

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION

INSiGHT

JULY 2025

TOGETHER WARDS *Jubilee*

50 Years

Introduction
to New Member
Churches



Presbyterian
Church of Mauritius
Eglise Presbytérienne de L'île Maurice

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION

1977-2027

CONTENT

July 2025

Foreword

- 4 Together towards Jubilee

Viewpoints

Together towards Jubilee

Introduction to new member churches

- 6 Jubilee as God's institution of justice and equality
- 11 The Presbyterian Church of Mauritius (EPIM):
A church with its ears on the ground
- 13 Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT):
A church where diverse cultures meet
- 15 Cook Islands Christian Church:
Knowing Jesus and making Jesus known
- 17 Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV):
A tale of perseverance for Christ

At a glance

CWM news

- 20 CWM board convenes in Songdo
- 22 History is made as CWM welcomes four new member churches
- 24 CWM Annual Member's Meeting commences in Songdo
with insights on Jubilee
- 27 CWM Annual Member's Meeting closes:
united in pursuing a just, transformed world
- 29 CWM celebrates 48th anniversary with thanksgiving service
- 31 CWM annual missionary gathering honours journeys of missionaries,
past and present
- 32 CWM welcomes two interns in Singapore and South Africa offices
- 33 CWM welcomes Rev. Dr Seungbum Kim as new partner in mission
- 34 Global consultation on environment challenges
churches to reject neutrality
- 36 Start your learning journey with the School of Intersectional
Ecotheology and Ecojustice Witness (SIEEW) 2025
- 38 Face 2 Face 2025 call for applications:
"Land and Deep Sea Mining" in the Pacific
- 39 WCC conference denounces destruction of Armenian culture,
urges international collaborative action
- 41 NIFEA conference: "Faith communities to move beyond charity,
drive structural transformation"
- 43 New CWM title explores potential of rituals for liberation
- 44 Consultation notice: proposed changes to permanent endowment funds
- 45 CWM sends emergency grant to South African flood survivors in
Mthatha and Eastern Cape

Member church news

- 47 Church of South India celebrates prophetic strength of women in
Philosophia graduation
- 48 Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar president calls for prayers for
upcoming General Synod
- 49 Kiribati Uniting Church organises gender equality theology outreach

- 50 *Take a look*

Together towards Jubilee

The Council for World Mission's (CWM) Annual Members' Meeting (AMM) took place in June in Songdo, South Korea, under the theme "Together towards Jubilee." This gathering was a significant moment in our journey as we look ahead to CWM's Jubilee in 2027 and the Assembly in 2028 — milestones that invite us to reflect deeply on our shared mission and reimagine our collective future.

At the heart of this issue's Viewpoints section is the keynote address delivered by Rev. Dr Yoon-Jae Chang, Dean of the School of Theology at Ewha Womans University, entitled *"Jubilee as God's Institution of Justice and Equality."* He reminds us that Jubilee is not merely a one-time event or a programme observed every 50 years. Jubilee is a paradigm, a system, and an institution. It offers both a resistance to and an alternative vision against neoliberalism, which has long positioned itself as an "institution of liberty." His insights challenge us to embrace Jubilee as a transformative mission.

This issue also marks an exciting expansion of our global fellowship. The AMM approved the induction of four new member churches: the Presbyterian Church of Mauritius (EPIM) in Africa, the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) in the Caribbean, and the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV) and the Cook Islands Christian Church (CICC) in the Pacific. With their inclusion, CWM now comprises 36 member churches, enriching our partnerships and strengthening our commitment to mission in life-flourishing communities.

In addition to these highlights, the July issue of INSIGHT features updates from the Board of Directors' Meeting, the Annual Members' Meeting, the celebration of CWM's 48th anniversary, the introduction of two new interns, the appointment of a new Partner in Mission, and news from our member churches.

We invite you to explore this issue, reflect on these stories, share them within your communities, and join us in journeying toward Jubilee with renewed vision and hope.

We look forward to welcoming you to the next issue of INSIGHT in September.



Rev. Dr Young-cheol Cheon
Mission Secretary for Communications



VIEW- POINTS

INSiGHT

| Together
| towards
| Jubilee

| Introduction to
| new member
| churches



Jubilee as God's institution of justice and equality

Yoon-Jae Chang

(Dean of School of Theology, Ewha Womans University)

Prologue

We truly are living in an age of disaster. It's a dark and uncertain time—one in which we can hardly see what lies ahead. We live with anxiety and fear, constantly tense and uneasy.

And yet, in times like this, we hear a voice from Scripture—a voice that calls the world toward freedom, liberation, justice, and restoration. That's the vision of Jubilee. And I stand here today because I want to share that vision with you—to imagine, together, what kind of missional future God is inviting us into.

“Disposable Youth”

Right now, in Korea, many young people are dying. Countless non-regular, subcontracted youth workers are being exploited—easy targets for companies that hide behind the mask of so-called “passion pay.”

In fact, in Korea's 5,000-year history, there has never been a generation in their 20s as capable as the one we have today. Their digital fluency—with computers, technology, and

everything online—is among the best in the world. Their English skills have surpassed those of my own generation. And yet, in all of Korea's history, there has never been a generation as unhappy as today's 20-somethings.

From a very young age, they've been pushed to chase one goal: getting into a “top university.” To get into one of those so-called elite universities, it's said that a student has to solve at least a million test questions between elementary school and high school.

And when they finally graduate, they hit the thick, unyielding wall of youth unemployment. Some even become credit delinquents—before they've had the chance to land their first job. And eventually, some of them do find jobs. But even then, nearly half of all young employees are in non-regular, insecure positions.

Henry A. Giroux calls these young people “disposable youth.” He says we are turning our youth into scapegoats—and as a result, poor and marginalised young people are being treated as if they're disposable, as if they're nothing more than social waste.

Around the world, young people are being treated as if they're a burden—something to be managed or pushed aside. We, the older generation, have driven our youth into a tunnel of endless competition, a tunnel with no clear exit in sight. And now we have to ask ourselves: Where does that tunnel lead? What's waiting at the end?

“A Society Where You Live Alone, and Die Alone”

As of 2025, Korea has officially entered what we call a “super-aged society,” meaning more than 20% of the population is over 65.

Right now, Korea's population is about 50 million. By 2050, it's expected to drop to 44 million. By 2100, 35 million. And according to projections, by the year 2300, the population could disappear entirely.

Korea isn't just the country with the lowest birthrate in the world—it's also the country with the highest suicide rate.

Even now, one person in Korea takes their own life every 40 minutes. As single-person households continue to increase, the lonely deaths of elderly people living alone—what we call “godoksa”—have already become a major social issue. But now, something even more heartbreaking is happening. The lonely deaths of people in their 20s and 30s—what we call the “2030 generation”—have emerged as a growing crisis.

I once read a newspaper feature titled, “A Society Where You Live Alone, and Die Alone—Japan.” In Japan, tens of thousands of people each year die alone, with no one discovering their death until four days—or more—have passed. Tens of thousands also die with no next of kin—no family or relatives to claim their bodies. Today, in Tokyo, three out of every 10 who die are taken straight to the crematorium without a funeral.

