

mission matters

Issue 14 November 2004



From *A Message to our Churches* from the *Llandudno Conference 2003*

We affirm that Methodism is committed to apostolic faith, evangelism, discipline, preaching of the Word, class meetings, personal and social holiness – features that ought to continue to be evident in our work and witness as they are relevant to this and every age.

We acknowledge how much we depend upon one another as members of the universal body of Christ. We agree to strengthen our partnership links and to facilitate the sharing of theological insights, of information, of personnel and of material resources that will continue to be an expression of our participation in God's mission. We invite all our churches to join together in this commitment as partners in our common mission.

AFFIRMING HOLINESS

Like grace, holiness is a gift available to all. Unlike grace, which is wholly God's initiative, holiness is a God given gift that we can develop and nurture.

Holiness begins with God's desire that we should be whole and wholly caught up in God's purposes for our lives. Being 'Holy' does not separate us from the world or protect us from the trivial frustrations of life – it helps us to live with an awareness of God's presence and to fully engage with the social issues of our world. For Methodists to affirm our commitment to personal and social holiness is not new – it was a key theme of Wesley's preaching and has always been a feature of Methodism's life.

What does it mean to affirm these things today? Personal holiness is a gift that can be nurtured through prayer, fellowship and worship and through being accountable to God and each other about our use of time, money and the talents we have been given. The emergence of discipleship groups and opportunities for spiritual retreats and experiences will help us to practice personal holiness.

For Methodists, however, the personal always leads to the social. Our deepened awareness of God leads us to engage with God's creation. We are called to challenge injustice, to work against poverty, oppression and the destruction of creation



Becoming holy may involve suffering, a willingness to give up position and popularity but it will bring a wholeness to our personal lives and to God's creation – definitely something worth affirming!

Revd Michaela A Youngson
Secretary for Pastoral Care & Spirituality





The Gospel of the Arts

From 23 to 26 August 60 young people met in St Johns Church Worcester for a 'Summer Skool' of arts. The MAYC Orchestra and Singers made up the core group and about 20 young people who were keen to find out about the Orchestra and Singers as well as explore creative arts in conjunction with the gospel joined them. There were a wider range of workshops including puppets, art, drama, dance, song writing and much more.

Here are a few comments from the young people who came.

'It has given me confidence to try new things'

'I have enjoyed meeting new people, playing so much classy music with talented people and exploring a variety of activities'

'I have been challenged to be more open about my faith'

'Fantastic weekend – really good experience'

'I have seen how other people express their faith and this has encouraged me'

'I was sceptical at first whether to come or not, but I don't regret it. I've met new friends and have found a completely new way to worship God'

We are delighted to welcome 14 new members in to the MAYC Singers and look forward to our recording project in October. Check out the MAYC website in November to find out how to buy your copy of the new MAYC Orchestra and Singers CD!

Rachel Appleyard, MAYC

Partnership

The Christian Gospel invites us to give our lives to Jesus Christ: heart and soul dedicated to him. Unconditional trust of Jesus Christ results in every relationship and every responsibility being looked at differently.

One outcome must be noted. Each disciple expects to have their vision of Christ enriched by every other disciple; each disciple has some valuable insight or experience to share with other disciples. Similarly each congregation looks to draw on the wisdom and resources of other congregations, nearby and far away; and each congregation has much to share with other congregations. A network of partnerships is established.

Giving and receiving in relationships of mutual respect is, for Christians, a truth about all we have to do to fulfil Our Calling - worship, learning and caring, service, and evangelism. Working with others towards agreed goals, sharing resources, enriching each other's perspectives, supporting each other through good times and bad - all add value to the tasks God gives us to do.

Partnerships are not important because they are "flavour of the month". Nor are they simply a device to do more with restricted time or resource, as if they are suitable only when organisations are going through difficult times. Partnerships are fundamental to our vision of how to be human. It is right to seek to work in partnership with others in all circumstances and at all times. It is through partnership that our discipleship matures.

"Going it alone" or longing to be self-sufficient are not helpful ambitions. Instead, the 2004 Conference Resolution on "Priorities for the Methodist Church" begins "In partnership with others wherever possible, the Methodist Church will..."

Partnerships come in many shapes and forms: with other Christian denominations; with Methodist Churches in other parts of the world; with other world faith communities; and with secular organisations (charitable, public service and business). All may enhance our mission.

