

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Greetings from a very warm and sunny Bedfordshire; I would certainly find it hard to complain about the lack of sunshine this summer!

This has been a very interesting three months, during which I have again been very grateful for the wonderful hospitality and the opportunity to share in fellowship with groups across the Districts. Thank you.

At the beginning of June I attended the Methodists for World Mission Annual Conference in Swanwick. Focusing on the Continent of Africa we looked at the variety of challenges faced by many of its 54 states, each having their own culture, language and traditions which creates a fascinating mix of humanitarian and faith perspectives. MWM is always an interesting Conference and I can certainly recommend it.

On 5th June I travelled with many ladies to Belfast for the World Federation European Area Seminar (a full report is on the website) and at the end of June, following our Conference Fringe Event in Nottingham, (report on page 5) I departed for my second overseas visit, a very full but fascinating itinerary which began with the World Federation South Pacific Area Seminar in Fiji.

In Fiji, along with Federation World President Alison Judd, I enjoyed the rich tones of singing, many varied cultural presentations, Biblical studies, and above all the friendship offered by the women of the South Pacific.



Above: Samoan ladies portraying the story of Hannah mother of Samuel



Following the Seminar I travelled by bus with my new friend Joanna Wagairatu to the Pacific Theological College in Suva. Here I stayed for a few days with Mission Partner Rev Dr Val Ogden before flying out to Guadalcanal and Munda in the Solomon Islands, the main focus of my overseas visit. Val has now returned to the UK and will be the keynote speaker for the 2019 Swanwick Weekend.

Left: Val Ogden and Joanna Wagairatu

The purpose of my visit to the Solomons was threefold: to talk and worship with local church representatives and women's groups, to visit the Helena Goldie Hospital and training centres, and to witness the effects of climate change and changing weather patterns in the South Pacific area. Looking down whilst flying above the Solomons in a small aircraft, the effect of rising sea levels on coastal strips and submerging atolls were very clearly visible.

Whilst in Honiara, the main city of Guadalcanal, I stayed with the family of Rev Mareta Tahu, once again experiencing a warm welcome and generous hospitality.

Right: Mareta and family



Back home and a chance to relax with friends and family, I have much to share. I look forward to the autumn Forum and the appointment of our next Vice- President/ President, to the World Federation Day events on Saturday 27th October, and to many more Circuit and District visits.

None of this would be possible without the dedication and hard work carried out by so many of you across the Connexion. So I'd like to say thank you on behalf of MWiB not only to the Executive and District teams but to all who support the work of MWiB in many different ways.

May God bless you all

Sandra

WE'RE MOVING!

From 1st September 2018, our new postal address will be: MWiB
c/o Touchstone
4 Easby Road
Bradford BD7 1QX



Please share as widely as possible around your church, circuit and district, and don't forget to change the address on any stationery, newsletters, website, etc.

The old P.O. Box address will no longer operate after the end of September.



Meet a Mission Partner

Our Woman in Sri Lanka

Anne Baldwin shares with us some of her early experiences as A Mission Partner new to Sri Lanka:

On a usual day I rise around 5.45am. Good—there is both electricity and water today, so I can have a warm shower! By 6.45 I have walked up the steep hill to the chapel (*pictured below*) for a time of meditation before the service begins at 7.00am. The enthusiastic singing with a harmonium and drums is inspiring.

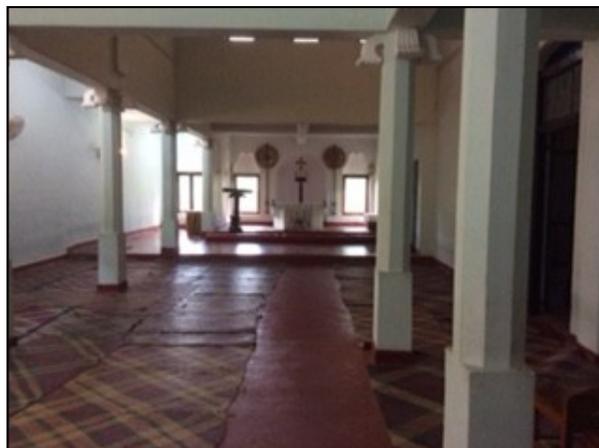
After breakfast (rice and curry or bread and eggs), lectures begin.

