



# Methodist Women in Britain

*For women, for justice, for Christ*

Newsletter  
August 2020

## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Readers,

2020 will no doubt be a year remembered by those who are living through it, and by those who learn history in the future. It has brought new experiences, and forced reflection on how we live. Personal experience over recent months contains mixed emotions as time has seemingly played tricks. It can seem a long time since March, or no time at all. Always, however, the days have rolled together into one.

My diary rapidly filled with crossings out, as travel and interactions ceased. Seeking ways to maintain a presence for MWiB, and endeavour to encourage interest in our work soon filled the gap. Zoom meetings became a new norm, and it has been such a boon to talk face to face with people. It has enabled the MWiB Executive to continue to meet, to maintain contact with other agencies, to conduct interviews, and to pass on information. It will surely keep a place in our days.

One exciting development has been MWiB partnering with Twelvebaskets to continue the production of *The Vine at Home*. Some of you will be familiar with the resources Twelvebaskets produces, supporting churches with service sheets for local arrangements and a range of other resources. At the start of lockdown they realised there would be a need for people to access worship, especially those without access to online facilities. This was an area of significant concern for us at MWiB too. *The Vine at Home* was produced to help fill this need, with the original thought that lockdown would be relatively short lived and costs would be manageable. However, such a need will be ongoing for some time, and MWiB will part-fund the production of *The Vine at Home* for a further year. The lectionary-based service is produced weekly, in two formats, uploaded onto our website each Wednesday. One version contains links to hymn accompaniments etc. online. The other is a simple black and white version which can be printed onto two sides of A4, and shared with those who cannot access it any other way. We are hearing stories of the occupants of one flat in a block passing the sheets on, so that each week every person in the block has used it. Also, parents of young children find a chance for a spiritual respite in their week, and neighbours, concerned about a single person in isolation, take the sheets to them each week to maintain contact. I commend it to you. It is free at the point of receipt. Please use it and share it widely—and do let us have your feedback on how you're using and sharing the resource.



Funding for the Mexican migrant café in Tijuana [pictured left] has also been adversely affected. This appeal was launched just before lockdown, but the needs of the migrants and those in the churches seeking to help and support them has only risen during this time. If you are looking for a fundraising project, do please consider doing something to help people trapped at the U.S. border.

We have two new appointments to announce. The first is that Ruth Parrott has been appointed as MWiB Vice President/President 2020–2024. Ruth has a background in Primary teaching and is also very musical, so we welcome her to the team and look forward to working with her. Ruth has written a piece to introduce herself, which you will find on page 2.

Secondly, Barbara Easton has been appointed as the next World Federation Area President (Britain and Ireland Area). She was due to begin this five year appointment in August 2021 at the World Assembly, but that meeting in Gothenburg has been postponed to 2022 because of Covid-19. This delay has been

filled, however, as the Methodist Conference in June appointed her as Vice President of Conference 2021–2022. She is going to be well occupied! Barbara has a background in secondary teaching and headship, and currently works as Director of Education for the Methodist Church.

I am hoping that some of my Autumn appointments will take place, and I look forward to meeting those of you whom I only know by name. In the meantime you will stay in my prayers, and whatever your personal circumstances I pray that you will feel supported, and that God is nearby, keeping you company.

With my good wishes,

**Hilary**

## Introducing...

### Ruth Parrott

*At their meeting in February, the MWiB Forum appointed Ruth as the next Vice President and President of MWiB, a role which she took over in June. Ruth writes:*



I was born in Stockport into a Methodist family. My father was a Local Preacher, my mother, a Sunday School Teacher and my uncle, a Methodist Minister. I met my husband, Michael, who was training to be a Local Preacher, at a weekend Youth Conference in Buxton. I trained as a teacher, specialising in music, at Bretton Hall College of Education in West Yorkshire, and we married as I left college and as Michael began his training for the ministry. We have a son and a daughter and four lovely grandchildren. We currently live in the attractive, rural town of Nantwich in Cheshire.

