



## Winter Newsletter 2025

Welcome to this edition of our newsletter, the last of 2025, and it has been a busy few months with some new events as you will see as you read the latest news from both the Executive team and from around the Districts. MWiB is certainly alive and active.

As an Executive team we have been together on several occasions this quarter as people are able, depending on other commitments. We were glad that Barbara Easton was able to be in London for the Butterfly Service—we have missed her on other occasions as she recovered from eye surgery. Similarly Madeleine has had to miss events with her college commitments but we were glad to see her at our most recent Trustees meeting in October which was a time of looking forward to the future.



In September we gathered at Stamford for the Commissioning Service of our CoChair Olive Ruvimbo Ruzvidzo. What a wonderful occasion that was, with singing & dancing led by the Zimbabwe Fellowship Choir, a powerful sermon from Revd Charity Tozivepi-Nzegwu, warm fellowship and good food from Second Helpings. Former CoChair Maggie was with us. This service can be viewed on our MWiB YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/live/zvdAyft7U3M>

Five of the Executive team gathered in Holyrood House, Thirsk in November for our annual Retreat led this year by Deacon Jenny Parnell on the theme Art and Spirituality. Jenny encouraged us to play and explore with paint and the results can be seen here. What you can't see is the wonderful time we shared singing worship songs as we created!



Our CoChairs Leonora & Olive can be contacted by email: [cochairs.mwib@gmail.com](mailto:cochairs.mwib@gmail.com)

All that remains is to wish each of you a very happy and blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year. We hope to see you at one of our events in 2026.

**Bronwen Braisdell**   [communications.mwib@gmail.com](mailto:communications.mwib@gmail.com)

## Butterfly Movement Service 25 November 2025

The Butterfly Movement Service was held at Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission by the Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) as part of the global 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women. The service highlighted the sobering reality that every 10 minutes in 2023 a woman was killed worldwide, and that 1 in 3 women experience violence in their lifetime.

The service was opened by Revd Dr Claire Potter, Minister at Wesley's Chapel, followed by a Statement of Intent from Revd Leonora Wassell, Co-Chair of MWiB, affirming the MWiB's commitment to stand with all those affected by gender-based violence. The Call to Worship invited the congregation to gather in gratitude, justice, and hope, and the opening hymn, "Beauty for Brokenness," set a powerful tone of compassion and transformation.

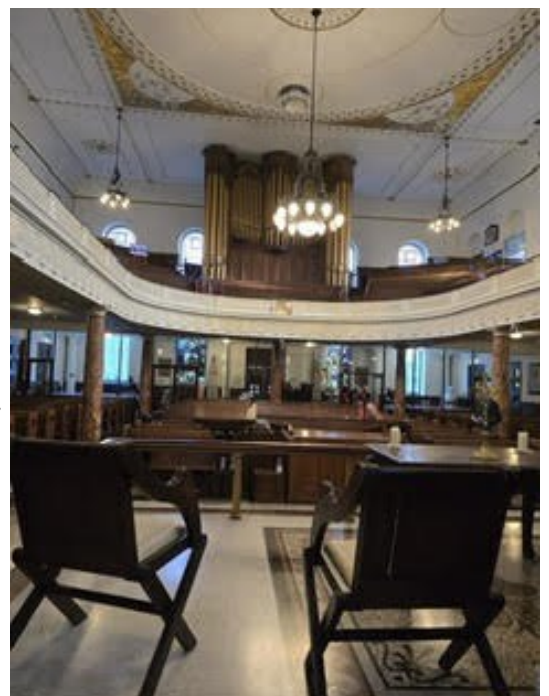


At the heart of the service were deeply moving survivor stories and creative reflections, including Tecla's Story, a poem by Revd Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni, Mary's Story read by Barbara Easton (WFUMCW Area President), Amina's Story read by Ruth Dawson (MWiB Media Officer), and a musical reflection, "After the Fall" by Rosie Clements. A powerful Lament was led by Revd Charity Tozivepi-Nzegwu, creating a sacred space for grief, truth-telling, and hope.

