



THE WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST AND UNITING CHURCH WOMEN

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# *The* TREE — *of* LIFE

## be holy

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# President's letter

**Dear Sisters,**

At last we are able to share news of our next World Assembly! It will take place at the Gothia Towers Conference Centre and Hotel in Gothenburg, Sweden, 10th - 15th August 2021. Our theme will be taken from John 15:16b 'Go and bear fruit – fruit that will last.' Jesus calls us to action and productivity. Jesus wants us to make a lasting difference in order to build the kingdom of God. The call to action begins now!

Start saving! We cannot give you a figure yet, until after August 2019 when World Officers will meet with the Local Arrangements Committee women for a site visit, but you all know that many will find it hard to pay for their flights and registration, so please consider how you can help women from every Unit attend our assembly. Find creative ways to raise funds, and contact our World Treasurer if your Unit can support another in this

way.

Get creative! If you would like to submit a design for the Assembly logo, get in touch with the World Secretary who will send you guidelines. We need to receive design submissions by 1st August 2019.

Get thinking! Write to the World Secretary now if you have suggestions for workshops or speakers that would help us explore the Assembly theme. We are particularly interested in topics that will address issues of gender equality, health and well-being, care for creation, and reduction of poverty.

Start looking! Don't forget that two young women from each Area will be given the opportunity to become Helen Kim Memorial Scholars for 2021-2026, beginning at the HKMS program in Gothenburg 8th -10th August 2021 and then staying on for the World Assembly.

Start praying! Pray that the right women will agree to be nominated for the various World and Area and Unit leadership roles. Pray that all preparations for the Assembly go smoothly.

Every blessing,

*-Alison Judd*



World Assembly  
10th -15th August 2021  
Sweden

# Be holy, for I am holy

This phrase, when God tells His people to be holy, is repeated several times in the Bible in one form or another, for example in Leviticus 11:44, Leviticus 11:45, Leviticus 19:2, Leviticus 20:26, 1 Peter 1:16, etc. I find this command a hard one because it means we should think and act as God Himself would. Holiness means without sin, sacred, morally blameless, to be a saint, to be set apart for God in thinking and in deeds. And when the Bible refers to obedience to God's laws it is about the morality in God's own view, not in the human view, which is quite rough for "our days".

After God created all things, He "took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." (Genesis 2:15) This stewardship was expected to be done in an attitude of holiness, according to divine laws, established by God. God defined what is good and what is evil, but since the world was created, people have moved away from God's law and decided what is good and bad for themselves. Next, the book of Genesis reports different stories of people deciding for themselves. We have the case of Abel and Cain: Cain decided he would be better off without his brother; he has not chosen life but death, he has not chosen holiness but sin, and murdered his brother. We have the story of Lamech, a violent person who chose to have more wives, even though God required one wife for a man (Genesis 2:24). He has not chosen holiness, but violence and promiscuity. We have the story of Babel, where people decided that it was better for them to stay in unity and to make a name for themselves (Genesis 11), even though God gave them the commandment to spread, to fill the earth and

subdue it (Genesis 1). And it was for a reason, because God didn't want sin to develop and spread. But people chose what they thought was good. And all these stories are just the beginning of many similar stories. Anytime people had their own definition of sin, of what is good or evil, they brought tragedy, violence and death.

We should never define what is sin because we, as people, we will always fail, but we should aspire to the same holiness that God has, and we should take seriously God's definition of good and evil.

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your bodies. (1 Corinthians 6:19)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. (Romans 12:1)

