



THE WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST AND UNITING CHURCH WOMEN

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The TREE — of LIFE

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President's letter

Christmas Message

“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” (John 1:18, NKJV)

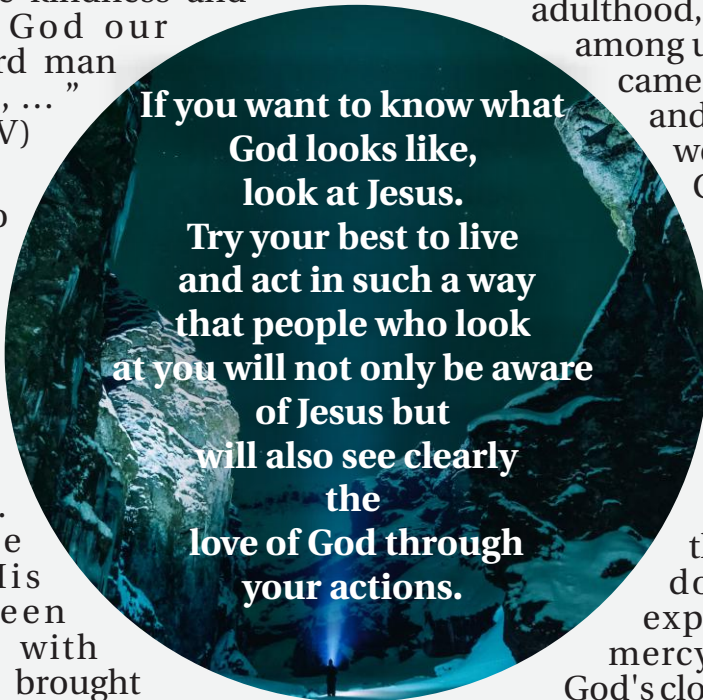
“But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, ... ” (Titus 3:4, NKJV)

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In December we focus on the birth of Jesus Christ. Through the centuries His birth has been synonymous with the things He brought to this world - peace, joy, mercy, love, and truth. We must never lose sight of the fact that it was Jesus who came to show us what God looks like.

“Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father,” Jesus said to Philip when Philip asked to see the Father. Through His words, life and actions, Jesus came to show us exactly what God looks like and how much He loves us. This loving portrait of God is seen more clearly when we remember that the son of God died on the cross so that our sins could be forgiven. If you ever doubt the love God has for you, you simply must look at the crucified Jesus.

With the birth of Jesus on that first



If you want to know what God looks like, look at Jesus. Try your best to live and act in such a way that people who look at you will not only be aware of Jesus but will also see clearly the love of God through your actions.

Christmas day, the love of God was made visible to us, and we discovered precisely what love included. People could now see it with their own eyes and tell others about it. We no longer need to doubt God's purpose for us; even though we still commit sin every day, God does not withdraw from us. Through the birth of His son, He made it possible for us to reach Him. He became our Father, and we can be now His children.

In Jesus, God himself became a person for us. With the coming of Jesus, a new dimension of the covenant was unveiled. In Jesus God was born, God grew into adulthood, lived, suffered, and died like us, among us. God is with us because Jesus came. His name is Emmanuel, you and I have God always with us and we are assured of His presence. God is closer to us than ever before.

If you want to know what God looks like, look at Jesus. Try your best to live and act in such a way that people who look at you will not only be aware of Jesus but will also see clearly the love of God through your actions. As you bear fruit through the things you say and do, may people have a new experience of God's love and mercy, and may they experience God's closeness through your example!

It is my prayer that you will experience the presence of God more clearly this Christmas time than ever before, as we go and bear fruit - not just fruit, but fruit that will last.

Blessings and much love!
Merry Christmas!

- Sipiwe Chisvo, World President



Editor's word:

The Living Word

What a joy God has made for us! Unto us a Child is born! Praise Him with all your heart!

Do you realize that this baby is the Word of God? ("In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God", John 1:1) In Jesus the Word of God became flesh for us, to be like one of us. Maybe it's hard for the human mind to comprehend this; we are used to many other names of Jesus like Emmanuel, Light of the World, and so on, but He Himself is all this and even more – He is the

our freedom is being taken away from us, and this stirs something in us and makes us oppose, but actually, in the law of God – God's rules – we have the biggest freedom possible. I think we could all share many situations in our life when the Word of God helped us in our daily life or when a commandment, an interdiction, actually spared us from something bad and painful.

This made me think of a Romanian artist, Liviu Mocan, who made a sculpture entitled Decalogue, with the commandments in the form of the fingers of God. While you are in God's hands you can rest, and you can find peace and happiness, but when you go from there, the surface is sharp and rigid. There is a lot of comfort in the Torah, in the Law of God.

Think about it.

