

NEWS AND FEATURES FROM USPG — ANGLICAN MISSION AGENCY

Revive

VOLUME 5 | SPRING 2025



USPG⁺
PARTNERS IN
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+ Transforming Theology Together
+ The Diocese of Jerusalem: A Beacon of Hope
+ A Church at a Crossroads?
+ An Interview with The Rt Revd Dr David Walker,
Bishop of Manchester and USPG Chair of Trustees

Welcome to the latest edition of REVIVE MAGAZINE

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Dear reader,



Thank you for picking up a copy of Revive.

Theology is far more than what we find in the books we read, it's about how faith is lived out in the world. In this edition, you will meet Christians embracing fresh and dynamic expressions of theology, shaped by

their diverse contexts. I invite you to read about people like Dr Sanjana Das, who uses Scripture to help survivors of trafficking make sense of their experiences (pages 6-7), or Indigenous activists in Brazil who are speaking out for change (pages 18-19).

Plus, you'll meet The Rt Revd Dr David Walker, Bishop of Manchester, who shares what motivated him to take up the role as USPG Chair of Trustees and what it's like to be a member of the House of the Lords (pages 14-15).

USPG has a long tradition of investing in people. It's nice to see this continuing as The Revd Lainirina Berthier joins other Principals and Deans from theological institutions across Africa for a leadership training course (page 17).

Whether you're new to USPG or have faithfully supported for years, thank you for journeying with us. May you continue to be inspired by the ways in which God is working across the world in and through His people.

Rachel Weller

Editor, Revive

Communications Officer, USPG

Warm greetings from USPG.

Let me start by thanking you all for the many ways in which you have supported and encouraged the life and work of USPG and our partner churches in the past year. You have given generously to our seasonal appeals – in Lent, Harvest and Christmas – and, as a result, greater resources have been able to support the Church in Brazil as it seeks to reduce HIV/AIDS stigma, in Zululand where it is supporting communities in facing the challenge of food insecurity and in Bangladesh where the Church runs community healthcare programmes.

As we come into this year, we are in good heart, but we know that we live in an increasingly polarised and precarious world. As I write, a fragile ceasefire in Gaza hangs in the balance and following close conversations with the Diocese in Jerusalem, our Lent Appeal this year – Bring Care in Crisis – will support the work of the diocese's hospitals as they work tirelessly to provide care and medical support.

This year is the 1700th anniversary of the Nicean creed (AD 325) – a key summary of our common faith. We will be reflecting on how we deepen our fellowship and commitment to each other across the wonderful diversity of cultures, contexts and languages within the Communion. This is the focus for our Lent study course – We Believe – with contributions from the Philippines, the Caribbean, Jerusalem, Virginia and South India. It will also be the focus of our Annual Conference, We Believe, We Belong? at Hayes Conference centre, Swanwick 1-3 July.

We are called as Christians to live out a hope-filled faith with humility and in deep solidarity with our sisters and brothers across God's world. I look forward to joining with you in that to which we are called in 2025.

The Revd Canon Dr Duncan Dormor

General Secretary and Chief Executive, USPG



WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON?

Female Leadership in Africa

We were thrilled to attend the Strategic Planning Retreat for female Anglican Bishops in Africa. The meeting in Lesotho brought together the Advisory Council of the Africa 6 Centre for Anglican Women's Leadership and Research in Africa for strategic thinking and retreat. The Africa 6 envisions empowering Africa's Anglican senior women leaders for this century and beyond.



Celebrating Partnership in Korea

The consecration of a bishop is always a special event. The service for The Rt Revd Elijah Kim, Bishop of Seoul, was no different. USPG's partnership with the Anglican Church in Korea dates back to the 1800s and has been reignited thanks to collaborative initiatives such as the Asian Theological Accompaniment Programme.



New Website

We're thrilled to announce the launch of our brand-new website, designed with you in mind. Explore a refreshed look, enhanced navigation, and a seamless user experience to help you find everything you need faster. Whether you're looking for a news article, a resource, or information about where we work, it's all just a click away. Visit www.uspg.org.uk.

FOR NEWS AS IT
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YouTube



New Canon Theologian

We are delighted that our General Secretary, The Revd Canon Dr Duncan Dormor, has been invited into the life of Portsmouth Cathedral as a Canon Theologian. In his new role, which he will hold alongside leading USPG, he looks forward to fostering theological engagement on global and local issues while celebrating Portsmouth's rich maritime heritage. We wish him every blessing in this exciting new appointment.



Thank you, All Saints!

The Filipino community at All Saints Battersea Church know how to party! The team hosted a memorable fundraiser celebrating the spirit of Bayanihan (community support) complete with live music, dance, and a captivating film about the community's experiences of life in the UK.

Has this inspired you? Visit our website or get in touch at info@uspg.org.uk and we'll help equip you to host a fundraising event.



"Flourishing like a garden"

The Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) Provincial Synod aimed to address justice, reconciliation, and creation care. The Revd Canon Dr Dormor praised ACSA's anti-Apartheid witness, highlighted USPG's ongoing partnership, and discussed the Theological Executive Leadership Programme (more on this on page 17). The synod ended with a message of hope for younger leaders to be equipped to step forward and dream big.



