

KOINONIA



MAKING THE COP COUNT

Rachel Mander on the Climate Change conference

THE STARS ARE BRIGHT

Co-Curator Jessica Ihejetoh on a striking new exhibition

THE VIEW FROM HERE

A youth Perspective in Belize

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KOINONIA

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM USPG AND OUR ANGLICAN COMMUNION PARTNERS

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

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EDITORIAL: 'GREENING' OUR DISCIPLESHIP

'We must begin the work of renewing creation by being renewed in our own hearts and minds'.

Anglicans are Green! This call to a renewal of spirituality and a 'greening' of our discipleship is that of Bishop Johnson Japheth Chinyong'ole reflecting on the droughts that have devastated Tanzania over recent decades. His call echoes through the pages of this issue, which focuses on the worldwide Anglican pursuit of ecological justice. In the face of environmental challenges which include plastic pollution, deforestation, water shortages, habitat loss and flooding. It is also a call to action, to prayer, to creativity and above all - to hope.

Renewal takes many forms. Anglicans are engaged with both science and sacrament:

In the commitment of scientists, like Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, challenging the churches to look to the stewardship of our natural capital. Or across Melanesia, where churches have installed monitoring equipment and created an archipelago of observatories, sending daily readings measuring shoreline change, rainfall, storm intensity and duration to their scientific partners.

'Green Anglicans' in Malawi are renewing the deep sense of connection between our pilgrimage on earth and the God who creates us all: At those key moments of baptism, marriage and death – a tree is planted. Tree planting is fast becoming an integral part of Christian life and worship in many of the churches of Africa, and bishops are also encouraging confirmation candidates to plant a tree as part of their commitment. That commitment to change and renewal is at the heart of the Lusophone network of Green Anglicans as they seek to embed green habits into everyday life. It is also a central task of responsible parenting.

Young people are, without doubt, some of the most articulate and passionate advocates of ecological justice and their voices are prominent in this issue of Koinonia with reflections from The Gambia, Southern African and Belize. They challenge the church to be 'the social conscience and the voice of the environment' - and to take action. Hope and creativity lie at the heart of mission in all its forms: That is clear from - The Stars are Bright- the exhibition of Zimbabwean paintings from the 1940s produced by the Cyrene Mission School; in our Exchanging Places programme; and in the focus of our Christmas campaign – the Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission programme: Promise of Hope. May the children who grow up HIV-free also look to a greener future.

The Rev'd Duncan Dormor, General Secretary USPG



WELCOME: REMEMBRANCE

We're in the season of poppies and parades, silences and solemn remembrance, and I find it comforting that so many of our commemorations take place around town and village War Memorials. This is where we count the cost of conflict and we don't count them in their hundreds of thousands, but instead we count them as individual people. Looking down the lists of names, each person is remembered and called to mind. Each one a child of God; each one precious in His sight.

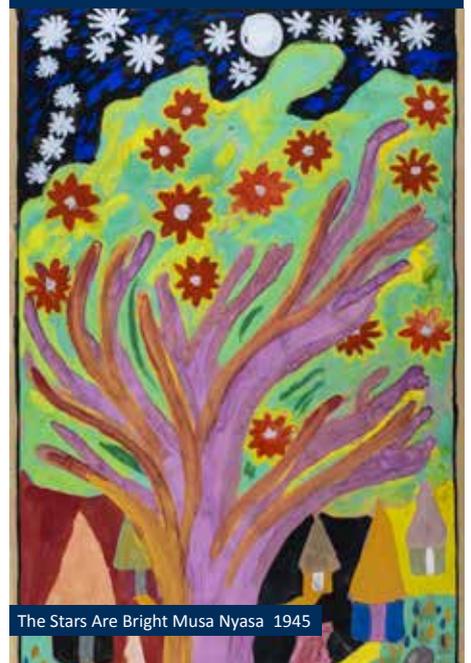
I find the most helpful Bible verse on these occasions is Matthew 5:9 'Blessed are the Peacemakers': a reminder that peace cannot be simply wished for, but has to be forged out of human determination and involves us not avoiding hard and dangerous places or situations.

Bishop Alfred Rose, Bishop of Dover, preached to hundreds of soldiers just before D-Day and said to them: 'I have no doubts about the war. I wish I could say the same about the peace,' reminding them that the end of armed conflict was not the end of the struggle for peace; that it goes on and is a daily duty of those who love God.

Rev'd Jonathan Jennings, British Army Chaplain

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The Stars Are Bright Musa Nyasa 1945

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STOP FUELLING THE FIRE

An interview with Hannah Abban



Hannah Abban, Leader of Stop Fuelling the Fire

‘By funding fossil fuels abroad, we are only exacerbating the injustice already presently being suffered by the global South due to climate change,’ says Hannah Abban, leader of the fledgling environmental group Stop Fuelling the Fire. ‘We believe our country could be doing better on this front by divesting the funds to more sustainable alternatives like renewable energy.’

Stop Fuelling the Fire is a group of 25 young Christians, scattered across the UK, who have made it their mission to urge the British Government to stop funding fossil fuel extraction overseas. The group was born out of an idea Hannah had late last year. ‘It was around the time that Greta Thunberg had led the school walkouts,’ Hannah recalls. ‘I was working at an advertising agency at the time, and the agency teamed up with several others to make a statement against climate change. Suddenly all these corporations were getting on the bandwagon. I decided that it was up to us Christians to keep the momentum going and make sure that we actually saw some fruit.’ Hannah is a member of the campaign’s press and parliamentary team. ‘We don’t really have any heads in team, to be honest,’ she

explains. ‘But my brief is to engage with the media and local MPs.’

Hannah studied philosophy and politics at the University of York and graduated in 2018, after which she worked for USPG’s sister organisation, SPCK Publishing. ‘I’ve volunteered for charities in one capacity or other since I was in secondary school,’ she says. ‘I’ve always been interested in social change. My current day job is in PR and I thought that starting this campaign would be a great way to reconcile my faith with the change I want to see in the world.’

‘We definitely want to engage churches in this because we all belong to a church. We believe that churches are a key instrument to spreading the message of climate justice. It’s linked to the gospel and to our call as Christians to be champions of justice.’

Trying to organise a climate change campaign in the midst of a pandemic has been challenging, to say the least. ‘It has been difficult,’ Hannah says. ‘Getting everyone on the same page has been hard because people have been affected by the pandemic in different ways and you have to think of everyone’s welfare. Some of us are working and some are furloughed, so availability varies. Zoom has been great for updating everyone and checking on the progress of the different teams.’

‘Also, it does feel like the message of climate change - which was so loud last year - has got lost a bit. But it remains a problem, and we should definitely not lose sight of trying to figure out solutions to combat it.’

The group is currently petitioning the Prime Minister to end the use of UK Export finance to fund fossil fuel projects overseas.

To add your signature to the petition, go to <https://tinyurl.com/stopfuelling> ■

READY FOR A NEW MISSION: ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, POHANG

By Rebecca Boardman, USPG Regional Manager



On 15th November 2017, a magnitude 5.4 earthquake struck the southern port city of Pohang in Gyeongsang Province, South Korea. The quake was the second most destructive on modern record in Korea – injuring 135 people, displacing thousands and causing an estimated 300 billion won (GBP200 million) in damages.

St Andrew's, the Anglican Church in Pohang, suffered irreparable damage and the city ordered its demolition. The Diocese of Busan put out a global appeal for funds to rebuild the Church. USPG joined the global displays of solidarity offering modest support through its Rapid Response fund that supports church and community response after disasters.

In March 2019, a South Korean government panel concluded that the earthquake was not caused naturally and was likely caused by an experimental geothermal power plant that uses thermal energy generated and stored in the earth. Whilst earthquakes have been linked to geothermal power plants elsewhere, the Pohang quake was around a thousand times greater than any other on record.

The Pohang power plant used an experimental technology called 'enhanced geothermal system' that injected fluid at high pressure into the ground to fracture the rock and release heat. The government panel found that this pressure caused small earthquakes that affected near-by faults that eventually triggered the massive November 2017 earthquake.

Geothermal energy (and other renewable energies and technological innovations such as carbon capture and storage) are important in the transition to a low carbon society. However, incidents such as this remind us of the physical and social costs of relying too heavily on new and emerging technologies that likely have unintended consequences. These types of events highlight the pressing need for society to reduce energy consumption and not just rely on new and experimental technology.

In February this year I visited the community of St Andrew's with the Bishop of Busan, the Rt Rev'd

Onesimus Park. We met the Reverend Daniel Roh, the Vicar of St Andrew's, who spoke about how the community was still recovering, with 300 families still residing in tents in the town's sports complex some two and a half years later. The church had converted a shipping container into a beautiful makeshift chapel and worship was ongoing as the new Church was being built. I was inspired by the commitment and dedication of the Rev'd Roh and 25 other priests from the Diocese who donated their time and labour to construct the church.

Bishop Onesimus shared, "The people of the Anglican Church of Korea have been praying for God to restore St Andrew's Church since its building was damaged by the Pohang earthquake in November 2017. Finally, with God's grace, along with the prayers and donations from the Most Rev'd Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, six overseas dioceses and mission societies, neighbouring churches of other denominations, 71 churches, 38 convents, institutions and activity organisations of the Anglican Church of Korea, St Andrew's Church's new building has been successfully completed and is ready for a new mission. Glory to God! Thank you to all the churches! We love God, and we will love what God loves."

The Diocese of Busan used the opportunity to be innovative with the architecture of the new building. The church has been designed for openness enabling natural air circulation and space for the service to extend outside. Speaking to the Korea Times, the architect Cha Tae-kwon said "St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Pohang embraces green principles, including solar energy. Instead of erecting a giant crucifix typical of Korean churches, trees were planted around the church site. The priest's office has a slanted roof for solar panels that will be installed later. The rooftop and a terrace are for gardens. Even the roof that connects the chapel and priest's office was hollowed out for a garden."

St Andrew's celebrated the consecration and dedication of the newly-reconstructed St Andrew's Church Pohang on 23 August 2020. The service was led by the Rt Rev'd Moses Yoo, Bishop of the Diocese of Daejeon and Primate, and around 50 people gathered to celebrate from all three dioceses of the Anglican Church of Korea. The Diocese of Busan said, "Though many people couldn't attend the service due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, it was a beautiful celebration because of the beautiful sunshine and smiles of relief on the faces of everyone." ■



Thank you to all the churches! We love God, and we will love what God loves

CLIMATE JUSTICE AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN SHINYANGA, TANZANIA

By The Right Reverend Johnson Japheth Chinyong'ole, Bishop of Shinyanga, Anglican Church of Tanzania



Landscape in Tanzania

The Anglican Diocese of Shinyanga covers three districts of the Shinyanga region and four districts of the Simiyu region. This area is located in the north-west of Tanzania, is a semi-arid and used to consist of extensive acacia and miombo woodlands. High population densities (42 people per km²) combined with an agro-pastoral land-use system exacerbated existing problems of clearing land for cultivation. The United Republic of Tanzania comprises Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar, has a total area of 945,087 square kilometres and an estimated population of over 56 million, making Tanzania one of the largest countries in East Africa.

