



The Church of Scotland

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FREE

WORLD MISSION COUNCIL - CONNECTING WITH THE WORLD CHURCH

WIM



CELEBRATING...

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World Mission Partners.

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Italy: Fiona Kendall.

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Editorial



"If the Church of Scotland does not commit itself to being the body of Christ in the wider world, as opposed to just on our own doorstep, then we begin to lose sight of one of the main reasons that we are the church." Rev. Owen Derrick, Twinning Report

Looking back on 2019, what has been your World Mission highlight? Have you been on a visit? Have you learnt about the work of a project you didn't know about before? Have you been involved in supporting one of our projects or inviting a speaker to share about a topic? Take a look at page 12 to hear what some of our readers have chosen as their highlights.

This issue of WM not only includes highlights from the last few months but also shares things our Area Secretaries would like to spotlight; projects,

initiatives and opportunities to get involved in or go and visit.

As you look forward to what 2020 holds why not decide on one thing you'd like to learn more about. Why not find out more about one of our partner churches or the work of an organisation? Look into visit opportunities or developing a Twinning? As seasons change let us not lose sight of what a blessing it is to be part of a wider church family, let us continue to support and learn from our brothers and sisters round the world as we all seek to live out God's call on our life.

ACT NOW...

Visit the website to see how you could be involved:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve

CELEBRATING OUR YEAR

As another year draws to a close we asked our team what the highlights of 2019 have been in their areas. While celebrating these we also asked them what they'd like to spotlight, moving forward in to 2020 what would they like you to know about.

European and Americas Highlights and Spotlights:

1. Zwingli movie

As part of the reformation celebrations the Swiss churches contributed to a major film production on the life of Zwingli, which topped the Swiss box office on its release in January 2019. The first English language screening of the film took place this summer and guests enjoyed Zwingli sausages as part of the occasion!

2. Quadruple Twinning

Forfar East and Old have expanded their Twinning partnership to include a church in Germany. Forfar East and Old were originally Twinned with a church in Hungary grew to include a Church in Switzerzlerland who in turn introduced a church from Germany. This vibrant partnership goes from strength to strength and you can learn more at the Mustard Seed Stories webpage.

3. Visit to Uruguay

In February Rev Alisa McDonald represented the World Mission Council at the Iglesia Evangelica Valdense Del Rio de la Plata annual synod meeting in Uruguay. This was a further stepping stone in our ongoing positive partnership building with the Waldensian Church in Uruguay and Argentina.

4. World Council of Churches

Did you know that the WMC staff and members engage frequently with programmes of the World Council of Churches based in Geneva? In 2019 this included meetings with the Ecumenical Network for Korea, the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance HIV strategy group and face to face meetings with members of the Secretariat.

5. Partnerships

Our partner churches in the Czech Republic and in the USA came together in Atlanta, Georgia to develop and evolve their understanding of local partnerships. Carol Finlay was invited as a guest to share the Church of Scotland and ECCB story of how historic links have developed into contemporary ways of creating opportunity of listening, learning and sharing with each other.





Asia Highlights and Spotlights:

1. I Love Taiwan

Each summer the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) invites its international partners to send young people to I Love Taiwan, a two-week youth mission programme that aims to help international participants learn and understand about people and the churches in Taiwan in a cross cultural and multi-religious context while sharing about their own faith and culture.

2. National Council of Churches of Korea Peace Treaty Campaign

2020 marks the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the 1950-53 Korean War, a war that claimed the lives of up to five million people and was brought to a close by an armistice, not a formal peace treaty. Since 2013 the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) has run a global campaign for the enactment of a peace treaty. NCCCK asks its partners to "Support the Korean churches in their efforts for healing, reconciliation and peaceful reunification."

3. Campaign Against the Misuse of the Blasphemy Law

For over 20 years Church of Scotland has campaigned against the misuse of the blasphemy law in Pakistan. Our partner Centre for Legal Aid, Assistance, Settlement (CLAAS) offers free legal aid to those falsely accused of blasphemy and other discriminatory charges and provides shelter for young women who are victims of rape, forced marriages and forced conversions to Islam.

