



OPEN TO ENCOUNTER

Mission in the 21st century

USPG[†]

USPG is the Anglican mission agency,
founded in 1701, that partners churches and
communities worldwide in God's mission to
enliven faith, strengthen relationships, unlock
potential and champion justice.

Cover: Village leader and his
grandson, Diocese of Durgapur,
North India. USPG/Leah Gordon



Woman praying at the Church of Hope,
Asrapur, Diocese of Amritsar, North India.
USPG/Leah Gordon



USPG celebration at All Saints
Margaret Street, London.
USPG/Leah Gordon

FOREWORD



Photo: The Office of the Archbishop of York

I warmly welcome this booklet as heralding a new era for USPG. At the heart of this is USPG's determination to rethink mission, energise the Church and community and champion justice which are its three strategic aims.

At the same time, it's important to recognise that USPG has a crucial role in God's mission as a catalyst, helping the Anglican Churches of Britain and Ireland engage with the worldwide Anglican Communion. USPG has made a significant contribution to the worldwide mission over its 318-year

history since its foundation by the Revd Dr Thomas Bray in 1701 right up to the present. Through the faithful witness of so many missionaries over the centuries, USPG has helped to bring the Gospel to so many parts of the world and has also shown to us what we can learn and receive as a gift from the worldwide church.

May God bless you richly in the next 300 years of your ministry!

The Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu, The Lord Archbishop of York

INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation. Turbulent global politics. Gender injustice. The desperate flight of migrants. Forced displacement of people at record levels. USPG believes today's major challenges cry out for words and actions that express a love and solidarity that goes beyond narrow self-interest and national boundaries.

In the pages of this booklet you will find an account of USPG's strategic direction and an invitation to encounter the riches and diversity of the worldwide Anglican Communion. This is an invitation to explore with us the role of mission in the 21st century. This is an invitation to go beyond your comfort zone, as Jesus did, to meet people of different cultures and to stand with the marginalised and dispossessed. This is an invitation to join us on the journey

towards being a more globally aware, inter-cultural Christian.

At a time when the loveless creed "might is right" seems triumphant, we believe the churches of the Anglican Communion are called urgently in mission to be communities of resistance and hope, witness to the healing power of Christ's love.

Whether you come to USPG as a church leader, a member of a congregation or as an inquiring individual, we hope you'll be open to this being the beginning of an ongoing relationship and the beginning of many reciprocal, transforming encounters with our neighbours, our brothers and sisters across the globe.



Choir at St Andrew's Church, Glenview,
Harare, Zimbabwe. USPG/Leah Gordon

A COMPLEX HISTORY

1701

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) was founded by the Revd Dr Thomas Bray. SPG sent priests and schoolteachers to America to minister to the colonists and take the message of the gospel to enslaved Africans and native Americans. During the 18th century SPG's activities expanded into the West Indies, Canada, Australia and West Africa.

1710

SPG accepted the bequest of a Barbadian slave plantation beginning a deeply shameful episode in the Society's history. The enslaved were not emancipated until 1834.

1736-37

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, served as an SPG missionary in America.

1766

Philip Quaque, the first African to be ordained in the Church of England, arrived on the Gold Coast, serving as an SPG missionary priest and teacher until 1816.

1820-1900

Pastoral ministry and educational work among indigenous people began to take priority over care of colonists and SPG sent missionaries to more than 50 countries including India, South Africa, Malaysia, Myanmar, China, Swaziland, Japan, Korea and Zimbabwe.

1965

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel united with the Universities' Mission to Central Africa to form The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG). The Cambridge Mission to Delhi joined USPG in 1968.

“USPG were close allies with us during the apartheid years, providing a link between parishes in South Africa and Britain so that together we could share information and pray about our common concerns. USPG helped our fellow Christians to keep faith with us through those difficult years. They helped us know that we were not alone.”

