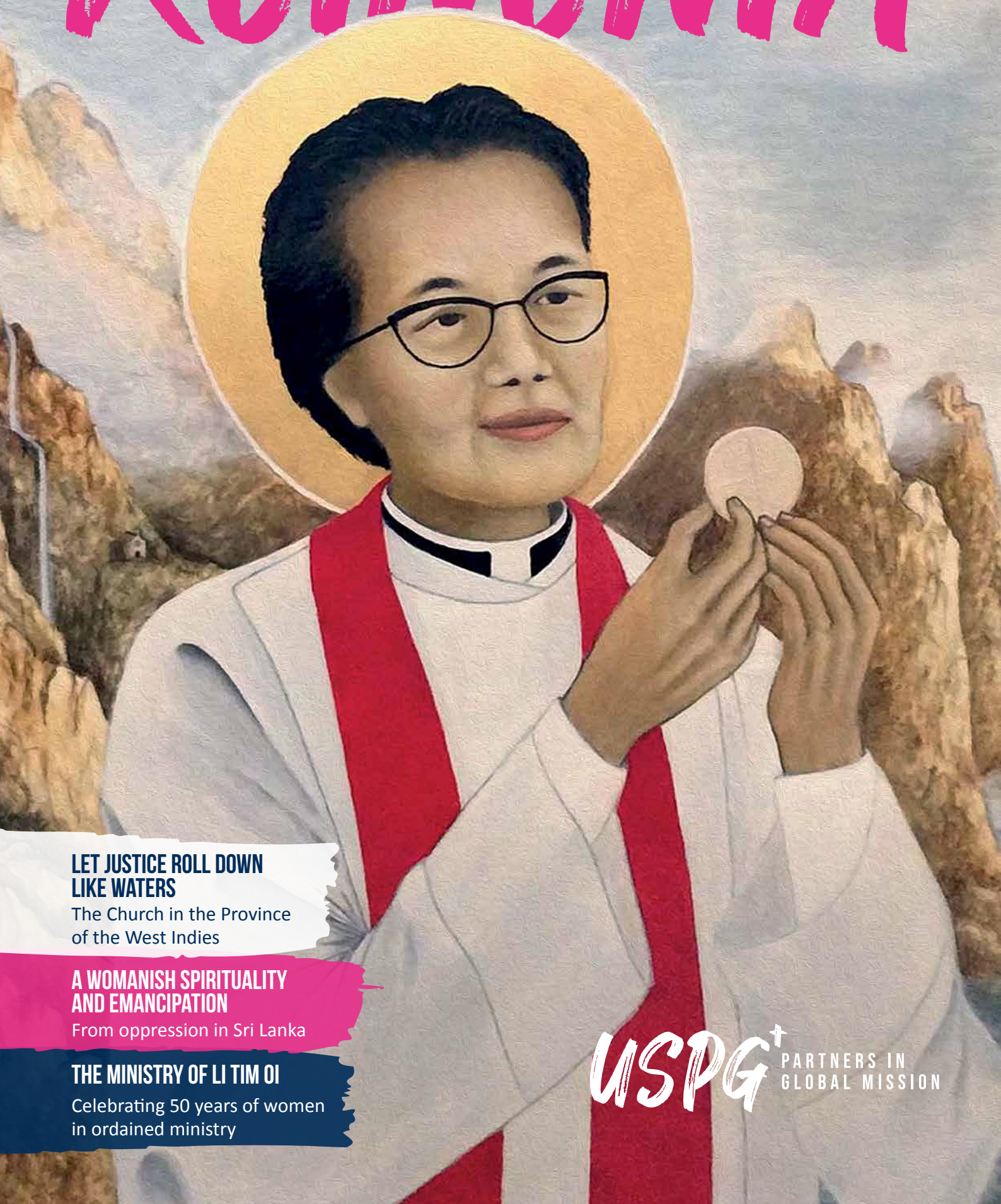


KOINONIA



LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN LIKE WATERS

The Church in the Province
of the West Indies

A WOMANISH SPIRITUALITY AND EMANCIPATION

From oppression in Sri Lanka

THE MINISTRY OF LI TIM OI

Celebrating 50 years of women
in ordained ministry

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KOINONIA

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM USPG AND OUR ANGLICAN COMMUNION PARTNERS

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USPG

5 Trinity Street, London, SE1 1DB
0207 921 2200
www.USPG.org.uk

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EDITORIAL



The Rev'd Duncan Dormor, General Secretary USPG

By the Rev'd Duncan Dormor,
General Secretary USPG

'The Church as an equal community of women and men living in correspondence with Kingdom values'.

Today as I write, it is Mothering Sunday, and these words set out a clear and challenging agenda for gender justice in the Christian life. They are the words of Dr Agnes Abuom, a leading Anglican voice within the World Council of Churches. She draws our attention to the key role women have played historically in mission and argues that if women are to be fully engaged in mission today, their lived experience needs to be incorporated into liturgy and ministry and their leadership actively sought and supported.

Later this year the Anglican Communion will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the decision of the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau to ordain women. It is good then to be reminded and to honour the pioneering ministry of the Rev'd Li Tim Oi (featured on our cover) ordained within the Anglican Church in China (CHSKH) in 1944 - whose orders were restored in 1971.

Celebrating pioneering women leaders is essential. So, in the pages that follow, we are delighted to have reflections from the Rev'd Dr Sonia Hinds and the Rev'd Angela Palacios, pioneering women priests in the Caribbean – and also from the Rev'd Canon Dr Vincentia Kgabe reflecting on the extra burden involved in modelling leadership as 'the first woman to...'; in her case, lead a theological College in the Church of the Province of Southern Africa.

Yet we are also acutely aware of the many dimensions of gender injustice including violence and discrimination. Mothering Sunday this year in England was overshadowed by the appalling, shocking police treatment of women who had gathered to grieve the death of a young woman, Sarah Everard – murdered, allegedly, by a police officer.

'Gender justice starts at home'. This is an important truth – and gender-based violence and discrimination within families can be difficult to challenge and change. Churches are doing this in courageous and creative ways: In West Bengal and in the work of the Delhi Brotherhood Society, interventions are direct and powerful, mobilising community groups to address situations in which women are suffering violence or ill-treatment. In the Caribbean, a more holistic approach to GBV survivors is also being developed which seeks to provide spiritual care and help with the healing of individuals

Churches have a key role within communities and families tackling what one contributor describes as the 'dragnet of gender injustice' – the many ways in which cultural attitudes and behaviours hold women and girls back from making the most of their God-given talents and opportunities to flourish - as together in solidarity, women and men across cultures and contexts, we seek to build an equal and just communities where all may flourish in God's love.

Duncan Dormor

The Rev'd Duncan Dormor,
General Secretary USPG

A WOMANISH SPIRITUALITY

By the Rev'd Dr Sonia Hinds, Barbados

Beatrice is 34 and has survived multiple acts of sexual violence. She was born on a Caribbean island and lived with her paternal grandmother and aunts before migrating to another island, where she lived with her mother and her mother's partner. Whilst Beatrice was living there, she was sexually abused by her mother's partner. Beatrice was threatened with physical punishment by him should she tell her mother what had happened. In her grandmother's home, Beatrice's grandfather also sexually abused her. Beatrice was again threatened with violence should she tell her other relatives what had happened. The threat of violence meant that Beatrice never told her mother or grandmother about the repeated assaults she experienced during her childhood.

Beatrice's schoolwork suffered because of the repeated sexual abuse she suffered and her mother and grandmother physically abused her because she was not performing well at school. Her teachers did not offer any help, as they were unaware of the abuse that Beatrice was experiencing. Beatrice attended church with her family, but the church she attended also became a site of abuse, as she was raped by the male youth pastor there. The pastor told Beatrice that she would go to hell if she did not obey biblical teachings about obedience and submissiveness, meaning that she was not to tell anyone about what had happened. Now, married to an abuser who is also a Christian, Beatrice suffers from depression and often has suicidal thoughts.

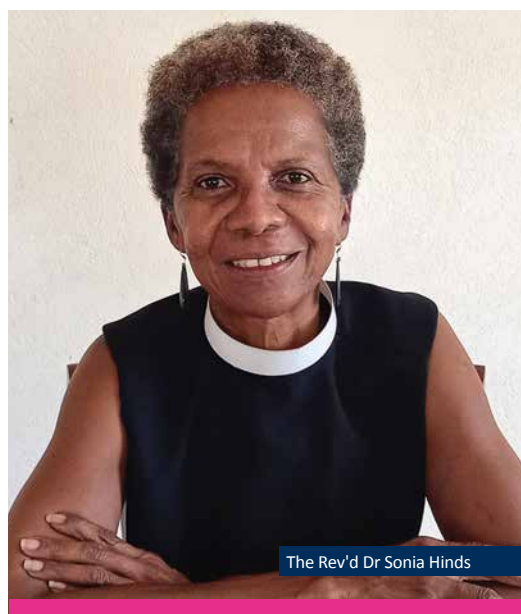
Beatrice's case is not an isolated one. Sexual violence against women and girls across the Caribbean continues to be a worryingly frequent occurrence. In cases like Beatrice's, questions are often asked about where God is and how God can allow these events to happen. How can Beatrice and other survivors view the Church and the Bible in a positive light having experienced sexual and physical abuse? To answer these questions about God, we need to embrace a womanish spirituality that allows for healing and transformation, grounded in the cultural context of the Caribbean. To understand womanish spirituality, it is important to first understand what exactly gender-based violence is, and how spiritual care can help survivors to heal, and the role of spiritual care in womanish spirituality.

According to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, gender-based violence is 'violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty'. Examples of gender-based violence range from sexual harassment in the form of verbal abuse to sexual assault and rape.