4. Women's Development Centre

Just over 30 years ago a women's project began in a garage in Kandy in Sri Lanka. This project grew to become the Women's Development Centre (WDC). It included a school for disabled children, community development and support for commercial sex workers who were vulnerable to HIV. But WDC is best known for its work with victims of sexual violence. Ten years ago, WDC started a social enterprise called 'Sthree', which means 'woman'. Sthree provides a market for women and differently-abled entrepreneurs to sell their hand-made products.

5. United Mission to Nepal

Church of Scotland was one of twelve agencies that founded United Mission to Nepal (UMN) in 1954. Today UMN "strives to address root causes of poverty as it serves the people of Nepal in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ." UMN's response to the 2015 earthquake will end in 2020 after a massive effort to rebuild and rehabilitate communities and infrastructure in north Dhading. Church of Scotland Let Us Build A House campaign raised more than £330,000 for this work.

Africa and Caribbean Highlights and Spotlights:

1. Volunteering

Have you ever thought of using your skills to help others whilst also having the opportunity to learn? This last year Lynne and Bob Connelly had their third visit to Zambia and Kenya where they offered their skills as a nurse specialising in dermatology and as a health and safety specialist. Bob Milne spent 6 months this year in Malawi helping in one of the presbyteries and was able to lend a hand supporting the flood relief efforts.

2. Hosting a visitor

As we know from the lessons learnt from Africa Report that went to the 2018 General Assembly we have a lot that we can learn from our brothers and sisters not just in Africa but around the world. A fantastic opportunity to do this is by hosting one of our many visitors who come to Scotland each year. Members of our partner churches visit us for many reasons and we are always looking for congregations to host them and to engage with them.

3. Work with South Sudan

Since 2015 we have been on a journey of peace and reconciliation with our brothers and sisters from the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan. This has been a full programme designed in conjunction with local church leaders in mediation. This has led them to working with those in their communities to address issues such as cattle raiding and child abduction. 8 people visited Scotland in October and were trained as trainers so they can go home and train others within their Church.



4. Student Engagement

The World Mission Council and the University of Edinburgh have entered into a partnership to offer a full scholarship to a member of one of our partner churches in Africa. This is known as the Desmond Tutu Scholarship and is for a Masters in Theology at New College. We are currently in our third year of this scholarship and students have been able to get involved in the life of the Church Of Scotland.

5. Access to Justice

Mission Partners, Linus Malu and Gary Brough, work with the Church and Society Programme in the North of Malawi helping people to access justice. The programme advocates on issues of human rights, governance and democracy and provides access to justice for communities in the North of Malawi. Many cases of human trafficking, gender based violence, child abuse, land rights and labour laws are brought to the department on a weekly basis. In October a volunteer from Scotland joined Linus and Gary to facilitate workshops on the international human rights system, gender-based violence, people trafficking and the rights of the child.

Middle East Highlights and Spotlights:

1. The Seminary of Cairo

Engaged in training hundreds of pastors, the Seminary of Cairo seeks to plant churches in as many communities as possible, and take advantage of the Government allowing a church in every new city.

2. The Synod of Syria and Lebanon

The Synod provides schooling facilities and vital pastoral and practical support to the millions of internal and external refugees displaced during the Civil War.

3. Department of Service to the Palestine Refugee (DSPR)

Based in Jordan the DSPR are working with the local Christian communities to help them face the challenges of unemployment, poverty, gender inequality, and agricultural development.



4. Highlight from Mission Partner John McCulloch

Spending time at the Tent of Nations with the Nasser family, as we walked amongst their threatened olive trees, and imagining the eco chapel amongst the olive grove, as a place where we could celebrate communion amidst the fragile beauty of this land.



