

TRANSMISSION

News and features from the Anglican Communion

Spring 2020

A BISHOP'S PASSION FOR CHANGE

– Page 4

MISSION IN MALAWI

– Page 18

TOWARDS KOINONIA

– Page 22

† UNITED SOCIETY
PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

USPG[†]

Welcome to Transmission

Welcome to the first Transmission of the new decade and for the Spring of 2020. As we enter a new epoch, USPG is entering a new visual era.

Whilst USPG's instantly recognisable colours will remain navy blue and vibrant pink, over the next twelve months you will start to see the USPG logo change to something we hope will be more inclusive of our cherished global partners.

At the same time, Transmission will undergo a transformation of its own. The new magazine will be an A4 format which should lend it a more contemporary look and a greater opportunity to share images from around the world.

We welcome contributions from our partners everywhere and look forward to receiving your news and stories throughout the year.

We are delighted and excited in equal measure that USPG will launch a new website later in the year. The address will remain as: USPG.org.uk

We have also recently launched the USPG Pinterest account, so please do engage with USPG on social media wherever you are - we love to share our stories and hear your news from around the world as well.

All of us at USPG offer you our prayers and good wishes for the forthcoming year. ■



Linda Mackenzie MBE
Head of Media and
Communications USPG

PHOTO: Katerina Gerhardt

Cover: 15th century Trinity Lavra founded by St Sergius Radonezh in Sergiyev Posad. It is one of the largest monasteries in Russia.

PHOTO: Sergey Ashmarin/Creative Commons

TRANSMISSION

**News and views from USPG
and our global Anglican
Communion partners in Christ.**

The views expressed here do not necessarily represent the official views of USPG or any of its employees.

Editor: Linda Mackenzie MBE
Designer: Monika Ciapala

ISSN 0967-926X

Whilst *Transmission* is distributed free of charge, any donations to cover USPG costs of production will be welcomed.

**To subscribe to *Transmission*
free of charge, please email
eunicek@uspg.org.uk**

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

USPG, 5 Trinity Street,
London SE1 1DB
020 7921 2200
info@uspg.org.uk
www.uspg.org.uk

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 234518

    **USPGglobal**



Living with difference

We live in a world where many are seeking to build walls between nations and peoples. Such barriers reflect those of hearts and minds. They divide and diminish our humanity by reinforcing the idea that difference is threatening.

Sadly, Christians and churches have also been divided.

We are, however, as Christians, called to challenge division and break down misunderstanding: to build up a common life and to liberate ourselves and others into a more generous understanding of what it means to be more fully human; to work for unity in diversity.

Those who travel with USPG programmes like Exchanging Places, Expanding Horizons and Journey with Us, bear ample testimony to the transformative possibilities of encountering Christ in another context and country.

In January I had the immense privilege of being with sisters and brothers in the Church of South India. Founded in 1947 with the coming together of four different denominations (including Anglicans), the formation of the CSI was the high point of the ecumenical movement: A deeply faithful response to Christ's words 'That they all may be one' - CSI's foundational text.

This year sees the 50th anniversary of two of the founding of two other United Churches - that of North India and of Pakistan. It is also the 50th anniversary of the Anglican Church of Tanzania and that of the Church in Myanmar. Truly a year of celebrations!

We look to Lambeth 2020 as a year to strengthen our response to God's call to work ever more closely together as Anglicans and with our ecumenical partners. In preparation for that, USPG has produced a study guide, Living with a World of Difference, which explores how a variety of differences are negotiated within the world church.

The Lambeth Conference 2020 will offer

church leaders an opportunity to prayerfully and earnestly engage in discussions focused on how best to mitigate the effects of climate change whilst simultaneously planning for the future.

The effects of climate change are of profound concern for our global partners and for USPG. For example, in Malawi the churches and USPG seek to mitigate this vulnerability through an integrated programme which includes irrigation technology and a Voluntary Savings and Loan scheme and we are delighted that the 'Green Schools' initiative in South India has been commended by the United Nations.

May we seek not just to live with, but to learn from and take delight in our differences in Christ in 2020. ■



The Rev'd Duncan Dormor
USPG General Secretary

CONTENTS

3	Editorial
4	How Africa helped ignite new bishop's passion for change
6	UN Climate Change Conference
7	'Green Schools' champion care for the environment
8	Transforming lives in India
10	My Status, My Health, My Life
12	Expanding Horizons
16	Church of the Province of Myanmar spearheads health in the community
17	New System for Stamp Collecting
18	Mission in Malawi
20	Celebrating 50 years of unity
22	Towards a Koinonia of Love and Equality
24	The reluctant ordinand
26	Tao Po: Justice and Humanity
27	Looking forward to July 2020

How Africa helped ignite new bishop's passion for change

On her appointment as Bishop of Reading last year, the Rt Rev'd Olivia Graham described it as her 'dream job'. She spoke of being excited, daunted and energised by the opportunity to have a ministry that was more outward-facing. 'My passions have always been much more focused on the world and the church's interface with the world,' she said.

Bishop Olivia's ministry since ordination in 1997 has been almost entirely within the Oxford diocese but she says she has Africa in her blood. She first went as a teenager when her father travelled to South Africa to work. She went back in her own right 'as soon as I could,' becoming a volunteer teacher in Kenya aged 18. After six years she returned to the UK to take a degree in Development Studies. But Africa drew her again after graduation in 1984. She spent a further eight years in relief and development work in Djibouti, Somalia and Senegal.

Africa made a lasting impression. 'It means two things: the smell and feeling when I get off an aeroplane or boat and stand on that continent and smell the air and feel the ancientness of it,' she says. 'But more importantly, it means the people... their resilience and optimism and extraordinary hospitality and willingness to relate. I have met people who are self-sufficient, optimistic,

strong, patient - particularly the women who are amazing examples of courage.'

Bishop Olivia recalls that her studies gave her theoretical knowledge about how economic and political structures work, but it was Africa that ignited a passion to see change.

'I am very passionate about the issues of global inequality. I am very clear that it has its roots in the historic and sometimes current systematic economic exploitation by rich nations of the poor nations. I am constantly shocked by the scale of global inequality.'

She has expressed her desire to speak out on issues of injustice and inequality but is realistic about what she can achieve.

'If that issue going to be tackled, then the whole world economic system needs to be reformed. We have to encourage our political leaders to be more long-term in their thinking and in their approach to the challenge of global capitalism. But I don't think there is a lot an individual bishop can do. I am interested in joining with others and bringing what weight we can to bear.'