**Revd David G Deeks,
General Secretary & Secretary of the Conference**

MAKE POVERTY HISTORY



Make Poverty History is a massive, concerted effort to end world poverty in a year when extraordinary and radical progress is finally possible.

The political events of 2005 present a unique opportunity for us to say 'enough is enough'. 20 years after Live Aid, the time has come. With enough public pressure - politicians could change policies on Trade, Debt and Aid, which would change the lives of 800 million people. It is possible.

The Make Poverty History coalition consists of over 50 charities, campaigns, trade unions, faith groups and celebrities, united by a common belief that 2005 offers an unprecedented opportunity for global change. If we are to have any hope of eradicating poverty, there must be political action on trade justice, dropping the debt, and more and better aid. MAYC World Action and MRDF will be part of this.

For more details see:
www.makepovertyhistory.org

See also the Global Week of Action website: www.april2005.org

Partners in Mission

The New Testament talks a lot about being 'partners in mission' [Philippians 1:3-6], working together and supporting each other in sharing the good news of Jesus. I have experienced a lovely example of this recently in my work as a Deacon in a deprived area of Barnsley.

The Methodist Church is a small ageing congregation and although there is a thriving children's club, I needed help to develop work with families. This help has come in the form of a small support group from other Methodist Churches in Barnsley and now has enabled us to hold a short event for families once a month called 'Thursday Praise' with songs, drama, puppets, stories and prayers, followed by drinks and buns. It's most encouraging to see families come, who would not usually attend Church on a Sunday.

We recently held a Pentecost celebration with the local Catholic and Anglican Churches in the Co-op car park. In spite of the showers, it was a great occasion and opportunity to share together the good news of Jesus with local people.

This valuable work only continues and develops as we pray and work together, being partners in mission for Jesus our Lord.

Deacon Chris Greening

Another Piece of the BIGGER PICTURE

The first part of **God's Mission: The Bigger Picture** has come out which looks at the various projects that are supported by the Funds for World Mission, Home Mission and Property. Each part contains three pieces of jigsaw, each with a story from one of the Funds on it. When you have collected all nine - three more come out in Advent, and then again at Easter - they will build up into a bigger picture of God's Mission.




God's Mission: The Bigger Picture is available from **mph**

(Methodist Publishing House) as the parts come out. Contact them at **4 John Wesley Road, Werrington, Peterborough PE4 6ZP; Tel: 01733 325002; Web: www.mph.org.uk**

The order code for the September parts was **GA191**, and the order code for Advent is **GA296**, and that for Easter will be **GA297**.

Highlighting the work of the...

...Fund for Home Mission
...Fund for World Mission
...Fund for Property



For more details about the work of the funds please contact:
**Mission Education,
Methodist Church House,
25 Marylebone Road,
London NW1 5JR
Tel: 020 7467 5116
Email: missioneducation@methodistchurch.org.uk**

GOD'S MISSION: THE BIGGER PICTURE



Derby (East) Circuit CELEBRATE THE DIVERSITY OF THE WORLD CHURCH and their Place in it

A Circuit event celebrating the diverse life of the World Church was held at Borrowash Methodist Church in the Derby (East) Circuit on the weekend of 22 and 23 May. The theme of the event was Celebrating the World Church of which we are part. The aim for the weekend was to educate members and friends from the Circuit and beyond about what life is like for Christians in other countries and even continents, and to provide encouragement by showing that the Church around the world is alive and growing. The weekend was the culmination of many months of planning by a small team of representatives from around the Circuit.



Prayer for the Holy Spirit

By Augustine of Hippo

Breathe in me, Holy Spirit,
that all my thoughts may be holy;
Act in me, Holy Spirit,
that all I do may be holy;
Draw my heart, Holy Spirit,
that I may love that which is holy;
Give me strength, Holy Spirit,
to defend all that is holy;
Guide me then, Holy Spirit,
that I always may be holy.

The Circuit was blessed with a number of speakers, including World Church partners from Fiji, India and Kenya; a Cliff college evangelist who was born in Albania; and a representative of the Wesley Guild Nigeria project. The weekend was also seen as an opportunity to involve as many people from the Circuit as possible, with each church in the Circuit being encouraged to provide displays giving information about different countries and different aspects of life in the World Church.

