

# ONE MISSION MATTERS



Winter 2015 • No 43

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Partners in mission

The Methodist Church 

Dear friends

Thank you to all of you who have responded so generously to the call of Jesus to make disciples of all nations, and in all nations. The parts that we offer are brought together by our heavenly Father to create something powerful and far greater than we alone often dare to imagine.



Photograph: © Anna Sharp

When we are engaged in 'building mission', it is too easy to complain that we live in a culture that does not listen, without realising that we live in a culture that does watch. In fact, everything we do is watched more closely than ever before. This can become a great opportunity for our mission; it just requires a shift in emphasis from what we say to what we do.

It has always struck me that if we are the Body of Christ, we should be looking like Jesus, doing what Jesus did, and therefore having the same reputation that Jesus had. We should be famous for the same reasons Jesus was.

He talked about God in such an intimate way, pointed to him so naturally and convincingly, but also showed watching communities what God can do.

Jesus was famous for doing what was thought impossible in his culture: restoring the sight of people born blind, casting out demons and offering forgiveness to people outside the structures of the temple system.

Our mission-building can also be driven by doing what is thought impossible in our many and varied cultures: providing life into dying communities, hope into dying lives, rescue into lost souls, and building bridges across cultural and racial divides with radical acts of reconciliation.

If we can uniquely see a need and have a sense of hope and courage that what others think is impossible can still be done, then we have our mission-building plan: to reach those in desperate need of the rescue that Jesus Christ offers.

In a noisy world which listens less and less to the voices of faith, we are still being watched for what we do. And amid the noise, what we do may be able to speak more clearly than any of our words.

Alistair Sharp  
Superintendent Minister and Chair of the Joint Property Strategy Group



Cover image: A lady from Asrang VDC (Village Development Committee) in Gorkha, carrying a relief package home.

Photograph: © Paul Wright

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# Access for all at Englesea Brook

A Heritage for Mission project, Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum of Primitive Methodism has been transformed over the last two years and now has access for wheelchair users.

Photograph: © Cheshire Museums



Left: Englesea Brook today, looking across from the car park to the chapel, museum and cottage.

Above: Victorian wash day under the covered way which links the museum and the cottage.

Below: Cutting the ribbon is Revd Douglas Savill, one of the longest serving volunteers. Wheelchair users are delighted to be able to access the chapel and museum for the first time.



Photograph: © Cheshire Museums

Since it opened in 1986, the only access to Englesea Brook Museum has been via a steep flight of stone steps. "Thanks to The Joseph Rank Trust, we were able to acquire the cottage next door, which made it possible for us to achieve our dream of creating access for all," says Jill Barber, the Director. "We used the land at the front to provide a new entrance by an easy slope, directly into the museum. Opening up the back has provided access to the toilets. We now have a new tea room, education room, and shop in the cottage. As well as a patio, for enjoying a cup of tea or coffee, we have extra outdoor space for the many children who take part in our extensive schools programme."

This has been achieved thanks to the Historic Cheshire Churches Trust, WREN and a Connexional Grant of £30,000, which means that Englesea Brook can now fulfil its true potential as a place of encounter, where people of all ages, backgrounds and faiths can meet and engage with the good news of the gospel.

Englesea Brook Chapel is Grade II listed and was built in 1828. The school room (now the museum) was added in 1914.

Its real significance, however, lies in the graveyard across the road. Hugh Bourne (1772-1852), the founder of Primitive Methodism, is buried here, as well as Thomas Russell, the 'Apostle of Berkshire'.

The words on Hugh Bourne's tomb show how Primitive Methodism grew to 110,000 members in just 40 years. What was it that people connected with, and what can we learn from it today?

Primitive Methodism changed the landscape of Britain and the Methodist Church. It still affects the way we worship, the role of lay people, and our understanding of what it means to be Church today.

"Heritage is a safe space," says Jill. "Often it provides an opportunity for people to open up about some of the deep issues in their lives, or ask questions they have never been able to ask. As one visitor said, 'I have learnt more about who I am and what I believe.'"

## PRAY

Please pray for all who visit our Methodist heritage sites, and for staff and volunteers sharing the good news of Jesus, our unique Methodist story, and our own faith stories.



Photo: © Peter Barber





# Building back better

On 25 April an earthquake of 7.8 magnitude shook Nepal violently. A second (of 7.3) followed on 12 May. Together they have caused almost 9,000 deaths, over 20,000 injuries, grave damage to thousands of buildings, and the destruction of a huge number of livelihoods. Even people who have not been physically affected have been left feeling traumatised and fearful.