I am working with a small group of students helping them mainly with grammar, comprehension and pronunciation. Why is the English language so difficult, with so many exceptions to the rules?

One of the main ways I feel I can be useful here is to be 'around', to have informal conversations as we wait for meals or lectures or just around the campus. I also work with students on a 1:1 basis.

I join in college life wherever possible and in the 10 weeks I have been here I have attended the Induction Services for four former Students as Methodist Probationary Ministers, the Ordination of several former students at the Cathedral in Colombo, two weddings of former students, and two funerals of people connected with the college.

In the Methodist Churches here celebrations and special services are held to commemorate the landing here of the first Methodist missionaries on 29th June 1814. I feel honoured to be part of this rich heritage.



This Harvest, inspire your church, group or school to celebrate how God's gift of light has the power to transform lives, and see how communities in southern Malawi are over-coming failed harvests with the introduction of solar powered irrigation.

FREE resources available to download from <https://allwecan.org.uk/resources>

Sermon notes, prayers, a short film, children/ youth resources and fundraising ideas (all on DVD-Rom), plus posters and Gift Aid envelopes.

Money raised for *All We Can* will improve the lives of people in poor communities across the world.

Seoul Reflections

Carolyn Lawrence, July 2018



What a privilege it was to attend the World Methodist Council meeting in Seoul and to hear about what God is doing in and through the Methodist Church as well as learn about concerns for prayer. The World Methodist Council comprises 425 members representing almost 80 million members in over 130 countries and it is a real honour for me to be a part of this on behalf of the Methodist Church in Britain.



It was also good to learn about the particular issues facing the church in South Korea and hear about their earnest prayer for the reunification of North and South Korea. I was honoured to attend an early morning prayer meeting with 5,000 local believers, as the culmination of 40 days of prayer for the reestablishment of the church in North Korea. The notice board outside the church where we were meeting tells the story of the once flourishing church in North Korea—2,000 churches established mainly by Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries, which “not only shed light to salvation but also served the poor and the deprived by Providing education, medical and cultural assistance”. Japanese rule and the colonial period, communist rule, and the Korean war have destroyed most of the churches in North Korea, but South Koreans pray, “believing that God’s work for restoration and peace are revealed where churches are planted.”

As I arrived for the early morning meeting, many had already gathered and were silently and fervently praying. Each person had brought their Bible with them, some of which were very well worn and clearly loved, and many took notes as the Pastor preached. The commitment, fervour and spiritual hunger of the Korean Christians was a challenge to me and something from which we in the UK can learn so much. We gave thanks to God that although just a year ago the nation was on the verge of war, today the prayers of many have been answered as reunification seems a step closer.



It was also an experience to share in worship on a grand scale on the Sunday morning, complete with orchestra and full robed choir. Kwanglim Methodist Church has around 85,000 members who meet at various times and places During a usual Sunday. It was amazing to experience church on a large scale like this, though I have to say, not something I would want to do every week! The sheer organisation of getting communion to over 5,000 people at a time, taking up the offering and getting people in and out was awe inspiring!



On the Sunday evening we were invited to take part in an open air peace prayer service, again praying for the church in North Korea. It was a blessing to stand with the people of the church in South Korea to pray for the breaking down of the barrier that divides their nation, and in many cases, their families.



One of the highlights for me was sharing a meal with some of the Korean women from the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church women, along with other leaders from the UK and USA. We were treated to a traditional Korean meal eaten with chopsticks of course. I have decided that this is a brilliant diet plan as I just couldn’t eat very much at all! Clearly I need more practice!

It was a real honour to receive the generous hospitality of our Korean brothers and sisters and I am so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the wider world church through the WMC and I am so grateful to everyone back home for your prayerful support as I travelled.

Life and Learning World Federation Day—Saturday 27th October 2018

Bookings are coming in fast—book your place now to avoid disappointment!