The Most Revd Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town

1895-1905

A number of radically-minded SPG missionaries, dubbed “atheists of the Empire”, began work: Roland Allen in China (1895), Arthur Cripps in Mashonaland (Zimbabwe) from 1900 and C.F. Andrews in India (1904). All were highly critical of British imperialism, empowered local people and nurtured indigenous leadership and nationalist sentiment. They inspired radicals within the next generation of church leaders, including Bishop Trevor Huddleston.

1877

The Cambridge Mission to Delhi (CMD), inspired by Cambridge theologian B.F. Westcott, led to the development of two Anglican communities there: the Brotherhood of the Ascension and St Stephen’s Community for women. St Stephen’s Hospital and St Stephen’s College became important Indian institutions.

1857

David Livingstone issued a challenge in his lectures in Oxford and Cambridge that led to the formation of the Universities’ Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). At the heart of its work was opposition to the East African slave trade and it went on to make a major contribution to the fight against leprosy. By the early 20th century, the UMCA had established the church in Central Africa across modern day Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia.

1856

Sarah Coombes, the first single SPG woman missionary, arrives in North Borneo.

2016

Following four years in which it was known as ‘Us’ (the United Society), USPG returns as – **United Society Partners in the Gospel**.

2000

USPG played a key role in the international campaign *Jubilee 2000* aimed at cancelling debt amongst the poorest countries of the world. *Jubilee 2000*’s co-founder Bill Peters was USPG’s Chair and a driving force.

1970s & 1980s

USPG took a leading role in support of the church and people of South Africa during the apartheid era.

“USPG’s vocation today involves wrestling with our history and journeying towards redemption where that is possible.”

The Revd Duncan Dormor,
General Secretary of USPG

THREE STRATEGIC AIMS

10



Rethinking Mission

We bring people together from different parts of the global church in mutually enriching conversation and profound encounters, to increase understanding and deepen our discipleship as inter-cultural Christians.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God. Romans 12:2



Energising Church and Community

We make connections between the dioceses and communities of the Churches of Britain and Ireland and those of Anglican churches overseas and we seek ways in which faith and action can go hand-in-hand. We look to strengthen the unity and capacity of the Anglican church by promoting education and leadership and by learning from each other in rich exchange.

**I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.
John 10:10**



Championing Justice

We accompany churches of the Anglican Communion in their struggles against injustices associated with gender, climate change, migration, the human rights of indigenous people and inter-religious living. We support Christians across the world to form communities of hope and resistance and we strive to give a platform to the faithful among those with power in the secular world.

**But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness.
Matthew 6:33**



Women cooking for AIDS
orphans, Masvingo, Zimbabwe.
All photos: USPG/Leah Gordon

DUNCAN DORMOR, GENERAL SECRETARY OF USPG, TALKS TO JUSTINA KEHINDE, WRITER, PERFORMANCE ARTIST AND DIRECTOR.



The Revd Duncan Dormor became General Secretary of USPG in January 2018. He is an Anglican priest, published author, teacher and public speaker. Justina Kehinde is a director, writer and performance artist. Passionate about telling unheard stories, in 2017/18 she wrote and directed her first original play UMUADA, an exploration of mental health, migration and motherhood in the urban African diaspora. UMUADA premiered at the Bunker Theatre before headlining the King's Head Theatre's Play Mill Festival.

What is USPG?

USPG – United Society Partners in the Gospel – is the mission agency of the Anglican Church. We exist to share, alongside others, in God's saving, redemptive, transforming mission for the world.

USPG was founded in 1701 so we've got a complex history tied up with British imperialism and colonial rule. We're constantly alive to that difficult legacy and take very seriously the role USPG now finds itself in as a result. We're right at the heart of the worldwide Anglican Communion - the third largest group of Christians in the world with 85 million Anglicans, mostly in the global south. We engage in the mission of local churches as they seek to serve their communities including people of all faiths and none.

What does mission mean to you and what role does it have in today's society?

Mission is intrinsic to being a Christian. If you believe in the unconditional love of God for you and the command to love your neighbour, you're going to want to spread that by reaching out to others in love and compassion. Jesus reached out in healing, teaching, and challenging people, and he talked about the Kingdom of God as being a place of justice, righteousness and peace.