Photograph: © Cati Ramsay

## Malcolm and Cati Ramsay

A common slogan here in the weeks following the earthquakes has been “building back better”. What this means is that new buildings must be earthquake-proof. Better materials need to be used. Building regulations that were routinely ignored now need to be rigorously enforced. In a wider sense too, Nepal needs to be far more ‘disaster-ready’. Stockpiles of essential relief materials, and plans for their distribution, need to be in place before the next big earthquake.

The United Mission to Nepal has been allocated parts of an area called Dhading as our responsibility for post-earthquake work. In the first phase of emergency response, we supplied relief materials to 12,175 homes; in the second, we embark

on a two-year plan for rehabilitation and reconstruction. It is a privilege to be taking part in work in which we can demonstrate in very practical terms the love of God in Jesus to people who have suffered so terribly.

But for all the good news stories following the earthquakes there are also many incidents that are heart-wrenching. The pastor of our church took us to two places on the outskirts of Kathmandu where there has been widespread devastation. People there have received almost no help at all. In one of them, the local MP had come and distributed a few tarpaulins and tents – but only to paid-up members of his own political party. In the other – about 45 minutes from the centre of the capital city – the town looked like a bomb site.

In Nepal – as is true for every country

*Above:* Taking the relief package home. It can't be too big, because some people have to walk long distances to the distribution point, sometimes up to 2-3 hours.

*Left:* Locals take responsibility for trying to recreate something out of the rubble.



# \$5 million raised already – but WMC needs your help to achieve its vision!

Just imagine a vision that builds on John Wesley's idea of a "global parish":

- an organisation encompassing 80 member churches on 6 continents
- 80 million people sharing a common faith heritage, spreading the gospel and making disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world
- a challenge to promote peace and understanding, and work for equal rights and social justice for all peoples.

That organisation is the World Methodist Council (WMC) and that is their vision. But they need your help to achieve it. At the WMC meeting in Durban in

2011 it was agreed to create a \$20 million (£16m) endowment to provide a permanent source of funding for global ministries. Our own Conference adopted the challenge and called on Methodists in Britain to give 50 pence per year over five years, being "extra generous" to make allowance for less well-off churches such as the fledgling Methodist Church in Rwanda which only joined WMC in 2013.

The good news is that WMC has now raised \$5m of its \$20m target. Less good is that so far, donations from this country have been under £30,000: just 6% of our target. There have been contributions from some of the churches and circuits in about half our districts.

There is still time to contribute! The

Revd Jenny Spouge, a UK member of WMC, says: "If every reader of *One Mission Matters* persuaded one more Methodist to contribute, it would nearly double our total; if each took the plea to one small church, the figure would be over 50%." WMC has completed one lap of this race; can you help it run three more?

## GIVE

Help the World Methodist Council achieve its vision! For more information and to donate visit [www.methodist.org.uk/mission/world-church/world-methodist-council](http://www.methodist.org.uk/mission/world-church/world-methodist-council)

Photograph: © Cat Ramsay



on earth – the phrase "building back better" means little unless it embraces the human heart as well as human homes. The Christian Church here is small, but growing steadily in numbers and in confidence. Please pray for the Church, and its leaders, that they may preach and live the gospel in such a way that many more are drawn into God's good purposes



Photograph: © Paul Wright

for our world. For surely in Christian terms "building back better" involves not merely construction codes and disaster plans, but also the recognition and honouring of right relationships – with God, with our neighbour, and with our planet.