5. Highlight from Mission Partner Kate McDonald

Witnessing the courage and resilience of the female activists amongst our Israeli partners, who face the dual challenges of patriarchy and shrinking space for civil society, yet who refuse to be silenced as they speak peace to power and amplify the voices of all affected by the conflict.

CHINA'S CHURCH AND THE ENVIRONMENT



Ruth Livingstone is the Programme Coordinator, and Membership and Office Administrator for Eco-Congregation Scotland. She recently took part in the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) visit in China.

In September 2019 a group of eight people from churches across the UK and Ireland travelled to China, in part to see how the church there is tackling climate issues. We visited four cities, Shanghai, Nanjing, Xi'an and Beijing, and spoke to the state-approved church organisations for the four provinces, as well as visiting churches, seminaries, and social projects. In my work with Eco-congregation Scotland I am confronting the need for the church to actively care for creation. I was fascinated to see what the Chinese church could teach us.





The Amity Foundation, which is the foremost Christian-based charity in China, has a fabulous history of working with rural churches to plant forests, slowing down and reversing desertification. As the Chinese government introduces more stringent recycling and waste classification, the local churches have been running training workshops (above) across the country to help residents understand how to accurately separate their waste. Unlike the UK, China does not have a charity shop network, so re-using unwanted goods can be more challenging. Many churches are running 'Second Hand Markets', to help people buy second hand goods and reduce unneeded waste. China has a stereotype in the west of

being wasteful of natural resources and polluting. I was pleasantly surprised to see how clean their cities were, and so full of greenery. The government has a "garden city" initiative that encourages cities to plant greenery throughout urban spaces. In Shanghai for example, every overpass is lined with window boxes full of shrubs and flowers. In 2014 the government introduced stringent new regulations on emissions from factories and power plants, setting aside billions of pounds to help companies comply, as well as tough penalties including prison sentences for executives of those who don't comply. This has improved the air quality in the cities. The official air pollution numbers are improved. I never saw any smog during the trip, the air quality seemed better to me than in Los Angeles, California. In addition, it is leading to a culture shift, where economic growth is seen as something that must be done wisely and with care for the environment. The Chinese church has been keen to support and encourage these changes, preaching about responsibility to look after God's creation, and building on the Chinese culture of harmony with surroundings. Often in our discussions with church leaders we heard President Xi's quote "Green mountains and clear waters are more important than mountains of gold or silver". The church in 2019 has had a national focus on the environment, with a climate Sunday in May, and a focus on teaching care for creation. Please remember the Chinese church in your prayers that it can continue to grow in its climate consciousness, and it would be seen as a positive influence on Chinese society.



EXPLORING FAITH RELATIONS



A group made up of 12 Muslims and Christians from across Scotland embarked on a unique visit to Ghana in September to explore faith relations. Here one of the participants, **Anne Stewart**, shares her reflections on the trip.

Ghana has a history of promoting good relations between the Muslim and Christian populations. Also, by living and travelling together we Scots would also learn from one another.

A distressing part of the trip was visiting Elmina Castle on the coast, which was one of the places where, over hundreds of years, tens of thousands of Ghanaians were held pending being loaded as "cargo" onto ships as part of the

disgraceful slave trade. None of us will forget seeing the "Door of No Return". It's shameful that slavery still exists, albeit in a so-called modern form, but it does. We travelled widely (Accra to Elmina Castle to Kumasi to Wa to Tamale and back to Accra) and met many faith and civic leaders, and visited schools too. Children have much less of an issue with interfaith relations don't they? It comes naturally to them. There was much food

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for thought from our many different meetings.

I believe the key to success in Ghana is that, like the children, the faith leaders are friends. They talk about interfaith relations rather than interfaith dialogue. Dialogue on its own can be theologians talking about their differences in an academic way with the general population not present to witness it. The aim isn't to negotiate a compromise faith and amalgamate. Rather we believe what we believe but are FRIENDS with people who believe something else. If an imam and a minister are seen to be friends, they set an example to their people. The National Chief Imam of Ghana, a remarkable man, has certainly lived that way. When he recently celebrated his 100th birthday he chose to do so in a Roman Catholic church!

