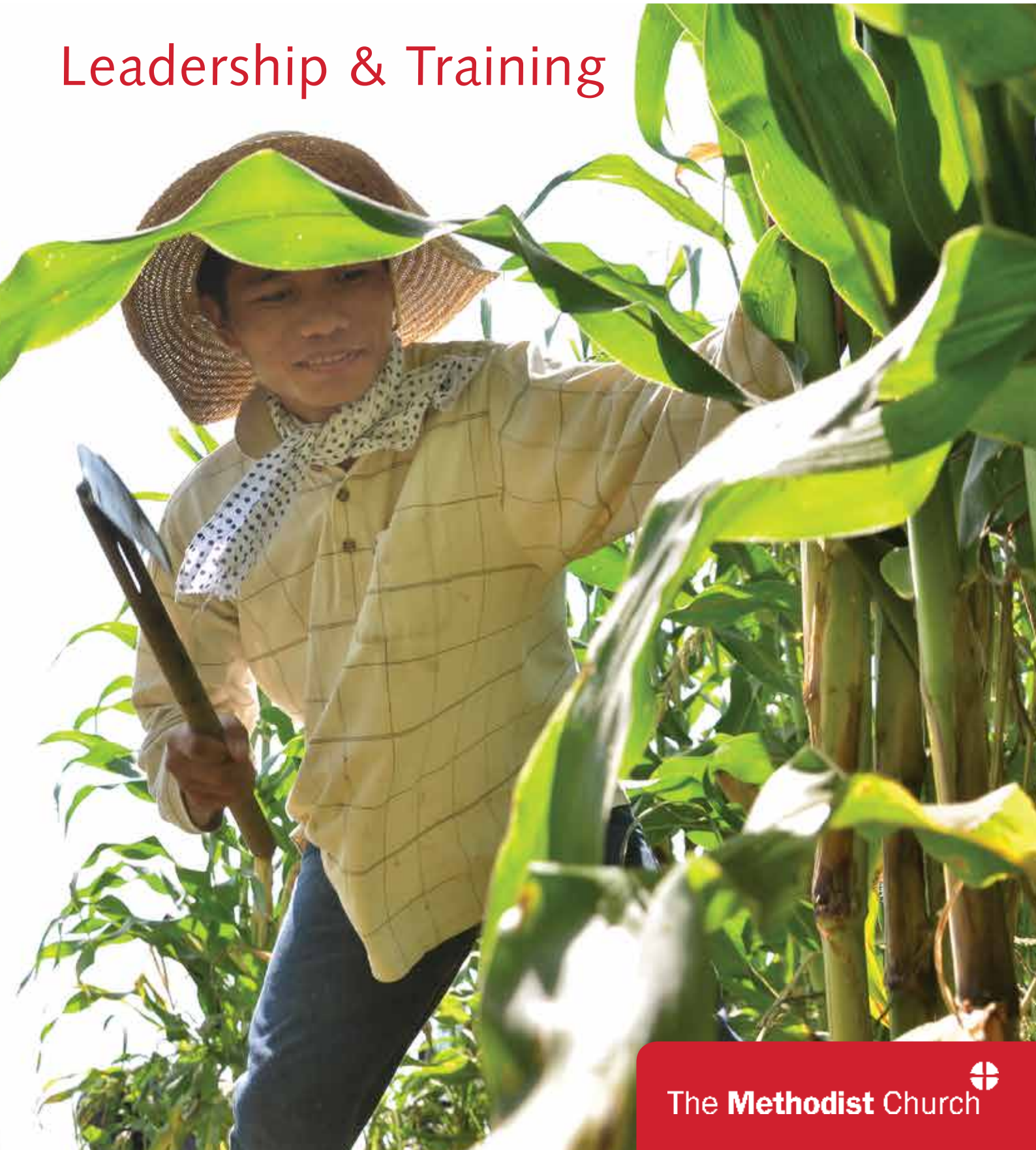


mission matters

Leadership & Training



Editorial

An Emmaus journey

Two people travelling to Emmaus, returning from Jerusalem, trying to make sense of all that has happened whilst they have been there. A man falls into step with them and becomes part of their conversation. They tell him what they have witnessed and he seems able to set it in the context of a much bigger picture, helping them to understand their experiences. It is at the end of their journey, when they share food together, that the real significance becomes apparent to them. You might like to read this story again (Luke 24:13-32), putting yourselves into the shoes of the two travellers.