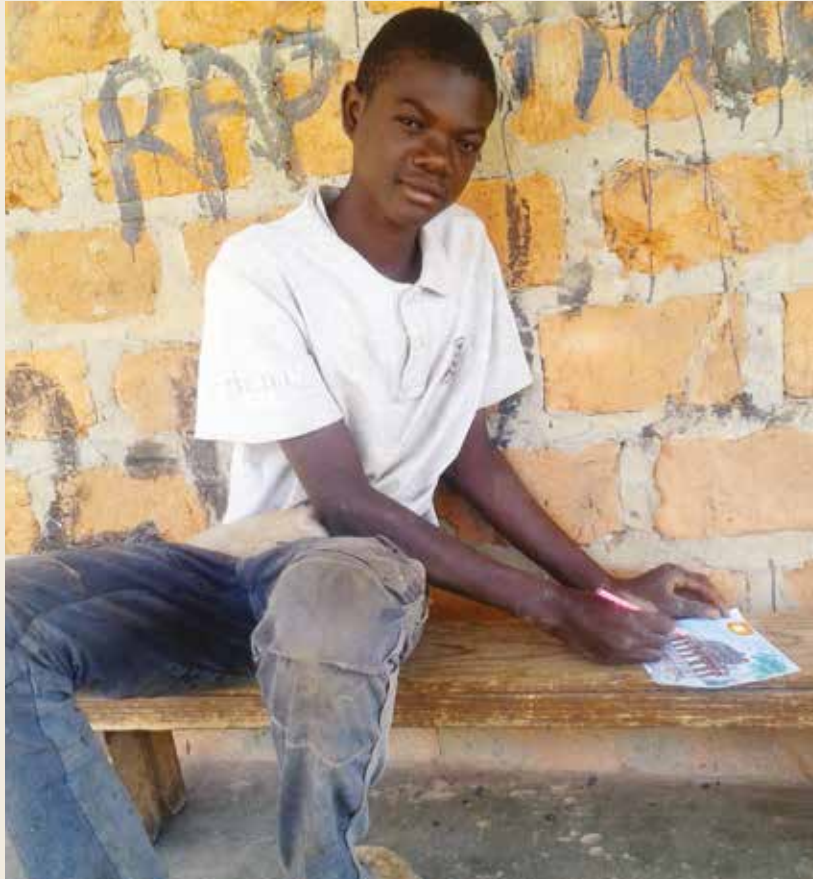
Above left: Remains of a building hang precariously over rubble.

Above: Family in Asrang VDC (Village Development Committee), Gorkha, in front of their collapsed house.

# Providing 'Play 4 All' in Zambia

There's nothing more special than the sound of a child's laugh. It is the most precious thing. Parents, uncles, aunties, grandmas, grandpas, neighbours – everybody around the world loves children.

Photograph: © Jane Mwenda



This is Andrew doing some painting. He is into art.

## Jane Mwenda

I would like to share with you the Play4All project in Zambia. My name is Jane Mwenda and I am the project manager.

Play4All was founded in January 2012 by Jenny Featherstone, a soft and kind-hearted woman full of love and peace.

Play4All is an NGO which is changing lives through play. The place gives the kids somewhere to play and feel at home, and to learn through play. The organisation has 16 volunteers who help look after the kids. Play4All opens from Monday to Friday.

Children learn a lot through play. These are some of the games we play:

**Jenga:** This game teaches children a lot about stability.

**Football:** This sport brings people together. It is the kids' favourite sport. Football teaches a lot about team work, communication and love.

**Draughts:** This game is more like maths; it makes us think about how to move. The kids love it. The thing they like most is when they become kings, because a king can move freely.

**Puzzles:** The kids struggle and work in a group to complete a puzzle. You should see their smiley faces when they finish! It makes them happy to complete a puzzle; they go around running, shouting and jumping.

**Ichiyenga:** This is a traditional game. It teaches the kids how to count. It is played by two or six people.

## Kamatipa

Kamatipa is a community where about 80% of children don't go to school; they wander around, looking for things to do and something to eat. This is why there were very many cases of children going missing some years ago. But since Play4All began, kids don't wander around anymore.

Every Wednesday and Friday we have a talent show, where the kids show their talents. They draw lovely pictures. We provide them with paper, crayons and pencils.

## Challenges

We have been facing a lot of challenges around this place. We have been robbed three times, and we don't have water or electricity.

The kids who come to play come with empty stomachs. So I think it would be a good idea if we could introduce a feeding programme, at least giving them porridge.

Personally I have been having challenges. I was almost attacked once. A lot of security is needed at this place for our work to be safe.

A lot of the kids don't go to school, so it would be good if we can introduce them to some basic level of education, just as we have done for the volunteers. The volunteers have a literacy programme. They are now able to read, understand and write in English.

Play4All is a good organisation. Thanks to Jenny and all who are helping to make this programme possible. More children are changing for the better.

## THANK YOU

Our thanks go to the Methodist Church of Scotland, Moiré Lee, Rachael Kalaba and all the donors. May the Lord bless you all.