That's what USPG is about – loving our neighbour and working for justice and peace. And in today's inter-connected world, that has to mean *globally*.

So what does USPG's work look like in practice?

In a way, USPG doesn't have any work. We're there to facilitate and accompany

“We’re right at the heart of the worldwide Anglican Communion”

local churches across the world with *their* priorities. We travel, we listen deeply, we form relationships of trust and honesty and we hold a lot of conversations, bringing church leaders, bishops and archbishops together from across the world to learn from and strengthen each other – and the Anglican Communion.

Much of the work of the churches we accompany addresses the major injustices of the world today associated with gender, climate, migration, the human rights of indigenous people and inter-religious living.

I'm impressed by how forthright USPG is in talking about its colonial past, but how do you reconcile the fact that it played a part in the oppression of Empire with your work now?

Christians have to be tough-minded, ruthlessly honest and constantly alert to how power – institutional, societal, personal – corrupts. So yes, we must acknowledge the wrongs of our past. For example, very early in its history, the Society received a bequest of a slave plantation in Barbados. It sought to be a “good” slave owner but of course that makes no sense whatsoever.

On the other hand, there have been vehemently anti-colonial missionaries with a truly radical vision who spoke out for the people they were serving in defiance of their English contemporaries and, at times, the Society itself. And the Universities’ Mission to Central Africa, was founded in 1858 in part to tackle the slave trade in East Africa.

Today, supporting those affected by human-trafficking, modern slavery and exploitation is an essential part of the work of the church world-wide.

Do you think the word “mission” can be reclaimed or is it so weighed down that it’s irreconcilable and we need to leave it in the past?

“Mission” has been widely adopted by the secular world. Everyone has a mission statement these days! So that’s ok. But “missionary” is more problematic. Historically, it has implied people from *here* going to do good to people over *there*. Cultural imperialism. USPG doesn’t send missionaries any more. But what I am keen on is genuinely mutual exchange. So, with our *Exchanging Places*, a “South to South” programme we enable churches to respond to need by sharing people in



Duncan Dormor.
Photo: Dumbletons Photography

mission. Currently, we only have a small number of such exchanges, for example between Cape Coast and the Gambia, and Ghana and Morocco, but in future, I would love to see more.

Your new strategy for USPG encourages Christians to be “open to encounter, to being renewed”. You talk about Jesus reaching beyond the most obvious inner circles of his world to engage with, find faith in, and even be surprised by others who were different or on the margins of society – the Syro-Phoenician woman (Mark 7:24-30), the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-26), the Roman Centurion (Matthew 8:5-15). But how do you promote inter-cultural encounters that allow different cultural identities to be celebrated while avoiding oppression and subjugation?

It's fascinating that Jesus Christ himself is changed by encounters with people beyond the Jewish faith. So from the New Testament onwards, Christianity has “mission” at its heart. But it teaches us that if we are to truly reach out to

others in God's name, we are not simply giving a message, we're uncovering and releasing something of God's love that transforms both parties. I find when I go to different parts of the world and meet Christians from different cultures and contexts, I am humbled, challenged, and a little “undone”, unravelled as a person. That's as it should be.

How can we make sure we do inter-cultural relations well? For me, I think we discover who we truly are through “the other”, through our experience of difference. So, the key Christian virtue is humility, a genuine openness to others and an acceptance that every culture brings something new to what it means to be a Christian. This involves conversations about substantial challenges. We do this in a very real way through our relationship with the Asian Theological Academy which brings Christians from different parts of Asia into dialogue. Inevitably, being in a religious minority as a Christian is a common topic.

“...how do you promote inter-cultural encounters that allow different cultural identities to be celebrated while avoiding oppression and subjugation?”

So *Rethinking Mission* is the essence of USPG?

Paul in *Romans 12* talks about not being conformed to this world but being transformed by the renewing of your mind. That talks about power. There are various things in this world which push you in certain directions: money, self-interest, vested interests. Being faithful as Christians means being prepared to push back, challenge and be transformed. To do that involves reflecting and rethinking. And the rate of change and the pressing challenges we all face mean that there is a particularly urgent Christian imperative to be more aware than ever of global issues, and that's why USPG is rethinking mission with renewed vigour. It's fundamental.