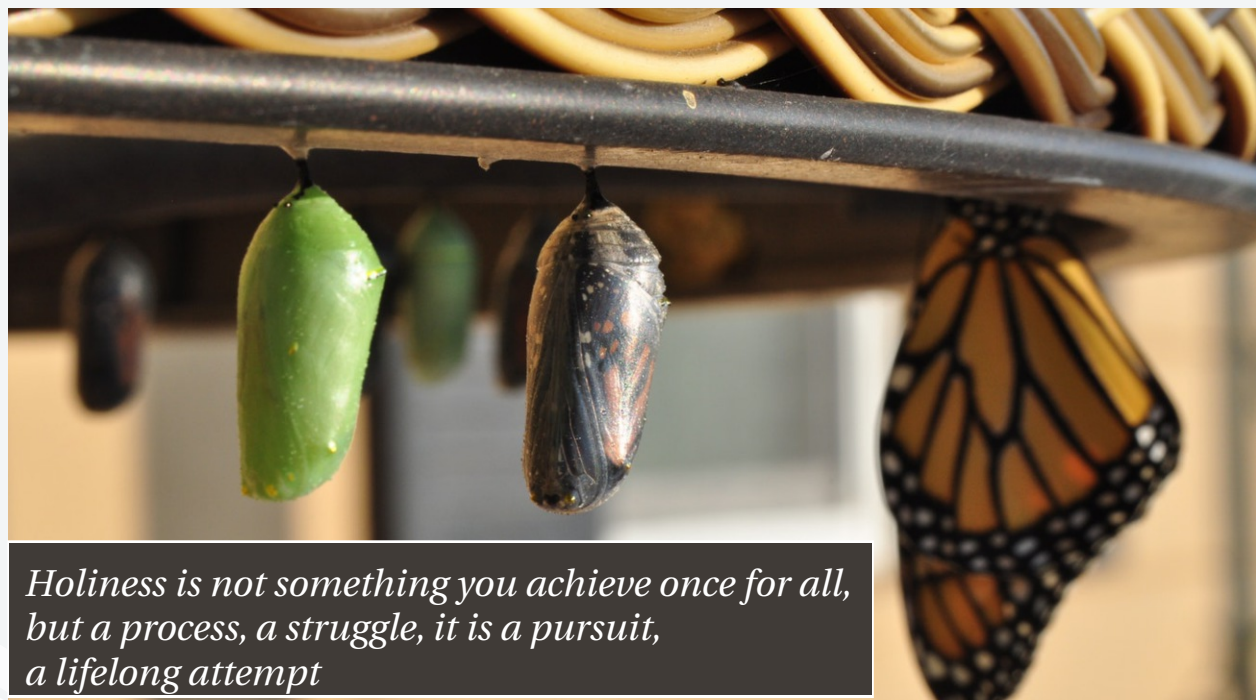
reject every kind of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Being holy does not come in a natural way or within our own strength. It is a divine feature and it can be achieved with the help of the Holy Spirit. (I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me, Galatians 2:19-21)

And holiness is not something you achieve once for all, but a process, a struggle, it is a pursuit, a lifelong attempt: Not that I have already reached the goal or am already perfect, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:12)

Remember: God called you and me to be holy. Don't turn your back.

*-Ligia Istrate, Tree of Life Editor*



*Holiness is not something you achieve once for all, but a process, a struggle, it is a pursuit, a lifelong attempt*

# Europe: Britain and Ireland bible study

## ‘Great is thy FAITHFULNESS’: Naomi’s Story (the Book of Ruth)

*But Ruth replied, ‘Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.’ (Ruth 1:16 NIV)*

Why would a young woman choose to leave her family and homeland, probably sacrificing any chance of marriage, security and children, to follow her mother-in-law into a strange land? What was it she saw in Naomi that motivated and inspired her?

We know that Naomi was selfless. She was concerned first and foremost for the well-being and happiness of both her daughters-in-law, and she was willing to sacrifice her own security and the opportunity for companionship. No doubt Ruth had already experienced these loving, caring, selfless qualities from Naomi as they shared and cared for each other in their respective grief and sorrow after the death of Naomi’s sons. Maybe in this way Naomi was a role model for Ruth.

This highlights for each of us the importance of how we should be role models for others, especially

for younger women.

Naomi’s relationship with God must have also really inspired Ruth. When Naomi was trying to persuade Ruth to turn back, Ruth said that “... your God (will be) my God.” She wouldn’t have made that comment if she wasn’t already familiar with Naomi’s God! She must have learnt about the God of Israel from Naomi and probably her husband, who would have learnt it from his mother. Naomi must have remained faithful to God during her time in Moab and most probably testified about His faithfulness to Israel and to her.

Do you take advantage of every opportunity to tell others about God’s faithfulness to you?

Naomi’s faithfulness to God and to Ruth must have been an inspiration to Ruth. And so, she followed Naomi to Bethlehem and once there she followed her guidance in the customs of this strange land.

Would someone follow you because of your faithfulness? More importantly, would someone follow God because of what they see in you?

Naomi’s story is a story of Faithfulness to others, Faithfulness to God and God’s Faithfulness to us!

*-Louise Wilson,  
President of Europe: Britain and  
Ireland Area*

*Do you take advantage of  
every opportunity  
to tell others about  
God’s faithfulness to you?*



# News



## East Asia news

We are very honoured that we held the third World Federation Executive Meeting at Yang's Meeting Room, Ward Building, Kowloon from 18<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019. Praise the Lord the meeting was successful, and all the participants had a safe trip home after the meeting.

East Asia Area Weaving Together Program was held from 25<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at the same venue. Mrs. Alison Judd welcomed unit presidents,

and Mrs. Matilda Johnson encouraged us to work towards fulfilling the SDGs. We were pleased to see our two Helen Kim Memorial Scholars: Kyeo from Taiwan, who is currently studying in United States, and Ruth from Malaysia, who is working with women.

29 participants attended the Asian Young Women's Leadership Training from 26<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The aims were to equip leaders with skills and commitment to nurture young

women, to raise their awareness on gender issues, and to stand up against discrimination and inequality.