Climate change and environmental damage are two of the most dramatic challenges facing the world today. In the last 40 years, Tanzania has experienced severe and recurring droughts, floods and storms with devastating effects on agriculture, water resources, human health, energy, ecosystems, and infrastructure sectors. Currently more than 70% of all natural disasters in Tanzania are climate change related and are linked to recurring droughts and floods. Rising temperatures, longer dry spells, more intense heavy rainfall and rises in sea level make Tanzania the 26th most vulnerable country to climate change.

The impacts of climate change are not being borne equally or fairly, between wealthy and poorer nations, women and men and older and younger generations. Consequently, there has

been a growing focus on climate justice, which looks at the climate crisis through the human-rights lens, and in the belief that by working together we can create a better future for present and future generations. Climate justice calls for clean, renewable, locally controlled and low-impact energy resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for all living things. It affirms the right of all people, including the vulnerable, women, rural and indigenous peoples, to have access to affordable and sustainable energy. It links human rights and development to achieve a human-centred approach, safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable people and sharing the burdens and benefits of climate change and its impacts equitably and fairly.

In recognition of this fact, the government of Tanzania and the donor community have already initiated activities to incorporate climate change into the country's strategic vision, determining priorities for key sectors such as agriculture and food security, and developing a National Climate Change Strategy to ensure that food production is not threatened.

The Church must declare that God's Creation is in crisis, suffering because of our neglect, selfishness, and pride which have fostered a pandemic of poverty and environmental degradation. We must begin the work of renewing Creation by being renewed in our own hearts and minds. ■



In the last 40 years Tanzania has experienced severe and recurring droughts, floods and storms with devastating effects

JOURNEY WITH US. GOING WHERE GOD CALLS US.

By Jo Musker-Sherwood

It's hard to know just what God has in mind when we are called to say 'yes' to something new and daunting in our lives.

When I was finishing my A levels, I knew I wasn't ready to go to university, so I enquired about the USPG 'Journey with Us' volunteer programme, and soon found myself setting off to spend six months in Peru.

I stayed with a Peruvian family, who quickly became like family to me. I taught English and music in the nearby church projects located in some of Lima's many informal settlements. I also had the opportunity to visit some of the other missions in the south of Peru.

I had never travelled beyond Western Europe before, and had spent most of my life growing up in a small town in Kent. In Peru, with its extraordinary food, intense landscapes, and heart-open people, I felt as if the whole world had opened-up before my eyes. The hardest part of the whole adventure was settling back into life in the UK. How on earth could I return to 'normal' life after such an experience? No matter how hard I tried to get stuck into university life, I couldn't shake-off the feeling that God was calling me to do something more with my experiences in Peru.

I became heavily involved in various social justice issues, and in particular with climate change. I soon learned that Peru is one of the countries in the world most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, as Lima, where one-third of the population lives, is dependent on the rapidly depleting Andean glaciers for water.

I joined a few others who were interested in helping churches do something about climate change. USPG supported our work financially and in all sorts of other non-material ways until our charity, Hope for the Future, was formally registered in 2017. Hope for the Future now works with USPG and offers support to churches looking to respond to the climate emergency by engaging with their elected representatives.

It has grown from a small cluster of Yorkshire-based churches to a UK-wide NGO impacting national climate policy by working with people of all faiths and none.

We also offer workshops about eco-anxiety - the fear of climate change. I write about eco-anxiety on my website, www.climateemergence.co.uk, sharing the peace that God offers when life feels overwhelming.

It's been an extraordinary journey and when I reflect on first walking to the Andean foothills to visit the church projects for the first time, I can see that so much of where I am today started there. I felt God's call on my life, witnessed the beautiful work of the Peruvian Church as they responded to God's call, and I have remembered it ever since. One of my most memorable moments was watching a huge rainbow spread across the sky, directly over one of the projects which happened to be

called 'Noah's Ark'. For many of the children it was their first time seeing a rainbow because Lima is a desert city so there isn't a great deal of rain!

I often reflect on God's rainbow promise never to flood the earth again, and what it might mean for humanity as we find ourselves at risk of causing all sorts of catastrophic changes to the earth's climate as a result of how we treat the planet.

But in addition to my vocation, I also have USPG's 'Journey with Us' Programme to thank for my husband.

Greg volunteered in Trinidad and Tobago for six months and taught in the local church school in an area where many of the children are at risk of getting involved in violent gangs. This was his first experience traveling and living on his own.

The Trinidadian family he lived with and the church there have always stayed with him. The experience also unearthed an unknown love of teaching and after returning to the UK, Greg started volunteering to teach homeless people and vulnerable adults woodworking skills. This eventually turned into a full-time job and he has loved teaching and working with young people.

Greg and I married six years ago, and we've since loved staying involved with USPG as a way of reconnecting with what first brought us together: the adventure of following wherever God may lead us! ■



Peru is one of the countries in the world most vulnerable to the effects of climate change



Jo and Greg Musker-Sherwood

QUEST FOR ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE IN THE CARIBBEAN

By Elizabeth Thomas-Hope

PROFESSOR EMERITA OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT, THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES.

We cannot fail to be aware that a global ecological crisis is upon us, with climate change providing the space and platform for the loudest articulation of the need for ecological justice. Foremost in the public narrative are demands for the sustainable use of the environment, not just for the present generation but more so for the generations to come.

Therefore, the issue of justice is not solely one of distributing environmental benefits and risks in the present, but doing justice to nature to allow the sustainability of natural capital and the protection of irreplaceable resources. The knowledge that the Earth is finite, and comprised of interconnected systems with thresholds of degradation beyond which restoration is irreversible, is now widely accepted. The central message is that nature has an intrinsic or inherent value and that humans are part of nature, not separate from it, so that justice for the one is also justice for the other. Climate justice is a major concern in the Caribbean, as elsewhere, representing just one of many situations where ecosystems are “traded” for economic activities without limits to resource exploitation or concern for either sustainability or justice.

The Caribbean

Formerly pristine ecosystems of the Caribbean were dramatically and irreversibly altered from the mid-17th century as commercial profit from tropical products, principally sugar, drove European colonial expansion in the region. This was associated with the aggressive clearing of forests undertaken by slave labour. Beyond clearing for cane and other crops, the plantations placed demands on trees for all construction needs. Additionally, huge quantities of wood fuelled the furnaces for sugar extraction. With timber removed, soil erosion was widespread. Had restraint been exercised in this process, the story would have been different. But the reality was the transformation of multi-species island ecosystems into monoculture plantations for massive profit. Then, when competition and production costs increased and profits waned, the abandoned acres were left as reminders of a past age of prosperity – not for the Caribbean, but for Europe.

Several small Caribbean islands were entirely deforested while, in the larger ones like Jamaica, the alluvial plains and low-lying lands were cleared leaving the interior uplands, no good for sugar-cane, as the refuge of ex-slaves and locations for successive

generations of small farming communities. But by the mid-20th century, the interior was in demand for mining bauxite (the ore from which aluminium is derived). Multinational bauxite companies acquired large tracts of land, mandating the relocation of settlements that were in their way.

Once areas were open-cast mined they too became abandoned and of minimal use for agriculture afterwards. The heyday of bauxite left Jamaica's economy as unsustainable as sugar had done before, as dependent as ever on the outside world, and locked into ongoing indebtedness to international banks.

In recent years we have seen new proposals for bauxite mining, this time including the last of Jamaica's contiguous rainforests of the interior upland - the Cockpit Country. Over 500 square miles of forest on limestone rock characterised by caves, swallow holes, conical hills and deep valleys defended by the 18th century Maroons (runaway slaves) that took refuge there, is still home to Maroon communities. Based on previous experience, the 'cost' of bauxite mining in the Cockpit Country would include deforestation, loss of biological diversity, water, air and soil pollution, the risk of ill health of residents in nearby villages from caustic dust, the destruction and –displacement of intact, viable rural communities and the loss of local agricultural production and way of life associated with such communities.

Driven by the present national environmental awareness and ethic, the response was in stark contrast to the earlier situation. Caution has been exercised by the government, and a strong stand taken by local residents and ecological groups across Jamaica opposing the issuing of contracts to the multinational company. A compromise was struck and the Cockpit Country Protected Area was designated (2017). However, this would not protect ecosystems, rivers, watersheds and settlements in an adjoining area that still remains in contention.



At a critical meeting of stakeholders, a commentator noted that, “Maroon drumming and singing called the ancestors into the space and made it sacred.” But the mainline churches were neither there, nor otherwise expressing any view on the matter. The church, anxious to avoid a highly politicised issue, has remained silent, accepting the view that it was solely one of “economic development”. The implications for ecological justice were missed.

The Church and the quest for ecological justice

Restoration is an ancient Judaeo-Christian tenet. But interpretations have been guided by the view that it was only God’s temple and His people that were to be restored, not His natural creation. Restoring nature as a divinely-inspired principle emerged in the public arena through the first Earth Day in the USA (April 22, 1970). The 20 million participants across the country protested against DDT, pollution, and all forms of environmental degradation. They rejected the frontier ethic that had gutted and then abandoned worn-out lands, and sought a collaborative ethic making nature humanity’s partner, rather than victim. A just and compassionate future, if not sheer survival, required a much more considerate stewardship of natural capital. Along similar lines, the Anglican Consultative Council in 1990 identified “Striving to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the Earth” as The Fifth Mark of Mission. While the response has been a general recognition that nature should be respected, zeal for its connection to justice is lacking.

The international dimension of the quest for ecological justice speaks to the evidence that the Earth’s dominant economic, social and political

systems have been based on an unequal North-South distribution of power and wealth. This has led to ecosystem destruction, pollution, species extinctions and climate change threatening both the Global North and South, but impacting most negatively the more economically vulnerable populations in the South.

From a spiritual perspective, ecological justice is based on the belief that the Earth is sacred, and that it has become a victim of exploitation as also have vulnerable human communities. There is need for a renewed emphasis in our interpretation of Scripture to reveal its calls for ecological justice based on our responsibility for the marginalized and exploited- both human and non-human in relationship with each other.

But built into the human psyche, is a deeply embedded dualism between mind and body, spirit and flesh, domestic and alien, this world and the next, conscious humans and non-thinking things of nature. The Judeo-Christian interpretations of Scripture in the past have been criticized for reinforcing this dualism by portraying a transcendent God as separate from the world, and humans in the image of God with dominion over nature, as being superior and separate from Earth. Ecological justice, then, countering dualism by expressing the unity of social and environmental dimensions of community, provides an expansive lens for properly seeing relevant and ever-changing contemporary issues. It is suggested, therefore, that the quest for ecological justice requires further conversations about how, as a paradigm of justice, it could contribute in dynamic and various ways to building a more just society and a sustainable future for everyone. ■



From a spiritual perspective, ecological justice is based on the belief that the Earth is sacred



DON'T JUST WORRY ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE: TAKE ACTION!