What else is USPG going to be prioritising from now on?

After *Rethinking Mission*, the other two pillars of our new strategy are *Energising Church and Community* and *Championing Justice*.

Energising Church centres on two things. The first is making connections between dioceses and church communities in Britain and Ireland and those overseas. Those British and Irish churches that are most open to encounter, open to global Christianity, are also better at reaching out to people from different backgrounds in their own communities. We also need to help people understand a way of being Anglican that goes beyond Englishness. The second is working with churches across the world in ways that genuinely strengthen the bonds of



Justina Kehinde.
Photo: Liz Woodroffe

“I want to see USPG supporting churches worldwide, joining up their conversations, providing a platform, amplifying their voices and taking the faith agenda to the UN, to the World Bank and the other big players.”

affection and capacity of the Anglican Church. We work alongside Provinces on *their* priorities.

Championing Justice is about having a holistic view of faith which takes human dignity and agency seriously, that strives for what we call the Kingdom or Reign of God. Across the world Christians are forming communities of hope and resistance that stand with the disenfranchised and marginalised; that call out injustice. We seek to stand in solidarity with them. We need to remind the secular West that faith has an important role to play on the world stage. I want to see USPG supporting churches worldwide, joining up their conversations, providing a platform, amplifying their voices and taking the faith agenda to the UN, to the World Bank and the other big players.

When it comes to specific projects USPG supports, how do you choose? Is it about the big issues of justice or energising the community? Or do you respond to priorities coming from the ground?

If you look across our website you think, wow! they're engaged with quite a variety of things. That's because we follow the priorities set by local churches. For the Church of North India it's their anti-human trafficking project that's a priority. In other parts of the Communion the emphasis is on tackling environmental damage or, in Zimbabwe reducing the stigma of HIV and AIDS and bringing people back into community, welcomed and accepted.

But there are common threads across the globe. The big issues bubble up everywhere. There's domestic violence

in the UK as well as in India; there are refugees in Calais, Greece, North Africa, Asia; there's a need to support clergy and lay leadership throughout the Communion. I'd love to see USPG bringing people together more and generating deeper, louder conversations in the future – taking the big issues to the world from a Christian perspective.

Why is USPG relevant when there are organisations like Tearfund, Christian Aid and Oxfam doing good work all over the world?

Other NGOs and charities, even the Christian ones, don't strengthen the local churches as we do. They tend to go in, do a project, evaluate it, and try not to create dependency, but it can be hard for them not to deprive local people of their autonomy. What's fundamentally different about USPG is that we are

“...the act of giving should transform the donor as well as the recipient.”

seeking to support, accompany, encourage and be alongside local churches in *their* work. It's a *with*, not a *for*. Like the vine and branches imagery in the Gospel of John, our relationship with the worldwide church is organic.

In practical terms that means we often enable church leadership development, education and clergy training. Where appropriate, we demonstrate solidarity in person. For example, USPG visited a bishop in the Philippines unjustly imprisoned while refusing to leave the side of an arrested peace consultant. Our visit brought international attention and it encouraged the local church to know that we were there with them.

How does USPG approach fundraising and looking at the politics of money and where it goes?

A lot of our money comes from individuals. A lot from churches. In all cases, we guard against asking for it by depicting people in ways that take away their dignity, agency or autonomy just because that tugs at people's heartstrings.

Equally the power dynamics. Giving can make people think “I have power to make a change therefore I have power over you”, rather than using their power to align with others.

Absolutely. Gifts bring obligations and they bring relationships. For us, it's important that donors understand we are a Christian mission agency, that we're about personal transformation, and that means the act of giving should transform the donor as well as the recipient. It takes time, effort and relationship to understand a donor's vision and for them

to understand ours. But it's important. Resource and vision have to go together, otherwise you are corrupting what it is you're striving to achieve.

I'm inspired by what you're doing and I want to support in some way. What can I do to get involved and to get my community involved?

