

Annual Review

Spring 2020



Methodist Women
in Britain





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in Britain

Creative Spirituality ~ World Church Focus ~ Global Social Justice ~ Resourcing and Enabling

The front cover image shows a section of the border wall between Mexico and the United States. Migrants travel north to the border, at constant risk of exploitation from traffickers and threatened by local cartels, while local churches struggle to provide food and shelter for them along the way and at the border. Read more about MWiB President Hilary Evans's visit to Mexico on page 8.

Methodist Women in Britain is a self-financing volunteer-run charity within the Methodist Church in Britain.

Its aims are three-fold:

- to bring women together, encouraging one another to know Christ and to make him known, as Methodist women and as part of the wider Church in the world;
- to encourage, resource and train women members of the Methodist Church, equipping them to participate more fully in the wider church and in society;
- to connect women in Britain with women overseas, working in partnership with others to raise awareness of and act upon issues of social justice around the world.

It does this by:

- providing fellowship and training events, including residential conferences and one day events;
- producing resources and publications, both printed and online, for worship and spiritual growth, and for advocating and providing information on issues of social concern;
- highlighting areas of need and raising funds or providing other goods to support partners and agencies working to alleviate poverty and injustice.

The MWiB Forum acts as the Trustee body of the charity, comprising one elected representative from each District within the Methodist Church in Britain, the MWiB Executive team, the Helen Kim Memorial Scholar, and the Methodist representative of the World Day of Prayer Committee (England, Wales and Northern Ireland). The Forum meets twice yearly (February and September), and is the main decision-making body of MWiB.

Outside of Forum meetings, the work of MWiB is taken forward by the Executive team, comprising the President, Vice-President, Finance Officer, World Federation Officer, and Communications Officer.

The work, activities, events and projects undertaken by MWiB are largely based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and everything we do falls under one or more of four main areas of focus: Creative Spirituality, World Church Focus, Global Social Justice, and Resourcing and Enabling.

This Annual Review gives a taste of our activities for the year 2018–2019. For more information about MWiB and news of our current activities, visit our website: www.mwib.org.uk

Forum Members (Trustees)

at September 2019



Beds, Essex & Herts	Linda King
Birmingham	Diana Bosman
Bolton & Rochdale	Philippa Hill
Bristol	Margaret Johnston
Channel Islands	Pam Gidney
Chester & Stoke	Chris Thompson
Cornwall	Adrienne Simpson
Cumbria	Judith James
Darlington	Win Aston
East Anglia	Ruth Arnold
Isle of Man	Sue Collier
Lancashire	Wendy Bridgman
Lincolnshire	Bronwen Braidell
Liverpool	Elaine Phillips

London	Eve de Graff
Manchester & Stockport	Jo Richards
Newcastle upon Tyne	Judith Oldroyd
Northampton	Mary Gill
Nottingham & Derby	Sue Nickson
Plymouth & Exeter	Elaine Banks
Scotland	Barbara Harrison
Sheffield	Ann Baldock
Shetland	Sylvia White
South East	Credwyn Tolhurst
Southampton	Liz Chick
Synod Cymru	Margaret Morgan
Wales Synod	Susan Murrell
Yorkshire West	Janet Thompson
Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury	Joan Wickett
Yorkshire North & East	Denise Creed
President	Hilary Evans
Vice President	Sandra Goodwin
Finance Officer	Nina Rawlins
Communications Officer	Judith Simms
WFM&UWC Officer	Carolyn Lawrence
Helen Kim Memorial Scholar	Rachel Allison
Women's World Day of Prayer	Charity Madenyika

Creative Spirituality

Grounded in prayer and worship, MWiB acknowledges and values the diverse and creative ways of expressing the Christian faith that lie at the heart of our movement as we seek 'to know Christ and make him known'.

~ In 2018 MWiB commissioned the COGS creative writing group in Knaresborough to produce a series of Advent Reflections for the Methodist Recorder. The group produced poetry on themes around the Advent and Christmas story, and included the lighting of Advent candles.