Global inequality plays out powerfully in another issue close to Bishop Olivia's heart: climate change.

'We (in the UK) may think we have a climate emergency but talk to our friends in South Africa or pretty much anywhere

'I am very passionate about the issues of global inequality. I am very clear that it has its roots in the historic and sometimes current systematic economic exploitation by rich nations of the poor nations. I am constantly shocked by the scale of global inequality.'

else in the global south and they will tell you it is a catastrophe and a matter of daily survival. Things are way ahead in terms of environmental degradation in other parts of the world’.

But she believes Christians can make a difference as part of the global Church pushing for change, and as individuals making decisions about how they live and spend their money.

‘Those who belong to our faith communities are consumers and many are also shareholders. That is a source of power. If we think about the Church as the body of Christ, each cell of the body has the ability to exert influence. Then I think we are onto something that gives us cause for hope’.

Bishop Olivia describes herself as a cradle Anglican, who was touched by the mystery and sense of otherness of church services. She was confirmed at boarding school. ‘I was a very pious little girl,’ she recalls.

She gave up on church in her teens but returned to faith at university when a friend asked her to be a godmother, provoking a bout of soul searching and reflection. Africa was the backdrop for another significant spiritual moment after university. A group of colleagues in Somalia were discussing where they would be in 10 years. To her astonishment, Bishop Olivia found herself saying ‘I think I’ll be ordained’.

She has held several roles in the Oxford diocese since ordination, most recently as Archdeacon of Berkshire. Her work has included strengthening the relationship with its Companion Link diocese, Kimberley and Kuruman in South Africa. But she believes links need to be on the right footing.

‘I am a fan of the right kind of link, done for the right reasons. Links are about mutual enrichment, about learning from each other’s experience, about praying for each other, about trying to deepen friendships and get that sense of what it’s like... that creative imagining of what it is like in someone else’s shoes’.

Bishop Olivia’s hero is Archbishop Desmond Tutu, whom she describes as incredibly courageous. She has said she will need to cultivate courage of her own as she speaks out on issues which touch not just her diocese but the rest of the world. ■

‘I am a fan of the right kind of link, done for the right reasons’



Pictured: Welcome service at Reading Minster for The Rt Revd Olivia Graham, the Bishop of Reading.

Credit: Steven Buckley/Diocese of Oxford

UN Climate Change Conference

Journeying with your MP ahead of COP26, the UN Climate Change Conference 2020. For many USPG partner churches around the world, climate change is a critical issue.

2020 is an important year for church engagement in this area. The Church of England's Lent campaign is focused on climate change, and it will also be an important topic of discussion at the Lambeth 2020 conference in August. Many churches of all denominations are also involved in preparations to support the UK hosting COP26 in November, the annual UN conference on climate change.

The UK has the 'soft power' and technological expertise to act decisively and effectively in managing climate risk - from both a mitigation and adaptation perspective. As USPG seeks to work always through the local church, in mutually transformative partnership, UK churches can support the mission of the global church through political engagement - demonstrating to politicians the mandate for political leadership on climate change.

UK churches are uniquely situated to effect change. This is why USPG work with Hope for the Future and are asking churches to meet with their MP this year, especially ahead of COP26.

It would make a huge difference if every MP was hearing from churches in their constituency, voicing their support for the UK government to act to make COP26 a success, and offering to support their MP taking the corresponding actions within Parliament.

One easy way to do this is to host a 'climate write-in' where church members sign a joint letter which can then be presented

to the MP. There are guides and templates available for this, and Hope for the Future can offer individual support to churches going through the process of meeting their MP - all the way from securing a meeting to preparing for it.

While it can be daunting initially, churches that go through the process often say it how positive the experience of meeting their MP has been, and how it has given them the confidence and motivation to engage further. St Anne's Church in Kew Gardens met their then-MP Zac Goldsmith last year and say 'We would strongly encourage church members who live in other areas to approach their own MPs'. ■



Pictured: The shore of Mahajanga in the morning after tropical cyclone Gafilo

Credit: Sascha Wittkowski via Wiki Commons

Contact rachel.mander@hftf.org.uk for more information on how to get involved.

'Green Schools' champion care for the environment

Thanks to its 'Green Schools' initiative, the Church of South India (CSI) is now recognised as a leading force in acting on the environment, for which it has received commendations both nationally and internationally, including from the United Nations.

Green Schools is an education programme aimed at subtly sensitising students to the environment through hands-on, thought-provoking activities. With guidance from their teachers, students audit the consumption of natural resources within school campuses and help their schools to become good environmental managers by deploying pragmatic solutions to reduce wastage of precious resources.

In the last three years, CSI has been able to implement this programme in over 350 of its schools. The Indian government has recognised Green Schools as an important programme, and CSI's Department for Ecological Concerns has worked together with the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in New Delhi, to produce a curriculum for use in schools.

USPG is one of the supporters of the Green Schools programme. USPG General Secretary The Rev'd Duncan Dormor and USPG's Regional Manager for Asia and the Middle East Davidson Solanki visited three of CSI's Green Schools in South India during January 2020.

'What we saw was very inspiring,' Davidson said. 'One school we visited was a girls' school in Madurai combined primary and secondary school with 6,000 students. The girls took us to various parts of the school and explained how they were working on environmental protection. They

shared how they had learned about the environment and how they were applying what they'd learnt; not only in their schools but also at home, in their communities and amongst their friends. They had become champions for the environment. It was very inspiring and encouraging to see how this initiative, slowly and gradually, was creating an impact that was growing wider and wider. Through the children, the message of care for the environment is reaching not only their families but also their neighbourhoods and wider communities'.

CSI has ambitious plans for the Green Schools project. Plans are under way to implement it in all of the CSI's 1,000 schools, aiming it not only at the students, teachers but also at their families and communities. CSI hopes that the children who attend its schools will in turn take the message of caring for the environment out to many more communities. Alongside Green Schools, CSI has come up with some other resources on environmental issues – including a 'Green Bible', 'Green Parables' and 'Green Sermons'. A Green Clergy movement is up and running, and there are green dioceses too.

'The CSI has a major focus on care for environment and one of its mission priorities is to remain sensitive to all environmental and ecological concerns and ecumenical relations,' Davidson said. 'Such strategic focus has enabled the church to make a huge difference'. ■



Transforming lives in India

In January, USPG's General Secretary the Rev'd Duncan Dormor was a keynote speaker at the annual synod of the Church of South India (CSI). He and USPG's Regional Manager for Asia, Davidson Solanki, used this as an opportunity to see some of the programmes CSI is spearheading.