When we talk about gender-based violence, we often use terms such as medical care and social justice. However, spiritual care is not a familiar concept within the context of gender-based violence. Spiritual care refers to the holistic care of survivors of gender-based violence. This approach combines medical care with psychological counselling, emotional support and prayer. It is a misconception to see spiritual care as only concerned with the spiritual dimension of a person, as if that dimension could be singled out and treated in isolation from the whole being. Only by responding to survivors of gender-based violence with a holistic approach that combines physical, mental and emotional healing, can we work to make the church a safe space for them again. Spiritual care is a crucial step in providing answers to the questions of how God could let such things happen. Womanish spirituality incorporates the affirmation of women's lived experiences, the recognition of cultural and historical and social realities surrounding issues of gender discrimination and gender-based



We need to embrace a womanish spirituality that allows for healing and transformation



The Rev'd Dr Sonia Hinds



violence. Womanish spirituality has spiritual care and questions about God at its centre.

Some of the questions that survivors of gender-based violence ask about God are: where was God when all this was happening to me? What would my Sunday school leader, priest or pastor say if I told them about the abuse I suffered? Would they believe me? Would they be willing and able to help me? Would men in the church community help me? Will I go to hell if I speak out about my suffering? If the Bible tells me to honour and obey my parents, how could my parents allow me to be abused? If God let this happen to me, does that mean that I deserved it?

Just as the woman who had a bleeding disorder in the Gospel of Mark came to Jesus and was healed, so the violated woman comes to the Church with questions that will lead to healing. It is time for the Church community to embody womanish spirituality, and within that spiritual care, so that it can help survivors of gender-based violence towards healing.

Focusing on womanish spirituality and spiritual care can help us to discern what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church about gender-based violence. The idea of spirit and spirituality is

crucial to Christianity in the context of the Caribbean; spirituality has strong roots in the Church in the Caribbean. These roots are linked with a search for freedom from oppressive structures such as enslavement and colonialism. The Rev'd Dr Kortright Davis maintains that Caribbean spirituality 'is a spirituality for freedom'. Rev'd Dr Davis asserts that "the Caribbean Church owes it to the broad spectrum of its membership to reflect more faithfully the tremendous depths of trust, hope and courage which Caribbean spirituality generates."

To create a spirituality for the survivors of gender-based violence in the Caribbean, we must examine the historical and cultural contexts the Church in the Caribbean operates in. For example, in North America, womanish refers to something that is 'characteristic of, or suitable to, a woman, especially when considered inferior to a man'. Womanish does not mean the same thing in the Caribbean. Here, the phrase refers to a female child who is acting older than she is. Acting womanish is a positive thing, for it is an assertion that women are confident about who they are.

It is paramount that survivors of gender-based violence can be their authentic selves in church. We need to create spaces where survivors can work through the trauma of their abuse in a non-judgmental environment. For example, some have said that the current liturgy in the Anglican Church could be more inclusive of women and their lived experience. Revised rituals and liturgies that incorporate womanish spirituality would make churches more welcoming places for survivors of gender-based violence, showing that they are welcome here.

How do we engage with Beatrice and survivors like her? Beatrice and her fellow survivors need to be cared for holistically. The womanish spirituality outlined above places the experience of survivors at its centre, allowing them to heal in their own time and space. This spirituality, which focuses on spiritual care, will hopefully lead to a more compassionate response from the Church to survivors of gender-based violence who seek us out in search of healing. We must help Beatrice and other survivors of gender-based violence to experience the power and presence of the Holy Spirit as a major partner in their healing and transforming process. ■



Where was God when all this was happening to me?

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN WEST BENGAL

By Amy Parinita Mookerji, Church of North India.

Mona is from West Bengal, India in an area cared for by the Church of North India. Married to Gurunath, their first pregnancy was good news for the family. It was devastating for Mona and Gurunath to learn from their GP that she had suffered a miscarriage following a fall. Advised to take complete bed rest, Mona resolved to be more careful, but sadly learned that they may not conceive again. Once the family discovered this, Gurunath and his mother started verbally and physically abusing her. Mona was later barred from attending any social occasions because she was viewed as a 'bad omen'.



Mona was unable to bear the daily agony and contacted Altaveriya, a local community based organisation (CBO) dealing with women's issues, and shared her plight. CBO members discussed her circumstances and decided to meet the Gram Panchayat (Village Council). The family was summoned and asked for explanation but denied the allegation. However, the Panchayat warned the family that they would have to face consequences if they continued the abuse. Gurunath started harassing Mona further because she had made a complaint about them. Her parents shunned her equally. When the CBO members learned about her situation, they approached the Panchayat members again and decided to meet their Police Inspector. Mona and members of the CBO met with him and filed a case diary.

Mona's husband and his family were immediately called to the police station. The police inspector explained to them that not being able to conceive does not mean that a woman is worthless. He suggested that Mona's husband and mother-in-law had failed to take proper care of her when she was pregnant

and explained that they could be jailed for more than 7 years for assaulting Mona. Mona wanted to remain with her husband since her parents would not support her. The Inspector warned the family that he would file a domestic violence case against them should he hear about any further abuse. Mona and Gurunath have not reconciled well yet, but they are living together and she is no-longer abused. The members of the CBO and Panchayat check with her regularly. Mona says, "Altaveriya Gram Unnyan Manch (CBO) saved her marriage".

Mahila Adhikar Manch (MAM) or the Women's Grievance Cell is formed in the communities to address unfair treatment of women and girls and provide support to survivors. These groups have given a platform to women to share their own struggles and help them to build self-esteem by enabling them to earn a living. Through MAM, women are able to develop a critical understanding of the links between their own lives and larger socio-political structures. MAM deals with domestic violence cases, protects women's rights and advocates for a safe family environment. These empowering experiences have brought back the dignity of women in their family, community and in the wider society.

With the support of USPG, CNI SBSS is organising women into Self Help Groups (SHG). A SHG is an association of people (mostly local women in a village) who make small regular savings until there is enough money in the group to begin lending to its members in the time of need. The group caters for the financial needs of the members. This platform provides economic freedom for women and highlights atrocities against them. MAM is a forum for SHGs to addresses the issues of health, education, child marriage, domestic violence and exploitation. It is also a women's platform to disseminate information on rights, social welfare schemes and the governance processes.

Women contribute to household incomes and improve their role in the family, participating in decision-making and enhancing their position in society. Some of their income-generation activities include kitchen gardening, raising poultry, pigs and goats, and needlework including tailoring. Efforts are made to ensure that all women and girl children live with dignity and respect and have the right to a good education, health, and sustainable livelihoods. ■



These groups have given a platform to women to share their own struggles and help them to build self-esteem

HEIRS OF THE GRACE OF LIFE

By the Rev'd Fr Prince Obo Mends, Ghana.

Most Christians believe that men and women are created equal in the sight of God, as we are all made in God's image. Whilst this is a fundamental Christian value, some Christians hold the view that men and women are designed to occupy particular positions in churches and that they should not deviate from these positions. This is a perspective called complementarianism, and it often leads to the restriction of women to supporting roles, whilst men occupy leadership positions within church. In my experience as a church leader, I have often heard men say that, "Men need the church but, more importantly, the church needs men. The presence of enthusiastic men is one of the surest predictors of church health, growth, giving, and expansion". Whilst this sentiment does not exclude women from participating in the life of the church, it centres church activity around the needs and wants of men, rather than fully involving the entire church membership.

I believe that women have an important role in the life of the church, and that we should support initiatives which encourage women to lead the church. In the Bible, it says that women are full heirs of the grace of life (1 Peter 3:7), equal recipients of the saving work of Christ (Galatians 3:28) and equal partakers of the Holy Spirit and its gifts (Acts 2:17; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6). Consequently, there is a biblical basis for women to be at the centre of church life and to occupy leadership positions in the church, rather than being restricted to supporting roles.

We cannot neglect the lived experience of either men or women and still expect to fulfil our mission. To demonstrate how both men and women are fundamental to the Body of Christ, it is important to outline the work that male and female church members do in the Diocese of Cape Coast, Ghana.

Both men and women occupy leadership roles within our Diocese. Although it has taken a long time for us to ordain women as priests in the church, we celebrate the fact that Rev'd Vida Gyabeng Frimpong was ordained in October 2020 and now works as a priest in the Diocese. Rev'd Frimpong is the first female priest to be ordained here and we hope to ordain more female priests in the future.

We also have male and female lay leaders in the church. These laypeople include the Diocese's 12 catechists as well as readers of the Bible, vergers and ushers. The Diocese of Cape Coast has recently invested in a training centre for lay leadership, which was facilitated by USPG's Festina loan scheme. We hope that we will be able to train an increasing number of effective male and female lay leaders there. Furthermore, we have enshrined gender equality within certain elements of our church structures. For example, each church in our Diocese has a male and female church warden. Both men and women are also represented on our parochial church councils.

In the Diocese of Cape Coast, we also have specific ministries dedicated to men and women. These ministries seek to equip church members with particular skills that they wish to develop. Such programmes include career development workshops, healthcare training and organisational management. These ministries aim to empower church members to be socially and financially independent, irrespective of their gender. The Diocese of Cape Coast also hopes to establish a centre for apprenticeships in the future, so that young people in the Diocese can improve their employment opportunities.

In our Diocese, both men and women are involved in our evangelism work. Male and female church members play an active role in the spreading of the Gospel and the expansion of the church, as we are mandated to in Matthew 28:19. Both men and women support our evangelism work, through financial contributions and volunteering. Most church members in our Diocese contribute financially to our evangelism work, whilst a smaller group of church members comprise our mission and evangelism team.

