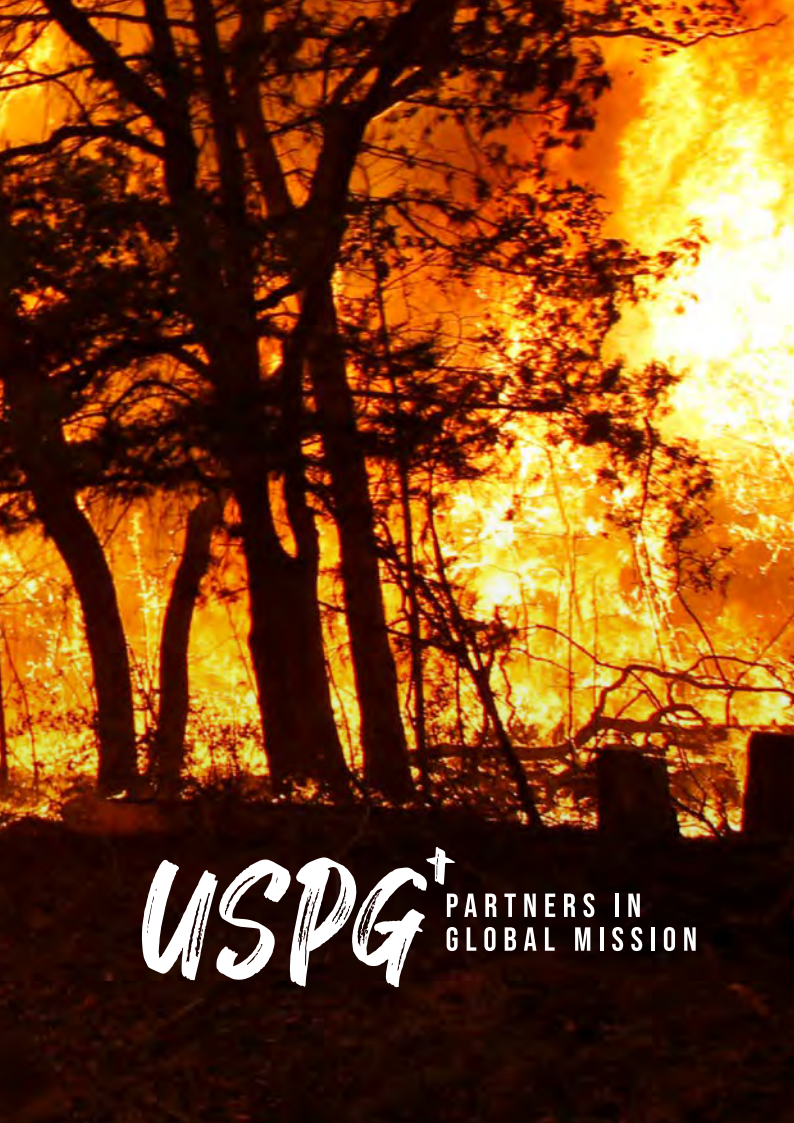


KOINONIA



COP26 AND THE CHURCH

Preparing for the last best chance

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Reflections on the 2021 conference

OUR GLOBAL THEOLOGIAN

Meet Peniel Rajkumar

USPG⁺ PARTNERS IN
GLOBAL MISSION

KOINONIA

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM USPG AND OUR ANGLICAN COMMUNION PARTNERS

Contributions are welcomed and should be emailed as a word document to communications@USPG.org.uk
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The Rev'd
Duncan Dormor

EDITORIAL

By the Rev'd Duncan Dormor, General Secretary USPG

Rarely can a USPG conference have had such an apt title. 'For Such a Time as This' seems to capture the mood of the extraordinary days in which we find ourselves and the challenges facing the Church around the world to step up and respond to major global issues such as climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The restrictions imposed by Covid meant our July conference had to be online but there was no diminution in its impact. I am constantly inspired by the rich variety of perspectives that our partners bring to conferences. The problem with these events is that they pass by so quickly and there is so much to digest and reflect upon. For that reason, we have returned to some of our speakers and asked them to develop their themes still further. Floyd Lalwet looks at how the pandemic has provoked a response from the Episcopal Church in the Philippines while Bertram Gayle considers how the Anglican Church in Jamaica needs to become 'a little less English'. Finally we hear first-hand about the struggle for ecological justice in Brazil from Bishop Martinez Rosa Dos Santos Bassotto.

As we look back, we are also looking ahead to COP26 in Glasgow in November. Anglicans have long been passionate about campaigning for climate justice - good stewardship of our world is a God-given task for humanity. Here we bring together a range of younger voices from across the Anglican Communion to explain the impact of climate change on their daily lives and hear their hopes for the conference. There is also an insight into how the churches in South India and Bangladesh are adapting and growing resilience in their communities. And we offer advice on how you can get involved and make a difference to COP26.

We also look ahead to two other significant events in November. The first is the 16 Days of Activism campaign to tackle gender-based violence. Our article by Mandy Marshall, the Anglican Communion's Director for Gender Justice, includes some truly sobering statistics and invites us to act in response. The second is a new innovation, the Anglican Communion Day of Prayer. I am very excited about this project. In many ways, this year will be a pilot, but I am encouraged by the support we have received from other agencies and hope the Day will develop and become a fixture in the Anglican calendar.

I am also excited to be welcoming the Rev'd Dr Peniel Rajkumar to the USPG family as our new global theologian. As you will discern from our interview with him, Peniel's passion and expertise will bring a fresh energy to this important work.

I hope that you find this latest edition of Koinonia stimulating and enriching. Please do get in touch if you have reflections to pass on.

Duncan Dormor

The Rev'd Duncan Dormor,
General Secretary USPG

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INDIAN CHURCH THANKS GENEROUS USPG FOR VITAL COVID SUPPORT

Senior clergy and medical staff in India have thanked USPG for its Covid Response Appeal which has funded essential equipment at two hospitals. The appeal, which was launched in April to support churches in India as they responded to an overwhelming second wave of Covid infections, raised more than £36,000.



Hospital executives with ventilator
Photo: St Stephen's Hospital

The appeal funded equipment for the Khristiya Seva Niketan (KSN) Hospital in the Diocese of Durgapur, West Bengal and St Stephen's Hospital in the Diocese of Delhi, both in the Church of North India.

St Stephen's Hospital was able to purchase a new ventilator, patient monitors and a Bi-level Positive Airway Pressure machine. USPG's support helped the KSN Hospital to get personal protective equipment, oximeters and oxygen cylinders. There are plans to upgrade the KSN Hospital's Intensive Care Unit through further support from USPG.

The Rev'd Dennis Lall, General Secretary of the Church of North India, said 'USPG provided quick and generous support to St Stephen's Hospital when it was struggling to deal with many Covid-19 patients. The Church of North India is blessed to have the support of USPG, and we hope that this experience strengthens the existing partnership between the CNI and USPG.'

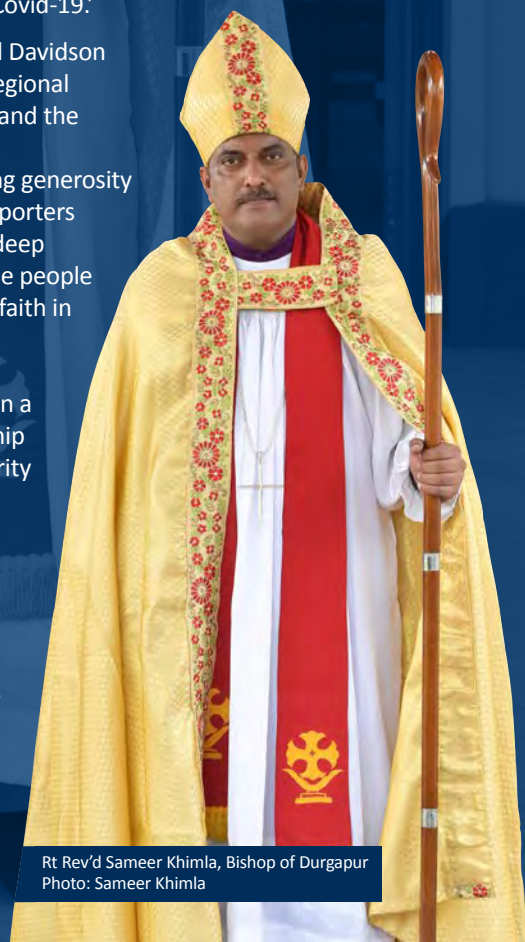
There was an equally positive response from the Rt Rev'd Sameer Khimla, Bishop of Durgapur.

He said 'USPG is standing by us, and we greatly appreciate this. We ask for your prayers for the diocese, West Bengal and India'.

Pradip Baux, Director of the KSN Hospital, added 'USPG's helping hand allowed us to ensure the safety of our hospital staff, organise a temporary isolation satellite facility of the hospital and raise awareness of Covid-19 in the local community. We are grateful for USPG's support and believe that it will facilitate our preparedness for any further waves of Covid-19.'

In response, Rev'd Davidson Solanki, USPG's Regional Manager for Asia and the Middle East, said 'The overwhelming generosity shown by our supporters highlighted their deep compassion for the people of India and their faith in the Churches.