One of those programmes was a skills training programme for women in Kurnool - a city that forms part of the Diocese of Nandyal. 'This is a very powerful programme,' Davidson said. The Diocese of Nandyal is helping young women by equipping them with skills that help them to secure a livelihood. Many of these young women are from the Dalit communities. Through this

programme these women and girls receive training in tailoring, computer and IT skills and English.

'We met 16 girls while we were there and it was quite encouraging to hear stories of how this programme has transformed their lives. Many of them told us how they were able to secure jobs after completing the training programme. Two of them are now working in the garment industry after learning

'We met 16 girls while we were there and it was quite encouraging to hear stories of how this programme has transformed their lives. Many of them told us how they were able to secure jobs after completing the training programme.'

tailoring. They are now able to support their families. Two other girls on the programme work with the government as village representatives. Many of the participants now want to give back by supporting other girls to get an education. It was quite remarkable to see how their self-confidence has blossomed. It was very humbling too.'

Duncan and Davidson also met with participants of another CSI initiative: the Institute of Pastoral Management. This is basically an institute run by CSI to provide guidance to clergy and priests on topics such as finance management, time management, effective communication, conflict resolution, human resource management and labour and land laws. 'These are the topics that aren't taught in seminaries, but were the issues clergy said they needed help with when asked,' Davidson explained. 'When ministers are posted to parishes, these are the areas they find themselves working in.'

'It was good to hear institute members share their stories. A few women told how they were now much more knowledgeable on these areas. One woman priest told us how she had applied what she'd learnt. Her church was going to host a big programme, and they made a decision not to look to outside sources for money but rather to see what resources the church had that could bring money in to fund the programme. This is a paradigm shift for these priests, because there was a tendency before just to look outwardly for help. This time, this church leader mobilised her congregation to look for sources from within. She was pleased and proud to show how her church was able to raise all that was needed to build a new Sunday school class.'

Duncan and Davidson ultimately attended the thirty-sixth session of the CSI Synod, which was held in Tiruchirapalli, in India's southern Tamil Nadu state. Duncan was a keynote speaker at the Synod and delivered the Bishop Michael Hollis Memorial Lecture on the theme 'Towards a koinonia of love and equality'. 'Duncan's lecture was very well received,' Davidson said. 'It was good for us to be able to witness the life of the Synod, especially to see members elect new officers for the next three years.' ■



Above: Pupils in class at CSI Holy Cross Girls High School, Nandyal, Diocese of Nandyal, Church of South India.

Opposite: S Jyothi in the tailoring class given by Miss R Deepika in the sewing room at the Kurnool Skill Training Centre for Rural/Urban Women, Kurnool, Diocese of Nandyal, Church of South India.

Credit: USPG/Leah Gordon

My Status, My Health, My Life

Duncan Dormor and Artwell Sipinyu reflect on an Anglican Church in Zimbabwe (ACZ) programme that is transforming lives with its clear message of love and inclusion for people living with HIV and AIDS.

Linda, Diocese of Harare said, *'I am a 40 year old HIV positive single mother. I was side-lined by my community and my four children were mocked at school. I felt so much shame and suffering that I contemplated suicide.'*

Low self-esteem, suicidal tendencies, isolation and family disintegration are some of the effects of the stigma associated with living with HIV and AIDS. Fear of discrimination reduces the likelihood people will come forward for testing and receive the support and treatment they need.

In 2014, a survey revealed that 65% of those with HIV/AIDS experienced at least one form of stigma and discrimination and almost 31% had been verbally abused, harassed or threatened. The ACZ Bishops launched the HIV Stigma and Discrimination Reduction programme, with USPG accompanying the church as they sought a reduction of HIV stigma and discrimination.

The ACZ's Stigma Reduction Programme has been training church leaders on issues of HIV and HIV stigma since 2015. This has become a more mainstream topic for church sermons: people who have disclosed their status are now welcomed into the church and offered support.

The ACZ programme also encourages people to come forward for HIV testing and counselling. Knowing their HIV status allows people to make informed decisions: they can receive medication to prolong life, be advised on a suitable diet and join wellness groups.

'Wellness Groups' provide a support network that offers emotional support whilst helping to develop livelihoods through income generation projects. Across the country these dynamic, inspiring and evangelistic groups have powerful stories to tell about Jesus's inclusive love as they campaign for HIV/AIDS stigma reduction within the ACZ.

Support received from the Bishops and clergy has been critical. Evidence shows this intervention has raised the profile of Anglican Council as a church leading from the front.

FACTS

Between 2015 and 2019:

- 655 church leaders have been trained in addressing HIV related stigma;
- The number of people living with HIV and participating in public forums has increased;
- 58 Wellness groups have been established in the Anglican Church;
- 407,608 people have been reached by the programme and the Stigma Index showed a significant drop from 65% to 21%.

Bishop Godfrey Tawonezvi, the National Chair and bishop of Masvingo sums it simply: 'The project has put the church on the map of Zimbabwe'.

Linda has benefitted from Stigma Reduction and says: 'I am so grateful that the stigma and discrimination reduction programme came to my church. This wonderful programme changed everything. I declared my HIV status in church. I was fully accepted and elected to be a church warden. Now I encourage others to disclose their status'.

Everyone has a role to play in addressing HIV & AIDS. The Anglican Church Community has played a key role in the response to HIV related stigma faced by PLHIV in Zimbabwe contributing significantly to National and Global HIV and AIDS targets. PLHIV are more open to disclose their status as a way of encouraging others who may be still in denial. This is a great achievement! The Stigma Index Study highlighted that 31% of the respondents told their leaders of their status. There was a notable increase in number of PLHIV church members openly disclosing their HIV status in church.

Preventing malnutrition is a key objective in HIV and AIDS management. Adherence



to antiretroviral therapy (ART) is dependent upon the availability of household food and clients are more likely to tolerate ARV drugs if they are food secure. The Church has empowered PLHIV to enjoy food security through supporting Income Generating Activities.

Sylvia Zhungu, Diocese of Central Zimbabwe: 'Thanks to support at the wellness group, I have continued growing my Kitchenware retail business. The Church continues to encourage us. I rent retail space and customers see a successful business person - not a person living with the virus. I am a role model'.