# Building mission – one mother at a time

Mattia Leoni

When I arrived in Rwanda I had plans, but I found dozens of ‘street kids’ who were too poor to afford school, which was one of their dreams. I began a reintegration programme, paying school fees and supplying stationery. Numbers kept increasing by the day, and means getting thinner, as the need was quite strong (children to be sent to primary or secondary school and young adults for vocational training), but we managed to keep meeting needs, pushed by the kids’ joyful reaction, sometimes bursting out into ecstatic jumps, at the prospect of going back to school, after years of wasted lives.

Daily walks around the dirt roads away from the main avenues (and plenty of encounters with poor people) showed me the reasons for all those kids out of school. When families are struggling to feed all their children, there’s no way they can send them to school. It also became clear whom to target: mothers, the backbone of society. Mothers with no fewer than four children to feed, a mud-brick house which they must pay



Photograph: © Mattia Leoni

Elena (with Michele and Sam) and disabled children’s mums sawing cardboard for paper furniture.

rent for and which we would not dare to call home; no running water but a pump some distance away to send the children to fill cans from, no money to afford electricity, and most of all no job.

Hence, the new phase: a group of over 30 mothers, meeting every Sunday after church to come up with ideas for simple income-generating activities. They decide which ones are most feasible, share feedback on their new small business and

learn from each other how to make crafts which we can then market in Europe. They’ve now all received funds to start. Some sell food staples or charcoal; some have farm animals. For some we bought sewing machines, for a dad (!) and a brother we bought a bicycle to transport things or people, for others popcorn machines.

Building mission, one mother at a time!

Photograph: © Mattia Leoni



Rita, one of the school pupils.



Photograph: © Mattia Leoni

Mothers’ group on a Wednesday afternoon in the Leonis’ garden, learning to make inigi (necklaces).

# Transforming lives and giving hope

The Parson Cross Initiative (PXI) is a project in North Sheffield supported and funded by the Methodist Church. It works at finding new ways of connecting as Church with the lives of the people around it. The project bases itself around the guiding principles of transforming lives and the communities it serves, with a strong emphasis on poverty and social justice.

“Our work is all about building relationships with our neighbours and seeing how the power of new friendships can transform lives and give hope,” says Nick Waterfield, one of the project’s community workers.

## Laura’s story

Laura first came to us last year. She had been living in London with her two young children. “When I came to Sheffield,” she says, “I was in a period of severe bipolar illness that led me to lose everything I had.”

Laura became separated from her two children, lost her job, her home and her support network that she had grown

over years in London. She was feeling increasingly isolated and vulnerable.

“One day I discovered an art group run by PXI,” she says, “and this led to the discovery of a strong community-based support network. The people running PXI offered me acceptance, friendship, practical support, home-cooked soup and love.”

One of Laura’s passions is music. She is a qualified music therapist, but sadly is currently unable to practise. As a result, as well as attending the art group, the creative writing group and gardening club, PXI has now been able to give her the opportunity to use her musical gifts in a voluntary capacity, helping to run

Photograph: © Katie York and Michelle Varley



More stories like Laura’s (pictured) are available in this year’s advent Offering materials online at [www.methodist.org.uk/advent](http://www.methodist.org.uk/advent)

a new music project. She is also about to become a member of one of the Methodist churches in the area.

“Sometimes,” says Laura, “hope is like a candle flame that has almost gone out. It doesn’t go out but sometimes I need friends to remind me that it is still there.”

## Mental health does matter

### Claire Rakich

In June, the Discipleship & Ministries Learning Network held *Mental Health Matters* at Cliff College. Conference delegates included Methodists, Anglicans and Quakers. Ministers, youth workers and mental health professionals gathered to learn more about mental health issues.

Vice-President Gill Dascombe gave the opening keynote speech – an insight into our understanding of the brain and the history of developing attitudes towards mental health, in particular the stigma attached to mental ill-health which still persists today. Gill reminded us that whilst mental health has become

a hot topic in the media, resources to provide services for those affected are at crisis point. The conference, inspired by discussions at 3Generate Children and Youth Assembly, offered an opportunity to explore ways that the Church might have a positive impact.

Keynotes and workshops over the weekend included the impact of mental health on the young and in older people, specific conditions such as depression and substance misuse and ways that the Church can provide a safe environment to support mental and spiritual well-being. Two workshop leaders spoke bravely and honestly about their personal experiences of living with mental illness. *Mental Health Matters* emphasised the

strong link between mind, body and spirit and concluded with the sharing of Holy Communion, led by Gill Dascombe and the conference chaplains.