The India Covid Response has been a genuine partnership of love and solidarity between USPG supporters and churches in India. USPG is deeply grateful to our church partners and all supporters for their faith and trust in us which enabled a timely response.' ■



Rt Rev'd Sameer Khimla, Bishop of Durgapur
Photo: Sameer Khimla

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS — USPG'S 2021 CONFERENCE



Rev'd Duncan Dormor

Unique times call for imaginative solutions. The Covid-19 pandemic meant USPG's annual conference in July took place virtually rather than in person at High Leigh as originally planned. But the result was a more international feel, bringing together speakers and participants from around the world for livestreamed or pre-filmed worship, Bible studies and thought-provoking addresses.

USPG's General Secretary, Rev'd Duncan Dormor, who gave the opening address, 'Solidarity and Mission in the Age of Covid', was delighted with the outcome. 'I thought the conference went very well. Because it was in a virtual setting, we were able to pull in a wider range of global speakers. It felt more global than previous conferences have done. I thought the hybrid nature of the conference worked well. I thought the content of the conference was very interesting.'

The positive feedback for the format of the conference has prompted USPG to reconsider how they might look in future.

'No one can predict how the world will look in twelve or even six months' time,' Rev'd Dormor said. 'However, I think USPG's online gatherings will continue as they have done for at least the medium-term. We need to be both highly attentive and dynamic to our audience's wants and needs. Our online events have helped to drive engagement with a truly global group of people.'

Duncan's personal conference highlights included the session on day two on racial justice which examined the legacies of mission in Malawi and Jamaica, and Bishop Marinez's contribution to the panel on climate justice, where she discussed the idea of reforestation as a prophetic action. 'Listening to these perspectives in conversation with each other was extraordinary,' he said. And Rev'd Dormor is keen to keep such conversations going.

'All of the themes discussed at the conference will continue to be important. The climate crisis and racial injustice are not going to disappear – these are deeply rooted issues. Likewise, I believe the Covid-19 pandemic will reshape the future of the Church over the next few decades. I think USPG's key role is to provide a platform for marginalised voices and connect voices across the global Church. How can we ensure good practices and prophetic voices around the world are heard? Conversations emerging from the conference challenge USPG to reconsider how it talks about God and theology and emphasise the need to look to other parts of the world for more innovative ways of doing this. To be Christian disciples, we must be open to critique and conversation, and listen to voices from elsewhere.'

Over the following pages, you can read further reflections from some of our conference speakers on the themes highlighted at the conference. ■



The positive feedback for the format of the conference has prompted USPG to reconsider how they might look in future.



GIVE MORE, SHARE MORE, LOVE MORE

The first session of Day Two at the conference was entitled 'Prayer, Presence and Provision in the Pandemic'. Here one of the speakers, Floyd Lalwet, Provincial Secretary of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines, expands his theme.

While we cannot even begin to imagine the extent of humanity's collective and individual grief over the loss of lives and destruction of communities caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we can say that the pandemic has also impacted the Church in a very positive way. Indeed, the pandemic has served as a compelling reset button for the most important things in life – family, community and the environment.

In the Episcopal Church in the Philippines (ECP), the pandemic has shattered certain assumptions, practices and worldviews which have previously served as obstacles for it to truly be an institution founded in Jesus Christ. The values of individualism and materialism that have engulfed the world have been stopped in their tracks by the restrictions and difficulties arising from the pandemic. This has provided the Church with an opportunity to re-calibrate its mindset and re-affirm the values of the Kingdom of God.

The ECP is a small church of 200,000 compared to the 84 million Roman Catholics living in the Philippines. Our mission fields for the past 120 years have largely been rural areas nestled in the mountains and valleys. While we are headquartered at Cathedral Heights in the central metropolis of Quezon City, the majority of our mission areas take several hours or even days to reach. When the lockdowns were imposed, we could not move out of our cities

and towns. Because of this restriction, the ECP began embracing city-dwellers in a more intentional manner, such as our neighbours in the communities near Cathedral Heights.

For a long time prior to the pandemic, our neighbours didn't give much thought to Cathedral Heights. However, in recent months Cathedral Heights has become a symbol of hope for them. When our neighbours lost their jobs, we welcomed them into Cathedral Heights. At a time when communities were understandably closing their doors for fear of infection, the Church did the exact opposite. We opened our compounds and church centres to economically challenged households and to frontline medical staff. Our doors have been open to anyone in need of somewhere to rest or in need of a secure place to quarantine. The Covid-19 pandemic forced the Church to take these drastic actions. Yet, taking these actions has changed the Church into a more inclusive, welcoming institution. In this way, the pandemic has helped the ECP to love our neighbours.

For a decade now, ECP has been practicing an asset-based approach to development as opposed to the needs-based mindset that had previously dominated our development planning for more than a century. With the limitations on movement brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, communities were forced to look at themselves. By looking after and developing their

GIVE MORE, SHARE MORE, LOVE MORE

own assets, nine congregations have become self-governing and self-supporting parishes. How ironic that churches have achieved greater financial viability during an economic crisis brought on by the pandemic than in previous, less challenging years!

The disruption caused by Covid-19 has also challenged the assumption that worship is confined to the four walls of a church building. Small group Bible studies and fellowships, family devotions and worship involving only two or three people were not traditional practices of our very high Church life; yet these practices have become integral to how we worship now. We are now seeing in a fresh and exciting light what is divinely declared in Matthew 18:20 – ‘For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them’.

At the start of the first lockdown, the ECP projected a budgetary deficit of around 30 million Philippine pesos (almost £430,000). This forecast was based on an expected reduction of giving with the cancellation of in-person worship services as well as the closure of businesses from which rentals and other incomes were derived. Yet, even with this stark projection, we waived our lessee’s rental payments during the months the buildings were closed, and our only concern was that they should take care of their employees.

We lost hundreds of thousands of pesos for doing this, exacerbating our projected budget shortfalls by doing so. But by the end of 2020, our actual deficit turned out to be much more manageable than expected, as we only saw a

slight reduction in church offerings. Financial giving was not affected in a substantial way despite the cancellation of worship services for more than two months and the subsequent limitation of in-person attendees continuing to the present day. We believe that God has been so kind to us because we were kind to others. This experience has guided the Church’s spirituality of resilience based on the notion that when times are hard and resources are scarce, the Church must give more, share more and love more. Far from being a feel-good statement, this is practised spirituality.

Recently, there was a negotiation for a government acquisition of a highly prized church property in Bontoc, Mountain Province. At a meeting convened to come up with the right acquisition price, government negotiators and community leaders were pleasantly shocked when the Rt Rev’d Brent Alawas, then Bishop of the Diocese of Northern Philippines and now Prime Bishop of the ECP, walked into the conference room and announced that the Church would not seek compensation but would donate the property. What would have been a source of millions of pesos was given away simply because church property is community property; it exists to benefit the wider community. That this happened at a time when money was greatly needed to tide us over during the raging pandemic is all the more remarkable.

As we live through the continuing pandemic and look forward to the future, the values and spirituality we have re-affirmed during these times need to be sustained and enhanced. Let us pray that we can continue to do this. ■



the pandemic has helped the ECP to love our neighbours



Floyd Lalwet outside ECP headquarters

BECOMING LESS ENGLISH

CREATING A MORE CULTURALLY RELEVANT JAMAICAN CHURCH

Day Two at the conference also saw a powerful session entitled 'Racial Justice: Recovering Spiritualities, Restoring Justice'. Here Bertram Gayle, an ordinand from the Diocese of Jamaica and The Cayman Islands, develops his ideas.

Disestablishment of the Anglican church in Jamaica in 1870 was part of the legislative change brought about by the Governor in conjunction with the Colonial Secretary. The Jamaican Assembly had abolished itself after the Morant Bay Rebellion and the island came under direct rule from Britain as a Crown Colony.

Two facts about disestablishment are worth noting. Disestablishment addressed issues of ecclesial politics and economics, not culture. In addition to the clergy appointed in Britain, all the churches had a small number of Jamaica-born clergy. Few questioned the euro-centric and class-based ethos of churches in 1870. Garvey and Bedward were the advocates of a greater understanding of Jamaican African heritage. However, they were largely dismissed.

Attention to popular culture only came after the Second World War and the agitation for political rights leading up to independence. But even then, British cultural norms and practices (including its Christian expression) remained the ideal for those who took the reins of the Jamaican church, wherever they were on the mixed (Creole) racial spectrum.

Rev'd Bertram Gayle
Photo: Bertram Gayle

Therefore, people were educated and cultured by those who saw themselves and the mission of the Church as continuing the civilising mission, imagined and initiated by the colonisers during the period of enslavement and after Emancipation. The Church sought to censor, control, suppress and discourage visible African cultural expressions such as drumming, spirit possession and 'magical techniques'. For example, Pocomania and Myalism, the African-centred syncretic religious forms were outlawed. Consequently, the churches contributed to the erasure of African elements of the emerging Jamaican culture and spirituality.