Both men and women are fundamental to the body of Christ, and we must not overlook either gender's contributions to the life of the church. We need both male and female church members to lead the church, spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and organise initiatives to empower other church members. ■

THE REV'D ELEANOR C GLASGOW

Violence At Home Signal



Having checked with social work entities and Mothers' Union sources within the Dioceses of the Windward Islands, Barbados and Jamaica, it would appear that this Domestic Violence Interventive Aid is neither known, adopted or utilized in our Region. It is my understanding that the Provincial Mothers' Union (PMU) often receive useful and enlightening suggestions that are shared regionally via their PMU Magazine, for consideration. However, it is the view of practitioners interviewed that this aid can be

a useful tool to assist victims in breaking their silence and signalling for help.

I commend the foresight and ingenuity of the engineers of this Canadian-based helping strategy. However, of particular concern would be the safety and security of victims using such a disclosure aid, should perpetrators become aware of GBV victims telling their story by this means. Thanks must be extended to the PMU for bringing this strategy to light. ■

The magazine cover features a photograph of a Black woman in white and red clerical vestments, smiling and holding a book and a wooden staff. The title 'KOINONIA' is written in large, bold, pink letters across the top. Below the title, there are three text boxes: 'BISHOP ROSE: Looking ahead to the Lambeth Conference 2021', 'BE STILL AND KNOW: The Rev'd Dr Packiam T Samuel with a view on Coronavirus', and 'NURTURING A HEALTHY CHURCH: Rev'd Capt. Patience Wanzala'. The USPG+ logo and 'PARTNERS IN GLOBAL MISSION' are at the bottom right of the cover.

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A SMALL BUT PATIENT FLOCK

By Anna Tomie Kaneko.

The mission of the Anglican Church of Japan began in 1859. 139 years later, and following over ten years of persistent campaigning, the 1998 General Synod amended the statutes allowing women to be ordained as priests. In December that same year, the first female priest was ordained. Today, however, only 22 of the 199 current clergy are women: still less than 10% of the total. Moreover, there remain male clergy opposed to women's ordination. A commission has been established at provincial level, to deal with this issue.



Three of the 22 clergy delegates to the General Synod are currently women (13.6%); nine of the 22 lay delegates are women (40%), and none of the 11 bishop delegates are women. In the Global Gender Gap Report 2020 published by the World Economic Forum, Japan ranked 121 out of 153 countries in the world, and it can be assumed that such social trends are reflected in the Church. The NSKK set a numerical goal at its 2013 Mission Consultation to increase women participants in decision-making bodies to 30% over the next 10 years until 2022.

With the establishment of the Gender Working Group at the 2002 provincial synod and the Women's Desk at the 2006 synod, momentum to resolve gender issues and promote women's activities has been growing. The two groups interact with each other, create PR magazines, hold study sessions, and disseminate information. In 2006 and 2013, an 'Anglican Women's Conference in Japan' was held to share issues that need addressing so women themselves can become missionary agents. These bodies have been actively involved in identifying Japanese delegates for UNCSW since 2005 and promoting such activities as the '16 Days Campaign against Gender Violence', including awareness of the SDGs, as well as collaborating with NGOs seeking equality for women and girls, and submitting proposals to the government.

Christians make up 1% of the population of Japan and are a minority in society, thus sometimes we wonder what impact we can have. But from the perspective of women in the Church, the desire for gender equality in society is strong. Over the past three years, the ratio of male to female seminarians has been about half, showing the results of hard work and prayer; and giving hope for the future. The Gender Working Group and the Women's Desk have requested seminaries teach about gender equality as part of their theological education. We may be a small flock, but the Anglican Church in Japan has patience and passion, and the grace and energy to support it. I believe that with this, and following the world's trends, we can promote greater gender equality. ■

WOMEN IN MISSION IN THE COMMUNION

By Dr Agnes Abuom

Having previously served the church in a number of ways, and currently as the Moderator of the Central Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches Central Executive, I have to say that there is still a lot to be done in enhancing the place of young women in mission.

In the early 1800s, female involvement in mission was rare compared to the involvement of men in mission work. Most missionaries were men, while women only accompanied them as wives and daughters tasked with the responsibility of giving support to the men involved in mission. This was despite the fact that many women had a strong desire to be actively involved in mission work. By the 1820s, their call to mission had taken shape, with an increasing number of women organising fundraising events and prayer meetings for mission agencies, as well as continuing to promote more female involvement in mission.

From the 1860s to 1920s, many European, American and Australasian women followed the call to the mission field including Marie Hayes, a medical missionary with the Cambridge Mission to Delhi, and Mary Cornwall Legh, an SPG missionary devoted to the care of leprosy patients in Japan. Women's mission was a form of Christian feminism – it promoted women's distinct ability to emancipate other women and helped to consolidate an established framework for female engagement in mission and other church activities. Women's involvement in mission allowed them to develop practical skills in domestic labour, schoolteaching and nursing. Female missionaries were therefore able to gain financial independence whilst following

their call to spread the Good News. In the early twentieth century, mission work was facilitated and supported by three central pillars: mission agencies, female missionaries and women's mission associations and networks. First of all, there was the sending mission agency. For example, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), USPG's forerunner, sent more than 60 female missionaries to India between 1910 and 1930. The female missionaries themselves were the second pillar. These women formed a formidable bedrock for successful missionary activities in host countries, showing that women were equally capable of missionary work as men. The women's associations and networks in sending countries and mission destinations comprised the third pillar. Women's associations played a critical role in fundraising for women's education about and involvement in mission. For example, in USPG's own history, the Women's Mission Association for the Promotion of Female Education in the Missions of the SPG actively campaigned for more female involvement in mission work.

Very few women occupied leadership positions within mission organisations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, despite the efforts of campaigners such as Louise Creighton to promote the cause of women in mission. However, female missionaries effectively encouraged other women to become involved in mission work. Women missionaries would return to the sending country to share their experiences with women in mission associations and churches.



Photo: USPG

We should revisit the role that women played in the history of mission work and give them the recognition they deserve. These accounts can provide inspiration for the young women of today to become increasingly involved in mission, as well as help us to gain a more accurate understanding of the history of mission. As churches, we need to learn from past mistakes, where the lives of female missionaries went unrecognised. The best way to learn from this is to make it increasingly appealing for women to participate in mission work today.

I am encouraged by the Church's gradual recognition of those thousands of women who have been involved in mission. We are slowly beginning to identify the women who served both at home and overseas, giving their lives to Christ and the building of His church. This progress has not been easy to make. It is a result of repeated efforts to recognise and promote women who have been involved in mission, and to encourage young women to embrace mission work today. The World Council of Churches' assembly in 1974 sought to promote a vision of the Church as an equal community of women and men living in correspondence with Kingdom values. The conference provided a strong theological foundation for radical transformation and renewal within the world Church. The World Council of Churches' ecumenical decade in solidarity with women, from 1988 to 1998, highlighted opportunities for economic empowerment, as well as shining a light on the impact of violence against women.

It is time for us as a global Church to re-examine the role of women in mission and explore how we can encourage more women to be involved. When I was a young girl attending mission schools and churches in Kenya, there would usually be one male missionary, compared to five female missionaries. This shows that women are still the bedrock of mission in many parts of the world. Yet, without the creation and implementation of programmes to encourage women to be more involved in mission,

it will be difficult to fulfill mission as envisioned by the Anglican Communion. In many global ecumenical forums that I have been a part of, representatives of women's associations and feminist groups have identified potential initiatives to encourage more women to be involved in mission activity.

To encourage more women into mission work, we need to strengthen women's networks and organisations and provide more theological training opportunities for women. It is also very important to include the voices of women and marginalised groups in theology courses, and to incorporate the lived experience of women in the liturgy and ministry of the Church. We need to inform and educate young women already involved in the Church about mission and opportunities to be involved in mission work. As part of this, we should approach mission from a local level, establishing mission and evangelism committees in parishes and dioceses in addition to national committees on gender and mission. Parish councils, committees and diocesan synods should incorporate gender-inclusive policies into their organisational structures. We need to encourage more women to take on leadership roles within the Church. By doing this, we provide a living example of what women can do and how they can be more involved in the life of the Church.

The world Church has to be sensitive to the complexities of the modern world and adapt its approach to mission, if it hopes to encourage more women to be involved in mission. Advances in technology, particularly the widespread use of the Internet and access to social media, should be harnessed to encourage more people to be involved in mission. This technology can be used to share personal testimonies of involvement in mission work as well as to develop relationships across the world Church. Social media has a potentially unlimited reach, and we should use it to inform people about mission, and encourage them to get involved. ■

LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN LIKE WATERS: A BAHAMIAN REALITY

Rev'd Angela C Bosfield Palacios.



I had dreamed of being ordained for a long time, having felt called to ministry since the late 1970s. I graduated from theological seminary in 1985, and waited 15 years for the Diocese of the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos to ordain me in May 2000. I became the first female Anglican priest in our diocese. So far, eight female priests have served in the Church of the Province of the West Indies, and we hope for many more.

Although I had to wait 15 years, some women are still being denied equality in the Bahamas, waiting for their Jericho Wall to fall. Bahamian women who give birth abroad are currently unable to pass their nationality status onto their children, whilst Bahamian men pass their nationality on automatically. Likewise, Bahamian women who are married to men from other countries have to wait years to gain citizenship, whilst the wives of Bahamian men are granted citizenship automatically. On average, Bahamian men earn 30% more than Bahamian women, and men comprise 87% of representatives in the Bahamian parliament – although women make up 51% of the population.

In the Bahamas, there are many women who have broken through so-called 'glass ceilings' in their respective fields, including me. Women have recently occupied these roles: Governor-General, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Speaker of the House, Chaplain to the House of Assembly and the Senate, President of the Senate, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and President of the College of The Bahamas. Despite this, many women in the Bahamas face gender discrimination at work and at home. In 2016, there was a referendum held on whether to add a new article to the Constitution of the Bahamas which would ban discrimination on the basis of gender. This was rejected, reflecting the dominance of cultural norms around the role of women in society.

