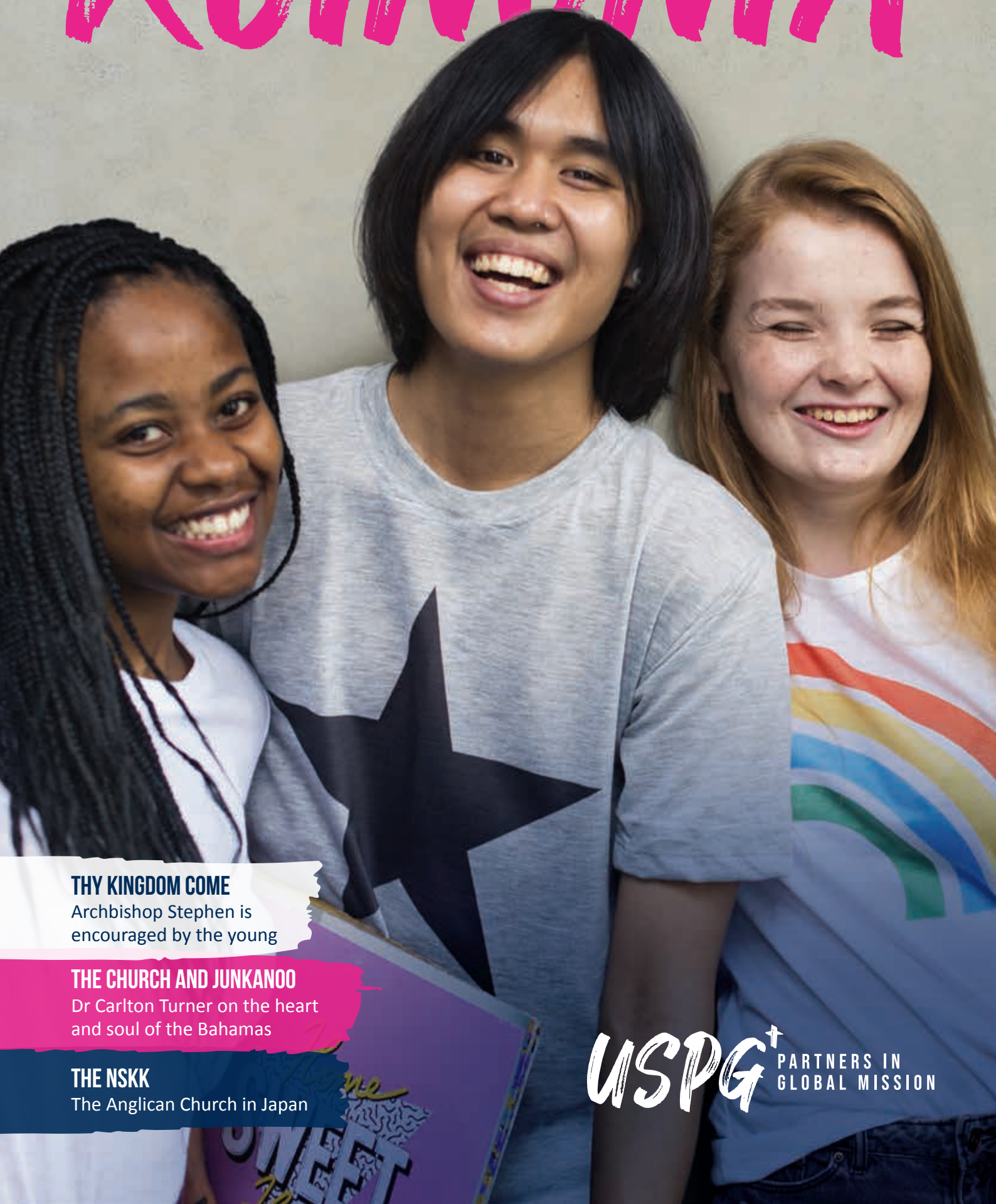


KOINONIA



THY KINGDOM COME

Archbishop Stephen is encouraged by the young

THE CHURCH AND JUNKANOO

Dr Carlton Turner on the heart and soul of the Bahamas

THE NSKK

The Anglican Church in Japan

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Please attach images (with captions) as high resolution JPEGs.

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The Rev'd
Duncan Dormor,
General
Secretary USPG

EDITORIAL

By the Rev'd Duncan Dormor,
General Secretary USPG

Encouraging 'hope-bearers of God's kingdom' - this is what the 'fairly new and still learning' Archbishop of York sees his role in your people.

Setting the scene for this issue, Archbishop Stephen highlights the key prophetic role that young people play within the church and the world. As they hold a light up to injustices – environmental, racial, social – he calls on church leaders to be open and alert to the voice of the young.

This challenge is echoed strongly in contributions from young Christians across the Communion. Some speak boldly of the disconnect between young people and the Church as institution, of the fact that 'the youth have many questions'.

This is echoed in contributions from West Africa, where it is argued that worship could be more 'culturally relevant' to the youth – but other concerns are raised too – about questions of the financial sustainability of the church and the nature of its social engagement.

These challenging questions underline the importance of the serious contextual theology that wrestles with the issues that really matter. Here the work of the Asian Theological Academy is critical as indeed is that of Trustee, Carlton Turner, whose book on the Church, Junkanoo on self-negation is highly pertinent.

In drawing attention to the 'disappearing demographic of young people' in the C of E, Shakeel Nurmahi reflects on what we can learn from other contexts. He draws inspiration from the engagement of the Council of Anglican Churches in Africa with the youth of that great continent. The commitment of young Japanese Anglicans to peace work rooted in the Beatitudes provides another distinctive example.

A very different, but inspiring picture emerges from the Philippines where the church is at the forefront of standing up 'in the face of the cruelty of those who are in power'. Here the youth, energised and inspired, by the Church leadership see themselves as part of a 'faithful and bold' church that seeks to work for the marginalised 'in the here and now'.

Contributions from South Africa and the Caribbean reflect on the innovation and experimentation that has occurred as the Church has 'gone online' under Covid-19. This creativity has taken many forms. In the context of severe economic hardship many young leaders would echo the words of Nosipho Mdakane from South Africa that not just bearing but also 'spreading' hope has been 'necessary to keep people alive' - for as Christians, as young people 'we are game changers and we are showing up'.

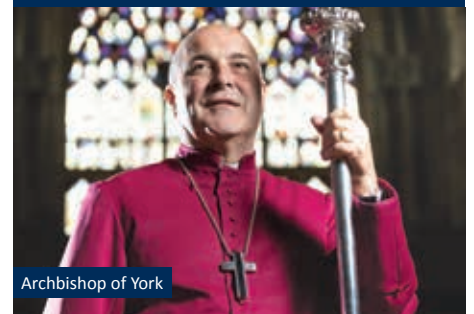
Duncan Dormor

The Rev'd Duncan Dormor,
General Secretary USPG

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THE CHANGING CHURCH LANDSCAPE

By Karen Smriti Elias, Diocese of Durgapur



India's response to Covid-19 came in March with the announcement of a nationwide lockdown. This was devastating for daily-wage labourers who number in the millions and migrate to larger towns and cities for work. It also led to the deterioration of the economy which resulted in massive job losses for thousands of people. The abrupt announcement of the lockdown also meant the public were not prepared and those living in poverty and the indigent were most severely affected. Thousands were starving.

The Diocese heard accounts of suffering, of missing and lost people, child marriages, of adults and children being trafficked. The confusion and a lack of planning, led to many taking advantage of the chaos, leading the vulnerable astray.

A few weeks into the lockdown, the government reached out to civil bodies throughout the country to help those in dire circumstances. The churches were among the thousands who came forward. Many dioceses have been active with relief campaigns to help those who have not rupee to their name or a grain of rice to eat. We focus on the distribution of food, clothes and other necessities. The Synod and its dioceses all have their own programmes which focus on issues such as human trafficking, livelihood support and women's empowerment.

Being a minority body in a country as populous as ours can make such efforts seem like a bucket in an ocean. Usually the challenge for continuous effort is funding and a lack of sustainability. Before the pandemic, our charities and programmes on a church level, were usually focused on short-term relief. However, this didn't and doesn't stop us

from providing some relief and hope to the impoverished and to help the oppressed. Our focus as a congregation is on God's word and learning from Jesus' life and then imitating it through our various projects and charities.

Covid-19 offers churches the opportunity to convert from a worshipping community to a diaconal community; one which is committed to serving. It is giving us the opportunity to evolve into a missional church, which not only studies the Bible but reflects on the Holy Spirit which is in us and which can truly work through us.

Times of suffering and adversity are often a turning point. The world is witnessing protests like the Anti-CAA* movement in India. This is a precursor for – hopefully positive – change. After witnessing extreme desperation and poverty, where the vulnerable knowingly leave themselves open to exploitation in the hope that they at least get one square meal a day, we as a Church can re-examine and restructure the way we do things. To bring about change, we must engage with the aim to educate and equip ourselves and the unempowered.

There is no easy solution or quick answer. These are problems that our country was born with and ones which we are struggling to solve. Much of our relief work is thought of in terms of material goods but one option we could consider is to add focus on the emotional and mental components. To work on removing prejudice, empathise with the marginalised and powerless, and build awareness acknowledging their presence and problems would be a start of a long journey. This could lead to bigger change, not only in the lives of the people we wish to empower but also in the very nature of our Church. ■

*Anti-Citizen Amendment Act



Our focus as a congregation is on God's word and learning from Jesus' life and then imitating it

THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PHILIPPINES: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE YOUNG

By Ma Norme M Serdeña, IFI



The Philippine Constitution guaranteed that every citizen regardless of gender, socio-cultural, religious and political persuasion has rights that are absolute and incontrovertible. Those rights are to be recognised, respected, asserted, protected and promoted whatever the situation. However, as years go by, laws that blatantly ignored the fundamental value and role of human rights have been passed and implemented. Examples of some of these include: the Mining Act of 1995 (the cause of environmental and cultural exploitation and 'land-grabbing' within Philippine indigenous peoples' ancestral lands) the Rice Ratification Law (which damaged every farmer in the country) the Oplan Kapayapaan (the cause of harassment, vilification and 'red-tagging') the Duterte's War on Drugs (that killed thousands of innocent people) and the

recent Anti-Terror Law (a deliberate suppression of freedom of speech and the individual's participation in advocacy for peace and justice.) All of these resulted in rampant extra judicial killing, deprivation of liberty and the loss of the right to struggle against oppression.