I submit that the Church was not being true to the Gospel when she chose to suppress the African-based cultures of the enslaved. I go further to add that the Anglophone dominance continued post-emancipation and post-disestablishment as the Church, though no longer governed and funded by the State, remained culturally and ideologically twinned to the State.

I suggest that the Church should embrace the emergent Afro-Caribbean Creole culture not only as reflected in her leadership, but also in her cultural expression. Such engagement would be an exercise in justice toward a people and their culture historically misunderstood, and marginalized; it would also facilitate reconciliation with many of our people who still feel hurt and betrayed by our church.

So, how do we become more culturally connected? For this, it may help if we become critically aware of our cultural location as a church vis-a-vis that of the general population. To do this, I draw on my background in linguistics and introduce the concept of the 'creole continuum'. In Jamaica, language is spoken on a spectrum. This arose out of a contact situation in which our ancestors who were speakers of West African languages came into (forced) contact with those who spoke English. The West African languages included the Niger-Congo sect of languages and the Akan group (Twi). These two languages represent polar ends of the linguistic and socio-cultural spectrum.

At the one end is English, associated with prestige and power, the elite, the ruling classes, the British. At the other extreme is the speech of those farthest removed from the ruling class, the least educated, the powerless, the poor, those at the bottom of the social scale. In between these extremes, we meet the mediating speech variety (and culture) associated with most Jamaicans. This significant population incorporates elements from across the entire spectrum to produce what is regarded as uniquely 'Jamaican'.

The Anglican church has been largely one of the advocates of Anglophone culture. Thus, part of the Church's mission, through education and evangelism, has been to 'bleach'

the people who are at the African end of the spectrum of their cultural norms and practices including their religion, language, philosophy, dress, and spontaneity. Until recently, there was apathy in reforming ourselves and religion to more effectively reflect the cultural spectrum.

Diocesan leadership since 2000 brought about efforts to move away from Anglophone religious culture, reflected in iconography, music, language and vestments. For example, more than 20 black icons were created and displayed in various Diocesan spaces; more than 30 Caribbean hymns were included in our hymnal - most are original compositions, written to rhythmic idioms associated with the Caribbean (e.g., Jamaican folk, traditional spiritual, reggae and calypso); and the use of drumming in liturgical settings has become commonplace.

Clergy have incorporated Jamaican colours and symbols into their vestments and in the worship space. The Jamaican language is used in some hymns, and in the occasional attempts at reading from the Jamiekian Nyuu Testament. Yet these do not define, in an unambiguous way, that we are a distinctively Jamaican church.

We need to apply intentional discipleship to our cultural engagement. The Church needs to make more intentional decisions and attempts to divest herself of the power, prestige, pomp, pageantry and privilege of the Anglican church and become incarnate in the cultural reality of those Jamaican people whose culture has been ignored or shunned. This involves engaging Jamaican language, iconography, music, dance, and preference for orality.

An appropriate response is not to uncritically imitate either European or African forms of religious culture, or that of the new culture of North America, but to honestly and creatively engage the breadth of the local cultural reality.

This would involve using what is available to create authentic local expressions, contributing to what it means to be Jamaican. Maybe we can begin the journey with a 'Decade of Intentional Cultural Engagement'. We could do this by exploring opportunities in the context of high and low church expressions, intentionally and creatively engaging our Prayer Book, and through dialogue with different groups especially those at the Africa-centred end of the spectrum. May we move into the future, purposefully incorporating the cultures from across the spectrum, decentering the English and centring the authentically emergent Jamaican. ■

THE STRUGGLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN BRAZIL

The final session of the conference was **The Cry of Creation: Creativity in the Church**. The Bishop of the Amazon, the Rt Rev'd Marinez Rosa Dos Santos Bassotto, spoke movingly about the impact of climate change and deforestation in her unique diocese and offers further insight here.

Throughout the Anglican Communion we are reflecting on the challenges of being God's Church for God's World. We want to look to the future and be a Church that responds by words and actions.

That response needs to be deeply rooted in our local reality. My local reality in Brazil is being greatly impacted by policies aimed at symbolically and physically crushing the structures of protection and environmental

care and the rights of the most vulnerable populations at a time when Covid-19 has deepened social gaps and inequalities.

The Brazilian government had begun deregulating environmental policies, but this process has accelerated during the pandemic. The changes include laws that once curbed environmental crimes and brought punishments to those who committed them.

More than 700 legal measures have been passed that impact the environment, and many others will follow. They serve private interests such as agribusiness, loggers, and mining companies. One example is Bill 490, which amends the legislation on the demarcation of indigenous lands and can extinguish communities originating in various parts of the country.

The government's attitude to Amazonia and other important biomes is not focused on the preservation of life. Rather it is the complete opposite - greed and extraction, which uses nature only as a generating source of profit. This leads to enormous inequalities, causes environmental degradation and devastation, killing fauna, flora, biodiversity and human life.

The dismantling of environmental protection bodies, the weakening of surveillance, and socio-environmental actions, the systematic deregulation of environmental protection, the successive attempts to minimize the



Rt Rev'd Marinez Rosa Dos Santos Bassotto, Bishop of the Amazon

THE STRUGGLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN BRAZIL

consequences of devastation in the Amazon, fires in the Amazon and the western wetlands, the numerous attempts to criminalize environmental organisations and activists are all a systematic strategy of the government. Deforestation has reached record levels; and there has been a 17% increase in the number of fire outbreaks in the last year alone. In addition, mining activities have begun in previously preserved indigenous territories, and there has been an increase in the illegal extraction of native timber.

The current government has also been turning a blind eye to violence resulting from these illicit activities. All this causes enormous damage not only to nature but to the original populations who are suffering and fighting to preserve and protect their territories, for the protection of their culture, their lives, and for the preservation of the environment. They are struggling for their very existence, and to keep alive what still exists of our biodiversity.

The contempt for the preservation, care and defence of life is devastating nature and leads to the persecution of indigenous leaders and other original peoples. Indigenous leaders are being coerced, criminalised and even murdered not only in the Amazon, but in various parts of our Brazil.

So, what of our action in the area of ecological/environmental justice?

The Anglican Church has been present for more than 100 years in the Amazon Region, and the Anglican Diocese of the Amazon is deeply committed to defending the rights and struggles of indigenous peoples and other peoples originating in this region.

The Church has been an advocate for environmental justice, offering itself as a prophetic voice – and denouncing this whole

situation of death. It has done this despite public criticism.

It seeks to walk together and amplify the voices of the original populations that call for the right to the territory, for respect, and for the maintenance of their culture. It seeks to live the fifth Anglican mark of the mission that calls us to safeguard God's creation and to fight to save human life.

Our projects include the development of the Course of Popular Educators in the Amazon. This has run for seven years – and was maintained for the first four years with the support of USPG. It is a free course of leadership and advocacy that helps local leaders by offering of modules and workshops to promote the social organisation of people who are on the margins of the political and economic system. It is based on the commitment to the Culture of Life in the rescue of dignity, justice, peace and socio-environmental preservation.

In January we started an ecumenical project called Planting Lives. It aims to distribute seedlings of native trees of the Amazon for reforestation and teach young people and adults about socio-environmental justice. The method is to use the seedlings as an opportunity to discuss the situation of the Amazon and the need for actions that change the current panorama, including actions that pressure the government, and defend forest peoples.

We are now revitalizing the seedling nursery, installing solar panels and constructing an artesian well to irrigate the nursery. Our first public planting was scheduled for September. This project also includes creating community gardens.

With the support of the Anglican Communion Fund, we also run a project called Economic Justice and Indigenous Identity for young people and women of various indigenous ethnicities in the state of Amazonas.

Here in the Amazon, we are a church that is truly incorporating and living the fifth mark of mission and being God's Church for God's World, raising its voice in defence of the peoples of the forest. Because attacks on indigenous territories, river dwellers and quilombolas in the Amazon violate forests, the biodiversity of life on our planet, they also violate the bodies of these peoples, violate and hurt their spirits, their souls. And therefore, they violate the integrity of God's creation. ■

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The current government has also been turning a blind eye to violence resulting from these illicit activities



Amazon river weaving through dense forest

MEET PENIEL RAJKUMAR - USPG'S NEW GLOBAL THEOLOGIAN

The Rev'd Dr Peniel Rajkumar, USPG's new Global Theologian, comes from a long line of ecumenically minded Anglicans. He says, 'In Hebrews 12, there is the idea of 'a great cloud of witnesses'. Growing up, I had my own great cloud of witnesses – many family members who had been deeply involved in the life of the Church. My great-great grandfather converted to Christianity from Hinduism. The story goes that he hid up a tree for two nights as he was afraid his family members would kill him, as he had broken off from his caste. My great-great grandfather subsequently sought refuge in a missionary compound and was baptised. My great-grandfather was a priest in the Church of South India and went on to be a priest in the United Evangelical Mission in India. My uncle, the Rt Rev'd Mahimai Rufus, was Bishop of the Diocese of Vellore in the Church of South India. He was a significant influence in my life, particularly at moments when I felt disillusioned with the Church; he convinced me to stay. And one of my great uncles, the Rev'd Vedam Santiago, led the South Indian United Churches alongside the Rt Rev'd V. S. Azariah'.