Numerous women have been victims of physical and sexual violence in the Bahamas, which has the highest rate of sexual assault in the Caribbean, with 133 women out of every 100,000 being a victim. Bahamian men suffer from verbal abuse, but not at the same level as women. Dr Mary Miller, an expert on domestic

LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN LIKE WATERS : A BAHAMIAN REALITY

abuse, writes that “It is inequality that traps women in abusive situations...euphemisms not only permit society to avoid recognizing this as a uniquely female tragedy but also reinforce society’s apathy toward women by implying that men are equally abused. They are not”.

Dr Sandra Dean Patterson founded the Bahamas Crisis Centre in 1982, providing services to women who are subject to physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Violence within families is an important area for churches to focus on, so that children can grow up in a peaceful environment. Dr Patterson is a leading member of the newly formed Diocesan Family Violence think tank, which is currently focused on preparing an initial proposal on family violence for the Rt Rev’d Laish Boyd, Bishop of Nassau and the Bahamas.

Bishop Laish recently wrote to the clergy: “We acknowledge that, for decades, there have been variables that have contributed to the breakdown of peaceable co-existence in the family. Due to the restrictions on movement brought about due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the related loss of income and employment, many families are experiencing tension within the home, with a greater number of people reporting conflict and violence. A small group of Anglican leaders – in collaboration with interested professionals from across the Bahamian community – is working on a proposal to shape the Diocese’s response to family violence. We are called by God to love one another, and this requires the Church to be much more intentional in the prevention, reduction and elimination of family violence”. The Diocesan Family Life Commission and the Diocesan Family Violence think tank will be discussing the causes of family violence and measures that can be taken to prevent it.”

Justice means the freedom to enjoy our God-given rights. These include equal opportunities in education and employment, equal access to goods and services, the right to vote and the right to live a peaceful life. As a Caribbean people shaped by the violence of slavery, the oppression of colonialism and the scourge of drug addiction, we recognize that our wounds are deep but commitment to justice remains strong. Now must be a time for prayer and peaceful contemplation, for high praise and deep reflection. Our dialogue on gender equality must include active listening, personal acts of forgiveness, and intentional action to promote gender justice. Practical steps for the church

involve extensive training of clergy on issues of gender equality, and the employment of psychological counsellors to understand and respond to issues related to family violence.

In the Diocese of the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos, as well as in the wider Church of the Province of the West Indies, we have to support education on gender equality, active participation in social reform and the introduction of legislation to prevent, reduce and eliminate gender injustice. In many instances, the parliament of the Bahamas has already signed on to international conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women. However, it is time for us to put these statements into action, implementing the gender equality and justice outlined in those treaties.



Rev'd Angela C. Bosfield Palacious

For me, divine justice is the recognition that we are all equally made in God's image and likeness, redeemed by the Lord, Jesus Christ, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, gifted for service and called to discipleship. As a global Church, we should look back to Egypt and learn from the oppression we have suffered. Yet we also need to look forward to God's promised land with hope in our hearts. We must consider how to implement gender justice in our local church, community, diocese and province. I pray that we may seek to promote the well-being of all persons and that we may bring about God's Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. We must remember that, in God, anything is possible.

As I look at my grandchildren, I ask myself what legacy I will leave them and all of the young people of their generation. I pray that I will leave them a world filled with light and love. I pray that they will be involved in the work of a church that leads by example, recognising that everyone is made in God's likeness, and engaged in acts that please God. ■



So far, eight female priests have served in the Church of the Province of the West Indies

THE NEW HUMANITY OF CHRIST

By the Rt Rev'd Dr Farai Mutamiri

The Anglican Diocese of Harare in Zimbabwe is part of the Church of the Province of Central Africa (CPCA). As part of the CPCA, the Diocese of Harare is involved in the Gender and Faith Network, an initiative launched by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches in 2015.

Rosemary Radford Ruether, leading feminist scholar and Catholic theologian, says that "Women, in solidarity with all those who belong to the world of exploited labour, must look to the conversion of the world system. This is the conversion which Christianity promised when it spoke of the new humanity in Christ 'in which there was neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female', but which it has betrayed historically".

These words are of great relevance to us today: as churches, we need to embrace the "new humanity" in which gender does not define decision-making processes. Although women occupy an increasing number of leadership positions in the world Church, more men than women occupy leadership and decision-making positions overall. Of the 877 bishops across the Anglican Communion, fewer than 100 of these bishops are women.

The Diocese of Harare's Diocesan Standing Committee (which acts as the Diocese's decision-making body between Synods) has only one female lay member, while the other five lay members of the Committee are male. The sad irony of this scenario is that the Diocese of Harare is predominantly comprised of women, who make up 75% of the diocesan membership. Yet, there is still only one female representative on our decision-making board! For me, this is a very clear indicator that our church needs to be more representative and that we need to continue to work towards equal representation and gender equality.

Good leaders need to be able to unify diverse groups of people and motivate them to work towards a common aim. In Zimbabwe, women occupy leadership positions in various sectors: we have three female judges on our constitutional court, a female President of the Senate in our parliament and increasing representation of women within our business sector. If women are occupying leadership positions in Zimbabwean society, we need to think about why this isn't reflected in the churches in the Diocese of Harare.

Many people within the Diocese argue that the scarcity of women leaders in our churches is related to the patriarchal culture of our churches. Female members of the church have previously been taught to submit themselves to men and to treat men as the primary decision-makers at home and within the church. Historically, fathers would refuse to allow their daughters to go to school, depriving girls of their education. Both within church and outside it, women have been taught to feel inferior. Subsequently, they understandably feel unable to occupy leadership positions within the Church. These cultural factors continue to prevent women from occupying positions of leadership in our Diocese today.

Aware of the difficulty of overcoming cultural and historical prejudice against women, the Diocese of Harare continues to encourage women to occupy leadership positions, in the hope of creating a more representative Church. To ensure more equal gender representation within the Diocese, we should appoint women to positions of leadership. The Diocese of Harare employs several women in administrative capacities, but this is not enough. We need women leaders to truly build a more inclusive church.

At the Synod of the Church of the Province of Central Africa, the Diocese of Harare promotes the cause of women in leadership. We bring forward motions in favour of the ordination of women. We continue to work and pray for the ordination of women, hopeful that this will one day become a reality.

We need to tackle gender inequality directly rather than burying our heads in the sand. We need to create diocesan structures which enshrine the representation of women in the decision-making processes of the Diocese of Harare. We should also recognise the need for the continued creation and promotion of Church programmes, teachings and sermons which promote the idea of women in leadership and gender equality across the Church.

We want to see gender equality across the Diocese of Harare. This will only be possible if every member in the Diocese embraces and appreciates the role of women in the life of the Church and beyond. ■



Of the 877 bishops across the Anglican Communion, fewer than 100 of these bishops are women

GENDER JUSTICE IS CLIMATE JUSTICE

Climate change affects all of us, yet it disproportionately affects people who rely on natural resources for their livelihoods. Women are more affected by climate change than men, as they are the world's main crop-growing population. In the Global South, women also tend to have lower incomes and less access to financial credit than men, meaning that they have fewer financial resources to combat natural disasters and extreme weather when these events occur. Structural factors, including lack of land rights and insufficient access to education, limit the actions that women in the Global South can take to fight climate change.

Women in Bangladesh and India have seen their economic prospects hurt by climate change, as rising sea levels mean that water is saltier, and clean water is therefore more expensive to access. Yet, women across the world are poorly represented in decision-making processes about what should be done to mitigate climate change and how to adapt our ways of living to curb carbon dioxide emissions. Research by the Global Gender and Climate Alliance shows that, within the European Union, women comprise only 26% of representatives in decision-making positions on climate change and sustainability committees.

This is a serious issue, as gender inequality within political representation limits action on climate change. Dr Astghik Mavisakalyan's research into the relationship between gender inequality and climate resilience shows that greater parliamentary representation of women leads to the adoption of more stringent climate change policies. A major example of this is Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's role in the promotion of a Green New Deal, an integrated approach to climate change and economic injustice. This was the first piece of legislation that Ocasio-Cortez submitted to Congress and has been a major part of President Biden's plan on climate change, despite the proposal's initial failure to pass the Senate. A similar policy proposal called the European Green Deal has been adopted by the European Commission.

A powerful example of the impact that women in leadership can have on climate resilience is the story of Deolinda Freitas Prado from the village of Turi Garapé Santa Cruz in Brazil, one of many indigenous communities located near the Amazon rainforest. In 1960, at the age of 10, Deolinda had to leave the community she grew up in, as deforestation and heavy mining

damaged the area and made it increasingly difficult to grow food. Deolinda went to a boarding school in Yaueretê, learning domestic skills and needlework. Afterwards, she moved to Manaus to work and support her family financially. Her first salary came via selling artisan craft products and later by working as childcare for families in Manaus.

Deolinda was not alone in this journey, with many other women moving from their communities to Manaus so that they could provide for their families. The deforestation of the Amazon rainforest had also made it difficult to hunt for food and find clean water, meaning that it was unsustainable for large communities to live in the area. Moving to Manaus meant leaving everything these women knew behind. In addition to the homesickness they felt, these women also faced racial prejudice, misogynistic violence and economic exploitation.

In 1984, Deolinda met Dr Janet Chernela, who was working as a Research Fellow at the National Institute for Amazon Research (INPA) in Manaus. Dr Chernela was in the process of establishing a group for women to gather and learn together in Manaus. The community was named the 'Upper Rio Negro Indigenous Women's Association', based in a rented house in Manaus where they could meet and work. Deolinda was a founding member of the Association and is currently its Deputy Coordinator. The group continues to work, producing sustainable goods from local materials. The Association has produced face-masks for vulnerable people in the area during the Covid-19 pandemic. Alongside the sustainable products that the Association makes, the group continues to push for the recognition of indigenous rights and the protection of their land.