~ Across the Connexion, and around the world, Methodist women continue to support the annual World Day of Prayer, and once again this year MWiB has offered bursaries to enable younger women to attend the WDP's 'Y-Pray' Conference.

~ *A Prayer for the Week*, the World Federation President's monthly *Call to Pray*, and the *MWiB Quarterly Prayer Diary* can all be downloaded from our website: www.mwib.org.uk

Open Hands and Space to Grow

is the umbrella theme adopted by Hilary Evans for her term as MWiB President 2019–2021.

Inspired by the hymn 'Let love be real' [*Singing the Faith* 615], Hilary spoke at her commissioning service about the symbolism of giving and receiving with open hands; having openness of mind, heart and spirit; having nurturing environments. It is an image that calls for sharing generously.

Alerting a wider audience to the work and ethos of MWiB, linking with other Methodist organisations, and raising awareness of migrancy and human trafficking issues will be priorities during her term.



Encountering Rome: then and now

In March 2019 Sandra Goodwin and Hilary Evans took part in a six-day pilgrimage exploring what it means to be a Protestant in Rome today, in light of the importance of Rome to the spreading of the Christian Gospel. The pilgrimage was led by former MWiB President Jill Baker and Mission Partner in Rome, Revd Tim Macquiban.



Pilgrimage was also a feature of events and activities celebrating **Susanna Wesley 350**—the 350th anniversary of the birth of 'the Mother of Methodism'—and Sandra joined a London pilgrimage, offering hymns and prayers at significant locations including Susanna's birthplace in Spital Yard [*below*], Wesley's Chapel, and her grave in Bunhill Fields.



Easter Offering

Written by Methodist Women in Britain as a gift to the whole church, the annual Easter Offering Service is an opportunity for churches, circuits and districts to celebrate God's mission activity. It includes the dedication of the Easter Offering, all of which goes to the World Mission Fund of the Methodist Church in Britain, supporting and working with 65 Partner Churches around the world.

The Methodist Church
Living generously

The 2019 service took as its theme *Longer Tables, Lower Fences* and featured stories of shared hospitality and welcome from Britain, South Africa, Bangladesh, Germany and Ethiopia.

During her time in office as MWiB President (2015–2017), Anne Browse highlighted the issue of economic migrants and refugees, and the worship encouraged us to consider how we might build longer tables, rather than higher fences, as we share whatever we have and connect with our neighbours.

The Easter Offering in 2019 raised over £370,000.



Easter Offering 2020

The 2020 service *Into all the world* features stories of people who have made a journey, some in obedience to God's call on their lives, and others because they had no choice.

In a year that marks both the 400th anniversary of the voyage of the Mayflower and 260 years of Methodist Overseas Mission, which started in Antigua, the worship encourages us to reflect and learn from those who travel, and to consider our own journeys, both physical and spiritual.



Celebrating the Easter Offering 2019: pictures from around the Connexion:

Above left: The congregation at Lanivet Methodist Church, Cornwall District.

Above right: A display prepared for the service at Ashbourne Methodist Church, Notts and Derby District.

Left: Sharing stories from around the world at Winchester Methodist Church, Southampton District.



World Church Focus

In April 2019, Vice President Hilary Evans visited Mexico on behalf of the Methodist Church. At migrant shelters on the northern border of Mexico with the USA she witnessed first-hand the task facing the church there as they seek to help the migrants flooding to the area. Hilary writes:

“My declared interest for my term as MWiB President has been to raise awareness about the scourge of human trafficking and modern slavery, but as the British Methodist Church is not directly tackling trafficking or slavery, migrancy was the nearest concern. The link between trafficking, slavery and migrancy is well recognised, and this was evident in some of the places in Mexico. For example, vulnerable people, particularly unaccompanied youngsters, are ‘picked up’ by cartels as they seek a better life. They are often tricked into thinking that there will be a job for them at the end of their journey. Sadly this is not true, and most often they are sold as slaves when they near the border. Some are forced into lives of servitude for little or no pay or freedom, while others are forced into prostitution. We saw evidence of this both in Monterrey and Tijuana.