By Sarah Robinson, Deputy Director, Hope for the Future

Children and young people have taken to the streets in their thousands, uniting to take a stand against climate change as they recognise that changes to the environment are already impacting their lives. A growing force of parents is standing in solidarity alongside these young people and their children demanding action on climate change.

Parents are a fierce voice on climate change, with the 'next generation' narrative made incredibly stark and personal as they too consider the future their children will inhabit. The growing sense of worry and frustration among parents is a rational response to the climate crisis as we watch the wildfires, droughts, and ecological disasters across the world as well as the flooding and heatwaves happening on our doorsteps. Sometimes, it can feel like no action is quick enough or big enough to tackle this huge issue and in fact, research has shown that the human brain finds it difficult to fully engage with an abstract, slow-moving threat like climate change, which is perceived as a distant problem. For parents, this future is brought somewhat closer when your child reminds you that it will be their adulthood which is impacted the most.

Climate change can feel so ingrained in our society that it can feel difficult to make change, leading to feelings of being overwhelmed with anxiety and frustration- feelings which are widely experienced among adults and children alike. It is so important to share these feelings. We can show children that these same feelings are normal and valid, and that taking action can give way to feelings of hope and empowerment. Having conversations about the changes we are

seeing as well as having positive conversations about action we can take to create a more sustainable future can help to reduce the negative emotions felt by both parents and children. Some parents feel inspired by their children's actions (or those of the youth strikers) with conversations as a family helping to ignite parents' passion to make a difference.

While taking action can help you to feel like you are contributing to the solution, campaigning as a parent can be a challenge for many reasons: a lack of time and energy; having to fulfil multiple roles within the community; dealing with the emotional toll associated with climate change; the practicalities of attending meetings and marches with children in tow. Yet, the advantages of taking action and campaigning can be profound. There are the practical advantages of sharing responsibilities, bringing diverse skills together and connecting with other networks to have a bigger impact. Taking part in campaigning and activism can lead to parents feeling determined, inspired and motivated as they see others sharing their concern and commitment. Worrying about the future and climate change can sometimes be a very lonely thing, so getting friends involved or joining groups with likeminded people can help you to process your emotions around the issue and celebrate successes together.

While taking action has a positive impact in so many ways, it is also important to remember that not everybody can be a full-time activist. Whatever action you might take, big or small, you are making a vital contribution to halting climate change and securing a future for the younger generation. ■



the advantages of taking action and campaigning can be profound



Climate change protesters

WE WERE THERE

Diocesan Day: Belize celebrates 138 years By The Right Reverend Philip Wright, Bishop of Belize.

The Diocese of Belize celebrated its 138 anniversary on August 10, 2020. What follows is an extract from the address given by the Right Reverend Philip Wright, Bishop of Belize.

Today, August 10th, we begin our 138th year as a Diocese. This is in addition to over 150 years of the Anglican Church's mission and ministry in what is Belize today: work that dates back to the late 17th century.

There is lot we can be proud of as Anglicans in this homeland of ours. We have been here from the earliest days of the settlement and when it was time to help organise society and put certain structures in place, we were there.

When it was time to erect the first established place of worship, we were there. Undoubtedly, the construction of St John's Cathedral, which started in 1812, was a pivotal moment in the history of this country. It signalled beyond the shadow of doubt, that this was to be a country founded on Christian principles, which is now stated in the Preamble of our Constitution.

When it was time to establish schools and educate the population, we were there. And when it was time to engage in the process of nation-building and political independence, we played our part and continue to do so to this day.

However, as much as we have played an essential role in our history as a people and as a nation, we want to continue to play such a role in our present and future development and progress.

There is a lot happening in our midst these days which is enough to make the most optimistic among us have doubts and second thoughts. Just this past week, the news headlines were enough to make us all feel discouraged and depressed. The surge in Covid-19 cases is not only alarming but has serious implications for us socially, medically and economically.

Yet, here is the good news my sisters and brothers. Despite all that looks like gloom and doom, we, the followers of Jesus, have a powerful witness to bear to the rest of society. In this instance, let us set the example of being responsible and sensible and showing that we care for our fellow citizens. Let us observe the protocols and guidelines by wearing masks, by physical distancing and by sanitising at all times.



Photo: Habib Nader

Society needs the Church for its very survival. Nevertheless, it must be a Church that is faithful to her Lord and who proclaims the Gospel in word and deed. We have a message of hope and encouragement. Jesus reminds us that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

Our stated vision continues to challenge us to work to make a difference in the lives of all God's people, even as we equip and empower ourselves for the mission and ministry at hand. We must help each other along; be there for each other and encourage one another. Our Outreach Ministry has been doing a fantastic job in reaching out to our disadvantaged sisters and brothers. We must be the place where all feel welcome and included.

We, members, friends and supporters from the several congregations across the diocese and around the world, continue to thank God for His goodness; to celebrate His love and to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

May God continue to richly bless you and your family.

Let us pray:

Almighty Father, whose blessed Son before His passion prayed for His disciples that they might be one, as you and He are one: Grant that your Church, being bound together in love and obedience to you, may be united in one body by the one Spirit, that the world may believe in Him whom you have sent, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen. ■



Jesus reminds us that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

MAKING THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES (COP) COUNT

By Rachel Mander

FROM HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

If we ignore the world, we betray the word of God which sends us out to serve the world.

(THE 2001 MICAH NETWORK DECLARATION ON INTEGRAL MISSION)

As followers of Christ, we are sent out to serve the world. Climate change can feel distant, but it is already happening. It is a lived reality across the world, but it is also encroaching on countries such as the UK. This year UK wheat production dropped by 40% because of heavy rainfall at harvest time in August - in combination with a hot and dry spring which caused droughts earlier in the year.

In November 2021, the UK should host the postponed COP26. This is the 'Olympic Games of climate change policy': The United Nations' international negotiations which govern the ambition and resourcing of global climate action. As the host country, the UK will have a major diplomatic and political role in its success.

COPs are held annually. In 2015, 195 nations signed the historic Paris Agreement following COP21. This was a major landmark; countries formally agreed to a programme of increased commitments running in five-year cycles, beginning in 2020. The stated aim of this agreement is to limit global temperature rise to two degrees, and to pursue limiting warming to 1.5 degrees.

This year the negotiations will be particularly significant. COP26 is the deadline for countries to submit their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), in the first five-year cycle of commitments. The degree of commitment signalled by these NDCs will indicate whether the Paris Agreement can deliver the governance needed to avert the three or four degrees increase in global average temperatures expected over the course of this century.

COP26 is a crucial test, it will act as a 'proof of concept' for the Paris Agreement.

High level international negotiations can feel very far away from our own contexts. At the same time, UK followers of Christ have an opportunity. As citizens of the host country, we have political influence over the government with the greatest control over the outcome of these talks - talks which have huge material implications for the wellbeing of our brothers and sisters around the world, and the flourishing of God's creation as a whole.

Given the importance of the UK's host role, the Committee on Climate Change (the UK government's independent advisory body) has said, "it has never been more important for the UK to demonstrate strong climate leadership, both for the world's future and for the UK's standing within it."

The UK is the world's sixth biggest economy and the 25th richest on a per person basis, with GDP per person over two and a half times the global average. On a per capita basis, it has high historic culpability for emissions. It also has the technical expertise and resources to decarbonise quickly and this leaves a question to be answered: What does it look like for the UK Church, sent to serve the world, to respond?

USPG's global Anglican partners and Christians across the world are challenging the UK Church to act on climate change. The UK has both historic and contemporary responsibility for the impacts of climate change, partly through a legacy of promoting environmental degradation through colonial resource extraction and cash crop production. It also has a present duty to utilise its position of global influence to mitigate climate risk.

In solidarity with our global partners, this year USPG and Hope for the Future are inviting churches to join with those around the world and use the time before COP26 to heed the call to act through the 'Make COP Count' programme.

This programme is open to all UK churches. It will give tailored support for churches to take action, while also providing churches with the opportunities and framework for connecting with the broader national and international context. Throughout the duration of the programme, UK churches will be invited to determine priority action for their congregation and receive comprehensive support for follow-up political engagement. Churches will be able to share this experience with other programme participants and USPG's global partners.

The programme will be a good fit if your church would benefit from:

Practical and individual support for your church engagement with climate justice, the opportunity to meet, connect and share with others and being able to pray with and learn from USPG's partners around the world.

For more information, please contact: rachel.mander@hftf.org.uk ■



COP26 is a crucial test, it will act as a 'proof of concept' for the Paris Agreement



Flooding in Kent
Photo: Linda Mackenzie

EXCHANGING PLACES



Habib Nader

People at the heart of USPG

By Habib Nader, People Programmes Manager

People, and the movement of people in mission, remain at the heart of USPG's work. Through the Exchanging Places programme, USPG offers its wealth of experience and knowledge of the movement of people in mission (going back three centuries) to encourage and support partner churches outside Europe as they share expertise and experience through the sending and receiving of personnel in mission. In this way, they build and strengthen reciprocal relationships.

USPG's role is to set up introductions between the prospective sending and receiving partner churches willing to share resources. We assist with the recruitment and preparation of nominated candidates and provide logistical support for a successful appointment. When it is necessary, USPG makes a financial contribution to enable the appointment to take place.

The sending church is the partner church that offers and sends personnel from their church to another church, to serve and share in mission, whilst the receiving church refers to the church that employs and hosts the person sent to serve and share in mission from a partner church. Only nationals from partner churches outside Europe are allowed to serve under the scheme. People from the UK and Europe are excluded from this programme.

In the past 25 years, 22 appointments have taken place between 42 dioceses and partner churches. Appointments involved both lay and clergy persons with a wide range of professional backgrounds, from priests, health

and development workers, trainers, theological tutors, youth workers, administrators and Information technology specialists, with an average appointment length of three years, sometimes less.

Partner churches taking part in this unique collaboration agree to share resources and contribute financially towards the budget for the appointment. Jointly sponsored appointments with ecumenical partners have also taken place.

A recent example of this partnership between partner churches is the appointment of the Rev'd Fr Justice Apo Tetteh from the Diocese of Accra, Ghana to the Diocese of The Windward Islands, West Indies. The request for a priest from Ghana came from Bishop Leopold Friday of the Diocese of The Windward Islands to the bishops from Ghana attending the USPG 2019 Annual Conference. Apparently, many people in the Windward Islands trace their historical roots to Ghana and so it was deemed fit to have a priest from Ghana to serve in the diocese. Bishop Daniel Torto of Accra responded and after the ensuing processes by USPG a three-year appointment was agreed. It is hoped that a priest from the West Indies will also go and serve in West Africa in due course.