As a result of this impressive lineage, the expectation was for Peniel to become a priest too. 'My parents were convinced that I should become a priest, but I wasn't sure that this was the right thing for me. I felt a calling to be a theologian instead. Once on this path, I studied theology at the United Theological Seminary in Bangalore and the University of Kent in Canterbury. After this, I joined the Parish of St John the Evangelist in Upper Holloway, London as a Lay Assistant Pastor and subsequently was ordained as a curate'.

Peniel's previous experience in the UK involved some interesting experiences of church life: 'When I was in the UK, I played for the Diocese of London's team in the Church Times Cricket Cup in 2005 and 2006. We used to have our net practice at Lord's cricket ground! While I was on the team, we won one final and lost the other to the Diocese of Southwark. My favourite cricketer is Sir Vivian Richards, which probably shows my age'.

Peniel has moved to the UK with his wife and two children. He says, 'My wife Rebecca works as a consultant for the Lutheran World Federation on a project concerned with developing conviviality across churches. She is now actively engaging with the discernment process in the Church of England. My elder son Ebenezer was born in London, but my younger



son Cleon has never been to the UK before. They have been loving the experience so far, despite the initial ten days of quarantine. Now that we are in the UK, we hope to go hiking as much as we can. Cleon loves tennis. As we are based in Croydon, we can get the tram direct to Wimbledon, so we are looking forward to going to watch the tennis in years to come'.

Before joining USPG, Peniel worked for many years as Programme Coordinator at the World Council of Churches. He says, 'The World Council of Churches is like an ocean – 350 member churches across various denominations. The WCC gave me the gift of contacts; it provided me with lots of opportunities to link up with many member churches across the world. The WCC also has an outstanding record in fostering church unity and advocating for social justice. I think this experience fits well with USPG's aims and values. Whilst at the WCC, I was also teaching at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute, where I launched the Young Adults Training for Religious Amity programme. This has given me links with the current leaders emerging in churches across the world. Both the WCC and USPG have a great sensitivity to diversity and how enriching a diverse church can be'.

Peniel's hopes for his time at USPG are clear, 'USPG has a healthy but critical respect for its legacy and the intentionality to move forward from this. Together with our partner churches, we can construct a new future for the Church. In this role, I hope to bring together partners across the Anglican Communion by focusing on questions of liberation and decolonisation. I also hope to help reimagine theological education within Britain and Ireland, moving away from Eurocentrism and towards action.' ■

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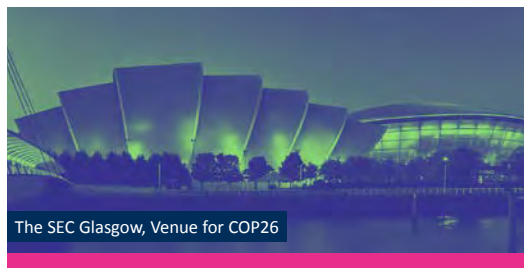
My parents were convinced I should become a priest but I wasn't sure.



UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

COP26 AND THE CHURCH – ANGLICANS PREPARE FOR CLIMATE'S 'BEST LAST CHANCE'



The SEC Glasgow, Venue for COP26

Almost 200 world leaders will be in Glasgow in November for the historic COP26 conference on tackling climate change. The stakes are high. The 12-day meeting has been billed as 'the last best chance to get runaway climate change under control'; a 'pivotal moment'; 'the Olympic Games of climate change policy'. The tide of hyperbole will rise still further as the talks approach. The conference is likely to dominate the news in the UK because of its role as co-host and president but the whole world will be watching.

Care for the environment is not a fashionable secular issue. Anglicans around the world have been campaigning passionately for years for climate justice. It is a key advocacy priority for USPG. The Anglican Communion's fifth Mark of Mission is 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth'. Faith groups will be at the conference and will hold parallel events in the margins.

Over the following pages we explain how COP works and look at how Anglicans around the world are dealing with the impact of climate change and hear their hopes for COP26. And there's advice on how to get involved.

COP26 - A QUICK GUIDE

How COP began

COP26 is a United Nations conference. The UN set up its Framework Convention on Climate Change at Rio de Janeiro in 1992. There are more than 200 countries who are parties to this Convention. They meet annually (apart from in 2020 because of Covid-19) at a Conference of the Parties - hence 'COP'. The conference in Glasgow is the 26th gathering.

COP21 - a turning point

The Paris Agreement, signed at COP21 in 2015, marked a significant gear change. For the first time, the world came together to adopt legally-binding targets to limit the impact of climate change. The aim was to limit the rise in global temperatures - ideally to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Countries also agreed to produce national plans on how they would reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases. These 'nationally

determined contributions', or NDCs, were to be reviewed every five years, starting at COP26. All parties to the Paris Agreement were also to set tougher targets on NDCs before COP26 meets. Progress in these areas will determine if the Paris Agreement has been effective.

Who will be at COP26?

At least 190 world leaders are expected to attend. Their delegations will include ministers, officials and advisors. Countries often work together in blocks during negotiations. These blocks include the Africa Group and the Climate Vulnerable Forum. Ad hoc alliances are also formed between parties with a joint agenda, for example on human rights.

The second group are observers. They have no formal part in negotiations but can make interventions. Their presence helps to maintain transparency. They include UN bodies such as the World Health Organisation, intergovernmental agencies such as OPEC, and non-governmental agencies. The NGOs includes representatives from environmental groups, business, Indigenous Peoples and trade unions. In addition, there are faith-based organisations.

The final group is representatives of the media. But there will be thousands of others in Glasgow, in effect creating a parallel conference. These include businesses, academics and activists.

What will happen?

Official negotiations will be held in the plenary halls and meetings rooms at the Scottish Events Campus (SEC). The conference gets down to business on Monday 1 November with a two-day leaders' summit. Topics for the rest of Week One are Finance, Energy, Youth and Public Empowerment and Energy. Week Two subjects include Adaptation, Loss and Damage, Science and Innovation, Gender, and Transport. The conference closes on Friday 12 November. There will also be plenty happening in the margins including meetings, events, conferences and demonstrations.

Italy is co-hosting COP26 and is the venue for two events before the main meeting, including a Youth Summit in Milan. The UK government's Business Secretary, Alok Sharma, is COP26 president and will preside over the negotiations. He has insisted the conference cannot be another talking shop. 'COP26 needs to be decisive,' he says. 'Whether future generations look back at this time with admiration or despair depends entirely on our ability to seize this moment'. ■



Anglicans... have been campaigning passionately for years for climate justice



UN CLIMATE
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CLIMATE CHANGE: OUR MESSAGE TO COP26



Flooding in Bangladesh

The impact of climate change is being felt globally. Koinonia invited Anglicans from around the world to describe its effect in their region and express their hopes for COP26. Across the page are perspectives from India and Bangladesh.

Below we hear from Carlos Respeito (Mozambique), Mandisa Gumada (South Africa), Mncedisi Masuku (Eswatini), Nicholas Fields and Theo Franklin (Barbados), Christopher Broaster (Belize), Rev'd Lasarus Ngube (Namibia) and Artwell Sipinyu, the National Co-ordinator for Anglican Relief and Development in Zimbabwe.

How is climate change affecting you and your country?

We are now constantly experiencing flooding which is something new. People's livelihoods are being affected by flooding so they can't live normal lives. – **Mandisa**

We haven't had rain. Some planted but the plants germinated and then died. Our cattle are dying – I myself lost four cattle in one week. When the cattle die you soon hear that the elderly will die too. – **Lasarus**

The main effect of climate on Barbados and our neighbouring islands are storms and hurricanes. Whilst we often experience extreme weather events, they are happening earlier in the year and more frequently. This gives us increasingly less time to prepare for and recover from the damage caused. – **Theo**

Climate change has affected our work in empowerment of communities living with HIV. Climate change depletes water sources and limits food supply. People living with HIV are often badly hit as they depend on their crops for their livelihood. – **Artwell**

What outcomes do you want from COP26?

My message is that we have spoken so much, and we have these policies but now can they be put into practice. – **Mandisa**

Remember that Africa is still developing and is highly affected by climate change. We are asking other countries to invest in Africa as much as possible. – **Mncedisi**

I think that COP26 needs to listen to the voices of small island states, as these countries are the worst affected by climate change. I am cautiously optimistic about COP26. I think much more action needs to be taken over limiting greenhouse gas emissions. – **Nicholas**

There must be a cut on the subsidisation of fossil fuel and mining companies must be encouraged to develop renewable energy plans for sustainable development. – **Artwell**

What is your message to the USPG family?