“There were poignant moments such as meeting the new mother with a three day old daughter, lying together on a mattress in a large room of many more mattresses. At the time of our visit she had been given space to rest, and was smiling, but one wondered what the future might hold. There were inspiring moments too. Many people from local churches work hard to offer humanitarian support to the migrants. They have been offering this support in many instances for a good many years. No-one knows how many more years this care will be needed, yet they are determined to continue despite not having a great deal themselves. Their faith was so strong, and they were truly seeking to live it.”

Established in 1858, the first women’s movement in the Methodist Church aimed ‘to train, equip and finance the sending of women missionaries overseas’.

This aim remains central to MWiB, supporting Mission Partners with prayer and practical support, working with Global Relationships to share news and identify projects for fundraising, gifts and grants, and visiting partner churches overseas on behalf of the Church.



Migrants held in cages at the Mexico-USA Border



Mexican church members making sandwiches for migrants

World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women



As a global fellowship of Methodist, United and Uniting Church women, the purpose of the WFM&UCW is "to know Christ and to make him known", by supporting and promoting the interests of women in all areas of life, and encouraging Women in leadership.

Its logo is the Tree of Life—the name also given to its quarterly magazine.

MWiB is the British Unit of the WFM&UCW, and part of the Europe: Britain and Ireland Area.

14th World Federation
World Assembly

**Go and bear fruit:
fruit that will last**



Gothenburg, Sweden
10th–15th August 2021

We continue to strengthen our links with Methodist Women in Ireland, and in April 2018 we were delighted to welcome two of the Irish women to our residential weekend at Swanwick. In 2020, Hilary Evans and Jude Simms will represent MWiB at the MWI event in Larne, Northern Ireland.



World Federation Day 2018 Saturday 27th October Life and Learning

150 people gathered in Blackburn and Truro to explore the issue of Universal Education (SDG 4), with keynote speakers Jill Baker (former MWiB President) and Alison Judd (World Federation President). Bible studies on the theme were led by Sandra Goodwin (MWiB President) and Carolyn Lawrence (Britain and Ireland Unit Vice President), and workshops considered the work of Hope Journey, Sat-7, and All We Can, as well as providing resources for sharing faith in a school setting, as teaching staff or by volunteering.



World Federation Day 2020 Saturday 24th October Just Living: Being Faithful with God's Resources (based on SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production)

Central Methodist Church,
Chippenham, Wiltshire
See mailings and website for
further details, coming soon!

Partnership working

Whenever possible, MWiB works in partnership with organisations whose activities fit with our own aims and purposes. Partnership working involves:

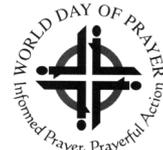
- ~ sharing of information and resources
- ~ identifying and engaging with Issues
- ~ working together to resource and enable people and projects

In 2018–2019, MWiB continued to work in partnership with:

The Methodist Church



Methodist
relief and
development



Methodist
Heritage



Global Social Justice

One of the main aims of MWiB is to engage with issues of social justice both in the UK and around the world.

Working in partnership with the Methodist Church and others, MWiB has raised awareness of and engaged the wider church with issues including Dementia Friendly Churches, hearing and visual impairment, Dalit Solidarity, and, most recently, migrancy, refugees and human trafficking.

United Nations Links

The 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals form the basis of the work of the World Federation, and in turn provide a global social justice focus for many of MWiB's activities and events.

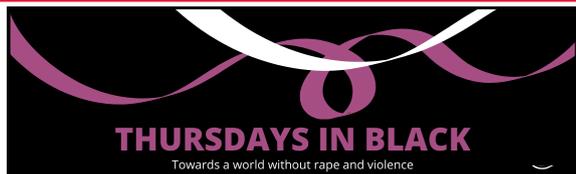
Through the World Federation, MWiB has representation within the United Nations, and the British Unit's Helen Kim Memorial Scholar Rachel Allison is now a UN Representative for the World Federation in Geneva. In January 2019 MWiB sponsored her to attend meetings at the UN and World Council of Churches.

