Musicum Salem (Winston-Salem, 1956), regarding the significant contribution of the Moravian Collegium Musicum (especially at Bethlehem and Salem) to the development of early American music.

After first using FreylinghAUSEN's Gesangbuch, the eighteenth-century Moravians soon created their own melodies and, in 1766-67, produced their Gesangbuch at Herrnhut, with 200 tunes and 144 meters. One Moravian musician, Christian Gregor (1723-1801), established the kind of composition which won the widest acceptance amongst Moravian musicians: "a rather short anthem, generally in one movement, for chorus with instruments, a group of strings and the organ" (Lewis, p. 167). 32

Lewis, op. cit., p. 168. Zinzendorf's other hymns mentioned in this context are "O Thou to whose all-searching sight," "O Spirit of grace," "My all in all, my Lord and Friend," "Holy spotless Lamb of God," and "Christian hearts in love united." The two hymns analyzed below are listed in Erik Routley's An English Speaking Hymnal Guide (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1979), No. 371 and No. 858, respectively.


Wesley avoids the harsh image of the "rauen Kreuzestamm," the rough beam of the cross, preferring to express the divine Father-Son relationship ("Who from the Father's bosom came", stanza 2, line 2).
This hymn, which Weinlick ranks amongst Zinzendorf's "best-known and loved hymns" and calls "perhaps the one hymn most representative of his theology" (op. cit., p. 147), is commonly reproduced in the translation by Jane L. Borthwick (1813-97). The hymn employs a spirited trochaic meter throughout, the end rhyme structure is aa; bb; cc. etc. (voran/bahn; verweilen/zueilen; Hand/land). Zinzendorf addresses Jesus directly, pleading with Him to guide His homeward-bound followers on their path. He asks for strength and endurance in our most difficult times ("auch in den schwersten Tagen," st. 2), for patience when personal grief or someone else's suffering touches us ("Rühret eigener Schmerz,. kümmert uns ein fremdes Leiden," st. 3), and for the necessary attendance when we struggle through rough patches ("durch raube Wege," "die nöt'ge Pflege," st. four). The final plea is for God to open the gate of Heaven for us when we have completed our journey ("tu uns nach dem Lauf deine Türe auf," st. 4).

The sentences are short, the pleading is simple and direct, with imperatives used throughout to further strengthen the insistence conveyed by the trochaic meter ("geh voran," "für uns," st. 1; "laß uns feste stehn," st. 2; " gib Geduld, richte unserm Sinn," st. 3; "Orde unserm Gang," "tu uns...auf," st. 4). The focus throughout the hymn is on the purpose of life on earth, namely, never to stray from the path to the end. Borthwick maintains this insistence very well in her own trochees and her imperatives ("lead on," "guide us," st. 1; "let not," "let not," st. 2; "increase and perfect patience," "show us," st. 3; "lead on," "direct us," "support, console, protect us," st. 4). Her translation is equally spirited in tone in its pleading for faith, guidance and strength in all grief and temptation, and she also uses short, rhetorical sentences.

For the most part, the translation stays close to the original in its main thrust, e.g., "We will follow, calm and fearless" ("wir wollen nicht verweilen, dir getreulich nachzieuen; führ uns an der Hand bis ins Vaterland!"

2. Sollst du hart ergehn, laß uns feste stehn und auch in den schwersten Tagen niemals über Lasten klagen; denn durch Trübsal hier geht der Weg zu dir!

3. Rühret eigener Schmerz, jemals unser Herz, kümmert uns ein fremdes Leiden, o so gib Geduld zu beiden; richte unserm Sinn auf das Ende hin.

4. Ordne unserm Gang, Liebster, lieberlang; Führst du uns durch rauhe Wege, gib uns auch die nöt'ge Pflege; tu uns nach dem Lauf deine Türe auf!

My sources are The Hymnal (The Baptist Federation of Canada, 1973), No. 350, translation by Jane L. Borthwick (1813-97), and Gesangbuch für die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern (1946), No. 489, where the hymn is listed as a hymn for weddings. See also Julian, Dictionary of Hymnology (New York: 1957, repr. of 2nd rev. ed., 1907), vol. 1, p. 589. According to Julian, this hymn first appeared in the Bräder G.B. of 1778, in four stanzas of six lines, and is a "slightly altered cento...from two hymns by Zinzendorf."

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