And that reminded me of an amazing Jewish Celebration that I really love, the Simchat Torah (The Joy of the Law), when the Rabbi in the Synagogue takes from the Aaron HaKodesh the scrolls of the Torah. And do you know what he is doing? He takes them out and starts to dance, but not any kind of dance, but an exuberant dance and all the community starts to dance because of the joy of the Torah. Maybe we appreciate the Word of God, but we often lack any sense of joy in the Word. We forget to celebrate the amazing fact that God loved us so much that He gave us The Word!

I wish for all of you to find an incredible JOY both for the Word made flesh and for the written Word of God, and I pray you will have your own dance of joy with God!

-Ligia Istrate, Tree of Life Editor



Liviu Mocan, the Decalogue

essence of the Words of God, He is the creator Word of God and through Him, everything was created, and life began.

This Word of God is both flesh and spirit in Jesus, but we also have the written Word of God, the Bible, with the commandments, the law, the stories, the history, the wisdom. During this period, I was thinking that as people, as humans, we hate rules; we feel that

Go, tell!

“Go home, to your loved ones, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you.” (Mark 5:19)

All of us in one way or another have experienced the mercy and great love of God in our lives. Let's meditate on it for a moment. Let's recall those miracles (big and small) that the Lord has done for us and be encouraged to testify to the world how great our God is. Christ commissioned His disciples to preach throughout the world, testifying, and announcing the wonders of God. We must do the same because we are also His disciples. Let

us proclaim the greatness of God whenever we are given the opportunity. Let nothing limit us in fulfilling this mandate of the Lord - not only with our words but also with our attitudes and our actions. May our lifestyle be attractive to those around us, so that they feel the desire to know Jesus. Let us bear witness to all the things that He has done and is doing in our midst, let us proclaim His wonders, and His great love, so that the whole world knows that our God is real, and so that God's Name may be glorified forever.

“I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will recount all your wonders.” (Psalm 9:1)

*-Ivonne Pereira Díaz,
World Vice-President*

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News

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

“Orange the World”

Greetings in the name of the One that makes all things possible.

The 16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual campaign that begins on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and runs through International Human Rights Day on 10 December.

During the 16 Days of activism, people around the world will unite to raise awareness about gender-based violence, challenge discriminatory attitudes, and call for improved laws and services to end violence against women for good.

The theme for this year's observance is “Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow”. The year 2022 is pivotal for achieving gender equality in the context of climate change

and environmental and disaster risk reduction, which are some of the greatest global challenges of the twenty-first century.

Orange the World

25 November has been designated as 'Orange Day'. The colour orange symbolizes a brighter future, free of violence. It also serves as a means of demonstrating



your solidarity in eliminating all forms of violence, and it is used as the colour of the day on 25 November.

The official United Nations Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women took place on Wednesday, 23 November 2002 at the ECOSOC

Chamber at the UN.

The event brought together feminists from all over the world. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the United States Ambassador to the UN, and others reminded us that gender-based violence against women and girls in all our diversity is not only preventable but must be urgently prevented. There was a moment of silence for all victims of gender-based violence. During the 16 Days of Activism, we can get involved by amplifying the voices of survivors and activists, supporting women's organizations, empowering survivors, and reducing and preventing violence against women and girls, and sharing information through social media.

Gather your group together, wear or display something orange, take a picture that can be shared on social media, and forward it to me, Joan Capel, jcapelj@aol.com. I will share it here in New York with the UN community. So WFMUCW, let us Orange the World!!!

- *Joan Capel, United Nations Representative*

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The shadow pandemic: violence against women during COVID-19

Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights. One in three women in the world suffers sexual or physical violence, mostly from their partner. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, new data and reports from those on the front lines reveal that all kinds of violence against women and girls, especially violence in the home, have escalated.

It is the shadow pandemic growing in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, and we need an overall collective effort to stop it. As COVID-19 cases continue to overwhelm health services, essential services – such as shelters and hotlines for those experiencing domestic violence – have reached capacity. Efforts need to be redoubled to make addressing violence against women a priority in the recovery and response measures to COVID-19.

In this sense, everyone bears a share of the responsibility.

UN Women provides updates and supports vital programs to combat violence against women taking place in the shadow of the COVID-19

pandemic.

“The shadow pandemic” campaign

While lockdown measures help limit the spread of the virus, women and girls experiencing domestic violence are increasingly isolated from the people and resources that can help them. In this new public service announcement, UN Women joins forces with Kate Winslet to reveal the shadow pandemic and share three things you can do to help.

November 25 is celebrated, with the purpose of making violence against women and girls visible worldwide.

It is intended to promote the implementation of policies by the nations of the world for the



eradication of gender violence, as well as provide support and raise awareness about the stigmatization and shame suffered by the victims.