As HKMS, Rachel works with the World Federation and MWiB to raise awareness of issues, particularly among the youth and young adult age groups. In 2021 she will be co-leading the Helen Kim Memorial Scholarship Programme at the World Federation's World Assembly in Gothenburg, Sweden (more details on page 9).

Tabita House

Following Sandra Goodwin's visit to Bolivia in 2017, MWiB took up the challenge of raising money for FEFEME (the Bolivian equivalent of MWiB) to complete the building of Tabita House, a centre providing safe accommodation and skills training for vulnerable women travelling from impoverished rural areas to El Alto, on the outskirts of the capital La Paz. With little or no education, few skills, and young children to care for, women are especially vulnerable, often ending up living and working on the streets.

In 2017 Tabita House was partially constructed but left without a roof when previous funding ceased. MWiB groups, churches and individuals raised £11,780—and Tabita House now has a roof! The additional amount raised will buy equipment, mattresses, and training.



MWiB supports the World Council of Churches' 'Thursdays in Black' campaign, and stands in solidarity against all forms of gender-based violence including domestic abuse, rape and female genital mutilation.

Left: Sandra Goodwin meeting members of FEFEME, the Bolivian equivalent of MWiB.



Mummies Republic

'Mummies Republic' is a church community of women and their pre-school and primary age children based at the South London Mission. Encouraged and led by Winnie Baffoe, a Methodist Venture FX Pioneer, the women meet together to share their faith, life experiences, and concerns. They are mainly from single unit households with little or no social network.

Winnie says, "The London Borough of Southwark was one of the first to experience the roll-out of Universal Credit (UC), and two years later the effects have been tragic and tiresome. The process of UC leaves people feeling silenced and invisible. We felt that an alternative was to enable a platform for the women to share their experiences."

Working with Applegart Arts and author Peter Moreton, a play entitled *The Vortex* was performed in parliament on 21st May 2019. Built around the idea of a television game show, *The Vortex* features real-life stories of mothers from Southwark, and demonstrates the difficulties encountered and many of the 'no win' issues involved with the roll-out of UC.

Enabled by Neil Coyle, MP for Bermondsey and Southwark, and supported by a number of agencies including MWiB, who provided a £2,000 Social and Community Action grant, the performance was taken to a wider audience in a campaign to raise awareness of the lived experiences of UC.

Three members of 'Mummies Republic' recounted with great courage their real-life experiences of trying to speak to a real person rather than conversing via phone or internet (if access to either was feasible), juggling work, childcare and accommodation, facing eviction, and visits to food-banks when the UC system fails—multiple problems faced by families trapped in a situation not of their making.

I felt moved and honoured to attend the initial performance of this important piece.

Also, in the lead up to the 'Mummies Republic' campaign, artist Suzy MacInnes visited members of the group in their homes, documenting some of the realities of their situation in paint on canvas. Some of her artwork is pictured here.

Sandra Goodwin



L-R: Rachel Lampard (Joint Public Issues Team), Winnie Baffoe (Mummies Republic), and Sandra Goodwin (MWiB)

Can you hear me?

AN INTRODUCTION TO SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS IN YOUR CHURCH



In 2019, using money from a generous legacy, MWiB followed up its work on visual impairment and the church with consultation on how our church spaces, worship and activities can be more user-friendly and accessible for people with hearing impairment. The resulting document, with guidelines for supporting people with hearing loss in the church, is now available to download from our website:

