



“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.”
Galatians 6:2 NRSV

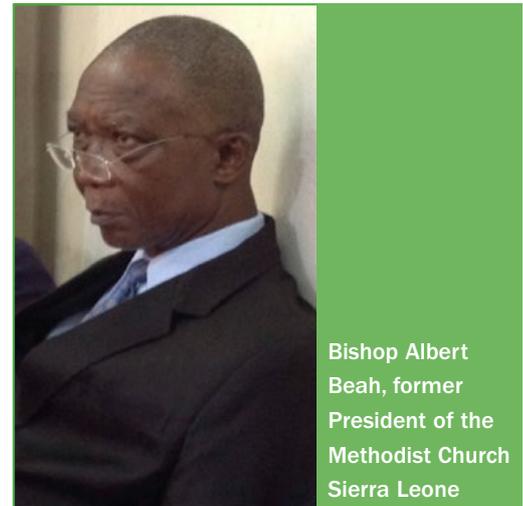
PARTNER CHURCHES AND ORGANISATIONS

Former Sierra Leone Methodist President passes away

Bishop Albert Beah, former President of the Methodist Church Sierra Leone (MCSL), died on 28 September. His funeral took place on Sunday 22 October, with dignitaries from various African Methodist Conferences in attendance.

Bishop Beah was ordained at a young age and obtained a Masters degree at the Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham. He also taught alongside Cliff College lecturers at various African theological institutes. His passion for Development and theology helped revive the Development Unit at MCSL’s Connexional Office in 2014. This had an active role in managing programmes such as caring for HIV/Aids orphans in Freetown, Ebola orphans in Kailahun, support for Ebola victims in 2015, and more recently flood victims in Freetown in 2017.

“He was very committed and intelligent,” said Dr Olubunmi Olayisade, Partnership Coordinator for Africa, who first worked with Bishop Beah in 2014 when he took over the role as President. “May his dear soul rest in peace. We shall continue to remember his family, his colleagues, Methodists in Sierra Leone, his relatives, friends and acquaintances in our thoughts and prayers.”



Bishop Albert Beah, former President of the Methodist Church Sierra Leone

A number of vigils and memorial services were held in different parts of Sierra Leone, culminating with the funeral service in Bo and burial in the grounds of Sidney Groves Methodist Church in Kenema. Michael Tettey, currently a mission partner in Benin and previously a mission partner in Sierra Leone, attended the services, delivering messages of condolences on behalf of both the World Church Relationships Team and L’Eglise Protestante Methodiste du Benin (EPMB).

“I pray the Church in Sierra Leone will be able to chart the turbulent waters ahead with God’s help and wisdom as they prepare to elect a new leader,” Mr Tettey said.

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Muslims participate in a CSC meeting

Christian Study Centre celebrates golden jubilee

This month, the Christian Study Centre (CSC) in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, will be celebrating its 50th anniversary. As part of the celebrations, CSC plans to host an international seminar focusing on interfaith work in Pakistan and abroad. The Revd Sally Spencer from the Yorkshire North and East District will be representing the Methodist Church in Britain at the golden jubilee celebrations.

Founded in 1967, the CSC is an ecumenical non-profit organisation. Its board and membership include representatives from both the Catholic and Protestant Churches in Pakistan, (Church of Pakistan, Presbyterian and Salvation Army), plus a number of civil society

organisations that work on human rights, minority and women's rights and interfaith harmony. The centre runs programmes and research studies in relation to theology and interfaith harmony, peacebuilding and human rights. Religious leaders and civil society organisations in Pakistan hold the CSC in high esteem and from time to time, the Pakistani government seeks comments from it in framing minority-related policies.

This year, the work carried out by the CSC led to some unexpected results. Due to its peacebuilding work, for the very first time, the Shia community (the minority Muslim sect in Pakistan) invited and requested the CSC to conduct an interfaith/peacebuilding session in their most prestigious



Jennifer Jag Jivan

woman's madarassah (seminary). For the very first time, a person from another faith entered the madarassah, whereas before, not even a person of a different Muslim sect had entered, Jennifer Jag Jivan, the director of CSC, conducted the session with around 80 students.

NATIONALS IN MISSION APPOINTMENTS

Nationals in mission appointments (NMAs): The World Mission Fund enables Partner Churches to employ local members of their Church to work in new, key mission projects in their home churches, by paying for the salary costs of an NMA post.



Silvana (second from the right) with Methodist church members in Mercedes

Committed to community

By Sandra Lopez

The Revd Fernando Suarez is a NMA post holder, working as an evangelist and congregational developer in the towns of Mercedes, Chacabuco and Junín, a few hours' drive from Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Methodist congregations he works with in these towns are small and lack children and young people, but the few church members are faithful and committed to their communities.