Founders' Day

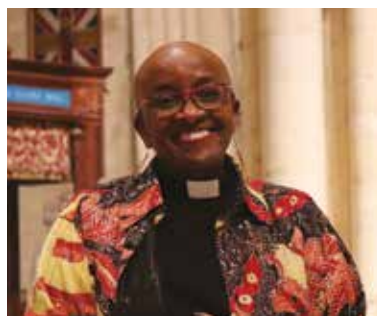
It was great to be together at St James's Church, Piccadilly for the annual Founders' Day celebration, remembering The Revd Thomas Bray - joint founder of USPG and SPCK Publishing. Thanks to Dr Ruth Valerio from Embrace the Middle East for reminding us to be "carriers of peace", inspired by Jesus - the Prince of Peace.



An Interview with The Revd Nontombi Tutu

It was an honour and a privilege to host the inaugural Desmond Tutu Memorial lecture in partnership with The University of the Western Cape at York Minster in September 2024. The Revd Nontombi Tutu, Episcopal priest, human rights activist, and daughter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, spoke powerfully on 'Truth: The Path to Reconciliation'.

Watch the interview in full on Youtube @USPGglobal.



"This is top of the European agenda"

At a recent 'In Conversation' dinner on the future of the refugee crisis in Europe, The Rt Revd Robert Innes, Bishop of the Diocese in Europe, highlighted the need for long-term solutions, funding, and volunteer support for refugees across Europe. The hope is that the event will stir conversation and inspire progress across churches in the Diocese in Europe and beyond.





The first in-person conference of USPG's Fellowship of Anglican Scholars of Theology (FeAST), under the theme 'Transformative Theologies: Rethinking Pedagogy, Praxis, and Perspectives,' took place in Colombo, Sri Lanka in November 2024. Bringing together around 30 scholars from nearly 20 different countries across the Anglican Communion, the gathering provided a space for the exchange of fresh, contextually relevant theological perspectives.

Here, we spotlight five voices from the conference. Read on to find out more about their research and how they are driving change in their communities.



Fr Luke Larner - United Kingdom

Fr Luke Larner is a parish priest in Luton, one of the UK's most ethnically and religiously diverse parishes. Inspired by the Church of Ceylon's ministry, Fr Luke deeply resonated with their expansion of the traditional Five Marks of Mission to include 'Transcend': the call to work with people of other faiths. "This is our everyday in my hometown. When I walk out the door, I'm doing interfaith dialogue and friendship. That's why it's been such an immersive and embodied conference, much more so than the average academic conference!" he shared.



The Revd John Hinge - Vanuatu

A student at Pacific Theological College, The Revd John Hinge seeks to 'unbury' Pacific theology and bring Indigenous practices to the forefront. He spoke passionately about the Gamali system, a traditional model of shared living, leadership, and justice, compelling in a world so divided by greed and injustice.

"When land is small, we learn to share," The Revd John explained, pointing to a map of Vanuatu, a Pacific nation of 80 islands that stretches over 800 miles. Learning to share is known by the term *betebete*, an Indigenous way of communal living and mutual care. He connected this to the biblical call to "do good works" (Titus 3:14), drawing a powerful link between godly wisdom and contemporary challenges such as gender justice, disaster resilience, and inclusivity.

By Rachel Weller,
Communications Officer,
USPG



Dr Sanjana Das – India

Feminist theologian Sanjana's research explores the intersection of migration and anti-trafficking practices. Through her work with trafficking survivors in Bangalore, Dr Sanjana amplifies the voices of women on the margins: "Women are the best knowers of their contexts and realities. They are the "knowers" and we should listen."

Dr Sanjana has developed an interactive Bible study to empower survivors of trafficking and migrant-working women to articulate their experiences and connect them with the narrative of Ruth. Often in precarious circumstances, women form networks of support. The book of Ruth and her loyalty to Naomi has many parallels and therefore allows survivors to articulate their own stories. By drawing connections between biblical narratives and struggles for liberation, dignity, and solidarity, women across Bangalore are finding new hope in the Gospel.



The Revd Neli Miranda López - Guatemala

With over 23 years' experience as a vicar, The Revd Neli spoke about the intersection of faith and poverty that she has witnessed in Latin America, a region where, despite deep Christian roots, economic hardship remains widespread.

"Is the Church just there for evangelisation? Or for engagement in social justice too?" she asked.

By conducting a survey with local church goers, The Revd Neli found that despite participants' strong Christian backgrounds, theological discourse on poverty was notably lacking. "The Bible is rich in wisdom about God's love for people living in poverty. We must rediscover it," she urged.



The Revd Dr Ishaya Anthony - Nigeria

As the inaugural Commonwealth Theologian in Residence at Westminster Abbey, The Revd Dr Ishaya Anthony challenged historical narratives that have excluded African Christian

voices. "For years we have ignored and driven out Christian voices from the Global South. Take a hard look at what you know, what you've learnt and think critically," he urged.

The Revd Dr Ishaya's work reframes Africa beyond colonial stereotypes, emphasising that it is not merely a geographical space or a commodity, but a place made by God. He calls for a missional theology that sees the image of God in every person and encompasses not only salvation but also religious freedom, stable infrastructure, and healthcare.

In conclusion, what does mission in the 21st century look like? Evidently it is dynamic and deeply contextual. The members of FeAST remind us that it is about embodying Christ's love and truth in word and deed; adapting faithfully to contemporary realities, while remaining anchored in the timeless message of the gospel."