The first step is to be open to encounter and to put yourself a little bit beyond your usual comfort zone. Come and meet USPG at our conferences, or at festivals, or invite one of our speakers to your church. If you're really adventurous, you could volunteer for our placement scheme, *Journey with Us*, and experience the world church at first hand. But even reading this booklet and talking about what it means to be a global Christian with your friends would be a great start.

Ordination service at the 150th
anniversary of the Diocese of Upper
Shire, Malawi. USPG/Leah Gordon



“USPG played a key role in the foundation of the worldwide Anglican Communion alongside CMS. Today, I warmly welcome USPG’s commitment to developing mutually enriching partnerships between churches within the global Anglican family.”

The Most Revd Dr Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon
Secretary General of the Anglican Communion

ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

“...the Bishop of Toliara visited a parish to perform a christening, and a week later five of the children that had been christened had died due to a lack of food and drinking water.”

20

USPG is in a unique position to capture first-hand experience of climate change injustice from church leaders around the globe and to share these stories as catalysts to action.

In Polynesia the church teaches “moana theology”, a conviction that God cares for all things, and that the waves, tides and ocean currents are metaphors for God’s love and for the interconnectedness of the environment.

The Rt Revd Apimeleki Qiliho, Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Polynesia, believes: “As members of the Anglican Communion and appointed guardians

and stewards of the environment we have a responsibility to act...the onus is on us to honour our commitment to God.”

From Madagascar, the Rt Revd Samitiana Razafindralambo Jhonson, Assistant Bishop of Toliara, reports: “The most obvious experience of climate change is how unusual it is to have so many cyclones. During the hot season we now have three or four cyclones each year. Not only is the number increasing but so is their speed and strength.

“At the same time, because the temperature is also rising, the south

part of the island is becoming drier. The drought is critical and has led to famine. Last November, the Bishop of Toliara visited a parish to perform a christening, and a week later five of the children that had been christened had died due to a lack of food and drinking water.

“We need to be globally aware and to think deeply on behalf of communities where climate change is life-destroying. We need to listen to each other as one community and learn from each other’s strengths and weaknesses so that we may rebuild lives and face climate change together.”



Archbishop Winston Halapua standing in the middle of Pangaimotu, an island off Tonga, which 10 months earlier was dry land and where sea water is also causing long-term damage to the trees. USPG/Naomi Herbert

COUNCIL OF ANGLICAN PROVINCES OF AFRICA

“A new social order is possible for Africa. It can be done, it must be done, because if it is not done, we shall be done.”

22

The Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa - CAPA, unifies, strengthens and gives a platform to the churches of 12 Anglican Provinces across 25 African countries. Through leadership training, theological education and advocacy, it empowers these churches to play an active part in struggles against human trafficking and migration, child protection and gender-based violence and to be a strong voice in inter-religious and intercultural dialogue.

USPG supports CAPA's capacity building programme and collaborates in its work to eradicate modern slavery. Last year, USPG accompanied two members of

the Church of England Youth Council to a CAPA Youth Congress, an experience that proved how much the rest of the world can learn from the energy and commitment of CAPA.

The congress brought together young people from all over Africa and urged them to become church, community, business and political leaders, filling the gaps left by a middle-aged generation decimated by HIV and AIDs and war.

Shakeel Nurmahi, Chair of the Church of England Youth Council, reflected: “The African church owned their African identity and brought it to their

expression of their Christian faith, as God would want of them. I need to continue to ask what I bring with me to the Anglican Church and know that God's call to me demands all of me – my culture, my background, my experiences, and everything else.”

Bishop Zac Niringiye from Uganda said at the Congress: “Radical happiness, radical witness, radical praying: why – because this is radical living. Not fundamentalism. A new social order is possible for Africa. It can be done, it must be done, because if it is not done, we shall be done.”

Young church-goers, Chirhu,
Zimbabwe. USPG/Leah Gordon



Idomeni informal refugee camp, Macedonia
border, Greece. USPG/Leah Gordon



CHAPLAIN IN CALAIS



The Revd Canon Kirrilee Reid on Calais beach, France. USPG/Rebecca Boardman

“This is where the church needs to be, right at the forefront of meeting the physical needs and providing spiritual support for those in trauma and facing an uncertain future.”