This approach to learning is one many of us will have experienced: the teacher at school who was willing to get alongside you and start where you are and not where you ought to be; the youth leader who inspired you to have the confidence to take the next step. In the articles in this edition we see more examples: in Touch of Hope we see the importance of facilitation; the 3Dimensions project highlights the importance of people recognising their potential; and in FRESH we see the value of building confidence.

This model of walking alongside others is one that has a growing significance today, with an increasing call on personal trainers, mentors, coaches, etc. It also poses some significant questions for the Church: How do we share wisdom and experience? How do we nurture and develop new leaders? How can we enable and encourage people to use their gifts to the full? Enjoy!

Paul Taylor

Director of Learning & Development
(Regions) in the Discipleship
& Ministries Learning Network

Touch of Hope

The experience of war in the Balkans between 1991 and 2001 has left a legacy of trauma, hurt, divided communities and social problems. In seeking to make sense of this experience, communities struggle with the tension between exclusion and embrace. People ask how we can move on from the past, and how can we live together again in peace in spite of our differences?



Touch of Hope participants

Dodir Nade ('Touch of Hope' in English) helps people to find their way through these issues. The project runs workshops which deliver training in a methodology of learning to 'live in a reconciling way'. They include teaching on reconciliation skills for church leaders and local community organisations so that Christians are empowered to become channels of healing and reconciliation in their local communities.

Working together

Running successful mixed Serb and Croat workshops is a demonstration of how both are able to move on and work together to rebuild community. One of the project team, Clive Fowle, shared with us the joy of seeing the newly trained facilitators working together:

"Terezija, a Croatian woman, and Desa, a Serbian woman, giving testimony of the way in which the workshops have helped them move on and to give this personal account in both Croatia and in Serbia has been very powerful."

The Touch of Hope team comprises the skilled trainer and peace worker Nena Arvaj from the Pentecostal church in Osijek; Judith Halliday (an experienced trainer) and Clive Fowle, who has an MA in Peace Studies and Mediation and works as a trainer and mediator. Clive is also a minister in the Rugby and Daventry Circuit. Clive is available to speak about the project and lead workshops on reconciliation topics. He is keen to share this work and explore how it can help us in the UK in communities which have inter ethnic conflict.



Testimonies:

The change seen in individuals is a testimony to the power of the resurrection and this gives hope to church communities and hope to people that change can happen. Below are two extracts from the project's new publication, *Wounded in War, Touched by Hope: Stories from Croatia*.

Ljubica's Story

"My husband died in 1988. I stayed with my two girls. Just as we had adjusted to our new situation, the war started. It was so hard. We have many scars, sorrow that has stayed with us. We have to continue. Poverty, sorrow for the dear ones we have lost, our town destroyed, all our possessions burned in the fire. It is too painful. We have to hold our heads up and face life. The workshops are a joy for me. I meet new people and receive new understanding. It is easier after all."

Branka's story

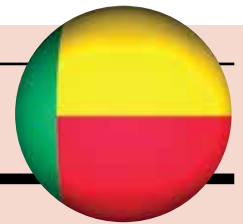
"I am married for 20 years and I'm living in Trpinje. Also I work there in kindergarten 'Lilliputian'...I love my work and it is my joy. I have two kids...My wish for the future is that my kids have a safe future with job and place to live, a home. I pray to God for health and clear and wise mind that I can help them. A big Thank You for help that you gave me, being aware of it or not – doors for hope are now opened for me and with hearts of unknown people for me that are full of warmth give me the strength to live for tomorrow."

Prayer requests for Touch of Hope:



- for new openings in working with war veterans from all sides
- for guidance in working with the Church in Bosnia and working with the Muslim community
- for our newly trained workers as they gain experience in leading workshops
- for Nena and her health. May God give her the strength she needs in body, mind, spirit and soul
- for those without work who struggle to survive
- for those with painful memories of torture in camps, vilification and humiliation, seeing their loved ones die and losing their homes.

Helping refugee communities in Benin



Ogoni refugees, originally from Nigeria and now living in Benin, have been working with the Methodist Church of Benin (MCB), and the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) to establish a business cooperative to enable these refugees to make a living.

An important element of the project was to assist the Ogoni group to develop skills to run communal business in the form of cooperative societies.

Scrap metal

Most of the Ogoni men have engaged in scavenging for scrap metal which is then sold in Cotonou for recycling in different Asian countries. This activity has been one of the main means of survival for the entire group.

