

# UNITED BEYOND BORDERS

## MIGRATION AND MOVEMENT

A five-week study course exploring migration and the global movement of people, with stories from the world church.



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# UNITED BEYOND BORDERS: MIGRATION AND MOVEMENT

At the heart of the Christian faith is a God who is in solidarity with people on the move. Hagar, the doubly displaced Egyptian slave, experiences God's solidarity as she wanders in the wilderness. In Jesus, God becomes flesh and pitches his tent among human beings (John 1:14). Miguel de La Torre, a Cuban American theologian writes, "the radicalism of the incarnation for Christians is not so much that the Creator of the universe became a frail human, but rather that God chose to become the undocumented, fleeing the empire of the time."<sup>1</sup>

In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit becomes part of the movement of people as the 'boundary-transcending' Spirit that empowers and accompanies Christ's disciples to become witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Therefore, we can say the Trinitarian nature of God is migratory at its very core. This has implications for Christian mission as we are called to welcome the stranger (Hebrews 13:2).

Migration is not new. However, what is ironic today is that often the people most resistant to migrants and refugees forget that their own ancestors were migrants in the lands that they now inhabit, or had moved to different countries uninvited, and had imposed themselves, their religion, language and culture on people who lived in these countries. Some of those who are refused hospitality at our borders today are the descendants of people who were once expected to welcome these 'uninvited guests'.

Today migration is also about 'landscapes of the mind' because even in our thinking borders are being drawn and redrawn with hostility and fear to suit vested agendas. In contexts of deep polarisation, politicians see the 'fear of the other' as being a weapon to enhance their political fortunes. Such contexts demand a unity that transcends borders – a unity marked by hospitality and solidarity. Our hope is that this resource will help us move towards such unity by inspiring and inviting us to deeper reflection and action on one of the most painful moral wounds of our age.

**The Revd Canon Dr Peniel Rajkumar,**  
Theologian and Director of Global Mission, USPG

This is an updated version of USPG's *Migration & Movement study guide*.  
For further resources, visit [www.uspg.org.uk](http://www.uspg.org.uk)

Bible passages from NRSV unless otherwise stated.

<sup>1</sup> Miguel De la Torre, *The U.S. Immigration Crisis: Toward an Ethics of Place*, (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2016).



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**Cover:** Family leaving Ukraine for Poland,  
March 2022

**Above:** Children playing at Agape  
pre-school kindergarten in Ma U Kyuusaung  
village, Myanmar. (USPG/Leah Gordon)



# A SNAPSHOT OF THE GLOBAL SITUATION

We hope the following statistics will give you a sense of the current situation regarding migration and the movement of people, both around the world and closer to home. Please also refer to the glossary of terms at the back of this booklet.

## GLOBAL MIGRATION

The current global estimate is that there were around 281 million international migrants in the world in 2020, which equates to 3.6 per cent of the worldwide population. This is a small minority of the world's population, meaning that staying within one's country of birth remains 'the norm'. Most people do not migrate across borders; much larger numbers migrate within countries. (IOM UN Migration Report)

## DISPLACED PEOPLES

By the end of 2020, 89.4 million people were living in displacement. This includes refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people (IDPs). This was an increase from 84.8 million in 2019. This figure includes people who were forcibly displaced within their own country. (IOM UN Migration Report)

## ASYLUM SEEKERS IN EUROPE

In 2022, there were just under one million (965,665) applications for asylum in the EU, 52.1% more than in 2021 and the highest level since 2016. The number of first-time asylum applicants in the EU in 2022 was 881,220, an increase of 64% from the year before (537 355). (Frontex)

## UK INHABITANTS BORN ELSEWHERE

The number of people living in the UK who were born in another country is currently about 9.6 million. (The Migration Observatory)

## UK: IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION

In the year ending June 2023, 1.2 million people immigrated to the UK and an estimated 508,000 people emigrated from the UK; a net migration figure of 672,000. (Office for National Statistics).



Nursery class in favela school, Brazil. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## TRAFFICKED CHILDREN

1.2 million children are trafficked every year. (UNICEF)

## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The most common form of human trafficking (79%) is sexual exploitation.