These are all pernicious works of evil in society. As a young person in the Church, I firmly believe, that the Church, as the 'Body of Christ' here on Earth, must act to fulfil its role in revealing the meaning of God's love and mercy, of spreading the Good News and be the visible grace of the invisible God whom I worship and adore. The Church must be a faithful and bold disciple, working for the marginalised in the here and now.

In the face of the cruelty of those who are in power, I believe that the Church must defend and advocate for human rights - including condemning those who are spiteful – as a true and faithful witness of the gospel. I believe that as the Church continues to work for the salvation of human souls, it must never forget that salvation for the toiling Filipino masses means restoring and returning the land of the farmers and indigenous peoples. The moment that we celebrate the Holy Eucharist, preaching the gospel and partaking the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood, we are mandated to live out the very profound statement of Christ's mission written in the gospel of Luke 4:18-19 – bringing healing and wholeness to the less privileged and bringing liberation to those who are demeaned or enslaved. The Church is expected to preach the reign of God, and help Christ to be felt and experienced in the most unlikely of places. Let us continue to move and move others! ■

THE CONNECTED GLOBAL ANGLICAN FAMILY

By Marc Ranarivelo, Diocese of Antananarivo, Madagascar.

Over two hundred years ago, the word of God managed to find its way to our island, often considered as some faraway island in the middle of an ocean somewhere. Even its name might have originated from an expression meaning 'at the end of the world', according to some theories. For those who have heard of Madagascar, an image of a small exotic island filled with little furry monkey-like animals often comes to mind. Those who know more, would mention an island of the coast of the main African continent with a unique biodiversity.

For many years, native Malagasy people have embraced Christianity and followed Jesus despite the many challenges that they have encountered. At one stage, some even risked their lives for the Gospel of Christ. Among the various Christian missionaries to have reached the island, those sent by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (now Partners in the Gospel) as well as the Church Mission Society travelled many miles, leaving behind loved ones and the comfort of home to share what they thought was something precious: the 'Good News' with the Malagasy people. Church communities began to form in various parts of the island and have continually grown since then.

Despite this promising development however, the church has struggled to keep up and to cope effectively with its needs. Issues ranging from the lack of trained ministers serving in the church, to external aspects such as economic and social poverty in the country have made it rather challenging for the church to continue

with its mission of evangelisation. We have also discovered the importance of communication during the recent global pandemic. Fortunately, technology has played an important role during the events caused by Covid-19. In fact, as well as TV and radio, other modern means of communication such as social media have become effective tools to reach out to our church communities.

In Madagascar, despite huge challenges faced by people during lockdowns, the use of social media has in some way filled an empty space. Where gatherings including church services have been restricted, people have resolved to Zoom and Facebook in order to remain virtually present and engaged. Churches have taken this opportunity to bring Christians together virtually, to pray and encourage one another in a different way. Looking ahead into the future, past and current experience can help us all think more deeply about possible ways to engage people in the life of the church, in our local communities and beyond our borders.

The Worldwide Anglican Communion has always been proud of its rich diversity, which really shows during events that may gather Anglicans from different parts of the globe. Despite our differences, we are known to be people who somehow have a certain and unique spirit that binds us. A person once said that whenever you see a group of individuals who appear to have always known each other during a gathering of Christians from different parts of the world and different denominations, they must be Anglicans. Having had the opportunity to experience life in a different country, I can certainly say that we as Anglicans are a unique global family. Having taken part in the life of the church from our beloved Canterbury Cathedral to a parish in Pietermaritzburg, there has never been a time where I have felt any different from when I was at St Laurent's Ambohimano Cathedral. I have always felt that I belonged, and I was always home. I believe that the binding spirit that has kept us together in this global family has always been our strength despite our weaknesses. Like many families, we may have our disagreements and difference of opinions, but nevertheless we are a family. And we pray to God that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us in our journey as we continue to walk together as a global Anglican family. ■



Marc Ranarivelo in Madagascar

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technology has played an important role during the events caused by Covid-19

EXPANDING HORIZONS IN BAHRAIN

By the Rev'd Thomas Pote



Rev'd Thomas Pote (centre)

To broaden my understanding of Christianity beyond the bounds of the Church of England, I went to Bahrain, in the diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, to spend a month at St. Christopher's Anglican Cathedral. I was part of an ecumenical congregation which welcomed Christians from many different countries and traditions, united by a desire to worship God while living in a foreign land.

My time in Bahrain was not just to be spent in the cathedral community; I was there to learn about living as a Christian in a country where the Church is hosted, and to do this I needed to leave the cathedral compound. In Bahrain, there is great freedom afforded to Christians. This stems from the early days of the first American missionaries who arrived there to establish a hospital. These medics spent years faithfully serving the health needs of the Bahrainis and because of this, they were invited to build a church. These Christians placed human need before spiritual need, recognising that the language of sickness, hunger, thirst and grief is international, crossing class, race, religious and social boundaries.

I was frequently struck by this model of Christian mission. Missionary work is bound-up with proclaiming the Word of God, but that does not always happen with the name of Christ on our lips. Indeed, the model I experienced here was one of being Christ with people rather than telling them about Jesus. I think this is applicable in ministry in the UK too. In today's culture, where fewer people identify as Christian, our actions speak louder than words as we preach the transforming love of Christ in the world. While visiting a labour

camp, caught unawares, I was asked to preach in a makeshift chapel. Afterwards I apologised to my guide for not having a polished sermon. 'Don't worry' was the reply, 'your real sermon was you coming here to this God-forsaken place'. Actions not words.

I witnessed this transforming love in two different charities I visited. The first was the port chaplaincy resourced by the Mission to Seafarers, a Christian mission society, and the Bahrain International Seafarers Association, run by Christians and Muslims. In addition to visiting seafarers onboard ship, the chaplaincy has often been involved in advocacy work on behalf of sailors stranded on vessels. This happens when companies go bankrupt or when ships are denied permission to dock. The chaplaincy provides material assistance to the seafarers while trying to negotiate with employers to get them ashore and back home.

I saw another example of such inter-faith work at a shelter run by the Migrant Workers' Protection Society. This charity provides food and shelter for predominantly female migrant workers, who are financially or physically abused by their employers. Once these workers leave the houses they work in, they are classed as 'illegals' and are unable to leave the country. The charity assists them by negotiating with their former employers and the judicial authorities for the return of their passports and a ticket out of the country. In both missions, the advocacy work is extremely delicate and requires a great deal of diplomacy. In both cases, there was a clear tension between speaking on behalf of the oppressed, and maintaining good relations with the government authorities. This essential relationship allows the charities to do their work and permits their voices to be heard on behalf of those they help.

This placement helped me to reflect on how we as Christians preach the Good News in word, but more importantly in action as we seek to reveal Christ's light in our communities. I also saw the importance of seeking friendship with people of other faiths to do the common work that we are called to. Listening to people in Bahrain who actively pursue greater understanding and cooperation between different faith groups, I realised that looking beyond the limits of religious tolerance and building genuine friendship is vital as we build communities and strive for a more peaceful world. ■



the language of sickness, hunger, thirst and grief is international, crossing class, race, religious and social boundaries

BRINGING NEW LIFE TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

By Shakeel Nurmahi, Diocese of Peterborough



Shakeel Nurmahi

Across the UK, we are experiencing a challenge in our churches. In my context of the Church of England, we are all too aware of the disappearing demographic of children and young adults in our churches. The Church of England too often feels like a church in which young people are absent. As we consider the future, the Church of England faces the question of how we address the lack of young people in our churches, and **what can we do to ignite faith in the young people of the UK?**

To answer this question, I think there is wisdom to found in our sisters and brothers across the Anglican Communion.

In 2018, I went with USPG to the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA) Youth Congress, hosted in Nairobi, Kenya. This congress sought to set out a vision for young

Anglicans across the continent. Leading bishops invited young people to be the driving force in transforming Anglican churches across Africa. Young people were to be leaders for today. They called on young people to breathe new life and innovation in the Church to grow and develop their nations. They saw the gifts and talents within their young people, and they wanted to nurture and develop these gifts and talents for the benefit of their churches and their communities.

CAPA's energy for young people in their churches was inspiring, and it made me think about life back in the UK. I have encountered churches that are not excited about their young people. Why would young people be interested in a church that doesn't seem interested in them? We need to find ways of valuing and taking an interest in our young people. Perhaps it could be through inviting them to take part in roles and teams that go into making our Sunday gatherings happen. Maybe it could be asking them for their opinions and creating opportunities to hear their voices. As churches, we need to encourage and support our young people, and this has got to be backed up by our time and our money because it shows our young people that we are serious and that we value them highly. I hope that if we started acting on these things, then like CAPA, we will begin to see young people as the driving and transformational forces in our Church. ■

THE NEW ROLE OF THE SERVER IN THE COVID-19 CHURCH

By Kae Archer, Diocesan Altar Servers Association, Barbados

The primary role of the altar server is to support the duties performed at and on the altar during before, during and after worship. Many altar server guilds are filled with young persons, making the ministry of serving one of the few ministries outside of Sunday school with a strong youth presence in my church. Here, the servers' guild is a vital aspect of church participation and education of younger persons about the traditions and practices of the Anglican Church. Through training, practice and participation in the rituals and traditions of the liturgy, we have educated more youth on the intricacies of the Anglican Church.

