



THE WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST AND UNITING CHURCH WOMEN

January - March 2025 / Issue No. 1

The TREE — of LIFE

Arise and Shine

President's letter *page 1*

Editor's word *page 2*

News *page 4*

15th World Assembly *page 5*

President's letter

President's chosen theme for the new quinquennium: Arise and Shine for the Glory of God is Upon You

Our theme for the 15th World Assembly and following quinquennium (2026-2031) is taken from Isaiah 60:1 ("Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.") This reminds us that we are women empowered by the splendor of our Lord. Together we arise in the light of His glory, claiming our space and declaring our purpose. We are no strangers to hardship, but we are called together to shine in the face of adversity, and reflect God's glory into the world through our attitudes and our actions. We are his instrument, so arise, and shine, women of faith; arise and shine Methodist and Uniting Church women for the Glory of God is upon you!



- Sipiwe Chisvo, World President

**TOGETHER WE ARISE IN THE LIGHT OF HIS GLORY,
CLAIMING OUR SPACE AND DECLARING OUR PURPOSE.
WE ARE NO STRANGERS TO HARDSHIP, BUT WE ARE CALLED TOGETHER TO SHINE
IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY, AND REFLECT GOD'S GLORY INTO THE WORLD
THROUGH OUR ATTITUDES AND OUR ACTIONS.**

Editor's word:

Hope in the Darkest Times

Life often brings us moments of despair, where circumstances seem impossible, and the future appears like fog. Yet, even in the darkest times, hope remains a powerful force that can sustain us and lead us to unexpected deliverance.

The story of Jochebed, the mother of Moses, is a testament to the strength of hope. She lived in a time when Pharaoh had decreed that all Hebrew baby boys must be killed. As a mother, she faced an unimaginable reality—her child was born into a world where his life was already sentenced to death. Yet, instead of drowning in fear, she chose hope. She believed that, despite the cruel circumstances, her son could be saved. So, she placed baby Moses in a basket and set him afloat on the Nile River. Her hope was not just a silent wish; it was an active force that moved her to take bold action. She passed this hope to her daughter, Miriam, who watched over her baby brother and, through divine providence, helped reunite Moses with his own mother as his wet nurse.

Moses' very name is a reminder of his miraculous deliverance. In Hebrew, Moshe (משה) comes from the verb *limshot* (למשות), meaning “to be drawn out” or “taken out from water.” He carried this name throughout his life, never forgetting that he had been lifted from the deepest waters of the Nile. In a way, Moses was resurrected from death to life, saved from what seemed like certain doom to fulfill a divine purpose. Why? Because his mother did not let her hope drown in the Nile, but imagined this child would be drawn out.

So, Moses grew up with dual influences—educated in the royal Egyptian palace yet nurtured by his Jewish mother's teachings. He never forgot his true identity. Jochebed's hope was fulfilled beyond what she could have imagined; the child she saved would become the one that saves, the leader who delivered Israel from the Egyptian slavery.

The story of Moses mirrors the greater redemption found in Jesus Christ. The Jewish Passover becomes the Christian Easter. Just as Jochebed's hope in the face of death led to deliverance, so too does Christ's resurrection bring hope and deliverance to all who believe.

Jesus Christ endured the darkest night of suffering, betrayal, and crucifixion. To the world, it seemed like all hope was lost. Yet, on the third day, He rose from the grave, proving that even in the face of death, life

can triumph. Jesus stepped over death with death for us. His resurrection is the ultimate message of hope: no

matter how deep our sorrow, how difficult our trials, or how impossible our situation seems, God is alive and He is still at work. Moses rose from the deep waters of the Nile to bring salvation to the Jewish people, but Jesus rose from the depths of death to bring unlimited salvation, salvation for all humanity.

In our darkest moments, when we feel abandoned, overwhelmed, or defeated, we can hold onto this truth: just as the Nile carried Moses to his destiny, our battles carry us too, and just as the grave could not hold Christ, our present trials cannot hold us either. “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” (Romans 8:37) Never lose hope.