And so, Japan became a society where people live alone and die alone. What made that report so disturbing for me was this: Korea's population trend is following Japan's almost exactly. And just like Japan, Korea could also become a society where people live and die alone. A society with no funerals. A society overflowing with unclaimed deaths and lonely deaths. The moment the sound of babies disappears from this land, and the bright smiles vanish from the faces of our young people—that will be the moment this country begins to disappear.

50 Years of Neoliberalism

We cannot talk about Jubilee without talking about the economy. Because Jubilee, above all, is about economic matters:

wealth and poverty, the line between greed and need, interest and debt.

At the heart of the problem is neoliberal economic policy, which has dominated the world for the past 50 years. And the result of that neoliberalism? Extreme polarization. Widening inequality. And deep injustice.

Neoliberalism, simply put, is a modern economic movement that began in the 1970s as a reaction against Keynesianism and socialism—an attempt to revive 19th-century classical liberalism. Back when Keynesianism ruled the stage, Austrian economist F.A. Hayek was dismissed as a fool. But in 1974, to everyone's surprise, he won the Nobel Prize in Economics—and that's when neoliberalism stepped into the spotlight.

In short, Hayek—the so-called “father of neoliberalism”—taught that the market is like water or wind in the natural world. It can't be controlled by humans, and it shouldn't be.

This kind of “market fundamentalism” has ruled the world for the past 50 years. And like Islamic fundamentalism or Christian fundamentalism—it's dangerous.

Neoliberalism isn't just a free-market economic theory. It's a kind of religious faith—a belief that the market never fails. It's a doctrine—that human beings exist for the sake of the market, not the market for the sake of human beings.

A Cry Toward Heaven

The belief that everything would go well if we just left it all to the market—has turned out to be wrong. Fifty years of neoliberalism have brought extreme polarization, deep social inequality, and widespread injustice.

After 1997, Korean society began to tear apart—as extreme polarization and inequality broke down our sense of community and fueled social conflict. Since then, Korea has entered a period of what we now call “three-zero growth:” growth with no new jobs, no wage increases, and no redistribution. This led to an explosion of low-wage and non-regular workers. Before 1997, many believed in what’s called the “trickle-down effect”—that economic growth would naturally reduce poverty. But after 1997, that illusion was shattered. We began living in a society where, even if the floor near the stove is boiling hot, the other end of the room stays ice-cold.

According to the *2022 World Inequality Report*, income and wealth inequality around the globe are staggering. The richest 10% of the world’s population earn more than half of all global income—52%, to be exact. Meanwhile, the poorest 50% earn just 8.5%. When it comes to wealth, the top 10% own 76% of everything. The bottom half? They own just 2%.

The report also shows that global income and wealth inequality are closely tied to ecological inequality and disparities in contributions to climate change. The top 10% of the world’s population is responsible for 50% of all carbon emissions, while the bottom 50% accounts for only 12%. It is the wealthy regions of the world that are driving climate change, yet it is the poorest regions that suffer the most because of it. This is a double injustice.

This is the missional reality we are facing today. This is precisely the kind of world that calls us to return to Scripture and rediscover the promise and vision of Jubilee.

Overcoming extreme polarization, inequality, and injustice must become a central missional task. We need a new and radical alternative—one grounded in the power of the gospel. That alternative is Jubilee. And it’s time to live it.

Proclaim the Jubilee!

The Jubilee laws recorded in Leviticus reflect the faith and conviction of the Levites—the people’s priests—who sought to reform and restore a deeply divided Israelite community.

This vision of Jubilee was proclaimed once again—this time by Jesus Christ at the very beginning of his public ministry. When he returned to his hometown synagogue in Nazareth, he opened the scroll of Isaiah and read from Chapter 61: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set the oppressed free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.” (Luke 4:18–19) That “year of the Lord’s favour” is Jubilee.

Jubilee was the very reason Jesus came!

A Line We Must Not Fall; A Line We Must Not Rise Above

Herman Daly, an American ecological economist, once offered a way to apply the concept of Jubilee to modern society. According to Daly, Jubilee begins with the acceptance of private property, but it sets clear social limits on how much inequality can be tolerated. In other words, while ownership is allowed, inequality must remain within a just and bounded range. From Jubilee, Daly found a compelling insight: our world must shift from unlimited inequality to limited inequality. For him, the idea of Jubilee can serve as a guiding principle to prevent destructive levels of inequality and polarization.

Recognizing this, the global church has already begun to speak about what it calls the “greed line.” Just as we talk about a poverty line—an absolute minimum below which no one should fall—the World Council of Churches has proposed that we must also define a maximum: a level of wealth above which no one should rise. The biblical vision of Jubilee may offer us a powerful framework—a social principle and institutional guide—that sets both a poverty line we must not fall below and a greed line we must not cross, to stop the extreme polarization and injustice of our time.

A Society That Encourages Debt

Under today’s financial capitalism, our financial system creates money by creating debt. Over 95% of the money that exists in the world today was created because someone borrowed from a bank. Banks don’t lend the money they actually have—they simply “create” money by issuing debt.

And because debt can grow infinitely, money supply can grow infinitely too.

In fact, the pressure that bank-created money puts on the goods and services we use every day is steadily increasing. Because of this pressure, the economy is constantly forced to grow. Within a limited economy, debts can be repaid by exploiting the socially vulnerable. But once that limit is crossed, we end up pulling resources from the future—using what rightfully belongs to the next generation. This is what so-called economic development often looks like today: development that comes with pollution and environmental destruction. Simply put, it's exploitation of the future and of those who will come after us.

Living under financial capitalism, we are all slaves to money and debt. The Apostle Paul's cry, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24), is really our own cry today. In this system of mutual destruction, how can we even begin to speak of life and salvation? Living under a financial capitalist system that creates something out of almost nothing—almost godlike in power—how can we dare to speak of God's rule and sovereignty?

The original source of debt forgiveness is none other than God. In Scripture, God's mercy is sometimes expressed through voluntary sharing. But knowing human limitations, God didn't leave justice up to goodwill alone—instead, God established institutions like the Sabbath year and Jubilee. That's right: Jubilee *is* God's Institution of Justice and Equality. It stands in direct resistance to the so-called "institution of liberty" celebrated by neoliberalism—a system that emphasises only the freedom of the powerful and the free reign of markets. Jubilee offers a different kind of freedom: one rooted in restoration, fairness, and shared dignity for all.

"The Power to Stop a Train"

In ancient Israel, the land was given rest every seven years.

God responded to that very question. "You may ask, 'What will we eat in the seventh year if we do not plant or harvest our crops?' I will send you such a blessing in the sixth year that the land will yield enough for three years." (Leviticus 25:20–21) But did ancient Israel really trust this promise and put it into practice?

According to A.P. and A.H. Huettermann, both scientists and authors of *Ecology in the Bible*, they believe the answer is yes. They argue that the Jubilee wasn't just a lofty religious ideal—it was something that truly happened.

The people of ancient Israel, According to the Huettermans, were unique along the Mediterranean coast in their use of something close to what we now understand as compost. This compost, they argue, was enriched with sodium nitrate gathered from the Jordan Valley.