I have taught in a variety of Primary Schools in the places we have been stationed – Stockport, Warrington, Sandbach, Cheadle (Staffs) and Newcastle Under Lyme, almost all in deprived areas and one in a tiny village school in the Staffordshire Moorlands. In all the schools I have been responsible for Music and RE. I became very interested in interfaith relationships and in 2008/9 I was awarded a Farmington Fellowship to study ‘Music in Different Faiths’ at the Farmington Institute, Harris Manchester College, Oxford.

As a minister’s wife, I have supported my husband: sharing services as a Worship Leader, organising events, becoming involved with many women’s activities, starting Mother and Toddler groups and presiding at local and circuit ‘Network’ and MWiB meetings. I served on the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent District Young Wives’ Committee and also on the Connexional Young Wives’ Committee. When I retired in 2011, I became more involved with the Circuit and District MWiB and had the privilege of serving as District President 2015–17, during which time I attended the WFM&UCW 13th World Assembly at Houston and the Joint European Areas Seminar in Belfast. I am a volunteer at Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum of Primitive Methodism, which highlights the importance of the role played by women in the Methodist Church, not least in teaching and preaching. I have travelled widely, the most memorable visits being to a South African Township, Israel, China, and educational establishments in Australia.

Music plays an important part in my life. When the children were young, I taught the piano at home—which paid for our holidays and my driving lessons! I have enjoyed directing several church choirs and their performances of musicals. Before ‘Lockdown’ I sang in the church choir, which has a ministry of bringing music to the local Communities, and I was a member of ‘The Border Singers’—a more serious choir!

I have a passion for Social Justice, particularly Climate Change, the eradication of poverty, and the global right for education, for Creative Spirituality, Pilgrimage, and Interfaith Relationships. I am really looking forward to developing the work at Touchstone and to working with you all across the Connexion.

**Ruth**

*[If you would like to invite Ruth to visit your District or Circuit, you can email her at: [vicepresident@mwib.org.uk](mailto:vicepresident@mwib.org.uk) or telephone: 0300 030 9873 and leave a message.*

## Q & A: What's going on...?!

You may well ask! Coronavirus has affected many things this year, including of course MWiB events and activities. Hopefully the Q&A below will clarify what's on, what's gone—and what's available instead!

### Q: What's happening with the Easter Offering?

A: The ongoing crisis has meant another re-think of our plans for this year's Easter Offering. The 'Into all the world' service material prepared this year will now be used for the Easter Offering 2021. The date will be changed on the resources, and they will be available to order later in the year. If you have already ordered and received resources, please simply alter the date yourself and use them next year, rather than waste them.



### Q: So there is no Easter Offering for 2020?

A: Not in its usual format, and not using the 'Into all the world' material.

However, Carolyn Lawrence is working with the Global Relationships team to produce a short service reflecting on the effect of Covid-19 on our partner churches around the world. This resource will be available in September, and the intention is that the worship material will be shared as widely as possible, along with an Easter Offering envelope, so that donations can be made (either online or via church groups) to help with extra funding for grants made due to Covid-19.

*You can of course send donations to the Methodist Church World Mission Fund at any time!*

### Q: Does this mean Sandra Goodwin won't be writing an Easter Offering service?

A: Sandra has graciously offered her service material, written originally for the 2021 Easter Offering, as an additional resource. The resource, which will be available to download from the MWiB website in September, looks at issues around climate change, and links in with the theme of the 2020/21 Methodist Prayer Handbook and the Methodist Church's current focus on climate change and COP26.

### Q: We REALLY missed the Swanwick Residential this year! Can we come next year?

A: Yes! At least, we hope so! Friday 16th—Sunday 18th April 2021: please put the date in your diary, and we will confirm details of speakers etc as soon as possible.

### Q: And what about the Methodist Conference Fringe Event?

A: The original plan was to join with the Global Relationships team, overseas guests and Mission Partners to share "Stories of Kingdom Growth" from around the Connexion and around the world. In the event, we collected together lots of those stories, and shared them online. You can find them all on the HOME page of the MWiB website.

### Q: Is the World Federation Day event happening in October?

A: This year's World Federation Day event has been postponed, and will now take place next year, on Saturday 23rd October 2021, at Chippenham, Wiltshire. The theme will be 'Just Living: Being Faithful with God's Resources', and the day will include worship, keynote address, information sharing and activities.