Find out more about FeAST:
www.uspg.org.uk/feast

“WE BELIEVE IN ONE GOD”

Every time we recite the Nicene Creed, we affirm truths about God that have defined Christianity for centuries. But how often do we pause to reflect on its origins and the history behind its words?

The creed was born at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. Its purpose was to resolve theological disputes over Christ’s divinity and to bring stability to a divided Church. By establishing the creed, the Council sought to unite Christians under a shared doctrine, affirming Christ as “true God from true God.”

As we commemorate the 1700th anniversary of Nicaea in 2025, we are invited to reflect on what unity means for us today. How can we embrace the richness of different cultures, traditions, and theological perspectives while remaining grounded in our shared faith? The Church is wonderfully diverse – reflecting the breadth of God’s creation – and our challenge is to hold fast to our shared faith in Jesus while welcoming different ways of expressing it.

EXPLORE THE NICENE CREED IN A FRESH WAY

To help you delve deeper, check out our free study guide: ‘We Believe’. With insights from contributors across the world – including the Philippines and the Middle East – it unpacks key elements of the creed, from the nature of Jesus to the power of the Holy Spirit. Thought-provoking questions and prayers will help you engage with themes of unity, diversity, and how we can live out Christ’s message of love and justice today.



Order your free copy or download it from our website today!

www.uspg.org.uk/resource/we-believe

To celebrate this enduring legacy, USPG has produced a video that features a diverse compilation of voices from around the globe declaring their belief by reciting the Creed. Among these voices are speakers of Twi, Bengali, Nyanja, Arabic, Spanish, and Welsh, alongside English

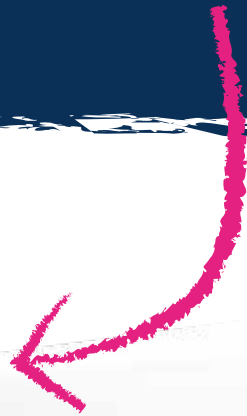
spoken by believers from the Middle East, Zambia, and the Solomon Islands.

Watch now and hear the Nicene Creed like you’ve never heard it before! Visit Youtube @USPGglobal





Take a look
inside the new
study guide.



JERUSALEM & THE MIDDLE EAST

SESSION THREE - SALVATION OF THE CROSS

Written by Susan Rumbel Barbour

Susan was born in Ramallah on the West Bank, where she grew up under Israeli occupation. She completed her BA degree in History with minors in chemistry and Christian studies in 1989 from Aurora University in Aurora, Illinois, USA. She completed her master's degree in theology from Faith Seminary in Tacoma, Washington, USA, in 2001, and earned her MFA in 2006 from Santa University. She married Samuel Barbour in 1993. Archbishop of the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem, and they have a daughter, Ruby Anne, and a son, Youssef. They currently live in Ramallah, where she works in development and fundraising on a freelance basis.

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem spans Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. This geographic spread adds innumerable complications to the work of the Diocese due to the many borders, checkpoints, and national governments involved.

In particular, the divergent laws and politics of each region make administration of its ministries exceedingly challenging. Despite these difficulties, the diocese is responsible for more than thirty institutions, including hospitals, schools, clinics, rehabilitation centres, guesthouses, and retirement homes. As Christians

in an area full of political strife, occupation, and discrimination, we strive to maintain our witness, shining the light of Christ into areas of darkness and offering hope to those otherwise living in despair. Although our numbers have declined, we believe that a little light dispels much darkness.



“Although our numbers have declined, we believe that a little light dispels much darkness.”

CRUCIFIXION - SALVATION

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

BIBLE READING

1 JOHN 4:9-10

* God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.
** In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

REFLECTION

As we recite the Nicene Creed in Church, we affirm our faith. This faith testifies to our personal conviction and emphasises a shared faith, a community united as members of the body of Christ.

For our sake, he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. The early Church wanted to dispel doubts about the historical accuracy of Jesus' passion and death in human history, so the Creed mentions the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. This is supported in the Gospels and by the Jewish historian Josephus in his Antiquities.

He suffered death and was buried. Crowned with thorns, Jesus is lifted on the Cross, where He dies. Crucifixion was considered the worst possible death, long and painful, and a public humiliation reserved for the worst of criminals. Jesus suffered death in such a terrible way for the greatest act of love for our sake! Jesus Christ, the selfless one, submitted to the

resurrection out through the darkness of the crucifixion. The empty tomb signifies Jesus' victory over death and the promise of new life and hope. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22)

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. Jesus' ascension further strengthens our hope. He has gone to heaven to prepare a place for us. In a position of power and authority, He embodies God's ever-present presence and ultimate plan for humanity.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end. Jesus will return in glory to

offer a message of hope and redemption. It is not simply a historical account; it is a call to action. A call for churches to explore the Creed more deeply so the faithful can understand its richness and not just recite its words. Jesus' sacrifice compels us to strive for peace and reconciliation, choosing love over hatred, even amidst immense pain. His resurrection inspires hope, even in the most challenging times. This translates into a call for us to work together to build a more just and peaceful future, drawing inspiration from the ultimate message of hope offered by the risen Christ. It reminds us that suffering is not the end; God's love and justice will ultimately triumph. It is a powerful message of strength and inspiration for reconciliation, forgiveness, and peace.

“In a world marked by violence and division, particularly in our region, the Nicene Creed offers a message of hope and redemption.”