The Huettermans also believed that the God who gave Israel the Sabbath and Jubilee laws also gave them the wisdom to use compost so that even in their barren land, a rich and life-giving harvest could flourish. As a result, they confidently claim that ancient Israel's agricultural yield was the highest in the world at that time.

What would have happened if ancient Israel had ignored the laws of the land—like the Sabbatical and Jubilee years? They would have collapsed. God once said, "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. I punish the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but I show love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20:4–5). At first glance, this might feel deeply unfair. Why should children suffer for the wrongdoing of their parents? In a modern world that values individual autonomy, this can be a hard teaching to accept.

The Sabbath and Jubilee laws in the Bible show us that ancient Israel had an ecological understanding of nature and lived a different kind of life: one that cherished the soil, honoured the land, and pursued a sustainable relationship with the earth.

And they did this because of God's word. Because of God's promise.

Within our Scriptures lies a hidden wisdom—wisdom that could heal our

wounded planet and restore our broken civilization. What we lack today is not doctrine. What we truly lack is the will to trust in God's word and promise, and to live it out faithfully and steadfastly.

From Unlimited Growth to Sustainable Development

The Earth has entered an era not *just* of global warming, but of global boiling. We are no longer facing a climate crisis—we are living through climate collapse.

According to a climate research institute in Europe, global warming has already reached 1.6°C as of 2024. The 1.5°C threshold, once agreed upon in Songdo in 2018, has effectively been broken. If this trend continues, average global temperatures could rise by as much as 3.5°C by the end of this century.

Right now, we are facing two simultaneous crises. On one hand, there is extreme inequality. On the other, we are confronting an ecological collapse that makes it impossible to share prosperity through continued growth. Capitalism is dangerous not only because it creates inequality, but because it is ultimately unsustainable. Whether or not we succeed in implementing progressive taxation on capital, we must come to terms with a painful truth: our planet simply cannot sustain even a 1% annual growth rate indefinitely.

Therefore, if humanity and all other living beings are to survive on this one and only planet, we must come to accept the "limits of growth."

To do this, we must learn to distinguish between "growth" and "development." Growth refers to an increase in material quantity or size, while development points to a qualitative transformation into something more whole and mature. That's why the true alternative to "unlimited growth" is not "sustainable growth" or "green growth," but "sustainable development." And this sustainable development is what we call the economy of Jubilee.

In Closing

In his profound reflection on the Hebrew Bible, the late Walter Brueggemann once argued that Sabbath-keeping is a form of defiance—against a market ideology that pushes us to endlessly desire, to never feel satisfied, and to never stop working.

Yes, "those who work must be given rest, and there must be appropriate times of renewal for bodies that have been

spent and exhausted through labour" (Leviticus 25:3–7). This is the heart of the Jubilee. It is resistance. It is an alternative to the dominant logic of the market. And this alternative—we must *choose* to live it.

The future can change depending on the policies and systems we choose and because of that, our choices today can shape a very different tomorrow. We must go forward with the belief that "this imperfect order is not necessary." We must keep moving toward Jubilee.

NOTE: This article is an abridged version of the keynote speech delivered by Prof. Yoon-Jae Chang at AMM 2025.

Scan the QR code to download the PDF of the keynote speech.





The Presbyterian Church of Mauritius (EPIM): A church with its ears on the ground



The origins of the Presbyterian Church of Mauritius lie in the missionary work of Rev. Jean Le Brun, a missionary from the London Missionary Society (LMS), who began his ministry in 1814.

Typically referred to as Église Presbytérienne à l'île Maurice or EPIM, the French name of the Presbyterian Church of Mauritius not only captures its francophone roots but also its regional historical heritage. EPIM is also the name adopted by Paris-based ecumenical mission agency, the Communauté d'Églises en Mission (Cevaa) to refer to the church.



In 1979, EPIM became autonomous through a parliamentary act, thereby forming a synodical structure and cementing the church as a firm character in the broader story amongst CWM's founding missionary societies.

With its current congregation of approximately 1,200 members, including members of Malagasy origin, EPIM's church members are spread across diverse parishes on the island, forming a melting pot of English-speaking expatriates, locals, and factory workers from Madagascar.

Ears on the ground

EPIM's missional outlook continues to be multifaceted and contextual with efforts made in various notable areas including providing spiritual care to foreigners, and operating a kindergarten in Pointe-aux-Piments to meet the educational needs of under-resourced children.



Despite these difficulties, EPIM's commitment to its closely-knitted partnership with various ecumenical and interfaith organisations that include Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, as well as Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Revivalist churches, has provided valuable support for the work of the church. EPIM has also co-founded the Ecumenical Working Party and signed the Charte de Bonne Entente, a local ecumenical agreement.



Alongside its sister church, the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM), EPIM's ecumenical identity continues to be shaped by its historical connection with Cevaa. This relationship has deepened the church's understanding of intercultural theology, postcolonial mission, and transcontinental solidarity.

At the same time, EPIM works closely with the communities on the ground with its “5 Loaves and 2 Fish” street-level ministry that combines worship with meals and practical assistance for over 100 street dwellers every Saturday in addition to supporting addiction recovery through its welfare services in the forms of a detox programme and the facilitating of medical and psychological care in collaboration with government hospitals.

Through a growing Respite Ministry, EPIM is also currently developing inclusive approaches for autistic persons.

Building bridges across challenges

EPIM identifies several systemic and social challenges that threaten to disrupt its ministries such as a demanding and irregular work culture that has reduced voluntary service numbers, and a decreasing birth rate that continue to negatively impact generational church growth. EPIM has also observed a worrying trend of youths postponing marriage and having fewer children while rapid urban migration has weakened its community base of central parishes.

This shared heritage with other Francophone African churches has uniquely positioned EPIM as a bridge-builder between Southern African, Indian Ocean, and wider global mission spaces while informing EPIM's approach towards ecclesiology, social witness, and mission innovation, especially in responding to issues of poverty, ecological degradation, and youth migration.



Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT): A church where diverse cultures meet



Historically linked to the London Missionary Society and other European and American missional agencies in the 19th century, the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) today is shaped by its commitment to evangelism, discipleship, education and other contextualised ministries in social justice and ecumenical cooperation.

Within a multi-religious and multicultural society of about 1.3 million in the island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the ministry of PCTT is through 108 congregations.

Among its outstanding ministries is PCTT's commitment to education and national development, evident by its ownership and operations of several educational institutions in the country, from early childhood centres to a theological college.

Beginnings rooted in liberation from slavery and indentured labour



Within the country's social landscape deeply shaped by its colonial history, marked by slavery and indentured labour, Trinidad and Tobago is home to a diverse population with significant African and Indian communities, alongside European and Chinese minorities. This ethnic diversity has influenced social relations, often reflected in politics, where support tends to divide along racial lines – Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians have historically backed different political parties. Despite these divisions, the



country has maintained a stable democracy.

Trinidad and Tobago's economy developed rapidly due to its rich oil and natural gas resources, fuelling industrialisation and national development since the 20th century. However, reliance on energy exports has also led to challenges such as vulnerability to global oil prices.