## FORCED LABOUR

An estimated 28 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide, of which 39.4% were women and girls, 4.9 million in forced commercial sexual exploitation, and 6 million in other economic sectors. (International Labour Organisation)

## DISPLACEMENT DUE TO CLIMATE

Over the past decade, extreme weather has displaced 20 million people a year. That's the equivalent of the population of China's capital city, Beijing, having to leave their homes each year. (World Economic Forum)



Evelyn Magang-an harvesting camote (sweet potato) crop, encouraged by the USPG-supported church community mobilisation programme in Mountain Province, Philippines. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## STUDY 1

# NOWHERE TO LAY HIS HEAD

We begin our journey with a focus on Jesus: his person and his teaching.

## OPENING REFLECTION

Take a little time to read through the statistics and glossary in the front and back of this study guide. Take it in turns to share your thoughts on the various topics. Allow space for people to share their lack of understanding and any fears or prejudices. Our aim is not to judge each other, but to investigate our personal feelings about global phenomena.

## BIBLE READINGS

### Matthew 8:18-22: Would-Be Followers of Jesus

<sup>18</sup> Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. <sup>19</sup> A scribe then approached and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>20</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." <sup>21</sup> Another of his disciples said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." <sup>22</sup> But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

### Matthew 25:31-46: The Judgment of the Nations

<sup>31</sup> "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, <sup>33</sup> and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup> And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' <sup>40</sup> And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' <sup>41</sup> Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; <sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' <sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw



you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’<sup>45</sup> Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’<sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

## QUESTIONS

- Looking at Matthew 8:18-22, in what sense did Jesus have ‘nowhere to lay his head’? What is the significance of this statement for us as followers of Christ?
- In Matthew 25:31-46, what do you personally understand of the words Jesus said that, ‘just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me’? What is this passage calling us to do?
- How does our understanding of Matthew 8:18-22 impact on our ability to follow the teaching in Matthew 25:31-46?

## AROUND THE WORLD: ENGLAND

**A Filipino worker in London shares her story. We’ve kept her identity anonymous.**

I came to London because my employer moved here and wanted me to take care of his sister, who was paralysed and had high blood pressure. But they were not good to me, so I ran away.

They came to the UK because it was easier for them to get medication and healthcare. But the sister was always angry and shouting at me, so I was scared to be alone with her. And the working arrangements were very bad. I was not allowed to go out and I got no days off. I slept on the floor and was not given enough food. So I ran away.

Now I am sharing a room with another Filipina worker. I am a part-time cleaner, visiting different houses each day; it’s hard to find full-time work because of the visa laws.

My family are in the Philippines, which is my home. I really miss them. I have three girls and a boy. Of the girls, two are married and the other is working in the Middle East to help support the family. I send money home to pay for medicine for my husband, who has diabetes, and to pay for my son’s school fees. I’ve also helped them to set up a small catering business to bring in an income. I plan to go back when my youngest child finishes at university, or earlier if the business succeeds.

When not working, I go to church, and I belong to the Filipino Domestic Workers Association, which helps me; they give me hope, knowledge and confidence. The association is campaigning to bring back legal rights for migrant domestic workers, many of whom are being treated like slaves by their employers.

Most of all, I thank God for giving me strength to face the sad realities of my life and stand firm.

## QUESTIONS

- Putting yourself in the shoes of the Filipina woman speaking in the article, take turns to explore how you think she may be feeling and what your response to this story is.
- Read the entry for ‘Migrant domestic workers’ in the glossary at the back of this booklet. Have you ever encountered people you believe to be MDWs? Do you think this could be an issue in your community?
- How might we, as a local church, reach out to migrants on our doorstep?

## PRAYER

God, our rock and our redeemer,  
We pray for those forced to leave to support families;  
We pray for lives torn apart by absence and loss;  
We pray for people missing loved ones and home;  
We pray for chaplains, pastors and advocates in this context.  
May we be willing to share our selves with the stranger in our midst.

