

## World Federation Day, Saturday 28 October 2017

### Keynote Address – Alison Judd (World President, WFM&UCW)

#### 1. Mind the Gap: Gender Equality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

2. **4 films** I've seen this year, all set in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all addressing the issue of gender equality, all true stories.

- **Their Finest** is about a young woman script-writer engaged to write scripts for propaganda films during WW2, experiences discrimination. She is told 'Of course I can't pay you the same salary as your male colleague'.
- **Made in Dagenham**: a dramatization of the 1968 strike at the Ford Dagenham car plant, where female workers walked out in protest against sexual discrimination. As well as experiencing poor working conditions, and sexual harassment, they were being paid a fraction of the men's wages for the same work across the board on the sole basis of their sex. Their protest was successful.
- **Suffragette**: about the campaign to allow women to have the right to vote. These women were willing to lose everything in their fight for equality - their jobs, their homes, their children and their lives.
- **Hidden Figures**: the story of three talented Black Women Mathematicians who worked for NASA during the Space Race, calculating the figures needed for the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, and guaranteeing his safe return. This amazing story highlights colour and gender discrimination.

3. Now I hear there is a new film due out called '**Battle of the Sexes**' about tennis player and 6 times

Wimbledon champion Billie Jean King and the exhibition match she played against the former men's number 1 Bobby Riggs. Set in Sept 1973, it brings LGBT into the equation, which at that time was considered a new phenomenon.

4. **Teresa May** being interviewed with her husband on The One Show surprised many when she spoke about division of labour in her home. Women's work and men's work. He said: "I get to decide when I take the bins out, not if I take the bins out."

Teresa jumped in to say: "There's boy jobs and girl jobs".

Her husband agreed: "I do the traditional boy jobs, by and large."

**I grew up in a similar environment** to the one described by Mr and Mrs May! In fact, with an even more clearly -defined division of labour. My mother and father met just before the war, when they both worked for the same company. But after the war, when my older sister was born, my mother stopped being in paid employment and became a home- maker, or as she would have said, a 'housewife', enjoying maintaining the home, shopping, cleaning, cooking, etc and taking on voluntary leadership roles in the church and community while my sister and I were in school. She also became the unofficial carer for my grandmother who lived with us for most of my childhood until she died during my first term at University. Our father was the 'bread -winner' and went to work in London each day. He did enjoy cooking at weekends, though. I can distinctly recall my father saying he enjoyed cooking the Sunday lunch while my mother and I were at church but he would never bake cakes as that was my mother's forte. I actually don't think he felt it was beneath him, but he didn't want to take that skill from her.

**I guess I was influenced by my parents' attitudes.** I do sometimes tell the story of discovering my husband Les in our bedroom one day with a bucket of soapy water and a cloth and wiping down the skirting boards. I was furious! I felt he was criticising my ability to keep the place clean! I have to say I did soon cotton on to the benefits of having a husband who was prepared to get involved in cleaning, and my anger turned to encouragement! I have also learned that he enjoys cooking and that this is good news for both of us.

We have already touched on **stereotypes**; the expectations we have of people of different genders. And that of course includes male, female, gay, lesbian and transgender.

How many of you are grandparents and knitting for the coming grandchild? How hard did you think about the colour of the wool, or the first toy?

**5. I wonder where you find yourselves in this? I wonder if anything I've said so far has shocked you.**

**What do you think of when you hear the words 'Gender equality?'**

**What's the problem?**

**Talk to your neighbour about what these words mean to you.**

**6. Raising awareness**

Two years ago we were introduced to the Sustainable Development Goals, 17 of them, aimed at building a better world with no one left behind. Each geographical Area of the WFMUCW is committed to raising awareness and working towards one or more of these goals. B&I Area is focussing on SDGs 4, 5 and 10. (Education, Gender equality and Reducing inequalities.)

**7. Goal 5 Gender Equality is our focus for today.**

While the world has achieved progress towards Gender Equality and women's empowerment under the Millennium Development Goals (including equal access to primary education for both girls and boys), women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world.

**It is said that Gender Equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.**

Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, and decent work, and allowing their voices to be heard in political and economic decision-making bodies will benefit local communities and humanity at large.

The world is waking up to the unequal opportunities in work and education for women and children and widespread unequal pay and discrimination in the

workplace. Women in some parts of the world are particularly oppressed by the male dominated society- a patriarchal society.