Working with people on the move is a key priority for many Anglican churches across the world.

In 2018, USPG supported the appointment of a Chaplain and Refugee Projects Officer in Pas-de-Calais (France). The Revd Canon Kirrilee Reid is the first priest to hold this new post, which is the outcome of a partnership between the Diocese in Europe, the Diocese of Canterbury and USPG.

“Around 2015, I found myself really challenged as a priest preaching a message of caring for the needy and the outcast. I reached a point where I couldn't preach it anymore. I had to live it.”

Now in Calais, Kirrilee is part of an ecumenical effort pushing for a more co-ordinated approach to caring for

migrants and their families on both sides of the English Channel.

“As many as three times a week, the refugees' makeshift camps are dismantled and possessions confiscated. All they want to do is work and be productive members of society but instead they're constantly having to move on to try to find a safe place to sleep, a safe place to be.

“This is where the church needs to be, right at the forefront of meeting the physical needs and providing spiritual support for those in trauma and facing an uncertain future.”

HUMAN RIGHTS AND STANDING WITH CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES

“Thank you USPG for calling the worldwide church to pray for Bishop Carlo and his family and to lobby for his immediate release.”

The Most Revd Rhee Timbang, Head of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente

26

The Philippines is the fifth most mineral-rich country in the world but its indigenous people are among the most marginalised. The Lumad who comprise 61% of the indigenous population struggle against state-sponsored violence, bomb attacks, school closures and forced displacement from ancestral land. Destructive mining and aggressive business enterprises are devastating their traditional culture which is focused on a deep respect for the environment.

Since 2000, hundreds of peacemakers have been killed including bishops, church workers, journalists, lawyers,

human rights campaigners, students and rural farmers.

USPG invites churches in Britain and Ireland to join them in standing in solidarity with the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) and the Episcopal Church of the Philippines (ECP). These churches are engaging in non-violent protests to highlight socio-economic injustice and IFI members live alongside Lumad communities to provide a protective presence.

In summer 2018, two IFI priests received death threats. They had opposed mining

in their parishes and founded the group People's Solidarity Against Large-Scale Mining in the Province of Ilocos Norte. One of them said: "They want to silence us because we are amplifying the cry of the poor against social injustice."

In May 2017, Bishop Carlo Morales of Ozamiz Diocese (IFI) was unjustly arrested while refusing to leave the side of a peace consultant who had been wrongfully arrested. He was imprisoned for over 300 days before temporary release. His case is not resolved.

Bishop Carlo Morales (back centre)
in Ozamiz City Jail, Mindanao, the
Philippines. Photo: IFI



HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY



“By this time my husband had left again. I put my daughter in the Safe House because there was no one to look after us. I don’t even have a place to live.”

USPG supports the Durgapur Diocese of the Church of North India with its Anti Human Trafficking Programme. In this and other areas of extreme poverty, people move in search of work, increasing their vulnerability to being trafficked into slavery.

“I live in a remote village. My husband went to another state to work. I had no news of him for months. Then staff from Anti Human Trafficking (AHT) helped me file a case in the police station. With the help of the police we were able to locate him and he returned home. But

once he was home, he was jobless. There was no work in our village; no harvest to reap either for a landlord. We were starving. Then AHT staff told me about the Safe House. By this time my husband had left again. I put my daughter in the Safe House because there was no one to look after us. I don’t even have a place to live. I stay in my brother-in-law’s house and work as a maid in other people’s houses. My daughter is going to school now. But my struggles are not over yet. I struggle every day to survive.”



Relatives of missing people from the
Diocese of Durgapur, North India
All photos: USPG/Leah Gordon

“In most parts of the world, you cannot advance human rights and development goals without understanding the importance of faith to the people you are trying to help. USPG keeps politicians and policy-makers alive to the faith dimension and stands firm for compassionate people-centred outcomes.”