Deolinda's story demonstrates how women in positions of leadership can lead the way when it comes to the issue of climate justice, by promoting sustainable ways of making a living and speaking out about issues like deforestation. To combat climate change, it is crucial that the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is reduced and this can only be achieved by living more sustainably.

USPG acknowledges the IAFN and the Rt Rev'd Marinez Bassotto, Bishop of the Diocese of the Amazon, who allowed us to use this story in Koinonia. ■



Women comprise only 26% of representatives in decision-making positions on climate change and sustainability committees

FROM PANTRY TO PULPIT

By the Very Rev'd Shelley-Ann Tenia, Diocese of Trinidad & Tobago.



Photo: the Very Rev'd Shelley-Ann Tenia

Gender justice in the Caribbean is complex and contradictory. Examining culture while sifting through external influences requires courage and endurance. Justice is not an act of benevolence dependent on the benefactor, but an intrinsic human right. Consider this: twenty-five-year-old Justine is contemplating a call to ordained ministry. She wants to serve God but is not sure about the Church. At sixteen, she became pregnant by the twenty-one-year-old head server. She lost her innocence, her ministry, her privileged status, and her honour.

Chief concerns were the Church's reputation, her family's plans for her, the young man's long-term relationship, and the negative influence on other young people. Unspoken but inferred, they preferred that she (or the situation) disappear. She was told that if she wasn't so "womanish" this could have been avoided: the head server was advised to be more careful. His ministry was uninterrupted. Was justice done? For the decision-makers, yes; a new life was preserved, all parties protected, and peace prevailed. But was there justice for Justine?

The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity states that the Hebrew scriptures insist on justice. It was a gospel imperative for Jesus. God expects us to order our societies justly, and has special concern for those who are vulnerable, violated, or treated unjustly. Justice is intrinsic to the Church's Mission.

So why is justice so elusive for the Church?

Achieving justice in societies built on stratified, patriarchal, hierarchical class systems, necessitates addressing issues of gender inequality. At the heart of justice work, in our post-colonial context, is converting our self-understanding and ordering our relationships justly. The Church's leadership is essential in realizing this vision. She must: leverage Her privilege to address systemic issues of gender inequality and gender-based violence; lead in public initiatives that foster collaboration among faith groups and local communities, and work towards integration and strategic lobbying for greater social impact; renew Her commitment to justice as part of Her mission with the same power and authority as Jesus, who confronted and upended harmful cultural norms whilst serving those at the margins.

A courageous step for the Church would be reordering its operational policies through the kind of bold transformational leadership that made women's ordination possible and to invest in education, healthcare, and other social services for girls and the marginalised.

Proactive steps toward workplace equality include closing the gender pay gap, ensuring adequate paid parental leave for men and women, and committing to non-judgmental inclusion with support and development of women's leadership. We must become more

FROM PANTRY TO PULPIT

intentional about the formation, development, training and continuing education of clergy and lay leaders to include clear behavioral standards that cultivate a culture of peace and respect in every space Church space. We should invest in the implementation of a safeguarding policy to protect women from sexual harassment, demand justice for girls, shelter young men from attitudes of toxic hypermasculinity, and hold errant lay and ordained persons to account. The Church may thus regain its moral authority and can use the power inherent in its privilege for strategic engagement of policymakers, advocating for more robust laws and policies, speaking out against corruption and societal violence, eventually dismantling the insidious patriarchal system.

Provincial dioceses attempt to sensitize and educate members and to raise public awareness about gender justice, via their ministries and in collaboration with partners. However, the Church's teachings still seem irrelevant to many. Gender inequalities go unheeded, violence and moral decay prevail, and the Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare societal and institutional gaps.



Rev'd Shelley-Ann Tenia

Where cultural expectations are rigid, toxic, oppressive, and violent, the Church's most powerful influence can be in their transformation. Some church leaders recognise the value of its access to citizens in the street and in the pew, to influence local policy and help mobilise community projects.

More is needed to affirm and reinforce the values of care and prudent environmental stewardship in the context of households,

schools, and workplaces. Equitable use of human resources, care of the Earth, poverty eradication, attending to mental health, and creating safer communities should become common concerns for faith and non-faith collaborative groups.

In the urban city center of Port of Spain (home to the Cathedral's ministry) issues of poverty, inequality, stigmatization, and violence remain. Young women, children, grandmothers, struggling young men, tentative migrants, and mothers in pain all seek a better life but feel caught in the dragnet of gender injustice. People long for the sense of safety, shared identity and belonging that a faith community provides.

We work toward a more just ordering of our relationships, through focused teaching and formation practices that influence how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, how they share roles and responsibilities and impact the distribution of power and resources. For us, fledgling relationships with other faith and secular groups need strengthening to seek justice for those at the margins: undervalued domestic workers and others needing a fair wage; equitable access to financial services for women and men who work in the informal sector; safety and security for the increasing flow of migrants; trafficked women and children; the elderly; the LGBTQI community; and other stigmatized groups. Deeper connection to and conversations with gang-ridden, poorer communities to interrogate the interconnected economic, social and political spheres of daily life and deeply embedded gender inequalities. These conversations create opportunities for reconciliation processes that can lead to peaceful coexistence.

Intentional 21st century mission and discipleship requires a return to justice as a core personal and societal value. Just ordering of relationships involves treating all people fairly; ensuring equity; protecting the weak; extending mutual respect, care and concern; celebrating differences; promoting complementarity, equality and integration; honouring the dignity and intrinsic worth of every person.

Will our grandchildren inherit notions that a woman's rightful place is in the pantry, and that God rightly ordained men to be in pulpits and in halls of power? Or will we faithfully persevere to shape Caribbean culture, free of unhealthy patriarchy and full of the treasures of our unique shared humanity? ■



a woman's rightful place is in the pantry

A WONDERFUL GIFT TO THE CHURCH

By the Rev'd Canon Dr Vicentia Kgabe

In their article, 'An Integrative Definition of Leadership,' Dr Bruce Winston and Dr Kathleen Patterson examine 90 different variables that comprise leadership. There is no single way of being a leader; every leader's approach depends on their own life experience and the context in which they are operating. The Bible has plenty of examples of leadership, from Moses leading Israel out of Egypt to Peter's early leadership of the Church. There is no universal model of leadership to emulate, and the appropriate form of leadership depends entirely on context.

I never thought I would graduate from theological college and return to the same place 15 years later as the leader of the college. I was appointed to be the Rector of College of Transfiguration in June of 2014, and started my duties in January of 2015. I remember checking with the Most Rev'd Thabo Makgoba, Archbishop of Cape Town and Primate of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, that my nomination and election as Rector of the College had gone through all the appropriate

processes that are used for appointments in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. I did this for one reason - I wanted my appointment to be as legitimate as possible, so that everyone could see I was selected on the basis of merit, rather than tokenism.

I was very much aware that I am a black woman. I was the youngest to have ever been appointed for this position and also the first former student to be given this responsibility. I worried that this appointment would raise questions within the Church or that it might be contested by people who thought that I was not experienced enough for the role. I have been interested to hear from those outside of the structure, who used my age and gender as reasons to be sceptical of my appointment. Likewise, I found that the people who celebrated and affirmed my appointment to this role were happy about my appointment for the same reasons! Some people saw my age and gender as a positive and others did not.

Before I started in my role as Rector of the College of the Transfiguration, I knew of only two other women in the Anglican Communion who held similar positions: Professor Esther Mombo, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) of St. Paul's University, Kenya, and Dr Jenny Te Paa Daniel, former Principal at St John's Theological College in Auckland. More recently, the Rev'd Dr LaKeesha Walrond has become President of New York Theological Seminary and the Rev'd Dr Yolanda Pierce has become Dean of Howard University's School of Divinity.

It is encouraging to know that more women are being appointed to lead theological seminaries and colleges. I am also excited about the possibility of partnerships between our institutions and the support we can give to each other. Having women in leadership positions at theological colleges demonstrates that the church cares about issues of inclusion, representation, recognition, and respect. To those of us who have been entrusted with positions of leadership and authority, I say that we must continue to make the church and other religious institutions safe and welcoming to all. I am conscious that any failures which happen during my time as Rector may be used as a justification to stop other women from holding this position in the future.



The Rev'd Canon Dr Vicentia Kgabe



I never thought I would graduate from theological college and return to the same place 15 years later as the leader



First year class with academic staff

I worry about whether we will have enough women theologians, lay and ordained, and I am concerned about whether we will have many women leading at the highest levels of the Church. I see many women obtaining their undergraduate qualifications but only a few of them going on to study for postgraduate qualifications. The challenges female theological students face are many of the same challenges that I faced when I was younger. I think particularly of having to deal with cultural and religious stereotypes about the role of women in church leadership.

The awarding of scholarships and bursaries often favours men, unless the donor indicates that these awards are specifically reserved for female applicants. As a global Church, we need to encourage and financially support women who wish to obtain doctoral degrees in the field of theological studies. In some dioceses, students who have just completed their undergraduate qualification in theology are not allowed to register for further study for at least two years. This rule has contributed to many young theologians never returning to study for postgraduate qualifications, having lost interest in the particular area of study they may have written a thesis on. I have asked diocesan staff why this is, only to be told that after three years of residential formation and studying, newly ordained graduates need to focus solely on being curates.

I encourage many different people to study theology, but especially women. Theological training is important to me, because no matter how hard you work or how knowledgeable you may be, without supporting academic documents, women will continue to miss out on appointments to leadership roles. Otherwise, there will always be someone questioning a woman's qualifications when they are being recommended for a position of leadership.

Although I am a strong advocate of theological training for all, I am keenly aware that many women are unable to access opportunities to study theology. I have heard stories told by women, and some male clergy, about being made to feel inadequate as a priest because they were not trained at a certain theological college. These anecdotes highlight the "classism" that has been created in the Church, based on the institution at which you earned your qualification. Furthermore, there is another class of clergy who do not have any theological qualifications, who are made to feel that they are not qualified to work in the Church.