Girls in some cultures are subjected to FGM, forced into early marriage, denied education, or treated as slaves in domestic service or prostitution. Women are more likely to receive abuse in social media.

Of course there have been some welcome developments.

Women's sports that were traditionally thought of as for men only, like football, are gaining recognition and acceptance. My daughter, 30 years ago in primary school, asked to be included in the football team but was told she must play on the other side of the playground to avoid being hurt by the boys. Now schools are facing issues of transgender education and some are advocating non-gender. Some are dividing children into gender specific classes. The media has noted Boy Scouts groups welcoming girls. A bit of a muddle?

A quick trawl through the internet reveals **campaigns** about Gender Equality. Some of you will have seen the Frances Scott 50:50 campaign for equal numbers of women and men politicians to represent us all in Politics. Then there's He for She, the Global Fund for Women, Thursdays in Black, and you will know of others. People speak of the Glass ceiling that denies women the access to roles with higher responsibility and higher pay. There was a recent outcry when it was revealed that the BBC is guilty of discrimination against women presenters, with vast differences in salary scales.

The Anglican church still encounters reluctance to ordain women bishops. Our own Methodist church has around 69% women members but far fewer women than men in leadership roles. It is unusual to have two women as President and Vice-President of Conference as we have now.

We could probably spend an hour on just one of these issues related to Gender Equality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. However I was asked to share a little from a global perspective through my involvement with the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.

**8. Our links with the global church** help to inform us. In a moment, I shall speak about my recent visit to

Zimbabwe, representing the British Methodist Church at celebrations marking 40 years of Autonomous mission and 40 years of women's ordination in MCZ. I leave Anne and Sandra to speak about their experiences and learning through visits to India and Bolivia.

9. **In Zimbabwe** I was interested to discover that the MCZ has now established a Gender Justice Desk with Lillian Chikara as office holder. I was glad to be able to meet with her one morning.

10. **Rev Dr Jimmy Dube** General Secretary spoke about Gender Justice at the World Federation Event in Harare.

It was interesting to hear him say they needed to address the issue from the perspective of their Zimbabwe culture: 'We are not the USA' he said. He urged us as women to ensure women have a voice. For instance, in their culture a woman who becomes widowed traditionally has no say in decisions about her future. Some funerals ignore the wishes of the widow. Even at weddings, the bride is not consulted; it is as if she doesn't matter. She may even be expected to stay behind after the wedding party and help clear up! Christian women must speak up and say this is wrong.

He said he wanted to talk about Gender Justice rather than Gender Equality. Justice is when women's voices are taken seriously. He referred to the OT story about Abraham finding a wife for his son Isaac. It's in Genesis 24. Abraham's servant is charged with the task of finding a wife for Isaac from among his relatives still in his home country. The servant prays for guidance and is led to Rebecca. He feels sure this is the right girl for Isaac and speaks to the family. They agree but when he says he wants to take her back straight away they ask for a week's delay. There is a disagreement until the family members call Rebecca and ask her what she wants, (verse 58) 'Do you want to go with this man?' She replies in the affirmative and off they go. Rev Dube urged us to find bible stories of women who speak out and are heard. Stories that support gender justice.

11. He then invited **questions and comments** from the women at the event. About 500 had come from all over the country.

12. **Immediately**, a woman stood and commented that on the poster for the

40 years of Autonomy celebrations, showing the speakers at the four day event in Harare Sports Stadium in which 40 years of women's ordination was also being celebrated, there was only one woman speaker!

Another woman spoke about inheritance issues, for women are still often cut out of family inheritance rights. And in Zimbabwe, if a man dies, and his widow wants to remarry, she will have to leave home and children. It was observed it was not the same rules for men!

Another recalled a song we used at the 13<sup>th</sup> World Assembly in Houston: 'Who will speak if we don't?' but commented it was not always safe to speak out. It took courage.

One asked what we should do about men who despise their wives for only producing girl children and don't want to provide for them. Another pointed out that some mothers show favour towards boys over their daughters.

Another lamented the way some women in the church do not support other women who show leadership ability. Instead they show jealousy and do not speak up for them.

13. **On the more positive side**, I witnessed initiatives while in Zimbabwe that provide skills training and leadership training for women of different ages and backgrounds, giving them the means to be generating income for themselves and their families, and education in health and communications, increasing their confidence in their ability to lead and support others.

14. **The Women's Ministry** training course in Bulawayo headed up by Julie Caddick, is well known and supported by MWiB in Cumbria.