See back page for details. Booking form enclosed with mailing.





Staunen! is a German word which roughly translates as ‘be amazed!’ and this was the theme for the European Methodist Festival which took place at the Dunenhof Retreat Centre near Cuxhaven on the northern coast of Germany in May. Along with about twenty others from the UK, MWiB Vice President Anne Browse and I joined in the event with around 800 people from across Europe and further afield. At the opening ceremony the flag of each country represented was brought into the main meeting tent—29 European countries, plus others including Australia, the USA, and South Korea—where they remained on display during the Festival, reminding us that we are part of a colourful and diverse worldwide Methodist family.



The parade of flags celebrating our European Methodist family

At the opening ceremony we were welcomed by the new German Methodist Bishop Harald Ruckert, and by Bishop Sifredo Teixeira of Portugal, among others, and we worshiped together—in English and German—led by a local worship group and choir.

Each morning we met all together in the large tent for an introduction to the day’s theme in worship, drama, testimony, and bible reading, before going into groups of around twenty for Bible study on the theme.

There were several Bible study options each day in different styles—interactive, lecture-style, discussions, etc—with some in English, others in German—on the themes: ‘Wrestling’, ‘Step by Step’, and ‘Seeing Things Differently’. After the study session, we divided into still smaller groups of eight to talk about things that we’d learned, or noticed, or experienced in the day’s worship, Bible study or conversation.



There were workshops and seminars on offer on a wide variety of creative and social justice themes, and each afternoon there was opportunity to visit local attractions or shop in the town, to take part in organised sports and games or learn about other church communities across Europe by browsing the resources and information in the Festival Market Place—or to simply relax, talk, and make new friends.



*Pictures left:
top: the Mission Bus, serving tea, coffee and fresh apples
centre: Anne Browse and Gillian Sloan, Mission Partner in Chemnitz, Germany
bottom: ideas, resources and information on offer in the Festival Market Place*



After dinner each day we were entertained with music, singing, and drama by choirs and artists from across Europe. For me there were three highlights: a performance by slam poet Marco Michalzik (with some very nifty PowerPoint work so that we could read the English translation as he performed in German!); the daily drama sketches hilariously performed by the Play it by Ear Theatre Group (otherwise Chris and Ross from Ireland); and the beautiful harmonious singing of Die Schmetterlingen (The Butterflies), a children’s choir from former East Germany.

I was especially pleased to meet up again with three women, from Austria, Germany and the United States, who I met at the World Federation Assembly in Houston two years ago. They had met there too, become friends, and kept in touch—and had decided that the Staunen! Festival would be a great opportunity for a reunion! At a time when our political and economic relationship with Europe is so precarious, such friendships and opportunities are increasingly valuable as we seek to maintain and build our Christian and Methodist relationships, working together with our European brothers and sisters to build God’s kingdom community in the world.

Jude Simms, May 2018

Story and Song

The MWiB Fringe Event at the Methodist Conference 2018

Around 150 people came together in Nottingham in June for a celebration of 'Story and Song' at the MWiB Conference Fringe Event. The evening began with the launch of our new project on hearing impairment and the church. Colin Townsend talked about the four 'Signs for Worship' choirs, made up of people of all ages and abilities, joined in a desire to express their love of Jesus in different, exciting, holistic and accessible ways. Members of the choirs from Walsall and Long Eaton then demonstrated the signing to some well known worship songs—My Jesus, my Saviour; The splendour of the King; and I the Lord of Sea and Sky—before leading us in singing and signing. Everyone joined in—with varying degrees of success! It was new for many of us, and fun too, yet it was a very moving worship experience.