If we are to increase the number of female theologians in positions of leadership at theological seminaries, I believe we must first normalise the idea of women serving at our altars, teaching in our lecture rooms, and speaking at official church gatherings, such as General Synod. Exposure and participation in the ecclesial legislative bodies of the Church is crucial to the prospect of seeing more women in leadership. These things matter because the majority of our parishioners are women. If the membership of the Church is predominantly comprised of women, then surely representatives of the Church should also be women.

I am grateful that the glass ceiling in certain parts of the Anglican Communion is showing cracks, even if it remains completely intact in other parts of the Communion. As we celebrate women occupying positions of leadership and authority in the Church, we need to bear in mind that for many of them, it has not been easy to reach the positions they are now in. Let us not judge them harshly nor put burdens on them that we are ourselves could not carry. Having women in positions of leadership is a wonderful gift to the Church and a gift worth valuing. ■



I am grateful that the glass ceiling in certain parts of the Anglican Communion is showing cracks

GENDER JUSTICE

By Kiran Bala, Delhi Brotherhood Society's Womens' Helpline

Although the Indian mythologies have stories extolling and venerating women as heroic and as divinities, in actual practice the society is strongly hierarchical in two ways. The first is the caste hierarchy and the other is the patriarchy. It is easy to understand that caste hierarchy has the Brahman-priests on top followed by graded descending castes of Kshatriya-warriors, Vaishya-traders and Shudra-servants, the rest of the population is cast out as Panchama or 'untouchables'.

Based on this system, the patriarchy takes a peculiar form by awarding subordination and domination to women simultaneously. Accordingly, a Brahman woman is subordinate to a Brahman man, but dominates over the men and women of lower castes. This line of subordination and domination goes down the hierarchy of castes. It is in this context that women in each station of caste live as unequal creatures who find no solidarity with the women of higher or lower castes. This is why women at all levels of Indian society face gender injustice in various forms of violence such as being abandoned, discriminated against by and the imposition of silence and segregation.

The Women's Helpline of the Delhi Brotherhood Society was set up to meet this obvious need for support. The women of the community are formed into a group of sisters in solidarity to support each other through emotional trauma, with counselling, legal help and also celebration. They aim to protect the social institutions that offer security and dignity to women including their families.

The destruction of the family often arises due to domestic violence as a product of men's alcoholism. They feel no remorse due to the patriarchal mentality (the male superiority which no remorse for unjustly subordinating women.) Here, the legal recognition of the Women Councils compels the males to present themselves when summoned. The approach taken is to solve problems by counselling, ensuring that family of the aggrieved woman remains intact, and that the woman is not abandoned by her husband.

The induction of a women into the woman's group and their routine participation in the fellowship and celebrations of women's events gives a clear signal to the menfolk about the strength of solidarity which the womenfolk

enjoy. This solidarity guards the security and dignity of women both in the family and the wider community. As a result, it psychologically empowers women.

How does the Women's Helpline work? It basically intervenes when a woman lodges a complaint and encourages men and women seek support. A 'younger men support group' was a welcome step in the project and surprised the project team, with some men helping other men (generally 'the accused' in the case) of two feuding parties to open up easily and with greater trust that their side of the story will be also given. The project team would be gender neutral while dealing with the case. These support groups of younger women and men (18 to 35 years of age) aimed at helping their peers away from violence and injustice. When the panchayat members or the project staff talked to them and took them in to the team, the cases were easier to resolve. There were some 316 such cases over past year that were counselled and solved using this strategy. Also, during the project implementation, the women's helpline has seen that not only women but also men are in distress. Hence, the helpline team helped these men in various cases of domestic violence and property or maintenance related issues or even in false cases of rape. There are 7 such groups which involve both women and men. Each group has 20 members. All members have the responsibility of vigilance in their areas. They are also made to observe the Panchayat proceedings so that they can be prepared to manage cases which come from the younger populations. ■



Gender Justice, Delhi Brotherhood



A Brahman woman is subordinate to a Brahman man...

TRUSTEE PROFILE

THE REV'D CANON DR DAPHNE GREEN



'I feel very privileged to be involved with USPG,' says Daphne, who became a trustee in June 2016 and is currently Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees.

'To be a part of such a long-established mission agency is amazing. The breadth of experience the staff and trustees have is very rich. I have hugely welcomed the opportunity through my role as a trustee to link up with USPG's partner churches throughout the world. I was very privileged to go to Malawi and Kenya with USPG in 2018 and to have the opportunity to take part in the international consultation in Barbados in 2019. The consultation was a wonderful opportunity to learn how people were living out the Christian faith in the context of their very different - and in many cases, very challenging - situations.

'What has surprised me most about USPG is the impact it has made on churches throughout the Anglican Communion and beyond, building on its very long history. USPG has managed to bring a fresh message and mission within each generation, which is unparalleled amongst many other mission agencies. That's something I think we can be intensely proud of. When I think of USPG and its work, the scripture that springs to mind is John 10:10 and what it says about us having life in all its fullness. That verse, to me, encapsulates what USPG is about in enabling men, women and children throughout the world to flourish, and to flourish in a way that reflects the wholeness and the vitality of Christ and makes it a reality in the world.'

Daphne is Provincial Chaplain and Researcher to the Archbishop of York. Previously she was a parish priest in Leeds and a university chaplain. Before her ordination, Daphne worked in publishing and as a director of a marketing and PR agency. 'I think that partly through my experience and calling as a Christian priest, I bring to the

trustee board a sense of a vision of what it means to be the body of Christ in many different ways throughout the world and the way we can build up and support and sustain one another,' she says. 'I believe that's something really foundational. I also bring experience from other areas of life, both in business and in the Church, and also through my work in parish and other forms of ministry, to see how we can build up partnerships and relationships and bring transformation together. From my experience in both Christian publishing and educational publishing, I bring a commitment to see the power of the written word in communication. That's something I think USPG has always done very well - and an area I was pleased to bring my experience to.'

But Daphne's experience in negotiating ecumenical issues started even earlier. 'My mother was raised Greek Orthodox but became Anglican in her teens, so from a very early age, we were used to experiencing different denominational Christian practices, which I think was good,' she says.

'A very similar influence on me was the year I spent teaching in India after I graduated from university. That was my first real experience of encountering people of other faiths, particularly Hinduism. After I did my training for ministry, I went on to do a PhD at Leeds University, in which I looked at links between Christian and Hindu spirituality in different faith communities. That increased my appreciation of the world Church, as well as engendering in me a deep love and respect for people - both in India and in the other churches I've been involved with.

'Since becoming a USPG trustee, I've learnt of the huge number of different situations and contexts in which Christians are working and living throughout the world - and a number of ways in which Christians can support and learn from each other. I've been encouraged by the partnerships that have been developed and the ways in which different partner churches are helping each other, especially through educational programmes such as the Asian theological Academy. Something that we've all had to learn from the current Covid-19 pandemic is all the new ways we can now connect with each other. A great example of that for me was Duncan Dormor's 24-hour Zoom session in which he preached throughout different parts of Anglican communion. I thought it was both wonderful and a pointer to ways in which we can develop those links in the future.' ■

LEGACY GIVING WITH USPG



Photo: USPG

You may feel that 'leaving a legacy' sounds like something only famous people do, but actually we are all leaving a legacy in life in our own way. Our legacy is a combination of the way we live every day and the impact it has on our family, friends, church and the community we live in. It is also about how we prepare others for life without us. Writing a will is a way to let others appreciate our love and consideration for them because we took the time to plan ahead for the impact our absence would have on them.

Although many of us may think from time to time about what we might need to do to get our affairs in order, you may be surprised to hear that over 65% of adults in the UK have

not written a will. Many of us mistakenly believe that our worldly possessions will go automatically to our next of kin, our partners or children, but without clear directions that may not always be the case.

Having a will gives you peace of mind for the future. It gives you the opportunity to provide for your family and loved ones, and to support the causes you care about. Leaving a gift in your will to USPG can have a transformational impact on the lives of people in the global Church. USPG supporters Linda Ali and Elizabeth Knight have pledged to leave gifts in their wills to USPG and these are their stories:

LEGACY GIVING WITH USPG

By Janine Goddard, USPG Individual Giving and Church Campaigns Manager.

Linda said, "I first heard about USPG through churches I attended in London many years ago. I began to believe in the work the Society was doing across the globe. I felt that USPG was dedicated to God's purpose in over 50 countries, and I am particularly passionate about its enormous efforts in championing women and girls' development and protecting the environment.

I decided to amend my will to include a gift to USPG; it was a very simple process through my local solicitor here in York. Although I give a regular monthly gift to USPG, leaving a legacy is my thanksgiving offering for all that God has provided throughout my life. I have so much to be grateful for and I wanted to show my gratitude through this gift that will keep on giving to those in need. I pray that the Society will continue to have a presence in the world community, where my gift will benefit God's people even after I have gone.

Through working closely with USPG as a Trustee and a former Chair, I know how dedicated the team are and how careful the organisation is with supporters' donations. I feel comforted that I know where the gift I leave behind will go and my main reason for leaving a legacy gift to USPG was to ensure we continue to build God's Kingdom across the world, including re-energising its efforts in the islands of the Caribbean.

For people who are thinking about when to write their will, I would suggest that the right time is now! We do not know when and what will happen to us, but it is so important to think about and provide for the future. I am very proud of USPG and would like to know that the organisation will continue to serve the world community for many more years."

Elizabeth explained, "When I was at school in the 1960s, USPG held a weekend conference about India for sixth formers. I was interested in India as my father had been there in WWII and a missionary from India, Murray Rogers, had made a deep impression on me when he had visited our church, so I was keen to attend. It was an excellent conference and I have had links with USPG ever since. When I moved to

Oxford I joined the local USPG group. I became a 'Friend of USPG'. I married a clergyman and in a number of parishes where we have lived we have encountered people who were supportive of mission and had connections with USPG.