Representatives from key survivor support organisations addressed the congregation, including Deacon Jenny Parnell, and Bekah Legg (Restored), underlining the importance of safeguarding, advocacy, and practical support.



*Our CoChairs were suitably dressed for this service held in the historic setting of Wesley's Chapel*



The Bible readings, Isaiah 43:1–3 and Mark 5:25–34, emphasised God’s presence with those who suffer and the restoration of dignity and were read by Carolyn Godfrey, DSO and past Vice-President. The sermon, delivered by Revd Michaela Youngson, Assistant Secretary of Conference, challenged the Church to be a place of sanctuary, courage, justice, and transformation.

Prayers of Thanksgiving were led by Karen Allen, Connexional Safeguarding Team and Prayers of Intercession by Olive Ruvimbo Ruzvidzo, Co-Chair of MWiB.

The service concluded with a Vote of Thanks and Blessing, followed by fellowship and refreshments in the Radnor Hall, provided by the London District of MWiB. Sincere thanks were expressed to Wesley’s Chapel & Leysian Mission for hosting.

This powerful service affirmed that no one should live in fear because of their gender and renewed the Church’s commitment to speak out, challenge injustice, and stand alongside survivors, locally and globally.

We were delighted to welcome people from across the Connexion as well as those joining us via Live-stream.

Leonora



### **Weaving Webs of Hope—Our World Federation Day in Starbeck Church, Harrogate**

With a warm welcome from Alison Judd, President Emerita WFMUCW, we settled in to listen to our keynote speaker, Sandra Lopez who manages the America’s desk at Global Relations. Using a Bolivian Aguayo, Sandra told us what Latin American women can teach us about weaving webs of hope to produce just & healthy communities. After coffee, Phoebe Parkin, former Youth President, told us about her time spent on an Encounter placement with CEPALC in Columbia, a presentation that was both inspiring and challenging. Lunch included South American food before CoChair Leonora introduced conversation around the Sustainable Development Goals



encouraging us to think about how we can empower women in our own communities; Becca from All we Can asked us to consider some Big Questions and former CoChair Ruth Parrott shared some of her experiences from Columbia. CoChair Olive led closing worship.

## **MWiB Quarterly Newsletter Report: "Let's Talk About It!" Series Success**

We are delighted to share a summary of the powerful and essential conversations we've hosted in our "Let's Talk About It!" webinar series over the last quarter. True to the Methodist Women in Britain(MWiB) mission, we have bravely confronted topics often relegated to the shadows, finding **wit, wisdom, and a whole lot of heart** in the process.

The success of the series so far proves that our community is ready to engage with complex issues, seek justice, and grow in compassion.

### **1. 🍵 Menopause: Hot Flushes, Hot Topics!**

**(Thursday, 25 September 2025)**

We launched the series with an important and often overlooked conversation about women's mid-life health. The session was led by **Menesia Chikazi**, the dedicated MWiB Trustee for the Northampton, Notts, and Derby Area.

**Content & Interpretation:** Menesia shared invaluable wisdom, demystifying the physical and emotional changes associated with **menopause**. The webinar served as a vital reminder that self-care and open discussion are fundamental to women's well-being and ministry. Theologically, we explored the concept of the body as a **Temple of the Holy Spirit** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). This grounds our responsibility to advocate for **holistic wellness** at every stage of life, reminding the Church that caring for the physical and hormonal health of women is a core act of discipleship and ministry support.

### **2. 😊 Intimacy: It's Not Just for the Song of Songs.**

**(Thursday, 23 October 2025)**

Our second session explored the complex and essential topic of **intimacy**, framed within a Christian understanding of relationships and self-acceptance. This reflective discussion was expertly guided by our two Co-Chairs,

**Olive Ruvimbo Ruzvidzo and Revd Leonora Wassell.**

**Content & Interpretation:** The Co-Chairs encouraged attendees to consider intimacy in its broadest sense—spiritual, emotional, and relational—not merely the physical. The theological focus was on ***Imago Dei*** (Genesis 1:27), the image of God in every person, and the call to **vulnerable relationship** modelled by the Trinity. We affirmed that true intimacy is rooted in genuine connection, respect, and self-acceptance, viewing the capacity for authentic relationship as a profound gift and purpose in human flourishing.