Foodstuffs

Trading in foodstuffs has also brought considerable gains to the community,

particularly the women. Although the Ogoni refugees in Ouidah do not own land to farm cassava, they buy cassava from the locals and process it into gari and fufu to sell to the teeming Nigerian households and restaurants that specialize in Nigerian food in Cotonou.

Another activity in which the women engaged was buying and selling different kinds of seafood (especially periwinkles) to households and restaurants.

Thanks to this project:

- the Ogoni community can now meet their essential needs
- ten children from the community are now attending schools in Cotonou as a result of money that their parents raised from businesses
- women can now buy firewood instead of collecting it and being exposed to conflict with the local community over this precious resource.

Praying for the Ogoni refugees



- Thank God for the gradual settlement of this group in Benin.
- We praise God for the funding and creativity of the refugees to support each other.
- Pray that the Ogoni families will get access to education, health and social services in Benin.
- We pray for MCB church growth and for its future church leaders.



My FRESH experience: Hannah's story

This year I went on the first ever FRESH North, with 11 other amazing 'FRESHers'. I absolutely loved all the teaching, the friendship and the late-night games. I enjoyed and was challenged by every single moment. God was working in each of us, teaching us all many new and exciting things for our lives.

After apprehensively waiting for FRESH to begin in October, I was amazed at how much I grew throughout the year in confidence, trust and my relationship with God. Through the talks and sessions we all took away something precious and powerful that will impact all of the things that we plan on doing with our leadership focuses and our lives. For me, this particularly came from Weekend 3's pre-breakfast silence and solitude. We spent an hour alone in total silence; just spending time talking to and listening to God. That one hour completely changed my view of God and of my life, and has started me off on an even bigger journey into God's grace.

As well as the fantastic teaching and God-time, FRESH gave me some unforgettable experiences. Whenever away on a FRESH weekend, life seemed to exist in a different time zone, waking at 7.00am and only going to bed at midnight. We had activities ranging from egg-protecting to climbing the rocks of Hope Valley in Derbyshire. Every single moment was teaching and guiding and just fun. I don't think there'll ever be a time when I'll forget what God has done for me through FRESH, or the strong new relationships the others and I formed in experiencing all of this together.

If anyone is up for being challenged, transformed and prepared for a life of leadership for God, FRESH would be perfect for you. Throw yourself into a totally life-changing year.

Pray for FRESH



Use this verse to pray for FRESH: "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah; and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh."

Ezekiel 47:8 (NRSV)

Enabling our young generations to be gifts of FRESH water:

Share Jesus International's FRESH project aims to develop a generation of young people passionate about mission; young people who are equipped, resourced and mobilised to be leaders in both their churches and their communities.



As a direct result of graduating from FRESH students have set up CUs in their schools and universities. Some have found the confidence to speak at church events and also set up groups in local places such as cafés and parks. The Dragons' Den sessions have given young people, such as 'FRESHER' Ibrahim, the confidence to set up projects.

The FRESH project has proven to be connexionally significant as its popularity spreads across Britain. In 2012/13, the first ever FRESH NORTH was run by Greenhill Methodist Church in Sheffield.

The FRESH training addresses questions such as "What is leadership?" It hosts an array of seminars with titles such as *Prayer: easy peasy?* and *We are family*. The FRESH training programme enlightens students to view how their roles in the world can work to serve Christ.

In 2011/12, the FRESH training sessions were hosted over three consecutive weekends at Morden Baptist Church and Oakwood Challenge Christian Centre in London. The training focused on discussing team building, mission activity and *Dragons' Den* sessions where young people pitched ideas to organisations in order to acquire financial backing. A third of the young people aged 15-21 came from Methodist backgrounds across the country.

What I loved about FRESH was how they invited different speakers related to the careers that we may possibly embark on. FRESH taught us how we could use our careers to glorify God and to change the world.

Zainab

What is FRESH?

FRESH is about equipping young people to be FRESH water in their 'Dead Sea', wherever that is; home, school, community, work or university.

FRESH is about allowing young people a space to explore how they themselves are 'temples' of the Holy Spirit and can continually grow deeper in their intimacy with Christ.

FRESH's vision is that as God is allowed to work in each of these young people and transform their lives, His plan and purposes will be outworked in the lives of those within their community. People will be transformed as they find food for their souls and healing for their bodies through Jesus Christ. FRESH helps young people to discover their ability to influence society and then equips them with the tools to do it!