The Saturday event started with exhibitions and an introduction to the history of the World Church. During the rest of the day a programme for children ran in parallel with a series of presentations given by the various speakers. Part of the church hall was transformed into an aeroplane taking young travellers to meet our new friends from various parts of the globe. The day ended with an act of worship where each of our speakers shared words of encouragement and blessing.

On Sunday morning Borrowash Methodist Church was packed as the Circuit gathered for a Circuit service. The preacher was Revd Jonathan Gichaara, a World Church partner from Kenya who is currently working with the Urban Theology Unit in Sheffield. Jonathan was one of the speakers for the Saturday event. The worship activities included modern and traditional hymns as well as worship songs from the World Church. After the service people stayed behind for a shared lunch and a special cake celebrating the World Church was cut.

People attending the event described it as exciting, uplifting and a blessing; sentiments that were shared by those who gave up their time to come to share with the Circuit. After the Sunday service Revd Jonathan Gichaara said that he had been encouraged and invigorated by the celebrations of the weekend. Everybody left knowing that they belonged to a larger Church than they could have imagined.

Caroline Dobinson

..... WELCOME TO EVANGELISM

It seems that evangelism has become 'flavour of the month' in the Methodist Church. Two of the five priorities for the Methodist Church agreed at this year's Methodist Conference are:

- Developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved
- Encouraging fresh ways of being Church

The first is obviously about evangelism, the second acknowledges that we need to create new churches that will meet the spiritual needs of those for whom traditional church is either unhelpful or irrelevant. Fresh ways of being Church can therefore act as either a safety net to catch those falling out of traditional Church or a fishing net for those with no Christian heritage. The second is more obviously evangelistic than the first, but given the fact that the rate of loss of young adults is 3 times the overall rate of decline in membership in the Methodist church, the first would seem to be urgent too. Fresh ways of being Church are easier when we think of them as part of a circuit mission strategy.

Revd Graham Horsley
Secretary for Evangelism Policy & Church Planting

These two priorities together also make a clear connection between the effectiveness of our evangelism and the sort of churches we are. If someone is thinking about faith, how will the welcome, witness and worship of their local church help them along their journey? The welcome is the most basic of these, but if it is not done well, the visitor may not find out any more about you. How well do you do? Try the checklist below:

- Are the grounds and exterior of the church well kept?
- Is the notice board up to date?
- Is it easy to find the right door to enter the church?
- Is the entrance and interior clean, warm and tidy?
- Are notice boards and leaflets up to date and attractive?
- Is there a warm greeting at the door?
- Will congregation members sit next to visitors and talk to them (3 different people speaking for 2 minutes is often better than one person speaking for 10 minutes!)?
- How much jargon do we use in our notices and worship (for instance, if we refer to people by name do we point out who they are?)?
- Do we introduce visitors to other church members, find out their names and invite them back?

Releasing Money for Mission

Conference has approved a range of new initiatives aimed at releasing funds for mission throughout the Methodist Connexion. The motivation for this is the knowledge that money has accumulated over many years from sales of property and other sources and these funds are increasing each year.

On the other hand Connexional grant making funds have reduced substantially and this may prevent some new mission projects from going ahead. Conference has allowed a full year for the planning and then implementation of the new initiatives with effect from 1 September 2005.

These new ways of working will include:

- Districts giving approval to Circuits to make grants for mission projects from Circuit Advance Fund (capital and/or income)
- The ability of Circuits to draw up to £10,000 each year (if available) for any Methodist purpose.

- Increased annual contributions from Circuit Advance Fund to the District Advance Fund for grant making.
- The establishment of reserves policies
- Up to £20,000 may be withdrawn from Bequests
- All Methodist trustee bodies will be encouraged to release surplus money for mission.





World Church Office Scholarship Programme Holders In Britain and Ireland 2004-05

Revd John Ataya (Kenya)
– Birmingham
PhD Applied Linguistics (Year 3)

Revd Anandaroo Bollarapu (CSI)
– Birmingham MA in Theology

Mr Kenneth Chisenga (Zambia)
– Wolverhampton (Telford)
Postgraduate Diploma in Development Training and Education (Forestry)

Revd Layasing De Silva (Sri Lanka)
– Cliff College Sheffield
MA in Mission & Ministry

Revd Divine Ekoko (Cameroon)
– Birmingham PhD in Theology

Revd Beni Gaba (Togo) – Aberdeen
English/MTh in Ministry & Mission

Revd Carlwin Greenaway (Antigua)
– Aberdeen MA in Ministry & Mission

Mrs Janet Kathure (Kenya)
– Nottingham Disability Nursing placement at the Children's Centre City Hospital, London, Disability and Impairment course (21 Nov-10 Dec).

