

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Greetings from a very wet and soggy Bedfordshire; however, quoting from Monty Python's *The Life of Brian*, always look on the bright side—at least it's not snowing!

There have certainly been bright moments for me over the last few months. On September 15th I attended the official opening of the new Touchstone premises in Bradford. Led by Rev Barbara Glasson, this Christian centre provides the opportunity to work alongside people, and especially women, of many different ethnic backgrounds, finding creative ways to talk about life and faith. Methodist Women in Britain have a working relationship with Touchstone and we now use the centre as our postal address.

Just a few days later I travelled with Nina Rawlins to the beautiful Irish coastal setting of Newcastle, County Down, to join Methodist Women in Ireland in their biennial Fellowship Weekend. Led by Jill Baker we were given the opportunity to think about pilgrimage and how it relates to our own journey of faith.

Another highlight this quarter has been the appointment by Forum of Hilary Evans from the Southampton District as our new MWiB Vice President/President 2018-2022. We welcome Hilary to the executive team and look forward to her leadership. Hilary is passionate about the issue of people trafficking and seeks to raise awareness of this modern day form of slavery.

On 27th October we successfully hosted the World Federation Study Day simultaneously in Blackburn and Truro. Having two venues enabled more people to participate than in previous years, and we hope to repeat this format in 2019 (Saturday 26th October—put the date in your diary!)

Another date to note is Sunday 20th January 2019—the 350th anniversary of the birth of Susanna Wesley. To mark the occasion there will be a prayer vigil at Epworth Old Rectory and a pilgrimage in London. Do look out for news of other events which will be held to commemorate the part that Susanna played as the 'mother of Methodism'.

As always I have really enjoyed meeting with so many of you around the Connexion. Thank you all for your hospitality and commitment. I must confess that treading on the sands of Herm in the Channel Islands, last visited when I was 18 years of age, was an extra special moment! Thank you Pam.

May God bless you all as we celebrate this season of Advent. *

Sandra

* See the MWiB website (Prayer & Worship page) for weekly Advent reflections written by Methodist women from the COGS Creative Writers in Knaresborough.



Photos:

Top: Opening of new Touchstone premises in Bradford

Centre: Visit to Methodist Women in Ireland's Fellowship Weekend

Bottom: Newly elected MWiB Vice-President Hilary Evans

A letter from Revd Dr Stephen Skuce, Director of Global Relationships, The Methodist Church

Times have changed. A generation ago I stood in fear in trembling before the head of the Methodist Missionary Society before being sent out as a mission partner to Sri Lanka. Today I find myself the head of our world church team, and responsible with others in overseeing our work with partner churches across the world. This has been a big change for me, but actually much remains constant.

One of these constants is the support by Methodist women for mission across the world. For many generations Methodist women have focused on supporting our mission partners, our partner churches and their work. And as one who was a recipient of much of this practical and prayerful support in years gone by, it's now my privilege to be able to thank the many thousands of Methodist women for whom the world church remains an important priority.



Leadership training programme, Rwanda

Your prayers for our partner churches, and the mission partners sent in our name, is vital. Through the *Prayer Handbook* we are able to share in a regular cycle of prayer, and seek God's blessing across the world. I hope that recent developments in our world church team will enable us to better support our understanding of mission today in our local churches and groups. If there is any way we can assist you, please do get in touch with us—email WCR.Admin@methodistchurch.org.uk to start the conversation.

Your financial support is hugely appreciated, and using it wisely, is an important part of what the world church team does. Among the partners we support is the Free Methodist Church of Rwanda where an annual grant of £25,000 last year was

used to assist a number of programmes including training to enable women to play a full role in the life of the church, support for families where a child faces psychological challenges, and a sewing project to create income generation for women, especially for those who had not been able to complete their secondary education.

An annual grant of £8,000 to the Church of Pakistan is focused on women's ministry and supports the translation of materials for World Day of Prayer, the development of a book comparing women's present day experience to that from Scripture, workshops on 'violence against women', empowerment programmes, and enabling the triennial Women's Synod held in March 2017 where among the areas considered was further action to support the ordination of women. Often our financial support is focused on areas of church life that struggle to receive priority. In some parts of the world ministry by and to women is not a priority, but your financial support enables courageous women to challenge inequality and for more to take their full place in the life of the people of God.



Women leaders in Pakistan

On behalf of wider British Methodism it's my privilege to be able to thank MWiB for all your prayerful, practical and financial support for the world church, and to continue to work with you in partnership in the days ahead.



Jackie presents the Home Secretary with her napkin

In November, local MP and current Home Secretary Sajid Javid visited Bromsgrove to see the Armistice centenary poppy installation. Jackie Hartrey was there, and managed to have a few moments to present him with her decorated table napkin, created during the 'craftivism' session at this year's Swanwick weekend. The napkins draw attention to food poverty and the increasing need for foodbanks, and call on the Government to re-think their benefits policies, in particular the Universal Credit system.