I have therefore had literature and prayer material from USPG over a very long time and have always been interested in the USPG magazines. Pictures from the magazines were useful for Sunday school classes to help children absorb the idea that the Church is not all white and British. Back in the seventies, I remember using a good USPG course based around the Windward Islands with school children, which was great.

I wanted to leave money in my will to help my family and others as well, and USPG was the obvious charity to choose. I have always been impressed by the way USPG gives directly to other churches in response to the priorities and needs of the local church. When people go on USPG exchange programmes, they are hosted by the local church. I am also conscious that while a wide-range of churches will support larger more well-known charities, USPG relies for its support largely on a sub-group of the Anglican Church. I feel that we all need to be aware that we are part of a worldwide Church and I would like to continue to support the worldwide Church after my death."

To help make leaving a legacy simple, USPG has partnered with Farewill, to offer our supporters a free will-writing service. Farewill's online will-writing service is straightforward, quick and stress free, just log on to www.uspg.org.uk/legacy. You can write your will in as little as 30 minutes with expert support via web chat or over the phone, seven days a week. Once you have answered the step-by-step questions, your will is checked by a team of expert will writers and printed so you can sign it alongside your witnesses.

We may not be able to control everything in life, but we can be sure of the gifts that we leave behind. Your legacy is your gift. Leave a gift in your will for USPG today and support future generations through the work of our global church partners. ■



We may not be able to control everything in life, but we can be sure of the gifts that we leave behind.

VISIT WWW.USPG.ORG.UK/LEGACY TO FIND OUT MORE



MAKE COP26 COUNT

Make COP26 Count is a joint programme run by USPG and Hope for the Future, equipping church congregations with the tools to take spiritual, practical and political action on climate change. These actions include leading a Climate Sunday service, working towards Eco Church accreditation or completing an Energy Audit of the church, and meeting with local MPs to discuss actions that can be taken on climate change.

“Sometimes there are things in life where you don’t have a choice. Something just comes along, and you know you have to do it”, says Lesley Bond, participant in the Make COP26 Count programme.

Lesley’s passion for climate justice has developed in the last few years. “I’ve been involved in environmental action since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s (IPCC) report came out in 2018. It had such a shocking effect on me. I was like a new convert!”. Make COP26 Count launched at the perfect time for Lesley. She says, “it’s taken me a while to find my feet and land where I am, having been involved in various environmental groups. Make COP26 Count is where my heart is, and where it has been all the time – with churches and faith groups. I haven’t really analysed it too much, it’s just a deep feeling”.

Lesley worships at St Gabriel’s in Aldersbrook, East London, and the congregation has been receptive to Make COP26 Count. “There is a strong commitment at St Gabriel’s to do something about the climate emergency. In preparation for Climate Sunday, we reached

out to people both within and outside the church to hear their concerns about climate change. We received lots of encouraging responses and included people from outside the church in our Climate Sunday service”.

Lesley has also appreciated being part of a wider cohort of churches participating in Make COP26 Count. She says, “It has been incredibly helpful to be a part of a wider group of churches involved in this programme. There’s a real sense of community, even though we can’t actually meet in person”. Discussing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Make COP26 Count, Lesley revealed that “lockdown has actually been quite helpful. It’s made a lot of church-related activities much quicker and more effective”.

Lesley is a little apprehensive about the next step in the programme but is treating it as an opportunity to learn. “I’m not particularly looking forward to the political advocacy part of the programme, because I don’t feel confident meeting MPs and telling them what we would like to achieve”. Integrating environmental action into church activities has been more comfortable for Lesley: “I have really enjoyed the Climate Sunday preparation – it’s been creative and liturgical. I think that’s the beauty of the Body of Christ, that we can all be good at different things”. ■



Make COP26 Count is a joint programme run by USPG and Hope For The Future.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MAKE COP26 COUNT, VISIT WWW.USPG.ORG.UK/COP26

BREAKING THE SILENCE: EXPANDING HORIZONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By Sarah Mortimer

For a month in 2019, I had the joy of a home from home in Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown) in Eastern Cape, South Africa, where I divided my time between the Anglican College of the Transfiguration (COTT) and the Cathedral of St Michael and St George. I say 'home' because I carried away learning about what creates a sense of belonging.

So much was unfamiliar and to be enjoyed. I swapped informal Anglican worship in a school-based church plant for wonderfully distinctive styles of cathedral and chapel worship featuring choirs, the organ and the marimbas, with multi-lingual liturgy and songs that gave an open welcome. There was winter in July, with temperatures inside buildings colder than outside, the stars of the southern skies, and donkeys wandering the streets.

A more sobering difference was the legacy of conflict epitomised by the debate over the city's name change. Apartheid had left behind a juxtaposition of town and township. I had come from one of the least deprived local authorities in England to one of the most impoverished provinces of South Africa, where on average two in three adults live in need and one in three are unemployed. By benefits payday, people were in urgent need of funds and there were long queues at the banks with security guards in evidence and limits on withdrawals.

Utilities that I take for granted were precarious. The water supply was unreliable and limited. Refuse was piling up between town and township. Load shedding and poorly maintained electrical infrastructure led to frequent power cuts. While I was there, one electrical fault caused both a power cut and a wildfire.

How did I come to feel I belonged in a place so unlike home? First there were divine appointments. Some encounters were planned, and some were purely and simply God's unexpected extras. Soon after my arrival I received a warm welcome from the Bishop of Grahamstown. Early one morning when it was barely light and I could scarcely find my way between the college accommodation and the cathedral, I came across the verger, who welcomed me and led me to Morning Prayer. Within a week of arriving, I was delighted to be greeted by name in the street by a runner. There were so many of these key moments that created a sense of belonging.



I was assigned to a formation group at COTT, sharing in their chapel duties and sitting with them for meals. I joined in meetings of the cathedral and student ministry teams and prayed and served alongside them. There was a sense of partnership in life and gospel.

People's generous gifts of time and conversation allowed me to discover much in a short time. Tours of the cathedral, town, and local history museum and browsing local newspapers and the internet all helped me gain some understanding and build connections. I was inspired by finding a connection with Coventry, where I lived in the 1990s: both the cathedral and the college displayed a cross of nails signifying affiliation to the Community of the Cross of Nails, Coventry Cathedral's international ministry of peace, justice and reconciliation.

Despite vastly different contexts, there was the same desire to see transformation through gospel living. The cathedral prepared weekly food parcels for families in need and a township church ran a school feeding programme. I shadowed the Archdeacon of Grahamstown at a gathering marking the start of a stakeholder coalition to create sustainable economic solutions for the city co-chaired by the Rector of COTT. The cathedral opened its doors to the Rhodes University 'Breaking the silence' campaign against gender-based violence. A priest (who was also the deputy head of a primary school) shared a story of drawing teenage girls back into church by wearing trousers herself to fight a dress code that was keeping them away. The cathedral student ministry empowered young adults to lead and serve, benefitting the wider church as they would graduate and disperse.

In Makhanda I freely received in God's people the gift of welcome through a generous sharing of lives and ministry. Recognising how this happens equips us to give that same sense of belonging and feeling at home to others who might have found the pandemic has pressed the life reset button. We can offer encounter, inclusion and connections as they tentatively set sail on the unfamiliar waters of faith. ■



Within a week of arriving, I was delighted to be greeted by name in the street...

USPG VOLUNTEER

ANDREW WINGATE



The Rev'd Canon Andrew Wingate

“You only need to look at the testimonies of those who go on the Journey With Us programme to see how transformational mission trips can be”, says Andrew. “If you’re considering going on a mission trip with USPG, I would say go for it!”.

The Rev'd Canon Andrew Wingate OBE has been engaged with the world church from an early age - his father was a priest in the Church of England, having previously served in the Royal Navy. “My father was a man concerned with global affairs and this had a lasting influence on me. Through my father’s work, I was brought up to engage with not just the local church, but the wider, world church”, he recalls.

Andrew’s commitment to the world church grew deeper during his studies at the University of Oxford. “I became a supporter of the Universities’ Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). After graduation, I worked as a curate in Birmingham, and during this time I felt called to work overseas”, he says. Andrew and his wife subsequently travelled to South India through USPG, which had since come into existence as a merger of the UMCA and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). He taught at the Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary in Mandurai, South India. “That’s where I learnt more than anywhere else. I learnt so much about faith from my students as I encouraged them to be involved in the wider church”, Andrew recalls.

After eight years at the Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary, Andrew and his family returned to Birmingham. He soon became a faculty member at Queen’s College, Birmingham. Subsequently, he became Principal of the College of the Ascension, which was sponsored by USPG. “I mirrored some of the opportunities that I had in India to enable students to take a full part in the mission of the church, not just within churches but throughout the city”. “We became partners, colleagues from all around the world – there must have been people from 15 to 20 different countries in each year group”, Andrew recalls. He

remains in touch with colleagues and students from his time at the College of the Ascension: “We still reminisce about it all, and how special it was for all of us, even though we’re now spread out all over the world”.

In 2006, Andrew moved to Leicester to establish St Philip’s Centre, an organisation focused on “study and engagement in a multi-faith society”. The centre works with churches, schools and community institutions to “create lasting relationships that help those serving their communities”. Andrew also served as Canon Theologian of Leicester Cathedral, preaching and providing theological reflection for Diocesan staff.

Andrew has recently fostered links with the Diocese of Europe, through which he has been on placements to Norway, Denmark and Sweden. He has led group trips to Turkey, as well as trips within the UK to Greater Manchester and Yorkshire. “We took a group of 22 people, visiting holy places such as Ephesus and Konya (a pilgrimage site for Sufi Muslims, where the tomb of Rumi is located). I’ll always believe that journeying together is the best way to learn from each other about faith and community”.