Support received from the Bishops and clergy has been critical in reducing HIV related stigma in the ACZ. The Church looks forward to continuing to minister to PLHIV and expanding to other areas in Zimbabwe. ■



Pictured left: Women living with HIV in Zimbabwe.

Pictured above: Women showing their vegetables at a rural healthy living garden managed by women living with HIV at rural Mission, Zimbabwe.

Credit: USPG/Linette Frewin

For more information please visit www.uspg.org.uk/worldwide/zimbabwe



Expanding Horizons

The USPG *Expanding Horizons* programme provides clergy who want to travel overseas on sabbatical, ordinands who are planning an overseas placement, and other church workers the opportunity to experience and share in the life and mission of the world church.

U SPG offer a small grant and help arrange a placement where required, ranging from one to six months. This can be anywhere in the world where USPG has links with the Anglican Church. Here, three people share their *Expanding Horizons* experiences:

**REV'D JAY NIBLETT
TRAVELLED TO THE NETHERLANDS**

When the opportunity came for a summer placement somewhere outside of the UK I jumped at the chance! I wanted to find out what God was doing in the Anglican Communion - particularly in the Netherlands,

where secularism presented a particularly potent challenge to the Christian identity and the great commission to proclaim the gospel and make disciples. USPG was incredibly supportive of this venture, helping with travel, genuine interest and continued support even after I returned.

During my placement I shadowed the Chaplain of Amsterdam and was involved in the spiritual life of the chaplaincy. It was great to see the diversity in the different gatherings and to see how the English language and Anglican spirituality could be a positive uniting factor amongst peoples from all over the world. It was also great to see how

people from different cultures could be united and creative with Anglican liturgy, bringing their own style to it yet still maintaining its familiarity. I had the opportunity to preach and lead the different church communities in prayer. I also spent a lot of the time listening and learning from key people looking at mission in Amsterdam and considering the challenges they are facing in making the gospel known outside of the church walls. These seemingly simple conversations were the aspect of my placement that provided the most fruit. I especially relished my time with Rev'd Alan Strange whose dedication to his calling and Tim Vreugdenhil whose bold and creative approach to mission was inspiring!

One pressing challenge was the need to counter the church's diminishing influence on the shaping of society and consequently faith retreating into private life. In one sense this reflected the worrying demise of the church as a worthy contender in the realm of plausibility structures—ways in which people can make sense of the world around them and shape their life.

Yet on the other hand the energy and commitment these conversation partners were demonstrating gave a real sense of hope that the church still had plenty to share in the lives of the people of Amsterdam. They still believed that the good news of Jesus Christ is a message that needs to be heard and this is true regardless of where a country lands on the 'Better Life Index'. The emphasis may be different but the good news if it is the good news, is a message of hope for all.

I am invested in their challenge as the church is finding ways of breaking outside of the safety of the home and church buildings. It is no new revelation that the Church of England is increasingly losing its voice in the shaping of culture, and that much louder, secular and divisive voices are continuing to grab people's attention. The church's role is to proclaim the truth in a world of truths. The church must live out all five marks of mission, especially the first two. What the Church in Amsterdam discovers and the ground they break will be very helpful for us as we take on the same challenges in the UK.



REV'D DIANE WHITTAKER TRAVELLED TO FIJI

It seems a long time ago, now that I began to plan my sabbatical break, without much idea as to what I wanted to do other than spend some time in Northumberland and visit a friend in Australia. Whilst mulling over options, I attended the Diocesan Minister's conference in November 2017 and got talking to Habib, who was representing the USPG at the conference exhibition. He talked to me about the Expanding Horizons programme for clergy and when I mentioned I wanted →

Opposite: Seashore in Fiji.

Credit: USPG/Naomi Herbert

Pictured left: Museum De Vale, Leiden, South Holland, Netherlands.

Credit: Jay Niblett



to visit Australia as part of my sabbatical, he suggested Fiji as a place I could visit with USPG sponsorship – so the die was cast. I applied for a place on the Expanding Horizons programme, which was offered to me in January 2018 along with some sponsorship funding. During the following year, I firmed up my proposal, which began to have an eco-theology theme to it and finally received approval for my visit from the Anglican Church in Fiji at Easter 2019.

Eventually, in September 2019 I landed at Nadi Airport on Vanua Viti and began my five week placement with the Fijian Anglican Church. It was a little different from most Expanding Horizons placements, as I had a research topic rather than a 'job' placement. I began my visit by spending some time at the

MAST, the Anglican Headquarters in Suva and had some meetings with representatives of the Anglican, Catholic and Methodist churches where we discussed climate change and how the church was preaching and acting on a message of care for creation. After this I stayed at Dreketi on Vanua Levu as a guest of Bishop Henry Bull for three weeks and preached and met people in the churches at Savusavu and Naviavia, as well as Dreketi, before returning to Vanua Viti for a final week in Nadi, visiting town and rural churches and communities affected by climate change.

I was privileged to preach on most of the Sundays I was in Fiji – beginning with the cathedral in Suva and ending at St Christopher's in Nadi. Each community I visited was welcoming, and I was really taken by the enthusiastic singing in church. It was interesting to see how liturgy so similar to that of the Anglican church in England can be taken and given a completely different feel in a different culture.

The placement affected me in many ways; I had time to think, read and reflect and also to experience a very different Christian and cultural context. Christian faith in Fiji still feels new and fresh, and this is linked to a cultural emphasis upon community and family and also connection to the land. I was told several times: 'Fijians are farmers at heart'. All of these experiences I am now carrying with me into my daily ministry, along with an increased passion for preaching and teaching about the importance of caring for God's wonderful creation. My horizons were definitely expanded!

REV'D TOM MUMFORD TRAVELLED TO RUSSIA

One of the most attractive and important facets of the Gospel, I think, is generosity. And that is because it is at the very heart of God and his love for the world. Generosity is



■ *'I was privileged to preach on most of the Sundays I was in Fiji'*



something that when truly offered, does not diminish a person or an institution, just as it does not diminish God. But instead enriches them allowing them also to flourish and in doing so this transforms them as they reflect the love of God back at the world. USPG has done just that.

From my first enquiry and initial conversations, nothing but generosity has been offered. I would like to thank USPG for their financial and spiritual contribution, because without these, my experience of the Church in Russia would not have been possible, and what I have learnt about the generosity of God would not have been so fully realised.