- Ligia Istrate, Tree of Life Editor



Responding to God's Call: Women in Action

Moses received instructions from God in Exodus 3:7, but it was only when he decided to move that his life began to change. Likewise, we can be sure that nothing will happen in our lives unless we make the decision to act first. God will not move if we do not take the initiative. As Christians, our light must shine brighter than the artificial light around us, in such a way that we inspire others to reach their full potential. So, do not allow your light to be dimmed by the ephemeral glow of the world. Moses was like a firefly that had gone out. His light could not transmit hope to the people of Israel until he made the decision to move. In the same way, many people will not know God if we do not take that first step. The Lord has invested time, resources, and blessings into us so that we do not remain static, but rather be a light for others.

In the end, it is not just about the burning bush, but about what God wants to convey through us. The burning bush appears to capture our attention, but the most important thing is the message it carries. This bush can symbolize our church, a group of friends, a job, a conference we

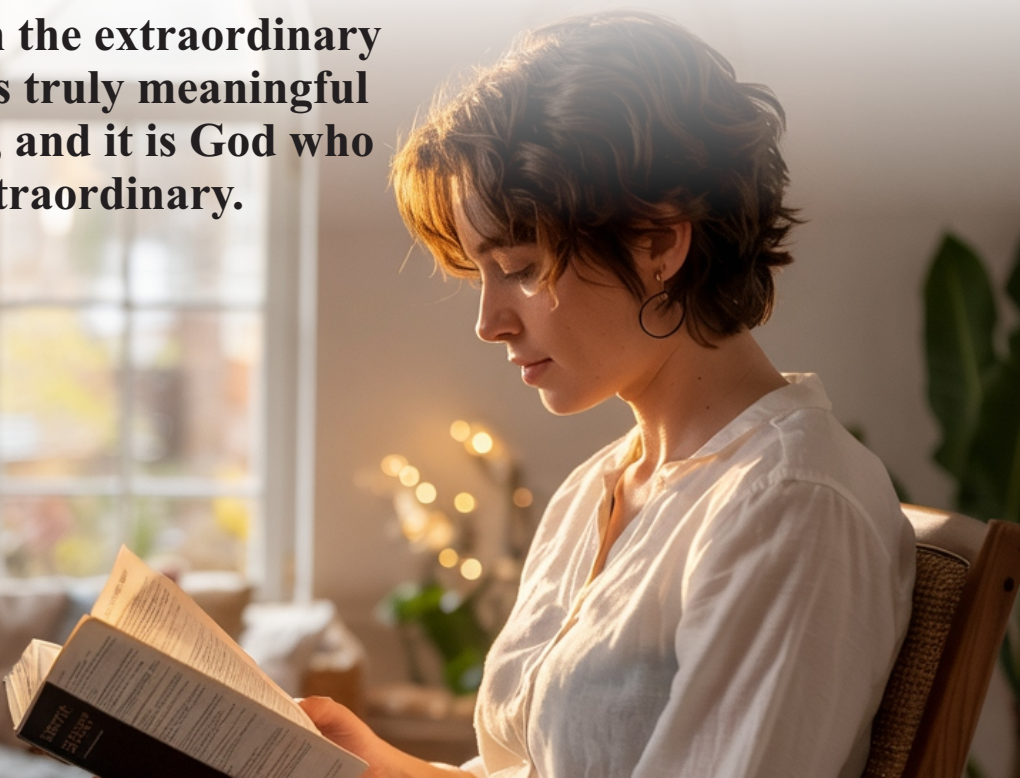
want to attend, or even a pastor we admire. However, the message comes only from God. We cannot worship the bush; if we do not listen to what God wants to tell us and do not take action, the manifestation before our eyes will have no value. We are often so focused on the extraordinary that we forget that what is truly meaningful happens in our daily lives, and it is God who brings about the extraordinary.

To take action, we must redefine our identity and recognize our ability to achieve great things. Likewise, we must have a new vision of who God is and how we see what happens around us, considering that many times what seems like a misfortune can be an opportunity. In Exodus, God sent plagues to Egypt, but these did not affect His people. For the Israelites, these plagues were not a curse, but wonders from God that brought them closer to their liberation.

In conclusion, let us learn to see and react to the manifestations of God in our lives. Be the light that motivates others to be better and to advance in their challenges. Remember that God does not take you out of a difficult place so that you could sit back and do nothing.

