

ONE MISSION MATTERS

Autumn 2017 • No 49

Welcome to our first UPDATE!



Day by day

I was born at the end of the 1950s, a decade that had seen the Harringay Crusade when Billy Graham addressed two million people through a series of evangelistic meetings in London. Such movements have their place without doubt; over the years, I have been involved in several large-scale evangelistic campaigns in local churches, regional centres and in parts of the World Church – they have all been memorable and transformative occasions. However, the emphasis Loraine and I have chosen for this year in the life of the British Methodist Church, *Day by Day: exploring the rhythm of mission and discipleship*, brings evangelism into the realm of the everyday.

We have been inspired by Acts 2:42-47, which speaks of the Early

Church meeting day by day for prayer and worship, and, day by day, receiving new believers. Our 'Spiritual Five-A-Day' challenge aims to keep us healthy as Christians; making time each day to **pray**,

to **give thanks**, to **read and reflect**, to **keep silence**

and to **act** is a starting point for a balanced life of mission and discipleship.

This rhythm is seen as we read the gospel stories too – time and again the disciples come to Jesus, time and again

they are sent out by Jesus. This natural rhythm is also a hallmark of so much of the excellent work which is going on now around the Connexion. Reading the stories in this *One Mission Matters Update*, we see how, day by day, people all



around the worldwide Methodist family are breathing in the love of God and, day by day, are breathing out compassion, generosity, companionship, healing, neighbourliness and support. One thread running through the stories is of how mission creates community, a foretaste of heaven, where people are accepted, loved, listened to and valued. This is a high calling for which we need the grace of God, freely offered, day by day.

Jill Baker, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

The Methodist Church
Living generously



Mission refurbishment

Thanks to a £20,000 grant from the Fund for Property, Marlborough Road Methodist Church in St Albans can now proceed with its vision of being a welcoming space to its neighbours. The Revd ROSEMARY FLETCHER reports.

For more than ten years, we have been considering whether we should make major changes to our building. Our late Victorian church structure had served us well, but its heating, lighting and sound system were tired and dated.

In the end, we opted for a straightforward refurbishment with some simple but effective alterations. Realising that refurbishment might take some time to happen, we began trying to improve our welcome ahead of the building work. We started a Thursday drop-in coffee morning, and set up Facebook and Twitter accounts. All these have made us more visible to our local community.

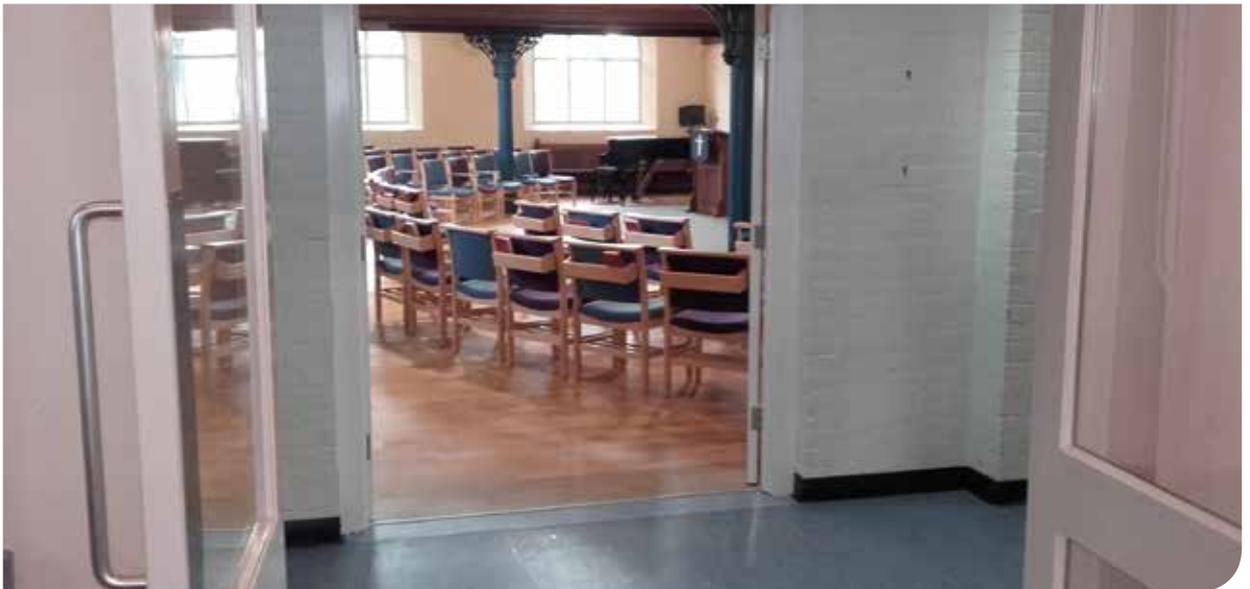
The project process has

been hard work for those most closely involved. We would recommend that anyone considering such a project asks for help from the Connexion much sooner than we did! Nonetheless we have been encouraged by all that was offered to us. Our circuit and our district have supported us with grants and advice. A local office furniture company met us at Sustainable St Albans Week and they undertook to help us with selling the pews.