15. I was invited to meet several of the **current students** who all testified to how the course had empowered them and changed their lives for the better.

16. I also heard an impassioned sermon at the MCZ Methodist Conference given by **Rev Margaret James**, the first woman to be ordained in the MCZ 40 years ago and a respected leader in the MCZ. She urged the conference delegates to remember how many women in the Bible OT and NT had been given leadership roles by God and had been accepted as such by the people. She said we must not ignore the fact that the leadership of the MCZ was almost entirely men; that we should accept a woman as Bishop (District Chair) and not deny her that role just

because of her gender. Just a few hours later, at the elections of new Bishops, Rev Everymary Nyabonda was elected Bishop of Gweru.

### 17. What about our Methodist Church in Britain?

**Methodist Church in Britain resource produced by The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is available on the Methodist Church Website.**

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/edi-toolkit>

This toolkit covers all areas of equality, but I looked particularly at the work of the **Gender Stakeholder Forum, chaired by Revd Anne Ellis** since 2013 and found in Module 5 of the toolkit.

### 18. The World Health Organisation's definition of sex and gender

What do we mean by 'sex' and 'gender'?

Sometimes it is hard to understand exactly what is meant by the term 'gender', and how it differs from the closely related term 'sex'.

'Sex' refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women.

'Gender' refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. These vary from society to society.

#### What does that mean?

Put simply, 'sex' is about our anatomy, and 'gender' is about how we express ourselves in terms of masculinity and femininity.

.... it is inaccurate to make assumptions about people's skills, aptitudes and preferences based on sex or gender. In other words, individuals should be

recognised for who they are, not who they are assumed to be because of their sex or gender.

.... Today, the British Methodist Church affirms the equality of women and men in the life and ministry of the Church and that both men and women should be equally recognised for their gifts. However, owing to underlying social and cultural issues, the reality often falls far short of the aspiration for gender equality.

### 19. The journey to date; women in ordained leadership in the MCB

The first female presbyters were ordained in 1974. This was a year before the passing of the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) in the UK. It was a significant breakthrough for the ordination of women not only in the Methodist Church, but also for those of other denominations who had not by then made the step.

In 1987 the Revd Kathleen Richardson was appointed as the first woman to be a chair of district.

In 1992 the Revd Kathleen Richardson was elected as President of Methodist Conference, the first woman to hold the post.

That same year, in 1992, the 'Inclusive language and images of God' report was adopted by Methodist Conference.

20. **Case studies** in the toolkit highlight issues of gender discrimination/inequality which may be seen in one or more of four areas of society

- **Structural** – eg legal and political structures, policies, committees etc
- **Cultural** – the cultural norms of a group or society, commonly held views
- **Institutional** – practices, how things are done
- **Personal** – personal behaviours and practices.

### 21. A Summary concludes the case studies and questions:

Having reflected, note that:

- People’s skills, abilities and talents are not defined by their gender.
- Traditional ways of thinking and speaking, including how we think of God, favour men.
- Methodism has clearly stated that men and women are equal in all aspects of Church life – even though the reality does not always match the aspiration.
- The Bible gives us a range of ‘images’ and ways of speaking and thinking about God, including both masculine and feminine.

## 22. Questions

### Experience

- What assumptions are there in your church about leadership and gender?

### Learning

- How does gender discrimination impact on individuals and on the mission of the church?
- Is there a particular culture of leadership within the church that promotes or inhibits gender equality?

### Action

- What support groups are there in your church? Are there opportunities for new groups to form?
- Are there gender specific roles in your church? How can we ensure that roles are inclusive?
- What could you and your church do to ensure gender equality?

## 23. An Appendix gives material on

1. Inclusive language and imagery about God
2. Gender reassignment and transgender issues

## 24. Freedom for girls video released on the International Day of the Girl 11 October

[https://www.freedomunited.org/advocate/forgirls/?trk\\_msg=REH9QT5V2C94T339ANARLTNRNS&trk\\_contact=LCP5IKU5AFHHF8COMEN13RHS10&trk\\_sid=68UCCRS3PAR2ARBM5O58PIM094&utm\\_source=Listrak&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=powerful+video&utm\\_campaign=FU-EN-OCT-2017-FREEDOM-FOR-GIRLS&utm\\_content=Freedom for girls Launch 11Oct 2017](https://www.freedomunited.org/advocate/forgirls/?trk_msg=REH9QT5V2C94T339ANARLTNRNS&trk_contact=LCP5IKU5AFHHF8COMEN13RHS10&trk_sid=68UCCRS3PAR2ARBM5O58PIM094&utm_source=Listrak&utm_medium=email&utm_term=powerful+video&utm_campaign=FU-EN-OCT-2017-FREEDOM-FOR-GIRLS&utm_content=Freedom%20for%20girls%20Launch%2011Oct%202017)