Each appointment is unique and USPG responds to requests according to the needs expressed in the applications by partner churches. For further information please email Habib Nader, People Programmes Manager on habibn@uspg.org ■



the movement of people in mission, remain at the heart of USPG's work

WHERE IS MY TREASURE?

Why Christians should change their habits to save the environment By Catarina Sá Couto, Lay Missionary in the Lusitanian Church

There are at least three good reasons why Christians should care about the environment and change their habits to positively impact on climate change. We need to consider God as Creator, the idea of simplicity and finally, the commandment to love each other as yourself.

Every Sunday in the Creed when we proclaim our faith, we recognise God as the Creator 'God the creator of all things'. God as the Creator is the basis not only of Christianity but also of all religions. After the creation of all the things this world needed in order to exist including the skies, light, water, trees, animals...God saw it and said 'how good it was'.

How is our relationship with God, if we disregard and don't care about something that He thought was 'good'? If we mistreat Creation and the things God created, we do not preserve them, we are not respecting God and we are not being grateful for all the things that keep humanity alive. We have the right to use and benefit from all the things our Lord gave us, but as believers in God the Creator, we have other duties of stewardship of the earth, like preservation, biodiversity and ecosystem protection.

In a lot of stories in the gospel we clearly see the message 'less plus less is more': in the parable of the greedy farmer (Luke 12:16-20) 'collect treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust don't eat them, and in Matthew 6:19-20: 'don't worry about what to eat and what to wear' and again in Matthew 6:25 'wear sandals but do not put on two shirts'. We need not squander the earth's resources.

Jesus encourages us to care more about our spiritual lives and less about material possessions, and part of this is because God invites us to live a free life. This life cannot be

lived fully if material things have such power in our lives that they control us. When things are no longer things, but an active part of our physical and mental well-being, then we should reconsider our relationship with them and make ourselves really think about the question: 'where is my treasure?' (Matthew 6:21)

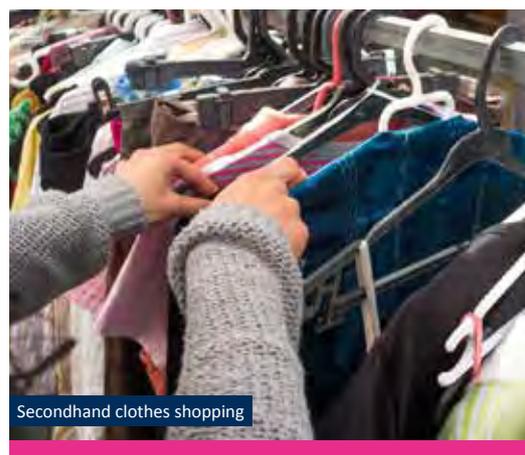
We all need to learn how to live with fewer material possessions and to reconnect with what is essential. In this way, we should feel closer to God and play an important role in preserving the Earth. If we care about the planet, then ultimately, requiring less heavy industry will result in smaller carbon emissions whilst simultaneously saving water and creating less garbage. We must recycle more and cherish the earth's natural resources.

Perhaps humankind can work and invest to have the money to buy all the things in the world, but do we need them? We need to commit to reducing massive daily consumption, re-use and re-cycle as much as we can and deliberately choose products that take less from nature. We can buy second hand and up-cycle. It is our duty as Christians to live in simplicity and benefit Creation.

According to the World Health Organisation, by the year 2050, 250,000 people will die annually as a direct consequence of climate change. Jesus himself told us to 'love our neighbours as ourselves.' This is what makes a Christian a Christian and defines why we must care about Creation and climate change. This is the basis of our faith and we need to focus on this.

We cannot close our eyes and look away as Christians, if our way of living is affecting our brothers and sisters all around the world. Extreme climate events are killing people, and this affects the most vulnerable in the worst way. We must revisit the way we grow and harvest our foods, and how we look after our livestock, taking care of the earth and our water supplies.

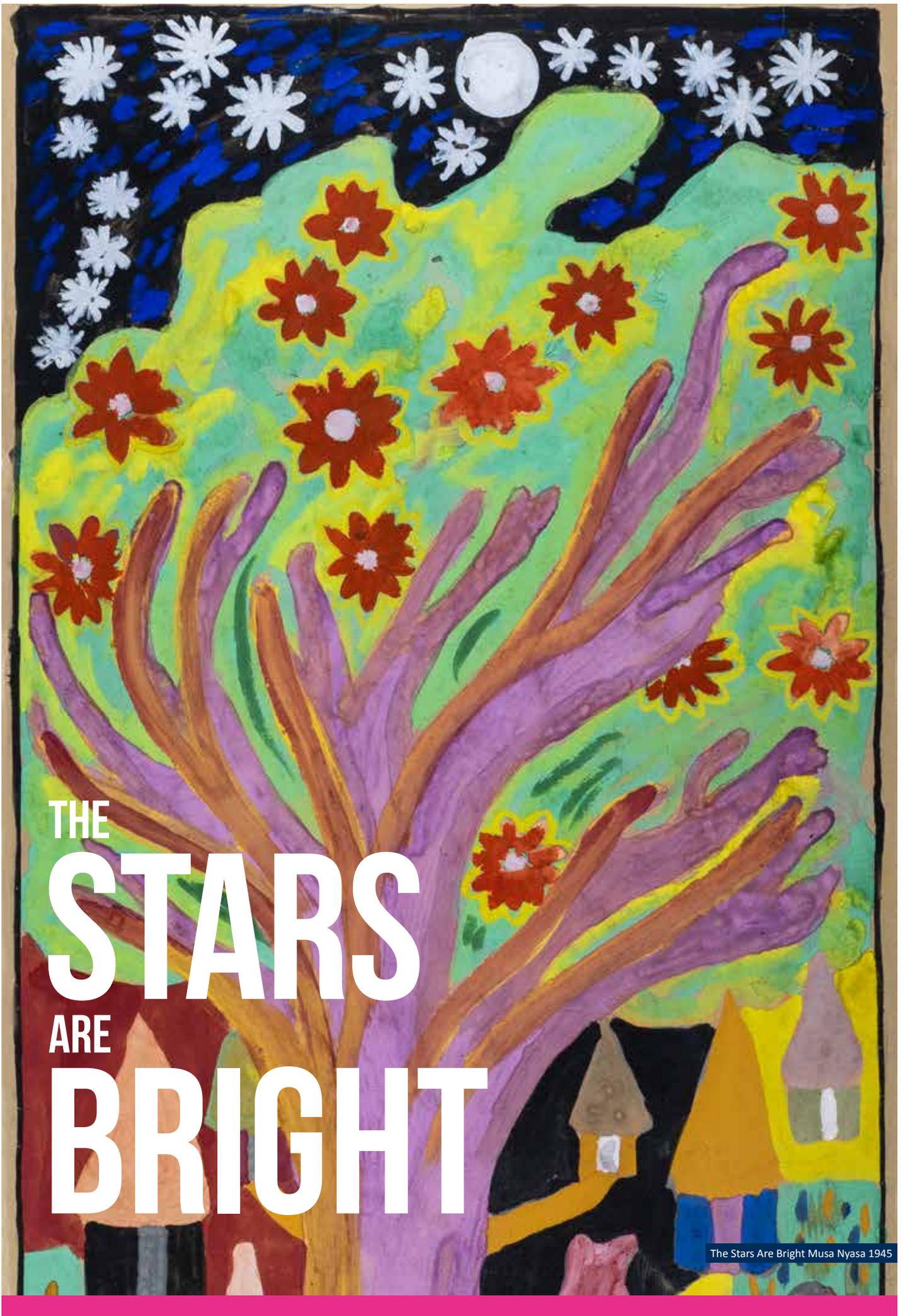
In Portugal, Green Anglicans of the Lusophone Network support many initiatives in education and awareness such as workshops in schools and activities like beach cleaning. Many of these events such as Save the Ocean happen on an ecumenical basis because Creation is beyond creeds and religions and we must share the stewardship of the earth. We invite all Christians to do the same - to love God, his people and his creation and to act to win against climate change in the name of all mankind. ■



Secondhand clothes shopping

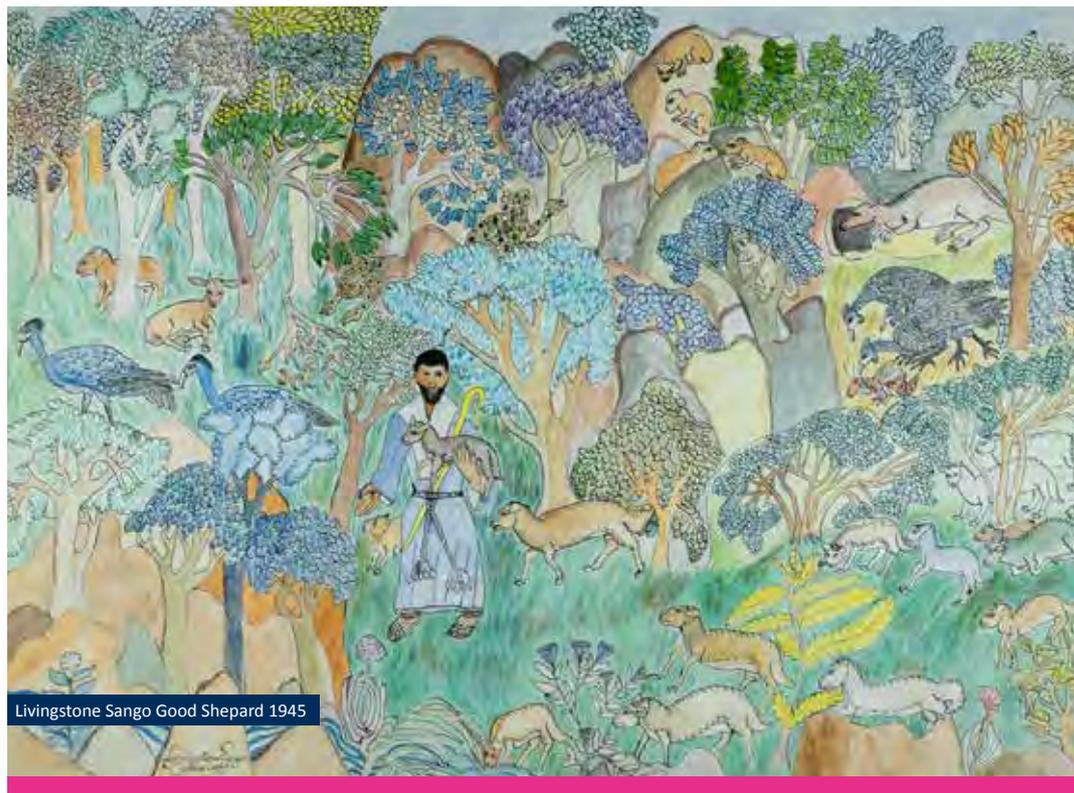


Jesus encourages us to care more about our spiritual lives and less about material possessions



THE
STARS
ARE
BRIGHT

The Stars Are Bright Musa Nyasa 1945



Livingstone Sango Good Shepard 1945

By Jessica Ihejeto
CO-CURATOR

The Stars Are Bright is a new exhibition which invites visitors to discover the extraordinary paintings and sculptures made by the students of the Cyrene Mission School. Produced between 1940 and 1947 by student artists aged between 10 and 20, the artwork offers a fascinating insight into Zimbabwe's rich and diverse cultures and landscapes.