### 3. **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Breaking the Silence**

**(Thursday, 27 November 2025)**

More recently, we hosted a critical webinar dedicated to **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**. We were honoured to partner with **FORWARD UK**, the leading African women-led organisation in this field, with the session led by **Yvette Robbin-Coker**, FORWARD UK's Training and Development Coordinator.

**Content & Interpretation:** Yvette provided life-changing knowledge on the realities and risks of FGM and the support available for survivors. Crucially, we explored the **theological and justice basis** for our Christian responsibility to end this practice. The discussion centred on the radical justice principle of **Prophetic Witness** (Micah 6:8), which demands we actively seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. FGM is viewed as a systemic injustice violating the sanctity of the body; therefore, advocacy against it is a non-negotiable part of our mission to protect the surviving vulnerable **sisters** globally.

#### **What's Next in the Series?**

The "Let's Talk About It!" series is far from over! We have a phenomenal line-up ready for the new year.

Please mark your diaries and join us as we continue to seek wisdom and justice:

-  **Mental Health** (Jan 22, 2026)
-  **Domestic Abuse (VAWG)** (Feb 26, 2026)
-  **Social Justice** (Mar 26, 2026)
-  **Immigration** (May 28, 2026)
-   **Gender/Sexual Identity** (Jun 25, 2026)
-  **Faith and Politics** (Jul 23, 2026)

Keep an eye on the MWiB website and social media channels for more details for these upcoming, essential webinars!

Register now to secure your spot: <https://forms.gle/fXkFMbUMyEreZVhQ7>

#### **Olive**

If you would like to catch up on the webinar series so far they are available on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwtArDJrEbcTPtnQ4drv9hdvVZ9111Eu->



## MWiB Butterfly Service

## A view from the pew by Ruth Dawson Media Officer

Twelve months in the making, the day had finally arrived. A small band of Methodist Women strode down City Road in London, adorned in their orange scarfs ready to give thanks in worship and show support to all women across the years who had suffered, who were suffering and those who may suffer violence or abuse.

25th November is International Elimination of Violence Against Women Day, and the start of the #16Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and so is the perfect day to hold our inaugural Butterfly Service. The service is named after the Mirabal sisters of the Dominican Republic, who were political activists known as Las Mariposas (The Butterflies). The sisters, Patria, Minerva and Maria were key figures in the movement against the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo. Along with their husbands, they were repeatedly imprisoned and tortured. The sisters were assassinated on 25th November in 1960.

Our small executive band stepped into Wesley's Chapel on 25th November some 65 years later to stand with strong and courageous women everywhere. Having never been to Wesley's Chapel before, I stood at the doors of our own history in awe, barely able to breathe not just at the beauty of the building but the generations of whispers that had gone before. Sitting in the same pews as those before us, hearing the history of John Wesley's pulpit and witnessing the whirl of the Holy Spirit as she whooshed amongst us.



With cameras ready, and a mass of orange we were warmly welcomed home by Revd Claire Potter minister at Wesley's Chapel. Our Co-Chairs Revd Leonora Wassell and Olive Ruvimbo Ruzvidzo stood humbly beside Assistant Secretary of Conference Revd Michaela Youngson as Leonora introduced the backdrop to our service.

We heard from and of many courageous women. We heard their stories of survival, courage and dignity played out in verse, in song, in prose, and in lament.

Ex-vice president Carolyn Godfrey read the lessons from Isaiah and from St Mark's gospel. Ex-Vice President Barbara Easton relayed a survivor's story.

Revd Michaela spoke in compassion and humility in her sermon of the women who touched Jesus' hem, a story recorded in all 3 synoptic Gospels. She spoke of women still today withheld from employment, being controlled and coerced by partners, whose voices can only be heard by those brave enough to speak for them.