Providing skills for women and girls to earn a living

The Methodist Women's Training Centre (MWTC) in Ghana was set up in 1948 by Methodist Women in Britain when Methodist Church Ghana was still an overseas district. The centre offers vocational training to girls and women who have no employable skills. In rural Ghana, most girls from poor households do not attend the formal school system due to financial constraints.

The MWTC offers the opportunity for these girls to take courses in catering and crafts such as beading, batik, soap making, fashion and design. Other recent courses are basic ICT skills and a childminding course based in the newly opened Early Child Development unit, which was equipped with a grant of £3,000 from the Methodist Women in Britain last year.

An additional grant of £10,000 from the World Mission Fund has been used to upgrade the training equipment in the other departments for 211 students, including kitchen equipment, computers, electric and manual sewing machines and hair dryers. The presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana asked for World Mission Fund support for this project as it makes such a strong contribution to the Churches goal of supporting women's empowerment.



Above: "Ellen Osei is my name, I am 24 years of age and I'm in Form 2 and I am a fashion student, now the equipment has helped me to sew my own dress and model in it. Very soon I will be computer literate so I can use the computer effectively. Thank you very much. God bless you."

Above: "Animah Mavis is my name, and I am a hairdressing student from Methodist Women's Training Centre. I am 19 years of age. Thank you Methodist Church in Britain for giving us such nice equipment. Now I can earn a living after school."

Top: The girls' graduation ceremony.

Training grants enable study

SALT special

Scholarship and Leadership Training (SALT) grants from the World Mission Fund enable students from our overseas church partners to study in the UK or another country. We are pleased to share stories from two recent graduates of the programme.



The Revd Sang Bik Cem, the Methodist Church Upper Myanmar

I am Revd Sang Bik Cem, a minister of the Methodist Church, Upper Myanmar, and a recent graduate of the Asian Rural Institute (ARI). I come from the middle of Chin State, which is located in the western part of Myanmar. There are many high mountains and many streams; we have no big river. Where I live gets very cold in the winter season.

Most of the Chin people are Christians. There are many denominations in my community and most of the churches are Baptist churches. We combine worship services once a month. At that worship service all the villagers attend and we share our visions for the village, for the villagers and for our community.

I am a minister in the Methodist Church of Hakha District. Most of the villagers are poor people but they love our family and we love them. We share with each other



whatever we have and we help each other with farm work. I sometimes go to the farm to help them. I work with them and I discuss the word of God as well as farming.

I remember in 1990 my village did not have enough food for that year and my

grandfather shared his food with those who had none. My father said to him, "Why are you doing this? They wouldn't do it for you." My grandfather replied, "If I don't, what will they eat?" That kind of sharing food is part of our Chin culture, but we cannot find it nowadays. I can understand what my grandfather was





doing for our community; when he shared his food he lost many things, but he made many people happy. This is our Christian teaching: to love each other.

“My dream is to build my community into a happy, healthy, peaceful community.”

I will start at home with my wife and work on my own farm, because I want to show my community practically. If I succeed, other farmers will come to me and ask what I learned and what things we should do. Before I share all the things I learned from ARI, I will observe how they grow crops and vegetables in their fields. What I learned from ARI is not the only good way to farm; the other farmers may also have many good techniques to grow crops and vegetables, and I can learn from them too. After they've shared what they know with me, I will share what I learned from ARI and we can select

the best ways of working from both. Practical is the best way to teach and learn.

Sometimes we do not have enough food to share in our community, and some people need to buy from another village. If we have bigger harvests, we can share with each other and we won't need to buy from outside the village. And since we will be spending less money on food, more of our children will be able to go to school. Before, many children did not go to school because their parents could not pay school fees or buy books, pens and school uniforms. But if they produce their own food, they will have more time to take care of their children and their homes. They can be happy and their homes will become happy homes. If all the homes in our community are happy, all the community will be happy. In this way we can build our community into one that is happy, healthy and peaceful.



**The Revd
Fonki Forba
in Douala,
Cameroon**

Olubunmi
Olayisade,
partnership
coordinator for

Africa, recently discussed how the Revd Fonki Forba's postgraduate experience at the Queen's Foundation has benefitted the Church.

Revd Forba pastors a large English-speaking congregation in Douala, the French-speaking commercial capital of Cameroon. There are two Sunday services, an active youth church, a vibrant choir and participative elders. He was very thankful for the Methodist Church in Britain World Mission Fund scholarship and grateful that this discussion was taking place. He mentioned a few positive changes since his return in August 2011 following his dissertation on poverty alleviation in Cameroon.