My overwhelming experience, and lasting impression of the Church in Russia, was one of great generosity. And this is because it was a reality in abundance at every turn. At every place visited, from the monasteries and the parish churches to the Anglican chaplaincy in Moscow, amazing warmth, hospitality and friendship was offered and it was beautiful. This I think, is because the people of Russia and in particular those committed to a religious vocation, really do take the Gospel and the mission of God seriously. For them, to give to others and to really live the Gospel is absolutely vital. Being a Christian doesn't just mean turning up on a Sunday. And this is

hardly a surprise - because there was a time when really living their faith could cost them their life.

It is easy to forget that Russia is a country where in living memory, Christianity (and indeed all religion) was illegal. Millions died for it. Thankfully, their God knew a way out of the grave and so their Church followed. Their mission now it seems, is to live this on the ground and this was summed up for me most fully, on the last day when visiting the Novopassky monastery. During yet more warm and generous hospitality, one of the monks wanted to remind us that although we were yet to break bread together in church, we needn't be scared of one another. For them he said, the dinner table was the second altar and we could feast together there. And he was right. For over such banquets (and they really were) we were able to listen to one another, to learn, and to grow in love. These are after all, the fruits of real Eucharistic hospitality and true generosity. ■

Opposite top: Diane Whittaker in Fiji.

Credit: USPG/Naomi Herbert

Opposite: Seashore in Fiji.

Credit: USPG/Naomi Herbert

Pictured above: Trinity Lavra in Sergiyev Posad, Russia.

Credit: Sergey Ashmarin/Creative Commons

Church of the Province of Myanmar spearheads health in the community

In rural Myanmar, one major need is for health facilities that are easily accessible. Through its Community Health programme, the Mandalay Diocese of the Church of the Province of Myanmar (CPM) is stepping in to meet this and other health needs.

The Diocese of Mandalay implements the Community Health programme in Naga Hills on the border of Myanmar and India. The Church of the Province of Myanmar has six dioceses, with the Diocese of Mandalay being one of the largest. It covers several rural areas, whilst government health facilities tend to be located in the urban areas. People here mostly travel by boat, which makes dealing with medical emergencies challenging because it takes several hours to reach the nearest hospital this way. The very hilly terrain also presents its own problems. Communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and other water-borne diseases are prevalent in these areas, which was part of the rationale for CPM to initiate this programme.

CPM has been running the community health programme for the past six years and its primary approach is to train village health workers (VHWs) and traditional birth attendants (TBAs). Doctor Mala heads Mandalay Diocese's health committee. She and her staff give local village health workers primary healthcare training and equip them with medical supplies. Another focus of the programme is raising health awareness. The church conducts regular 'Medical Mission camps' at which they provide training and raise awareness of various diseases, with a focus on prevention. If there are issues with a patient that are outside the local health workers' areas of expertise, then they refer such cases to the government-run health facilities.

The village health workers and traditional



birth attendants have become a link between the government and the local communities they serve. Government staff do not come regularly to these clinics because of transport challenges and so the health workers provide necessary support.

According to the Bishop of Mandalay the Rt Rev'd David Nyi Nyi Naing, the programme has been able to completely eradicate malaria from that area within the last three years, a major achievement for a church in this part of Myanmar. He travels by boat to visit the communities in Naga Hills quite regularly, a journey that takes seven to eight hours. 'These people in the villages are our church,' he said. 'Irrespective of religion or

ethnic background, we provide healthcare and support to everyone who is needy. The church is not partisan, it is for everyone'.

CPM is one of USPG's historic partners. Davidson Solanki, USPG's Regional Manager for Asia and the Middle East, visited CPM in November 2019 and saw the Community Health programme in action. 'I was inspired and humbled to see how the local church is bringing hope and life to the people who are living on the margins of society,' Davidson said. ■

Pictured opposite: Local leader with family at a villages in the Homalin area.

Credit: USPG/Davidson Solanki

NEW SYSTEM FOR STAMP COLLECTING

Our friend and supporter John Wallis has had to stand down as stamp collector due to ill health. Over the years John has taken in stamps from churches and individuals around the UK. He raised over £19,000 for USPG. We are thankful for all that he has done and wish him well. Our prayers are with him in his retirement.



We have a new system for Stamp collections.

1. Internally

As an office we collect stamps. USPG has ordered an envelope to put them in and once it is full we can send it off. It will be the same as below.

2. For supporters

We are delighted to say that we have worked out a new system for our supporters recycling stamps. We have engaged Xchange Master Ltd to handle the stamps. Xchange Master Ltd will send pre-paid C4 size gusset envelopes free of charge. The stamps are put in them and sent to Xchange Master Ltd again free of charge.

Or for bulk pickups (i.e. more than 3kg) Xchange Master Ltd can arrange for a courier to pick up from any premises in the UK (excluding the Channel Islands) on a day that suits or alternatively or send a label for the client to drop off at a local Hermes/ UPS/ DPD drop off point, again free of charge. There is usually a drop off point within one mile for most postcodes in the UK. Stamps should be on single thickness backing paper (i.e. not front and back of the envelope) and the backing paper should be trimmed to about 4mm to 8mm. Nothing else should be mixed with the stamps (e.g. coins or postcards). A variety of stamps may be submitted together. ■

To receive either the envelopes or the courier service, please email sean@xchange-master.co.uk Please ensure they are aware that it is for USPG.

Mission in Malawi

The Anglican Church in Malawi and USPG are reaching out to sustain life and conserve livelihoods through simple irrigation technology, knowledge, and a *Voluntary Savings and Loan (VSL)* scheme.

M

alawi is one of the countries in the world, most challenged by the effects of climate change (World Bank, 2010). Much of

the vulnerability to climate change is related to the fact that 90% of families depend on rain-watered agriculture to support their livelihoods.

Climate variability and change are already affecting Malawi, which has experienced significant dry spells and intense rainfall. These changes have led to an increase in the frequency of floods, cyclones, droughts, erratic and unreliable rainfall directly impacting vulnerable family's incomes, food security, health and ability to support children's education, especially girls.

The Anglican Council in Malawi and USPG help communities and churches by responding to this change and climate vulnerability through an Integrated Programme in Mission which helps families conserve livelihoods and live a full life.

As the Regional Manager for Africa, I have been lucky to see this firsthand on my trip during a Learning Review of a four-year Programme in Mission.

During my trip, I met inspiring families, men and women using simple irrigation technology to mitigate effects of drought on crop production at the family level supported by the Anglican Council in Malawi.