Rosie Clements gave us the background of and then sang her song which she composed 'After the Fall'. The sounds of which echoed around the echelons of time in those pews of Wesley's. We listened as Deacon Jenny Parnell created an image of a large circular table with clear canvas where all are equal and all have a story to tell. Powerful words. We heard Revd Mmasape Thathane-Tyolweni's poem giving hope. And the stories of 3 survivors, each with a different story each in a different place each with dreams and finally hope.

Restored's Bekah Legg discussed the many ways in which women and girls can access help. How churches & communities can stand together to support women where they are. The service finished with prayers of thanksgiving from Connexional SG Team Karen Allen and prayer of intercession from Co-Chair Olive.



So many powerful women, stood together in support of each other, in for those whose voices are yet to be heard. It was a time of reflection and also of hope. To reaffirm a God who stands with all of us, in all our times of trials, God who gives courage to those who need it, God who sends the Holy Spirit to hold, to guide, to lift each as is needed. Hope for a world where all are equal, where all can be who they are without fear of prejudice, a world where justice prevails. Hope for an understanding that all are uniquely made in the Image of God and are to be celebrated for who they are.

The full service can be viewed on our YouTube channel. You can follow our #16Days of Activism on both our Facebook pages – Methodist Women in Britain (private page) or Methodist Women for Britain For All (public page) or on our Instagram @mwibfa. Please share your comments and pictures in support of our part of this campaign.

#16Days #OrangeTheWorld #EndTheViolenceNow #StandWithWomen @restoreduk  
@forwarduk\_

*As God Loves Us, so let us love each other*

*With no demands, just open hands & space to grow*

*Can you spot Madeleine with our Trustees in October 2025?*



## **News from our Helen Kim Memorial Scholar, Madeleine Reed**

I am writing this report from a cosy room at Cliff College. I submitted my fifth assignment this morning. At 26 years old, having not gone to school, having no qualifications, and having never lived away from my parents, I am now a fulltime BA student over two hundred miles away from home, living in Christian community, and with a peace and a joy in my heart that I can't even begin to describe.

I am also doing the Methodist Leadership Year, which is a bit like the Helen Kim Memorial Scholarship, only for any young Methodist, and only one year. I am one of ten others on that course. I have never been so busy, or so content.

Let me share with you some of the journey that has led me here which I have not shared in previous newsletters.

In September 2024, I stayed for a weekend at Hilfield Friary in Dorset, not connected with Methodist Women in Britain, but just exploring the life of the Franciscans. For a long time, a cloistered or community life has appealed to me and I was enthused by my visit to begin researching convents or abbeys that I could go to stay at. At the MWiB Trustee Meeting in October 2024 I told people with absolute confidence that I would be going to live as a nun in the new year. Needless to say, God had different plans.

In February, the MWiB Trustee Meeting was held at Launde Abbey, Leicestershire. This sparked up my dream of living in a Christian community which I had been nursing since my visit to the Franciscan friary in September. When I came home, all walking on air and feeling very spiritual, I was met with a sharp turn in my journey.

In March, I crashed my car.

I loved my car. It was my first, it was named after one of my favourite Star Trek characters, and it was my fault that it was written off. Suddenly, I was reliant on trains and friends. I'm not good at being reliant. This was a hard lesson, but I resolved to learn from it. My brother-in-law drove me to the Alpha Course with my sister each week, and when I was invited to give the Sunday address at Stubbington Methodist Church with Alison Judd, the President Emerita of the World Federation, I took a train there, and my brother-in-law came and drove me home. Praise God for my brother-in-law!

I loved Stubbington. It was a lovely church and the people were wonderful; one of my favourite parts of the Helen Kim Memorial Scholarship is visiting new churches and meeting new people wherever I go.