AN INSTRUMENT OF UNITY

By Rachel Weller, Communications Officer, USPG

In an Anglican Communion that can sometimes feel stretched and divided, the Council of the Church of East Asia stands as a powerful model of unity. Meeting every four years, the CCEA Full Assembly comprises Archbishops, Bishops, Assistant Bishops, Clergy, and Lay representatives from Myanmar, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan, alongside associate members – the Anglican Church of Australia and the Iglesia Filipina Independiente. Its goal is to foster cooperation among its member churches to strengthen Christian witness across East Asia.

Speaking at the closing Eucharist at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manila, The Revd Canon Dr Duncan Dormor praised the CCEA and its role as an example for the wider Anglican Communion: “We all know and love the Anglican Communion; we all know and love our sisters and brothers across God’s world; but we also all know that we face challenges of discord and disagreement.” He continued: “And yet, your deep commitment to fellowship, to hospitality, to walking together and celebrating your differences yet remaining united in Jesus Christ... is an inspiration and, frankly, a model of how we might be as a global Communion.”

The CCEA is no stranger to what it means to trust God amid political unrest. Its 77-year history spans much political, economic, and cultural change, including more recent geopolitical fears such as contests over the South China Sea; the mounting pressures on Taiwan, the nuclear and artificial intelligence arms race as well as the climate crisis, threats to Indigenous rights, and the politicisation of religion and war. It is remarkable that CCEA continues to display such a steadfast commitment to unity. How is this possible? By focussing on Jesus, The Revd Canon Dr Duncan Dormor concluded.

Strengthening Christian witness across East Asia.

Just like Jesus, followed by disciples like Paul, throughout the New Testament, Christians are called to engage in the public square. As in Acts 17, we are called at specific times in specific places to speak and reach out with joyful confidence to our own generation about the hope we have in Jesus. We don’t do this to pursue power, wealth, or status, but to proclaim the Gospel – the good news through which every person is valued as a child of God, with dignity, agency, and belonging.

Whilst in the Philippines, USPG also had the opportunity to lead a retreat at St Andrew’s Theological Seminary. It was a great joy to interact with and learn from over 100 young seminarians who engaged with seminars on ‘Christian Leadership’ and ‘Peace and Reconciliation’ led by USPG staff.

USPG congratulates The Most Revd Dr Titus Chung, Archbishop of the Anglican Church of the Province of South East Asia and Bishop of Singapore, on his appointment as Chairman of CCEA. Join us in prayer for Archbishop Dr Titus Chung and ask for God’s guidance, wisdom, and spiritual refreshment in his leadership, and that he may be strengthened to serve the CCEA with vision and grace.



A BEACON OF HOPE

As part of February's General Synod, USPG hosted a fringe event communicating the work of the Diocese of Jerusalem amid the ever-changing and challenging conflict in the Middle East. As the Church's response in Gaza was not part of the official agenda for General Synod, the event offered an opportunity for people to gather, hear updates and pray for what is undoubtedly a dynamic and fragile situation.

"We live in a place that is so unpredictable. It is impossible to imagine what might happen next. Even though the missiles have stopped, the anticipation and uncertainty remain." shared The Most Revd Hosam Naoum, Archbishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, via livestream.

And yet, the prevailing Christian witness in the region is nothing short of remarkable. Al-Ahli Hospital, run by the Diocese of Jerusalem, is one of the very few in the region that remains open. The staff work tirelessly against the odds to provide life-saving medical treatment. The hospital is not without its scars but stands strong as "a beacon of hope" added The Most Revd Hosam Naoum.

On behalf of the Diocese of Jerusalem, The Most Revd Hosam Naoum also expressed his deep gratitude to Anglican partners such as USPG for their solidarity, prayers, and ongoing support. He acknowledged their crucial role in keeping hospitals and clinics open and extended his thanks to bishops for their advocacy in the House of Lords.

We were honoured to be joined at the event by The Rt Revd Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester and The Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford, who praised the front-line ministry of the

Diocese of Jerusalem. In a context where advocacy can be quickly politicised in favour of one side or another, the Bishop of Gloucester emphasised that God's equity, justice and mercy must encompass all sides. Echoing the Archbishop, she added that "everyone deserves to live in dignity, freedom and security."

Looking ahead, the situation remains unpredictable. Yet God's call to make a stand is clear. Jamie Eyre, CEO of Embrace the Middle East, concluded: "We must support where we can: listening, praying and speaking up for equity. Justice is the theme of God's Kingdom and we are invited to play a role in advancing it."

The ceasefire (however fragile it might be) does not mean the challenges are over – there is still a long road ahead. The Diocese of Jerusalem continues its vital work, and your support remains essential.

LET US PRAY:

Gracious and loving God,
We commend to you the people of Palestine and Israel, and the whole Middle Eastern region. We pray for the Diocese of Jerusalem that continues to be a shining light. We give thanks for their work, ministry and witness. We pray for Archbishop Hosam, please continue to bless him, guide him and give him the wisdom and strength that he needs. We pray for all those working for peace and reconciliation. We commit ourselves once again to our ongoing support for those who need it most as we continue to pray for peace with justice and the dignity of all people. Make us people of peace in the lives we lead. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.



LENT

APPEAL 2025

BRING CARE IN CRISIS TO FAMILIES IN GAZA AND THE WEST BANK

Support the critical work of the Diocese of Jerusalem in partnership with USPG, delivering essential medical aid and hope to those in urgent need.