## HOW YOUR DONATIONS WILL HELP

At USPG, we believe that every person is made in the image of God. That’s why we are busy raising awareness of the plight of refugees and migrant workers in our world, supporting the world church to respond to their needs, and encouraging the church here in the UK to get behind that work. Your donations are helping us to respond to this issue, wherever we find the need.



Lin Lin was helped by USPG-supported volunteer health workers in Ma U Daw Kyuusaung village near Toungoo, Myanmar. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## STUDY 2

# WHERE IS MY HOME?

Most of us consider it vitally important to have somewhere we call home. But why is this so and what does it mean to have a 'home'?

## OPENING REFLECTION

Today's world has become a 'global village' as everyone is connected through technology. However, nationalistic fervour is on the rise in many nations. Borders keep closing and walls keep going up as war and conflict rage in many parts of our world. How can the people of God promote peace individually and collectively? What is our role as Christians in such a time as this?

## BIBLE READINGS

### Isaiah 55:12 and Mathew 5:9

For you shall go out in joy,  
and be led back in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you  
shall burst into song,  
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

### Isaiah 55:12

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

## QUESTIONS

- What kind of peace does the prophet foresee in Isaiah 55:12? How can such peace be promoted in the context of war and violence?
- What are some ways in which we can become 'peacemakers' as described in Mathew 5:9? Thinking more widely, what is the role of the church in promoting sustainable peace?

## AROUND THE WORLD: MYANMAR

**Personal reflection by The Revd Davidson Solanki, Senior Regional Manager for Asia and Middle East, USPG**

Myanmar (formerly Burma) is a country in Southeast Asia that shares its borders with China, India, Bangladesh, Thailand and Laos. It is rich in natural resources and in culture, with over 100 ethnic groups and different religions amongst its number. Today this nation is facing serious challenges. On 1 February 2021, the Myanmar military overthrew the democratically elected government resulting in nationwide protest and riots. Youth and adults took to the streets to make their anger and dismay known.

Since then, Myanmar has experienced a humanitarian crisis of serious proportion. All the developmental progress of the last few years has been undone. Education, health care, economic prosperity have all been seriously impacted. The protests were met with a strong response by the military resulting in civilian deaths, extrajudicial killings and damage to infrastructure. This beautiful nation once known for its unity in diversity, is going through turbulent times. The cry of its people seems unnoticed and neglected by the international community. It is not widely featured in the international news and media. Due to fighting between military and ethnic militia, millions are either internally displaced or forced to flee the country.

In the midst of all these challenges, the Church is standing firm in its faith and mission. The Church continues to serve the poor, the needy and the marginalised in Myanmar. It remains united in its call for peace and harmony. The Church is wounded but remains watchful and resilient. Are we listening to the cry of the people Myanmar? There is an urgent need to unite in call for prayer and solidarity. Let's recommit ourselves to prayer for and with the people of Myanmar. Let's stand in solidarity against the abuse of human rights and pray for peace.

## QUESTIONS

- How does the conflict in Myanmar, or in any other countries in the world, affect and challenge our Christian faith?
- What practical steps can the local and the global church take for the people of Myanmar as they go through these extremely difficult situations?
- How can we as individuals and churches promote peace and harmony in our local context?

## PRAYER

O God of hope and life, we cry out to you for the people of Myanmar. May you bring an end to the conflict and usher peace into this nation. May you continue to bring hope and help to those who are trapped in the cycle of violence. May you provide wisdom, understanding and humility to those who have power to end war and work for peace and prosperity of all.

We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace,

Amen

## HOW YOUR DONATIONS WILL HELP

We have supported the Church of Myanmar as it reaches out to villagers who are returning home after spending years sheltering from the dangers on the Thai border. We are helping to fund a team of volunteer health workers and a clean water programme that means better health, sanitation and crops.





Bolivian street vendors in São Paulo, Brazil. (USPG/Heidi Schmidt)

## STUDY 3

# AGAINST OUR WILL

In ideal circumstances, we would be free to move and live where we choose. But this is not always the case.