The Covid-19 pandemic has placed many restrictions on countries and institutions alike, the church being no exception. The initial lockdown created its own hosts of issues: mainly it prevented any hands-on training and practice for these young people. The slow

reopening and the reduced numbers allowed in the church buildings, caused many youths to remain at home and withdraw from participation in church activities.

With the limit on the number of persons in the sanctuary, and the restricted activity in and around the altar, the need for social distancing has limited the number of servers needed. With the reduced numbers of servers has come a reduced number of the younger servers attending church. This coupled with the fear that Covid-19 has inspired, has led to a much lower number of servers, specifically those under the age of 18, attending church.

The servers' role, though not diminished, is reduced in such a way that many young people no longer find the connection in learning through the traditions and actions performed during service. They no longer look forward to

church through the hands-on purpose given to them through the ministry of serving.

Covid-19 has brought with it many changes for the Anglican Church. It has in some cases, launched the Anglican Church into the 21 Century in the ways in which they deliver their message. However, this message should be revised, not in content but in delivery. Our youth need to feel connected to the liturgy. For servers, the physical connection has frayed and as a church we should address this. The church is now utilising technology that is more familiar to younger people - YouTube, and Instagram for example, in a way to compensate for the lag in regular services. These channels are a great way to reach new and existing youth, and if used strategically and embraced by leaders can be the injection of youthfulness that Anglicanism needs. ■



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The Covid-19 pandemic has placed many restrictions on countries and institutions alike

JOURNEYING TO BE IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

By the Rev'd Fr Rajitha De Mel



I am deeply honoured to have been a part of the Asian Theological Academy (ATA) since 2015. I commenced my journey with the ATA family as a participant in the programme themed 'Journeying to be in the household of God.'

This gave me both useful experiences and immense knowledge as a young priest. Those experiences contributed enormously to my ministerial life.

The exposure visits I made with the ATA team were diverse experiences where I learnt about several local communities, including fishermen. Those visits influenced me in adopting a new perspective toward such local communities. I realised the significance of being aware of diverse segments in community throughout the journey to be the household of God. My first ATA experience was impressive, and it led me to continue my journey with them.

In 2016, I had the privilege to join the local ATA Committee, and I am honoured to be a part of

it today. As a result of this great opportunity, I work with a well-experienced and talented team formed of both clergy and lay members. I felt like a twig of a giant tree when I first joined them. In the beginning, my task at the committee seemed to be challenging. I was nervous as I was new to the ATA and as it was my first experience working on an international committee. However, with the warm welcome, love, and support of my fellow committee members, I overcame the challenge and as a result, I am still working as a committee member.

My experience as an ATA committee member has influenced my ministry. I am able to do a number of things now, for example, organise events such as exposure and cultural visits, search for resources, work with a variety of people and meet international friends and professionals.

I am glad to be a part of the ATA family and the USPG group and I am grateful to God for choosing me for this work. Through teamwork, God has blessed me to foster friendships, gain new experiences and learn new things that have enabled me to be a skilled servant of God for the glory of His kingdom.

I trust these experiences will facilitate in accomplishing one of the key objectives of the ATA. That is to equip presbyters and laity with the required expertise to become responsible leaders and stewards in their churches, communities, and societies. ■

'OBOR BELIA'

YOUTH AFLAME IN THE DIOCESE OF KUCHING



By The Diocesan Youth Council, Kuching

The Diocese of Kuching was established in 1865, 17 years after the arrival of English missionaries. Located in the eastern side of Malaysia, on the island of Borneo, the Diocese covers both Sarawak in Malaysia and the neighbouring country, Brunei Darussalam. In 1996, the Anglican Diocesan Youth Council (ADYC) was formed to meet the needs of the young people in the diocese. Formed on a foundation of being culturally conservative and theologically reformed, ADYC continues to coordinate, organise and formulate policies pertaining to diocesan youth. Today, ADYC oversees some 10,000 young people, aged 13 to 40, across 45 parishes in the diocese.

Since March 2020, Sarawak has recorded over 1,000 positive Covid-19 cases as Malaysia was hit by the worldwide pandemic. Adhering to the Movement Control Order has changed the way ADYC serves and reaches out to the young people in the diocese. During this challenging time, helping our young people in the diocese to remain faithful in Christ is top priority. Ms Phyllis Montegrai, the ADYC President, expressed her concern for the future and the future of Anglicanism. She said, 'Engaging with our young people online helps the continuous sharing of the Gospel, especially in a critical time like this. If we fail to faithfully care for our young people's spiritual needs, they will be easily fooled by the false teachers that promise them a better life and more opportunity in terms of health and wealth. If we fail to equip their faith now with the true Gospel, they will be easily swayed by heresy, influenced by liberalism and secularist teachings that are against the scriptures.

Despite living in the fast-changing world, Anglicanism should strive to uphold the scriptures as the highest authority (Sola Scriptura) and stay faithful to the true Gospel. We pray that Anglicanism will continue to be the foundation that guides Anglicans to be faithful in their journey with Christ and repentance from their sins, to be equipped with solid theological knowledge and sound doctrine, to recognise the scriptures as the ultimate interpretation of God's will and their relationship with Him, to choose prayer as a lifestyle and to actively respond to the great commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

Regardless of how fast the world is changing, the sharing of the Good News is relevant at all times. The Gospel must be proclaimed faithfully to all generations until Christ second coming. The real heritage and future of Anglicanism is the apostolic Gospel!

for "All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers,
and the flower falls,
but the word of the Lord remains forever."
And this word is the good news that was preached to you.
(1 Peter 1:24-25)"

Ms Lydia Ida, the Head of the ADYC media team said, 'We are deeply humbled and thankful to God for His faithfulness as well as wisdom upon the council's leadership. The President has empowered the ADYC media team to connect the council with the young people wherever they are through social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). This team was set up in 2014, mainly to produce newsletters for the youth in the Diocese, and also decided to use social media. This year, the ADYC media team's role has expanded, and they served in a number of online programmes for the council including a number of weekly intentional discipleship programmes such as 'Obor Belia' (Youth Aflame) and Christianity Explored, an Online streaming service for the Diocesan youth Sunday in July 2020, 'Faithline', a short video broadcasted fortnightly that answers young people's questions about the Christian faith and lifestyles and 'Find your church' – an information campaign that helps users to find the nearest Anglican church that they can attend when they move to another region (Peninsular Malaysia or Sabah and vice versa).

One of the challenges that ADYC media team faces is the internet connectivity in most parts of Sarawak. Internet access or connectivity is still weak, slow and unstable with some being unable to log in at all. Even in the urban areas, we continue to experience infrastructure gaps in accessing the internet, partially due to discrepancies in internet broadband speed in different regions.' ■

THE NIPPON SEI KO KAI

(NSKK - THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN JAPAN)

By Mako Kobayashi, Diocese of Kobe, Japan



The Nippon Sei Ko Kai (NSKK - the Anglican Church in Japan) was among the first Protestant churches established after Japan was re-opened to the world in 1854, ending 200 years of isolation.

These days, the Anglican population has dramatically declined in Japan, especially for young members. This reflects the Japanese national trends. However, even being a small group within a small church in a very secular nation, we the younger generations have tried to engage in various activities in our local places based on our faith in God.

Peace and social contribution

Young people from several dioceses of the NSKK have been involved in activities for peace for a few decades; especially in the Dioceses of Okinawa and Kobe (which includes Hiroshima city). These dioceses have put a lot of effort into conveying what happened in their regions in the past to congregations in other dioceses in Japan. They do this by giving opportunities for peace study sessions offering the opportunity to listen to survivors of the war and the atomic bombing.

The NSKK has also tried to contribute to society. One nuclear power facility suffered huge damage because of the terrible earthquake and tsunami in Tohoku in 2011. Radioactive material leaked, and many people became threatened by its effects. The NSKK has declared its opposition to nuclear power plants, and is active in promoting this issue. This also shows the care the Japanese Anglican community has for God's beautiful created world as we try to protect it. The youth of the NSKK are very much involved in this activity.

In addition, we remember the people who were victims of the big earthquake: the NSKK opened centers for evacuated people to help them relax and share their anxieties with volunteers. Many young members still support this activity, and the people who suffered from the earthquake, by making places for them to enjoy chatting and sharing their feelings.

Motivation for those activities comes from the Bible including Jesus' Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9) as well as the example of the Good Samaritan. Everyone surely knows these stories and they tell us why we have to take action for a variety of issues in our own places. We should keep these words in our minds as Christians, especially for youth in the community, who will face challenges, yet engage with helping people without religious or national boundaries.

The NSKK has had many opportunities to collaborate through activities for building good relationships with several nearby countries. Some dioceses of the Korean Anglican Church and the NSKK often have held events especially for young people. The Korean-Japan youth seminar was launched in 2008, and young people learned about each other's culture and histories annually. The Korean church has sent many clergy to NSKK to relieve our lack of clergy.

The Episcopal Church of the Philippines have also built relationship with the NSKK through annual work camps for young Japanese in the Philippines, and through visiting local churches and sharing their thoughts with local congregations. Sadly, these have all stopped this year because of Covid-19.

USPG has also been central to mission in Japan for many years and has helped offer chances for NSKK clergy to study theology in the UK. The NSKK is still particularly isolated because of language and cultural differences even though the world has become so much more open. This isolation could be the next challenge for NSKK, encouraging building and creating links with the wider Anglican world.