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lent.uspg.org.uk

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SPOTLIGHT



The Rt Revd Dr David Walker

As he completes his first year as Chair of Trustees at USPG, we sat down with The Rt Revd Dr David Walker, Bishop of Manchester, to ask him a few questions.

What motivated you to take up the role as Chair of Trustees at USPG?

Ahead of consecrating me as a bishop in 2000, Lord George Carey, then Archbishop of Canterbury told me that he wanted us younger bishops (I was young, once!) to pay serious attention to the Anglican Communion as it would become ever more important that we built and sustained global friendships. To this end, USPG supported me in spending a sabbatical in Peru in 2005. This really opened up my eyes to the richness and importance of our all being part of the global Anglican Communion. I love the international links that dioceses have, in my own case with Namibia and Lahore. Working with USPG gives me a chance to make a greater contribution. I was also attracted by the Society's willingness to address its legacy of slavery, having previously worked with the Church Commissioners on the same subject.

As chair of a global Anglican Mission agency – what do you feel our relevance today is?

USPG is vital in ensuring that dioceses and member churches of the Anglican Communion across the world can flourish through developing theology and mission that fit their culturally diverse contexts. It's an essential oil in the machine, allowing cross cultural conversations to take place and relationships to remain warm in an age of increasing polarisation and conflict. It is possibly unique in how widely it is respected, a reputation built up over 300 years and more of seeking to serve the Church. I come across many Anglicans on my travels who may have little sense of the structures of the wider Communion, but who, if asked to define their church describe themselves as "(U)SPG Christians"

As one of the longest-serving bishops in the Church of England – what continues to inspire you about your role?

Every day is different. I might be in conversation with a priest on how their ministry is developing, helping formulate the next stage of our diocesan strategy, asking a question in parliament, or delivering a Thought for the Day on Radio 4. Some days, I might be doing all of those and more.

What is it like to be a member of the House of Lords?

It's an enormous privilege to have been summoned by the King to serve him and my country in Parliament. The House of Lords contains world experts on almost every subject imaginable, so our debates are always very well informed. I enjoy being able to contribute to how we govern such a richly diverse and complex society as is the UK today.

As a Lord, how does your Christian faith motivate you to speak out on key topics such as homelessness, terrorism and policing?

Whenever I speak, in or out of Parliament, I seek to draw on my faith as a Christian and my experience as a priest and bishop. Sometimes, I can share that explicitly, at other times it underpins my contributions. In the aftermath of the Manchester Arena attack in 2017, my response was based on three key New Testament principles: love is stronger than hate; light overcomes darkness; defiance is far better than revenge. These seemed to catch the public mood. The Manchester response has since provided a model for other communities reacting to terrorist atrocities across the globe.

We are aware that we are in a period of change – what are your hopes and prayers for the Anglican Communion in 2025?

I hope that the participation of five members from the wider Communion on the Crown Nominations Commission will serve us well in finding someone to be the next Archbishop of Canterbury who will provide a global lead, not by virtue of being a symbol of Englishness, but by leading us forward to a future where the whole of our Communion feels a greater sense of common belonging. I also hope and pray that we will all come to a deeper understanding of how the Five Marks of Mission, which have underpinned the Communion for almost four decades, far outweigh any matters that may from time-to-time sow seeds of division among us.

In your recent Christmas message, you said that "we need joyful news as much as ever." What are some examples of joyful news?

Visiting the Diocese of Kuching in Malaysia with members of our Communion Wide Advisory Group (CWAG) last spring was a real highlight of 2024. From church communities in traditional long houses in rural villages to a city cathedral packed for a midweek evening Eucharist, everywhere we met signs of how the love of Jesus Christ is growing both in depth and numbers. In Barbados last autumn, I was overjoyed by conversations with ordinands training at Codrington College, as they prepare for ministry. Reading the reports of the many projects taking place around the Communion, and the impact they are having, makes even preparing for board meetings a joy.

How can our supporters pray for you and the USPG trustee board and staff this coming year?

There have been quite a few changes to membership of the trustee board in the last year, with several new trustees sought in the next few months. Please pray that the new board will work effectively and with imagination, to further the work of USPG. Pray also for partners working and ministering in difficult situations, especially in parts of the world where Christians are persecuted. And give thanks for the dedication and skills of our UK based staff.



Bishop David plants tree in the grounds of Codrington College, Barbados.

RE-AFFIRMING OUR COMMON FAITH FOR UNCOMMON TIMES

By Ella Sibley, Regional Manager for Europe and Oceania, USPG



Towards Nicaea 1700: Rethinking Mission Conference

In December 2024, invited guests gathered at Southwark Cathedral for an afternoon of conversation and reflections on the Nicene Creed and its importance for Christians across the world and throughout history, of all denominations and traditions.

The Revd Dr Susan Durber, Europe President World Council of Churches (WCC) gave a detailed analysis of the original Greek text of the Creed, illustrating that the focus of the statement is on the birth of Jesus, not his death. To the early Church, this was the central idea – that of Immanuel, 'God with us'. The power and miracle of God becoming human in Jesus.

The Rt Revd Mike Royal, General Secretary, Churches Together in England reflected on the importance of the Creed and other elements of liturgy for promoting Christian unity between denominations and across the world. These are rich and deep sources of theology that we share in common.