## OPENING REFLECTION

This week we are looking at forms of modern slavery, including bonded labour and human trafficking. Share in the group your understanding of these issues. Have you heard anything about it recently in the media? Have you had any personal experience or encounters with people who have experienced these things?

## BIBLE READINGS

### Philemon 8-21: Paul's Plea for Onesimus

<sup>8</sup> For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, <sup>9</sup> yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love – and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. <sup>10</sup> I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. <sup>11</sup> Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. <sup>12</sup> I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. <sup>13</sup> I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; <sup>14</sup> but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. <sup>15</sup> Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, <sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother – especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. <sup>17</sup> So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. <sup>18</sup> If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. <sup>19</sup> I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. <sup>20</sup> Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. <sup>21</sup> Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

## QUESTIONS

- What does this challenging passage tell us about God's position on slavery or bonded labour?
- How does God show value and care for the person enslaved?



## AROUND THE WORLD: BRAZIL

**Article by Luis Benavides, a lawyer with CAMI (Centro de Apoio e Pastoral do Migrante, meaning Support Centre and Pastoral Care for Migrants), based in Sao Paulo.**

There are an estimated 600,000 immigrants living in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The vast majority are here to find work, having come from other Latin American countries, in particular Bolivia, where there are few employment opportunities.

Many were lured to the city by recruiters who promised jobs with a salary, housing and food. Yet, on arrival, many found themselves in situations akin to slave labour, working up to 15 hours a day and living in unsanitary conditions with a poor diet.

David and Isabel came to Sao Paulo with the hope of building a better life for themselves. They paid a recruiter in Bolivia to find them a job and were required to hand over their personal documents. They ended up on a production line sewing clothes, being forced to work from 6.30am until 10pm each day, then sleeping on the same premises. Whenever they asked for their wages they were verbally abused and threatened with being reported to the police for having no documents.

Finally, David and Isabel and some of their fellow workers refused to keep working for no pay. The factory owner responded by trying to sell the workers to another factory in a bid to recoup the money he had paid the recruiter. At this point, CAMI heard about the case and stepped in, encouraging the victims to go to the police. On this occasion, the factory owners were arrested – caught red-handed in a police raid. But such positive endings are few and far between; thousands of immigrants are suffering in silence.

CAMI is working closely with the Diocese of Sao Paulo to raise awareness about the dangers of this type of labour recruitment, which is a form of human trafficking. We endeavour to investigate situations of slave labour and rescue workers. We offer legal support and counselling, and help immigrants to find real jobs.

## QUESTIONS

- Whether working as slave labour or for low wages in poor conditions, immigrants the world over are being exploited by the rich. In the above story from Brazil, imagine yourself into the roles of 1) immigrant, 2) recruiter, 3) factory owner, 4) CAMI staff worker: in each case, what is your motivation? What needs to change so that people are no longer vulnerable to exploitation?
- There are many low paid immigrants working in Britain and Ireland, many of whom may have been trafficked. How might your church get involved in addressing issues of trafficking: 1) globally, 2) locally?
- Has your church or diocese heard about The Clewer Initiative? You may want to spend some time looking at their website and resources. [www.theclewerinitiative.org](http://www.theclewerinitiative.org)

## PRAYER

Lord, you are a God who sets the captives free.

Your Spirit searches restlessly for those in despair, that they may find the life you are calling them to.

We pray for those who are being trafficked and callously put to work in the region.

On the cross, you were powerless and subject to the cruelty of others. Look with mercy on those who suffer this way.

May we, who are blinded by the shallow distractions of daily life, feel the fear of the cornered and be roused to action.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**(Written by The Rt Revd Simon Burton-Jones, Bishop of Tonbridge, Source: The Clewer Initiative)**

## HOW YOUR DONATIONS WILL HELP

USPG work with the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil on a number of projects including one for human rights to equip and train community members on advocacy work. This work provides practical support for vulnerable members in communities such as Indigenous peoples.



Refugee in Calais (USPG)

## STUDY 4

# TRAPPED AND ALONE

When exile leads to death where is our hope?