Like many other Caribbean nations, Trinidad and Tobago has its own social, economic and political challenges. It is in these contexts that PCTT has positioned itself as a church with a prophetic voice, influencing social, political and economic issues; advocating for the marginalised; and working towards a just and equitable society.

Longstanding relationship with Presbyterian and Reformed traditions

Available historical records suggest that PCTT is a product of the collective labour of several agencies of the Reformed tradition – its birth owed chiefly to the efforts of LMS, Church of Scotland, Reformed Presbyterian Church of the United States, and Canadian Presbyterian missionaries.

The earliest known documentation of a Presbyterian presence in Trinidad occurred in October 1833, when Presbyterian churches and clergy were established in Trinidad. At the start of 1837 the first formally constituted congregation became a reality. Since then, several other Presbyterian missions were launched in Trinidad over the following decades.



The PCTT was eventually established on 29 January 1868, four years after Rev. John Morton, a Canadian Presbyterian minister, planted a nucleus for the Canadian Mission in Iere Village. Morton would go on to create an extensive evangelistic outreach network and laid the groundwork for a robust educational infrastructure that continues to support the work of the PCTT today.

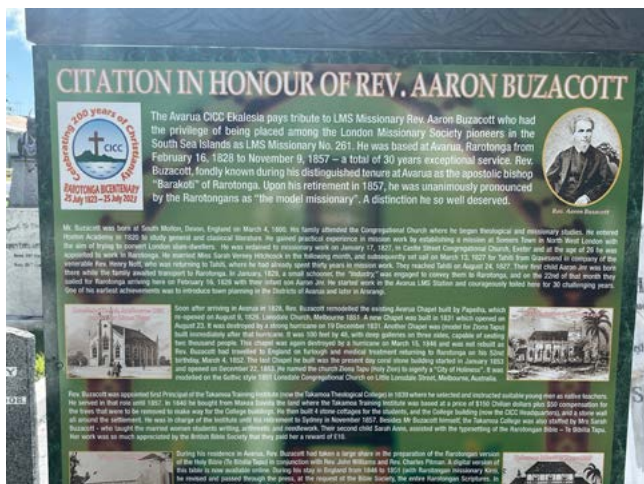


Cook Islands Christian Church: Knowing Jesus and making Jesus known



When the London Missionary Society (LMS) was engaged in the Pacific from 1821 to 1965, the first missionaries travelled from Tahiti, founding the Cook Islands Christian Church (CICC) in 1821, cementing its historical links with the LMS and the Council for World Mission of today. Since 1965, as the Pacific region underwent gradual decolonization, the Cook Islands formed a closer relationship with Aotearoa New Zealand than in maintaining former relationships.

During this period, CICC retained several close ecumenical ties with other churches in the region such as the Maohi Protestant Church of French Polynesia, United Church of Papua New Guinea, Uniting Church of Australia, Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, and the Congregational Union of New Zealand; it also saw itself being an integral part of the Pacific Conference of Churches.



At the CICC Assembly in July, EPM and UCPNG both signed fresh MoUs with CICC, committing to future collaborations. The General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches (Rev. James Bhagwan) and CWM Mission Secretary (Rev. Dr Amelia Koh-Butler) were both in attendance, as was former CWM Mission Secretary, Rev. Dr Nikotema Sopepe. It was an historic moment for these CWM Member Churches and bodes well for the region. In her address,



Rev. Dr. Amelia noted that the Pacific churches have a responsibility to contribute from the ocean to the world.

CICC also signaled its ongoing commitment to mission through learning and education by being a founding member of the Pacific Theological College (now the Pacific Communities University) that also includes the Takamoa Theological College, the second oldest Christian institution in the Pacific region. The college, established in 1839, continues to develop church leaders educated in disciplines such as Theology, Ethics, Biblical Studies, Church History, and Christian Education and Ministry.



Another hallmark of CICC is its commitment in developing, equipping, and empowering its youth and women members. The CICC Women's Fellowship, known as "vainetini," plays a vital role in fostering spiritual growth and leadership among the church's female congregants. In May 2024, the fellowship hosted a weeklong conference attended by nearly 200 women from various CICC regions. CICC youth are also actively engaged and involved in the church's Youth Conferences and activities, regular events to nurture leadership skills while emphasizing the roles of young people in the CICC's mission and governance.

Today, CICC is the largest religious entity in the Cook Islands, with a 10,000 strong congregation out of the total island population of 18,000. At the same time, CICC comprises of over 70 branches and counting with 24 in the Cook Islands, 25 in New Zealand, and 30 in Australia. Six CICC Pastors are currently serving in Maohi Nui (with EPM). At the recent Assembly, conversations highlighted the changing missional needs in different parts of the world, with challenges of communications and need for education. As the world around the Pacific evolves, the missiological outlook of CICC actively pursues its vision of "worshiping and serving God, and to make Jesus known to all people" through local and international outreach, educational initiatives, and ecumenical partnerships—navigating challenges related to religious diversity and inclusivity while balancing tradition with an eye on and a spirit of commitment towards a pluralistic society.



Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV): A tale of perseverance for Christ

Established in 1948 as the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides, the church was renamed as the current Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV) in 1980. A vibrant church with a reformed/Presbyterian background, largely founded through the work of Pacific Islander London Missionary Society (LMS) missionaries from Tonga, Samoa, and the Cook Islands who were led by John Williams, it currently ministers to 400 congregations with a total of 78,000 baptised members, and has 108 ministers in active service.

PCV also enjoys close ties with the World Council of Churches and the Pacific Conference of Churches. Prior to 1948 when



the church gained its autonomous status, PCV was a missional ground worked on extensively by Scottish Presbyterian missionaries. When the New Zealand Presbyterian church first expressed its interest in engaging with the region at the 1862 Southern Presbyterian Assembly, the General Assembly Foreign Missions Committee was established with the New Hebrides as a field for mission. The fledgling mission field in New Hebrides faced many difficulties in the late 1800s to the start of the 1900s where the missionaries, despite their best efforts, still experienced low conversion numbers while facing life-threatening conditions, including the risk of being harmed by local people.

In 1901 through to 1930, in a bid to spread the Gospel more effectively discussions were made to contextualise the salvific message of Christ, a change that eventually catalyzed the





Today, it continues to be a thriving Christian presence in the country, establishing life-flourishing communities in and beyond its walls. The work of the PCV is not without its pressing challenges such as the rising trend of materialism brought on by the competitive message of the prosperity gospel. It is hoped that new and deeper collaboration with CWM will assist in understanding the impetus of African missionaries coming to the Pacific and how to address their impact.

18 **INSiGHT**

Despite the varied issues and hard challenges, PCV remains resilient and hopeful in its mission as it currently focuses on decentralising leadership, conducting a national review, and establishing a national development plan. Meanwhile, the church continues to operate various schools, vocational training centres, and a ministry training centre, while being closely involved in evangelism, mission training, and outward mission work.



ATA
GLANCE

INSIGHT

CWM news



CWM board convenes in Songdo

The Council for World Mission (CWM) Board convened from 13-14 June in Songdo, South Korea, prior to the Annual Member's Meeting (AMM) scheduled for 16-18 June.