The Revd Canon Dr Duncan Dormor, General Secretary, USPG, gave us his 'word of the century' for the 4th century. A Greek word, pronounced homousious, meaning "of one substance.". This, for him, was the crucial point of the Creed, that Jesus is of one substance with God. Prior to the Council of Nicaea, people had a whole variety of beliefs about who Jesus was, with many thinking he was perhaps only human, or something like a demi-God. In the Nicene Creed, this was resolved, with the acknowledgement that Jesus was 'of one substance' with God.

The Revd Dr Kuzipa Nalwamba Programme Director for Unity, Mission and Ecumenical Formation, WCC, reflected on how the commemoration of the 1700th anniversary of

Nicaea can inspire the worldwide family of churches towards greater unity and justice. She touched upon the link between ecumenism and ethical practice and outlined the various ways in which the WCC is aiming to commemorate Nicaea 1700 with a focus on lived ecumenism which expresses itself in justice, peace and unity.

The conversation continued into the evening with the launch of a new book, "Lived Mission in 21st Century Britain: Ecumenical and Postcolonial Perspectives", edited by Benjamin Aldous, Harvey Kwiyan, The Revd Canon Dr Peniel Rajkumar, Director of Global Mission, USPG and Victoria Turner and published by SCM Press. This book explores mission as practice through the perspectives of both experienced theologians and practitioners, as well as those with hands-on experience on the ground.



SHAPING THE FUTURE

By Rachel Weller,
Communications
Officer, USPG

AFRICA



When The Revd Lainirina Berthier from Madagascar joined the Theological Executive Leadership Programme (TELP), he had no idea just how transformative the experience would be. Over 12 weeks, alongside 14 other leaders from Anglican theological institutions across Africa, he gained invaluable insights into leadership, strategy and financial stewardship – all designed to strengthen theological education in the future.

A PROGRAMME FOR CHANGE

TELP was born out of the 2022 Future of Theological Education in Africa summit in Botswana, where participants highlighted the need for strong, well-equipped leaders in theological institutions. In response, USPG partnered with the Nelson Mandela University Business School in South Africa to develop this ground-breaking programme. The course is offered to principals and deans from Anglican Theological Education Institutions across Africa including Malawi, Ghana, Mauritius, Zambia and Madagascar. It blends online learning with two immersive residential weeks and is designed to equip leaders with the skills needed to navigate sustainability, growth, and innovation in their institutions.

For The Revd Lainirina Berthier, Dean and Principal St Patrick's Theological College, Toliara, Madagascar, the programme sparked a fresh vision for leadership: "TELP made me realise the importance of having a strategic mind as a leader. I've learned that strategy isn't restrictive – instead it's about seeing the bigger picture and having big ambitions to innovate."

BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE

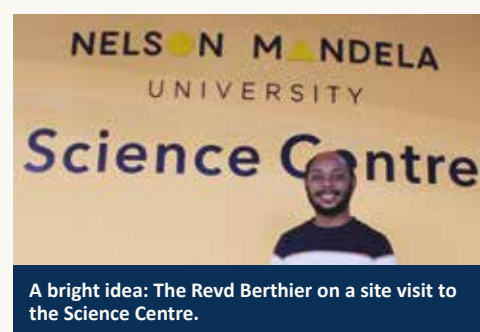
The residential in Port Elizabeth, South Africa gave the group a chance to connect in-person and reflect on their learning. Each leader presented a Capstone Project;

an activity designed to inspire ideas for immediate improvements in their home contexts. For The Revd Lainirina, presenting his project was both challenging and inspiring: "We were pushed to apply what we had learned, to think critically about how we lead. But the best part was learning together as a community – sharing ideas, building partnerships, and growing in our calling and ministry."

Beyond the classroom, TELP also fostered connections through shared experiences, including a visit to the Nelson Mandela University Science Centre as well as a memorable trip to Nyosi Wildlife Reserve for a traditional South African braai and game drive.

As he returns to Madagascar, The Revd Lainirina is looking ahead: "I am going to apply the course to my ministry at St Patrick's Theological College in Toliara. We are going to improve our teamwork, partnership and networks to improve the way we work and our offer to students. Right now, we are exploring as a team how we can best use technology to improve our curriculum."

TELP is not just a leadership programme; it's a catalyst for transformation. It equips theological leaders like The Revd Berthier to shape the future of theological education across Africa and beyond.



THEOLOGY FOR A JUST WORLD:

*Insights from the Summit on Climate
Justice and Social Equity in Brazil*

By Dr Paulo Ueti, Regional Manager for
the Americas and the Caribbean



In a world grappling with the challenges of climate change, systemic inequality, and the enduring legacies of colonialism which disproportionately harm communities of colour, the International Colloquium on Indigenous Theologies and Advocacy for Climate Justice and Social Equity represented an important and transformative gathering.

Hosted by the Seminary of the Anglican Diocese of Recife in northeastern Brazil, the summit brought together Indigenous groups, theologians, local Bishops, and representatives from Christian Aid, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund and the Anglican Alliance. With Christians from countries as diverse as the Philippines and Canada, the key aim was to bridge theological reflection with practical advocacy.