## OPENING REFLECTION

As of the end of 2022 there were almost 12.4 million refugees in Europe, according to the UN Refugee Agency. In addition to refugees, there were 1.3 million asylum-seekers, 7.2 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and 474,000 who were stateless. Europe continues to struggle with the resettlement of refugees, leaving many feeling trapped vulnerable and alone. Share in your group your understanding of the current crisis in Europe, particularly in Calais.

## BIBLE READINGS

### Ezekiel 22:2-6

<sup>2</sup>You, mortal, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then declare to it all its abominable deeds. <sup>3</sup>You shall say: Thus says the Lord God: A city! Shedding blood within itself; its time has come; making its idols, defiling itself. <sup>4</sup>You have become guilty by the blood that you have shed and defiled by the idols that you have made; you have brought your days near; the appointed time of your years has come. Therefore I have made you a disgrace before the nations and a mockery to all the countries. <sup>5</sup>Those who are near and those who are far from you will mock you, you infamous one, full of tumult. <sup>6</sup>The princes of Israel in you, everyone according to his power, have been bent on shedding blood.

### Revelation 21:1-5, 25

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; <sup>4</sup>he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.' <sup>5</sup>And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also, he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.'...

<sup>25</sup>Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.



## QUESTIONS

- Take a moment to reflect individually and then share with your group the vision you have of the heavenly city. How do you envisage God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven for migrants? What would be different at our national borders?
- What small practical steps can we take in our cities to come closer to the New Jerusalem described in Revelation 21?

## AROUND THE WORLD: CALAIS, FRANCE

**Reflection by Bradon Muilenburg - Anglican Refugee Support Lead in Northern France (a role joint-funded by USPG, The Diocese of Canterbury and The Diocese in Europe).**

Calais is a real city and a symbolic one too. An international crossroads and place of exile, so many lives are put on hold, sitting stuck within a tangled legal web constructed between three power-filled capitals.

The violence migrants are subjected to on the Channel coast never ceases to shock. Each week, mounting indignities and escalated suffering; and simultaneously, there is nothing new under the clouds. This week I learned that a one-month-old baby was tear gassed by the police. He cried and vomited. This is the border.

Jesus will wipe away every tear; but as far as it depends on us, a start could mean not chemically inducing additional tears. Our silence and taxes allow for vulnerable men and women alike to be shot with less lethal bullets. The only shared state countless families can live in is one of painful division. The border, with its threat of death, is used to hold them apart. This city construction is the antithesis of New Jerusalem.

We do not love our neighbours as ourselves. My child is orders of magnitude safer than paperless children who are not permitted the basic security afforded by big boat, Channel Tunnel, and plane.

The vast majority are young, with dreams cut short. Two of the most recent were seven-year-old girls, Roula and Sara. Consciously, anxiously anticipating the next death, I find the word accident increasingly inappropriate.

Christians should resist numbing to our sisters and brothers reality by accepting their deaths as necessary tragedies—just the order of things. How can we find and hold on to hope?

The only true invasion is the Son banishing the darkness of our cities with his being and light. Our walls cannot hold him for long. Being united beyond borders means being united beyond death. He expects us to take our stand against violence in all its forms.

When Jesus becomes our city, there's no xenophobic limit to who can find hospitality, safe inside decommissioned walls.

## QUESTIONS

- What do you see happening in the world today in relation to migrants? Are there things in either passage that speak to your reality, of people you know, or the things you hear about in the news?
- As the Church how can we be united beyond borders against violence in all its forms?

## PRAYER

Lord Jesus, as we sojourn through this life, help us to deeply identify with the immigrant. We are all refugees in need of your city.

Still the voices of fear who try to convince us that we are under siege. Help us trust you as our refuge. Transform hard-hearted hostility into hospitality. Move us on from a mentality of scarcity toward the cheerful generosity of your super-abundant welcome.

Amen.

## HOW YOUR DONATIONS WILL HELP

The Diocese in Europe and USPG launched an emergency appeal to support those affected by the invasion of Ukraine. Funds raised by the appeal support churches and ecumenical charities carrying out humanitarian work both in Ukraine and responding to the arrival of refugees in neighbouring countries such as Hungary, Romania and Finland. In addition to this, the role of the Anglican Refugee Support Lead in Calais is the outcome of a partnership between The Diocese in Europe, The Diocese of Canterbury and USPG. It is a response to the growing needs of migrants around the Channel ports in Northern France.



