

### "Let's include women at all levels!"

This was the challenge from Laura Lloyd-Williams when she talked to the Church in Wales' Governing Body about her experience at this year's session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York (CSW62).

Eighteen-year-old Laura is studying A-levels (the final qualifications gained at secondary school) at Coleg Cambria in Deeside, Wales, and was one of 16 Anglican Communion delegates at CSW62 where the focus was gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

In her report Laura highlighted some of the key issues that came out of CSW62, such as indigenous women, access to healthcare and education, harmful practices such as FGM and early child forced marriage, and human trafficking and modern slavery.

She said, "It was such an incredible experience! The feeling of sisterhood and uniting to fight a common cause was fantastic. I am so fortunate to be part of the Church in Wales which recognises and supports young people.

"I met so many fascinating people from all over the world and heard their stories. I learnt so much and had some life changing experiences.

"I pledged to bring back to the Church in Wales all I learnt to help us to empower women across Wales ... I can't do this without saying a huge thanks to the Church in Wales for everything they've done for me since I was 12 years old. I have been encouraged and allowed to grow and develop within my faith and myself as a person. Without the help and support of my bishop and my entire province I wouldn't have been able to go to New York or have the confidence to come here to present to Governing Body. I don't know what I would have done without that sort of support through my teen years but the empowerment they have given has definitely made a difference to me now."

Laura explained how the human rights of women in rural communities are often not realised.

"In Canada many Indigenous women go missing", she said, "and the church ran a campaign to highlight their plight, ringing the church bell for every missing woman. Last year alone, the bell rang 1,200 times. In Sudan, the testimony of a woman is worth half the value of a man, meaning two female witnesses are required, for every man. The Anglican Church there is doing much to challenge this."

Laura finished her report by asking the women present in the Governing Body to stand up in order to show how far the Church in Wales has come. "This a great start to gender equality in the Church in Wales", she said. "Let's encourage

June 2018 Issue 23



diversity – women can bring so much to the table if only given a chance."

Congratulations Laura!

The UN Commission on the Status of Women met in New York in March. The Anglican Communion delegation was supported throughout by Rachel Chardon at the Anglican Communion Office in New York, assisted by Rachel Jimenez and Ashley López Oliynyk.

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# News from Around the Communion

## Remembering murdered women in El Salvador

In the Anglican Episcopal Church of El Salvador, The day of the Diocesan Assembly of Women ended with a prayer on the seashore, in remembrance of all the women who have been victims of femicide in recent weeks.



Since 2000, the homicide rate for young women in El Salvador has increased sharply. Many of these deaths are gang-related.

## Bishop Sarah Mullally joins British House of Lords

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, was introduced as a member of the House of Lords, the upper house of the British Parliament in May. From its earliest days as an advisory council to monarchs, the House of Lords has included Church of England bishops in its membership. Today, 26 bishops are included amongst its members: the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishops of London, Winchester and Durham. The remaining 21 are chosen by seniority, in the order that they first became diocesan bishops. In a 10-year transition arrangement, eligible female bishops will be appointed to the House of Lords ahead of eligible male bishops.

Watch the video at <http://bit.ly/2IL63I7>.



Bishop Sarah, formerly Chief Nursing Officer for England, was named as Bishop of London, in December 2017. At that time she was serving as Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter. She was installed at a service in St Paul's Cathedral, London on 12 May – International Nurses Day.

## Canada: Advocacy and service hand in hand

*IAWN Steering Group member Margaret Dempster reflects on the approach being taken by the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) in the Anglican Church of Canada.*

Advocacy can often feel like an uphill battle attempting to persuade and convince policy makers and governments to advance justice and equality among the world's women and young girls. However, a cycle of advocacy – action – assessment – adaptation, leading to further enhanced advocacy, can be highly effective.

Over the years, IAWN's efforts have led to progress, contributing to the faith voice at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, and strongly influencing resolutions passed by the Anglican Consultative Council and in provincial Synods and Conventions.

PWRDF currently has the underlying principle of 'the Empowerment of Women', recognising that if you improve the life of a woman, you change the world. PWRDF's efforts have been successful in partnering with the governmental organisation Global Affairs Canada, the Canadian Anglican Partnership Program, the Anglican Alliance, and local beneficiaries.



*Members of IAWN's international Steering Group read about PWRDF's work during their meeting in London last year*

The Canadian Government has initiated a new 'Feminist International Assistance Policy' which means that 95 per cent of Canadian assistance programming will advance gender equality and women's empowerment. The aim is to reduce poverty and build a more inclusive, peaceful and prosperous world.

Advocacy, program and service delivery, and on the ground partnerships work together to make a world of difference in bringing about peace, security and health among the world's neediest populations, not least women and their families.

Have you joined our Facebook group at  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/IntAngWomen>?



# News from Around the Communion

## Farewell to Rachel at the Anglican Communion Office at the UN in New York

Next month, after nine years' faithful service, Rachel Chardon will be leaving her role as General Program and Administrative Officer at the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations in New York.

Since 2009, Rachel has been preparing, accompanying and supporting women from around the Communion as they find their feet at the annual sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

Thank you Rachel! May God bless you and keep you as you move on to new things. We will miss you!



## 'Living as confident disciples': An interview with the Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney

*IAWN member Elaine Cameron has interviewed the first woman to be consecrated in the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Rt Revd Anne Dyer:*

**Elaine:** Bishop Anne, before your consecration, you spoke eloquently of the importance of prayer. Prayer is integral to the lives of all IAWN sisters - we pray for one another, especially in times of crisis. So what feeds your prayer life?

