



Methodist Women in Britain Newsletter—Winter 2023

Letter from the Co-Chairs

Greetings!

Winter will soon be upon us, though the temperatures are remaining mild. Autumn has been quite turbulent, in more ways than one. We are experiencing the effects of climate change in the recent storms and our thoughts and prayers are with those people whose homes have been affected by flooding and erosion. The war between Israel and Palestine has shocked us as we have seen the harrowing reports on the news and prayed for peace in that war-torn land.

We have been working on the Easter Offering Service for next year, the theme of which is: 'Let Justice Roll'. God calls us to fight for justice but the need for justice is on-going and we must never give up; we need to leave a better world for the next generation and the generations after them. The resources will be available on the Methodist Publishing website after Christmas and there will be a link on our website.

We held our first Trustee Meeting in October, under our new structure. The theme of the weekend was 'Hospitality – Preparing a Table'. Being a smaller number, helped us to have useful and meaningful discussions and to review how the new structure is working. There are bound to be 'tweaks' in any new structure but hopefully we are getting there! If you are not aware of who is your Trustee, please do ask, and similarly, do contact your District Ambassadors if you have any questions – we are all here to help and to make our line of communication stronger.

This year, we are focusing on two projects: 'Period Poverty' and 'Dora' a project based in Ukraine. Our aim with 'Period Poverty' is to make sure that sanitary products are available in the cloakrooms of all churches, so please check if you have them readily available in your church and if not, raise the matter with your minister or Church Council. This is one way we can show our hospitality to those who visit our premises and to let them know they are welcome as well as providing for basic needs.

The 'Dora' project is based in sub carpathian Ukraine and has been set up to protect a group of young people (currently 19 girls and 5 boys) who are at high risk of trafficking or being unable to reach their potential because of the disruption of war. The project offers lifeskills and practical support alongside access to education. Beds Essex and Herts have already adopted this as their project for the coming year.

Ruth finishes her term of office at the end of this Methodist year, so we are advertising for a new Co-Chair. If you know anyone who you think would be suitable, please have a word with them and give them a nudge. Is God calling you? If you would like a chat about the role, please email Ruth or Maggie.

Please do continue to put your District news on our website and Facebook page so that we can share your ideas. This also helps us to know what is going on in the Districts, and strengthens communication.

As we wait for the coming of the Christ Child, who was born in occupied Judea and had to flee to safety with his parents, to Egypt, let us remember those who are having to make the same journey and for those for whom this is not an option. In this season of Advent, let us go forward in hope to pray for peace in the world.

Every Blessing for Christmas

and the New Year.

Maggie and Ruth

Contact us—please note new emails:

Maggie Woods

cochairsouth.mwib@gmail.com

Ruth Parrott

cochairnorth.mwib@gmail.com



THANK YOU !

Over £6000 sent to All We Can AgLit + Project, Ruth's fundraiser over the last 2 years.

Wow! Thank you so much – this is amazing.

Thank you for all your efforts over the last couple of years to tell these stories, to enable MWiB to engage with the work of AGLIT+ and the work our partners do all around the world. Really grateful,



Trustees met at
Swanwick during
October

— and took time out
for a rather
windswept photo!



Methodist Women in Britain

Make a Difference ... Become a Co-Chair of Methodist Women in Britain

We are Methodist Women in Britain, a charity whose focus is for women, for justice and for Christ.

We are looking to recruit a new Co-Chair to work in tandem with the present Co-Chair, Maggie Woods.

As Co-Chair of the Charity, you will be a representative for Methodist Women in Britain and the Methodist Church. Currently the work is shared on a predominantly North/South basis, but this is open to negotiation. There will also be an opportunity to have an overseas visit during your term of office. The role brings many wide-ranging opportunities to engage with people inside and outside the Methodist Church. You will have the support of other Trustees, the Executive Team, and a network of local Methodist women to help you guide and shape the future direction of the movement.

So, if you are passionate about :

creating a fairer world for women and girls

social action and fighting injustice.

encouraging others in their walk with Christ

then we want to hear from you.