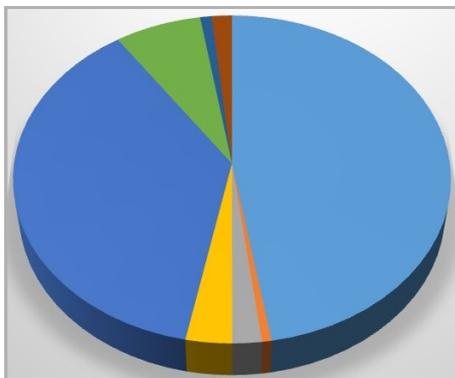
www.mwib.org.uk
or order by email:
resources@mwib.org.uk

Resourcing and Enabling

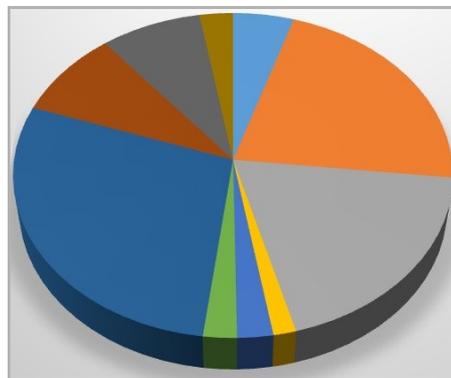
MWiB is self-financed, primarily through donations, which enables us to fund the running of the movement, to underwrite our activities, events and resources, and to offer various gifts, grants and bursaries.

Occasionally MWiB receives generous legacies, and these often enable us to undertake a specific piece of work, where possible linked to the interests of the benefactor.

Receipts to 31st August 2019



Payments to 31st August 2019



Bursaries

As part of its commitment to training women for mission and leadership roles, MWiB offers bursaries to enable women to access a variety of training opportunities. This year we began a successful partnership with Cliff College, which has enabled women to attend courses and events at the college.

In 2018/19, the following bursaries were given:

- to attend *Passions and Palms*, the 2019 MWiB residential weekend: 9
- to attend the World Day of Prayer's *Y-Pray* conference: 1
- to undertake the new Cliff College Gap Year programme: 1
- to attend Cliff College's *Women in Leadership* course: 8
- to attend a weekend retreat on *Ruth* at Cliff College (event organised by the Girls Brigade): 2

You can donate to MWiB by cheque or via the DONATE button on our website.

Gifts and Grants

Empowerment Gifts:

Every year MWiB donates £10,000 to projects working to empower women and girls overseas by providing staff costs, enabling training, or buying equipment to facilitate their work.

In 2018/19, eight applications met our criteria, and the following Empowerment Gifts were awarded:

✦ Methodist Women's Training Centre, Ghana	£1,500
✦ Freetown Cheshire Home, Sierra Leone	£1,000
✦ Mahalir Sakthi, India	£1,500
✦ Methodist Care and Development Trust, Nigeria	£1,500
✦ Reaching the Unreached, Colombia	£1,500
✦ MCK Irindiro Primary School, Karibuni, Kenya	£1,000
✦ Methodist Nursery School, The Gambia	£1,000
✦ Ruwadzano Women's Centre, Zimbabwe	£1,000

Social and Community Action Grants:

Every year MWiB sets aside £6,000 for grants for local projects around the UK, to foster interest and involvement in social and community action and to encourage new projects that fill a community need.

Seven SCA Grant applications met our criteria, and the following six of those were awarded in 2018/19:

✦ Coffee and Craft group, Loughborough	£500
✦ Craft and Chatter / Learning for Life, Newcastle	£564
✦ Wesley Online, Liskeard, Cornwall	£600
✦ Soup and Hub Café, Notts and Derby	£412
✦ Natural Learn and Play, Birmingham	£600
✦ Mummy's Republic, London	£2,000

Other Grants:

A grant of £600 was given to Days for Girls in Papua New Guinea to buy an over-locking sewing machine for making re-usable sanitary pads, enabling girls to continue attending school during their monthly period.



An Empowerment Gift granted to the Methodist Nursery School in The Gambia provides a daily hot meal for the children...



...and provides employment for the local women who provide and prepare the food.



Irindiro Primary School in Kenya purchased much needed resources and equipment for the Special Needs classroom with their Empowerment Gift.