### Q: Doesn't the World Federation produce study materials for World Federation Day?

A: Yes indeed! This year, the West Africa Area have produced a resource pack based on SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being—a relevant theme if ever there was one! World President Alison Judd writes:

*"In a time of global pandemic it is important that we are all aware of health issues including and in addition to Covid 19. As World Federation sisters, we are committed to working towards the goal of Health and Well-Being for all. I commend this resource to you."*



Why not use the material in lieu of our World Federation Day event? You could use it for personal study, or with your congregation or other women's group if you're meeting in person or online this autumn, or think of how you can share it among others in their homes.

I hope this Q&A has been helpful, but if you have any further queries, please email: [admin@mwib.org.uk](mailto:admin@mwib.org.uk)  
Keep up to date with MWiB information, events, and activities on the website: [www.mwib.org.uk](http://www.mwib.org.uk)

*The three resources mentioned above will all be available to download in due course.*

## MWiB MERCHANDISE



Having taken over this role from Liz Marriott (who came all the way to the South West with her van to deliver the boxes – I can't thank her enough), and having gone through the boxes of 'merch', I thought I'd pop a few words in here to update anyone who has missed buying MWiB stuff over the last few months.

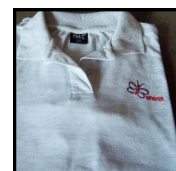
You can find information about most of the items we sell if you go to the website, then 'About Us', and scroll down to 'Merchandise'. BUT... the poor old website is creaking at the knees (I have a fellow-feeling for it); Jude Simms will be working on it over the summer, and hopes to have links and so forth working after that. So in the meantime you can email me at [resources@mwib.org.uk](mailto:resources@mwib.org.uk) to order anything (or telephone 0300 030 9873 and leave a message). We will take it from there!

So – as a starter, can I just mention a couple of items?

We have some rather nice bamboo re-useable lidded cups for carrying hot or cold drinks around: £5.60. Just the job for summer outings or car journeys, or sitting socially-distanced with others. They have a neat MWiB logo, so if you run out of conversation, you can always talk about that!



And we have some MWiB polo shirts in white, with an embroidered logo: £9.50, but only in small and extra-small. So after four months of being too near the kitchen for comfort, they certainly won't fit me – but maybe some of you have been MUCH more sensible...



We also have two resource titles from our partnership with Shoreline Conversations:

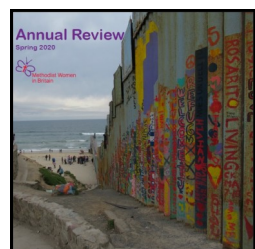
*Journeying Spiritually with Children* and *Aloneness* (also in large print)

Originally £8, but we are selling them for £2.60. For more information, please email me.

Finally, we have MWiB lanyards, at £1.50 (or £1.75 including a plastic pouch), ideal for your District events—and re-usable too.



Elaine Banks  
Resources Officer



### MWiB Annual Review Spring 2020

The latest MWiB Annual Review gives a taste of our activities for 2018/19, and is a good way of introducing people to MWiB, who we are, and what we do.

You can download the Review at our website.

Due to the curtailment of our usual distribution opportunities, we have not had the usual number of Reviews printed this year. However, I have around 500 copies available, free of charge, on a first come, first served basis.

To request these, please email your name, postal address, and the number required, to:  
[communications@mwib.org.uk](mailto:communications@mwib.org.uk)

### Jumpers, umbrellas and plastic bags



In conjunction with our Heritage work and the Methodist Women's Collection held at Epworth Old Rectory, Dr Ruth Slatter is undertaking a research project into women's everyday experiences of Methodism in England from 1945.

Ruth, and her research assistant Hannah Wilson, are inviting women to take part in a 45-minute telephone or online interview in which participants will have an opportunity to talk about their experiences of Methodism, and to consider what objects or material things have played an important role in their journey of faith.