Revd John Kwofie (Ghana) – London (Holloway College)
MA in Development & Environment.

Miss Ava-Gail Lewis Williams (Panama) - Birmingham (Aston)
MSc Engineering Management.

Revd Titus Lunpumthang (Myanmar)
– Birmingham
English & UCA Mission Programme.

Revd Vasile Marchis (Romania)
– Oxford, (Oxford Theological Exchange Programme) Research

Revd Joseph Michuki (Kenya)
– Durham MA in Theology and Ministry

Miss Anca Popescu (Romania)
– Oxford, (Oxford Theological Exchange Programme) Research

Revd Purna Sagar Nag (CNI)
– Birmingham UCA Mission Programme

Revd Ngurliana (Myanmar)
– Birmingham PhD Theology (Year 2)

Revd Henry Niumeitolu (Tonga)
– Edinburgh PhD Theology (Year 3)

Revd Jolame Sedra (Fiji) – Birmingham
MPhil (research) History of Christianity

Revd Lawrence Shu (Cameroon)
– Aberdeen MTh in Ministry & Mission.

Revd Oral Thomas (Antigua)
– Birmingham PhD in Theology (Year 1)

Revd Solomon Zwana (Zimbabwe)
– Edinburgh PhD Theology (Year 2)

Christian Giving

The Revd Gordon Jamieson, the Stewardship Director of the Church of Scotland, believes giving is vitally important in the mission of the Church:

The Church exists to worship God and to spread the good news of his love throughout the world. The gospel is God's greatest gift to us. It is not only a gift to treasure: it is also a gift to share. The mission of the Church is sharing the gospel. The main focus of all the Church's use of resources should be the sharing of the gospel. Our giving is one measure of our desire to share the gospel. Sacrificial giving is a sign of our enthusiasm for the gospel and our commitment to the mission of the Church.

He has recently produced colour leaflets on Christian Giving which are designed for use by all Churches. They are designed for group, or individual, study and focuses on Bible passages on the theme of giving. If you wanted copies for your church they are available from **Stewardship Department, The Church of Scotland, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN. Tel: 0131 240 2226. Email: stewardship@cofscotland.org.uk**

These leaflets cost 6p each, and can be ordered on any quantity. P&P will be charged at cost (roughly £2-4 per 100). Enquiries to the above address.



Evangelism Resource Unit in *Scotland*

The Fund for Home Mission supports my work with individual churches around the District as together we seek to discover their way forward with God within the framework of "Our Calling". This has involved a number of meetings with churches as we recognize and appreciate the good work that is happening, consider new possibilities and look to putting some of these into action. This has included more participative, varied and enjoyable worship; planned Sundays to include worship,

discussion and lunch, the planning of new study groups to discuss faith matters for the "honest doubters"; active Church involvement in Fair Trade, actively seeking ways to include young people in the life of the Church.

Involvement with the churches has highlighted evangelism as a priority both within local churches and the District. To address this I am at the present time travelling round the District meeting with all Circuit Ministers and Deacons to find out their

views on evangelism, and to gather the ways in which churches are addressing evangelism. Our District Network day in June gave an opportunity for interested lay people to share their views on evangelism, and to consider the way forward for the District.

There is a growing sense of anticipation within churches in the District, and the support of the Fund for Home Mission has helped provide encouragement and hope.

Revd Grahame Lockhart

For more details see – www.inpartnershipwithgod.com

Wesley Study Centre

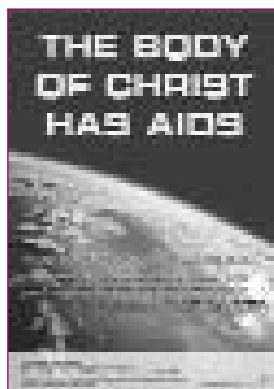
Mission is central to theological training colleges. This can be seen in a variety of ways at the Wesley Study Centre, Durham. First, mission is on the curriculum. That is, there are a number of courses with mission in the title. These examine historical and modern patterns of mission and the theology implicit in them. We also look at aspects of mission in the modern context, such as mass media, popular apologetics and contemporary challenges to Christian faith. Second, reflection on mission and ministry is a vital part of all placements. Students are asked to observe and reflect