Cyrene was founded by Aberdeen-born clergyman Edward 'Ned' Paterson. Born in 1885, Paterson spent his childhood in South Africa before serving during the First World War in the British Army in what is now Namibia. An Army scholarship led to studies at the London College of Arts and Crafts in the early 1920s, fuelling his lifelong commitment to arts education. Paterson eventually trained as a priest and in 1940 established Cyrene in south-west Zimbabwe, ensuring that art was a key part of the curriculum.

The exhibition features striking water colour paintings, many illustrating the magnificent landscapes of Southern Africa and Zimbabwe's breath-taking Matopos Hills. Students enjoyed freedom of imagination while they painted their Zimbabwe. In Livingstone Sango's The Good Shepherd (1945), we see a dark-skinned Christ surrounded by his flock of sheep. But alongside them, Sango exuberantly added peacocks, klipspringers, aardvarks, kori bustards and other animals native to Southern Africa.

Bold abstract paintings diverge in style and technique from the more traditional watercolours. In Musa Nyahwa's 'The Stars Are Bright' (1945) the young artist's strong brushstrokes and exaggerated shapes pull the viewer into a fantastical dreamlike landscape. Each painting in the exhibition begins to form its own identity as shapes and colours swirl on paper, with a lightness and freedom which reflects the young hands of the artist.

Buoyed by a well-publicised visit to Cyrene by Queen Elizabeth in 1947, Ned began to tour the work in Southern Africa, the UK, Paris and the US, supported by USPG. Following a UK tour in the early 1950s, the work was stored in a church in East London for decades and is now on display for the first time in nearly 70 years. With a helping hand from USPG's archivist, the exhibition includes an extraordinary photo album from the 1940s containing early images of the school, its pupils and Cyrene's beautiful chapel murals, which may be familiar to many Zimbabweans.

We encourage visitors to use their imagination to develop their own interpretations of these paintings and to explore life, the natural world, spirituality and a changing nation, guided by Zimbabwe's bright young stars

The exhibition is open until 31 October 2020 at the Theatre Courtyard Green Rooms in London and will tour Zimbabwe in 2021. See:

www.thestarsarebright.com ■



Students enjoyed freedom of imagination while they painted their Zimbabwe

STEWARDSHIP OF OUR WORLD

By The Right Rev'd Alinafe Kalemba
MA Anglican Diocese of Southern Malawi

Climate justice is a term used to explain global warming, not just an issue that concerns the physical environment but as an item with ethical and political connotations as well. The universe, which God created and handed over to us to look after, is under great attack partly because of our negligence in taking care of it, and partly due to natural causes.

Environmental degradation, which has been accelerated by a number of factors ranging from pollution (which has exacerbated climate change), overpopulation and systemic poverty, has become a great threat to human existence. The Anglican Diocese of Southern Malawi is the youngest and smallest Anglican Diocese in Malawi. It covers the last seven administrative districts of the southern region of Malawi. Such a region has had a good feel of the bite of climate change and environmental degradation like floods and droughts, hence any call for environmental justice is greatly appreciated.

Climate change has wrought a lot of bad effects on the people. Many people rely on agriculture and farming. Climate change has affected the seasons, especially the growing season: we either get more rains that cause floods or little to no rain at all, hence we experience drought. When such natural effects happen, people are left with nothing. Poverty comes in. Climate change makes a direct contribution to environmental degradation in that as people have nothing: they cut down trees, for example, as a source of income. This has left large areas of our land bare. When rains come and fall on such bare ground, there is high soil erosion. We also experience floods, which lead to washing away of crops, livestock, houses and other property. This calls for corporate response in relocating the people to higher grounds, providing materials for

rebuilding, supplying farm inputs for replanting and provision of livestock to start again.

Climate or environmental justice calls for finding better ethical and political ways of addressing the unjust causes of environmental degradation by involving both the perpetrators and those who suffer such effects.

In addressing the effects of climate change, as Church we emphasise the doctrine of Creation, what God had done and continues to do through His people. We are mandated to till the ground and take care of it: Genesis 1:26-27. We have embarked on tree planting exercises in all uncultivated areas. As a diocese we launch a tree planting session in January of every year and we encourage each parish to choose a day for it. We also encourage all confirmation candidates and those joining guilds to plant a tree. We teach and encourage our members to have small families with a number of children they can manage to look after. This helps in dealing with the population boom, which has a negative impact on the environment.

All of our church groups and structures do participate in actions for the cause of climate justice.

We consult and involve traditional and political leaders and government officials on issues of land care, population control, and redistribution of land in matters of relocation during floods. When all stakeholders are involved, the fight for climate justice becomes easier because we all take responsibility and play a role.

Our challenges come when we are unable to reach developed countries and authorities who are polluting our atmosphere with fumes from their industrial sites. We suffer from the toxic gases which are released into the air from machines and vehicles. The second challenge is the ever-rising poverty levels, which leave people without any other option but to engage in practices that accelerate environmental degradation. The third challenge comes from lack of political will by our government officials, who turn a deaf ear to matters of population boom, poverty of the majority and need for better agricultural practices.

Whatever the case, as the Church of God, we will continue preaching and propagating the Good News that will bring life, and life in abundance, to God's people, and the entire created order. You have a role to play, let's join hands and fight for climate justice. ■



For me to live is
Christ and to die
is gain
Phil 1: 21

OPPORTUNITY COST: THE ACOM & CLIMATE CHANGE

By Marie Schlenker and Dr. Adam Bobbette

This is an abridged version first published by the MMUK (Melanesian Mission UK).

The Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACoM) considers climate change one of the most significant environmental and social issues facing its community. With more than 100 years in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, ACoM understands that it can play a crucial role in solving future challenges.

Sea level rise, increased severity of storms and flooding, droughts, saltwater intrusion into freshwater agriculture, and reef habitat loss all threaten to destabilise local communities. Knock-on social consequences could be significant.

One challenge is a lack of accurate local data and environmental monitoring. The Solomon Islands Government does not have sufficient infrastructure or systems to monitor ongoing environmental change. International monitoring is focused on the wider Pacific region. Fisheries, forests, extreme weather events, and shoreline changes are not sufficiently studied. The reality is stark: without monitoring we cannot know local conditions. We therefore cannot develop evidence-based mitigation plans.

The Anglican Church of Melanesia considers this an opportunity. We can contribute to sustaining local communities and supporting the people of the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The creation of the Anglican Church of Melanesia Environment Observatory is forging new alliances between the environmental sciences and the Anglican Church of Melanesia. It aims to solve the dearth of local environmental monitoring. With a majority

Anglican population, we are using churches throughout the archipelago as a network of scientific observatories. Installing monitoring equipment operated by clergy and lay people, churches are beginning to measure shoreline change, rainfall, storm intensity and duration. Daily readings are sent at regular intervals to ACoM headquarters, Honiara, where they will form the basis for scientific analysis.

In our first year of implementation we established three observatories on three islands. Students and faculty from the Solomon Islands National University are undertaking shoreline measurements on Guadalcanal north shore. In the coming years, we will expand stations to all islands with ACoM churches and integrate observing with clerical duties. This will produce a close-range portrait of environmental change and the basis for accurate mitigation strategies. Data will be in the public domain and a valuable resource to local and international climate change scientists. Rather than import costly monitoring equipment and expertise from abroad, the observatory repurposes existing church infrastructure and expertise.

This innovative approach is appealing to churches in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. Anglican and other Christian communities in Australia, Vanuatu, Samoa, and the UK, are developing partnerships to extend the observatory network. The observatory is being studied as a case study of the integration of science and religion in courses at the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, and Malua Theological College, Apia, Samoa. ■



One challenge is a lack of accurate local data and environmental monitoring

GIVE A PROMISE OF HOPE THIS CHRISTMAS



The programme has given us power and a new hopeful life.

For five years, USPG has been partnering with the Anglican Church of Tanzania, which runs the Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission programme.

Tanzania is significantly affected by HIV and AIDS, the death rate is thankfully reducing. Sadly, however, mother-to-child transmission of the virus is still a real challenge.

A baby born with HIV is unlikely to see their fifth birthday. So many mothers have held their new-borns full of hope, while also knowing the stark reality of the challenges that they and their precious babies face.

Estimates from UNAIDS show that 150,000 children were newly infected with HIV in 2019. This can happen during pregnancy, labour, delivery, or breastfeeding. Many mothers are not aware that there is hope, thanks to improved nutrition and increased access to antiretroviral treatment.

This programme provides both the practical and medical support needed to prevent the virus being passed on from mothers to their children.

It does this by:

- providing antiretroviral drugs during pregnancy, labour and breastfeeding for women with HIV
- providing counselling and contraceptives for women living with HIV
- working closely with the maternal health services to provide full care for women.

Thanks to this work, a whole community now has hope and a future. All the babies that are born as part of this programme are born HIV free.

The programme has also helped women become more confident and address other challenges they face such as climate change. In recent years East Africa has seen crops fail and families' livelihoods reduced. Often, women with HIV become too unwell to work the land or run small businesses to provide for their families. The impact of the change in climate affects women and children the most.

As women gain confidence and hope they can seek solutions for the challenges they face. They no longer feel ashamed but have hope for a new future for themselves and their families. Their improved health and confidence means they are more likely to be involved in income generating activities.

Following are the stories of just two of the mothers that the programme has helped.



Baby Daniel



Rehema and Agnes

Baby Daniel

Baby Daniel is a single mother from Chihembe Village. She moved to Chihembe from Mbeya region after contracting HIV. Many mothers like Baby Daniel, who has HIV, are even scared to go out due to the stigma associated with their status.

‘When I arrived at Chihembe, I was scared to go out and mix with people because of my HIV status and the stigma that comes with it. Sometimes people called you a “wandering corpse” if you have HIV. But when I found this project, I realised I could continue living like other people and even start a family. Through this project, the stigma slowly diminished. This enabled me to go out and start attending the clinic for antiretrovirals and counselling.’

She wanted to have a baby.

‘One year after attending the clinic, I became pregnant and gave birth to my son, Gian, who is HIV-negative and is now two years old.

‘For me, these are the greatest achievements in my life. But they have come from a huge stigma reduction in our community and this is the most significant change I see. Today I attend the clinic and collect my medicines.

‘I thank the Anglican Church of Tanzania for restoring my happiness through diminished stigma in our community.’