**Bishop Anne:** I have a deep habit of prayer - 'if we don't do it, we die'. I have two retreats annually to a Benedictine House in Ireland. My spiritual compass is evangelical and Scripture based, but I now find less is more - my well of Scripture is so deep that I find lingering prayerfully with short biblical passages feeds me profoundly.

I also pray with art - like praying with Scripture - looking, praying, listening. I have a particular interest in women's art and pictures. For too long, paintings by men have been seen as universal, speaking to or for, all humankind, falsely defining the male stance as definitive and normal. This has rendered women's paintings as merely domestic, speaking only to women. But women's paintings should be seen as speaking to everyone from a woman's perspective; men's speaking to everyone from a man's perspective. Both perspectives should be equally valued as such.

**Elaine:** Recently you said 'Everything I do is shaped and informed by my life experience as a woman'. How do you envisage this empowering you as a focus of unity in the diocese?

**Bishop Anne:** If one has had the experience of being excluded because of your gender, as I had within the Church of England in the first years following ordination, it gives an added impulse to how you operate. My brother Bishops have not had that experience. Exclusion and discrimination limit what the Holy Spirit can do in the lives of those excluded and those doing the exclusion.

I am writing an article for the local paper on the gender pay gap; it isn't just women who suffer but children also. One way of lifting more children out of poverty would be to reduce the gender pay gap, to enable working women to be paid the same as men. We need to stop regarding work and jobs in stereotyped ways - this would allow both women and men to fulfil their potential. There is also a gender care gap. Who are most often regarded as carers in society? The gender pay gap is not just about women, but all of us.

My experience of gender brings a different episcopal understanding of how best to fulfil God's purposes for each and everyone in the diocese.

**Elaine:** Leadership is practised very differently around the Anglican Communion. What do you think are the most important qualities of leadership?

**Bishop Anne:** My approach has two stages: 'gathering' and 'setting out'. 'Gathering' involves listening, being present, understanding the history, assessing resources. Remember Jesus' parable about the king considering going to war. In this strange parable Jesus speaks of the king assessing resources, and making a plan accordingly. It is part of responsible leadership to assess resources.

'Moving forward' is about discerning the best direction in which to go; articulating priorities, and then setting off. One task of a bishop is to 'bind and loose', to say 'yes' to some things and 'no' to others. Overall we are looking for the best way at this time and in this place to share the good news of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. *Continued on back page*



*Anne Dyer, Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney.  
Photo: Scottish Episcopal Church*

# News from Around the Communion

**Elaine:** Many IAWN members, like the majority of church members, are lay. What importance will you give to lay education?

**Bishop Anne:** The vital question is 'how can we live as confident disciples?' I hope that everyone, ordained or lay, can be offered the best possible training to be confident in their faith, able to work and live as God intends. I plan to have an authorised lay ministry scheme, equipping people to specific ministries, helping people to be the people of God, and be 'match fit'. I am concerned about the spiritual health of both clergy and lay folk, and long for people to be confident about Jesus Christ – not to be embarrassed to speak about their faith, nor embarrassed by what others say. We play our part with confidence, but it is God who gives the growth.

Visit Bishop Anne's blog site 'Picturing Prayer' at <https://aoepiscopal.scot/picturing-prayers>.

## Challenging the status quo in the Democratic Republic of Congo

*Marthe Vira Mamboyabo, Mothers' Union Provincial Development Coordinator for the Anglican Church of Congo (centre in photo below), represented her Province at this year's session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Here she describes how the Mothers' Union takes a leading role in reducing intimate partner violence, promoting peace and reconciliation, and women's empowerment.*

The Anglican Church of Congo is a member of the Église du Christ au Congo (a union of 62 Protestant church traditions) and has been chosen to implement a project in our congregations to help reduce violence perpetrated by intimate partners. The project involves questioning social norms that are the source of inequalities in relationships between women and men, and changing negative behaviours to positive ones.



We train community leaders and gender champions as volunteers. They animate community dialogues for a period of eight weeks in congregations. The participants are young couples, young parents and fiancés. After the eight dialogue sessions, participants are able to change social norms in their communities, promote equality between men and women and achieve positive masculinity.

The Mothers' Union 'Listening, Observing, Acting' approach (MULOA) brings us closer to the victims of injustice, gender

inequality, the marginalized, the vulnerable... The more we are in action the more we help to promote women and girls in communities; we visit them, we frame them holistically.

Mother's Union members are engaged in the promotion of peace and reconciliation and will be taking part in an awareness campaign.

We supervise widows and young girls in the activities of apprenticeship trades according to their vocations. This plays a role in the psychology of the women and girls involved. It is a therapeutic occupation that strengthens their families' economy and enables them to support themselves after training.



The Mothers' Union department at the provincial level is concerned with promoting rural women and girls, at the same level as urban women and girls.

CSW62 held in New York this year raised for us the challenges faced by rural women and girls. They are huge challenges and we have a duty to speak out loud to promote their voices until gender equality is visible, and to stop practices which do them harm.

Religious leaders as well as community leaders must work in synergy to succeed in the fight against gender inequality and to empower rural women and girls.

## 'Pilgrim prayers' for women overcoming violence

We are all invited to join in prayer for women who are standing strong in the face of gender-based violence. Each Thursday, via its website and social media, the World Council of Churches is releasing a prayer shared by members of 'Pilgrim Teams' who have been visiting communities in conflict, and hearing the stories of women who are facing sexual harassment, rape, domestic violence and other injustices. See <http://bit.ly/2l4RaSl> and take part.

Send your news and photos to our Newsletter editor  
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