- Jessica Solar, Latin America Area President

We are often so focused on the extraordinary that we forget that what is truly meaningful happens in our daily lives, and it is God who brings about the extraordinary.



News

Kuala Lumpur third Executive Committee

noted. This was followed by the adoption of the agenda and the approval of the minutes from the second Executive Committee meeting. After a coffee break, reports were presented by the World Officers, Area Presidents, the Tree of Life Editor, the Web Manager, and the Archivist. The committee then worked on the Guidelines for the World Assembly. The day's sessions concluded with closing devotions led by Filipa Teixeira, Europe Continental Vice-President as the Area President, Lilla Kardosne Lakatos was preparing to have her first baby. In the evening, a dinner was hosted by the Malaysian unit at a

Study Day material, the Thursdays in Black campaign, and programs for young leaders: the Bossey Scholarship, YATRA, and the Helen Kim Memorial Scholarship. The committee also established a committee for reviewing the Handbook and continued working on the Guidelines book. The day's sessions concluded with closing devotions led by Olive Tanielu from the South Pacific Area.

On Friday, the morning devotions were led by Lois Grant Hector from North America. The discussions then



The World Executive, Thursdays in Black

The third Executive Committee meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 19th to 22nd February 2025.

On Wednesday, 19th February, the meeting began with opening devotions led by the World President, Sipiwe Chisvo. The composition of the Executive Committee was confirmed, with two apologies

Chinese restaurant.

On the second day, Patricia Mapani from Southern and Eastern Africa led the opening devotions. This was followed by the financial report from the World Treasurer, which included explanations and discussions on various financial matters until afternoon. Further discussions covered the



World's Officers from left to right: World Treasurer, World Vice-President, World



Tree of Life Editor
with World President.

focused on preparations for the 15th World Assembly in 2026. Topics covered included dates and timelines, budget, venue and accommodation, the logo, the local arrangements committee, the draft program, workshops, keynote speakers, Bible study leaders, registration and registrar, music director, chaplains, the memorial and installation services, the Helen Kim Memorial Scholar program, translation and interpretation, the marketplace display area, nominations committees, scrutineers, personal assistants for the World Officers and other logistical aspects. Each executive member's role and responsibilities were discussed, and work on the Guidelines book continued. The day concluded with closing devotions led by Rajini Jegasothy from South Asia.

Saturday was the last day of the committee meeting. Unfinished business was addressed, and after lunch, there was a short outing in Kuala Lumpur. The gathering concluded in the evening with a Holy Communion service, led by a local pastor.

We are thankful for this executive meeting!

- Ligia Istrate, ToL Editor

Save The Date



WFMUCW 15TH WORLD ASSEMBLY

25-29 AUGUST 2026

Auckland, New Zealand

Delegates & Visitors arrive on 24th
and depart on 30th August 2026

New Elderly Project

After decades of participating in pastoral talks, I was deeply inspired by the theme Reinventing Ourselves in Older Adulthood, shared in a meeting for the “Golden Generation.” It stirred reflection on the place of older adults—especially women—in our faith communities. Despite the growing global elderly population, with projections of 400 million by 2050, pastoral theology often overlooks aging, favoring a youthful, dynamic image of the Church. Sadly, this sometimes marginalizes the elderly, pushing them into the shadows with “elegant discretion.” Yet aging does not diminish a person's spiritual vitality or value to the church.

When we prioritize speed, technical skills, and short-term results over wisdom, experience, and deep-rooted spirituality, we risk losing a profound heritage. While I affirm the importance of investing in youth, excessive focus on them can create apathy toward older adults and children. The elderly are not a burden—they are rich in life lessons, eager to serve, and deserve inclusion in ministry, discipleship, and celebration. We must offer them opportunities to use their gifts and to feel motivated to contribute to God's work.

I dream of a church that embraces every generation—a community where all voices, stories, and rhythms of life are honored. A theology of aging is essential, reflecting Jesus' inclusive vision. At the World Federation of Methodist Women's Executive Committee meeting, I presented a project focused on elderly, called “Formation of Support Groups to Console and Accompany Women in the Midst of Pain, Loss, and

Loneliness,” which was approved. I look forward to sharing it in the next edition of Tree of Life.

