



“Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.”
Ephesians 6:18 NRSV

PARTNER CHURCHES AND ORGANISATIONS

Ending the cold winter of division



The table at which the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed in Panmunjom, North Korea

by Syntiche Dedji

The love of sport has long had a unifying effect on people. In fact, in ancient times, a ‘sacred truce’ would be announced before the Olympic Games began, calling off all

wars so that people could travel to the Games in peace. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the Games continue to have a unifying effect, and that peace and unity are both symbols of the Olympics. At the 2016 games, two Korean gymnasts (one from North Korea and one from South Korea) took a selfie together. It went viral, becoming a symbol of unity and possibly the most iconic picture from the Rio Olympics.

Relations between North and South Korea further developed during the recent Winter Olympics, with a South Korean visit to Pyongyang on 6 March:

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At the border between North and South Korea

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PARTNER CHURCHES AND ORGANISATIONS

Ending the cold winter of division (continued)



North and South Korea play against each other in a football match

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the first high-level direct talks between the two Koreas in more than a decade. Then, in the midst of an international conference in South Korea to mark the 30th anniversary of the Korean Churches' 1988 declaration on reunification and peace, North Korea declared its willingness to denuclearise.

Steve Pearce, Partnership Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific, was at the conference. "The overnight news has enlivened the whole group," Steve said. "There was a real sense of fresh hope around the breakfast tables and in the conference hall in the morning! At the beginning of our first session, everyone in the hall spontaneously held hands and

gave thanks for this progress in the long journey towards peace on the Korean peninsula."

As the world now waits for the meeting between Kim Jong-Un and Donald Trump, tentatively set for May, we pray "that we can see spring rain beginning to fall, ending the cold winter of division".



The conference in full swing

For more information, please contact Steve Pearce at wcr.asiapacific@methodistchurch.org.uk

Methodists and Baptists hold talks

During March, representatives from the World Methodist Council and the Baptist World Alliance spent a week together at Sarum College, Salisbury.

The meeting was the last of the rounds of conversations of the international dialogue between Methodists and Baptists. This dialogue began in 2014, and has 'faith working through love' as its theme.

The Revd Dr Tim Macquiban (Director of the Methodist



Ecumenical Office in Rome) co-chaired the dialogue with the Revd Dr Curtis Freeman (Director of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke University Divinity School in North Carolina). The Methodist delegation included Dr Ulrike Schuler, Professor at the

Reutlingen School of Theology in Germany, and the Revd Christine Gooden-Benguiche, Secretary of the Jamaica District Conference, Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas. Ministers and deacons from local Methodist churches were also in attendance.

EPMB holds its first synod since reunification

In February, the Eglise Protestante Méthodiste du Benin (EPMB) held its first synod since the Church was reconciled and reunified in 2016.

Michael Tettey, a mission partner in Benin, attended the synod on behalf of the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB). In his address to the synod, Michael said: "The MCB rejoices with you today, that after many years of crisis and failed attempts at reconciliation, the EPMB is finally entering a new era of unity. The Church is now one and we thank God for his blessings.

"MCB has a long and fruitful relationship with EPMB, through

the years up to today. That is the reason why both my wife and I are here as mission partners from MCB. May this relationship continue and be very fruitful."

Attendees at the synod included

Bishop Samuel Mensah of Methodist Church Ghana, and other invited delegates from overseas. EPMB was urged to strengthen relationships with neighbouring Churches.



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Meet our newest (and oldest!)

At 76 years of age, our newest mission partner Anne Baldwin is also our oldest mission partner.

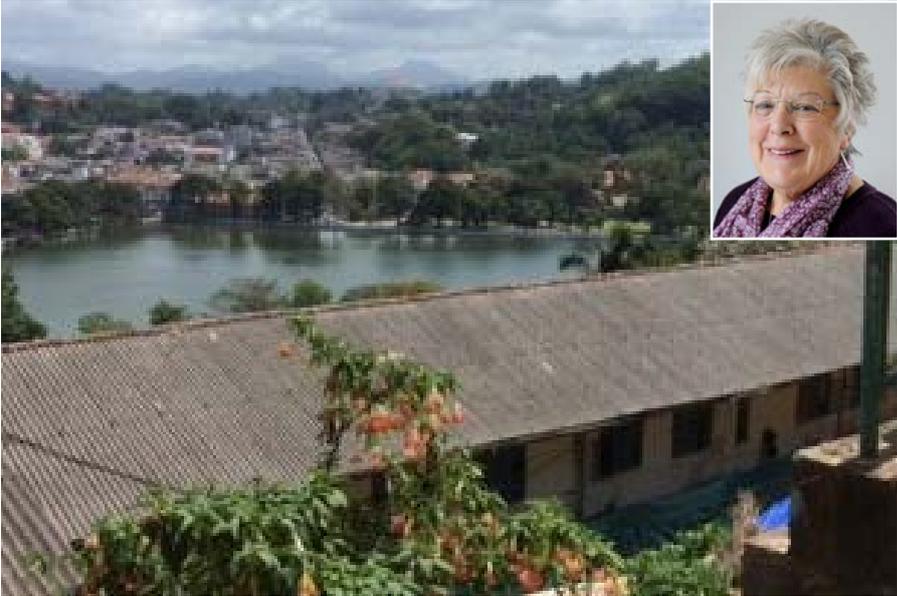
Anne is from Lancashire. A few years ago, she felt that God was calling her to undertake overseas mission, and in the spring of 2016 she became the first ever participant on our Encounter Worldwide programme.

“I thought and prayed about volunteering for several weeks before actually applying,” Anne says. “One of my concerns was my age, but I felt eager to undertake this opportunity.”

Anne spent three months sharing in faith, teaching, worship and life with the Theological College of Lanka in Sri Lanka. She developed a syllabus for English language teaching, and spent much of her time helping students develop their language skills. “I found the experience exciting and uplifting,” she says. “Living alongside student ministers who were so openly enthusiastic about their faith has given me a new zeal for my Christian belief!”

Now that Anne has committed to becoming a long-term mission partner, she will be returning to work with the Theological College of Lanka for an initial period of two years.

TOP: The view over Kandy, Sri Lanka, where Anne will be staying; TOP INSET: Anne Baldwin; MIDDLE: The chapel at the Theological College of Lanka; RIGHT: Anne with some of the friends she made during her Encounter trip



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A delegation of 14 bishops from the Methodist Church in Ghana popped into Methodist Church House during a recent tour of London. The bishops had been visiting local churches around the London District, strengthening the Methodist Church in Ghana's partnership with the Methodist Church in Britain. Since 2006, the Ghanaian Church has been implementing a strategic plan with a mission to demonstrate Christian faith and love in the world through effective ministry.

PRAYER POINTS



Pray that the understanding reached between North and South Korea may continue and that the anticipated meeting between North Korea and the USA may be fruitful, leading the peninsula closer to peace and unification.

Pray for Anne Baldwin as she prepares to go to Sri Lanka as a mission partner.

Thank God for the successful completion of EPMB's first synod since the Church's reunification. Pray that the Church continues to grow in unity and strength.

Pray for the Methodist and Baptist Churches worldwide to continue to grow and work together in a spirit of unity and friendship.