Prior experience of Methodist Women in Britain is not essential, as you will be able to shadow one of the present Co-Chairs before you take up office in September 2024. You will need to be comfortable with public speaking and have good communication, organisational and IT skills. Experience of chairing meetings and leading worship will be an advantage.

This is a volunteer position with reasonable expenses reimbursed.

Could God be calling you to apply for this exciting role starting in September 2024?

If you would like further information or an informal chat about the role, please contact thepresident.mwib@gmail.com

Closing Date – Friday 5th January 2024

Co-Chair Ruth's Visits

It is always a joy to visit groups and to meet you all and recently I have made three visits. The first to the Methodist Women in Ireland Retreat at the Drumalis Retreat and Conference Centre, Larne. I received a wonderful welcome and I was met at the airport by Moira, the secretary of MWI, and Joan Strong, the previous President, then transported to the Retreat Centre, where I was met by Olive Rowe, the President. Drumalis is a beautiful Centre with a very impressive staircase and colourful stained-glass windows set in splendid grounds.



The challenging theme of the conference was 'Faith Over Fear' which in the setting of Northern Ireland, had real significance for the women attending. The speaker was Rev Maureen Hassard, a Supernumary Minister who had served in Northern Ireland. She encouraged us to examine our faith in the light of two questions:

What does your faith look like to Jesus? What does your faith look like to other people?

The Methodist Connexional President of Ireland, Rev David Turtle joined us for lunch and then answered questions during the afternoon session.



This was followed by a cookery demonstration by Ingrid, who managed to demonstrate and cook seven tray bakes in an hour! There was an evening of games and quizzes. One quiz was on places in Ireland and proved to me how lacking my knowledge of Ireland is! There was much fun and laughter.

The conference concluded on the Sunday with a Communion Service led by Olive and Maureen. I was delighted to be asked to distribute the wine, which meant I had met everyone there. I came away richer than I had arrived with new friends and much to reflect upon.

My second visit was to the Dane and Trent MWiB meeting to talk about my visit to Colombia, meeting old friends and new.

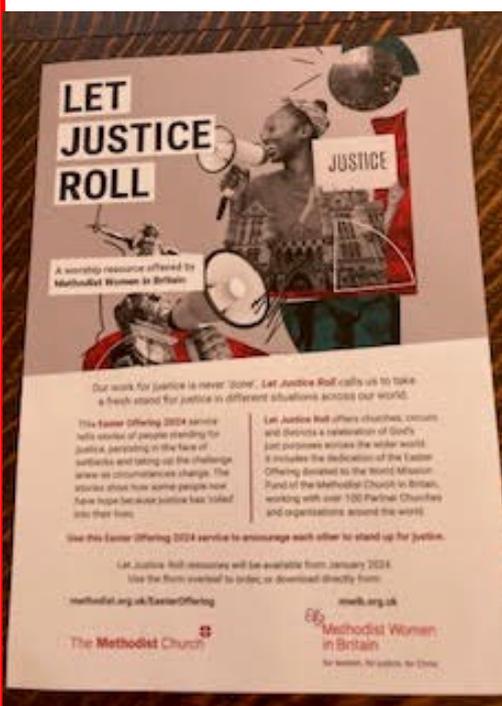
I have also visited Princes Park MC in Toxteth Liverpool with Trustee Margaret Lindley. We had been invited by Naledi Phaladi, the Liverpool Ambassador, to talk about MWiB to a new group. We began with worship led by Naladi and then were given a history of the church which had served the community during the Toxteth Riots in July 1971. After a wonderful 'Bring and Share' lunch, we talked about MWiB, it's values and work and then we had a craft session – decorating candles and making bags for our Period Poverty Project. Craft work always generates conversation and we learned much about the lives of the women in Toxteth. We were royally looked after by Alfred, who, as well as looking after our needs and brewing endless cups of tea, joined in with the craft work. Thank you to the women at Princes Park, for making us so welcome and we look forward to seeing you at some of our events.