Valeria, Chairperson of the Tiyanjane farmers and Voluntary Savings and Loan (VSL) Group said, 'Before joining the group, members were facing various problems like hunger, children were going to school hungry, lacked money to buy household basics like



soap, salt, sugar, clothes for children, just to mention but a few. It was hard for us to have money throughout the year after selling our farm produce. We had to do casual labour to earn money for food.

'However, after participating in the Voluntary Savings and Loan scheme for two years we decided as a group to venture into simple irrigation techniques, to expand ways of generating income for our household, we agreed to find some land for irrigation farming, since we had undergone various business, farming conservation and organic manure making training, we decided to ask the Anglican church to give us two treadle pumps'.

The Anglican church-supported Irrigation farming management training via the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. With the provision of two treadle pumps to start simple irrigation farming, the Tiyanjane group secured land

Above: Tiyanjane farmer group in Chapananga parish.

Credit: USPG/Fran Mate

for irrigation farming, and upon receiving two treadle pumps from the Anglican church, the group used funds through VSL and purchased two more treadle pumps and seeds, increasing the number of treadle pumps to four.

Valeria said that 'After our involvement in various activities with the Anglican church, the lives of 96 % members have changed significantly. We have learnt how to work in groups, we know how to do business, we have learnt modern farming methods, we can make local manure, and we are applying these skills in our farms. We now have enough food in our households, our children are putting on clean clothes, they are going to school on a full stomach, and we live in a very clean environment. We have acquired skills in different areas to support our lives, and we are able to buy household necessities. And above all, we now pray together and support each other even though we are from different denominations'.

The Tiyanjne group dreams of acquiring enough land for irrigation and solar-driven machines for irrigation so that many members of the community can benefit and have more than enough household.

The Tiyanjane farmers and VSL group have 36 members, established in August 2016 supported by the Anglican church to enable families to conserve livelihoods, be economically empowered and support girls' education.

Another member, Nancy, told me that she could eat three times a day because she has enough food for her family. Nancy's income also improved as a result of the programme. She farms and sells produce for income. She was then able to build an iron-roofed house which has given her comfort and pride. A single mother, she is now empowered economically such that she no longer depends on anyone for her household needs.

Three hundred families are also championing fuel-efficient stoves and

briquettes to conserve livelihoods and the environment. The programme trained families on how to make environmentally friendly stoves and briquettes in Samama and Chapananga. The briquettes are made from wastepaper and families are educated on the importance of using fuel-efficient stoves as a method of managing the environment. Over 826 families participated in environmental conservation campaigns and training.

Girls in targeted primary schools are trained in skills to conserve the environment. They learn how to make decorative bowls that reduce unnecessary waste and generate income to support family needs.

The Chair of the House of Bishops in Malawi, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Fanuel Magangani and Bishops said they are very grateful to USPG for journeying together with them in mission, which included leadership and human resource strengthening. 'It is about the mission of God, which is not only spiritual but full wellbeing. We renew our commitment in this mission as long as we exist as a church', the House of Bishops Anglican Council in Malawi has stated. ■



Pictured: Mercy from Chipayika village. In this picture she was captured harvesting mangoes from the fruit tree at her home which she shared with the review team.

Credit: USPG/Fran Mate



Celebrating 50 years of unity

Anne Bonger, USPG's Team Coordinator, was in Nagpur for the start of the golden jubilee celebrations of the Church of North India (CNI).

Six of India's Protestant denominations came together in Nagpur in 1970 to form one united church. In November 2019, members of the CNI gathered again - this time to launch a year of events to mark their golden jubilee. Several of CNI's overseas partners were invited to attend, and take part in the celebrations.

It was a huge event consisting of two days of celebrations and the Bishops, their wives and representatives of all 27 CNI dioceses attended. There were colourful and spectacular cultural shows involving

beautifully dressed children and young people from the various church schools and the traditional Indian dancing was wonderful. All of the visiting partners gave presentations and were all garlanded and given gifts. Hundreds of people attended the service,

Pictured: Sister Susmita Seth taking people's blood pressure and weight in the village of Bhangadali, where community health camps are held by the Khristiya Seva Niketan Hospital in Sarenga.

Credit: USPG/Leah Gordon

and the golden jubilee logo was unveiled on the first day. Everyone processed down the streets, which were lined with schoolchildren throwing petals. It was a glorious time of celebration.

CNI's motto is 'Unity, witness and service', and this was very much in evidence over the next few days. I visited Khrishtiya Seva Niketan Hospital, located in Sarenga, West Bengal in the Diocese of Durgapur.

I visited the various wards in the hospital with Dr Bose, the Doctor in Charge. His wife Dr Raisa Bose, also works at the hospital as an obstetrician. USPG currently supports the Community Approach for Rural Development (CAFORD) programme which aims at improving holistic wellbeing and the general health of the community through community-based initiatives. There is also an element of socio-economic empowerment of women through a self-help group process. Soukanya Mandi, the project coordinator, is a dynamic and committed young woman who has established a good rapport with the villagers.

The hospital runs mobile clinics and one of the things on offers is cataract surgery for people with eyesight problems. In the past, there have been some challenges with inadequate cataract operations so it was very good for the surgeons to regain the trust of local people. CAFORD has been breaking down some of these barriers.

A canteen set up in a renovated building in the hospital compound provides heavily



subsidised meals, so that everyone can afford to eat there. Another room in the hospital is equipped with sewing machines available for sewing classes. This is a fairly recent initiative and it is hoped that the women will gain income both from hospital staff, nursing students and with local customers in their villages.

Some of the local people I met in the villages are in challenging circumstances. Thanks to the CAFORD programme, people have realised how important it is to encourage their children to go to school and get an education. Some parents also receive counselling, which has led to a reduction in alcohol abuse.

CNI has achieved an awful lot in the last 50 years. The Church is a minority institution in North India, but despite this, CNI has been able to make a difference in people's lives through important initiatives such as CAFORD. ■



Pictured above: Golden jubilee (50 years) of the CNI (Church of North India) celebrations in Nagpur in November 2019.

Pictured left: Lakhan Murmu, from Bhangadali village, who was successfully operated on for cataracts through the held by the Khrishtiya Seva Niketan Hospital, Sarenga, Diocese of Durgapur, Church of North India. Development.

Credit: USPG/Anne Bongser

Towards a *koinonia* of Love and Equality

Some commentators feel that the coin of *koinonia* has become a little too smooth, losing its distinctiveness. Its use in official documents has robbed the word of much of the power that it possesses in the Scriptures, especially in Paul's letters and within the texture of John's gospel and the Johannine writings, which speak so poetically and powerfully of what *koinonia* really means.