But I'm getting ahead of myself. March was unprecedented in my life. The sudden reliance I had on my friends meant I was spending much more time at my sister's house. Since lockdown in 2020, I had been struggling with a time of spiritual wilderness in which I struggled to pray, I felt perpetually distant from God, and I was even more enslaved to the anxiety I'd been living with for as long as I could remember. I wore a headscarf for the Lord, in a desperate attempt to feel close to Him in this dark time. Somehow, I had convinced myself that I was on fire for God, and that this life was all I could hope for.

One evening, I was sitting with my friends discussing the last session of the Alpha Course we had attended together, when I felt the Lord prompt me to take my headscarf off. The next morning, when I woke up, the anxiety which I had grown up with, which I had nursed, on which I had based my identity – was gone. It had just... vanished in the night. For the first time in my life, I wasn't afraid.

When I attended the annual MWiB conference in Swanwick, I was more than happy to tell as many people as I could about the healing and deliverance I had experienced. A friend drove me, and I think she could probably recite the story herself by the time we arrived. The conference was titled 'This Little Light of Mine' and the keynote speaker was the Rev Dr Sonia Hicks, who spoke powerfully about the struggle to let her light shine in a context of racism and misogyny. I ran a workshop that weekend on 'Neurodiversity in the church' and was humbled by how many people showed up for it. I'm glad it happened after I had been released from anxiety; the last workshop I had led (in Porto with Maggie Woods), I had become so overwhelmed that I was nonverbal for most of it, and Maggie had been forced to pick up the slack. Thank you, Maggie. You were marvellous, and I love you.

When May rolled around, then we find the coming together of some threads. Hilfield Friary and Launde Abbey had both been sitting on my heart, and I was becoming quite put out that the Lord hadn't made me a nun yet. Then our Co-Chair Leonora invited me to join her at the annual festival hosted and held at Cliff College in Derbyshire. You will remember from our last newsletter how much I enjoyed the experience resulting in my application to study at Cliff College.

So what a blessing 2025 has been. What astonishing and unexpected gifts God has given me. From staying at Hilfield Friary in September 2024, to being delivered from anxiety, to Leonora making a way for me to go to seminars at Cliff Festival, to moving churches, to moving counties; *The Lord has promised good to me / His word my hope secures / He will my shield and portion be / As long as life endures.*

# News from around the Districts. What's been happening in your area?

## Southampton District Day 4th October 2025 Report from Hilary Evans

### The Status of Women – A Way Forward Speaker – Rev'd Leonora Wassell

The theme followed Leonora's experience of visiting the UN annual conference on the subject in New York, and Leonora travelled south to share something of what she had learned with around 50 people at Romsey Methodist Church

A short time of devotion introduced the theme and was followed by a Bible study led by Rev'd Andrew de Ville based around Exodus 3:1 - 6 exploring the need to 'pay attention' to God, and the needs of others as well as ourselves.



Leonora's keynote talk included messages from the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres and his Deputy Amina J Mohamed highlighting the work in many nations to improve women's experiences, and celebrating progress that has been made. However, aggression towards women now affects 1 in 3 in their lifetime, so there is still much to do, and we heard about some organisations involved in the ongoing efforts.

We were reminded of the annual 16 Days of Action campaign especially the 25th November when women unite to work towards the end of gender based violence, and also the Thursdays in Black campaign which Methodist Women continue to support.

Workshops were based around the theme with opportunity to write and present a Haiku poem, to create a postcard to send to an MP or a talk about the work of women's refuges in the Southampton area which gained close attention.



Following some news updates, which included a presentation to Chris Stuckey as she retired from her District role, and an announcement that last year's fundraiser for The Leprosy Mission raised £11, 783.00, everyone came together to share in Holy Communion linking the day's theme to 'Our Story, Our Song', giving a sense of hope and positivity for the future.



## Newcastle upon Tyne District MWiB Away Day September 2025 Report by Judy Tasker



As a district we were very pleased when our church at Amble offered to host our Away Day for a second time. Friends from here often travel many miles to the south of the district, in order to share in activities, so this time we were glad to journey north.