My last visit was to the annual 'Love and Light' Day for the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District, held at Wolstanton MC, Newcastle-under-Lyme. There was a choice of activities – Christmas Card making, Glass Painting, Bible Study, Journalling, Christmas Poetry and Music workshops. It was a lovely day of fun and fellowship and we ended the day with a 'Show and Tell' Advent Service followed by tea and cake.

If you would like me to come to speak at your group, please invite me!

Easter Offering 2024—Let Justice Roll



Our work for justice is never 'done'. Let Justice Roll calls us to take a fresh stand for justice in different situations across our world.

This Easter Offering 2024 service tells stories of people standing for justice, persisting in the face of setbacks and taking up the challenge anew as circumstances change. The stories show how some people now have hope because justice has 'rolled' into their lives.

Let Justice Roll offers churches, circuits and districts a celebration of God's just purposes across the wider world.

It includes the dedication of the Easter Offering donated to the World Mission Fund of the Methodist Church in Britain, working with over 100 Partner Churches and organisations around the world.

Empowerment Gifts Update

In 2022 MWIB awarded an Empowerment Gift for a Kitchen Garden Project at Maua Methodist Hospital in Kenya, a Community Empowerment Project in Uganda and a Tailoring Project in Kenya.

And this is what they have done:

The Kitchen Garden Project has provided 32 kitchen gardens and trained and supported over 300 patients on a palliative programme on planting and growing vegetables such as kale, spinach, tomatoes, cucumber and onions and fruit trees such as mangoes, oranges and avocados, which grow well in that area. This has improved their health and wellbeing and provided financial support.

The project in Uganda empowered marginalized people, particularly disabled teenage mothers and women to help them to realise their potential and participate in community development. They conducted a community awareness workshop to sensitize communities on the needs and rights of people with disabilities so that the community can give them support even when they come up with initiatives aimed at self employment. During these awareness workshops, it was noted that the targeted communities have misconceptions about people with disabilities and they abuse them out of ignorance.

The Tailoring Project supported two workshops in Kenya, benefitting women of different ages, helping them to repair clothing and sew new items, which means they are able to buy food. They also were able to secure school uniform contracts with the local schools, which has enabled them to be more independent. Many of the women are sole breadwinners and they need the money raised to be able to feed themselves and their families. The second workshop taught the women to produce quality items including laptop cases, wrap skirts, jackets as well as school uniforms.

All last year's recipients wished to thank MWIB for their support in enabling these projects to happen and make a difference to their lives.

This year we awarded 5 Gifts: to groups in Togo for preventative health; in Fiji for training women in pastoral care leading to a recognised Level 4 qualification which will improve their lives; in Sri Lanka to provide equipment to Tamil widows to enable them to sell products and provide an income; in Columbia to provide allotments which will improve food security and financial independence and in Uganda to assist 80 vulnerable children and women with disabilities who have HIV.

All these projects will make a big difference to the quality of their lives in each of these five countries and we look forward to an update next year.

Sylvia White, MWIB Empowerment Gifts

Are you involved with a project abroad who might benefit from an Empowerment Gift? The application form for 2024 will be on our website in April, closing date 31st July 2024. But if you want to know more contact Sylvia at: empowermentgifts.mwib@gmail.com

Have you visited our Methodist Women in Britain website recently? www.mwib.org.uk

This is the place to find out all the latest information about all things related to MWiB.

On the Home page you can read regular Blog's from our CoChair's Ruth & Maggie; each Saturday our Prayer for the Week is posted; you can also access our quarterly newsletter and find details of upcoming events as well as direct links to our You Tube channel to view past events and webinars—a useful resource for local meetings instead of a speaker.

But there is much more!

Click on the About Us page, scroll down and meet the executive team and trustees.

Read the News and Events page for news from around the Districts & national events.

Click on the World Church Focus page, scroll down and after news of overseas visits you will find news from the World Federation of Methodist & Uniting Church Women. You will now find that our Helen Kim Scholar, Madeleine Reed is writing an occasional Blog sharing some very heartfelt thoughts. Why not take a look and encourage Madeleine with an email response.