Feedback has been excellent: “Such a tremendous atmosphere throughout - just the right environment to unpack the very important and sensitive theme we were dealing with.” “I learned so much ... and have come away feeling really excited about opportunities for me and my work.” “A great informative, supportive, sensitive, engaging, inspiring and motivating event.”

Requests for *Mental Health Matters* to be repeated have been taken on board and a second conference is being planned for June 2017.

Below: Mental Health Matters chaplains Karen Jobson and Don Pritchard display their T-shirts.



Photograph: © TMCP



# Reflecting back on last Advent

“We all know one language: God’s language, the language of love.” During Advent last year, we met Raheela and Irfan John – refugees from Pakistan, now settled in Wales and serving the Wales Synod. As the season of anticipation approaches, we caught up with Irfan and his family again.

## Interview with the Revd Irfan John

### What have been some of the highlights of your ministry over the past 10 years?

When we came to Wales in January 2006, my English wasn’t very good. I asked at the library to borrow an English Bible to help me learn English better, but they didn’t have one! I was upset because this is supposedly a Christian country. I was introduced to the Revd Watcyn James at the Bible Society and I asked them to find Bibles in different languages. We contacted a local Christian counsellor and a preacher and I was introduced to the director of Cardiff libraries. You can now find the Bible in 11 languages at Cardiff library, 17 at Swansea, and 12 at Newport. In this way, small dreams come true.

### How is your family settling in Wales?

We settled really well. Wales has been a



photograph: © Irfan Irfan

*Left:* Thanks to the Johns, you can now find the Bible in 11 languages in Cardiff’s libraries. They take their inspiration from Mary Jones (whose grave is shown here), who travelled barefoot over the Welsh mountains to get her own copy of the Bible.

sanctuary and a home for us. Cardiff as a city is our new birthplace. In different ways the Methodist Church has been a countless blessing. The children have settled in school quickly; they have performed well and grown spiritually. When we first came to the country, we were just six people with six suitcases. Now we have everything. We share what

we have with others. I call my car a lorry; we collect what people are throwing away and give it to the needy. I involve the whole family in our ministry to be a bridge between the local community and culturally diverse people. Everyone knows that with us, you buy one and get five free. In our family, we work together.

*Below:* Another achievement: Revd Irfan and family staged the most diverse nativity play ever performed, with a cast that had 55 nationalities. For this, they were awarded a Guinness World Record!



Photograph: © Dave Russell



Photograph: © Revd Jonny Gios



Photograph: © Revd Jonny Gios



Photograph: © Debbie Briggs

Above left: Mug painting at the over 60s holiday club.

Above: Natasha (instructor) and Debbie (organiser) at Sandylands charity aerobics night.

Above right: Wow – from a dream to reality! Play park success.

# Sandylands

The story of Sandylands Methodist Church, Kendal, Cumbria, is an inspiring example of a church leading the way in caring for those around it.

Built at the same time as the estate it shares a name with, Sandylands Church has been serving the residents of Sandylands Estate for nigh on 80 years. Today, the Sandylands estate has approximately 3,500 residents. "As we have grown as a church, so has the estate God has placed us in," says the Revd Jonny Gios, the church's community worker.

Jonny spent part of last year consulting with local parents to find out what they felt the community's big needs were. It emerged that one area was the play

park. Together with the parents and the local residents' association, the church has invested to develop the play park through grant applications, free space for 'nearly new' sales, and Jonny's expertise to help bring about a better place for children and young people to play. Since last summer the church and the estate's residents have raised £133,000 towards developing the park. For its efforts, Sandylands Church was nominated for 'Best Church-based Social Action Project' in the inaugural Christian Funders' Forum Awards last November.

Sandylands' success proves that God doesn't have limitations as we do. If there's a local cause you care about, feel free to apply for a Connexional grant to help you with it!

**FUNDRAISE**

Sandylands Methodist Church is a sterling example of local fundraising. Harness your creative side to fundraise for the Methodist Church in Britain. Visit [www.methodist.org.uk/fundraise](http://www.methodist.org.uk/fundraise)

Photograph: © Ryan Clyde



Right: Revd Jonny Gios at Ignite the Light 2014 (An alternative to Halloween).

Far right: What joy – children celebrate the park getting a whopping £133,000!