The youth of the NSKK hope that our experiences and projects, grown from Japan's past will help the NSKK and Japan to look to the future. Interaction with younger groups in other nations can be a massive stimulation to any Anglican youth group, and will help them to learn to be able to walk together towards a brighter future. We in the NSKK would like to put more emphasis on connecting with youth in other nations to create this. We really look forward to knowing other churches without any national boundaries.

We hope our experience might be an inspiration to other Christians and churches around the world: that even small groups of young people can do big things for our Lord. ■

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USPG has also been central to mission in Japan for many years



IMPORTED FAITHS AND HARMONIOUS INTER-FAITH LIVING

By The Rev'd Rasika TB Abeysinghe
Diocese of Kurunagala, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka had all its current religious faiths imported. However, the coming of Christianity was relatively late in comparison with the other great religious traditions. And with its arrival in the form of foreign rule and missionary activity, its impact has been felt on all spheres of life in the country.

The experience of being a new faith in the multitude of other faiths is novel. It calls not for enforcing one's own faith, but rather an inclusive approach of symbiosis. This is being in a 'lived out' faith journey with those who may not belong to our faith and being nourished both ways. The Anglican church in Sri Lanka has maintained a very positive stance with regard to interfaith dialogue and interfaith relations. The emphasis on 'very' is stressed, even to the level of being critical for its wider ecumenical outlook. The Diocese of Kurunagala was carved especially to work with people of other faiths in harmony, owing to the agricultural and plantation settings of the Diocese, where a majority of our neighbours belong to Buddhist and Hindu faiths.

The Anglican Communion focusses on the five marks of mission. In our reflections we have added a further element to make it six; we recognise interfaith collaboration as a further mark. The practice of this mark of mission extends from interfaith forums and action at the highest level in the national sphere, to the mutual invitation we receive and extend at the local parish level.

The extremist attacks on churches in Sri Lanka, extremist attacks on Muslims, the Tsunami, and the aftermath of the civil war all had interfaith components which were led by Anglican ambassadors in the hope of peace, harmony justice and cooperation. At the neighbourhood level, parishes are called to invite religious dignitaries from other faiths for events, festivals and collaborative tasks. The syllabuses of Anglican and all mainline church ministers, have a special branch of study titled "Religion and Society" where each aspect of our neighbour's faith is respected, studied and recognised.

Sri Lanka continues to be a religion-oriented country, in that religions mean a lot to everyone. It was ranked in the top five countries where people were convinced that religions played a major role in their lives. This wonderful tapestry of religious harmony and cooperation



has been modelled through the ages and must be regarded as highly important. There are two main reasons for this. The first is the ability that this model provides for harmonious coexistence. In a country where people look up to religious leaders, it is necessary that they promote this ideology as one that is pro-life giving. The second is witness to them who are not like us and also witness to the wider world. Even in the case that my brother and sister may not want to dialogue with me; I must take the initiative to dialogue with him or her.

Our world is witness to many conflicts that have raged because of the differences in our faiths. Yet we all believe that the ultimate reality of God bypasses all our human limitations and understanding. In this regard, if God is accepted, then there is no reason why we would decline dialogue with our neighbour who may have a different faith. In Sri Lanka, we have not come to this conclusion based on theory or frameworks. Instead, this has come to us through experience. While both these terms of interfaith dialogue and interfaith relations are relatively new concepts from a first world context, they have been part and parcel of life in the Asian culture for centuries.

Therefore, the Anglican Church remains committed for the development and collaboration between faiths. We feel that as we are called to proclaim the reign of God, we do so when we accept and work with our neighbours. While we realise that in the modern world, this topic maybe toxic amidst varied issues, God calls us in Jesus who broke down barriers and opened the way of liberation to all. As we remember and pray for all efforts of interfaith peace and harmony in the world, may God's guidance, patience, wisdom and peace be upon us all. ■



we all believe that
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THE FUTURE OF THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF KUMASI, GHANA

By the Rev'd Canon Samuel Kojo Nyame

Speaking at the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in Lisbon, 1998, the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan said:

'No one was born a good citizen, no nation born a democracy. Rather, both were the results of processes that evolved over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cut itself off from its youth has severed its lifeline, and it is condemned to bleed to death. You are the guardians of that lifeline -- nurture it; develop it; and give it strength.'

Examining the future of the Anglican Diocese of Kumasi from the perspective of the younger generation is timely and relevant. Like many others, the Diocese seems to be losing many of its younger generation to other attractions.

Younger people form half of the total membership of the Anglican Diocese of Kumasi, and they have always been very active in her growth and expansion. As Youth Director, part of my role is to listen and engage with the youth who are an important part of the church of today, to understand their concerns and challenges and help address them.

A concern often expressed by the youth today is the feeling of discouragement because church leaders can seem to disregard their views. They sometimes feel like they are not being given proper recognition for who they are - neither are they regarded as fitting partners and collaborators in the total ministry of the Church. They can feel excluded and ignored in the planning and development of youth programmes even where they have valuable contributions to offer for the good of the ministry.

Some are of the view that the Anglican Church does not encourage the young to explore spiritual gifts such as healing and prophesy, and therefore those interested often leave the Church either to join another church or establish their own. Some of those who stay behind have 'second churches' where they go to seek what they term 'spiritual help'.

Many are also grappling with the disturbing trend in Kumasi connected with the new style of evangelism associated with the so-called 'prosperity churches,' promoting the

so-called 'prosperity gospel', and many are being attracted to this.

To improve the situation for young people, the Anglican Church needs to make an intentional effort to re-engage with youth ministry, focusing on the intellectual, physical, social and spiritual development of its younger generation and take a holistic approach. It also needs to create more openings for good teaching and nurturing that will facilitate discernment of vocation and development of gifts. The Church could offer appropriate opportunities for the youth to participate and explore a variety of innovative ways of worship in the Anglican context. This way, many of the young who discern vocational as well as spiritual gifts, can be properly nurtured and allowed to exercise their gifts in the Anglican Church, with supervision and guidance from the clergy.

The majority of the young people desire to be involved, to be helped to realise their goals in life, to grow in their Christian life and become faithful disciples of Christ. Planning and development of youth programmes should involve the youth themselves, because they have invaluable contributions to make for the good of the Church (1 Timothy 4:12)

To remain relevant, the Church needs to inspire the young people to participate in issues of justice, peace, development, caring and service; to present the Good News of Jesus in practical ways in the community.

As the guardians of that lifeline of the future of the Church we are called to nurture, develop and give the youth its strength. The future of the Anglican Diocese of Kumasi needs to be visualised in the hands and actions of the younger generation today. Therefore, every effort should be made to shape the future in them today so that we can witness the desired future of our diocese tomorrow. ■

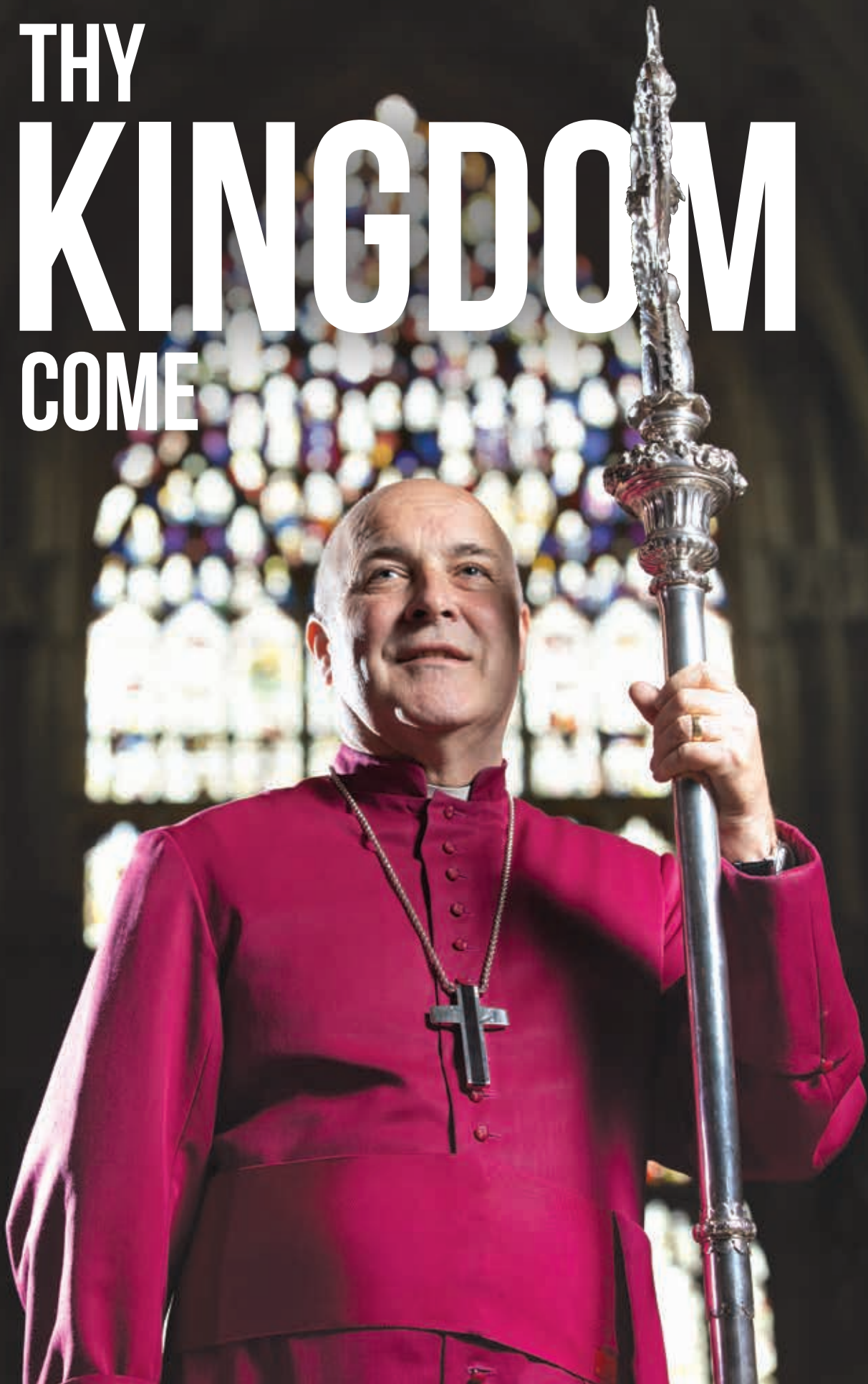


Football trophy presentation

“

A society that cut itself off from its youth has severed its lifeline

THY KINGDOM COME



THY KINGDOM COME

By The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Stephen Cottrell SCP

EVERY DAY, CHRISTIANS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD PRAY THIS PRAYER THAT JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES.