As a result of his experiences across the world and within the UK, Andrew has written several books on multifaith relations, including ‘Encounter in the Spirit: Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Practice’, ‘The Meeting of Opposites?’, ‘Why Interfaith?’ and ‘Celebrating Difference, Staying Faithful: How to Live in a Multi-Faith World’. Now based in Brighton, Andrew is a Trustee of Voices in Exile, a Sussex-based charity that offers practical support to refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants within the local area. He is also an Interfaith Advisor for the Diocese of Chichester, having previously done this with the Dioceses of Leicester and Birmingham.

Remarking on what makes USPG different from other mission-oriented organisations, Andrew reflects, “when the name changed from United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to United Society Partners in the Gospel, that said a great deal – partnership is at the centre of what USPG does”. He adds, “partnership is not a distraction for USPG, it is vital to the organisation’s approach. USPG has a broad idea of mission rather than a narrow one”. Andrew has passed on the global outlook he inherited from his father to the next generation, with his son Matthew currently working as the International Rescue Committee’s Country Director for Tanzania. ■

A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES

By Ana and Shehani

Gender refers to the sociological construction of characteristics that we associate with women and men. It differs from sex, which refers to a person's biological and physical status. Gender is often used as the basis of discrimination and abuse or as a reason for people to be treated differently from each other. There are many perspectives on gender from different cultural, social and economic contexts. Here, we consider gender justice in Sri Lankan plantation communities.



There is an ancient Chinese proverb that says 'a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step'. Likewise, the path to gender equality starts at home, within the family unit. In the Sri Lankan plantation community, girls receive lots of advice from relatives and community leaders regarding how to behave, how to dress and how to look once they have reached adolescence. Some of this advice is welcome, helping girls to navigate cultural issues around wearing appropriate clothing but some advice may also limit a girl's expectations of what she can achieve in the future, encouraging her to focus on her appearance rather than what she can contribute to society.

Everyone has a right to education, irrespective of their gender. Plantation schools provide education for both sexes and they are given equal opportunities to engage with learning opportunities and physical activities at school. Sri Lanka is the only country in South Asia to have already achieved the United Nations' Millennium Development Goal for gender equality at all levels of education. However, a girl's education is often limited, as she is expected to marry at a young age. Girls are often encouraged to focus on finding a husband, rather than concentrating on schoolwork and educational development. This focus on marriage often means that girls are unable to finish their education, staying at home or going work instead. This approach to education is common in the plantation community.

Employment in Sri Lanka is predominantly in either the public sector, in the civil service or agencies run by the state, or in the private sector. Within these sectors, there are equal employment opportunities and salary scales for men and women. However, only 35.9% of women in Sri Lanka are employed. Social and cultural factors play a defining role in determining women's inclusion in the Sri Lankan labour market. These cultural constraints primarily stem from negative attitudes towards women's work as well as societal perceptions of women's roles and responsibilities. These cultural norms negatively influence a woman's decision to pursue gainful employment opportunities and limit her occupational choice and earning capacity.

Gender inequality also impacts the quality of healthcare that Sri Lankan women receive. Women and girls face specific health risks that men do not, such as unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Sri Lanka has free healthcare for all and very low levels of maternal mortality. However, cultural norms often prevent Sri Lankan women from receiving the same quality of healthcare as men. In families with both a son and a daughter, the son's health is often prioritised over the daughter's and cultural rather than legal factors stand in the way of gender equality in access to healthcare.

Sri Lanka has the highest rate of sexual harassment in South Asia. One in every four women in Sri Lanka has experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. Furthermore, one of out every three Sri Lankan men admits to having carried out an act of sexual or physical violence against a woman. The Sri Lankan government has made efforts to prevent gender-based violence, passing The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act and The National Action Plan to Address Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. However, this legislation is insufficient to tackle sexual violence within communities, as many perpetrators of rape and sexual violence are partners or relatives of the victim.

Gender equality means equal access to opportunities and resources for everyone, regardless of their gender. To prevent gender discrimination and reverse gender inequality, we are called to ensure that basic human rights are universally protected. In our fight for gender equality, we consider these words from Nelson Mandela: 'freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all kinds of oppression'. ■



One in every four women in Sri Lanka has experienced physical or sexual abuse.

THE ORDINATION AND MINISTRY OF LI TIM OI

By Philip L Wickeri



Photos: Christina Rees of the Li Tim Oi Foundation.

The ordination to the priesthood of Florence Li Tim Oi (1907-1992) in 1944 was an extraordinary event. She became the first woman priest in the Anglican Communion, and her ordination was controversial from its inception.

Whilst Li Tim Oi was not the first apparently ordained woman in China, she may have been the first in a main-line denomination and she became an icon in the movement for the ordination of women in the Anglican Communion from the 1970s. Importantly, she was certainly the first in a church that maintained the apostolic succession and the historic episcopacy.

We should remember Li Tim Oi herself, because her pioneering role and the context in which she ministered, are often neglected in the interpretation of her priesthood. The ordination of Li Tim Oi was a significant event in the

process leading to the ordination of women in the Anglican Communion.

The Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui (CHSKH) - the Anglican Church in China at this time - was, by the 1920s, ahead of the Church of England in its thinking about women in ministry. In China, women were permitted to lead prayer, and deaconesses could preach and assist in the sacraments at church services. It may have been that the Chinese churches were short of priests and lay leaders, and so they were forced by circumstances beyond their control to give women more authority and responsibility.

Li Tim Oi grew up in an Anglican family. She graduated from secondary school in 1934 and later worked at a primary school for the children of those who fished for a living. She began a full course of study at Union Theological College and received her diploma in 1938. By 1940, Bishop Mok (sic) decided to put her in

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF WOMEN IN ORDAINED MINISTRY

charge of the congregation in Macau. This was a big responsibility because she would be the only Anglican pastor in the territory and in the immediate vicinity of Guangdong. After a year, Bishop Mok suggested that she be made a deaconess. She was ordained by Bishop Hall through the laying on of hands at St. John's Cathedral, Hong Kong on Ascension Day.

By 1941, Macau was a city teeming with refugees and people from all over China and many parts of the world. Li Tim Oi served this parish from 1940 to the end of 1946. As a deaconess, she conducted services for a growing congregation that included Chinese, Westerners, and Eurasians, most of them displaced people. She also worked with refugees, did evangelistic and educational work with young people, and sought government help in purchasing rice for needy parish members. In the words of one biographer, "She was a priest in all but name." By everyone's account, she was warmly received and strongly supported by the parish members in Macau, who apparently had no difficulty accepting a woman in ministry. Li Tim Oi did not put herself forward for ordination. She was told that she would be ordained.

It became close to impossible for priests for Hong Kong to go to Macau with the fall of Hong Kong in December 1941. The inability to have regular Eucharistic services for the Anglican parish at Morrison Chapel, Macau became an immediate factor in the move by Bishop Hall to ordain Li Tim Oi. After her ordination to the priesthood, Bishop Hall spoke of the immediate context of her ordination in in May 1946. He said,

"It was on his last journey through Macau to the interior that Bishop Mok authorized Pastor Lee Tim Oi to celebrate the Lord's supper. When I later ordained her to the priesthood, I was confirming what Bishop Mok had begun. I do not think that we need to be surprised that the ordination of women to the ministry of our Church should come first in China; nor surprised that it should be a Cantonese bishop, caring for the spiritual needs of the Cantonese people, who took the first step..."

Opposition to Bishop Hall's action in ordaining a woman priest continued and grew and was ultimately discussed at a meeting of the CHSKH House of Bishops in Shanghai in in February 1946. After considerable debate, the bishops voted to repudiate Hall's decision, although at least four Chinese bishops stood with him. Li Tim Oi later agreed to resign in writing to

Bishop Hall stating:

"According to the rule of the Anglican Church that there is no women can become an ordained priest, I think it is right time for me to resign, especially the war is over now. Actually, it is an old church prejudice... Anyhow, this new rule can be passed sooner or later because women' movement becomes more active than before."

On Ascension Day, five years after she became deaconess and some two years and four months after she was ordained priest, Li celebrated her last Eucharist at Morrison Chapel. Later that summer, Li wrote:

"The Bishop came to Macau and explained to the congregation about the uncanonical of the ordination of a women as a priest. What a great shock to them! On the very day after the Bishop had gone back to Hong Kong, some of the congregation came to see me particularly to comfort me. Some of the lady Church members came to see me with a sore heart, with tears in their eyes and they raised so many questions. They said that when Christ was in the world, he was very kind to women. Why does the Church not carry out the spirit of Christ? What does the Church represent?"

Bishop Mok Shau Tsang's licensing and Bishop Hall's ordination of Li Tim Oi were courageous, prophetic and pastoral acts. Li Tim Oi has rightly been hailed as a forerunner in the movement for women's ordination. Her spiritual and physical strength as a priest were evident in her work and in her retirement. She was humble in her ministry. She never asked to be ordained, as either a deacon or priest. Things were done to her, for this was the way in which she, as a woman, experienced the Anglican Church.

Li Tim Oi's suffering at the hands of the Church and its laws reflects the suffering of women in the Church through the ages. Florence Li Tim Oi reminds us that the person – and her community – are always more important than the institution or the office.

Li Tim Oi had her priestly orders restored in 1971, when the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau was the first in the Anglican Communion to allow the ordination of women to the priesthood. Li Tim Oi's legacy is remembered in the work of the Li Tim-Oi Foundation (www.ltof.org.uk/)

USPG is grateful to Philip L Wickeri for permission to publish edited extracts of his original article in *Christian Women in Chinese Society, The Anglican Story*. ■



It became close to impossible for priests for Hong Kong to go to Macau with the fall of Hong Kong in December 1941.

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