Members of the Walsall 'Signs for Worship' choir



David Hulme presenting prizes to joint winners Margaret Chan (left) & Margaret Doughty (right)

During the evening, the winners of our 2018 writing competition, held in memory of Revd Julie Hulme, were announced. The theme this year was 'At the Heart...', and we were especially pleased to have Julie's husband, Revd David Hulme, with us at the event. He spoke about Julie's legacy of writing and spirituality, and presented two joint winners with their prizes of £100. The winning entries—*God as Weaver* by Margaret Chan, and *A Prayer Pilgrimage... With a Difference* by last year's winner Margaret Doughty—were once again brought to life, read out by Revd Jenny Pathmarajah, and they can be read and downloaded for personal and group use from our website: www.mwib.org.uk

Next year's writing competition will be launched earlier than in previous years, in November 2018—look out for details on the website and in the next MWiB mailing!

Finally, outgoing Vice President Anne Browse shared some brief reflections on her four years as Vice President/President, highlighting particularly stories illustrating the overarching principle of inclusion embedded in all that MWiB is and does, and presentations were made to Anne, and to Finance Officer Gillian Womersley, whose terms of office finish in the autumn, and new Finance Officer Nina Rawlins was welcomed.



Anne Browse shares stories of inclusion

Election of new MWiB Vice-President/President

Since being unable to appoint a new Vice President at the Forum meeting in February, we have re-advertised the post, and received nominations which have now been shortlisted.

The interview and appointment process will take place at our Forum meeting on Saturday 29th September 2018. Please hold the Forum, the Executive, and the candidates in your prayers as we move forward into the next stage of our journey.

Have you visited our website recently? Go to:

www.mwib.org.uk

for news and information about MWiB and related activities, events and campaigns, the President's Blog, weekly prayer, and quarterly prayer diary. You can also download newsletters, resources, and the annual review.

If you know anyone who might be interested in working with the Communications Officer to improve and update the website, please email: communications@mwib.org

EXECUTIVE MEETINGS:

5th September 2018
21st November 2018

FORUM MEETINGS:

29th–30th September 2018
16th–17th February 2019

If you have any issues to raise or questions to ask, please speak to your Forum Rep.

The Methodist Church
3GENERATE
CHILDREN & YOUTH ASSEMBLY
www.methodist.org.uk/1000letters

1000letters

Letters from one generation to another



1,000 letters is an initiative encouraging people to write a letter of encouragement to the children and young People attending the 3Generate event in November 2018, to help them be courageous in their life and faith—a letter from one generation to another.

If you'd like to send a letter, you can find more details at:

www.methodist.org.uk/1000letters

Forthcoming Events



World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women

World Federation Day 2018



Life and Learning

Based on Sustainable Development Goal 4:
'inclusive and equitable quality education and
lifelong learning opportunities for all'

Saturday 27th October 2018
10.00am—4.00pm

Choice of two venues:

Truro Methodist Church, Cornwall
Union Place, Turo, Cornwall TR1 1EP

St. Paul's Methodist Church, Blackburn
Higher Audley St, Blackburn, Lancs BB1 1DH

Worship, Bible study, keynote presentation,
and information, activities, and resources on
different aspects of education .

Refreshments and hot lunch provided.
Suggested donation £10 per person.

Information and booking form:
download from: www.mwib.org.uk
or email: communications@mwib.org.uk
or telephone: 0300 030 9873



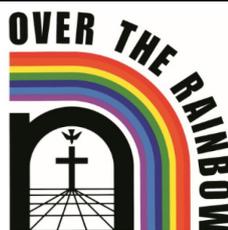
Swanwick 2019 Residential Weekend

Friday 5th—Sunday 7th April *

** NB—these dates are correct; apologies for incorrect dates
which appeared in the previous newsletter **

Keynote speaker: Revd Dr Val Ogden
(Former Mission Partner in Fiji)

Look out for further information and booking forms,
available early November 2018



Over the Rainbow

A new exhibition looking back at
Women's Network's
1990 campaign for an end to
apartheid in South Africa

Exhibition open March—October 2018
Tuesday—Saturday, and Bank Holiday Mondays,
10.00am—4.30pm

Epworth Old Rectory, 1 Rectory Street,
Epworth, North Lincolnshire DN9 1HX

For further information, visit:
www.epwortholdrectory.org.uk

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From 1st Sept 2018: MWiB, c/o Touchstone, 4 Easby Road, Bradford BD7 1QX

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