Forms of violence against women

Forms of violence against women and girls manifest themselves physically, sexually, and psychologically,

and include the following:

- Violence by a sentimental partner (physical violence, psychological abuse, marital rape, femicide).
- Sexual violence and harassment (rape, forced sexual acts, unwanted sexual advances, child sexual abuse, forced marriage, stalking, street harassment, cyberbullying).
- Human trafficking (slavery, sexual exploitation).
- Female genital mutilation (practiced in certain communities and cultures, associated with religious beliefs).
- Child marriage (girls forced into marriage against their will).

Orange Day against violence against women

The Church's position is that abuse in any form cannot be tolerated and those who abuse will be held accountable to God (see Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2). The Lord expects us to do all we can to prevent abuse and protect and help victims.

- *Ivonne Pereira Diaz, World Vice President*

Other actions:

Lilla Kardosné Lakatos, Europe Continental Area President, informed us that the Italian protestant women have put together a booklet for the 16 Days of activism against Gender-Based Violence.

ELECTIONS: MEET THE NEW EXECUTIVE

Part two: World Officers

President Emerita: Alison Judd



I am thankful for the opportunity to continue engaging with the World Executive during the next four years. My new role is to offer support to the current elected World Officers, to keep in touch with our Senior Friends, and to produce the updated Federation Handbook. I hope that this will be on our website in the New Year and available in print by the time the World Officers and Area Presidents meet as World Executive in February 2023. I shall continue to pray for our Federation to remain united in Christ so that we might bear fruit that will last.

Every blessing,
Alison

Area Presidents

**Europe:
Britain and
Ireland:
Barbara
Easton**



Hello! I don't have a long history of being involved in the Methodist women's movement but I do have a long history in Methodism. Community, mutuality, opportunity, and transformation are all really

important to me in my Christian faith. I guess that's why I went into teaching – education is what I have done for the last 40+ years of my life. I started as a teacher of religious education in the throbbing, multi-cultural British Midlands and grew to be headteacher of a couple of secondary schools. But when I was 54, the church called again and I found a new role working in the British Connexional Team as Director of Education, working with the Methodist schools in Britain; I'm still doing this, although in a slightly different way. A belief in what I do for the day job still gets me out of bed in the morning. And the church still makes up a big part of my life. Last year I held the most senior lay role in the British Methodist Church, as President of the Conference. This year I am enjoying serving locally - preaching, writing, and leading worship for the Methodist people as I am asked. I really believe that the Methodist way has something to offer in the kaleidoscope of Christian expression – I am passionate about that, and about Methodism becoming more than the sum of its parts, nationally and globally.

South Pacific Area: Olive Amani Tanielu

I am a nurse, and I am people orientated. My strengths are leadership and organizational skills, and also teamwork and communication skills.



Area Vice-Presidents

South Pacific Area: Rev. Gloria Gima Marke

I am 48 years old, and I am a soil engineer. I am married to Goli and I have two children. I was Women's Coordinator for twelve years (2001 – 2012), dean of Women for three years (2009 – 2012), and correspondence Secretary of United Church Papua New Guinea Unit for seven years (2012 – 2019). I also represented the Unit at South Pacific Area Seminars, and I was the women's representative to various Council for World Mission meetings during my term of office. I carried out the Millennium goals through Thursday in Black, Gender Equality and Reducing Poverty awareness and workshops, training retreats for young girls and women leaders, Bible studies, workshops for health and well-being of women and children, and spiritual enrichment programs.



Two of the challenges I face being the Vice-President are working with different Pacific Island women because of the different cultures and boundaries and building strong relationships as a new leader. I want to thank especially the women leaders of the Solomon Islands for putting their trust in me and the President, Olivia Tanielu, and our team.

Dr Marion Logan (1929 – 2022)



Our dear sister in Christ and in the Federation passed into glory on 2nd November 2022. Marion served the World Federation faithfully for

many years in many different ways, including as Editor of the Tree of Life from 1983 to 1991, and traveling around the world with Ethel Born to collect the stories for our second history book, From Memory to Hope.

We who knew Marion often heard her say, “We have to talk more and learn from each other”. We thank God for the many wonderful memories we have of time spent in her company. She was an inspirational, pioneering woman of God and our lives have been greatly blessed by her presence.

On behalf of Marion's family her son, Dave Logan, is delighted to send wishes to all their friends in the Federation. He writes:

“As the son of a Federation Executive member, I have had the privilege of meeting

people from all around the world at mom's coffee table, where she would bring others together to talk, to share, to pray, and to dream of a better future. I also stuffed my fair share of conference registration envelopes! For Marion the Federation was an opportunity to share her belief in peace-making and making the world a better place. Her final days were peaceful and sunny just as she would have liked. On behalf of the Logans, thank you for the memories and time with the Federation.”

Marion has joined the saints in heaven and no doubt has heard her Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'

- Louise Wilson, World Secretary

Merry Christmas And Happy New Year

“It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you... yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand.”

— St. (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta.

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