- He has strengthened his participation in the **local prison ministry** where he leads prison fellowship and administers Holy Communion. His church also provides transport fares for newly released inmates to enable them return to their communities and homes.
- The Church now celebrates an **Agape meal** on the last Sunday of each month with the community. Fonki commented how the church is packed full with non-members and church members who bring all kinds of food for all to dine together. This practice has endeared the Church to the community and gives opportunities to share the good news about Jesus as well as demonstrate his love.
- There are many **street children** in Douala. The church now offers 60 street kids a meal a day, plus clothes, counselling and spiritual guidance as and when needed. A house has been rented to care for them; however, insufficient funding has hampered its progress. A special fundraising service was held to help meet the needs.



Prayer Requests

Please give thanks for the Revds Forba and Abik and their times of study. Give thanks for God's work through them and pray for them as they continue to implement their dreams.

The Christian Muslim Forum

The Christian Muslim Forum shows how faith is a catalyst for good relationships and welcomes the 'other'.

The forum is made up of members of the Muslim and Christian communities – Sunni, Shi'a, Anglican, Catholic, Baptist, Pentecostal, Methodist and Coptic Orthodox – and includes various traditions. Both Christian and Muslim groups are dedicated to demonstrating that faith is a resource for peace, conflict resolution, understanding and the valuing of all human beings.

The members firmly believe that the time is right for Christians and Muslims to develop strong and committed relationships, for the benefit of both faith communities and the wider society. The Christian Muslim Forum is committed to the belief that *"friendship between people of different faiths is encouraged by our traditions"*.

The Mission in Britain Fund has awarded a grant of £22,500 for the Christian Muslim Forum to develop an accredited



youthwork qualification for Christians and Muslims. Previously, there has been religious segregation in the youth training for Christians and Muslims.

The pilot course begins in September; Geoff Harley-Mason will be responsible for the Christian theological reflection and Nahim Khan will lead the Muslim theological reflection. This pilot course is being delivered in partnership with the Feast (the forum's partner) and will take place at the Faithful Neighbourhoods Centre in Sparkhill, Birmingham. There are still some subsidised places available for people in the Midlands, especially Methodists.

Feedback from the pilot have been very positive:

"Interactive sessions, chance to discuss ideas/ practice with other youth workers."

"Full of useful resources and information."

Contacts:

Christian Muslim Forum
www.christianmuslimforum.org

The Feast
www.thefeast.org.uk

Living in 3Dimensions: equipping the baby-boomer generation and beyond

Living in 3Dimensions (L3D) aims to meet the spiritual needs of the 'Baby Boomer' generation; people born between 1945 and 1965 (the last generation that attended Sunday School in significant numbers). Many baby boomers believe church is a good thing, but apart from occasional visits for weddings and funerals, have not been to church for several years.

L3D's mission is to help people make the most of their potential, make the most of their relationships and do their best for the planet – all with God's help. L3D's two main strategies for reaching baby boomer generation are:

- creating fresh expressions of Church
- offering leadership development for

lay and ordained members of this generation.

Focusing Leaders Networks provide a one-off spiritual focusing programme for leaders to evaluate the shape and future direction of their ministry and find renewed energy and focus. This process takes six to eight months and offers a small group approach with one-to-one coaching. The first course took place in the South West this year and further networks are planned in the South East and the North East in the next connexional year.

The project began in the Hants-Surrey Border Circuit, where one of its key outreach initiatives is a 'Spirit of Rock' event where their band, Metal Fatigue,

A helping hand for nurses

The Methodist Church in Britain recently gave a grant of £1,032 from the World Mission Fund to the United Church of the Solomon Islands (UCSI), to enable nurse aides at the Helena Goldie Hospital to upgrade their nursing skills.

Helena Goldie was the first hospital in the Solomon Islands. It is owned and run by the UCSI with a government grant covering some costs. Mission partners Jenny and Graham Longbottom both work there. The hospital relies on 'nurse aides' who are often in charge of wards, see out-patients and work – sometimes alone – in rural clinics. However, the government is now phasing out the position of nurse aide and instead requiring fully trained nurses in all hospitals.

In light of this, Graham and Jenny are offering nurse aides some basic education in English and Maths using a distance



Prayer Requests



Give thanks for the 11 nurse aides who have passed the course, and pray for them as they go on to study for their nursing diploma.