Dr. Azza Karam, senior advisor on social and cultural development
at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Nancy Canete and her children from Lula, an indigenous village affected by local mining, Southern Philippines. USPG/Leah Gordon





A community court at the Mahila Panchayat Women's Empowerment Centre, Seemapuri, Delhi. All photos: USPG/Leah Gordon

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT COUNCILS



‘...the Councils’ success is that women in the community are witnesses to proceedings and can engage, monitor and verify whether rulings are being upheld.’

USPG is opposed to all forms of discrimination and one of the many projects it enables is the Women’s Helpline in Delhi. Run by the Delhi Brotherhood, an outward-looking monastic order, it operates a 24-hour helpline and hosts weekly Women’s Empowerment Councils where 50 to 100 women might come, often with their offending partners or in-laws, to seek justice and guidance from a community court of trained and elderly women. Of the cases, 80-85% are resolved but staff also help women go to the police when they need to.

Though not a formal part of the legal system, the Women’s Councils have the support of the local government and provide an opportunity for communities to resolve local disputes without the need for fines, court fees or

imprisonments that further impoverish families.

One of the reasons for the Councils’ success is that women in the community are witnesses to proceedings and can engage, monitor and verify whether rulings are being upheld.

The Councils are an example of inter-faith co-operation. While the Delhi Brotherhood is a Christian organisation, the Councils involve Hindus, Muslims and Christians. There is no discrimination according to faith.

MORE FOR GIRLS IN MALAWI

“We need to support women all the way until the goal of equality is achieved in all spheres of life, education and property ownership”

Half of Malawi's population live below the poverty line, a quarter of the population survive on one meagre meal a day and 11% of adults are living with HIV. USPG has been active in Malawi since 1882 and today it supports the Anglican Church of Malawi Community Integrated Intervention (ACMCII) programme.

Working at parish level amongst the most needy, the programme addresses education for girls, protecting livelihoods, management of the environment, and hygiene and sanitation and has an across-the-board focus on gender equality, HIV and AIDS.

The church draws local government, media, health institutions and Mothers' Union groups together to help communities build their own capabilities and realise their potential.

“The church is encouraging communities to find solutions to problems using local resources,” said Tamara Khisimisi, Anglican Church of Malawi Community Integrated Intervention Programme Co-ordinator.

Solutions promoting rural livelihoods include table banking, where groups place savings and other contributions on a table, then borrow from the table to kick-start a project. The use of bio-sand water filters to remove bacteria and viruses is one of many measures improving sanitation as is the restoration and construction of more hand-dug wells. Other initiatives include farmers' clubs and the preparation of compost to improve household food security.

Only 35% of girls in Malawi complete primary school and many more drop

out of school at puberty to care for siblings or become wives and mothers. The church is challenging the lack of education, opportunity and autonomy for women in Malawi by inspiring girls to return to school. They are doing this by providing girls-only hostels and toilets, promoting local production of sanitary pads, promoting sexual health services to reduce early pregnancy and taking education into isolated communities via the radio.

“We need to support women all the way until the goal of equality is achieved in all spheres of life, education and property ownership,” said the Most Revd Albert Chama, Archbishop of Central Africa.



Chimpango Loyee and friend in
new uniforms at Champhoyo
School, Kayoyo, Lake Malawi.
USPG/Carrie Myers

EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITY IN THE AMAZON

“The church is helping many groups like mine to mobilise people in forgotten communities so they can have better lives.”

36

USPG supported the Diocese of the Amazon to reach out to young people from Brazil's majority black communities trapped by discrimination and lack of opportunity. Amazon Anglicans trained community workers known as Popular Educators to help young men find alternatives to drugs and violence and young women to embrace education and employment as an escape from early marriage and servitude.

When Margarida, now a Popular Educator and a leader in the Black Women's Movement, was 13, her father told her she'd have to marry a man of 40. She ran away to Belem but ended up working as a servant.

“It seemed that, because I'm black, I was expected to live a life of servitude and only have children. But I wanted a different life: my dream was to study. So, I studied and, when I was older, I joined the Black Women's Movement. I had finally found myself. Now, my biggest motivation is to make sure other girls don't experience what I went through.