We have abused this beautiful planet which God created almost to the point of no return. We are still torn apart by hatred and in-fighting. So many suffer because they lack the basic necessities of life. Others still are rejected or condemned to a lesser life because of the colour of their skin, their gender or their faith. And the current Covid-19 pandemic has both magnified and also shed a powerful light on these current woes.

Yet despite all this, I am filled with hope. I have hope because I know that God, who has created this world and created us, is faithful to us. God has shown us that faithfulness in the gift of His Son Jesus coming into the world to redeem us. Jesus has taught us to pray 'Thy kingdom come' and has also promised us that He is with us always, even to the end of the age. So we know that despite the mess we have made of things, God is with us and things can be different.

Nowhere do I see that hope more clearly than in our young people today. They hold up a light to so many of the things which are not right in our world today. Their witness for environmental, racial and social justice which has drawn support from people throughout the world is a prophetic witness. It shames us into realising how far we have fallen short in bringing in God's kingdom; it also challenges us to strive now for good and lasting change.

As a fairly new and still learning Archbishop of York, I want to help churches and people everywhere to live and share the gospel of Jesus Christ. I desire this so that people can glimpse what the Good News of Christ actually means in practice as they can see the signs of God's kingdom breaking in – signs of hope as we learn to care for the world in a more sustainable way, to live peacefully together and to honour one another, welcoming those who are different from us.

So I pray that in this role, I may particularly help young people to be hope-bearers of God's kingdom in the communities and countries in

which they live. I rejoice in all that they are already doing to make this a reality. Just to give you a few examples, in my own diocese of York, I been really excited to see school and college students bringing environmental changes, supporting those who are elderly and housebound and campaigning to bring badly-needed changes in their local communities.

I am also encouraged by all that young people are doing throughout the Anglican Communion to build links of friendship and support. The role of USPG is really significant here. Throughout its 300- year history as an Anglican Mission Agency, it has continuously developed and adapted to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ. Through the strong partnerships which USPG has between provinces, we've seen what it can mean for Christians to love, pray for and support one another as fellow members of Christ's church. And the opportunities USPG provides for young people to spend time in different parts of the Anglican Communion, through for example, the 'Journey with Us' and 'Exchanging Places' schemes, enable them to glimpse and live out what God's love means in a far wider context.

In the Bible, we see how God calls young people to serve him, often by challenging current injustices and living out the changes God was seeking in their own lives. In that way, they became a living sign of God's kingdom. Remember Samuel, called when he was a young child, Jeremiah the prophet, called as a youth and think of Mary called as a young teenager.

My hope and prayer today is twofold. First that the leaders of the nations and especially the church leaders, may be open and alert to what young people are saying to them and discern where God is at work amongst them. And second, that young people in every place may with confidence and faith be hope-bearers as they show us what it means and what it will require of us that God's kingdom may truly come on earth. ■



Nowhere do I see that hope more clearly than in our young people today

YET EVERY DAY AS WE LOOK AROUND AT OUR WORLD, SO MUCH CRIES OUT TO US THAT THIS IS NOT WHAT GOD MEANT IT TO BE.

JOURNEY WITH US IN SOUTH AFRICA

By The Rev'd Gerry Lynch, Devizes

I first went to South Africa in 2011 through what is now USPG's Journey with Us programme. My placement in the Diocese of Cape Town taught me I was a valued person. I returned through USPG's Expanding Horizons programme, but this time 'up north' in the Diocese of Christ the King. In and around Johannesburg, a country's and perhaps a continent's future is being forged. Christ the King covers none of the city's famous landmarks in its glitzy Northern suburbs or the emotional heartland of Soweto.

Instead, this is a diocese of work-a-day suburbs, townships and industrial towns, with a kaleidoscopic collection of races, nationalities and income levels. In the hilltop suburbs around Christ the King Church, Mondeor, whites, blacks, Indians and those of mixed race live together in roughly equal numbers and considerable comfort; down the hill in Rosettenville and Turffontein, a similarly mixed population battles poverty and violent crime, with much xenophobia directed by some South Africans towards a large population from other African countries.



An act of worship

The Diocese spreads southwards to the industrial Vaal region, where tightly-knit communities give a different 'small town' feel, reminiscent of the shift in atmosphere one gets by going from, say, Manchester to Bolton. Here, at St Cyprian's in Sharpeville, the spiritual heart of a diocese without a cathedral beats, just a few hundred metres from the site of the 1960 police massacre that aroused the world's conscience against the horrors of apartheid.

South African Anglicanism impresses in its capacity to mix Catholic, Evangelical, and Liberal elements into a distinctive spiritual personality. The Sunday morning thrifer might lead an Alpha course on Wednesday night before calling a local *purohit* to discuss a mixed Hindu-Christian marriage. This is a church of many tongues too – at a Sunday Eucharist in Christ the Saviour, Lenasia, a historically Indian congregation with growing numbers of black and mixed race worshippers, the prayer of consecration switched between seven languages, from Afrikaans to Zulu, in perhaps five minutes. At a high school Eucharist, to include the many Congolese, Mozambican, and Chinese pupils, prayers in French, Portuguese, and Mandarin were interspersed among English, Sesotho, and Xhosa. This living out of Pentecost is a more pragmatic gift of the Holy Spirit than the type favoured in the region's many glitzy mega-churches.

The Diocese doesn't lack problems; with no endowments, finances are tight. Just 13 stipendiary priests struggle to serve a population of over a million, many nominally Anglican but essentially de-churched. The fields are ripe for harvest, but the labourers are few.

Divisions over homosexuality are as intense as they are here, with increasingly strident demands for change among the young often confronting angry bewilderment from older Anglicans.

This is Africa at its most globalised, and while in some ways our contexts are profoundly different, in others there is tremendous overlap. Not least, since my return, we have shared the burden of Covid-19. My new friendships have continued over WhatsApp and Facebook, and of course, through prayer. USPG is about partnership in the Gospel, and partnership is about sharing joys and burdens as equals. It was a privilege to be allowed to share the world of my South African colleagues, whom I found to be humorous, pragmatic, faithful, and wise. ■

USPG TRUSTEE PROFILE

Catherine Wickens



When Catherine became a trustee in July 2019, it was for her a homecoming of sorts. 'I was six months old when my parents moved to Zambia to be mission partners with USPG,' she says. 'We lived there until I was three. So right from the beginning, USPG has been in my life, lingering somewhere in the background, even though I didn't get involved in it as I grew up. Faith-wise, I very much did my own thing.'

'What made me decide to come back to USPG was its focus on partnership, which aligned with the way I was seeing global mission and my own involvement in organisations around the world. I felt this would be a useful time to add my voice to the conversation.'

Catherine has recently graduated from Durham University, where she read French and Arabic. She is now a mental health social worker on the Wirral. Catherine has taught English at a university in Rwanda and worked with refugees in Greece and for the intellectual disability organisation L'Arche in France. Whilst doing her degree, she spent some time studying in Morocco and Jordan.

'I'm still a relatively new trustee,' she says. 'I have mostly been learning about the world church through my induction processes and through meetings with USPG staff and learning more about the Anglican Communion. I am very aware that there is still a lot I have to learn. The world church is huge and immensely complex. And we in the UK, particularly as Anglicans, tend to think that we get it and we really don't! Having that awareness as a trustee is crucial because there is so much that we don't understand. Being honest about how much more there is still to learn is an important part of this role.'

'I've found the biblical account of the disciples on the road to Emmaus profoundly helpful in thinking of my role as a trustee. The fact that the

two disciples walking together found Jesus along the road is immensely useful to me for thinking about relationships. It encourages me - not only in my thinking about USPG, but also in my personal life: that realisation of how we need each other and how we find Christ in that space in between.'

Inclusion is an issue very close to Catherine's heart, and she has been at the forefront of USPG's Standing in Solidarity initiative, together with fellow trustee the Rev'd Dr Carlton Turner.

'As a member of the Anglican Communion, and as someone who is younger and deeply passionate about issues of inclusion, I think that that's something I can bring to the table,' she says. 'I think that USPG should be working towards being an organisation which anyone and everyone can get involved with, and which is also a bridge or a hub between different communities and different people from around the world. And that involves us having conversations like the ones Carlton and I have had on behalf of Standing in Solidarity - conversations that are often quite difficult. I have experience of advocating for the rights of different groups and I think that that's something that very much feeds into where USPG sits, in terms of encouraging genuine conversation and relationship with different communities around the world. I think the real way in which USPG grapples with its past is impressive and exciting. That sense of being willing to be honest about history and past failures is quite surprising for an organisation. Sometimes people and organisations tend to shy away from the darker parts of their history. For me, it's brilliant that USPG confronts its history so thoughtfully and with such intention.'