Photograph: © Revd Jonny Gios



# “Come on In” at Wicken Ely Methodist Church: creating an active building for an active church

Photograph: © Adele Borrowman



Photograph: © Adele Borrowman

Above: Welcome to Our Church: Sunday Teas – visiting cyclists on the National Cycle Network get to refuel with tea and cake!

Left: Sunday Teas – the bunting is out, the people are in, but you can't see much happening from the street!

## Adele Borrowman

Wicken has no post office, no convenience shop, no school or doctors' surgery. With just one bus service a week, residents without transport are cut off. We are ranked in the top one per cent of deprived communities in England.

We celebrated our centenary in 2011 with a £6,000 spruce-up. But this led us to ponder our future; what was God's will for us for the next 100 years? We knew the struggles of rural Methodist churches to survive; with just under 20 members we were all too aware of our own fragility.

We sat down as a congregation for a 'vision day'. We listed all our outreach and mission activities, how sustainable we were and what was stopping us pursuing other opportunities. We found that the constraint was not the workforce, nor was it a lack of local need. The problem was that our building just did not lend itself to delivering our mission. And so our 'Come on In' project came about.

Unanimously, we voted to remove the pews and to open up the frontage. As frugal Methodist folk, investing nearly

£0.25m in a building project for our small congregation seemed unthinkable extravagant. We spent a long time looking at local need, working with local charities to develop opportunities. We prayed as a congregation each week. Eventually we were confident enough to start fundraising and making our pledges, whilst approaching external funders. We have been overwhelmed at the response. Sixteen funders stepped forward (in addition to our local fundraising activities) and we are absolutely thrilled that the Fund for Property is one of them.

We can't say what the next 100 years hold, but as the Revd Colin Watkins said at the final service before work started: "We are not a museum; we are a place of mission." Our refurbished premises will enable us to be exactly that.

### GIVE

With your support, we can champion projects like 'Come on In' at Wicken Methodist Church. Donate to Mission in Britain via [www.methodist.org.uk/give](http://www.methodist.org.uk/give) or by using the enclosed giving form.

Right: Members giving their pledges of over £6,000 on our Gift Day in June 2014 to kick start our fundraising for the 'Come On In' project.



Photograph: © Revd Colin Watkins

# The Oasis project: A place for both problems and celebrations

The aim of our work at Oasis is to combine practical help (such as training courses, or a foodbank) with a Christian community ready to call on God's help in times of trouble and acknowledge his blessings and authority.

## Eunice Halliday

Locally, we're known as "Oh – that's the place Mum goes to when she has a problem!"

Maria Mills is the Project Manager at Oasis. One day she was chatting with one of Oasis' foodbank volunteers, who mentioned that her daughter had suffered a miscarriage. Maria suggested holding a funeral service for the lost baby. Praying with the bereaved parents at the service helped them deal with their grief.

Over 100 children in 2 schools know more about the Bible thanks to our

regular Open the Book sessions where our team and the children act out Bible stories. We have now expanded this to holidays when parents struggle to feed their children in the absence of free school meals. So free breakfast at Oasis is followed by the children preparing a story, making the crafts, doing some cooking and having fun whilst Mum or Dad chat about life, faith and the universe over coffee and cake. The children then act out the Bible story they have rehearsed for their parents and we all eat lunch together.

Our English, Maths, ICT, healthy

cooking, art and English for Speakers of Other Languages groups are all well attended and our amazing volunteers give one-to-one help. We share the joy of people who have never had a certificate. When Sam (who had helped at the foodbank for two years) got a part-time job with Tesco, we celebrated with him over cake. Sam said our electronic till training had really helped with his confidence levels.

We offer people the opportunity to ask questions about faith in a cosy 'kitchen corner' atmosphere, less formal than church; we 'gossip' the gospel!

We are very aware that we are able to provide holistic support for people because of funding we have had from the Connexion and now from the District Advance Fund. Thank you. We see people growing in confidence and faith and happy to tell others too.

The children performing a Bible scene for their parents.



Photograph: © Maria Mills



Photograph: © Maria Mills



# #RethinkSanctions



Photo: © Revd David Hardman

In July, a special service was held at Green Lanes Methodist Church in north London, entitled *In God's Kingdom There are No Benefit Sanctions*. The Revd David Hardman gave the address; Hackney MP Dianne Abbott gave a response.