CWM Moderator, Dr Natalie Lin, opened the meeting with a reflection based on Mark 14:1-9 which describes an encounter in Bethany between Jesus and an unnamed woman who anointed the Messiah with an expensive perfume made of pure nard – a costly ingredient in biblical times.

Using the actions of the woman as an example, Lin reminded the Board of the value of the woman's action and that, through her decision to anoint Jesus, she recognised Jesus for who He was despite being labelled as wasteful by Christ's disciples.

The story, Lin elaborated, was an illustration to do one's best for Christ without considerations of the cost. She also offered a secondary reflection that as Christ Himself praised the woman and added that her act would be remembered in perpetuity, it was a clear reminder that Christ would recompense the works done upon Him despite earthly objections and opposing perspectives.

"Let us love Jesus spontaneously," urged Lin as she closed her sermon.

General Secretary's Report

CWM General Secretary, Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum, delivered his report to the Board, offering an overview of concluded Member's Mission Forums. He also gave an account of the recent successful Finance Conference held in Hong Kong as well as the series of member church engagement trips to the Congregational Christian Church Samoa (CCCS) for the 150th anniversary celebration of its General Assembly and the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan during the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum.

Keum also gave the Board a preview of planned activities for the second half of 2025 such as the CWM Sunday celebration on 18 July, as well as the upcoming Board meeting in November that will be held in conjunction with the biennial General Secretaries' Conference.



He also highlighted to the Board the CEVAA, CWM, and UEM Joint Mission Consultation in November to promote dialogue, learning, and shared strategies for contemporary global challenges and the urgent need to decolonise mission work.

Envisioning the CWM Jubilee

With the advent of the CWM Jubilee in 2027, Rev. Dr Amelia Koh-Butler, CWM Mission Secretary for Education and Empowerment, led the Board in brainstorming on potential Jubilee programmes.

The ideas and feedback of the Board will feed directly into the plenary discussion on the CWM Jubilee during the upcoming AMM.

Membership Taskforce Report

The Board received and approved the various reports from the Membership Taskforce. The final approval decisions of the new member churches will be announced during the AMM.

Closing of the Board meeting

The meeting was closed with a worship session led by Board Director of the Pacific region, Ms Mina Tupu Saifoloi.



History is made as CWM welcomes four new member churches

The Council for World Mission (CWM), in an historic milestone on 17 June, approved four new member churches for induction into the global partnership: Presbyterian Church of Mauritius (EPIM) in Africa, Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT) in the Caribbean, and Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV) and Cook Islands Christian Church (CICC) in the Pacific.

The decision was made on the second day of the CWM Annual Member's Meeting (AMM), which is convening in Songdo, South Korea, from 16-18 June.

Currently, CWM is made up of 32 member churches.

Three regional Membership Taskforce groups explored the viability of the four candidate churches based on their significant historical ties with CWM, congregational makeup, ministerial alignment, and other operational aspects.

Earlier this year, the Membership Taskforce groups travelled to the regions in which the churches are based to meet and dialogue with their leadership. Reports from the meetings were drafted and presented to the CWM Board before being received by the member delegates of the AMM.

Membership Taskforce group representatives Rev. Kudzani Ndebele, Trevor Llewellyn Benn, and Mina Tupu Saifoloi presented their reports for the African, Caribbean, and Pacific

regions respectively during the AMM.

After receiving and approving the reports, AMM delegates voted for each churches' entry into CWM.

CWM warmly welcomes our new members!

About the CWM new member churches

Presbyterian Church of Mauritius (EPIM)

EPIM's origins lie in the missionary work of Rev. Jean Le Brun, a missionary from the London Missionary Society (LMS), who began his ministry in 1814.

In 1979, EPIM became autonomous through a parliamentary act, thereby forming a synodical structure and cementing the church as a firm character in the broader story amongst CWM's founding missionary societies.

Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago (PCTT)

Historically linked to the LMS and tracing its roots to the pioneering missionary work on the island in the

19th century, the PCTT today is shaped by its commitment to education and other contextualised ministries in social justice and ecumenical cooperation – building relationships with other faith-based communities.

With the country's social landscape deeply shaped by its colonial history, marked by slavery and indentured labour, PCTT has positioned itself as a church with a prophetic voice, lending its influence on social, political, and economic issues; advocating for the marginalised; and working towards a just and equitable society.

Cook Islands Christian Church in the Pacific (CICC)

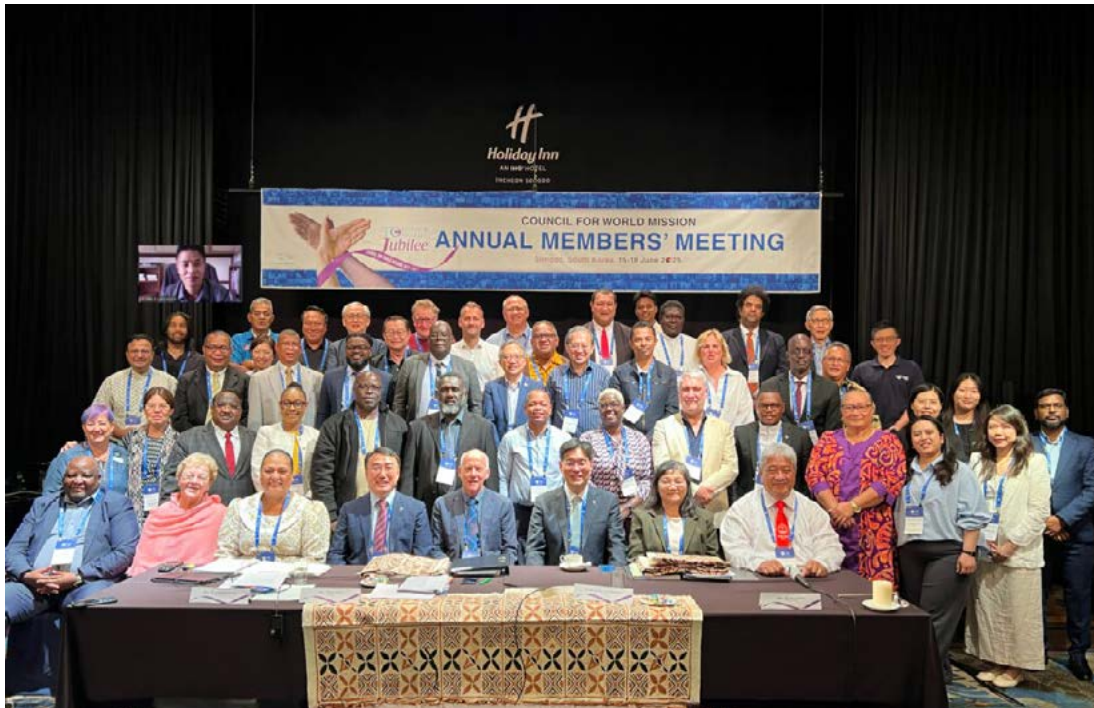
The CICC was established in 1821 when the LMS was engaged in missional work in the islands. Decolonisation in the Pacific during the 1960s saw CICC forming new relationships with regional Christian bodies such as the Pacific Conference of Churches. CICC is also a founding member of the Pacific Theological College.