God invites us all to take care of his creation. Let us be aware that our people are suffering because of climate change and let us do something about it. – **Carlos**

Our church is involved in water harvesting and tree planting as well as Climate change education and advocacy. What can you do to make a difference? – **Mncedisi**

There are areas where people say, 'I am all right I have food, I have water'. Be mindful that a sister or a brother is dying because they have no food, no water. Let us be serious about our actions. – **Lasarus**

We all have a responsibility to protect and preserve God's creation. We can all make changes to our lives to promote environmental sustainability. We can learn from each other's advocacy efforts. – **Nicholas**

We should all be focusing on sustainability over profitability. We can all make choices to use cars less or use more environmentally friendly vehicles. We should share knowledge between churches around the world. – **Theo**

Thank you for your continued support, which has enabled us to make an impact in addressing challenges faced by our congregants and communities. And for providing a platform for partners to share for knowledge and strategies to combat the effects of climate change. Your support has gone a long way to bring positive change, and we look forward to continuing to walk together in making an impact and reducing the negative effects of climate change in our country. – **Artwell**



I am optimistic
about achieving
progress at COP26



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CSI WORKS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The Church of South India is using COP26 to draw attention to its work on climate-resilient communities and schools. Since 1992, the CSI Synod's Department of Ecological Concerns has been increasing public awareness about environmental and ecological concerns and care for God's creation. The Department empowers congregations to take a prophetic stand against climate injustice. We focus on teaching the sustainable development goals of the UN through Eco-Ministry, campaigns for climate Justice ministry, our Green Protocol, our Green School Programme and through climate resilient schools and communities.

In climate resilient schools and communities, students put into practice the Green Protocol of CSI: carbon neutrality, mitigation and adaptation. These children then transform their houses the way they do their schools. The result is community transformation through students. We are planning to create some community resilient model schools and model communities by 2022. Due to Covid-19, the campaign is going online to educate clergy, teachers, and students about climate resilience. Details about the orientation classes on climate resilient schools and communities can be found on YouTube.

Covid has also encouraged us to think differently in other areas of our work and turn it to good. For example the Department ran three-day eco-awareness classes for clergy and teachers in Chennai every month from 2015 to 2019. The Department funded accommodation, food and travel for participants. Around 400 clergy and 400 teachers benefitted from our programmes every year. But now, by running the programme over zoom, more people are attending: every month we see around 500 clergy, 600 teachers, and 1,000 students. There are other benefits too. Our costs are much lower and, most importantly, the carbon footprint is minimal.

Dr. Mathew Koshy Punnackad, Honorary Director, CSI Synod Department of Ecological Concerns.



Professor Mathew Koshy of the Church of South India
Photo: Mathew Koshy

BANGLADESH'S RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Bangladesh is specifically vulnerable to climate change. It is low-lying, has a high population density and inappropriate infrastructure and has an economy that is heavily reliant on farming and industry. It has been estimated that by 2050, one in every seven people in Bangladesh will be displaced by climate change and, with a projected 50 cm rise in sea level, Bangladesh may lose approximately 11% of its land, affecting an estimated 15 million people living in its low-lying coastal region. Coastal drinking water supplies have already been contaminated with salt, leaving the 33 million people vulnerable to health problems. Every day, up to 2,000 people flee to the capital Dhaka.

Because of its location and extreme weather, the country continues to experience natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, storms, droughts and landslides. Agriculture is badly disrupted and crops reduced, ruining livelihoods. Women and children suffer the most.

Shalom, the Development Department of the Church of Bangladesh, is implementing a series of programmes through various groups to help people and communities adapt to the effects of climate change by using available resources. This include building small bridges and link roads, organising an alarm system to warn of impending cyclones and helping people to reach cyclone shelters.

They also train people to secure their homes if they are vulnerable and encourage the planting of trees. They also teach children to swim so that have a better chance of survival during floods. There is also practical teaching on climate change, mitigation and adaptation, installing solar pumps and climate-friendly stoves and cultivating climate-resilient crops.

Shaloms feels strongly obliged to respond to the issue and believes a systematic approach is needed to save not just the people of Bangladesh but our planet. At COP26 it hopes that at least 50% of climate finance will be dedicated to adaptation for the communities on the frontline of the climate crisis, that climate finance will increased by the countries who are directly causing climate change and that a new climate finance mechanism will be mobilised for the most vulnerable communities to think about loss and damages. Let's make something different together.

Ronan Gomes, Director of SHALOM, Church of Bangladesh and **Senoy Sarker**, Programme Coordinator of SHALOM. ■

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Bangladesh
is specifically
vulnerable to
climate change

COP26 – WHAT YOU CAN DO



Rebecca Boardman is USPG's lead on climate change. She has been involved in running USPG's Make COP26 Count programme and participated in the COP26 Relay. Here she explains how you can get involved in climate activism.

It can be easy to think that conversations at a UN meeting are unrelated to our daily lives. Whatever the outcome of COP26, climate activism will remain essential to both raise the ambition needed to prevent catastrophic climate change, as well as to meet the targets already set. It will continue to be important to act for change at local and national levels. Here are some things churches in Britain and Ireland have been doing in the run up to COP26, and ideas for action you can take after the conference ends.

Climate Sunday

Over the past 18 months, churches have been encouraged to hold a climate-focused service. There is still time to get your church involved. Visit climatesunday.org/

Need inspiration? Check out weekly reflections on the lectionary from across the Anglican Communion at sustainable-preaching.org/ and find global prayer and liturgy resources on the USPG website.



Rebecca Boardman, USPG's climate lead

Relay to COP26

Led by the Young Christian Climate Network, Christians of all ages and denominations have been walking from the G7 venue at Cardis Bay in Cornwall to COP26 advocating for fair climate finance. Look out for them and continue to pray for them in the last section of their pilgrimage. Find out more at yccn.uk/

Global Day of Action for Climate Justice

On Saturday 6 November movements are coming together to make their voices heard. Mobilisations are planned for Glasgow, London and other cities across the UK. There will also be opportunities to engage virtually from home.

Eco Church

Form an eco-team or elect eco-champions for your church to lead the way. Connect with your Diocesan Environmental Officer for support and consider working towards an A Rocha Eco Church award which celebrates a church's commitment to climate and ecological justice through worship and teaching, building management and community and global engagement. ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/

Lobby your MP

Climate justice needs systematic change at the national level. Working with your MP may seem daunting, but it is one of the most effective ways to bring change. This is where our friends at Hope for the Future can help. By supporting you to form good relationships with your political representatives, even the most climate sceptic MPs can be agents of change! hftf.org.uk/

Use your money to bring change

It is important to think about how your money is used. What you choose to invest in, where your pension is held and who you bank with all make a difference.

The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility has great resources to help you: eccr.org.uk/money-makes-change/ ■

TACKLING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE — 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

By Mandy Marshall, Director for Gender Justice, Anglican Communion

'The abuse went on for six years before I realised that what I was experiencing wasn't just a bad marriage. Everyone says marriage is difficult so at first, I thought it was that – our adjustment to married life. There was pressure to make marriage work and to sacrifice yourself. After all the Church says, 'till death us do part'. I bent over backwards to make it work. From the outside most people thought we were the perfect happy couple. But I was walking on eggshells in my own home, never knowing what mood he would be in when he came home. It was such a lonely time. I didn't think anyone would believe me if I told them what it was really like at home. I was desperate for some hope.'

Christian survivor of domestic abuse.

Each year, churches, governments, and individuals around the world focus on preventing and ending gender-based violence (GBV) during the 16 Days of Activism. This runs from The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November) to Human Rights Day (10 December). The aim is to raise awareness of the prevalence, persistence and impact of GBV and work to prevent it.

GBV comes in many forms, including sexual violence such as rape and forced marriage, physical violence such as beatings and assaults, and psychological abuse. Economic abuse in the form of financial control and abuse, verbal abuse and emotional abuse are often minimised or ignored yet can also have severe consequences.

Gender-based violence can occur to anyone irrespective of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, educational level, country, gender, or socioeconomic background. Wealth is no barrier. At the heart of GBV is the desire to control and misuse power over another person.

Globally one in three women experiences physical and/or sexual violence, mostly by an intimate partner. In the year before Covid-19, 243 million women and girls experienced sexual and/or physical violence by an intimate partner. Globally 137 women are killed each day by their intimate partner or relatives.

Being a Christian is no protector. In fact, research from the Anglican Church in Australia found that being an Anglican woman could put women at greater risk of abuse. In the UK, researchers found that one in four churchgoers across Cumbria had experienced abuse.

Rev'd Dominic Misolo, in Kenya states, 'to me, ending gender-based violence should be a priority in order to bridge the gap between men and women for justice and peaceful co-existence in the society'. Dr Paulo Ueti, Anglican Alliance Theologian adds 'Men should be involved to become part of the solution not the problem....



it is an opportunity to be washed out from the patriarchal system that inhabits all of us towards a society and relations where equality and dignity to all are our daily bread.'

So, what can we do about gender-based violence in addition to praying?

This year the Anglican Communion is running the Exposure campaign which asks under-35's to produce a two-minute film about GBV in their own country, context, culture and language. We want young people to raise their voices for gender justice and change around GBV and communicate the issues from their perspectives. The films will be shown during the 16 days of activism.

Reflect on the one in three women statistic and think about how many women in your church could this be? Is there a safe space for them to ask for the help and support they need?

Other ways to engage

1. Educate yourself. Read the research from Australia and the organisation Restored, check out UN Women website and the gender justice material on Anglican Communion website.
2. Pray the prayer of David in Psalm 139: 'Search me Oh God, and know my heart, ...see if there is any offensive way within me and lead me to everlasting.' Ask God is there is anything that you need to change inside yourself.
3. Be alert to the subtle and not so subtle abuses that take place in everyday life and call it out. Have zero tolerance on verbal abuse, derogatory comments etc. If you have committed GBV, submit yourself to be held accountable for your actions
4. Read Scars Across Humanity by Dr Elaine Storkey on how GBV affects women from before birth until death.
5. Give regularly to a charity working to end gender-based violence.