Rehema

Rehema became a mother at 17. She moved to Muungano Village two years ago after the death of her third child while her second born Agnes was very sick.

‘In general, my life lacked direction and I felt like I no longer deserved to live.’

Rehema was encouraged to attend the programme and to get an HIV test for Agnes and herself. They were both positive.

‘I remember when Dr James gave me the test results. I was trembling with fear. My baby and I were enrolled on the programme. We were given antiretrovirals and advice on how to live with HIV. As we took the medication and followed the nutrition instructions, the better our health became. I began to do household activities such as washing and cooking.

‘Now we are happy, even though we are living with HIV. I have joined a group and I am engaged in vegetable farming. My income has improved and my daughter has started pre-school.

‘This programme has given us another chance to enjoy life that we thought had come to an end. My child would not have died and Agnes would be HIV-free if we had had this help sooner.’

Giving women with HIV maternal healthcare during pregnancy will ensure that they will live longer and be able to care for their babies.

Today 100% of the children born to HIV-positive mothers in this programme in Tanzania are HIV free.

The programme is a success story. But as I write, we are in the middle of a global pandemic. Many mothers are nervous about leaving their homes to attend vital antenatal appointments, for fear that they will get Covid-19. There are still many more women that the programme needs to reach. Mwelecele helps community health workers find mothers and children who are showing signs of HIV infection. She has seen how the programme has had a powerful knock-on effect on the whole community. Women who were ill are more engaged in the community; in agriculture and in business. Each year, 8,586 mothers, fathers, babies and children are impacted by the programme.

‘The programme has given us power and a new hopeful life.’

This Christmas, we can have hope in a new future for the people of Dodoma. As Mary and Joseph looked at baby Jesus in a manger, they had a promise of hope. **Every child born free from HIV is a promise of hope for a future generation.**

Your gift can give a promise of hope to more women like Baby Daniel and Rehema. **Will you give a promise of hope this Christmas?**

This Christmas, we know that there are still many mothers who are waiting expectantly, in hope, for the arrival of their babies. They want to see their child grow to adulthood. Many mothers in Tanzania do not have that hope.

We know that if women are given access to counselling, healthcare and antiretroviral drugs, they can reduce the transmission of HIV to their babies. ■

YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR PROMISE OF HOPE APPEAL THIS CHRISTMAS BY:



- giving a gift of hope using the response form in this issue of Koinonia or visiting www.uspg.org.uk/promiseofhope
- sending your Promise of Hope on the star below. Please return your Promise of Hope with your gift and we will display a chain of hope to share with the Church of Tanzania. Or if you are a church please ask your congregation to each write a Promise of Hope on a star to display in your church. Then share your Promise of Hope on social media tagging in USPG and using #PromiseOfHope

You can download more copies of this leaflet from www.uspg.org.uk/promiseofhope where you will also find more resources for you to use with your church.

Thank you for taking part in the Promise of Hope appeal this Christmas. Your gift really will bring hope.



**Will you give a
Promise of Hope
this Christmas?**

THE VIEW FROM HERE: A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE IN BELIZE

Keisha Laing (Youth Coordinator, Anglican Diocese of Belize) interviews young people about their views on climate change

The nation of Belize boasts about and prides itself in being ‘Mother Nature’s best kept secret.’ This 8,867 square mile country is home to over 400,000 people, as well as abundance of flora and fauna, dense rainforest, cayes, rivers, wetlands and diverse species of wildlife. Belize is also known to have the second largest barrier reef in the world.

Since Belize has a vast array of nature, it is crucial that citizens of Belize (especially the young who are the future), take action on ecological justice. It has been said that ecological justice includes ensuring climate justice, addressing impacts of resource extraction, and protecting water and watersheds, as well as the building of sustainable alternatives. Arguably, we have already been engaging in the fight for ecological justice because we have interest groups and organisations taking the lead in environmental management issues.

Amongst others organisations, Belize has: Protected Areas Conservation Trust, Department of the Environment and Oceana. These organisations spearhead environmental initiatives across the country, to promote sustainable uses of the environment and its resources, as well as conservation and preservation of natural resources. Rachel said, “organisations are doing their part, especially in education and raising awareness.” Additionally, Cheyenne mentioned that, “Oceana does seaside clean-up campaigns. We have a long way to go in terms of conservation, but I believe we’re in a good place.”

Some of our youth believe that more could be done. Like Jerris, who said, “We have many anti-litter campaigns which are not going well. Our water bodies are very polluted.” Rachel added, “I live in front of the sea, and the water is very polluted. Our communities and society need to do their part.” Asher said, “We have fines for public dumping and some laws protecting endangered species. The laws for endangered species are being greatly enforced, but not the ones for public dumping. More importance should be put on law enforcement with fines

imposed for public dumping.”

Our young people know that the government of Belize has a major role to play when it comes to implementing legislation regarding the environment, but many said they need more education about it. Deanni knew a part of recent legislation, and said, “There is legislation for single use plastic. Businesses and citizens are asked to use biodegradable or reusable materials in their businesses every day, to promote good environmental practices.” But more can be done. Based on Cheyenne’s personal observations, she said, “Belize is trying to phase-out single use plastic, but it needs to be enforced. When we go to the stores, we are still not using biodegradable or reusable bags.”

Another major area of concern for the youth is deforestation. Christopher indicated that, “slashing and burning the land causes air pollution and it affects people with breathing problems. Deforestation is done for development, but it also mismanages our resources.” Deanni added, “We have an issue of cutting and burning down many trees without re-planting. Road construction and development contribute to deforestation because trees are being cleared without being replaced. The issue of deforestation is one of the contributing factors of climate change.”

According to our youth, deforestation and climate change seems to have a major link in Belize’s environment. As Cheyenne mentioned, “We have a drought affecting crops because of wildfires. Wildfires are healthy, but the drought is intensifying the fires and because of this, animals are dying.” Asher also said, “Climate change is affecting our weather patterns. We have increasing heat temperatures. It is very scary, and I am afraid of how nature is affecting Belize. What if twenty years from now we do not have an Earth? The long-term effects of these drastic changes could cause lethal effects. We need to find ways to stabilise.” ■



The nation of Belize boasts and prides itself in being ‘Mother Nature’s best kept secret’



Placencia Beach

SNAPSHOTS FROM STUTTGART

By Rev'd Kara Werner

In what is frequently now known as the 'pre-Christmas season' rather than 'Advent' does the Church or any church still have something distinctive or worthwhile to offer alongside or in contrast to the usual frenzy?

The city of Stuttgart is host to more than 25 types of churches – the differences largely being language and country of origin and denominations. St Catherine's Anglican Church (part of the Diocese in Europe), is a mix of some twenty nationalities offering Anglican English language worship, but most who worship with us do so because of the language.

1: The women from this city-wide mix of churches are invited to a party at the beginning of Advent each year to join in celebration and friendship. Last Advent, St Catherine's took its turn in hosting this event which was a joy. In Anglican and Roman Catholic spirituality, Advent is a season of penitence, deep reflection and preparing of self 'to receive Christ once again this Christmas'. Yet other churches celebrate throughout these weeks in a world with many challenges and uncertainties. It was uplifting to share these and other insights as we joined briefly on our Advent journey with others who perhaps do it very differently.

2: St Catherine's shares a church building with a small denomination of 'Old Catholics' (to distinguish from Roman Catholics). They own the building - we are guests and relationships are good. Next door we have a 'state' church and also some Roman Catholic presence. We all try to be good neighbours to one another and to our local neighbourhood area where most of us do not live, but it is where we worship. Advent last year saw us joining for a local ecumenical



event at the intersection where Advent disciplines and neighbourliness meet. Carol singing as a community event is an English thing, but we got close to it one Friday evening last Advent. A group of us from all of these neighbouring churches gathered, walked, sang and prayed through our neighbourhood. We included stops at a local business, the top of a multi-storey car park (for the view but also because we have input over its 'soon to be pulled down and what shall replace it with?' conversations) and we included a couple of charities we all support financially (caring in practical ways for those very young men and women who work on the streets in our locality) and of course the churches too.

3: The Covid-19 statistics with spikes, hotspots and second waves are all keeping us on our toes, so who knows what may or may not be possible in Advent this year? The bulk of our worship is online and that will remain the case for those who are or feel vulnerable, regardless of what we may be able to offer in physical space. The local group will meet again for its walk through the neighbourhood this Advent and gather outside (where singing is allowed) in front of the church around a fire-bowl instead of inside the church.

St Catherine's itself will offer similar, small outdoor events to replace the Advent Carol Service which normally welcomes up to or some 400 people. The need for distancing means no such numbers will be possible any time soon. The need to keep vulnerable people away from such gatherings is important for keeping people safe, and we have that duty of care. An Advent without singing is unimaginable, so we will indeed brave the cold so we can sing outdoors.

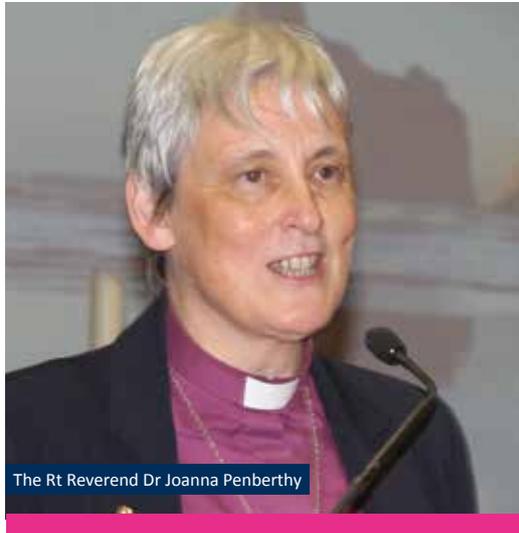
4: As chaplain of the English-speaking community in Stuttgart, near to my heart is to offer something online and in the physical space for the countless people for whom Advent will be an unbearably sad time this year. Some have had bereavements (not related to Covid-19) and others, unwelcome diagnoses. Countless others many not have seen families right across the globe because of the dangers of travelling, especially where an elderly or medically vulnerable person is at the destination, or when the travel has included children. What can we as a church offer to all these folk? I am working on this and what emerges will be offered online for those who feel safest there, as well as those who 'cannot face people'. ■



The city of Stuttgart is host to more than 25 types of churches

TRUSTEE PROFILE

The Rt Reverend Dr Joanna Penberthy, Bishop of St David's



The Rt Reverend Dr Joanna Penberthy

Bishop Joanna became a USPG Trustee in July 2018. 'I think I'm a trustee partly because I'm in the Church in Wales, and partly because I know the British Anglican context very well,' she says. 'I've been a minister the whole of my life. I was a deaconess and then a deacon; then I was a parish priest and now I'm a bishop. I've been stipendiary and I've been non-stipendiary. I may not have the sort of expertise some of the other trustees bring in terms of having specific skills, but I am someone with an extensive knowledge of what makes the Anglican Church tick. I'm also somebody who's really excited by the work of USPG and who wants to be in partnership with churches from the Anglican Communion.'