We attended a church service together in Accra. It lasted for four and a quarter hours – about four times the length of the average Church of Scotland service. We also attended Friday prayers in the mosque in Wa. Some of the Muslims among our group had never been in a

church and some of the Christians had never been in a mosque, so this was a good thing to do.

Some long journeys on our minibus gave us time to reflect on interfaith relations in Scotland. One discussion was around national identity. Faith leaders in Ghana over many years have aimed to foster good interfaith relationships by uniting people under the flag. "We're all proud Ghanaians. We all have to live here. So what kind of country do you want to live in? A peaceful one of course". In Scotland, nationalism has other connotations. The Saltire, Union Jack and national pride may sometimes associations which might be unhelpful. So it might be better phrased as "We're all human beings. We all have to live here. What kind of country do you want to live in? A peaceful one of course". Same approach, but without the stumbling block.

LEARN MORE:

Visit the website to see how you could be involved:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve

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LET'S CELEBRATE HIV

The Church of Scotland HIV Programme helps to support a variety of diverse projects round the globe. **Carol Finlay** reflects on the journey so far.

Two decades ago, I do not think anyone would have put the words 'celebrate' and 'HIV' together. Yet, today we can celebrate. We celebrate people growing old with HIV; children being born HIV free to positive parents; the availability of medication helping people to have an undetectable viral load and therefore prevent the spread of the virus - these are just a few of the causes for celebration.

We must also celebrate those who have fought tirelessly for access to treatment and care, the scientists, medical personnel, community activists and volunteers. We give thanks for every penny donated to support programmes and projects around the world, for learning opportunities and for prayers spoken and unspoken.

Through Advent and beyond, as we celebrate the birth and the life of Jesus, let us look forward to the day when we do not need to 'celebrate HIV' but rather give thanks for lives lived well.

"Celebrate the Festival of Harvest with the firstfruits of the crops you sow in your field. Celebrate the Festival of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field."

Exodus 23:16

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PRAYER FOCUS:

Baby Jesus lying in the manger, we remember your vulnerability, help us today to remember all who are in a similar situation.

Mary, mother of Jesus, we remember the way in which you nurtured your son, help us today to reach out to all who need our love and care.

Joseph, father of Jesus, we remember how you supported your family, help us today to find ways to give the right support to those in need.

Shepherds and Kings, we remember how you gave reverence to the new born baby, help us today to have kind words and actions for all people around us, no matter their circumstances.

Generous God, we are grateful for your unconditional love for us, help us to love others as you have taught us to do.

Amen.

To support the work of partner organisations through the Church of Scotland HIV Programme see:
www.churchofscotland.org.uk

NEWSFLASH:

Have you seen our Christmas Craft Pack?

To download a copy, visit:
www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve

MISSION PARTNER PRAYER FOCUS



Linus Malu works with the Church and Society Programme of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Synod of Livingstonia, Malawi (CCAP). Linus, a lawyer, is head of the Legal

Department and Access to Justice Manager of the Programme. His work includes human rights, anti-human trafficking and gender based violence issues. He has asked that we join him in praying for the following:

- For the CCAP as it spreads the gospel.
- For successful democratic electoral processes in Malawi after the May 2019 General Elections.
- For the numerous victims of gender based violence and trafficking in Malawi.
- For all the clients at the Church and Society Programme, who do not have access to justice, that the government will provide more mechanisms for them to access services.
- For the community development programmes run by the CCAP.

A YEAR WITH WORLD MISSION

We asked some of our readers what their World Mission highlights were from this year...