This 16 Days of Activism I urge you to commit to making a difference. Don't leave it for another day. ■



Globally one in three women experiences physical and/or sexual violence

NEWS

BRINGING HOPE TO DISABLED YOUTH IN TANZANIA

Donations from USPG are bringing hope for a better future to young people at a centre for the disabled in Tanzania. The Kwamkono Disabled Children Centre at Hadeni supports 58 boys and girls with physical disabilities. Funds from USPG have improved the studying environment inside and outside the classroom. Money has been provided for stationery and school uniforms. There were also funds for the centre's garden – paying for seeds and manures and for labourers who helped clear the land. The garden is used to help train the children in growing vegetables.

On a bigger scale, funds from USPG were used to prepare nine hectares on the Centre's farms for cultivation. This paid for bush clearance, buying seeds, and paying labourers. Crops grown on the land are all used to feed the children.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Centre has taken measures to protect the children. Under the direction of the government, and using a donation from USPG, it bought buckets and soap to make sure the children were able to take extra hygiene measures to remain safe. ■



Patient at the Kwamkono Disabled Children Centre



Rt Rev'd Leopold Friday, Bishop of the Windward Islands

ST VINCENT RECOVERING FROM DEVASTATING VOLCANO ERUPTION

People on St Vincent are rebuilding their lives and homes in the wake of the eruption of the volcano La Soufrière in April. The eruption coated the island in a thick layer of ash. Tens of thousands of people were forced to leave their homes. Scientists say the volcano is returning to its normal dormant state but are warning people not to venture near the crater because it is still too dangerous.

At one point there were more than 30 evacuation centres giving refuge to people. In recent months, the authorities have gradually been giving the all-clear for people to return to their

homes as water and electricity supplies were restored. Community meetings have been held to discuss support for displaced people.

The authorities are also working to map out the areas where people should not build houses in the future because it will be too risky to do so, for example, in or near to riverbanks or the pathway of mudflows. Areas are being selected to construct houses for those who are affected. More than 3,000 buildings were damaged. Some can be repaired but others will need to be completely rebuilt. ■

NEW TRUSTEES JOIN THE BOARD

USPG has appointed two new trustees: Charles Cowling and Mathen Thomas. Charles will be stepping straight into chairing the Finance and Audit committee. He is Chief Actuary and partner at Mercer in the UK, where he has been engaged in research, intellectual capital, professionalism and actuarial standards.

He also has more than 30 years' pensions experience as a scheme actuary advising some of the largest companies and pension schemes in the UK. Charles has extensive experience in the charity sector as a trustee. He is also a very successful charity fundraiser largely through his marathon running. This has included the Brathay 10 in 10 (that is 10 marathons in 10 days around Windermere). Charles is also an ordinand in the Church of England as well as an accomplished tenor who has sung in choirs and as a soloist in many operas.

Mathen Thomas joins the board of Trustees with a wealth of international experience as a Senior Executive based in Hong Kong, Singapore, London, Brussels and Malmö, leading businesses and delivering sustainable profitable growth, scale up and turnaround.

He and his family have been involved in the Anglican Church, most recently at St Alban's Copenhagen, serving as PCC Secretary, Finance Committee member and as Warden. Mathen's wife, Alice, is a social worker, teacher and safeguarding officer. His son Thomas is a doctor and his daughter, Rebecca, is an ordinand in the Church of England. Mathen has a truly global perspective, being born in England and having lived in Ghana, Sikkim, Thailand, India, US, and Belgium. His family's roots are from Kerala and they support charities within the Church of South India. ■



Charles Cowling



Mathen Thomas

MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA IS NEWEST ANGLICAN PROVINCE

The Anglican Church of Mozambique and Angola (IAMA) has become the 42nd province of the Anglican Communion. The Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and the Anglican Communion primates gave the go-ahead for its creation earlier this year. Mozambique and Angola have been part of the province of Southern Africa.

IAMA will have 12 dioceses. Several new dioceses have been created during 2021 to meet the requirements for a new province. The province is hoping to have new bishops in place in all the dioceses so that they can attend the Lambeth Conference next year.

Work has also been continuing on meeting basic institutional requirements such as preparing the Constitution and Canon and setting up Provincial Office. At time of going to press, the inauguration ceremony was due to take place in late September. ■



Church in Mozambique

ANGLICANS INVITED TO JOIN GLOBAL WAVE OF PRAYER



Prayer at Deenabandhu High School in Delhi

Plans are being finalised for an Anglican Communion Day of Prayer which could see millions of Anglicans taking part in a 24-hour wave of prayer around the globe.

The event, set for 30 November, is being co-ordinated by a team at USPG and has the support of the Anglican Communion Office and several Anglican mission agencies. The number of provinces signing up has been increasing since invitations were sent out in July. The date is significant: 30 November is St Andrew's Day – a day where Anglicans focus on mission. It has historically been a day of prayer for the Communion. The organisers hope the Day of Prayer will honour this tradition as Anglicans around the world consider their contribution to God's mission.

USPG's General Secretary, Rev'd Duncan Dormor, said, 'We are very excited about the Day of Prayer. It is a new venture, and this is very much a pilot which will be developed in future years. I hope that Christians around the world – not just Anglicans – will join us in praying.'

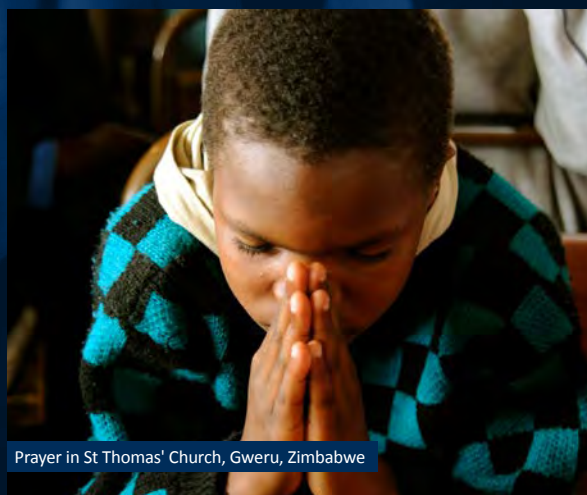
'people can join online prayer and worship at convenient times, wherever they are around the world'

Rev'd Davidson Solanki, USPG's Regional Manager for Asia and the Middle East, said the idea had come about through the Church's response to Covid.

'We saw how churches around the Communion were using technology to keep in touch and thought we could take advantage of this growth in 'virtual church' to bring everyone together to pray. Our virtual global gathering will take place over 24 hours so that people can join online prayer and worship at convenient times, wherever they are around the world.

'Our vision is for the time to comprise a collection of authentic expressions of prayer and worship from provinces, extra-provincial churches and churches in full communion with the Anglican Communion. We believe this initiative will enable the churches of the Anglican Communion to experience deeper fellowship together in Christ. We hope that by uniting people and provinces in prayer, we will demonstrate our solidarity with each other at this challenging time.'

Regular updates on the Day of Prayer and how to get involved will appear on the USPG website and in editions of e-news. ■



Prayer in St Thomas' Church, Gweru, Zimbabwe

USPG VOLUNTEER

REV'D PAUL GURNHAM



The Rev'd Paul Gurnham, Curate at St Anne's Church in London's Soho, first came across USPG when he was studying at the University of Cambridge. He says, 'I started as a History student at St John's College, Cambridge at the same time as the Rev'd Duncan Dormor, USPG's General Secretary, was starting there as Chaplain. I wasn't particularly into church at this point, though I had been a chorister in my hometown of Louth, Lincolnshire as a boy. I was familiar with the chapel setting but not that interested. I remember having a conversation with Duncan at Cambridge where I laid out my scepticism about Christianity. He responded by simply inviting me to the college chapel for a service. When I was coming to the end of my time at university, I was looking for things to do for a gap year; Duncan suggested I serve for a year with USPG. Again, I was very sceptical about this – I only went to chapel services and wasn't that involved in church whereas the more 'serious' Christians would go to chapel and then to churches in Cambridge.

'Throwing myself into the work of a missionary society was quite a big step at that point! My engagement with USPG really started my growth into an adult faith of my own. The Rev'd Dr Fergus King, then USPG's desk officer for Central Africa, gave a sermon at one of the Cambridge colleges. Duncan encouraged me to go along and meet Fergus, one thing led to another, and I ended up going to Tanzania for a year.'

Paul's experiences both in preparation for the trip and while living in Tanzania greatly encouraged his faith. 'My preparation for Tanzania at the College of the

Ascension in Selly Oak was a wonderful opportunity to meet Christians who were truly living out their faith. When I went to Dar Es Salaam, it felt like I was experiencing Christianity anew. During my time working at St Mark's Anglican Theological College there, I lived among priests and ordinands. The ritual of the Anglo-Catholic liturgy really struck me, encountering God through ritual and the students at St Mark's. Part of the reason I've continued to engage with USPG is the role that this experience played in developing my faith.'