This group at Knightthorpe Methodist Church in Loughborough can now enjoy hot drinks as they craft, thanks to the new water boiler purchased with their SCA grant.

All Gift and Grant criteria and application forms can be found on our website: www.mwib.org.uk

Events and Networking

Swanwick 2019



250 women filled The Hayes Conference Centre to capacity in April, with MWiB taking over the whole site for the weekend.

Revd Dr Val Ogden, recently returned from being a Mission Partner in Fiji, spoke on the theme of **Passions and Palms: Heavy Lifting and Resilient Hope**, using illustrations from her Fijian experiences to highlight changes affecting the South Pacific islands as our climate warms.

Travelling in hope
Swanwick Residential 2020
Friday 3rd—Sunday 5th April
Keynote: Jill Baker & Fiona Kendall



Cost: £175 full board
Bursaries available
Further details and
booking form at: www.mwib.org.uk

We flexed our muscles and considered the weight of an 'Atlas stone', acknowledging the burdens we often carry, but ultimately transforming the stone with images of butterflies, a sign of resurrection.

Revd Jenny Pathmarajah joined the 'Signs of Worship' group to lead A Big Sing, and Louise Wilson (British and Irish Area President of the World Federation) led a Bible study session.

We prayed, we sang, we talked, we crafted, we listened, we ate. All in all a great time for friendship, learning, and worship.



Merchandise and Resources

A wide range of merchandise is available with the MWiB logo, including notebooks, pens, bags, badges, and bamboo cups.



MWiB engages with issues of social justice, often producing a resource pack of information, facts and figures, stories, and worship resources relating to the issue. Most recently we have produced resources relating to Dementia Friendly Churches (currently being updated), Visual and Hearing Impairment, and Dalit Solidarity.

As part of an ongoing process of raising the profile of MWiB both within the Methodist Church and more widely, members of the Executive team attended several meetings and events in 2019, engaging with different groups and individuals, and sharing news, information and resources:

- ▣ February, London – Connexional Team at Methodist Church House
- ▣ February, Bristol – Festival of Transformation (ecology day-conference)
- ▣ April, Scarborough – ECG (Christian teaching and holiday event)
- ▣ May, Derbyshire – Cliff Festival (Christian teaching and holiday event)
- ▣ June, Birmingham – Methodist Conference



You can order MWiB resources and merchandise by email from: resources@mwib.org.uk or by post from 'MWiB Resources Officer' at the MWiB address overleaf.

Events Diary: 2019—2020

2019

- Wednesday 11 September MWiB Executive meets at MCH, London
- Sat 5—Sun 6 October MWiB Forum meets at The Hayes, Swanwick
- Saturday 26th October *Water of Life, Water for Life*—World Federation Day at Elm Ridge, Darlington and Christ Church, Braintree
- Fri 1—Sun 3 November MWiB Executive Retreat, Ammerdown Retreat Centre
- Wednesday 20 November MWiB Executive meets at MCH, London

2020

- Wednesday 8 January MWiB Executive meets at MCH, London
- Sat 22—Sun 23 February MWiB Forum meets at Hinsley Hall, Leeds
- Friday 6 March Women's World Day of Prayer
- Wednesday 18 March MWiB Executive meets at MCH, London
- Fri 5—Sun 7 April *Travelling in Hope*—Residential Weekend with keynote speakers Jill Baker and Fiona Kendall
The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire
- Wednesday 10 June MWiB Executive meets at MCH, London
- Friday 26 June *Supporting Growth*—Methodist Conference Fringe event, jointly organised with the Global Relationships Team
- Wednesday 9 September MWiB Executive meets at MCH, London
- Friday 25 September Induction for new Forum reps, The Hayes, Swanwick
- Sat 26—Sun 27 September MWiB Forum meets at The Hayes, Swanwick
- Saturday 24th October *Just Living: Being Faithful with God's Resources*—
World Federation Day at Central Methodist Church, Chippenham





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@methodistwomen

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