*- Ivonne Pereira Díaz,
World Vice-President*

An Irish “Gathering”



World Federation Day is a special day hosted by units around the world, usually on or near the 26th of October. Having been postponed several times since 2019 due to Covid, this eagerly anticipated event was held on a crisp autumn day in Leeson Park Methodist Church, Dublin. It was an opportunity for Methodist Women from across the island to meet together, learn more about WFMUCW and fellowship together.

Ladies travelled from near and far to join together, at what we called “The Gathering.” We were also delighted to have Barbara Easton, Area President of the World Federation Britain & Ireland, with us as it provided an opportunity to meet and share information. Due to unforeseen circumstances, those coming from Northern Ireland on the train were delayed which meant that plans needed to be adjusted and our schedule for the day shuffled around a little. We are an adaptable unit here on this green isle and quickly came up with some ice-breaker games while we waited for those stuck on public transport to arrive!

There's something very special about a room full of people singing praises to the Lord. With everyone assembled

and the day getting started, we began by raising our voices in praise and worship. Scattered between the times of praise, various speakers had been invited to share with those gathered. Maureen Young, a previous Area Vice President, explained what the World Federation is and talked about the impact that it has had here in Ireland.

We heard about many of the previous World Assemblies. Our keynote speaker, Gillian Kingston, led us in a Bible study about the woman at the well. After a tasty lunch, shared together with a healthy dose of laughter and informal chatter, Louise Wilson, WFMUCW World Secretary ably led the launch of 'Thursdays in Black'. We are hopeful that this will encourage our members to look at ways to promote this movement more widely within our congregations.

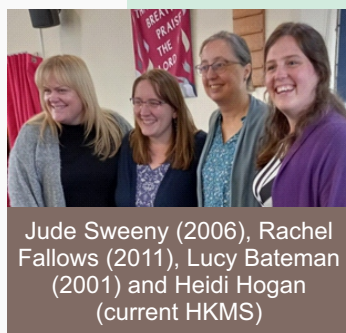
We were delighted to have four out of five of our previous Helen Kim Memorial Scholars taking part in the event which was something to behold. It was special to hear them

reflect on their time as HKMS and to see where and how they are currently serving God. It highlighted for many the importance of our HKMS programme and

the skills and opportunities that the programme helps our young women develop and use.

Our Irish Unit has not traditionally held a World Federation Day in October; however, following the success of this year's event, there are plans for more regular World Federation Day Events with the possibility of some of these being held online and some in person in the future.

*- Wanda Hogan, former HKMS
and Vice-President of Europe:
Britain and Ireland*



Logo design call

Designs for the official logo for the 15th World Assembly of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women are invited for consideration by the World Officers. The design should take into account the details in the accompanying Concept Note and reflect the theme of "Arise and Shine for the Glory of God is Upon You" (Isaiah 60:1).

- 1. The Assembly logo should consist of a 'standalone' image that will continue to be used during the ensuing quinquennium – the five years following the Assembly (2026–2031).*
- 2. Prior to the Assembly, a second part of the Assembly logo may include the following information:*
 - World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women, 15th World Assembly, 2026, Auckland.*
- 3. The Assembly logo should reproduce well in black and white/greyscale as well as in colour.*
- 4. The Assembly logo may be used in the Assembly Programme Book, on the website, on posters, and in advertising the Assembly. It may also be used on sale items during the World Assembly and by Units for promotional purposes during the ensuing quinquennium.*
- 5. The official Assembly logo is the property of the World Federation.*
- 6. The World Officers have final responsibility for the approval of the design and its theological rationale.*

Designs and theological rationale should be submitted to the World Secretary at world.secretary@wfmucw.org by no later than 1st May 2025.

There will be between 12 and 20 Workshops focusing on issues which women in the Area Seminars have emphasized or are of particular concern. The following examples are only some suggestions for information, you may have other ideas.

ARISE – Workshops that encourage and enable women to step into the roles God has planned for them.

For example: empowerment of women; gender justice; intergenerational mentoring; building community and support networks.

SHINE – Workshops that help women to go deeper with God, value their own self-care, and so find their inner light.

For example: physical and mental health and well-being; personal spirituality.