They need mathematics for working out dosages and concentrations in IV fluid, so the courses are very helpful.

learning course, before they attempt to apply for the nursing diploma. Since many nurse aides left school early, this is a big challenge for them. Twelve nurse aides at Helena Goldie Hospital are now taking these courses, and eleven have just passed the basic writing part of the course, eight of them with B or B+ grades.

"Access to education and training is a great liberator," says Steve Pearce, partnership coordinator for Asia & the Pacific. *"Often it takes only a small amount of money or an affirming*

word to bridge a chasm and make that access possible. In this case it was a small grant from the money you raise for the World Mission Fund, and time and encouragement from our mission partners."

One student at the college said, *"English is the language that they have to use for assignments, for the internet and their text books also. They need mathematics for working out dosages and concentrations in IV fluid, so the courses are very helpful."*

plays 1960s and 1970s music to help people remember their youthful aspirations and reflect on how well they've achieved them. People who are provoked into fulfilling more of their youthful aspirations are encouraged to join L3D groups. These are groups of three people who meet regularly and work through a series of questions designed to help them to 'live in three dimensions'.

The project leaders are now receiving invitations from around the Connexion to envision others to do the same.

For more information about the project, visit their website: www.l3d.org.uk.



Retreat to Advance: Bolivia's training and retreat centre

Sandra Lopez, the new partnership coordinator for the Americas and the Caribbean, shares with us news of the projects she visited during her recent visit to Bolivia.

"At Thiu Rancho we were welcomed by about 30 lay pastors who had travelled from all over Bolivia for a 10 day training course on Methodism and on the vision of the Bolivian Church.

We were told that it had been a time for these lay pastors to share together, cry together and rejoice together over the work they were doing for God in their churches and communities.

They were people so passionate about God that many had left their families, work, husbands and children for those ten days, a huge sacrifice, especially for the women, so that they could attend

this retreat and grow spiritually and be equipped for their ministries. These lay pastors are so important given that there are only 50 ordained ministers for over 200 churches in the nation.

One of the indigenous Quechua women told me that it was especially difficult for women to be lay pastors in Bolivia because often their husbands were not happy with the time they spent in ministry, away from their families. This important piece of work has raised up leaders who are now working for the national Church, a few of whom were present to share their testimony of how dedicating ten days of their lives every year for four years had

Prayer Requests:

Remember the Methodist Church in Bolivia in your prayers, pray for God to bless, guide, and strengthen the ministers and lay pastors. Pray that the orphanage will be able to raise the income it needs, and pray that the staff and students will grow closer to God each day.



helped them get to where they were now-national leaders. The World Mission Fund has been supporting this work for a number of years now.

Ruth Gee, Methodist president this year, and with whom I was travelling, shared with the group what is happening in British Methodism today. There were some similarities in what is happening in Bolivia also, in terms of church attendance and participation of young people. One of the young people attending the training, aged 15, spoke about wanting to help revive some churches where the young people were no longer attending. She wanted to set up a radio show especially for young people and play Christian music that they could relate to."



Sandra also shared another story that highlights the importance of education and training.

"Our hosts in Santa Cruz also took us to Saint Peter's Orphanage north of Montero. The Iglesia de la Transfiguración [Transfiguration Church] has been running the orphanage and school for 32 years.

The orphanage looks after 32 students, 7 who live on site. The school has been facing increasing financial difficulties in recent years. Global warming has badly affected local agriculture, which means that giving in the local church had been decreasing and poverty rising. Some of the pressing needs of the school include renovating its kitchen and building better toilets.

It was wonderful to meet Bismar, who was raised there as an orphan, went to university and then returned as a teacher once he had graduated.

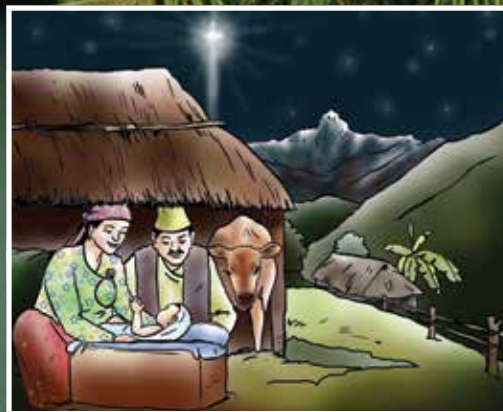
He said that he wanted to give something back to the school that had given him so much."

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