Our Creative Spirituality page contains links to the Prayer Diary as well as reflections posted for Advent & Lent. This year's Advent Reflections will be found here.

Finally the Resourcing & Enabling page helps you access grant application forms and also tells you about the resources we have for sale—new wooden gifts will be available soon. Our Social Action page is a work in progress—be patient with us as we update things.

Swanwick Conference 2024—booking & payment for this will be through our website—the link will be on the Home page—booking opens Monday 15th January 2024.

Facebook—you can also join in the conversation on our Facebook page where our Digital Media Coordinator Ruth posts regularly—she'd love you to join in the chat.

 **Remember there are grants available all year round from Methodist Women in Britain.**
Social & Community Action grants; Enabling grants; Discretionary grants; Pastoral Care Fund & Bursaries
Visit our website: www.mwib.org.uk for further information and application forms or contact our Finance Officer: finance.mwib@gmail.com



Methodist Women in Britain Conference 2024 – ‘Words Create Worlds’

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Our ability to communicate, to imagine, to work for change is held within a framework of sounds and images, vowels and consonants.

Jenny and Becca have teamed up to offer two different angles, inviting us to examine the words we use, the reality we create with those words and the future that they shape.



Rev Jenny Pathmarajah is a long-standing friend and supporter of Methodist Women in Britain and is very excited to be leading this weekend. Most of the time she's very happily sat behind a piano and known amongst us for her music workshops and in days gone by, contextual bible studies. But her first degree was in Linguistics at Durham University and has a real passion for the power of words and how they transform our everyday life and understanding of God. Jenny leaves the comfort of the piano stool this weekend and promises us an enlightening and challenging journey as we discover the power of words in the church and our faith.

Becca Byass lives in Nottingham and works as an Engagement officer for All We Can (Methodist Relief and Development). Prior to that, Becca worked in social care for seven years, promoting wellbeing and enabling individuals to 'live later life well' and as the Nottingham and Derby District Wellbeing Officer (with a similar aim but less Bingo!). Becca has a master's degree in Theology, Politics and Faith-based Organisations, a PGCE in Secondary Education and a BA in Biblical and Evangelistic Studies. Becca is scared of disconnection and rejection, she hopes for a future where every person's potential is fulfilled and finds joy in the changing seasons, large bodies of water, Ossie (black labrador), and her two children, Felicity (15) and Alex (17).

Friday 19th to Sunday 21st April 2024 at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick

Cost £185 full board; Zoom only option £40; Bursaries available (need to apply)

Booking opens on 15th January 2024 on our website: mwib.org.uk

More info needed? Contact swanwick.mwib@gmail.com or 0300 030 9873

In addition to our fabulous speakers a variety of workshops will be offered on Saturday afternoon including this year: Bible Study; Creative Writing; Media; Weaving; Interfaith working (on Zoom); The use of cash in poverty; Juggling; & two from our friends at Mother's Union: Domestic Violence & Themed Craft. Plus our usual Marketplace with a variety of stalls; A QUIZ; late night circle dancing; and Holy Communion to conclude our conference. And faith, friendship & fellowship all weekend.

11th JOINT EUROPEAN AREA SEMINAR
Porto,
13th - 17th June 2024

“rooted and grounded in love”

Area Seminar:
 a meeting place for all methodist women in Europe
 brought to you by the two European Areas of the World Federation

Praise Discussion
Worship
Differnet Culture
Bible Study
Love Feast
 & more...

Kerry Spence
 Church Speaker

Sipwe Chisvo
 Church Speaker

Deacon and Vice President of the British Methodist Church. Kerry grew up in and around Belfast. Her earlier appointments included circuit ministry, workplace chaplaincy, and the development of both the West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network, and the Adayu Project, a Birmingham District project supporting survivors of modern slavery. Kerry is still involved with the work of Adayu in a voluntary advisory capacity, and has part time PhD studies exploring the ways in which faith stories of survivors can shape engagement with modern slavery.