on the patterns of ministry and the nature of mission they see and engage in when they work alongside those in circuit and other forms of ministry. Then there are the specific opportunities to assist churches in their mission such as our Evangelism and Nurture weekend, where teams of students work alongside local churches in mission initiatives and activities. Finally we deliberately nurture our world church relationships, with students coming from various parts of the world to share their experience and insight in our community, and students from Durham spending time with the Church in other parts of the world as they engage in mission in order to widen their vision, to reflect on the nature of mission in that part of the world and what we might learn for our situation in Britain. Perhaps most important of all, everything we study and explore is pursued with the question in mind – What does this mean for sharing in God's mission today?

Revd Dr Roger Walton
 Director of the Wesley Study Centre, Durham
 See also <http://www.dur.ac.uk/st-johns.college/cranmer/wesley.htm>

Events and Resources



The Body of Christ has AIDS

A full-colour A2 poster for display and educational purposes. Ref. GA290, available free from MPH (plus P&P).

A booklet of the same name exploring the Church's support of those affected by AIDS is available from Mission Education.

Know & Grow

A 6-week support programme to help your church:

- Identify strength and areas for growth
- Plan appropriate action and support
- See development take place within three months

Available from Methodist Publishing House (www.mph.org.uk) Product code HA102 Price £4.99.



MISSION ADVENTURE 2005

To be held at the **Hayes Conference Centre, Swanick, Derbyshire 4-6 February 2005**. Key speaker: Revd Dr Mvume Dandala, Chair of the All-Africa Conference of Churches. Cost £35 for the weekend plus your travel costs.

For booking forms contact John Nutt at Mission Education Tel: 020 7467 5116.

* NOTE TO TREASURERS

Please ensure that donation cheques are made out correctly eg 'Methodist Church Fund', 'Methodist Church Fund for Home Mission', 'Methodist Church Fund for World Mission' or 'Methodist Church Fund for Property' – and not 'Home Mission', 'World Mission', 'Mission in Britain' etc.

WORLD CHURCH SPEAKERS

dependence on one another... strengthening partnership links... facilitating the sharing of information and personnel ...
all points mentioned in 'A Message to our Churches'.

A World Church Service or event is one way of taking your church forward in this journey of faith with our Partner Churches.

A speaker with first-hand, up to date, knowledge and experience of an overseas country would bring your event to life. To invite one of the speakers on our new 2004/2005 list, 'Windows on the World', simply complete and return the reply slip below. The following serving Mission Partners are expected home on leave and may also be available to speak.

WORLD MISSION SPEAKERS REPLY SLIP

Please tick

- Please send me your 2004/2005 list of World Mission Speakers, "Windows on the World"
- I would like to invite the Mission Partner expected on leave in 2004/05, and named below, to speak

Mission Partner's name.....

Preferred date(s).....

Event.....

Your Name.....

Address.....

.....

..... Postcode.....

Tel No..... Email.....

SEND TO: Margaret Michelmores, World Church Office, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR

NAME	COUNTRY SERVING	UK BASE	TIME EXPECTED/ AVAILABLE
Ian & Diana Bosman	Ghana	Walsall, W Midlands	June - August
David & Rhona Burfield	Malaysia	Aylesbury, Bucks	June - August
Vanessa Cook	Germany	Lincoln	April - July
Daniel & Yasuko Dellming	Japan	Birmingham / London	December 2004 - March 2005
Michael & Maureen Hawksworth	Nepal	Bolton	June/July
Revd Sue Jansen	Argentina	Scotland	December 2004 - January 2005
Mr Paul & Dr Rachel Lindoewood	Kenya	Nottingham	End of May - final furlough
Andrew & Rosemary Symonds	Bangladesh	Essex	Early summer. Limited availability
Paul & Sarah Wright	Nepal	N Yorkshire	Summer



Further Information

Please contact John Nutt, Mission Education Administrator, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR
Tel: 020 7467 5116 Fax: 020 7467 5281
E-mail: missioneducation@methodistchurch.org.uk

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Who has been sent copies direct?

- District Mission Officers
- Circuit Mission Officers
- Ministers and Deacons in pastoral charge
- Mission Funds supporters

Who else in your church might find this useful?

- Members of your local mission committee
- Local preachers
- House group leaders

Please write their names and get them to tick the box when they have received or seen a copy.