“The Popular Educators programme really helped me. I learned how to run an organisation and manage people. We go on marches and host workshops. The church is helping many groups like mine to mobilise people in forgotten communities so they can have better lives.”

Minna, another Popular Educator, used art and music to raise awareness of the importance of education: “... the young people write lyrics and rap about their situations and about justice. With the art, some of it is about creating inspirational imagery that encourages people to seek a better life.

“They've seen so much violence, so it's wonderful that they can see something beautiful instead.”

Margarida (centre) and Popular Educators in Belem,
Diocese of the Amazon, Brazil. USPG/Naomi Herbert



JOURNEY WITH US

38



Jo Musker-Sherwood, Director of Hope for the Future. USPG/Leah Gordon

“India has taught me to trust that all shall be well, ...that companions are always provided for the journey.”

USPG makes it possible for individuals, couples and families to have deep encounters with the global Anglican family, seeing the world differently, stretching their faith and preparing them to live life more fully and enrich their own community on their return.

The Revd Sarah Miller reflects on her USPG Journey With Us placement in Madurai, India. “I return to the UK having rediscovered the country of my birth, which has welcomed me warmly. India has exhausted me and cared for me, challenged me and soothed me, infuriated and charmed me. It has allowed me to share and develop my passion for communication and to experience the lives of contrasting communities. India has taught me to trust that all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well, despite

uncertainty and apparent chaos; that bright sun always follows the rain, however dark the storm; that companions are always provided for the journey.”

Jo Musker-Sherwood’s experience helped her become Director of a climate change campaign when she returned. Hope for the Future undertakes work for USPG, trains faith communities, local groups, NGOs and individuals to engage with MPs and have their voices heard.

“Journey With Us was transformational for me as I transitioned from school to adult life. I made lifelong friends, here and in Peru, discovered a calling to work in climate change and had time to listen more deeply to God.”

Self-help group, Diocese of Durgapur,
North India. USPG/Leah Gordon



ASIAN THEOLOGICAL ACADEMY

“ATA refreshed my vision and strengthened my conviction, in heart and mind, that women should also work for Christ.”

How can churches in different parts of Asia think about their Christian faith free from the shadow of Western Christian history? Where Christians are in the minority, what can be learnt about inter-religious living?

USPG supports Christians from Korea, Myanmar, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines and leaders from other faiths, to encounter each other at an annual peripatetic Asian Theological Academy (ATA). Asian clergy and grass-roots community leaders who attend the Academy find it liberating to question traditional teachings and think through radical theologies that make sense in Asian contexts.

“God is God is God even though some have learnt to know him through a

Buddhist lens or a Muslim lens or a Hindu lens,” said the Revd Dr Evie Vernon O’Brien, Theological Advisor, USPG.

The Revd Haroon Ajmal of Sialkot Diocese in the Church of Pakistan returned from the Academy to persuade his Bishop to allow a woman to study at the seminary for the first time. “As a result of my time at ATA I have new goals and am aware of issues such as LGBT and women’s leadership in the Church. In Pakistan there is not much about that in the church and we ignore women in fellowship. ATA refreshed my vision and strengthened my conviction, in heart and mind, that women should also work for Christ.

“It’s all about ATA. ATA changed my mind and I changed my Bishop’s mind.”

Revd Timothy at St Andrew's Church in Ma
U Daw Kyuusaung near Toungoo, Myanmar.
USPG/Leah Gordon



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how we can go forwards into the world
together, in thought and word and deed.

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**The Revd Duncan Dormor,
General Secretary USPG
info@uspg.org.uk
020 7921 2200**

www.uspg.org.uk

*Please contact us if you would like a
large print version of this booklet.*



Makeshift altar at St James
Mission Hospital, Mantsonyane,
Lesotho. USPG/Real Pictures

“...our role in today’s world is to love our global neighbour
and to work for justice and peace...”

The Revd Duncan Dormor, General Secretary, United Society Partners in the Gospel.

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5 Trinity Street,
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020 7921 2200
www.uspg.org.uk

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