Official church usage has rendered *koinonia* blandly as 'communion'. Congregations may recognise '*koinonia*' as 'fellowship' identifying it most closely from our frequent repetition of the Grace: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God'... and the fellowship (*Koinonia*) of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore'. Even here, fellowship can at times seem to lack weight or depth of meaning.

We need an enlarged sense of *koinonia*: Communion, fellowship, but more expansively: it is participation, partnership, a mutual belonging, a sharing; it is a participational knowledge. It is the embrace and the recognition and intimacy of being together in the love of Christ.

None of these words is adequate in capturing the depth of mystery of our life together and the depth of *koinonia* which goes beyond these descriptions. Its spirit is understood more fully in the knowledge of our lives and encounters with each other; when a dear friend pays an unexpected visit or with the gentle squeeze of the hand at the bed of loved one who is dying. More powerfully, it is also the moment when barriers dissolve, when recognition dawns, when reconciliation beckons; when the stranger feels accepted for who they are.

If 'the People of God' speak of a pilgrim church, a forward movement, the story of

salvation coming to fulfilment and the 'Body of Christ' of sacrament and radical unity in the face of difference and potential division, then the spirit of *koinonia* speaks of fellowship, a deeper participation in the Incarnation, of a deepening dimension to the life of the Church. It speaks of partnership, sharing and a mutual abiding.

The spirit of *koinonia* enlivens what it means to be the People of God, the Body of Christ; it is that which makes these things real. In the language of *koinonia* - it is the personal, the deeply human dimension of being in Christ that is to the fore - rather than the salvation story or a concern for unity and order within the Fellowship. It entails a deeply practical and pastoral theology concerned with the lived reality, with the grounding of the life of the church in how its members act towards each other and in their reaching out to the world.

Koinonia involves an acceptance of the 'other' and the realisation of a barrier broken; it reconciles, and whether through words or action, there is a sacramental connectivity involved. Brought to birth by the Spirit of Christ it creates a distinctive type of space between persons, the sort of solidarity which takes us to full stretch as human persons and renders us vulnerable; it involves risk, discomfort and sacrifice.

Koinonia should bring a richness and a depth dimension to our understanding and

life of the church. It challenges us through our shared participation in Christ to a much more personal identification with others; it witnesses a radically different kind of human solidarity from that which we see in the world. It also deepens our commitment to mission, in prophetic action, in partnership and solidarity with others.

The scope of *koinonia* ranges widely. This is clear in Paul's writing where it is applied to participation in Christ and his sufferings, to the relationship between Christ and the community, and Paul's own relationship to various churches. It is also at the heart of a deeply personal appeal: In his carefully crafted pastoral letter to the slave-owning Philemon, arguing that the runaway slave Onesimus be received by his former owner, not just as blessed brother, but as Paul himself: 'So if you consider me your partner (*koinonon*), receive him as you would receive me'.

The spirit of *koinonia* most powerfully expressed at the heart of Paul's letter to the Philippians, penned in prison, where Paul at his most profound and reaches the depths of his own understanding: 'if there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing (*koinonia*) in the Spirit' then if these things 'bring me to the fullness of joy' doing 'nothing from selfishness or conceit', but in humility 'counting others better than yourselves' - look to the 'interest of others' and 'put on the mind of Christ'.

The depth of our identification with others may even need teasing out of the second part of the greatest commandment: Love your neighbour as yourself. For how often do we hear 'love your neighbour as much as yourself' rather than 'as yourself?' The real challenge is to see our neighbour as our self and indeed our self as a neighbour. This radical identification lies at the heart of the mystical understanding of *koinonia*. This is participation in Christ. What does this look like for our corporate life, for us as Church?

To renew the spirit of *koinonia* in the

life of the church is to be concerned with lived Christianity. It is concerned as Jesus himself was - with open-ended encounter, deep listening and generous hospitality. The incarnation teaches us that God's love stretches to the fullness and extremity of humanity. The Spirit of *koinonia* calls us to an identification of something that may be called 'deep listening' where the trials and sorrows of the individual person or community open a window upon the injustices associated with the broader context and circumstance.

If though a deepening of the *koinonia* of the Spirit we are able to nurture a trust that allows honest self-criticism, to be open to correction and are willing both to receive and to offer wisdom then our life and mission together in Christ across national boundaries will be profoundly blessed. ■



Pictured top: Revd Duncan Dormor, USP General Secretary, speaking at the 36th CSI Synod 2020 in the Trichy - Thanjavur Diocese, South India. Pictured bottom: Revd Duncan Dormor giving gift to outgoing Moderator of CSI, Bishop Oomen.

Credit: USP/Davidson Solanki



The reluctant ordinand

When Mary Nelson quit nursing and signed up to go to Tanzania on USPG's *Journey With Us* programme, she was adamant that ordination wasn't for her. But God had other plans.

The year after her husband died, Mary felt that God was telling her to leave her job as a practise nurse. In January 2018, she handed in her resignation. 'I had a blank diary and I felt very uncomfortable about that, because I like to know what I'm doing,' she says. But then she received an email advertising USPG's *Rethinking Mission* conference, and knew straight away that she had to be there.

The conference was an eye-opener. 'All my preconceptions about mission were stripped away,' Mary says. 'I spoke to Habib Nader

at USPG, with a view to going abroad on the *Journey with Us* programme. Habib said to me, "Mary, I know exactly where I'm going to send you. It's somewhere where women priests are welcome and it might well be that when you come back, you'll want to be ordained". At this point, I looked him straight in the face and said, "I do not want to hear that!"

'I had a blank diary and I felt very uncomfortable about that, because I like to know what I'm doing'

'As the Bishop started preaching, the heavens opened. We had 20 minutes of torrential rain, and he had to stop because the noise of the rain on the roof was so loud, no-one could hear him speak. It's rained ever since, and people say the rain was a sign of God's blessing on all of the ordinands!'

'Over the previous five years, a number of people had told me they thought I should consider ordination. But it certainly hadn't been the right time because my husband had been very ill and I didn't think it was for me. I felt I wasn't good enough'.

Mary chose to visit Tanzania to work in Msalato Theological College, which is situated outside Dodoma, part of the Diocese of Central Tanganyika. In her first month, she divided her time between the theological college and a local hospital. 'I felt very much at home,' she says. The principal of the college suggested that Mary should teach English. She was unsure at first (having never taught before), but he said to her, 'Your qualification is that you are English. That's what we need. We need our students to learn good English'.