WFMUCW 11th East Asia Area Seminar 2019 Hong Kong was held from 27<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> 2019 with the theme "Here I am. Send me" (Isaiah 6:8). About 290 participants, World & EAA



officers, pastors and guests attended the Opening Worship, which included a procession of banners. Mrs. Ngui welcomed all participants, the Methodist Church President, Rev. Dr. Lam,



gave a sermon on the text 'Go, and Do Thou Likewise', and a gala dinner was held after the worship. Nine units

performed from their cultures, enabling us to understand each other. A half day tour was organised for participants to see the beauty of Hong Kong and the seminar ended on Saturday afternoon with Holy Communion. Indeed, the Seminar was really compact, which perhaps is the Hongkongers life style.



I wish to thank all who participated in this Seminar, especially those



who came from afar at their own expense. This Seminar could not be successful without their commitment and sacrifice. We have built up our friendship and it shall never cease. We shall continue to encourage, edify and pray for each other. After the Closing Worship, each of us embarked on our journey back home, saying, "we will meet soon in Sweden."

- Ting Sing Hong,  
East Asia Area President



## Abigail – the woman who made a great impact on the life of King David and others



Women of today need to be filled with God's Word, to read the truth and interact with the Word in a way that is meaningful and applicable to their life experience. From Abigail's experience we learn that God makes us brave if we listen to Him and obey what He tells us.

Abigail's character shows loyalty, and loyalty is about caring for other people in the same way God cares for us. God calls us to love in all circumstances, even when you feel people don't deserve your love.

Abigail was the wife of a rich man called Nabal. Because of his wealth, he was rude, arrogant and evil in his doings. When David heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep in the wilderness, he sent ten of his men to go and ask, in David's name, for some of his sheep. Nabal treated the men so badly that it made David angry, so he decided to go and kill all the males in Nabal's possession. Abigail was well respected and the fact that the servants ran to report what had happened to her tells it all. Abigail was in a bad marriage, but had a discerning spirit, she did not let the unfortunate relationship of her marriage wreck her future blessings.

Abigail was wise and prudent in both words and actions. She did not waste time. She immediately went to work, putting a plan into action to save her family. **A lesson to learn here is to never let the evil disposition of one person hinder your devotion and grace. Never let the difficulties of your home lead you to abdicate your throne. Do not step down to the level of your circumstances but lift them to your own high calling in Christ.** 'Be not conformed but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.' (Romans 12: 1-2) When a desperate situation arises, a wise woman must be able to quickly size up the situation and present an action plan. Because of Abigail's smart move, she prevented a situation that made David confess in 1 Samuel 25: 34 that *"for as the Lord the God of Israel lives, who has prevented me from hurting you, if you had not hurried and come to meet me, surely by morning there would not have been left so much as one male to Nabal."*

Abigail was resourceful, she pulled together an impressive gift for David and his men. She loaded

donkeys with the best that her husband had to offer in hope of pacifying David's anger. In today's world, a woman has many resources available. Following Abigail's example, as a woman, whether in a ministry or at home, every woman should be aware of the resources at her disposal to be able to meet the needs that arise.

Abigail was trustworthy. She lived up to the woman presented in Proverbs 31. Her husband can trust her and in addition, the servants also obviously trusted her to rectify a horrible situation. Abigail's character speaks of her sacrifice and faithfulness. She was courageous and understood that her husband's life and the lives of every man in her household were at stake. She could have packed up and run for her life. It would have provided an easy way out of a terrible marriage. But instead, she faced the oncoming disaster decisively and without apparent fear.

The combination of courage and wisdom Abigail had is a rare and valuable commodity. Her decision to wait for the right moment to inform Nabal of her actions demonstrates wisdom and great restraint.

Abigail was also a submissive woman. When she approached David, she honoured him by bowing down before him. She did not react out of self-protection or self-promotion. She acted in the best interest of not only her husband but of her entire household. And while she was not at fault, she takes the blame, "my Lord the blame be on me alone" (1 Samuel 25: 24-25). She had a character that should be followed by all women.

- Rev. Jemima Amanor, West Africa Area President



## Situation Vacant

We invite you to apply for the **WEBMASTER position** for the 2021-2026 Quinquennium. Come and join our wonderful team if you are passionate about World Federation work and web design! An honorarium is available. Send your letter of application to our World Secretary by 30th September  
2019: [world.secretary@wfmucw.org](mailto:world.secretary@wfmucw.org)

### Requirements:

- ability to use specific programs
- webpage design
- multimedia design

- programming
- image editing
- writing and editing
- website updating
- website developing
- solving problems
- good communication skills

**Note:** the successful candidate will work with Nicholas, the current webmaster, for the next two years in order to prepare herself for the next Quinquennium.





## Contact details you may find useful

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