'I believe that USPG, as an organisation is profoundly rooted in partnership and is in a great position to encourage dialogue and relationship within the wider Anglican Communion. We're always fearful that the Communion might split over one issue or another. But I think that we hold a very precious orb that shines in the Anglican Communion. We need to protect that light, nurture it and help it to grow. I do believe that we have an opportunity over the coming years to help those conversations happen gently and with care and diligence to all parties concerned. USPG's greatest strength is its long historical and continued relationships with its partners, and I think that that those relationships are profoundly enriching to the lives of Christians - both in this country and all over the world.' ■



So right from the beginning, USPG has been in my life

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS



We live in a broken and unequal world. We are here for such a time as this. Called to respond with words and actions. USPG partners with churches across the world in their mission of transforming lives through education, health care and justice for all.



#forsuchatime



People are living in this world as though they have another planet to go to.
Hermani

The Green Schools Programme is empowering the next generation with the skills and knowledge they need to protect the environment now for the future. You are standing in solidarity with young people like Hermani from St Hilda's School Ooty who is seeing the impact that the Green Schools Programme is having in her school.

They harvest rainwater in large tanks and use the water for their toilets, gardening, washing and cooking using steam. Children in schools across south India are putting their faith into action in caring for God's Creation.

£30

Provides one school with a Green School Award to champion their progress and inspire others to follow in their footsteps

£60

Provides educational materials on the Green School Programme to students in six schools to empower their students to start their environmental journey

£100

Means that 270 children can learn how to change their environment by training nine teachers on the Green Schools Initiative.

CASE STUDIES & STORIES:

Diyaa - I think this will help me as an adult because in the future we will start doing many new things, like rainwater harvesting. We will find more ways to help our environment so we can use the basic knowledge we learnt now and make better changes for the environment

Hermani - the pupil in charge of the green project at her school said "This school has taught me to how to save electricity, how to save water, how to plant trees and how to develop the ecology. I will surely teach the next generation to keep our environment clean and green. I have studied at this school from first grade and I have been in this school for 9 years and it has been a perfect blessing for me. When I leave I will miss the school very much as it is very eco-friendly."

Dr Jegy Grace Thomas - (Principal of Baker Memorial Secondary School in Kottayam) has embraced the challenge to make it a 'Green School' after receiving training on the environment from the Church of South India. The school campus is now a plastic-free zone, with children bringing in their food in tiffin boxes and cloth bags.

Each student has a grow-bag with their name on it, and they learn how to grow vegetables such as cauliflower, peas, beans, and spinach using organic fertilizer such as cow dung. Turmeric is also cultivated on campus, and the students are responsible for cleaning, drying, powdering and packing it. The students then sell their turmeric, and the profit is used to help support under-privileged students at the school. ■



A boy in Green School

YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR LENT APPEAL

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

BY:



- Giving a donation (uspg.org.uk/forsuchatime)
- Following along with our weekly environmental challenges on social media or in the Lent Course which is freely available from our website at www.uspg.org.uk

Thank you for supporting our Lent Appeal, **FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS**. Your gift will really help the Green Schools programme.



I will surely teach the next generation to keep our environment clean and green

PASTORAL CARE IN ZONES OF FREEDOM: 1701 TO 2020

By Dr Alison Searle and Emily Vine, University of Leeds.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) has an enormous archive documenting its long history and operations as an incorporated company involved in global mission. When it was established in 1701, the only form of communication between the Society's headquarters in London, and the various missionaries it employed in the Caribbean and North America, was by handwritten letters.



Our project examines letters from the first twenty years of the Society's existence. We focus on what they reveal about the Society's early practices, the ways in which caregiving and oversight were established and administered remotely, and the diverse experiences of early missionaries in a range of contexts. These missionaries sought to provide care to a diverse range of potential and sometimes conflicting congregations (British immigrants and Indigenous people) and to receive care (from the Society, local patrons, and fellow missionaries). Pastoral care, what it involves, and who should administer it to whom remains integral to the global operations of USPG in 2020.

In the wake of Covid-19, practices of remote caregiving to vulnerable and precarious communities as well as how those providing care are resourced and sustained in a crisis have become urgent questions. Exploring pastoral care as a theme, our research creates a dialogue between USPG as a contemporary organisation and its archive. We reflect on SPG's initial formation as an Anglican mission organisation. Specifically we are interested how its early formation, working across the -Atlantic, shapes and informs its current work and caregiving as a global partner within the Anglican Communion.

PASTORAL CARE IN ZONES OF FREEDOM: 1701 TO 2020

Francis Le Jau (1665-1717), originally a French Huguenot, was one of the earliest missionaries employed by the Society in Goose Creek, South Carolina, and a persistent letter writer. His letters offer insights into the challenges of transatlantic pastoral care as the Society, and its missionaries, sought to create parishes and the rituals of Anglican communion in complex places. Writing onboard the ship 'Greenwich' docked near Plymouth in May 1706, Le Jau notes that he has been delayed: 'yet out of an ardent desire to be in the place where I am sent I would willingly go passenger in some other ship'. However, he is unable to bear the cost. The financial and logistical vulnerabilities of the Society's missionaries as they sought to make a living, and travel long distances, dependent on the goodwill of shipmasters and the challenges of weather, piracy and war, recur throughout the early correspondence. The challenge of distance was particularly acute when it came to receiving instructions and supplies.

In September, Le Jau writes again noting that he has arrived safely after a 'Pleasant' ten-week voyage with 'no bad Accident and all our Ships Company in health; we lost but 3 men these five months'. This is a stark reminder of the dangers of eighteenth-century travel, and the relative nature of how we define 'safety'. Le Jau is hosted by Mr Wallace, 'Minister of the Neighbouring parish', observing: 'I wish I was so happy as to imitate his prudence in the care of his Flock. He has won the affections of all Strangers as well as his own people'. This meeting occurs very early in Le Jau's missionary experience but provides a glimpse of the pastoral care he too hopes to provide.

In Le Jau's letter of 2 December, having settled into his parish, he notes the toll that the voyage and climate are taking on his health: 'when I am season'd to the country I hope I'll do well'. He trusts that God 'will take care of me and direct me in my Mission' and records the 'great & charitable care' he has received, while waiting for his church and parsonage to be built. His confidence that this 'will be fitted up in a short time' proved to be seriously misplaced.

A more seasoned Le Jau writes to the Secretary of the Society from Goose Creek in April 1711, revealing the caution taken to cross-reference correspondence, in case a ship or bearer is waylaid. He says, 'besides the Letter which shall I hope come to your hands', he send other papers separately, and his colleague Johnson

will deliver another message upon arriving 'Safe to London'. The vision of missionary life he offers is very different from his initial expectations five years' earlier, providing prospective candidates with a reality check:

'If the Society thinks fit to send any missionary to \any/ one of our vacant Parishes and they \should/ have families... they must prepare to suffer great hardships and Crosses. our poor Brother Wood perish'd of meer misery. Batchelors do well Enough if they be young and healthy. the poor man was some-what Elderly and broken & no care was taken of him..., I have little or no help from my Parishioners who have much ado to maintain themselves we hardly have a joint of fresh meat once a week. Indian corn bread & water is the common food and drink for my children with a little milk. This melancholy narrative is not all I suffer here.'

Le Jau's melancholy narrative makes clear some of the critical differences between parish life in England and South Carolina. The congregation is not able to supply him with sufficient to live on, so he and his family remain dependent on the financial resources of the Society. It is difficult to work in places where the church remains uncertainly established and to provide for a family.

There are many parallels between Le Jau's missionary experiences in the early SPG, and the work and concerns of USPG today. USPG connects those who are geographically separated but are united by the gospel. Then and today it seeks to provide care, and to resource and support those involved in care provision. Today we are not reliant on letters and ships. The challenges of Covid-19 requiring an increase in online communication, have in many ways served to connect the global church community more than ever. In our consideration of global care past and present we need to be acutely aware of historical missionaries' failures to care for others. The hope is that USPG will take the learning from the past and present and apply it to its mission in the future. ■



The challenge of distance was particularly acute

THE CHURCH AND JUNKANOO

By Adrian Butcher



The Rev'd Dr Carlton Turner

Colourful, noisy and vibrant, the festival of Junkanoo is the heart and soul of the Bahamas in the Caribbean. The parades which take place on Boxing Day and New Year's Day feature music, dancing and incredible costumes. Historically Junkanoo, which originated in West Africa, has had an uneasy relationship with the Church. But a Bahamian theologian believes if Anglicans were to understand and embrace Junkanoo, the result could be transformative for society across the islands and beyond.

In a new book, the Rev'd Dr Carlton Turner, USPG trustee and tutor in Contextual Theology at the Queen's Foundation in Birmingham, explores the history of the Bahamas and the relationship between the Church and Junkanoo. He examines the Church's attitude to the power and spirituality of Junkanoo and the conflation of sinfulness with African religious and cultural heritage. He argues that the Church must reassess its view of the carnival.

'For Bahamian people, Junkanoo and the Church are central to their identity,' he says. 'But consciously or sub-consciously, Junkanoo has been regarded as secular or even demonic.'

He believes this has produced what he calls 'self-negation' – a damaging tendency for Caribbean people to belittle their African heritage as second class. He explores how the Church has played a central role in this rejection of indigenous culture and how that hostility can be traced back to the colonial era. He believes the Church's lack of engagement with Junkanoo and fear of its power and practices has perpetuated self-negation and created division.

'I want this dichotomy and everything that fuels it to go,' he says, '...for Junkanoo to be esteemed and honoured for what it is, even in Church, even in our religious life. I want our churches to take our culture seriously.'