Sipwe Chisvo, Harare, Zimbabwe, Southern and East Africa Area, World President of the World Federation of Methodist and United Church women (WFMUCW). The first black woman from Africa being the World President of this wonderful organization. Sipwe is counselor and family-therapist. Excited about being part of a world-wide sisterhood she declares: "The World Federation is a place where I think Methodist women should be in, if one wants to advance in all dimensions."

more information:
 In Britain/Ireland: Barbara Easton: britainireland.president@wfmucw.org
 In Continental Europe: Lilla Kardosné Lakatos: europe.president@wfmucw.org
 Learn more about the World Federation: wfmucw.org

REGISTER NOW

DAFFODIL DAY 2024

A SPRING FESTIVAL FOR CHRISTIAN ENCOURAGEMENT AND RENEWAL

SAVE THE DATE: SAT 2ND MARCH 2024

1:40PM for 2PM start -
 Methodist Central Hall, Storey's Gate, Westminster SW1H 9NH

WITH
 Pam Rhodes - Broadcaster & Author
 Revd Gill Newton - President of the Methodist Conference
 and a host of Special Guests

WEB MCHW.LIVE TEL 020 7654 3809



**You are invited to a Garden Party at Epworth Old Rectory
 on Saturday 18th May 2024, 2pm to 5pm**

**Guest speakers: Dr Ruth Slatter & Dr Hannah Worthen talking about their research work
 using the Women's Collection held at Epworth Old Rectory.**

**There will be opportunity to view the latest Women's Collection exhibition; share & record your
 experiences and memories of life as a woman in the Methodist Church; talk to Ruth & Hannah
 and to Anya, Visits & Collections manager EOR.**

Afternoon tea will be served.

We end the day with worship led by Rev Angy Long, Chair of the Lincolnshire District.

Details of cost and how to book will be in our next newsletter and on our website from March

Our 2nd Mary Bosanquet Lecture will be given by Chine McDonald

(Head of Community Fundraising & Public Engagement at Christian Aid)

Casting down the mighty: women and the mission of God

Despite much progress in Church and society in recent decades, vestiges persist that portray women as 'less than', causing some to doubt their role in the purpose of God's mission. This lecture will explore how women throughout history have engaged in the issues of justice in the face of oppression, casting down the mighty, and working to bring about God's kingdom on earth, and re-inspire us all in the life-transforming work of the gospel.

SAVE THE DATE: in the evening of Friday 28th June 2024 at Methodist Conference in Leeds

Contact us: PLEASE NOTE NEW EMAIL ADDRESSES

MWiB Co-chair (North): Ruth Parrott - cochairnorth.mwib@gmail.com

MWiB Co-chair (South): Maggie Woods - cochairsouth.mwib@gmail.com

Finance Officer: Nina Rawlins - finance.mwib@gmail.com

Communications Officer: Bronwen Braisdell - communications.mwib@gmail.com

Digital Media Coordinator: Ruth Dawson - media.mwib@gmail.com

WFM&UCW Officer: Barbara Easton - britainireland.president@wfmucw.org

Helen Kim Memorial Scholar: Madeleine Reed—hkms.mwib@gmail.com

MWiB Resources : Elaine Banks - resources.mwib@gmail.com

General enquiries: 0300 030 9873

or post to MWiB, c/o Stamford Methodist Church, 11 Barn Hill, Stamford, Lincs. PE9 2AE

Visit us: Website: www.mwib.org.uk

Follow us:



Registered Charity No: 1156626 Methodist Women in Britain

MWiB Area Trustees

East Anglia and Lincs - Rita Rowe

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Bolton & Rochdale and Lancashire - Philippa Hill

Liverpool, Chester & Stoke, N. Wales, Manchester & Stockport - Margaret Lindley

Bristol & South Wales - Gillian Pengelly

Southampton & Channel Islands - Liz Chick

Next Trustee meeting: 15th/16th February 2024 at Hinsley Hall, Leeds Please use communications.mwib@gmail.com

initially to make contact with your area trustee and let them know what's happening in your local MWiB group.