## 25. United Nations & WFMUCW

Dr Brenda Smith represents us at the United Nations in New York. Ivonne Pereira Diaz in Latin America. Matilda Johnson as World Federation World Vice President lives in the Gambia but has a special responsibility of co-ordinating our UN representation. Reports are available on the WFMUCW website.

26. **The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**, established in 1946, is part of the United Nations’

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), focusing on gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is the principal global policy-making body. It organizes an annual two week programme of activities at the United Nations to review the progress made by governments, NGOs and faith-based organisations, on gender equality and women’s empowerment; it formulates policies and sets global standards for women.

27. **CSW 61 13-24 March 2017 focused on women in the workplace.**

The new secretary General, António Guterres said that women's empowerment will benefit the whole world and lead to a new future.

## **28. Matilda Johnson reported that:**

**This year's theme: 'Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work'** is based on the premise that women's contribution to the economy is not fully recognized. Women in the workforce are discriminated against through low wages, barriers to recruitment and promotion, harassment, and unfair dismissals. Women are often prevented from realising their full potential in the workplace.

**Faith-based organisations such as: Ecumenical women** which comprises- Salvation Army, World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women (WFMUCW), Anglican Communion, Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), the Lutherans to name a few, participated in the annual women's meetings through their daily worship services at the Church Center and side events.

Executive director of CSW61 spoke of 'progress on achieving a world free of gender discrimination and inequality, a world that leaves no one behind'

## **29-31. 10 areas covered by the CSW61**

### **1. Gender Gaps in the World of Work**

### **2. Human rights and labour rights including life cycle approach**

### **3. Conditions of work for women's economic empowerment**

- A. Equal Pay and Living Wages
- B. From Informal to Formal and Decent Work
- C. Occupational Segregation
- D. Recruitment, Retention, Re-entry, Promotion and Progression
- E. Gender-responsive Social Protection and Pensions

### **4. Transforming unpaid care and domestic work**

- A. Unpaid Care and Domestic Work

### **B. Work Life Balance and Family Responsibilities**

## **5. Addressing violence and discrimination**

- A. Ending Violence Against Women
- B. Addressing intersectionalities and discrimination

## **6. Enabler / beneficiary links with Sustainable Development Goals**

- A. Poverty Eradication
- B. Food Security and Nutrition
- C. Education, training and skills development
- D. Health
- E. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights
- F. Access to Economic and Productive Resources
- G. Climate Change

## **7. Mastering the new economies**

- A. Technological Change
- B. Migration

## **8. National enabling environment**

- A. Affirmative laws, policies and measures
- B. Enhanced financing and investments
- C. Gender responsive Institutions
- D. Data, knowledge, monitoring and accountability

## **9. International enabling environment**

## **10. Mobilizing strategic partners and game changers for women's economic empowerment in the Changing world of work**

- A. CSOs, Trade Unions
- B. Role of the Private Sector
- C. Men and Boys
- D. Young Women's Empowerment and Youth Dividend
- E. Role of the Media

## F. The Role of the United Nations and UN Women

### **32. Matilda's report includes some stories from around the world**

One day there was a panel of speakers from different parts of the world with each panelist telling their story.

**The Cambodian story:** working for Nike. Lady worked in a cardboard factory but later started organizing women to stand up for their rights because of an incident at work where a woman died without any compensation paid out to her family. She organized women for change and became a Union leader, however charges were pressed against her by over 500 employers.

**The Native American story:** a rape survivor from the Navaho tribe in New Mexico, Arizona. She opposed the mining companies allowing toxic waste to cause environmental damage after mines were closed. As jobs were lost, the families struggled to survive. There were several one-parent families and many people needed support. This woman advocated for more women on the Tribal Council.

**The Mozambique story:** women and girls are regarded as second class citizens and pulled off the streets – they are called illegal traders. Child marriages (48%) bring economic and cultural benefits to the parents but affect the girl child particularly. That woman is involved in raising the awareness of parents on Family Law and Human Rights issues; also encouraging adult literacy and income generating projects.