CICC is currently the largest religious body in the Cook Islands comprising 24 branches in the Cook Islands, 25 in New Zealand, and 30 in Australia.

Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV)

Established in 1948 (as the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides), PCV is a vibrant church with a reformed/Presbyterian background, largely founded through the work of Pacific Islander LMS missionaries led by John Williams.

PCV is currently focusing on decentralising its leadership, conducting a national review, and establishing a national development plan. The church also operates schools, vocational training centres, and a ministry training centre, while being closely involved in evangelism, mission training, and outward mission work.



CWM Annual Member's Meeting commences in Songdo with insights on Jubilee

The Council for World Mission's (CWM) Annual Member's Meeting (AMM) kicked off on 16 June in Songdo, South Korea, with 32 delegates from CWM member churches attending.

Hosted by the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK), the AMM is a yearly gathering of CWM's members to celebrate and share stories of their ministries in their unique contexts.

In his greeting to the assembled delegates, partners, and CWM staff, Rev. Young-Gul Kim, Moderator of PCK, reflected on the deep ties shared between CWM and PCK even as the Korean church celebrates its 140th year of Christian mission in the country.

"For more than two centuries, CWM (formerly the LMS) has faithfully connected churches across the globe, fulfilling the precious mission of proclaiming the light of the Gospel. We are proud that the PCK has been part of this meaningful journey," Kim said.

"I hope that this meeting will serve as a precious opportunity for the PCK and the CWM family gathered from around the world to share our faith journeys and missional visions, and build deeper fellowship and friendship with one another."

Burnt but not consumed

Dr Natalie Lin, CWM Moderator, opened the meeting with a reflection from Exodus 3:1-4 which recounts Moses' encounter with God through the burning bush, that remained un-singed despite being engulfed in flames.

Lin then showcased a poem referencing the burning bush written by Rev. Kao Chun Ming, a Taiwanese church leader who was incarcerated during the 1979 Formosa Event – a government crackdown on prodemocracy elements during Taiwan's martial law period.

Lin went on to describe Kao's time in prison where he, fully surrendering to God's will, continued to inspire inmates with his quiet strength and faith.



Through her story on Kao, Lin exhorted the delegates to embody the Taiwanese church leader's unwavering spirit in facing up to the challenges of the world today.

Vital role of Jubilee

Rev. Dr Yoon-Jae Chang, Dean of the School of Theology, Ewha Womans University, gave the keynote address highlighting the important role that the Jubilee year plays in the Bible as well as how it is the answer to today's rampant rise in injustice, inequality, and suffering.

In the Bible, the Jubilee year signals the start of a period that comes every 50 years when the ancient Israelites would write off debts, return properties to their owners, allow agricultural lands to lie fallow, and release slaves and hired hands. It was a God-mandated social and economic reset.

However, the world today, according to Chang, has largely abandoned this model, compelling societies to engage in zero-sum systems that divide people into winners and losers, and partake in wanton consumption habits that destroy the earth and devastate biodiversity.

"Jubilee is not just a one-time event or a special program that happens every 50 years. Jubilee is a paradigm. Jubilee is a system. Jubilee is an institution. It stands as both a resistance to—and an alternative to—neoliberalism, which once called itself an 'institution of liberty.'"

As the original biblical idea of Jubilee also espoused the idea of environmental care by making provisions for arable lands to rest, an idea that the modern consumer-driven world would balk at, Chang once again sounded the warning of an ecological collapse.

"According to a climate research institute in Europe, global warming has already reached 1.6°C as of last year. The 1.5°C threshold, once agreed upon in Songdo in 2018, has effectively been broken," warned Chang, who added that if left unchecked average global temperatures could rise by as much as 3.5°C by the end of this century.

Despite the grimness and darkness surrounding the world today, Chang offered a ray of hope – a sliver of light that is the Jubilee concept. He proffered that the future can still be changed, depending on the policies and systems that humanity chooses.

"... our choices today can shape a very different tomorrow. We must go forward with the belief that this imperfect order is not necessary. We must keep moving toward Jubilee," exhorted Chang.

Moderator's report: CWM must look beyond institutional maintenance

Delivering her first report as CWM Moderator during the AMM, Dr Natalie Lin gave the assembled delegates an overview account of Board activities and CWM initiatives in the year in review.

Regional challenges, missional opportunities

The report focused on findings from reports produced by each regional Member's Mission Forum.

Lin commended the member churches that, despite their unique regional issues, share a deep commitment to discerning God's will, responding to contemporary challenges, and seizing new opportunities for faithful witness and transformative mission.



Lin concluded that through the various global partnerships, CWM is uniquely positioned to serve as a prophetic voice amidst global challenges:

General Secretary's report: God's transforming power is key

Putting trust in faith, hope, and love

Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum, General Secretary of CWM, delivered a report with a sobering message that the world is deeply wounded, with the rise of global powers vying for control through military operations and trade wars amidst technological disruptions such as the advent of artificial intelligence threatening jobs and livelihoods and the increasing threats posed by climate change.

Yet, the world is not without hope. Keum drew the eyes and minds of the delegates to focus upon God and his transformative power.

"... the Holy Spirit is the spring of transforming power, [it] reminds us that mission is not about maintaining the status quo but about participating in God's work of radical transformation," declared Keum.

Keum also cautioned against presenting God's love selectively by only witnessing in ways that are safe and comfortable.

"It is time to question the integrity of the ecumenical and missional movement: Are we true disciples of the gospel?" challenged Keum.

"The depth of our discipleship will ultimately determine whether we rise to the challenge of these times."

Looking towards Jubilee

In addition summarising CWM programmes and engagements as well as other governance matters, Keum unveiled the AMM to be a platform where the delegates must come together to envision the upcoming CWM Jubilee collectively.

"This Jubilee will be a season of discernment, an opportunity to critically examine the last 50 years of our journey as a partnership of churches in mission and chart a bold way forward," said Keum who highlighted that a detailed plan for the Jubilee celebrations will be presented at a separate session during this AMM.

Onwards to an Eco-Jubilee

The first day of the AMM was concluded with a Bible study led by Rev. Dr Nāsili Vaka'uta, the Professor of Biblical Studies and Principal of Trinity Theological College, Auckland, New Zealand.

Vaka'uta shared from Leviticus 25:1-13 that gave an outline on the Sabbath year and what it entailed for the land in Israel, linking his message to the need for a communal effort in working towards an eco-jubilee for CWM.



CWM Annual Member's Meeting closes: united in pursuing a just, transformed world

As the Council for World Mission's (CWM) Annual Member's Meeting (AMM) drew to a close, the final day's Bible study session set the tone by urging CWM delegates to read the Scripture—and see the world—through the eyes of the wounded.

Led by Rev. Dr Nāsili Vaka'uta, Professor of Biblical Studies and Principal of Trinity Theological College, Auckland, New Zealand, the Bible study was based on Luke 4:16-21.