Situated on the Northumberland coast, it was appropriate to have a watery theme for our day. 'Still Waters' was the title, led by Helen Van Teutem. As we gathered for our opening worship after a welcome cup of coffee or tea, we were gently brought to a calm, still, thoughtful place to worship our Loving God with prayers, hymns and Mark's account of 'The Stilling of the Storm.'

During the morning Helen guided us with thoughts of John's account of 'A man healed at the Pool of Bethesda.' In small groups we had the opportunity to explore further. Here it was very illuminating to share each other's thoughts.

The morning ended with relaxation and breathing exercises, before Helen led us with a meditation entitled 'By the seashore.'

After an enjoyable hour of chatter and laughter while we ate our lunch, we then had the choices of craft activities, circle dancing or a walk exploring Amble. Following this, closing worship with Holy Communion included prayers for peace. Our circle dancers moved to the singing of 'Let there be peace on earth.' Sustained by tea and cakes we left for home, reflecting on all that we had shared.



## Darlington District MWiB Report by Hazel Neasham

Darlington District Methodist Women in Britain Autumn meeting was at Sedgefield Methodist Church on the 1/10/25. Sedgefield Methodist Church is part of the West Durham Methodist Circuit. The Darlington District is spread out geographically and has 12 circuits, so we try to move our meetings around the District so that we can reach as many women as possible.

It is many many years since we last met at Sedgefield and our theme for the day was "Times they are a changing ". Like many groups we have seen attendance at our meetings decline and it is all too easy to become disheartened when people are



reluctant to hold office. Over the last year the District Coordinating Group have worked closely with Helle Sewell the Darlington District Mission Enabler who has helped and guided us to dream and look at the future with a new vision. So the Autumn meeting was our opportunity to give thanks for all that has been and recognise that everything changes.

The day was attended by over 60 women and men and was led by the Reverend Elizabeth Catford. Rev Elizabeth led the morning session and constructed a tree explaining how the tree has different seasons. There are times of new growth, full leaf, then a time when the leaves change colour and things come to a natural end. Our lives can be the same, seeming empty, but underneath there is an unnoticed growth waiting to burst forth into a new spring.



During the worship there was an opportunity for longstanding and recent members to share with the meeting what being part of MWiB means to them.

In the words of the women of Sedgefield this was informative and entertaining and gave lots to think about. They loved the enthusiasm and hearing the laughter. Importantly it helped them realise that the Women's Fellowship and the Young Wives meetings that had been at Sedgefield were part of that history. Hosting had been a joy and meeting many different people from a wide variety of places with their own story had been enriching.

During the morning a cheque was presented to Hope Church East Cleveland our project for 2024/25. Women across the District fundraise throughout the year and we were able to give them £3,000. We learned that from 1992, £211,000 had been raised for many local and international causes.

### **70th Anniversary Celebrations in Guisborough Report by Pamela Stenson**

On the afternoon of Sunday 19th October 2025 a group of around 60 MWiB members past and present met at Guisborough Methodist Church for a wonderful time of stories, songs and fellowship together in celebration of the 70th Anniversary of our women's groups continuously meeting at the Church since the Autumn of 1955.

We were treated to a performance of worship songs and hymns across the decades from the 1950s to the 2020s from local musicians Julie & Dave Booth, who were delighted with the audience participation especially in old favourites from the last century.

Rev Graham Smith, Minister at Guisborough from 1983-1994, and his wife Jean, a former Network President of our Tuesday at Eight group, were delighted to be able to join us to share their memories of times gone by. We were also very pleased that Connexional MWiB Co-Chair Rev Leonora Wassell was able to be with us, bringing greetings from Connexion along with congratulations on our anniversary and sharing in our time of worship together.







During a delicious afternoon tea when one of our longest serving members Ethel Hugill (95) cut our special anniversary cake we all had the opportunity to chat and catch up with friends old and new. We closed the celebration with a time of worship in the Church on the theme of "Our Story, Our Song" with our current Minister Rev Meg Peters.