Dr Turner believes the Church has much to learn from Junkanoo.

'It's very pastoral and open to anyone, regardless of who they are and where they come from. There is no barrier... there's a sense of belonging. There's also mentoring - Church can marginalise young people but Junkanoo doesn't.'

Dr Turner hopes the book will inspire people to take a fresh look at Caribbean theology and will inform their theological formation. He feels that developing a better understanding of Junkanoo and similar spiritualities will encourage Christian theology to grow and be more creative, and to appreciate how religious and cultural traditions helped the people of the Caribbean survive slavery and colonialism.

'I believe Junkanoo and Christianity can complement each other,' he says. 'Both are important and cherished resources for bringing about wholeness within Bahamian society.' ■

'Overcoming Self-Negation – The Church and Junkanoo in Contemporary Bahamian Society' – by Rev'd Dr C Turner is published by Pickwick Publications



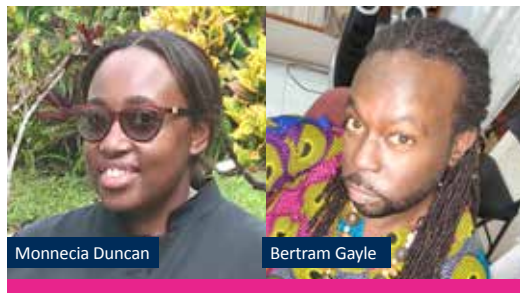
The Junkanoo festival



For Bahamian people, Junkanoo and the Church are central to their identity

AN AFFIRMING SPACE FOR YOUTH: THE CHURCH IN THE PROVINCE OF THE WEST INDIES

By Monnecia Duncan and Bertram Gayle



How did we get here? Christianity came to the Caribbean in the service of those who participated in the enslavement of Africans. The Church, while catering for the spiritual needs of the colonists, provided chaplaincy and the by-product of religious justification for the colonial project. Christianity was later introduced to the enslaved, primarily to make them more servile and productive. The identity and dignity of black lives did not matter or only mattered in so far as they were producers; this is the indisputable history of the faith in the region.

Equally indisputable is the shift in the value that the Church has placed on black lives. Black lives now matter! The appointment of black people such as Percival Gibson as leaders in the Church in the Province of the West Indies (CPWI), starting in the mid 20 century, is noteworthy. This move to affirm black lives has been a long and on-going process. We highlight two examples: the hymnody of the CPWI and the iconography found in several of our ecclesial spaces.

For most of its existence, the CPWI's principal hymnal was an artefact of the colonial era, Hymns Ancient and Modern. In 2010, a new provincial hymnal was published. Unlike its predecessor, it reflects sensitivity not only to the musical traditions of the province but also to the region's experience of enslavement and of the quest for liberation. This sensitivity is evidenced by the inclusion of hymns by Caribbean authors, several of which are written to rhythmic idioms associated with the Caribbean experience – for example, Jamaican folk, spirituals, reggae and calypso.

Since the 1970s, there has been a proliferation of culturally-relevant icons. In the Diocese of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, for example, one of our priests, the Rev'd Hilda Vaughn, has identified no fewer than twenty such icons. Before now, none of our icons portrayed biblical characters in ways that affirmed our Afro-Caribbean identity, history and culture.

As youths in the CPWI, this is a very hopeful process for celebrating the dignity of black lives and its regional focus makes the Caribbean potentially a more hospitable and affirming space for youths. With the longest history of exclusion from the church and society – black youths, as shown in the following example, are in a better position to affirm, engage and enjoy the hospitality of the sacred community.

I (Monnecia) grew up in the coastal town of Falmouth, Trelawny. My mother would take me along with her to church every Sunday, and one Sunday, after my confirmation, a lady asked her if I could join the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF). At the time, I was just around 10 years old and I was in Sunday School with a lot of my friends. I didn't want to leave them behind. I felt better when I was told that they were coming too.

This was how I became involved in youth ministry which later led to my role in the National Youth Council. From Sunday School to AYF, election as the group's secretary, treasurer, vice president and then president. I played an active role at all levels of the church. Also, I would always represent my church at diocesan events and work closely with the Deanery Youth Co-Ordinator to promote and facilitate fellowship among the youth in my church and in the wider community.

The most impactful event of my involvement with the National Council was being involved with the planning of the National Youth Rally. The council provided opportunities for spiritual growth such as retreats, workshops, Bible studies, creative worship, sports, and Bible quizzes. I had the opportunity to form bonds in the church community which created long-lasting relationships. My interpersonal and leadership skills were developed during this period. I formed a deep relationship with God which has led me to encourage others to join the AYF and become members of the church. My faith in Christ grew as I worked in the church and my sense of vocation inspired my acceptance for formation and training towards the priesthood at the United Theological College of the West Indies.

In the final analysis, the young generation, while resisting the legacy of exploitation of the past, is still very much active in the Anglican church. Undoubtedly, there is a wider appreciation of the church's systems and programmes for youth development and the affirmation that black lives do matter in the Caribbean today. ■



The identity
and dignity of
black lives did
not matter

USPG VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW

MARION MACDONALD

‘I want people in churches in the UK to see how important it is to have a long-term partnership with the world church,’ says Marion, who has been a USPG volunteer since 2016.

‘Some churches might have a partnership because they know someone who’s doing some work overseas. But when that person moves on, that church’s connection disappears because the person they used to support is no longer there. That, to me, is not the way to support the world church.’

Marion volunteers as a Diocesan Representative in the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham. Her USPG story began when she went to Serbia on what was then the Experience Exchange Programme (now Journey With Us).

‘I was about 50 or 51 at the time,’ she recalls. ‘I had my training in Birmingham and an interview with Habib Nader, who coordinated the programme. At the interview I said, “I’ve got a very limited area where I can go. I don’t want to have to take malaria tablets and I don’t want to go somewhere where I’m not likely to get on with the food.” I was expecting Habib to say he was sending me to the West Indies! But he found a placement for me in Novi Sad in Serbia. I went

in August 2003 - a few months after Serbia’s president Zoran Dindic was assassinated. My son wasn’t very keen on me going.’

Marion’s volunteering role involves setting up speaking appointments for USPG representatives in churches in her diocese. ‘If people want a speaker to come and talk about what they’re doing in USPG, I find someone for them, usually someone who is over on furlough from wherever they are working,’ she says. ‘Our diocese had quite a number of churches who regularly gave to USPG. But one thing I’ve found difficult in the last six years is that one church after another seems to have given up supporting us.’ But it hasn’t all been bad news. ‘I’ve really enjoyed meeting other people who, like me, are committed to supporting the work of USPG,’ she says. ‘I’ve enjoyed coming down to London for some of the meetings there.’

What would Marion say to someone who was thinking about volunteering? She doesn’t hesitate with her reply: ‘Do it! When I was thinking about going overseas, I met a lady at an event in Swanwick. She waved a USPG leaflet at me and said, “You should do this!” I didn’t know this lady at all. But that was the start of the process for me. I believe that meeting her was a kick from God to say, “Get on with it!” So, if you’re thinking about volunteering, maybe it’s now time to just do it.’ ■

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Contact Ramond Mitchell our Volunteering and Education Co-ordinator, to find out how you can get involved. Email rmitchell@uspg.org.uk or phone **0207 921 2200** to have a chat about volunteering.

THE FUTURE OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE GAMBIA

Banjul, capital city of the Gambia



Mam Betty George

I decided to discuss the topic of the future of Anglicanism in The Gambia with some of the “youthful adults” I socialise with, and this brief reflection is from our conversation. There seems to be a sort of disconnect between the younger generation and the Church as an institution in our context. We think this could be because young people are excluded from the decision-making process.

We the youth see ourselves sometimes as misfits in the Church’s Eucharistic and administrative life. We feel that the church today is not getting the appetite for the charismatic way of worship which we envisage. There is no vibrancy during the service. We are yearning for a blend of Anglicanism with a Charismatic style of worship.

We asked ourselves ‘where did it get lost?’ because the Anglican Young People’s Association (AYPA) used to be really vibrant. It is worth noting that most of the other youth

organisations of the Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches used to take their cue from the AYPA. Social functions like youth camps, dramas, picnics, and dances emanated from the AYPA. All these social functions are no-longer sponsored by the Church anymore, and there is no functional leadership to organise us.

Thinking deeper, our parents in some ways share part of the responsibility for this. Many of our parents appear more interested in our academic performances than our spiritual growth. Many families have moved away from the capital Banjul where we lived within the reach of the church. The churches outside Banjul are not now close to where we live.

One thing that should always be borne in mind is that a church without youth is dead. The younger generation are part of the church today and will be there for the future, and therefore they should be shaped to take over future leadership roles in the Church. ■

Evelyn W.D N. Bidwell-John

Anglicanism is a form of Western Christian tradition that has developed its own form of practices, liturgy and identity out of the Church of England following the English reformation.

As young people in the church, most of us were baptised as babies and we were confirmed without much solid grounding in the teachings and beliefs of the church. This has affected our participation in church life.

When I engage in conversation with my friends from the other so-called ‘Born Again’ churches, I begin to feel my inadequacies and lack of understanding of some basic Christian concepts. Like me, many young people of the Diocese yearn for serious bible study sessions in the various Parishes to equip us with the basic understanding of the teachings of the Church.

The English language is used exclusively for

worship in the Anglican church. Most of the other denominations around us use some of the local languages to conduct services, and young people can see how engaged their youthful congregation is because of it. For the future of Anglicanism to become vital and real among the youth, the Church could think about begin to localising some of its worship life. Inculturation should be a consideration for the Church going into the future.