Vaka'uta expounded upon the meaning behind Jesus' reading of the scroll that foretold of arevealed Himself as the fulfilled prophecy to the crowd in the synagogue saying, *"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."* (v. 21)a

Vaka'uta posited that, through Jesus' example, the church is to bear the hallmarks of a Jubilee community through public and systemic repentance for past harms, property and wealth redistribution, and re-reading of Scripture not through dominant systems but the eyes of the wounded.

CWM General Secretary to continue for second term

The staffing committee delivered its report to the AMM delegates, who met for a round of closed-door discussions, then

unanimously approved the continuation of Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum as the CWM General Secretary (GS) for a second term.

In his acceptance address, a visibly touched Keum recounted the tough seasons early on in his role as CWM GS during which he thanked those who have placed their support and trust in his leadership.

"I am deeply humbled and honoured by your continued trust and affirmation of my leadership. I take this as a sacred call to deeper faithfulness, greater responsibility, and renewed obedience to God's mission as discerned through the collective life of our member churches," he said.

Keum also reiterated his commitment to further key CWM programmatic areas and initiatives such as strengthening partnerships and collaboration among existing member churches while ensuring the full integration of the new ones; advancing full implementation of The Onesimus Project; continual investment in leadership development and capacity-building within the CWM; prioritising the empowerment of youth and women in leadership positions; and



ramping up preparations for the CWM Jubilee celebrations in 2027.

AMM resolutions

Gender balance for AMM delegates

The AMM delegates approved the proposal of the AMM Gender Balance Committee that member churches nominate a male and female representative to the AMM for a four-year period, with alternating attendance each year. Representative substitutions should also preserve gender balance.

Closing service: “A just economy under God”

The AMM concluded with a closing service led by CWM Mission Secretary for Education and Empowerment, Rev. Dr Amelia Koh-Butler, and Rev. Philip King from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (PCANZ).

Keum preached from the parable of the vineyard owner and his interactions with his labourers as recorded in Matthew 20:1-16. The sermon touched on the parable’s illustration of a just economy under God that offers equal opportunity and distribution of wealth.

“The story in Matthew is a case study of a life-giving economy where the first will care for the last, and both groups are allowed to feast together in the house of the Father,” said Keum, who drew a parallel to the same vision that is shared by CWM as it heads into its Jubilee celebrations.

He stressed that CWM must continue to exist as an equal partnership in mission amongst its members, sharing resources and insights. He reflected that CWM, empowered by the Holy Spirit, is commissioned to celebrate life and transform life-destroying forces.

The sermon was followed by communion, with CWM delegates giving thanks for yet another year of a successful and fruitful AMM, giving rise to new friendships, and renewing old ones.



CWM celebrates 48th anniversary with thanksgiving service

The staff of the Council for World Mission (CWM) Singapore office gathered on Sunday, 20 July, at the Parish of Christ Church (POCC) to celebrate the organisation's 48th anniversary. The celebration was marked with a thanksgiving service with the Immanuel Congregation of the Church of South India (CSI) in Singapore.

CWM General Secretary, Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum, delivered a sermon reflecting on the prophetic vision of Bishop Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah, the first Indian Bishop of the Anglican Church and one of a few non-Western participants at the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh.

Azariah challenged the prevailing Western missionary hegemony with an emphatic call for equal missiological partnerships. His speech would give rise to the Singapore Consultation in 1975 that ultimately birthed CWM.

The Singapore Consultation marked a historical turning point, recognising that the former structure of the London Missionary Society (LMS) has systematically denied the full participation and stature of the global south churches as missional contribu-

tors to their communities. This led to a unanimous agreement amongst all 56 LMS representatives that radical structural changes were necessary to realise Azariah's progressive vision.

As a result, the LMS underwent significant structural changes in 1977. "The old missionary society ceased to exist, and a new community of churches in mission — the CWM — was founded on the principles of mutuality, sharing, and partnership," Keum explained.

A world torn by conflict, greed, and allure of comfort

Reflecting on CWM's 48-year journey, Keum also highlighted the growing challenges facing today's world: climate crises, wars, and dysfunctional democracies.

Keum also decried the plethora of economic and technological headwinds brought on by cryptocurrencies, artificial intelligence (AI), and



tech companies that threaten to grow into massive empires that influence global economies and politics insidiously, taking away humanity's role as main agents of labour, and usher in a passive economic life created by AI and robotics.

In a rejection of this outcome, Keum urged the congregation to always remember that a true Christian missiological love for people and justice is never passive.

"Missionary work is a courageous love that crosses boundaries and is fearless... a transformative power that overturns injustice... and pursues radical inclusion," emphasised Keum.

A call to be a 'Jubilee Community'

Despite the darkening global landscape, Keum encouraged the church to embrace God's Jubilee vision — a vision of life-flourishing communities. He reaffirmed CWM as a global community of churches in mission committed to proclaiming the Kingdom of God where fullness of life is possible, even for those without money.

Looking ahead to CWM's 50th anniversary in 2027, a biblical Jubilee year, Keum called on the congregation to return to God as a collective 'Jubilee Community' rooted in discipleship and a heart that repents, restores righteousness, and rejoices in hope.

"Jubilee is not solely a utopian dream in heaven but indicative of a historical vision that the Reign of God is entering into this world from the eschaton," Keum said, "Affirming life in all its fullness is Jesus Christ's ultimate concern and mission — and it is our mission as CWM, his disciples."

Each year, the CWM community gathers for worship and reflection to mark CWM Sunday, with this year's celebration held on 20 July 2025 — the closest Sunday to 18 July, commemorating the start of CWM's restructuring in 1977.

To support member churches in their celebrations, CWM has circulated liturgical resources including prayers, songs, readings, and visual materials.



CWM annual missionary gathering honours journeys of missionaries, past and present

Former Council for World Mission (CWM) missionaries, current Partners in Mission (PIM), and members of the Welsh Presbyterian Church came together on 2 July during the CWM annual missionary gathering at the Clapham Welsh Presbyterian Church in London.

Besides being an annual event that recognises CWM missionaries and staff, the missionary gathering spotlights the CWM PIM programme and its current partners while inviting CWM colleagues and missionaries, old and new, to prayer and fellowship.

Rev. Yufen Chen, CWM Partner in Mission from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT), preached during the service, highlighting the challenging landscapes in which missionaries often work, adding that “mission is not just the stage – it is the hidden struggles behind.”

Affirming Chen’s sermon, Rev. Nigel Lindsay from the Congregational Federation (CF) reflected on his two missional experiences in Grenada and Nauru. He shared about his engagement in ministry during a hurricane, helping with job creation, and ministering to children across language barriers while he was in Nauru.

Lindsay began his new role as a Mission Enabler with the Nauru Congregational Church (NCC) on 29 January for a two-year term. Previously in his first term as a PIM, he served

as a pastor and chaplain with the Presbyterian Church in Grenada from September 2021 to August 2024.

Coming fresh from the recently concluded Annual Member’s Meeting (AMM) in South Korea, CWM Mission Secretary for Finance Soonyew Sum, shared an account of the AMM, bringing the good news of four new member churches joining the CWM global family.