Over 2,500 churchgoers have written to their MPs to highlight their concerns over the unjust benefit sanctions regime. Many have talked about their personal experiences of sanctions, or those of people they have worked alongside at foodbanks or advice centres. These letters and emails are slowly but surely having an effect.

In March, the Methodist Church, together with other Churches and charities, launched a campaign, *Time to Rethink Benefit Sanctions*, to highlight the injustices of the benefit sanctions system. Paul Morrison, a member of the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) and author of the report, said: "People often think that writing to their MP is a one-off event and can be fairly fruitless if your MP disagrees with you. Our experience with this campaign suggests it can be different."

Many MPs initially sent out standard replies repeating arguments in favour of benefit sanctions. Some people chose to write back challenging those arguments, supported by resources from the JPIT website. For some, this has allowed the correspondence with MPs to develop into more of a constructive conversation.

Reflecting on the effect of churchgoers' letters, Paul said: "When we launched

this report, together with a group of Churches, we tried to arrange meetings with MPs. As MPs met with us, many of them mentioned that they'd been receiving letters from their constituents about this subject.

"We have been able to talk very constructively with MPs from various parties about how the system could both be altered in the short term, and how it should be reviewed in the longer term. There is still a lot of work to be done. But we have been encouraged to see the results of ordinary people taking time to make contact with their elected representatives."

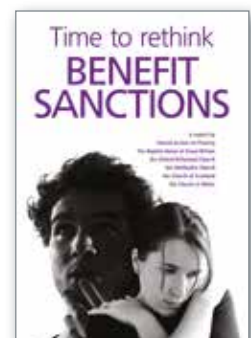
Families are still arriving at foodbanks hungry as a result of benefit sanctions. In 2014, more than one million benefit payments were stopped for a period of between one month and three years. The system imposes disproportionate

## ACT NOW

Join the Joint Public Issue Team in promoting equality in your community. To read their report and find out how you can write to your MP, visit [www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/rethinksanctions](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/rethinksanctions)

punishment for often minor mistakes – one of the most common reasons for being sanctioned is being late or not turning up for an appointment

It is time to rethink sanctions – church members bringing their concerns to their MPs is starting to make this happen.



## Celebrate life with a lasting legacy



We all love a great celebration, don't we? Milestones like birthdays and dedications are wonderful opportunities to celebrate life with God and the community of family and friends around us. We thank God for how he has lavished his love over us during the course of our lives; our response is to share it with others, allowing us to leave a lasting legacy to future generations.

John Wesley himself lived up to his own principle that a Christian should give away any extra income once debts and family needs were taken care of. In his will, he left his books to the Methodist Conference and gave the contents of three houses to be "employed in teaching and maintaining the children of poor travelling preachers".

Today, the Methodist Church continues to share God's love through worship and mission. You can play your part in celebrating God's work by making a gift to the Methodist Church in your will.

Leaving a legacy to the Methodist Church enables you to share the blessings you have received with future generations. It is a lasting reminder of Christian service and love.

If you are interested in leaving a legacy to the Methodist Church please get in touch.

☎ 020 7467 5251

✉ [leavealegacy@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:leavealegacy@methodistchurch.org.uk)

## Pop Up Monastery - creating a space for peace and inclusion

Mariensee is a small sleepy village near Hannover. Two pubs, a bakery, a bank and a local print shop are lined up along the high street. Foreign visitors are not unusual as Gerd, the landlord of the pub 'Klosterglocke' (The Monastery Bell) says. The international Institute for Farm Animal Genetics attracts researchers from all over the world, some of them staying in the guest rooms above the pub. The institute was established on the agricultural grounds of the monastery, an impressive building dating back to 1207. Built originally as a Convent for wealthy daughters following the rules of the Cistercians, it was transformed into a Protestant Convent during the reformation.

In August, 50 women (aged between 19 and 73, and from 16 European countries) moved into the vast monastery building to join the first ever European ecumenical 'Pop Up Monastery' and to share life with the conventuals who still live there.

The women were given the opportunity to seek time out of their busy lives and to meet women from all generations, denominations and cultural backgrounds. A rhythm of prayer, silence, housework and workshops structured the day, but there was also room for celebration and exchange.

Looking back, one participant from the UK said: "My stay was a gift to me and has set off a train of reflections. Each of

the women participants was a gift to me and I remember them all for the beauty of their souls and bodies. They helped build cultural bridges in personal and community encounters."