In Mercedes, the Church supports a children's feeding programme run by Silvana, a lady who lives in an impoverished part of town, but who felt moved to feed the

children in her neighbourhood who had nothing to eat. It was clear that Silvana herself is living in poverty, yet this beautiful, kind-hearted woman gives what she has to feed these children. Since starting the programme, Silvana's work has grown in fame locally and she now receives donations of food and kitchen appliances from local businesses and people.

What an example of how we all have something to give back to God, even when we think we have absolutely nothing to offer! The Methodist Church in Mercedes supports Silvana's work by collecting bread and

other food items donated by a local bakery.

The Church also works closely with the Nicolas Lowe Children's Home, which was founded in 1902 by Nicholas Lowe, an Irish Methodist. It now receives children who need to be placed into care with a view to adoption, from birth to age 17. There is a system of weekend 'fostering' in place, whereby children stay with local families and attend church. The Cumbria District, which has a very fruitful partnership with the Evangelical Methodist Church in Argentina, has supported the children's home for a number of years.

TEE grows in east Africa



The Presbyterian Church of East Africa's TEE group holds a graduation ceremony

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) is a fast-growing programme, aimed at providing theological education to both lay church members and ordained ministers. TEE began in the early 1970s, and has proved to be an important tool for enabling churches to strengthen their discipleship programmes.

There are now TEE programmes in more than 25 African countries. Most of these take place in churches, but some have also been run in prisons. Although the Church in Africa is growing rapidly, the pace of training pastors and leaders in residential seminaries and colleges is not up to meeting the demand. TEE provides a viable, cost-effective alternative method of training – especially as costs such as transportation, accommodation and other structural requirements of a residential seminary are not required. The programme is effective in training people with no academic qualifications and can be delivered in

local languages, which is essential in most African countries.

The Methodist Church currently supports the Revd Dr Kangwa Mabaluki in his role as General Secretary of the TEE programmes in Africa, with an NMA grant of £14,096. His role includes promoting collaboration between TEE programmes, organising the General Conference every four years and

helping to start TEE programmes in countries/churches where there are none. One of the highlights of this year has been the graduation of a TEE class in a rural church in Meru, Kenya, following a course in the Holistic Nurturing of Children. The TEE group of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (which developed this course) is now hoping to make it available in other countries.



The Presbyterian Church of East Africa's TEE group holds a graduation ceremony

Maintaining yachts and hopes

Meet Isaac Apparicio. He is 23 years old, and recently graduated from a course in Yacht Maintenance at the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development (GARD) Centre in St John's, Antigua.

Isaac is one of GARD's success stories. Having struggled academically, Isaac left high school at 19 and did several odd jobs before he came across an advert for the GARD Centre's Yacht Maintenance programme. He spent 14 weeks learning maintenance technology, maths and English, and acquiring skills that gave him a new perspective on life. A few months after he graduated, Isaac got a job at a local marina slipway welding, painting and cleaning yachts. This experience could help Isaac find work on yachts overseas, as it has for other graduates.

One of the people Isaac has to thank for his new career is June Jackson, the GARD Centre's Job Placement Officer. June is an NMA post holder and works with vulnerable young people between the ages of 17 and 35, preparing them for the competitive world of work.

"Like their counterparts in the rest of the Caribbean, young people in Antigua and Barbuda face numerous challenges," June says. "The youth unemployment rate is still on the rise, from 21% in 2011 to 34% in 2016, with Antigua and Barbuda



Isaac at work

holding the 59th highest youth unemployment rate of 129 countries.

"Entrepreneurship is an important part of the GARD

Centre's courses. At least 10 to 15% of our trainees choose the option of setting up a business."

DONATE TO THE WORLD MISSION FUND

All the Partner Churches, partner organisations, NMA postholders, scholarship students and mission partners that you regularly read about in *World Church News* are supported by the Methodist Church World Mission Fund, through the sharing of both resources and personnel.

You can donate online by going to www.justgiving.com/mcfworldmission/donate. Alternately, send a cheque to: the Methodist Church World Mission Fund, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR. Please make cheques payable to "Methodist Church World Mission Fund".



Bishop Chombo of the Lusaka Presbytery outside United Voice Radio station in Lusaka, Zambia. The station is popular for its choral music, produced by various choirs across Lusaka, and for Christian music from ecumenical partners. It offers a platform for both aspiring and established Christian artists to showcase their talents.

PRAYER POINTS



Please remember the family and friends of Bishop Albert Beah in your prayers, as well as the Methodist Church in Sierra Leone as it navigates through this difficult time.

Pray for Antigua and Barbuda as they recover from the recent hurricanes and storms. Pray that the great work that has started in Antigua may be able to continue.

Thank God for the growth of the Theological Education by Extension (TEE) programme

in Africa. Pray for those who have benefitted from the programme, as they seek new ways to develop.

Praise the Lord for people like Silvana! May we recognise that we all have something to give back to God, even when we think we have absolutely nothing to offer.

Praise the Lord for the work the Christian Study Centre is doing, and pray for the centre as it celebrates its golden jubilee.