Children sitting at the base of a tree in Mangochi, Malawi, where USPG has been supporting community health work. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## STUDY 5

# LIFE ON THE MARGINS

Around the world, extreme weather and rising sea levels have claimed lives, destroyed infrastructure and displaced large numbers of people.

## OPENING REFLECTION

As a group, consider the links between climate change and poverty. You might like to consider issues such as a country's economic situation, infrastructure and the availability of emergency services, healthcare, food security and so on.

## BIBLE READINGS

### Genesis 1:26-31: God creates humankind

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."<sup>27</sup> So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." <sup>29</sup> God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. <sup>31</sup> God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

## QUESTIONS

- What is your understanding of the injunction to subdue the earth and have dominion over everything in it? What might this look like in practice?
- The earth's resources are finite – and billions of people want need their share. What does being a good steward mean in today's globalised world? Consider people, animals and the environment.
- It is generally accepted that increases in extreme weather can be linked to the activities of developed nations: in particular, the amount of pollution we create and unsustainable patterns of consumption. As Christians how can we help and support issues around climate emergency?



## AROUND THE WORLD: MALAWI

**Article by The Rt Revd Alinafe Kalembe, Bishop of Southern Malawi.**

Malawi has seen an increase in temperatures and intense rain over the past 40 years, leading to drought and flooding, poor harvests and hunger. In 2015, the floods in Malawi were devastating, with the loss of life, animals, homes and crops. Life came to a standstill and seemed meaningless.

Churches and other organisations provided food, shelter, counsel and companionship. One church member said: 'When our lives were reduced to nothing, we were dead. But God, through his people, brought us back and gave us new life. It's like a rebirth.'

The floods were a result of climate change. Our weather and seasons are no longer stable or predictable. People have been displaced, affecting their welfare. Many have been put in camps, which lack privacy and which have disrupted community cohesion. Health and education systems have been paralysed. People are confused.

Now we are in the process of relocating people to more suitable areas. There is resistance among some because it will mean leaving the land of their ancestors, which is especially a concern among people with traditional beliefs. It means starting life again from scratch. Relocation is also very costly, especially in terms of building materials for new homes. So we are working together to try and make sense of the situation.

As part of our relief efforts, the people were given maize and beans for planting and they have been able to harvest from these crops.

When I was young the rains were consistent. Around late October and November we knew the rains were going to come. Safe in this knowledge, we could plant our crops and make preparations. But now the rains are unpredictable, and when they come they are not enough or they are too heavy.

While there are a lot of factors contributing to climate change, I don't think it is being caused by the poor nations, yet we are the ones suffering the most, and we don't have mechanisms to respond.

So whatever the nations of the world can do to ease this problem, it needs to be done now if we are to save human lives. And we need to do it together.

## QUESTIONS

- What is your response to this story?
- Share with the group any experiences you've had of the power of nature to damage or destroy. How might these experiences be similar or different if we compare our experience in developed countries with the experience of people in Malawi?
- What new insights has this study inspired regarding how you might engage with environmental issues: personally, as a local church, as part of the World Church?

## SUMMING UP: LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

- As a group, take it in turns to share how this study course has impacted upon your understanding of migration and related issues.
- If you feel comfortable, make a pledge regarding how you might turn these insights into action – both as individuals and as a study group or local church.

## PRAYER

God of the seas, the land and skies,  
 Forgive our selfishness and greed,  
 Where we see this world as a commodity to use.  
 Renew our love for the earth,  
 Deepen our respect for the soil,  
 And help us to change our ways in order to save this planet.

## HOW YOUR DONATIONS WILL HELP

We sent an emergency grant from our Rapid Response Fund in 2015 to support the relief and rehabilitation work of the Anglican Church in Malawi following major flooding. Our Rapid Response Fund continues to provide crucial support our partner churches around the world as they deal with emergencies, as we believe that churches rooted in local communities know how best to respond when disaster strikes. We are also working with the church to develop a disaster response programme.