The help from the Connexion's Fund for Property was crucial. We had trimmed the scope as far as possible, but we still did not have enough funds. This grant meant the project is now becoming a reality.



Pray for the continuation of mission through this refurbishment and others that aim to make the Church more visible in local communities.



Refurbished seating area at Marlborough Road Methodist Church

Photograph: © Rosemary Fletcher



RIGHT: Two ladies knitting together

Love your neighbour

Has your church ever asked “How can we love our neighbours better?” MARY HUFFMAN tells what happened when Methodist churches in Luton did just that.

Surely we all agree it's important. We write it into our mission statements and try to find ways to put it into practice. Much thought and ink are spent, but not always very much action.

Luton is a town of many faiths and cultures. This can present both challenges and gifts. One such gift was the possibility, via a grant from Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice (MAPJ), to fund a community development worker for our neighbourhood. It was too good an

opportunity to miss. This just would not have been possible without that grant of £7,195, which allows us to continue our work for a further two years.

So what are we doing? Well, after talking to local people, we organised a 'taster session' that combined a free health check, a cake-making demonstration, knitting, a cuppa and a chat. This brought several local communities together and included different age groups and cultures. It was so successful we swiftly set up another gathering. Here, skills were shared across generations; some people were able to teach knitting whilst others showed us how to make samosas. Following on from this, a group of people met to have lunch together and knit for Syrian refugees.

Loving your neighbour: it's simply about eating and laughing, knitting and cooking together!



Photographs: © Mary Huffman

ABOVE: Syrian children in Jordan keeping warm wearing donated knitted clothes



Act now to share the love of God with one of your neighbours by inviting them for a cuppa and chat. You can also make a donation to the Mission in Britain Fund and help projects like this.

Advent Offering: Comfort my people

Advent is coming – it’s time to prepare. Our Connexion-wide Advent Offering Service is an all-age act of worship that inspires us to look beyond our Church’s walls by giving towards mission work in Britain. This year, we are taking our inspiration from the prophet Isaiah’s rallying call to “Comfort my people” (Isaiah 40:1-11) and learning from some of our chaplains how we can follow Jesus in leaving our comfort zones to come alongside people in need.

Save the date for your Advent Offering

Have you set the date for your service yet? Advent Sundays fall on December 3, 10, 17 and 24 this year. Many people prefer to use the first week to set the tone for the whole season but you can choose whichever week suits you best. Our lead passage is taken from the lectionary for 10 December.



What your generosity makes possible

This year’s resources feature two of the eighteen chaplaincy placements helped by your support of the Mission in Britain Fund. Here’s a small taste of the inspiration that’s waiting for you and your congregation in their stories:



“Jesus went off the beaten track to find people. He was the Son of God but he chose to be present to us. I try to mirror that.

That’s where the kingdom is: in being out there, where he already is, serving and bringing comfort to people in their space rather than ours. It often takes you well beyond your own comfort zones. Some of the things you see and hear break your heart and make you feel, ‘What can I do?’ But you can always give the gift of being present and listening with your whole self.”

**Matt Albury,
Workplace and Prison Chaplain, Bristol**

“John Wesley went to be out there with people. And chaplaincy is all about being out there. This century, the Methodist Church has really taken a lead in propagating chaplaincy in exciting ways: in casinos, airports and all sorts of places. I’m hugely grateful for how it’s allowed my form of chaplaincy to develop; it’s a liberating force for this brilliant way of releasing people’s gifts and talents to serve God and people. Thank you for supporting the Mission in Britain Fund!”

**Debbie Thrower,
The Gift of Years Team
Leader and Anna Chaplain
to older people**



Everything you need to get started

Our bespoke resources have been designed to help bring your service to life and to make sure no one misses out on joining in with Advent Offering.

Order printed items

**Call: 0845 017 8220 or
visit: www.methodistpublishing.org.uk**

Advent Offering Collection Envelopes

These are specially designed to collect Gift Aid details and track what's been given, so we can let you know how much we've all raised.

A3 Advent Offering poster

With space for you to write in the date, time and location of your service.



Download online items

Visit: www.methodist.org.uk/advent

Browse, select and adapt the elements that will work best for your local context from our 'pick and mix' resources, including:

- notes on our chosen Bible passages exploring how they speak into our Advent theme and featured chaplaincy work and a selection of written and creative prayers, suggested hymns and songs (see Leader's Notes)
- candle-lighting prayers
- inspiring stories from our featured chaplains about giving the gift of presence, illustrated by a PowerPoint so everyone can 'meet' them
- an all-age sketch and talk (see Leader's Notes) and children's activities to help everyone engage
- all the practical information you need.

Preparation Prayer for Advent

You might find this prayer – taken from the worship resources – a helpful tool as you plan, lead or participate in your special offering service; and more generally as we all examine our hearts and prepare to recommit ourselves and our resources to God again this Advent.