Indigenous and Afro-descendant voices, which are often pushed aside, were central to the summit. Dialogues illuminated how Indigenous theologies, such as those of the Māori, Moana, and Pachamama traditions, challenge dominant Western frameworks. These theologies emphasise interconnectedness with creation, the sacredness of the earth, and a communal approach to faith and salvation.

"The earth is the first theologian." reflected Jocabel Solano, from the Gunadule Indigenous nation in Panama, "it reveals God not only to us but through us." This perspective was echoed by participants like Winston Tarere from Fiji, who reminded participants of the call to "reconnect with the sacred rhythms of the earth, ocean, and skies as kin and family." A call so often lost to the material and capitalist trappings of our day.

Isabel Dessana, from the Desana ethnic group in the Amazon, spoke honestly about her experience of struggle: "In Latin America we fight for the ancestry that defines our identity and inspires us to keep working against the exploitation of land and people. We learn these theologies from our ancestors, and we exist to keep them alive. They are sources of hope amid the struggle for life and life in abundance".

At the end of the week, The Rt Revd Mauricio Andrade, Bishop of Brasilia, reflected: "The summit was a great space for dialogue and for deepening our south-south relations in the Anglican Communion, and especially in our understanding and definition of decolonialisation. As the Bishop of Brasilia I reinforce that the Advocacy Office of the Diocese of Brasilia

is doing its best to strive to safeguard creation, pursue justice and transform the unjust structures that prevents life in its full, by working locally, nationally and globally".

As the week concluded, participants carried forward lessons of solidarity, healing, and the power of decolonial theology. Their shared commitment to justice and liberation served as a testament to the Church's potential to inspire change in a complex and ever-evolving world. As the Anglican Communion prepares for COP30 in Brazil, the insights from Recife will serve as a theological and practical foundation for advocacy. Together, Christian communities have a greater message of hope to speak against the challenges of our time.

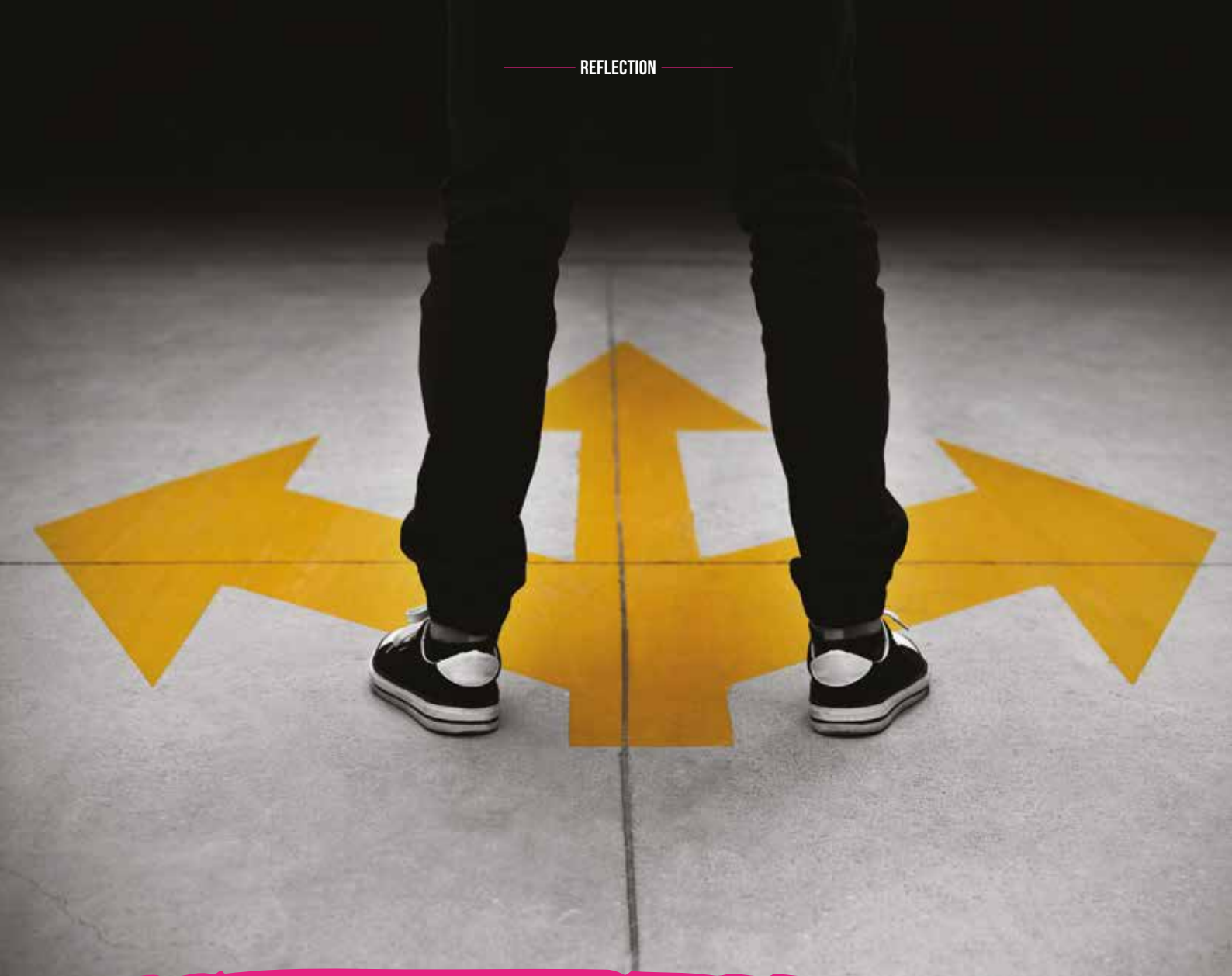
"We learn these theologies from our ancestors. and we exist to keep them alive."