If you're interested taking part in an interview, please contact Ruth by email or telephone:  
[R.Slatter@hull.ac.uk](mailto:R.Slatter@hull.ac.uk) 01482 463456

**EXECUTIVE MEETINGS:** 9th September and 18th November 2020  
**FORUM MEETINGS:** 26th–27th September 2020 and 20th–21st February 2021

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

## Meet a Mission Partner

### Our Woman in South Africa



Freddy and I (Dee) are mission partners in the Methodist Church South Africa. Freddy is one of two ministers in a Circuit of a 204km radius, and we are based in Upington, a town in the Northern Cape region *[marked with a star on the map, left]*.

Upington is a town of rich grape farms and large wineries, drawing most of its labour force from surrounding poor communities. The town has socio-economic concerns of drug and substance abuse, child abuse, and domestic violence, particularly among the communities surrounding the farms.

I, together with a dedicated team of mostly women staff, teach at Oasis Skills Training Centre for children of school going age, youth and adults with learning and other disabilities. The centre was the initiative of a Women's Development Forum formed in 1995 to meet the needs of the town and the surrounding farm communities. I provide one-to-one instruction to learners in the 6–15 years age range, as well as giving other practical support in an environment where resources are limited.

#### Prayer Concerns:

- ~ that more trained teachers and donors be found for the work of the Centre, which is struggling in its operations due to financial constraints;
- ~ that staff and learners will remain safe until the Centre opens again after the upheaval caused by the Covid 19 pandemic.

*Dee Takavarasha*



### **Change begins with a bicycle!**

Throughout Butagaya, in rural Uganda, every day presents a new challenge for children like Nawalat. She dreams of being a nurse; but her two-hour journey to school, and the chores she must do at home, meant she was often late and was turned away from class.

This year's Harvest Worship resources from All We Can are helping provide children like Nawalat with bicycles. Bicycles are more than a means of transport: they are a way to start breaking the cycle of poverty.

Now she cycles, Nawalat arrives at school on time, every day—and she can help with chores at home as well. 'I feel good, because with the bike I am able to reach school in time', she says. Her dream of becoming a nurse is within her grasp, thanks to her bicycle.

Whether you plan on meeting virtually or in person this Harvest, All We Can's resources will help your church, congregation or small group begin to make real change.

Download resources from: [allwecan.org.uk/cycle](http://allwecan.org.uk/cycle)

In 2021, MWiB will celebrates its

## **10th Birthday!**

(No, we can't quite believe it either!)



We're planning a number of events and activities to celebrate, including a Connexional coffee morning / tea party, a Creativity Day celebrating our story, a special event at Methodist Conference, and much more.

Keep your eyes open for further information about events and how to get involved—and if you have any ideas, let us know: how do YOU want to celebrate?



**Methodist Women in Britain**

## Forthcoming Events



### World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women

World Assembly

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



The 14th World Assembly has been postponed,  
and will now take place in Gothenburg

2nd–7th August 2022

*Further details will be released at a later date.*

World Federation Day Event

**Just Living:  
Being Faithful with God's Resources**



This event has been postponed to  
Saturday 23rd October 2021  
at Chippenham, Wiltshire

*Information and booking details  
available spring 2021*

### SWANWICK RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND 2021



Friday 16th—Sunday 18th April 2021

Look out for details of theme, content,  
speakers and activities available later this year.

Coming in May 2021:

a creativity day to  
celebrate our story on our tenth birthday

More details later in the year

#### PLEASE NOTE:

**OUR OLD P.O. BOX ADDRESS HAS NOT BEEN IN  
USE NOW FOR THREE YEARS. UNFORTUNATELY  
MAIL, INCLUDING CHEQUES, IS STILL BEING SENT!**

**THE NEW MWiB ADDRESS IS PRINTED BELOW:  
PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL OFFICE-HOLDERS IN  
YOUR CIRCUIT (BOTH CHURCH OFFICERS AND  
MWiB) ARE AWARE OF THE CORRECT ADDRESS.**

**THANK YOU.**

#### Contact us:

MWiB President:	Hilary Evans	<a href="mailto:president@mwib.org.uk">president@mwib.org.uk</a>
Vice President:	Ruth Parrott	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@mwib.org.uk">vicepresident@mwib.org.uk</a>
WFM&UCW Officer:	Carolyn Lawrence	<a href="mailto:wfmucw@mwib.org.uk">wfmucw@mwib.org.uk</a>
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