However, pursuing ordination was certainly not Paul's priority on his return to the UK. He says, 'I was very determined that I wouldn't be called to the priesthood. At that time, I was focused on earning a good living and having a nice life in London. When I did get back to the UK, I worked as a barrister for 13 years and thoroughly enjoyed it. Working as a barrister gave me a great deal of insight into the realities of life. While some people might think of being at the bar as an exclusive club, you encounter people at very stressful times in their lives – people who have lost their jobs under difficult circumstances, people who have suffered injuries at work. I think God wanted me to have those experiences in order to nurture the pastoral side of my ministry. The legal profession is almost unique in giving one the opportunities to meet people at these challenging times. I'd also underestimated the role of the law in Church life, so my legal background is certainly proving useful!'

During this time, Paul had a sense that he was being called to do something different: 'I had a feeling that God was calling me to use my skills in a distinctive way in the Church. While I was quite involved in the Church life, volunteering as a speaker with USPG and sitting as a trustee for charities such as the All Saints Foundation, I felt that God was calling me to give my whole life to the Church.'

Paul now loves being part of a church that is so integral to the local community. 'Historically, Soho is a place for people who have been excluded by others; it's a place where everyone can be themselves. While St Anne's is a parish church serving the local area, it's also a place for anyone to come along and join in.' Paul is also the Bishop's Nominee for the Diocese of London. It is this which involved him attending USPG's annual conferences and led to him chairing this year's conference, For Such A Time As This. ■

FIRST BELONGING –

FROM SARAWAK TO ENGLAND AND BACK



Charlotte Hunter

Charlotte Hunter writes of her time on USPG's Journey with Us programme

Having been accepted on 'Journey with Us' in November 2015, my 12-month placement was with the Anglican Diocese of Kuching in Malaysia. It was no coincidence that I ended up in my mother's original city. This gave me the chance to connect with the Anglican church and with my family history on a deeper level. Since then, I have chosen to stay in Kuching for several months every year, still in the neighbourhood of my mother's birth.

My claim to being a member of the Kuching community may seem tenuous. Though a daughter of a Sarawakian-Chinese mother, I am also a product of a Northern Irish father. Though there were extended visits to Kuching as a child I was born and raised in England, and English is my mother tongue. However, in Kuching there exists for me a physical rootedness to my identity in the form of a traditional style shophouse on Carpenter Street, in the heart of the old town, from which my maternal family flows.

You may ask why this is important to me, and the answer may be that because my identity is split along the fault lines of race, culture, and continents, I've always felt a need for something physical, something definitive, to help me see in part who I am. This extends to the bricks and mortar of the house in which my mother was born, to the portrait of my late uncle – hung now with the photos of his parents – to my cousin at work in the family trade of watch repair, bent over his microscope as his father had done before him, and our grandfather before him, and our great grandfather before him... 'The poetry of the everyday', I believe it's called.

There's a continuity present that stretches outwards to the rest of our quarter, in particular to the thin triangle formed between the family shophouse, the temple, and Lau Ya Keng food court. The food court has been a daily part of family life reaching back to my mother's childhood, and during those extended visits, part of mine too. I now feel a deep-seated recognition of the smell of kerosene from the mobile cookers mingled with freshly brewed coffee, while the sound of torrential rain pounds on corrugated metal roofs. It was in here that my uncle and I last spoke before his final illness, where he whispered to me in his failing voice: 'I used to bring you here for satay when you were a little girl, and now you are bringing me'.

One cousin tells me I have a tendency to romanticise life in these parts, and I fear she is right. After all, for all the familiarity there is the unfamiliarity – what the writer Amin Maalouf describes as 'being estranged from the very traditions to which I belong'. I think about the metal grille across the front of the shophouse which, when the shop is closed, needs to be pulled back to let anyone in or out. I have never been able to manage it.

Not because it is heavy or stuck, but like a mortice key in a tricky lock, it takes a sleight of hand gained through habitude to make it shift – something I do not possess. On more pensive, introspective days, it becomes a symbol for the alienation I know exists between myself and this society in which I both belong, and cannot one hundred percent belong. I speak none of the local languages, without which no person can ever truly inhabit a society, and for all my extended childhood visits, ultimately, I was socialised in England. The consequence is that there are social and cultural complexities within both my family and the wider community which I might never understand.

Nonetheless, the feeling of belonging is stronger than any sense of non-belonging. Were anyone to ask me where my first point of identity lies, I would say right here, among these narrow streets and dark, dilapidated shophouses, in the chaos and in the heat. I would say I belong to one house in particular – the place where I've found the steadfastness I've always needed, the wellspring where four generations of my family have lived, worked, married, been born, and died. When the time comes, throw my ashes in the back yard. I'll be home.

This is an edited version of an article first written for KINO magazine, published March 2020. ■

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF OBISPO MAXIMO ALBERTO RAMENTO

It is 15 years since Obispo Maximo Alberto Ramento was murdered at his home in Tarlac, 60 miles north of the Philippines capital, Manila. Here his son Br. Alberto Ramento III reflects on the legacy of his father.

Obispo Maximo Alberto Ramento was born on 9 August 1936, in Guimba, Nueva Ecija, in the Philippines. He came from a wealthy and influential family.

Alberto's grandfather Don Felix Ramento was Guimba's town mayor from 1922-1925 and Alberto had three uncles who were pioneer priests in the Iglesia Filipina Independiente. His father Felipe Ramento was also the chief of police in Guimba. The Ramento family owned several large plots of land inherited from the Baldovino clan, Alberto's mother's side of the family. It is safe to say that Bishop Ramento had a comfortable childhood and came from an affluent family.

So why did Alberto suddenly turn away from the privileged life he was born into and towards a humble life as a priest?

Alberto's life was disrupted by the effects of conflict. The events of the Second World War devastated the Philippines. At a very young age, Alberto helped his family to earn money by selling rice cake and homemade beverages, like sago gulaman, in the local railway station. His conversations and friendships with other vendors there opened his mind to the reality of life for the less privileged.

Alberto decided to enter seminary after he got his Bachelor of Arts degree major in Philosophy at the Far Eastern University in Manila, and he graduated from St. Andrews Theological Seminary in Quezon City in 1958. He was ordained to the diaconate on 8 April 1958 and to the priesthood three weeks later. He was consecrated to bishop on 9 May 1969 after the inauguration of the newly rebuilt National Cathedral in Manila and served as Bishop of the Diocese of Cavite from 1970 until he was elected as the 9th Obispo Maximo on 9 May 1993.

Obispo Maximo Ramento held power and influence later in life but never used it to benefit himself. Instead, he deployed it to implement the mission of the Church: serving God and the people of the Philippines. Obispo Maximo Ramento did this through his continuous involvement in socio-political issues. He was a champion of human rights and an advocate of peace.

The mission and ministry of Bishop Ramento is reflected in the sermon he delivered during the wake of Fr. William Tadena, a victim of extrajudicial killing in the Philippines:

'The vision of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente is the vision of the Aglipayanos, that was given to us by our forebears who offered their lives and shed their blood so that we can freely preach the vision; our vision of how we can become true Christians.

Anyone who does not serve their neighbour, especially the poor, anyone who denies support to the deprived, the needy, the oppressed, the thirsty, the political prisoners, are not true Christians. A Church that worships God but fails to serve her country performs false worship, because the life of any person, their words and deeds in every minute of their life is their true worship.'

The killing of Fr. Tadena was designed to incite fear among people who supported the United Luisita Workers Union and the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union, who were striking for better pay for their work at the Hacienda Luisita sugar plantation. Obispo Maximo Ramento did not cower in fear, despite receiving numerous death threats from people opposed to the strike. He once said, 'Where will the farmers of Hacienda go if the Church closes its doors? Society and the government have already closed their doors to them'. Obispo Maximo then added, 'I know they are going to kill me next, but I will never abandon my duty to God and my ministry to the people of the Philippines'.

Obispo Maximo Alberto Ramento was murdered not only because he preached the Good News. He was murdered because he practised what he preached.

Br. Alberto Ramento is carrying on his father's legacy of human rights campaigning as a staff member of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente's PROPHETS programme (People's Right to Organize, to Peace, to Health, to Education, for Transformation of Society). ■



He was a champion of human rights and an advocate of peace

TRUSTEE PROFILE

REV'D CARLTON TURNER

'I see USPG as doing a kind of uniting work within the Anglican Communion,' says the Rev'd Dr Carlton Turner. 'In many ways, USPG is a glue in the Communion. It has deep knowledge of the past and it is a fount of wisdom.' Carlton, who was born in the Bahamas, became a trustee in 2018. 'I always knew I was going to be a priest and a teacher,' he says. 'I grew up on a rural island in the Bahamas, in a situation where I wasn't raised by my parents but by my grand aunt. She was a deputy head teacher of catechism in the church, a very responsible person within that society.'