It was then that Mary realised she didn't miss nursing much. 'I had been out to the hospital a few times and helped out there, but I just felt that the college was where I should be,' she says. Two weeks before her visa was due to expire, Mary was told that she wouldn't be getting a new one. Bishop Dickson Chilongani intervened and Mary applied for a work permit which was eventually issued - the day before her visa was to expire. 'When I got it,' she says, 'I knew God was calling me back'.

The ordination question arose again when Mary returned to the UK last August. 'Everywhere I went, people kept saying I needed to think about ordination - even people who weren't Christians!' she says. 'In Tanzania, the college staff and some

students had asked me why I wasn't ordained, and said I really ought to be. I still wasn't interested. I caught up with Habib when I came back and he said, "When are you going to get ordained?" I replied, "I have no intention to!"

'Then I went to the USPG annual conference and even there, people came up to me and told me I ought to be ordained. That was when I decided I needed to take this seriously! I decided that I would see what happened when I returned to Tanzania. I chatted with Bishop Chilongani and he said he'd be happy to ordain me.

As soon as he said that, I had so much peace. Two of us were ordained in November. As the Bishop started preaching, the heavens opened. We had 20 minutes of torrential rain, and he had to stop because the noise of the rain on the roof was so loud, no-one could hear him speak. It's rained ever since, and people say the rain was a sign of God's blessing on all of the ordinands!'

Mary is now preparing for her return to Tanzania. 'The whole journey has been incredible,' she said. 'I felt very uncomfortable teaching at first, but the Lord gave me the means. The students are fantastic; I'm learning as much about my own language as they are from me. In fact, I may be learning even more. It's just been the most incredible journey and I don't know what God is going to do with me next'. ■

Pictured opposite: Mary Nelson.

Credit: USPG/Leah Gordon

Tao Po: Rising up for Justice and Humanity

Every life matters. Every tear shed for a slain son, daughter, kin and kith is a cry for justice. In the Philippines, the butchers go after our most vulnerable, the poor who barely survive on the margins of society. We want the world to know their story.

TAO PO is an expression used in the Philippines when one calls out to see if anyone is home. It usually comes with a knock at the door. It is used to contrast with Operation Tokhang – the Government’s campaign against illegal drugs which sees law enforcers knocking on doors of suspected drug dealers or addicts, purportedly to persuade them to surrender and stop their illegal activities. Operation Tokhang has become synonymous with the thousands of extrajudicial killings in the country.

The dreams of many for a strong-willed administration that fights poverty and criminality have morphed into a long three-year nightmare under President Rodrigo Duterte.

Many cheered initially, even at the news of the deaths. Some of them ended up weeping for their own. Many have since seen through the spree of senseless violence and ruthlessness, and the lies cooked-up to downplay or cover up police abuse and other human rights violations.

With the President’s insistence on viewing the drug menace as an almost criminal and public safety issue, and his claim that addicts are sub-human and outside the pale of redemption, the dead become

accomplishment statistics, and child victims are lumped together as ‘collateral damage’.

These (last) three years have claimed more than 27,000 lives. Desperation and hopelessness may have even worsened. Justice and accountability remain elusive, and the climate of impunity seems to be at its worst.

The 2019 Tao PO Rising Up for Justice and Humanity Europe Tour was a collective response of resistance by artists, human rights defenders and survivors of the murderous anti-illegal drug campaign. We have tried to bring to the hearts of our audiences abroad, and the lived realities of individuals and communities reeling from these unjust killings.

Travelling miles away from home, we have knocked on the doors of people who share a love for humanity and make our stories heard and felt despite the distance. We have endeavoured to weave a synergy, a shared hope with action for the Philippines where respect for human life is prime and social justice is lived out.

In the end, we hope to generate interest and build networks of support for the campaign with redress for justice on behalf of the victims, survivors and their families. Please remember us in your prayers. ■

‘TAO’ is the Tagalog term for ‘Human’ and ‘Po’ is a word-form used to show respect.

Looking forward to July 2020

Rev'd Dr. David Isiorho shares some of his hopes for the USPG 2020 Rethinking Mission Conference

Mission is heart speaking to heart across the suffering of the human condition. It is the tiny movement of the Spirit in local places where the members of the Church take others under their wing just as the everlasting God has us all under his enduring wings. We are the people of faith. And it is in the faith of Christ Jesus that we continue this important work.

I am looking forward to the Rethinking Mission conference because theology is the way we talk about God and our part in his glad service. I am looking forward to relating my vision and narrative with that of other contributors. What I am most looking forward to about the conference is not really knowing the answer to my questions until I listen and engage with others.

The theme of the conference is "Rediscovering the Gospel in 'Christian' nations". To rediscover the Gospel here in Britain we need to reconsider our context. This is now characterised by uncertainty as we try to theologise the full consequences of the UK leaving the EU. How do we regain the Christ model for ourselves in our contemporary context? We start with a realisation that we must rediscover the catholicity of the universal Church. For the Church of England that means we must be more Anglican in our

approach, re-imaging ourselves as part of an international fellowship. It also means giving renewed focus to our parish system where many of the faithful reside.

God is great and finds all kinds of ways to communicate with us and we each have our own tolerances and ways of being that need to be safeguarded. In The Acts of the Apostles, Luke made it very clear that the Kingdom depends upon the active participation of all, with the diversity of talents and ministries this involves.

As Christians, we believe God is the creator of all humanity and that Jesus showed us how, as his disciples, we should be welcoming of all. Jesus spent time with all kinds of people and welcomed them as children of God. All are included and welcomed - not only because we are Disciples of Christ, but also because as UK citizens, we seek to abide by the legislative requirements of our country.

How do we go about rediscovering the Gospel here in Britain? All people must be treated fairly and equally. As we follow Christ's command to 'Love one another as I have loved you', we have the great opportunity to take the lead in being fully inclusive and welcoming, working to eliminate discrimination and to change attitudes. ■

WHAT I AM MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT THE CONFERENCE IS NOT REALLY KNOWING THE ANSWER TO MY QUESTIONS UNTIL I LISTEN AND ENGAGE WITH OTHERS.



SAVE THE DATE

USPG 2020 CONFERENCE

Rejoice in the Lord always
God's people in God's mission

————→ **20-22 July 2020** ←————

The Hayes Conference Centre
DE55 1AU

† UNITED SOCIETY
PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

USPG[†]