Lord Jesus, my coming King,
comfort me again this Advent.
Reassure me where I need consolation,
strengthen me where I am weak
and challenge me where I need to change.

Lord Jesus, my coming King,
make me a comforter for you again this Advent.
Quicken my heart in prayer for others,
motivate my hands, feet and resources to serve
and prepare my heart and life for you,
my coming, comforting Lord.
Amen.

Helping people live with the complexity of HIV

In 2003, Methodism saw a massive need and responded by appointing Steve Penrose as the first chaplain to Londoners living with HIV.

The London HIV Chaplaincy works with people from all faith traditions and none throughout the London District. “To our knowledge no other organisation does what we do,” says Steve. “Many of the people the chaplaincy works with have in the past been traumatised by their own faith traditions. All of them are trying to make sense of who they are.

“We only have one employed chaplain who meets regularly with 365 clients, all of whom have been traumatised by their HIV diagnosis. We listen to our clients without any preconceived thoughts and are completely non-judgemental.”

The chaplaincy became a separate charity in 2012.

However, the Methodist Church is still very much involved in its work; it receives funding from the Mission in Britain Fund, and four of its seven trustees are Methodists.

“We at the London HIV Chaplaincy commend the Methodist Church, both the Connexion and the London District, for having the courage, humility and trustworthiness to fund us,” says Steve Penrose.

“Through the Connexion and the London District helping to fund the charity, the Church is helping people who live on the fringes of society to become more self-confident and less isolated, and to begin to re-engage with society.”

Photograph: © Getty Images



Helping people who live on the fringes of society to become more self-confident and less isolated



Keep silence in prayer and hold before God all those who are in distress and pain.



SALT grant recipients

Growing fruitful churches in Peru

From its base in the breathtaking beauty of God’s creation in the Peruvian mountains, the Methodist Church in Peru is soldiering on with an ambitious vision to grow churches amongst the country’s indigenous people – and is doing this with help from the World Mission Fund.

Peru has some of the largest indigenous populations in South America. The Aymara and Quechua

speaking communities are among the largest indigenous groupings here.

In 2016, the Methodist Church in Britain gave the Peruvian Church a Scholarship And Leadership Training (SALT) grant. This enabled the Church to offer theological education to 157 local lay pastors. Recipients of the training say it has strengthened their ministry, and that this was in turn strengthening

their churches.

“This is a Methodist community that loves God and has made great efforts to work towards sustainability as a congregation,” said Sandra Lopez, Partnership Coordinator for Latin America. “It was fascinating to learn how the Church is growing at a rate of 8% a year and how most of this growth is taking place in its rural, indigenous communities.



Aymara woman digging for potatoes in Puno



Quechua woman worshipping God with her offering in Patacancha



Learn more about our Partner Churches around the world at: www.methodist.org.uk/mission/world-church

One Mission: Cards for Haiti

In the summer of 2015, Dr John and Mrs Sharon Harbottle, mission partners serving in Haiti, visited the Tynedale Circuit in Northumberland. During their visit, they presented the circuit with a cross made by Christians in Haiti from old oil drums.

After Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti in October 2016, the World Mission Fund appealed for support to help Haitians rebuild their country. In response, a member of the Tynedale Circuit suggested that the circuit could make and sell greetings cards showing the Haiti Cross. With the

help of the circuit Leadership Team and technical wizardry by one of the circuit ministers the cards were produced.

Sold in packs of five cards at £3 a pack, the circuit raised over £800 for the Hurricane Matthew appeal.

In Corinthians and Romans, Paul talks about the body of Christ working together. These cards for Haiti are a reflection of God's people 'doing' mission for partners across the world, by using different skills and gifts in different ways to the glory of God.

"One Mission and working in partnership were at the heart of this project. It began with a gift from the people of Haiti to the people of Tynedale, which the Haitians had made using their skills. Through a different set of skills in the Tynedale Circuit we have been able to create these cards to give something back to the people of Haiti."



We give thanks and praise for the generosity of God's people

Pray for the Caribbean: We continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in the Caribbean following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Our partners in the Caribbean and ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together), via the United Methodist Committee on Relief, are keeping us up to date with news and humanitarian support in the affected areas. If you would like to make a donation visit bit.ly/2uWwRq



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ENCOUNTER WORLDWIDE

offers Christians in Britain and Ireland (aged 18 and over) the chance to spend three to twelve months sharing in the Methodist Church's mission, life and culture in another part of the world as a self-funded volunteer.

Interested to undertake your own encounter?

Contact Rachel Gooden in the World Church Relationships Team.
t: +44 (0)20 7467 5166
e: encounterworldwide@methodistchurch.org.uk
w: www.methodist.org.uk/encounterworldwide

Living alongside student ministers who were so enthusiastic about their faith has given me a new zeal for my Christian belief ... the Encounter Worldwide experience has changed my life.

Anne Baldwin,
English Teacher, Sri Lanka

The **Methodist Church**
World Church Relationships

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