Mr Javid's security people were keen to whisk him off to his next engagement so he didn't have time to open it, but Jackie was able to show everyone else a photo of the napkin.



EXECUTIVE MEETINGS:

9th January 2019

20th March 2019

FORUM MEETINGS:

16th–17th February 2019

4th–6th October 2019

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

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

Life and Learning

Saturday 26th October 2018

This year's World Federation Day event, on the theme of **Life and Learning—Quality Education for All**, (based on Sustainable Development Goal 4), was held simultaneously in two venues. Around 80 people gathered at Truro Methodist Church and another 100 at St Paul's Methodist Church in Blackburn. Delegates were warmly welcomed at both venues, and fantastic catering teams provided a wonderful hot lunch and refreshments during the day.

In Truro, opening worship was led by Jill Nute and Cathy Arscott from the Cornwall District, and Carolyn Lawrence led a Bible study on the theme of 'Learning from God's Word.' Carolyn spoke about what the Bible teaches us about knowledge, wisdom and learning and how we can share that legacy of learning with others. There followed a keynote speech from Alison Judd, who spoke about issues in education in our own country and across the world, sharing some of her experiences from her recent travels as the World President of the WFM&UCW.

In Blackburn the opening worship was led by Deacon Jane Harpur, the District MWiB President, and Bible study by Sandra Goodwin. The keynote speaker was Jill Baker, former Vice President of Conference, who spoke about cultural assumptions and differences in education, which she experienced as a Mission Partner with young children.

In the afternoon, there was opportunity to participate in workshops on the theme. Carolyn Lawrence and Rachel Allison presented workshops on how *All We Can* is seeking to remove barriers to education in some of the poorest countries in the world.

In Truro, Chris and Paddy Miles from the charity SAT-7 gave an overview of their work and ministry in the area of education across the Middle East and North Africa, and Margaret Lilley from *Scripture Union* shared ideas about how we as individuals and churches can get involved in supporting our local schools.

The other workshops in Blackburn were led by Wanda Hogan (Helen Kim Scholar for Ireland) speaking about education in Zimbabwe, and *Hope Journey*, a charity working to tell the Bible story in an interactive way in many schools in the North West of England.

In each venue there was quiet reflective space, a welcome oasis of peace and stillness in an otherwise busy day, with prayer resources prepared by the local teams. The day concluded with closing worship led by Alison Judd in Truro and Rachel Allison in Blackburn, which included prayers of intercession based on the issues raised during the day.

There was some excellent feedback from both venues, with many of those who attended expressing their gratitude for an interesting and inspiring day, with lots of ideas about practical ways to get involved in supporting education locally as well as across the world.

Carolyn Lawrence

British Area Officer for WFM&UCW



World Federation President Alison Judd



Deacon Jane Harpur and former Vice President of Conference, Jill Baker



Hope Journey workshop facilitators



Margaret Lilley (Scripture Union)



Quiet reflective prayer space at Truro



Bible study for Blackburn delegates



MWiB Merchandise

New to our merchandise range this autumn an attractive **MWiB notebook**, pictured below. A5 size in ivory with the MWiB logo on the cover, it has lined pages, ribbon page marker, and elastic closer—and at just **£3.00** it makes a perfect small gift, Secret Santa, or stocking-filler!



Another lovely gift item is the **MWiB Swarovski beaded and Pendant cross bookmark** featuring our logo. These are on offer at **£8.00**—there is limited stock, so please order soon to avoid disappointment.

Also available are **MWiB Pulpit Falls** at **£20.00** each.

The Shoreline conversation packs on offer at **£5.00** each:
Aloneness - in both standard and large print.
Journeying Spiritually with Children – standard only.

And of course there are MWiB bags, pens, candles, note cards compact mirrors, and badges.

For more information about MWiB merchandise go to:
www.mwib.org.uk
or email Liz Marriott,
Resources Officer, at: resources@mwib.org.uk



Swanwick 2019 Residential Weekend

Friday 5th—Sunday 7th April



Creative Explorations
with Revd Dr Val Ogden

BOOKINGS NOW OPEN!

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Crèche and children's programme available

For more information and booking form:
visit: www.mwib.org.uk
email: admin@mwib.org.uk
or telephone: 0300 030 1517

Contact us:

MWiB President:	Sandra Goodwin	president@mwib.org.uk
Vice President:	Hilary Evans	vicepresident@mwib.org.uk
WFM&UCW Officer:	Carolyn Lawrence	wfmucw@mwib.org.uk
Finance Officer:	Nina Rawlins	finance@mwib.org.uk
Communications Officer:	Judith Simms	communications@mwib.org.uk
Resources Officer:	Liz Marriott	resources@mwib.org.uk
General enquiries	0300 030 9873	admin@mwib.org.uk

Our new postal address is: MWiB, c/o Touchstone, 4 Easby Road, Bradford BD7 1QX

NOTE: the old P.O. Box address is now no longer in use.

Visit us:

Website: <http://www.mwib.org.uk>
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