'I first got involved formally with USPG when I came to the UK to do a master's at the Queen's Foundation where I now work. I was one of the students at the Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies at the Queen's Foundation. After completing the master's, I went home for about three months, then returned to do a PhD. I kept in close contact with USPG, even though they weren't sponsoring the PhD. Somewhere along the line - 2016, I think - I was a keynote speaker at the USPG conference. It was there that the suggestion came up that I should become a trustee - which I was very happy to do.'

In 2008, Carlton completed his MA in Mission and Applied Theology at the Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies. Since 2010, he has been involved with USPG on the Journey with Us programme and the Rethinking Mission conference. He currently works as a lecturer at the Queen's Foundation.

'When it comes to what I bring to the table as a trustee, I suppose the main thing would be a good knowledge of cross-cultural relations within the Anglican Communion,' Carlton says. 'Coming from a non-British, non-UK province, I bring another perspective. But also, having worked in the UK for the Church of England for 10 or more years, I bring both an 'inside' and an 'outside' perspective. My expertise, if you will, is of being a theologian - particularly a mission theologian, and a contextual theologian. And so, my ways of engaging topics come from the perspective of somebody who brings a wealth of experience of practical ministry.'

'Another thing about me that's important - especially when looking at USPG's history - is that I was trained for ordination at the place where the society had its very beginning: Codrington College in Barbados. The college was built on a former slave plantation that was



Rev'd Dr Carlton Turner

bequeathed in a legacy to SPG, as the organisation was then, with the view that it would become a school for local gentry and a university of theology. Those were quite worthy ambitions, but it was still an old slave plantation. USPG has been very forthright in facing up to that side of its past, and in some ways I'm a reminder of that. When I joined the trustees, it dawned on me very quickly that I was very much a minority in the room in terms of my ethnicity. USPG is one of these organisations that could have been institutionally very white. But it is making strides to ensure there is diversity. I'm glad about that.'

Carlton initially trained to be a Spanish teacher and it was while teaching that he realised that he had a pastoral gift. 'I did try to run away from ministry for some time,' he says. 'But eventually I relented, and it was then that I went to Codrington College.'

'The biggest challenge for me whilst training happened in the middle of my first year. One night, I stopped breathing. I was choking and I realised that I had a large lump in my throat. It turned out that this lump was malignant: it was a very rare but low-grade type of Hodgkin's Lymphoma. That threw me into a serious state of wrestling with God. I was challenged to take this life - and my purpose and ministry - seriously.'

'In all this, Isaiah 40:28 has been a real source of inspiration: 'Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.' It was written during a very tumultuous time, in the context of being carried off into exile, and I've preached on it many times.' ■

TRIBUTES TO THREE GIANTS OF ANGLICAN COMMUNION LIFE

Since the last edition of Koinonia, the Anglican Communion has lost three significant figures whose ministry has blessed Anglicans around the world. Their lives are remembered here:

Rt Rev'd John Robert Osmer

Generations of doctors, or clergy, or teachers reveal the calling on a family. That calling can also be less tangible, as in Bishop John Osmer's family where the courageous pursuit of justice can be seen in succeeding generations. He admired his great uncle, Charles F Andrews, a Cambridge Mission to Delhi missionary, friend of Gandhi and Tagore, and early activist for India's independence. In Bishop John's case it was standing against apartheid, which led to him being targeted by the South African authorities in a letter bomb attack, resulting in the loss of his right hand and other injuries.

Born and educated in New Zealand, Bishop John began ordination training at the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield after a visit to South Africa in 1958 where he encountered Trevor Huddleston. Apart from his first curacy, Bishop John's life in ministry was spent in southern Africa; in Lesotho, Botswana and Zambia.

John Osmer's connection with USPAG began in 1965 when he was appointed as a missionary while he was parish priest in Quthing, Lesotho. In 1973 he moved to the larger parish of Masite, where he also supported South Africans fleeing the authorities, until responding to South African pressure, the Lesotho government refused him permission to return from leave. Botswana then became home until his life was threatened again and he moved to Zambia, initially as Chaplain to the exiled African National Congress alongside serving the Church, later becoming the first Bishop of the new Diocese of Eastern Zambia in 1995. Bishop John officially retired in 2002 but continued serving the Church in Zambia and supporting refugees until his death.

U San Lin (Peter)

USPG was heartbroken to learn of the death of U San Lin (Peter) and grieves with his family and the Church of Province of Myanmar (CPM). Peter suffered with Covid-19 and died peacefully at his home in Yangon.



U San Lin (far left) with Archbishop Stephen Than Myint Oo (centre)
Photo: Joy U San Lin

Peter and his wife Joy led the CPM in the area of relief and development under the term of Archbishop Stephen Than Myint Oo. He had an extraordinary capacity to lead and build a motivated team, he inspired and empowered others. He transformed, consolidated and strengthened the provincial coordination of relief and development across the church. He was well known and much loved by many at USPAG and around the Anglican Communion. A gentle and humble human being with a big smile on his face, he will be remembered for a long time, by family and friends, within Myanmar and around the world. He was a very committed and loyal lay worker of the CPM and always kept the interest of the vulnerable and marginalised at the centre of his ministry. As a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, he modelled servant leadership in words and actions up until his last days.

USPG will miss a good and wise friend, and we praise God for his life and ministry. Our thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved family and with the Church of Province of Myanmar as they come to terms with this huge loss.

Most Rev'd Fereimi Cama

Archbishop Fereimi Cama was one of the three primates of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, and was the first Fijian to serve as an archbishop in the province.



Archbishop Fereimi Cama
Photo: Anglican
Communion News Service

He was a strong leader on climate justice and natural disaster preparedness. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, described his death as a great shock to the whole Communion.

That sentiment is strongly echoed at USPAG. We appreciated our time together during his visit to the Diocese of Lincoln in 2019. The connection between the Bishop of Lincoln and the Diocese of Polynesia was made at the USPAG International Consultation in Fiji in 2016 and it was encouraging to see the development of a companion link strengthened and furthered by Archbishop Cama. Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone in the diocese.

We are thankful for the words and encouragement of Archbishop Cama. His passing at 66 is a great loss to the Communion. ■



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

CHRISTMAS with a star icon APPEAL 2021



One of Sri Lanka's main products is tea and it plays a major role in the economy of the country.

Despite this many of the people who live and work in the country's numerous tea plantations have endured years of marginalization and exclusion from the rest of Sri Lankan society. This isolation has led to poor living conditions for families, limited medical care and a lack of education for children.

Plantation workers and their families living on the tea estates have significantly poorer living standards than the average worker in Sri Lanka. Estates rarely have proper schools or clinics. Families are also unlikely to have basic facilities such as drinking water, sanitation and electricity in their homes.

Our Church partner, The Church of Ceylon, Diocese of Colombo, has set up development and advocacy programmes to improve the well-being of people living in the tea plantation communities.

THE SIVANESHWARY FAMILY



Mrs Vishwanathan Sivaneshwary and her family live in a former cowshed on Farm Estate, a private plantation located in the hill country, in the central province of Sri Lanka. Mrs Sivaneshwary's husband lost his job due to the Covid-19 pandemic and now her salary from tea picking provides for the whole family.

Plantation workers are often paid very poorly and given strict targets, their basic pay is halved if they don't pick the target weight of tea per day. Mrs Sivaneshwary is paid an average salary of 12,500 LKR (£45) per month to support her whole family. She says "Our expenses always exceed our income therefore we cannot save any money for our children's future" The unstable financial situation of many estate workers has pushed them towards indebtedness which is common in plantation communities.

Due to the poor living conditions on the plantation there is only one toilet available for every five houses on the estate. Mrs Sivaneshwary's 12 year old daughter Mishanthini has to wake up at 5am to use the facilities before the plantation workers get ready to start their day. Lack of toilets and running water is a problem for women and young girls who need to wake up early in the morning to bathe, exposing them to various threats, including unwanted sexual harassment.

Plantation workers are scared to complain or discuss their needs with the management. They are fearful that if they do so, the supervisors will ask them to leave the estate and they will lose their homes and livelihoods.

The Church of Ceylon, Diocese of Colombo's Plantation Community Development programme aims to fight this discrimination and injustice by providing education, healthcare and advocacy for families living and working on the tea estates. The programme provides education to children, including preschools, non-formal education classes, seminars and scholarships for government exams as well as for A Level and University students. The programme also offers medical support to pregnant mothers and advocates for human rights of the tea plantation community including improved living conditions.

Throughout Advent and Christmas 2021 we will be standing in solidarity with our partner, The Church of Ceylon, Diocese of Colombo. Their vital work with women and children from the tea plantation communities is transforming lives and lifting people out of poverty.

JOIN US IN SUPPORTING SRI LANKA'S MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES.

Visit www.uspg.org.uk/christmas

CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2021

CHRISTMAS
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Throughout Advent and Christmas 2021 we will be standing in solidarity with our partner church in Sri Lanka, the Diocese of Colombo, of the Church of Ceylon.

Their vital work with women and children from marginalised and isolated tea plantation communities is transforming lives and lifting people out of poverty.

The Plantation Community Development programme of the Diocese of Colombo provides education to children, support to pregnant mothers and advocates for human rights of people living and working on the tea plantations.

Join us this Christmas in supporting Sri Lanka's most vulnerable communities.

TO FIND OUT MORE

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