'One Bible verse that sums up my motivation for belonging to USPG is 1 John 3:18, which says: "Little children, let us love not in word and speech but in action and in truth." The Christian life is not about theology or airy-fairy stuff; it's about lived practice. I'm excited that USPG is a means of helping Christians across the world live that life together.'

Bishop Joanna describes herself as 'a theologian who's interested in what science has to tell us about the world'. She recently completed a PhD in Theology, in which she explored the relationship between theology and quantum physics. The seeds for what would become that PhD were sown when she was about to be made a canon in St David's Cathedral.

'St David's is one of the few cathedrals that still has canons who are clergy of the local diocese in Britain, and then we come into residence,' she explains. 'The then Dean - who also was my predecessor later as Bishop - suggested to me that I should use my spare time to write a book.'

I didn't think much of that idea, but decided I should do some serious study.

'One day just before I was due to go into the residence for the first time, I was browsing through the non-fiction in one of our local bookshops. I came across a book called *On Physics and Philosophy* by Bernard d'Espagnat, a French physicist who was also a philosopher. It opened my eyes to a realm of physics that is very practical but also provokes a lot of thoughts. That was what got me interested.'

In 2017, Bishop Joanna made history when she became Wales's first woman Bishop. She was enthroned Bishop in St David's Cathedral - where she had also previously made history by being the first female ordinand to be made a Canon.

'When women were moving from becoming deaconesses to being deacons, there was a great fellowship amongst us,' she recalls. 'In the church in Wales, we would meet as women across the diocese, and the two northern dioceses would meet together. The ministry officer for the whole of the Church in Wales would give us a budget so that we could go on a weekend retreat together every year. Most of the people across the Church realised that their stance on women's ministry was anachronistic. If you can have a woman Prime Minister, as we have had, and if you're happy to have a woman perform open-heart surgery on you, then it's ridiculous not to have women priests. I must admit I was shocked to be elected but people have been very supportive. There are a few within the diocese who would not have wanted this to happen, but they have treated me with respect.'

And does she see USPG helping to break any other barriers? 'I think USPG has tried to address the legacy of slavery and colonialism, and hasn't just said, "Oh, well, that was a shame. But of course, we're all different now." I think that's profoundly helpful for the Church in the United Kingdom to have an agency that is trying to help us not pretend about the past and therefore to be in proper relationships in the present.'

'I hope that USPG can help shift the centre of the Anglican Communion from England to the whole communion, so that it's not just seen as something that emerges from Canterbury; that we take seriously the fact that we're a multicultural organisation across continents. We can't change everything, but I think if we can work with it, then that can be a helpful perspective for the Anglican Communion.' ■



Little children, let us love not in word and speech but in action and in truth

PROFFIL YMDDIRIEDOLWRAIG

Y Gwir Barchedig Ddr Joanna Penberthy, Esgob Cadeirlan Tyddewi



Y Gwir Barchedig Ddr Joanna Penberthy

Gwnaed yr Esgob Joanna yn ymddiriedolwraig dros y Gymdeithas Unedig er Lledaeniad yr Efengyl, CULIE, ym mis Gorffennaf 2018. 'Rwy'n credu mod i'n ymddiriedolwraig, yn rhannol am fy mod yn yr Eglwys yng Nghymru, a hefyd am fy mod yn gyfarwydd iawn â'r cyd-destun Anglicanaidd Prydeinig,' medde hi. 'Bûm yn weinidog ar hyd fy mywyd. Cychwynnais fel diacones, cyn dod yn ddiakon; yna bûm yn offeiriad plwyf a bellach rwy'n esgob. Bûm yn gyflogedig, hefyd yn ddi-gyflog. Er nad wyf yn meddu, efallai, ar y math o arbenigedd sydd gan rai o'r ymddiriedolwyr eraill, o ran cynnig sgiliau penodedig, rwy'n berson sydd â gwybodaeth drylwyr o hanfod yr Eglwys Anglicanaidd. Hefyd, y mae gwaith y GULIE yn fy nghyffroi yn enbyd, ac yn ysgogiad i mi dymuno bod mewn partneriaeth ag eglwysi oddi fewn i'r Cymundeb Anglicanaidd.

'Mae yna adnod o'r Beibl yn crynhoi yr hyn sy'n symbyliad i mi berthyn i'r GULIE, sef I Ioan 3:18 : "Blant bychain, gadewch i ni garu, nid ar air nac ar dafod, ond mewn gweithred a gwirionedd." Nid rhyw ddiwinydda a siarad ffansi yw'r bywyd Cristionogol; yn hytrach byw yn ymarferol yw'r nod. Mae'n destun cyffro fod CULIE yn fodd o helpu Cristionogion ledled y byd i fyw y bywyd hwnnw gyda'i gilydd.'

Mae Esgob Joanna yn ei disgrifio i hun fel 'diwinydd sy'n ymddiddori yn yr hyn sydd gan wyddoniaeth i ddweud wrthym ynglŷn â'r byd.' Fe lwyddodd yn ddiweddar i gwblhau PhD mewn Diwinyddiaeth, gwaith lle yr archwiliodd hi y berthynas rhwng Diwinyddiaeth a Ffiseg Cwantwm. Heuwyd hadau'r radd honno pan oedd ar fin ei sefydlu'n ganon Cadeirlan Tyddewi.

'Mae Tyddewi'n un o'r ychydig gadeirlannau Prydeinig sy'n dal i fod â chanoniaid sy'n glerigwyr yn yr esgobaeth leol, a byddwn yn treulio cyfnod preswyl yno,' meddai. 'Awgrymodd y Deon a oedd yno ar y pryd – sef fy rhagflaenydd, yn ddiweddarach, fel Esgob – y dylwn ddefnyddio fy

oriau hamdden er mwyn ysgrifennu llyfr. Doedd hynny ddim at fy nant rywsut, ond penderfynais fwrw ati i astudio'n ddwys.

'Un diwrnod, a minnau ar fin profi'r cyfnod preswyl am y tro cyntaf, roeddwn yn pori yn adran ffeithiol un o'n siopau llyfrau lleol. Dyma fi'n canfod llyfr â'r teitl On Physics and Philosophy gan Bernard d'Espagnat, ffisegydd Ffrengig a oedd hefyd yn athronydd. Agorwyd fy llygaid i adran o Ffiseg sy'n ymarferol iawn ond sydd hefyd yn ennyn cryn fyfyrddod. Dyna ysgogodd fy niddordeb.'

Yn 2017, bu i Esgob Joanna greu hanes pan etholwyd hi'n Esgob benywaidd cyntaf Cymru. Fe'i gorseddwyd yn Esgob yng Nghadeirlan Tyddewi lle y creasai hanes yn flaenorol, eisoes, drwy fod yr ymgeisydd-am-urddau benywaidd cyntaf i'w dyrchafu'n Ganon.

'Pan oedd merched yn symud o fod yn ddiaconesau i safle diaconiaid, roedd yna gyfeillach anhygoel yn ein plith,' meddai. 'Yn yr Eglwys yng Nghymru, fe fyddai merched ledled yr esgobaeth yn cyfarfod, a byddai'r ddwy esgobaeth ogleddol yn cydgyfarfod. Byddai'r swyddog gweinidogaethol dros yr Eglwys yng Nghymru'n ganolog yn darparu cyllideb er mwyn i ni fynychu encil benwythnos gyda'n gilydd, yn flynyddol. Roedd mwyafrif pobl yr Eglwys yn sylweddoli fod eu safiad ynglŷn â gweinidogaeth merched yn gamamserol. Os yw'n bosib i ferch fod yn Brif Weinidog, megis yng ngwledydd Prydain, ac os ydych yn fodlon derbyn llawdriniaeth ar y galon dan law merch, yna ffolineb o'r mwyaf yw gwrthod offeiriad benywaidd. Heb os, roedd fy ethol yn sioc a syndod i mi; ond derbyniais bob cefnogaeth gan bobl. Mae yna ambell un yn yr esgobaeth na fyddai wedi dymuno i hyn ddigwydd, ond maent wedi fy nhrin yn barchus.'

Ac a yw hi'n gweld y gall CULIE helpu i chwalo unrhyw ragfarnau eraill? 'Mi gredaf fod CULIE wedi ceisio delio â gwaddol caethwasiaeth a gwladychiaeth, yn lle rhyw ddweud, "Trueni am hynny. Ond wrth gwrs rydym yn wahanol, bawb ohonom, erbyn hyn." Am wn i nad yw o gymorth mawr, o ran yr Eglwys yn y Deyrnas gyfunol, fod yna asiantaeth sy'n ceisio'n helpu i beidio cymryd arnom na ddigwyddodd y gorffennol, ond i hybu perthynas addas â'n gilydd, felly, yn y presennol.

'Fy ngobaith yw y gall CULIE fod yn gymorth i symud canolbwynt y Cymundeb Anglicanaidd o Loegr i'r dalaith gyfan, er mwyn creu yr argraff nad rhywbeth sy'n tarddu o Gaergaint yn unig ydyw; ac er mwyn i ni fod o ddifri ynglŷn â'r ffaith mai sefydliad amlddiwylliannol ydym, yn rhychwantu cyfandiroedd. Ni allwn newid popeth, ond os gallwn weithio law yn llaw ag ef, mi gredaf y gall hynny fod yn bersbectif defnyddiol i'r Cymundeb Anglicanaidd.' ■



Blant bychain,
gadewch i ni garu,
nid ar air nac ar
dafod, ond mewn
gweithred a
gwirionedd

ENVIRONMENTAL RITES OF PASSAGE

By the Rev'dd Rachel Mash, environmental Coordinator of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa



Saplings for Planting

Last year, one hundred community members adopted a tree as part of the Renew the Elsie's Canal project in Cape Town.

As people collected and planted their trees, I was surprised to see how many people had chosen to plant a tree in memory of a loved one. I will always remember a call from a mother whose 15-year-old son had been murdered. 'I can't be there on Saturday', she said 'because we are having the funeral, but I need you to keep me a tree so that I have a place for us to go and mourn.'

The Diocese of Harare in Zimbabwe formed a partnership with a funeral director to provide trees to families for the day of the funeral. People find that it is healing to plant a tree at a time of sorrow, and to nurture and care for the tree is therapeutic.

Green Anglicans in Malawi has incorporated tree planting at key rites of passage 'One matrimony, one tree', 'One baptism one tree' and 'one funeral, one tree'.

A growing number of bishops are encouraging confirmation candidates to bring a tree

seedling to the confirmation service. The tree is blessed as a symbol of their spiritual life, which like the tree, needs to be watered and cared for, if it is to grow!

Trees are a symbol of hope. In the early days of HIV, one of the first pastors to be infected in South Africa planted a tree as a sign of hope when his first child was born. Both child and tree are now fully grown!