REFLECT – Workshops that enable women to reflect God's glory in their attitudes and actions.

For example: care for creation; sharing faith and personal testimonies; reducing poverty.

In addition, there will be a number of workshops which encourage women to express themselves creatively through art, music, drama, dance, and so forth, as well as practical workshops looking at communication skills, the use of IT, and navigating the WFMUCW website.

If you are interested in leading an information, creative or practical workshop, please send a couple of paragraphs describing a workshop you might offer, outlining how it fits the aims and theme of our 15th World Assembly. Please pray that God will bless all our preparations for this exciting event.

Please submit suggestions for workshops and speakers by sending details to world.secretary@wfmucw.org preferably by 1st May 2025.

**CALL FOR
WORKSHOP
LEADERS
AND
SPEAKERS**

Helen Kim Memorial Scholarship Information

The Helen Kim Memorial Scholarship is established in honor of Helen Kim, a pioneering young Korean woman and the first female university graduate in her country. Inspired by her Christian faith, Helen Kim envisioned a global sisterhood of Methodist women united in purpose and service. In alignment with this vision, the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women has long championed the welfare of young women.

The scholarship provides an opportunity for 18 outstanding young women—two from each of the Federation's nine geographical areas worldwide—to participate in a unique and transformative leadership initiative. These selected recipients will take part in the World Federation Leadership Development Training for Young Women, a program that has been successfully conducted for over 25 years. This initiative seeks to empower young women to become agents of change, equipping them with the skills and global connections needed to make a meaningful impact in their communities and beyond.

As preparations for the next quinquennium progress, we anticipate welcoming the new 18 scholars into the program. When the application process opens, Area Presidents will distribute the necessary information and application forms to Unit Presidents, who will, in turn, share them with potential candidates. All completed applications should be submitted to the World Secretary by the specified deadline for consideration.

This scholarship represents a vital investment in the future leadership of our global sisterhood and continues to embody the enduring legacy of Helen Kim.



Editor: Ligia Istrate

ligiaistrate@gmail.com

Cover design, interior
design:
Cristian Istrate

All photos except those provided by
WFMUCW are under Creative
Commons Zero license.

WORLD EXECUTIVE 2022 – 2026 CONTACT DETAILS

TITLE	NAME	EMAIL
WORLD OFFICERS:		
President	Sipiwe Chisvo	world.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Ivonne Pereira Díaz	world.vice-president@wfmucw.org
Secretary	Louise Wilson	world.secretary@wfmucw.org
Treasurer	Mrs Ngui Ting	world.treasurer@wfmucw.org
President Emerita	Alison Judd	president.emerita@wfmucw.org
AREA OFFICERS:		
<i>Southern & East Africa:</i>		
President	Patricia Mapani	seafrica.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Rebecca Matongo	seafrica.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>West Africa:</i>		
President	Muriel Nelson	westafrica.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Marcelline Beda	westafrica.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>Latin America:</i>		
President	Jessica Milagros Solar Munayco	latinamerica.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Claudia Lima Carmargo Lira	latinamerica.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>North America:</i>		
President	Lois Grant-Hector	northamerica.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Jeanette Bouknight	northamerica.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>East Asia:</i>		
President	Mary Devadason	eastasia.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Chao Hui Min	eastasia.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>South Asia:</i>		
President	Rajini Jegasothy	southasia.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Glory George	southasia.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>Europe: Britain & Ireland:</i>		
President	Barbara Easton	britainireland.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Wanda Hogan	britainireland.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>Europe: Continental:</i>		
President	Lilla Kardosné Lakatos	europe.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Filipa Teixeira	europe.vice-president@wfmucw.org
<i>South Pacific:</i>		
President	Olive Tanielu	southpacific.president@wfmucw.org
Vice-President	Rev Gloria Marke	southpacific.vice-president@wfmucw.org
Editor Tree of Life	Ligia Istrate	treeoflife@wfmucw.org
Web Manager	Naomi Allison	webmaster@wfmucw.org
UN REPRESENTATIVES:		
New York	Joan Capel	un@wfmucw.org
New York	Alexandria Carson	
Latin America	Karen Danytza	
Archivist	Judith Siaba	world.archivist@wfmucw.org



www.wfmucw.org