[www.uspg.org.uk/rapid-response](http://www.uspg.org.uk/rapid-response)

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## ASYLUM SEEKER

In the UK, an asylum seeker is someone who has asked the government for refugee status and is waiting to hear the outcome of their application.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

According to the Met Office: 'Climate change is a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns or average temperatures.' Examples of climate change include rising temperatures; changes in rainfall patterns; changes in the timing of the seasons, resulting, for example, in birds migrating or flowers blooming at different times of the year; rising sea levels; retreating glaciers; shrinking sea ice and ice sheets.

## CLIMATE JUSTICE

According to Friends of the Earth, climate change and the global energy crisis threaten billions of people. The main cause of these challenges is 'our unsustainable level of consumption, which uses large quantities of energy for production and transportation. Fossil fuels like oil and coal take millions of years to form and are being used far faster than they are being replaced. The burning of fossil fuels also releases billions of tons of carbon dioxide in to the atmosphere, creating climate change. Oil is now running out, but the world is not ready to make the shift to sustainable renewable energy production and consumption. At the same time, over a billion impoverished people in the world have no access to energy. They are also the ones who will be hit the hardest by climate change impacts.'

## EXPATRIATE

A person who lives outside their native country. (Oxford Dictionary)

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) defines trafficking in persons as 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation'. Typically people are trafficked to be used as forced labour or sex workers or for the removal of organs.

## IMMIGRANT

A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.

## INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON (IDP)

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): 'Two elements are decisive in identifying who is an IDP: (1) the coercive or otherwise involuntary character of movement – that is, movement caused by armed conflict, violence, disasters, and the like; and (2) the fact that such movement takes place within national borders.'

## MIGRANT

A simple definition of a migrant might be someone who makes a conscious choice to leave their country to seek a better life elsewhere. Sometimes this is called 'economic migration'. However, it should be noted that there is no consensus on a single definition of a 'migrant'. According to The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford: 'Migrants might be defined by foreign birth, by foreign citizenship, or by their movement into a new country to stay temporarily (sometimes for as little as a year) or to settle for the long-term.'

## MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS (MDWS)

Under UK law, MDWs can only remain in the country if they stay with the employer who brought them here. With MDWs 'tied' in this way, many employers have felt able to abuse their employees and effectively treat them as slave labour. Human rights groups are lobbying the UK government to change the law so MDWs can leave abusive employers yet keep their visas and remain in the country with new employers.

## REFUGEE

A person who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country...' (Definition quoted from the 1951 Refugee Convention).

## STATELESS

The international legal definition of a stateless person is "a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law". In simple terms, this means that a stateless person does not have the nationality of any country. Some people are born stateless, but others become stateless. Statelessness often has a severe and lifelong impact on those it affects. The millions of people around the world who are denied a nationality often fight for the same basic human rights that most of us take for granted. (UNHCR)





# YOUR DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The articles in this study course have been prepared by our world church partners. Each contributor belongs to a church or programme that receives direct support from USPG. Our financial assistance to them helps to fund vital work that has a huge impact on the lives of ordinary people. Your donations help to make this happen.

Within each study we have included an indication of how your financial support could enable our global partners to put the gospel into action among the communities they serve.

Now you have explored how we can Unite Beyond Borders through this course, please consider how you will respond.

For more details, email [info@uspg.org.uk](mailto:info@uspg.org.uk), call 020 7921 2200 or visit [www.uspg.org.uk](http://www.uspg.org.uk)



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## KEEPING IN TOUCH

USPG would very much like to keep in touch with you to keep you updated on the work of our partner churches and communities worldwide. Managing your details well is important to us and we would like to contact you in ways that work for you.

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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



## NOTES

[illegible]



USPG is the Anglican mission agency that partners with churches and communities worldwide in God's mission to rethink mission, energise church and champion justice. USPG has a global perspective and long-established relationships with the churches of the Anglican Communion. USPG is engaged with over 60 programmes across the global church working in partnership with member churches as they work with their communities and contexts.

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