Lastly, the Diocese could develop a robust and vibrant youth and children’s chaplaincy ministry -which will have full and undivided attention on the needs of the younger generation of the Church. We feel that the focus of the Church is focused on the adult population in the congregation, but young people will grow to become the future leaders of the Church and we should begin to own that future from today. ■

“

many young people of the Diocese yearn for serious bible study sessions in the various parishes

‘MISSION AUDIT’: POSSIBILITIES FOR CHURCH GROWTH IN GHANA

By The Rev’d Fr Prince Anilov Mensah, Diocese of Ho, Ghana

The African continent within which the Anglican Church exists, has a largely tragic history which includes socio political, economic and religious chaos, bad governance and manipulation of ethnic and religious differences which have resulted in misery for the people. Many Anglican Christians have fallen for lies and have been misled, leaving the Church confused, discouraged and betrayed.

The role of the Anglican Church has been seen as that of ‘custodian of moral principles and critical norms for spirituality’ that could result in the reformation of the society where the Church exists.

Young people who are often seen as the future of the Anglican Church are faced with varying challenges within and outside the Church. The Church can sometimes overlook the potential roles for the young who may be left out when it comes to formulating policies. Young people face unemployment which will adversely affect the Church financially too. It is important for the Church to think of ways of reducing the impact of unemployment on young people.

One way the Anglican Church in Ghana could thrive is by doing what I call a ‘Mission Audit.’ The youth (and the general membership) have God-given talents and skills which need to be identified, empowered and harnessed through

the organisation of regular conferences, workshops to help to build a very beautiful tapestry called the Anglican Church. A ‘Mission Audit’ (when carried out appropriately) will go a very long way to foster growth and build the Church. This can only be achieved if the Church identifies the gifts, skills and talents embodied by younger members, and empowers them to take up active roles in the Anglican Church in Ghana and on the global stage.

It is important not to limit catechetical instruction to preparation for confirmation. It should be a lifeline in the Church’s ministry of teaching and building up the body of Christ. It is important for the Church to share the principles and beliefs of the priesthood with all believers, and thus empower and provide opportunities for all baptised members of the Church to exercise their ‘priesthood’ calling. It will help identify, develop and deploy the gifts, skills and talents of every member (especially the young) to build up of the body of Christ. As a highly mobile population, these processes should be owned and practiced by all Anglican congregations in the country, so that the young people can follow a well-planned and ordered growth path. This means that the Anglican Church in Ghana should begin to model a national church, not only in terms of presence but importantly in terms of practice, mission and vision.



Anglican Church, Cape Coast, Ghana

The Anglican Diocese of Ho in Ghana is making progress in assisting the youth. This is achieved through initiatives like the making of local clothes - Tie and Dye - periodical gatherings which seek to foster Christian unity and peaceful cohesion among the youth in the diocese and elsewhere. The church has prioritised what we call, ‘Youth Engagement’ - an initiative which seeks to provide a platform for interfaith and ecumenical conversations; this is not just among Anglican Youth but also with other denominational youth; where Christian acknowledge is shared and acquired.

It is my fervent hope that the challenges and the solutions suggested for building up the youth in the Anglican Church in Ghana will be given the attention they need. Challenges tackled and solutions proposed could help the Church achieve the goal of increasing and propagating the gospel of Christ to the ends of the world as enjoined by Jesus’ command in Matthew 28:18-19. ■



A ‘Mission Audit’ (when carried out appropriately) will go a very long way to foster growth and build the Church.

YOUTH IN THE BODY OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION



Deanna Walcott

By Deanna Walcott, Past President of the Guyana Anglican Youth Council.

In this time of uncertainty, with the world appearing to crumble instead of stabilising, it is difficult to conjure a clear perspective on the future of the Anglican Church. However, we should remain resolute, identify issues, and discuss possible solutions.

In the Province of the West Indies, at its core the Anglican Communion is a close physical contact religion. From the signing of the cross, shaking hands, hugs, and kisses during the Peace, and in the delivery of the Eucharist. As such, Covid-19 has suspended these traditional acts of worship. We were presented with two options: halt or adapt. Sadly, most churches had to stop. The reality is the majority of congregations are made up of at-risk parishioners (due to age and existing health conditions) and countries like Guyana had mandatory lockdown which temporarily forbade in-person worship. This forced adjustment provided a breeding ground for innovation and experimentation. This produced many 'first times' for parishes and dioceses which included live streaming, pre-recorded morning devotions, Sunday services on Zoom - all in an effort to maintain worship. Fellowship proved to be a hurdle, as events such as Diocesan services, sports and fun days and Mothers' Union services were all canceled. In the Province, a few dioceses found fun and educational platforms such as webinars and 'Facebook live' sessions to keep their congregation engaged. I particularly liked the Diocese of Trinidad and Tobago's virtual Ludo competition for the youth.

Surely the future of the Anglican Church lies in the lessons learnt from the successes and failures of the innovation and experimentation period. Thus far, the inability to include the one because we have successfully satisfied the ninety-nine* is an issue we must work to correct. Many parishes have aging congregations and as a result, there is lesser use of technology compared to the younger age groups. Additionally, congregations in remote areas have limited to no internet access. The in-person worship in these cases is the only source of fellowship and interaction with the liturgy. We truly cannot be

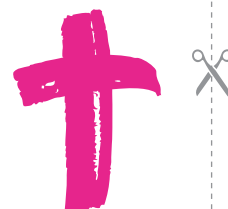
comfortable with losing souls because of physical distancing. As such, our future must be inclusive and mission-oriented. Just like the teachers ventured out of their comfort zones to carry school to their students, the church should surely do the same.

Secondly, outside of the Covid-19 bubble is an emerging young generation focused on mass movements, mental health, women's empowerment and climate change. In some parts of the world, Anglicanism is seen as a progressive sect of Christianity, known for liberal policies. The Province of the West Indies is playing 'catch-up' with making liberal changes, only recently allowing women to become ordained to the priesthood. The young people in this province are questioning Anglican ties to slavery and patriarchal dogma. The whispers about the LGBTQ community having a place in the church are getting louder. The Anglican Communion does address these issues, however, it is primarily done as a monologue, from the pulpit with a top-down approach to policies. More dialogue is needed. Dialogue can facilitate the reconciliation required for the still visible scars of slavery, it can create space for women and youth to share their thoughts, and it will ensure the ministry is more meaningful. Effective dialogue helps shape visions, dissolve stereotypes, stimulate creativity, and strengthen bonds. This is why our future depends on us using this tool effectively.

The Anglican Communion is a body, and it needs nourishment to survive. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 tells us there is one body, but it has many parts. The future of the Anglican Church lies in inclusive ministry and dialogue. In this way, one part of the body will not be neglected and therefore the entire body will thrive. ■

*Matthew 18:12

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YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: THE FUTURE OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

By Mrs Deon Connell, Barbados



The Church in the Province of the West Indies has been faced with the stark reality that our congregations are predominately an aging population. Our demographics show more than half of the church is over the age of fifty-five. In order to preserve the existence of our faith, attention must be given to inviting and keeping younger members in our congregations.

The second of the Five Marks of Mission encourages us to teach, baptise and nurture new believers. The church needs to make this a priority in order to develop longstanding Christian Anglicans. Youth engagement is an integral part in the nurturing of young believers and this should not be confused with youth presence. We should never be content with just having youth sitting in our pews and playing a token role in church services.

Youth engagement happens when there is intentional involvement and integration of youth in the development, management and maintenance of policies, activities and programmes that are beneficial to the growth of the church. It is more than having a seat at the table; it is giving a voice at the table to young people so they may freely express and share ideas. Too often our approach is to fix our young people. They are not broken. They are young, with different opinions and ideas, just as youth have always been.

As a former Bishop of the Windward Islands, Sehon Goodridge said 'Youth is not a tangent Church, not a subset of the Church, not the core or heart of the Church and certainly not the future of the Church. Young people should be an integral and functioning part of all aspects of the life of the Church – mainstreamed molecules present in every cell – feeding and being fed.'

One sure way is to give them opportunities. We will never get an active Sunday school or vibrant youth choir by wishing. We need to make room for and encourage their activity, we need to give allowances for and embrace and celebrate their vibrancy.

While God is unchanging, the world around us is not. Jesus spoke to the people He met during His earthly pilgrimage in terms that they understood. We too need to make the Good News of Jesus' salvation relevant in our time. We must constantly seek innovative ways to reach and engage our youth. This year gave us the opportunity to embrace technology like never before to spread the gospel. As good stewards, we are not to just take and use what was handed to us for our benefit, we are also charged with building on the foundation we received, and passing on a faith, a hope, a truth and a love that is inclusive and relevant.

Successful youth engagement includes the integration of youth in every aspect of the church. We tend to focus on the youth in isolation i.e. in youth group or Sunday School. However if we want them to take this church forward this must be part and parcel of the church today. Every group in the church should have a youth presence. The development of mentorship programmes with the Mothers' Union, Men's Fellowship and Church Army can aid this integration.

There is no magic solution to engaging youth but here are some steps that may be useful: Establish who the young people in the congregations are. Then create an enabling environment where youths are able to express their views. The establishment of meaningful trustworthy relationships with leaders keeps the lines of communication open. Next, create programmes that have youth appeal and include younger voices in the planning. Support young people because we cannot expect that youth can do it alone. Support also includes the provision of sufficient financial and other resources to undertake youth activities. Finally, offer training both for the youth and for people working with them.

While this list is not exhaustive it provides ideas for us to effectively engage our youth. If we want the Anglican Church to remain vibrant we must focus our efforts on the young people in our midst. We must surround them with our support and guidance. Engaged youth will feel that they have a mission in the Church today and in the future. ■



The second of the Five Marks of Mission encourages us to teach, baptise and nurture new believers

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