Fighting for change: Isabel Dessana. Credit: @ismaelgholand



Friends in arms: (from left to right) The Rt Revd Maurício de Andrade, Bishop of Brasilia, The Revd Creuza Valdeira, Presbyterian Independent Church and The Rt Revd Filadelfo Neto, Bishop of Rio de Janeiro.

A photograph showing the lower half of a person standing on a grey concrete floor. The person is wearing black trousers and black sneakers with white soles. They are standing on a crossroads marked with four large, bright yellow arrows pointing in the four cardinal directions (up, down, left, right). The person's feet are positioned at the center where the arrows meet.

A CHURCH AT A CROSSROADS?

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By The Revd Canon Dr Duncan Dormor,  
General Secretary USPG

**In my 'day job', I have the huge privilege (and pleasure) of working with senior leaders, lay and ordained, across the Anglican Communion, and of learning something of the challenges that face the member churches of our wider Fellowship.**

These really are hugely varied. On the one hand, it can mean working with communities under regular threat from natural disasters during the hurricane season in the Caribbean or being subject to multiple typhoons in the Philippines. In these cases, houses and schools and livelihoods have to be rebuilt from scratch – and bishops and other leaders have a crucial role to play in encouraging communities in the ways of hope and resilience, in addition to galvanising practical support, locally and internationally.

In other churches, especially in much of Asia, Christians are often in a small minority and/or from marginalised ethnic groups or castes, so often face active discrimination or persecution.

Then there are the ongoing challenges of working within corrupt political and unstable economic conditions which make clergy stipends or housing or pensions precarious or, in some cases, non-existent. And I haven't even scratched the surface in terms of the challenges posed by war or chronic violence; of what it means to 'be Church' in the Congo, Myanmar, South Sudan or Gaza.

Everyday basic realities are rarely examined, but they too can create significant pressures. Some flow from geography. Consider what it might be like to lead a diocese that takes a couple of days to travel across (rather than an hour or two) – problems familiar to those in Brazil or Botswana or Madagascar. Or take the issue of communication and mutual intelligibility as an example. Most churches serve multiple language groups and some operate with liturgies in a range of official languages. For example, the Prayer book of Southern Africa is currently printed in nine languages.

This is just a quick snapshot of what bishops navigate – alongside the internal politics and tensions of the institutional and communal dimensions of ecclesial life. And of course, it is the latter which (almost) always generates the most disturbing challenges for any church.

The Church of England at the national level is in need of systemic change. That has been true for quite a while. And it is within this frame that we should approach the oft-repeated statement about the Archbishop of Canterbury: "it's too big a job for any one person". Clearly the issue isn't one of scale (see under 'the Pope'). There are clearly powerful arguments for separating the Archbishop of Canterbury's responsibilities to the Church of England from the Communion-wide role – although I'm not completely convinced that this is where the real issue lies.

Over the last seven years I have attended provincial synods across the Communion in wonderfully diverse contexts. I have enjoyed learning something of the different ecclesial politics in operation, not least of how primates and bishops are elected, or exercise authority within different churches – sometimes with great sophistication and wisdom. Inevitably,

## *The Church of England at the national level is in need of systemic change.*

those conversations involve the articulation of broader cultural and political considerations within which episcopal authority is exercised.

Unsurprisingly, I am often drawn into conversations where I am asked to explain or interpret one church to another – rarely in terms of the formalities (canon law, etc) but rather – what really happens and why. And within all of this, the Church of England is a complete outlier. Nothing can illustrate this more clearly than the task of trying to explain to fellow Anglicans – many in countries which were formally part of the British Empire – why the committee responsible for appointing the next Archbishop of Canterbury is chaired by the former head of the State's domestic intelligence service, MI5. To many, where a primate is simply elected by his or her fellow bishops, such deep entanglement with the State is incomprehensible, frankly 'lost' – without trace – 'in translation'.

The challenge for the Church of England at the national level is not one of strategy, but of organisational culture. When looked at from outside the UK this seems obvious. The Church of England's organisational culture is too dependent on, and derivative of, institutions that form an integral part of the British State. For example, the General Synod operates like a mini-parliament, encouraging institutionalised debate and conflict, while Church House functions like a centralised civil service. However, the Church of England is made up of 42 largely independent dioceses, each led by its own bishop, making this centralised approach difficult to manage effectively. If you also throw into the mix an archiepiscopal court across the river – need more be said?

When any organisation faces a serious, even existential, crisis it has to have the humility to ask fundamental questions and to look beyond itself for models and examples. Not simply to copy or import them (the wholesale importation of ideas or practices really doesn't work) but to 'think with'. We are part of a global communion, so if, in the Church of England, we are serious about reviewing and refreshing the culture at the heart of our national church, we may need to overcome that characteristic British myopia and look beyond La Manche at our sisters and brothers and how they organise their lives together as Christians – in most cases with significantly less resource that we are privileged (and burdened) to carry. The humility and courage to walk this road may be one of the most important qualities in a new Archbishop.



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*Take a look inside*





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