**33. The Commission established an action plan** that would lead to improved conditions for the lives of women and girls. Most significantly, the Agreed Conclusions committed all stakeholders to creating what we call an Ecosystem of Strategic Enablers that would aim to bring about women's full, equal and effective participation, leadership and economic empowerment in the changing world of work.

**34. UN-Women** was called upon to continue to play a central role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and in supporting governments and national women's organisations, coordinating the United

Nations work in this area, mobilizing civil society, the private sector, employers' organizations and trade unions and other relevant stakeholders.

Their website states their Targets, beginning with:

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. ...

### **35. Three flagship programmes are highlighted:**

- Women's Political Empowerment and Leadership
- Women' Leadership, Empowerment, Access And Protection In Crisis Response
- Prevention and Access to Essential Services to end Violence against Women

### **36. Brenda Smith's report highlights how the CSW challenged governments to take action:**

- Strengthening legal frameworks,
- Financing programmes for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls,
- Strengthening women's leadership and full and equal participation in all areas of sustainable development.
- Strengthening gender-responsive data collection and follow-up and review processes.
- Enhancing national institutional arrangements.

Some governments are doing more to ensure the immediate implementation of agreed-upon conclusions. Others have made commitments; however, governments have been asked to implement the goals and conclusions adopted in a more comprehensive manner.'

**37. Ivonne Pereira Diaz, UN rep for The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC ) reported on 2017 annual meeting on International Women's Day 8<sup>th</sup> March:**

**She states: 'we must commit ourselves to do everything possible to overcome entrenched prejudices, support participation and activism, and promote gender equality and empower women.'**

**38. Labour market, the key to equality of women in Latin America and the Caribbean**

Latin America and the Caribbean is the only region in the world where, for four decades and in an uninterrupted manner, States have come together to discuss and commit themselves politically to eradicate discrimination and gender inequality and move towards ensuring the full exercise of Autonomy and the human rights of women.

We have overcome multiple obstacles and made exceptional progress, but there is still a wide wage gap in the region, inequality on sexual and reproductive rights and the pending challenge of granting greater political participation to all women.

**ECLAC has shown** that an increase in the numbers of women in work would help reduce poverty in the region significantly. 1 in 3 women in Latin America and the Caribbean does not yet have a source of income. This is certainly a great challenge for the autonomy of women who depend on other household members for their own needs or those of their families. In addition, 26% of women over 15 years of age receive less than a minimum wage, resulting in more than half of the women in the region not having their own income or receiving minimum sums that preclude real economic independence.

**39. Quote from Ivonne on screen.** 'The time has come to change the gender schema in our countries and end patriarchy as a model of society. It is time to open the way to parity in all its forms and spaces, to respect and look at women beyond our gender, for all our abilities, for our integral view of life and for our constant struggle for the construction of a more just society not only for all women but also for all people.' Ivonne Pereira Diaz

**40. The current Area President for Latin America is Leila Barbosa .** In October 2017, Leila gave a lecture on 'Violence against Women' to a group of men in her home country of Brazil. She wrote to me afterwards:

'I would like to inform you that the lecture on Violence against Women, held at the Men's Congress in Rio de Janeiro was a blessing! It seems to me that they understood and were encouraged to help women in this struggle. I was very direct and used strong words to describe the terrible situation experienced by many! Thank God and your prayers went very well!

It was a challenge for me!'

**41. Who will speak if we don't?** The warning we hear on the underground or rail station 'Mind the gap!' is for our own good and for the good of all. I thank God for women who have the courage to speak out and urge men and women boys and girls that we all need to be treated with respect and encouraged to reach our full potential. The benefits will be for the whole of society. We all have potential regardless of our gender. We are all made in the image of God. As women of faith, chosen and called by God to proclaim the values of God, set free by the Christ we know, and inspired by the Holy Spirit, we seek gender justice for all.

**Resources:**

V-P report on CSW 61 and

UN Rep report on CSW61 <http://wfmucw.org/publications/united-nations>

Latin America UN ECLOC Ivonne Pereira Díaz

<file:///C:/Users/Hp/Documents/MWiB/World-Federation-Day-2017/ECLOC%20Newsletter%203%20Jan%20Mar%202017.pdf>

Global Fund for Women @thereproject

This girl can getting more women into sport

<http://ethicalmarketingnews.com/new-girl-can-campaign>

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/edi-toolkit>

[www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality)

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/series/womens>

<https://www.unicef.org/gender>