Rev Jenny Adams

My World Mission year has had red laces and a study tour to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. I've worn HIV Programme laces all year, with a personal challenge to donate to the Programme. They remind me of amazing work and are conversation-starters. The laces were on as I delivered reports to the General Assembly, and they came to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. That was a return trip for me, 7 years on from a Guild/WM tour, this one focussed on meeting people & listening. I got angry, tired and inspired – and proud of being part of the Church of Scotland. We are a wee Kirk in a big world, but we use our presence to enable so much good work for peace with justice. Now our group is supporting each other, as we “go and tell” what we saw and heard, to play our part in peace-making.



Fiona and Colin Anderson

In July 2019, a team of 25 from the 25th Stirling (Dunblane) Boys' Brigade travelled to Malawi. They stayed in the Likhubula area for 2 weeks and during their time there they built 2 classrooms and renovated 10 others in Pasani Primary School. Not only did the team work hard at the building projects but they fully integrated with the local community. They worked and worshipped together strengthening the bonds between the communities of Likhubula and Dunblane that have lasted for over 15 years. The boys have now returned to Dunblane with amazing memories but also a first-hand experience of extreme poverty. We hope these experiences shape and influence the futures of these amazing teenagers.

Amy Hannah

In July of this year, I was invited to go to Hungary's Starpoint Youth Festival in Debrecen under invitation of the World Mission Council. The trip promised an insight into the differences of youth ministry in the Church of Scotland and Hungary. The trip was not quite what I expected with little opportunity to learn

about leading youth ministry. However, I gained something that proved much more valuable in my personal faith. I was part of an international group of delegates from all around the world and over the week, we became a united force within Starpoint, building strong relationships to help one another through the challenges and enjoying new experiences together. I



was very grateful for all the laughs, good times and shared moments with people I hope to one day see again.



Valerie Allen

Saima, a young woman in her early 20's, stood in front of the packed room. In a clear voice she told us "Before this weekend, I wouldn't have had the courage to speak in front of anyone. But after the affirmation I've received in the activities we did, I now have the confidence to stand here and speak to you." It was a deeply touching moment witnessing this young woman blossoming. Saima was one of 35 women from a variety of denominations who participated in a three-day women's leadership workshop in Pakistan entitled "Nurturing Resilience in and Empowering Women". The workshop was sponsored by Talitha Kumi and facilitated by Kay Keith and myself (current and past Conveners of Integrity). Using the story of the

Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28), the women reflected on inner qualities that build resilience. They were encouraged to use their voices and skills, building confidence and leading to a greater sense of empowerment. They tried a variety of creative approaches - stitching, art, drama, movement and wellness practices. This was a revelation! The women arrived expecting to sit around a conference table and listen to "expert" leaders. Instead they discovered circles of chairs and the expectation that they were the experts in their own lives and communities. Anyone passing the room where we met would have heard animated conversation and hoots of laughter! The depth of relationships formed was lovely; the connections made ones, we hope, will continue. This workshop followed on from Integrity's visit in 2017.

LEARN MORE:

What have been your World Mission highlights this year? Send us an email and share them with us, it is always encouraging to hear from you.
wmoutreach@churchofscotland.org.uk



The Church of Scotland

THE OLIVE GROVE CHAPEL

Creating a sacred space for worship

GET INVOLVED

PRAY

Join us in praying for peace in the Middle East and for the Nassar family as they work to create a safe space for worship.

WATCH

Visit the Church of Scotland Community channel on YouTube to watch a video about the project: The Olive Grove Chapel - Tent of Nations, Bethlehem.

DONATE

Funds raised will be used to develop the Chapel and surrounding area by planting olive trees, grape vines, and other fruiting trees, as well as providing irrigation systems and other infrastructure and ongoing work.

FOLLOW

Keep up-to-date on the progress – stay in touch, join the World Mission Facebook page to see updates.

SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN CHRISTIAN PRESENCE AT THE TENT OF NATIONS, BETHLEHEM.

Send donations to Church of Scotland.

Cheques should be made payable to the 'Church of Scotland' with an accompanying note indicating the donation is for the Olive Grove Chapel. For bank transfer details email wmoutreach@churchofscotland.org.uk

Scottish Charity Number: SC011353

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