The Pop Up Monastery was an initiative of the young women's group of the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women (EFECW) and has been planned over the past four years by Fiona Buchanan (Scotland), Carla Maurer (England/Switzerland), Maryana Varabyova (Belarus) and Julia Lersch (Germany), all in their thirties. Julia Lersch recalls: "When I first joined a General Assembly of the EFECW six years ago, I found that my generation was hardly represented. Some of us sat together one evening and we asked ourselves how we could change this."

How can projects like the Pop Up Monastery contribute to building mission? "Our generation risks forgetting the achievements of the ecumenical movement and the European project that brought peace and unity to our continent," Carla Maurer says. New wars and crisis have become daily reality for many of us. At the Pop Up Monastery our longing for peace and inclusion became evident in prayers, but also in many discussions."

The Pop Up Monastery is a pilot project, and might be multiplied in the future to grow the spirit of community. A documentary film will be released in 2016, sponsored by the Methodist Church in Britain, and a brochure will be developed to inspire similar projects – for men and women alike!

See [www.popupmonastery.com](http://www.popupmonastery.com)

### PRAY

Like our 'pop up sisters' why not take time out of your day to pray and be silent? Pray that God brings peace to Europe, and that he places women like these to be peace-makers in their communities.

Photo: © Alexandra Bosbeer



Left: Entering the 13th-century Liebfrauenkirche in Neustadt am Rübenberge for a prayer stop during the pilgrimage.



# The Methodist Church's 'Dating Agency'

Who, or what, is World Church Relationships (WCR)?



Photograph: © TMCP

Left:  
The WCR Team,  
with leader  
David Friswell  
(right).

## David Friswell

We are a small but extremely well-connected team in Methodist Church House (formerly known as Mission House) who link British Methodism to other parts of the world. The world has shrunk considerably since John Wesley's day and we are in the privileged position of being able to say that we do "look upon all the world as our parish".

What do we do? It's all about relationships. Our relationship with Partner Churches around the world is three-dimensional: supporting Methodists around the world through learning together, exchanges of people (mission partners and guests from Partner Churches) and grants. These are the main areas where we try to be matchmakers!

Our work is certainly not just about the money, although we do have the great privilege and responsibility of directing resources from the World Mission Fund (WMF) to where they are most needed. Of course we couldn't do any of this without the assistance of our colleagues in the Grants Team and Connexional Grants Committee. Part of my role as WCR's Team Leader

is to promote giving to the WMF, which provides the money for some of our Partner Churches overseas.

What can you do to be more involved with us? You can support WCR and Partner Churches in various practical ways (such as offering your time, prayers and financial resources) but the most important thing is to be passionate about it! I hope that, like me, you are passionate about mission, both through your local church and across the world. In order to serve the Church well and be really effective in mission, we need to build a community of passionate people. John Wesley set out to build a movement of people called Methodists who were not content to stay in these islands. Many were so passionate about sharing their faith that they set off to distant lands to share their faith and that passion with other people. The commitment of those early 'missionaries' was huge, and today has led to a worldwide movement

of Methodists who are also passionate about going out in mission.

So it is easy to see why we have so many people from around the world serving in the Methodist Church in Britain today. We have much to learn together and from each other, whether that is about sharing skills and experiences, exploring issues of global concern such as climate change or the impact of faith relationships. And WCR can help to bring many of these issues alive in your church, from sharing the first hand experiences of mission partners through to our many overseas visitors to our islands each year.

If you haven't been in touch with WCR lately then do make contact! We have news and stories from around the world, resources for prayer and Bible study, opportunities to travel, volunteer and serve abroad, and so much more! Make a date with WCR to see what the future holds.

## SUPPORT OUR WORK

Keep up to date with Methodist World Mission at [www.methodist.org.uk/supportourwork](http://www.methodist.org.uk/supportourwork) or contact the team

☎ 020 7467 3532

✉ [fundraising@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@methodistchurch.org.uk)



# ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT JESUS?

Do you want to put your faith into action in another part of the world?

Do you want to work alongside local communities, deepening your faith and knowledge of global justice and development?

Are you passionate about Jesus and have 6-12 months to meet exciting people abroad?

Are you ready for a life-changing challenge, putting your skills to good use and learning new ones?

If you answered **YES** to these questions, then **Encounter Worldwide** could be for you!

visit [www.methodist.org.uk/encounterworldwide](http://www.methodist.org.uk/encounterworldwide) to find out more



The **Methodist Church**   
World Church Relationships