In 1955, 70 years ago, a small group of Methodist women with a vision of caring within the local community & of sharing their faith formed the Guisborough Methodist Wives Club. Since then our groups continued to grow over many years, although nowadays we are fewer in number than before; in the name of Jesus, our Lord & Saviour, we still meet together in faith and in action, supporting one another and also many local, national and international charities with fund-raising. We have changed our name & constitution to reflect the connexional re-organisation of women's movements within Methodism and have evolved alongside Women's Own that became Women's Fellowship while we went from Wives Club to Young Wives, to simply Wives and then to Tuesday @ Eight and now T@2 within the over-arching national Women's Work, Network & connexional MWiB charitable organisations, as well as the WFMUCW internationally.

*(Congratulations to Guisborough—I was at their 60th anniversary afternoon tea when Sarah Braisdell, then Heritage & Archives Researcher for MWiB, was the speaker. Perhaps other groups with such a long history in the Women's movements would like to send me their story for a future newsletter? Send all news to [communications.mwib@gmail.com](mailto:communications.mwib@gmail.com))*

### **Cumbria MWiB Residential at Thornleigh November 2025 Report by Delphine Gratrix**

At Cumbria MWiB's "Together at Thornleigh" Grange-over-Sands we were delighted to have Hilary Evans, Past President of MWiB, leading our 11th Residential at Thornleigh, her title being "One Fine Day".

After our opening worship and welcome led by Rev Jackie Betts, Hilary commenced her first talk by guiding us to think about ourselves in today's world and the influences on our own lives. Then, onto the life of Jesus growing into a man, not only in Nazareth, but also working as a carpenter on the rebuilding of Sepphoris, Herod Antipas's new exotic city in the hills, where there would have been many other influences on Jesus' life in that place.



Hilary also drew our attention to the Ethiopian Bible and showed us different images of Christ, as well as unusual art work to focus on and discuss together in small groups.

The next day, we took a fresh & inciteful look at Mary Magdalene & Lydia, (hence the purple banners in the photo). Then the Marys Ward & Bosanquet, progressing forward in time to Fanny Crosby, Sybil Phoenix, Pauline Webb & Rachel Held-Evans, all inspirational women in their own times.

Hilary's final session focused on the ways God can lead us, sharing her story of becoming President of MWiB & all it involved. This included her visit to Mexico, having an interest & concern for trafficked people, as well as the plight of migrants trying to cross the "Wall" into the USA ( ref photo). Hilary certainly gave us food for thought, for which we are truly indebted to her, as well as for the super handouts she provided at each session.



As usual, we had social and fellowship time together over coffee & excellent meals; with a lovely crafting session facilitated by Hilary in our "free time" slot. Five members of Harps North West graced our first evening, with a concert of beautiful calm & lilting music. This was in contrast to the laughs and banter we enjoyed the following night in a popular quiz session, ably led by

Kathleen. There were, of course chocs & prizes, even for the losers !

Our evenings ended with prayers, thoughtfully led by members, as were our morning prayers. Wednesday's final session concluded as always, with a Communion Service, this year led by our very own Rev Mary Elliot, who sensitively & prayerfully brought together all aspects of our time together, in a very special way.

We give praise & thanks to God for all the blessings we received in our time at Thornleigh with Hilary, & for the staff who worked hard to make our stay so enjoyable.

### **Activism at Houghton-le-Spring in the East Durham Circuit Report by Judy Tasker**



We are raising awareness about the 16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. (East Durham circuit).

All year round we wear our Thursdays in Black T-shirts at our weekly Thursday coffee mornings at Houghton-le-Spring.

Hosted by Northamptonshire and Notts & Derby area

Methodist Women in Britain  
for women, for justice, for Christ

Don't forget to grab your coffee / hot drink

Meeting ID: 915 5175 5606  
Passcode: 798213

Watch this space!  
Speakers, Chat and Fellowship

Join us for an uplifting time of fellowship, friendship and coffee

Invite you for a coffee morning on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026

10:00am - 12:00pm  
Via Zoom

Really Great Company

Events you might want to join with.  
Please send news reports & adverts for website or newsletter to Bronwen communications.mwib@gmail.com  
Items for newsletter at least 2 weeks before next edition please.