Even though water is mentioned 722 times in the Bible, it is very rare to hear a sermon, or to incorporate water into our liturgical life. Jesus was baptised in the river Jordan with all its messy, muddy glory and we have distanced that river of life from the sterile jug of water that is poured into our fonts for baptism.

Several churches are now incorporating a challenge into the baptism classes: to discover which river the water comes from that is used in your church. Go and visit that river and claim it as your river Jordan, and then you must commit to protecting it. A priest takes small bottles which are marked with the date of baptism and gives them to parents explaining that they must be 'the protectors of the water'. Several churches, such as the Anglican Church in Canada have added a promise

to the baptismal vow, in line with the fifth mark of mission:

Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?

Many churches add a few drops of water to the wine at the Eucharist, the symbols of the blood and water that fell from Jesus' side. But we have been slow to recognise that we are receiving three elements at the Communion; bread, water and wine. The Season of Creation Eucharistic prayer of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa encourages the use of an additional paragraph, after the taking of the bread and wine 'Blessed are you, Creator Spirit, Source of all life. Through your goodness we have this water to offer, which refreshes, cleanses and give life to all of your creatures. For us it becomes the water of life. Blessed be God forever.'

Holy Communion is a very key part of our spiritual life, and yet we often fail to understand its environmental significance. We talk about the wine, fruit of the earth and work of human hands, but what does that mean? After some research I discovered where the bread was baked and where the wine came from. And so as I lifted them up I said, 'this wine is the gift of the earth and the work of human hands, but those hands are abused, the workers in this vineyard receive less than survival wages, this bread was made by a man who got up at 3am to get to work and because there was no public transport he walked to work to bake this bread.'

May they become to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. ■



Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?

USPG

VOLUNTEER

ELIZABETH TAYLOR



Elizabeth Taylor

USPG is responsible for one of Elizabeth's two biggest joys in life. 'There are two important things I want people to know me for,' she says. 'My grandson and my love of Tanzania!'

The passion for Tanzania is a result of the time Elizabeth spent there as a USPG mission companion. 'My initial contact with USPG was when I inquired about job vacancies,' she recalls. 'I'd previously spent a week in Kenya on a church placement and I felt a big pull to do something about supporting people in developing countries. That initial inquiry led me to apply to be a short-term missionary for six months.'

By the time Elizabeth left for Tanzania, six months had grown to a year. She stayed in Tanzania for seven years, working for the Anglican Church of

Tanzania and for St. John's University, which was then just opening. 'My biggest achievement in life is being one of the founder members of St. John's University,' she says.

Elizabeth volunteers with USPG as a diocesan representative. She was living in Bicester in Oxfordshire when she started doing this and she hopes to continue doing it in her new hometown of Weedon Bec in Northamptonshire. 'I moved after I retired last September,' she explains. 'I needed to downsize and that meant moving away from Bicester. I chose Weedon Bec because my son lives here with the little boy he adopted last August. I'm enjoying being a grandmother, although it's been a bit difficult these last few months.'

'While I was in Bicester, I had quite a good ministry going to different places to speak about USPG. I really believe in the work of USPG and just want to make it more widely known.'

Another highlight of Elizabeth's volunteering life is representing USPG at the Greenbelt Festival. 'Each year I've been to Greenbelt, it's been a delight,' she says. 'I enjoy being on the USPG stand talking to people, and wandering around the site with my USPG T-shirt on. It has provoked some very interesting conversations!'

'To me, **the most important thing about USPG is that it partners with churches in other countries** and walks alongside them and listens to what they want. We don't go in with both feet and say "This is what we want to do for you." Instead, we say: "What do you need? How can we respond?" And then, very sensibly, we take the experience of what's been done in other places and offer it. But we never impose it. That's what I like most about how USPG works.' ■

USPG CELEBRATES

with the Rev'd Davidson Solanki



Characterised by a certain gentleness of nature and peaceful demeanour, Davidson Solanki is the epitome of a man who seems content with his faith and his place in the world. Born in Ahmedabad in India, Davidson is the eldest child to parents Samuel and Yarusha who still live there. His mother tongue is Gujarati and he speaks Hindi and English: valuable skills which serve him well in his international role with USPG.

A mechanical engineer by trade, he has three brothers (two in the UK and one in Australia). Moving to England to work for Tearfund in 2005, Davidson also completed his MA in Peace and Conflict studies at the University of Coventry before settling in Hounslow with his family: wife Deepika and son Dishan. Davidson has worked for USPG for almost seven years and is the Regional Manager for Asia and the Middle East.

He said, "I wanted to work for USPG because I am passionate about the Church. I believe it is God's chosen vehicle for any transformative and redemptive work on this earth. Through USPG, I am able to serve my calling and be the bridge between global and local mission; partnering in God's mission through journeying with Anglican partners around the world and serving the marginalised, vulnerable and needy through engaging with mission of our partner churches."

On Sunday 27 September, Davidson was ordained as a deacon at St Paul's Cathedral. This was the culmination of years of discernment, study and reflection. Davidson said, "On 9 May 1983, I had a profound encounter with Jesus Christ. I had served World Vision for sixteen years in India and Asia Pacific area, but I felt I needed to serve God elsewhere. I prayed that He would show me where and when."

Davidson embarked on a year-long listening and discernment process in 2015. After receiving confirmation and affirmation from God, family and friends, he applied to the Church of England through Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Hounslow for Ordination training. After selection, he started three (part time) years of ordination training

at St Mellitus College where he studied for a BA in Theology, Mission and Ministry before completing his training in June 2020.

Newly ordained, Davidson said, "It is huge privilege and responsibility as I have become the public servant of God for all of humanity, to offer pastoral support as a priest, and to bring the eucharist to the whole world."

The Rev'd Duncan Dormor, USPG General Secretary said, "I take great delight in knowing that Davidson has now been ordained. We pray for him as he enters upon this new stage of his Christian journey. At USPG, his service of the global church is marked by the humility and thoughtfulness of his rich, spiritual life. I have no doubt that he will bring these gifts to his ministry."

During training, Davidson regarded his vocation as an integral part of his being. He said, "I was nervous when I first stepped forward for training, but deep down, I had an affirmation from God. This is my lifelong vocation and whatever I do is part of my calling. My work at USPG and ministry at St Leonard's, Heston are integrated parts of my vocation".

USPG's Director of Global Relations Rachel Parry said, "It is a joy that our dear colleague Davidson has been ordained as a deacon. Throughout his training, I have been amazed how Davidson has managed to balance study and work. He is a deeply encouraging presence at USPG, demonstrating characteristic dedication, discipline and spirit-filled joy."

Davidson's wife, son, daughter-in-law and one brother shared his special day at St Paul's, whilst his wider family and friends joined him via the internet. He said, "My family is happy, excited and grateful to God for this privilege and they see it as a vocation for the whole family. My biggest challenge now is not to become complacent, but to remain focussed and watchful for God's presence – locally and globally and be willing to serve Him all the time.

Colleague Habib Nader said, "Davidson has a pastor's heart. We congratulate him for responding to the call, we continue to pray for the Lord's Blessing on his ministry; May the Lord watch over and be gracious to Davidson and all his loved ones; May the Lord lift up His countenance on Davidson and grant him Shalom.

Davidson added, "I am hugely grateful to USPG staff, partners, and supporters for their continuous prayers and accompaniment. I have felt hugely supported throughout my training process. Thank you!" ■



Through USPG, I am able to serve my calling and be the bridge between global and local mission

WHAT ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE MEANS TO ME

USPG asked youth leaders from the Anglican Churches in Southern Africa and The Gambia to share what ecological justice means for them and what message they would like to share with the Anglican Communion.

The Right Time For Ecological Conversion By Evelyn N W Bidwell-John, Diocese of Gambia

Ecological justice deals with both environmental and social justice. Environmental justice means fairness to the environment while social justice refers to fairness to the people within the world's environment.

The Gambia is experiencing higher levels of change in the health of its climate. Not long ago the government had to ban the use of plastics and replace it with paper bags because plastic was choking the sewage systems and polluting our water bodies. This causes serious floods during the rainy season. I have often been unable to attend school because the classrooms were under water.

These changes have been drastic and are leading to excess heat which is making people sick. Water and electricity have also been in short supply. This affects the main economic earner for The Gambia, which is tourism. Over the years the number of tourists who come into the country has reduced significantly because of poor sanitation and many other health concerns.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has exposed these injustices against the environment. All the measures as proffered by the World Health Organisation are difficult to observe. Social distancing and regular washing of hands are impossible because of lack of space and running water.

The government must wake up and increase its monitoring responsibilities to protect the ecosystem whilst criminalising pollution and ecological degradation activities. The church must be the social conscience and the voice of the environment. The question remains, how can the church contribute more effectively to ecological justice?

Ecological Justice: Water By Mandisa Gumada Anglican Church of Southern Africa

Water is a basic need and access to it is a human right. However, we still have people without clean drinking water due to the social injustices of the world. Without water, animals and people are unable to function and lead a normal life and as such, it threatens one's existence. Currently we have water shortages and the people that suffer the most are those in rural areas without clean drinking water. The people depend on the rain and the rivers, which are shared for drinking, cooking and laundry, and the animals drink from them too.

How can something so 'free' be so expensive and rare to own, be only available to the privileged? I call it free because God created it. How do we decide who should and should not have it? We each have a responsibility to conserve water and be mindful of the fact that the water we waste is someone's only hope of saving themselves that 5km walk to the river, or that energy to carry 20 litres. When Jesus was hanging on the cross He asked for water (John 19:28-29) what does that mean to me today? Could it be an outcry of someone dried out by injustice and oppression? What are we doing to share in people's thirst? Are we ones to share vinegar or water for the betterment of their livelihoods? I believe we can do better every day, one person at a time, to close that tap and dripping pipe, to use our grey water for gardening for example. ■

USPG 2021 CALENDAR



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GIVING THE PROMISE OF HOPE THIS CHRISTMAS



USPG has been partnering with the Anglican Church of Tanzania, which runs the Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission programme.

Tanzania is significantly affected by HIV and AIDS, although the death rate is thankfully reducing. However, sadly, mother-to-child transmission of the virus is still a real challenge. A baby born with HIV is unlikely to see their fifth birthday.

Estimates from UNAIDS show that 150,000 children were newly infected with HIV in 2019.

This can happen during pregnancy, labour, delivery or breastfeeding. Many mothers are not aware that there is hope, thanks to improved nutrition and increased access to antiretroviral treatment.

This programme provides both the practical and medical support needed to prevent the virus being passed on from mothers to their children.

WILL YOU GIVE A PROMISE OF HOPE THIS CHRISTMAS?

To find out more visit www.uspg.org.uk/promiseofhope or call **020 7921 2200** to make a donation over the phone



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“

This programme has given us another chance to enjoy life that we thought had come to an end. My child would not have died and Agnes would be HIV-free if we had had this help sooner.

Rehema and her daughter Agnes