BRIAN E BECK MEMORIAL LECTURE 2026

Perfecting Love and the public sphere?  
Towards a Wesleyan social ethics for a fractured world

with Professor Dion Forster

This year the Revd Dr Brian E Beck Memorial Lecture will be given by Dion Forster, Professor of Public Theology & Ethics in the School of Religion & Theology at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

This lecture asks how perfecting love might inhabit the public sphere as an expression of Wesleyan social ethics for a fractured world.

In the spirit of Scripture and Conference, embodied by Brian Beck, the lecture considers the promises and perils of diverse and sometimes divergent Methodisms shaped by migration, contextual, and global entanglements, and how these can serve and hinder the common good.

Thursday 22 January 2026 2.30pm-4pm  
At Wesley House or Online  
Wesley House, St Giles Court, 24 Castle Street, Cambridge CB3 0AJ

Wesley House Cambridge

For further information and to register (in person or online) visit:  
<https://brianbeck.eventbrite.co.uk>

ARISE AND SHINE  
FOR THE GLORY OF GOD IS UPON YOU

World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women

15<sup>th</sup> World Assembly  
25- 29 August 2026  
Auckland, New Zealand

This sacred gathering takes place from the 25 – 30 August 2026, Due Drop Events Centre, Auckland, New Zealand. Please note these key points:

- Registration has not yet opened. Online registration will begin first week of December 2025.
- Early bird registration is available at USD 1,100.00 until 12 March 2026. After this date, the fee will be USD 1,250.00.
- Registration includes lunches and dinners at the Due Drop Event Centre Venue.
- Spaces are limited and will be allocated on first – come, first served basis. Look out for official registration opening on our Website and Facebook

## News from our friends at Action for Children from Karis Kolawole

### Action for Children Methodist survey

We really want to get better at communicating and stewarding our relationship with churches. We also want to make sure that we equip you with fundraising tools that you enjoy and find easy to use. So, I'd be grateful if you could you **share your views in this survey**: <https://forms.office.com/e/OPkKXL1Wau>. Your views are incredibly valuable. Please invite others to complete it too. Thanks.

### Share the wonder of Christmas!

I'm delighted to share this year's Christmas resources with you. **The theme is 'Share the wonder of Christmas'**. Let's reflect on the amazing Christmas story together while thinking about the children and families who find the season difficult. It's an all-age outline with a section for Christmas-themed children's activities. **You can download the outline as well as our newsletter from our 'Fundraise in your church' page**: [actionforchildren.uk/faithFR](https://actionforchildren.uk/faithFR).





## Methodist Women in Britain

**Swanwick Residential Weekend : 10th to 12th April 2026  
at The Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire DE55 1AT**

### **“Where Power meets Purpose: Small Acts that Change the World”**

**with Carolyn Godfrey**



*Carolyn Godfrey has been the Regional Officer for Safeguarding for both the Darlington and Newcastle Districts since early 2015. Before this she worked in education and has a background in pastoral care and special needs, mostly focused in the primary sector. She feels strongly that a good safeguarding culture is central to our calling to be a growing, inclusive, evangelistic and justice seeking church.*

*Carolyn served as the Vice President of the Methodist Conference 2024-2025.*

**Come & join us for a weekend of Faith, Fellowship & Fun  
Worship & Workshops, Women Working & Wondering**

**Booking opens 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
on our website [www.mwib.org.uk](http://www.mwib.org.uk)**

**Conference cost: £210**

**Book by 2<sup>nd</sup> February with £100 deposit only**

**Balance due by 20<sup>th</sup> March**

**A limited number of Bursaries are available**

**Bursary applications must be submitted before 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

**Contact: [Swanwick.mwib26@gmail.com](mailto:Swanwick.mwib26@gmail.com)**

**Conference will also be on zoom – book online**