A key highlight of the gathering was the corporate singing of “Lord for the Years” which served as a powerful faith reminder to those gathered that they were joined by a cloud of witnesses who have not only contributed to God’s missional vision in the past, but continues to surround and journey with the current missionaries as they soldier on to realise the life-flourishing mission of God.

In closing, CWM Mission Secretary for Discipleship, Spiritualities, and Dialogue, Rev. Dr Graham McGeoch, who was also the service’s liturgist, held a brief memorial as he recalled the names of dearly departed CWM missionaries in the past year.



Bosworth Jayden Ewen



Ntokomalo Mzoneli

CWM INTERN 2025

CWM welcomes two interns in Singapore and South Africa offices

The Council for World Mission (CWM) warmly welcomes two interns who will be deployed in the South Africa and Singapore offices.

Ntokomalo Mzoneli and Bosworth Jayden Ewen were selected from a pool of young candidates for the CWM Internship Programme and the Internship-Training in Mission (TIM) hybrid programme, respectively.

Mzoneli is a member of the Groutville Congregational Church, a member of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA). Meanwhile, Ewen worships at the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (UCJCI).

The two internship deployments, while originating from different programmes within the CWM training structure, both offer exciting opportunities for youths ages 21-30 from CWM member churches to gain valuable working experience within an international mission organisation for six months to a year.

“As CWM has member churches located across six regions (Pacific, Africa, Europe, Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia) with its main office in Singapore, the internships will involve opportunities to work in one or more of these locations, providing an excellent opportunity for our youths to explore, experience, and learn from different work, people, and cultures,” explained Rev. Julie Sim, CWM Mission Secretary for Mission Programme and Partnership.

Through the programme, while interns can expect to develop new skills through cross-cultural experiences and work set-

tings, ample opportunities will also be given to them to get a taste of working with various CWM teams from Programme to Finance to Communications.

They will also receive comprehensive and practical on-the-job training as well as a close mentoring relationship throughout their tenure, ensuring well-rounded support for their professional, personal, and spiritual development.

Flourishing life through education and empowerment

As a participant in the Internship-Training in Mission (TIM) hybrid programme that began in June 2025, Ewen will be working closely with the CWM Mission Secretary for Education and Empowerment, Rev. Dr Amelia Koh-Butler, in a specially curated role that provides him with practical mission engagement as well as contextual theological learning.

Throughout his internship, Ewen, who has experience in children's, youth, young adult, and men's ministries, will be deeply involved in social justice work, youth leadership development, and cross-cultural mission initiatives that engage the diverse community of youths across the CWM network, furthering his skills in leadership, service, and community engagement.

"This TIM-Internship programme presents an exciting opportunity to merge my academic interests with my calling to ministry. I hope to gain hands-on experience in how marketing and communications can support the mission of the church in areas such as evangelism, social advocacy, outreach, and public relations," said Ewen, who believes that the internship will not only strengthen his faith and leadership skills, but also shape his future ministry work in meaningful ways.

Making her mark in CWM ecology and economy initiatives

Interning at the CWM office in Johannesburg, South Africa, for six months beginning 15 July, Mzoneli will be collaborating with Rev. Daimon Mkandawire, CWM Mission Secretary for Ecology and Economy, contributing to CWM's ongoing efforts in ecological justice and economic transformation.

Mzoneli brings to CWM skills in sustainable and eco-friendly design, communication, and administration that she has developed during her previous internship in architectural work.

A self-professed history lover and storyteller, Mzoneli learnt about ecumenism from her youth leaders in church which resulted in her passion in learning from and collaborating with UCCSA's churches at a regional level. "[This is] one of the reasons I was drawn to working at CWM, an organisation that values Christian unity in worship," commented Mzoneli, who also enjoys photography and creating art as a medium to spread the gospel and advocate for social justice.

The CWM team looks forward to the gifts, insights, and energy that these new interns will bring in this season of learning and service!



Rev. Dr Seungbum Kim
Union Theological Seminary (UTS)
Assistant Professor

Sending Church:
Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK)

CWM welcomes Rev. Dr Seungbum Kim as new partner in mission

The Council for World Mission (CWM) warmly welcomes Rev. Dr Seungbum Kim from the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) as a Partner in Mission (PIM). He will serve his PIM term as an Assistant Professor with the Union Theological Seminary in Cavite, Philippines.

Describing his role as a fellow pilgrim seeking liberation and justice together with students and local communities, Kim said, "I pray that we may reflect deeply together on God's liberating love, stand with the oppressed, and imagine new ways to embody freedom, healing, and care for all creation. Through our teaching, learning, and shared struggles, may we nurture a community that lives out the gospel of hope, liberation, and solidarity in our time and place."



Global consultation on environment challenges churches to reject neutrality

Thirty-three participants hailing from various Council for World Mission (CWM) member churches across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Europe, ecumenical and interfaith partners, grassroots climate movements, theological institutions, youth networks, and Indigenous communities gathered in Lusaka, Zambia from 2-6 June for a “Faith at the Forefront of Climate Justice and Renewal” consultation.

The event was a timely prophetic and theological response to the climate crisis, positioning faith as a frontline agent in the struggle for environmental justice.

Positioning itself as a global ecclesial convocation, the gathering of the diverse members of the faith community created a hotbed for conversations on the topic of climate change and collapse, framing it as a crisis that encompasses spiritual, political, and judicial aspects.

Throughout the five days, participants were actively challenged to reject messages of neutrality and avoid complicity with empire in the face of widespread ecological devastation. The consultation also provided a valuable space for the forging of global alliances for radical climate justice activism and policy advocacy and to mark World Environment Day (5 June) with bold, transformative environmental action.

“Faith communities must rise as prophetic voices, challenging structures that perpetuate ecological violence and economic injustice,” said Daimon Mkandawire, CWM Mission Secretary for Ecology and Economy.

“The Scriptures echo a divine call for justice, stewardship, and the restoration of creation. Psalm 24:1 writes ‘*The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.*’ The reckless exploitation of nature is an affront to this sacred trust.”

Amplifying young voices

The consultation served as a platform that amplified the voices of youth speaking truth to power and advocating for a more equitable, sustainable future – recognising the youth as the world’s greatest asset in being both present and future role players in fighting for climate justice.

In light of that goal, a youth panel dialogue on “Generation Now: Faith, Resistance, and the Fight for Climate Justice” spotlighted youth-led movements in the global climate struggle while igniting discussions about innovative faith-based activism for ecological transformation and engaging

emerging youth leaders who are instrumental in shaping the future of climate justice.

“This consultation was not a workshop—it was a pilgrimage. I leave Lusaka feeling awakened and commissioned,” said Dr Malebona Makoetje, a youth participant from Lesotho, who also headed the panel.

Seeds for the future

Participants visited Chipembi Girls’ Secondary School, a United Church of Zambia (UCZ) institution that embodies practical ecological theology.

The visit showcased the school’s commitment to a climate-responsive education featuring school-run tree nurseries, rain-water harvesting systems, and an integrated eco-curriculum. At the same time, the visit also underscored how a robust education for girls and faith-rooted environmental action can come together to confront empire’s exploitation of both women and land.

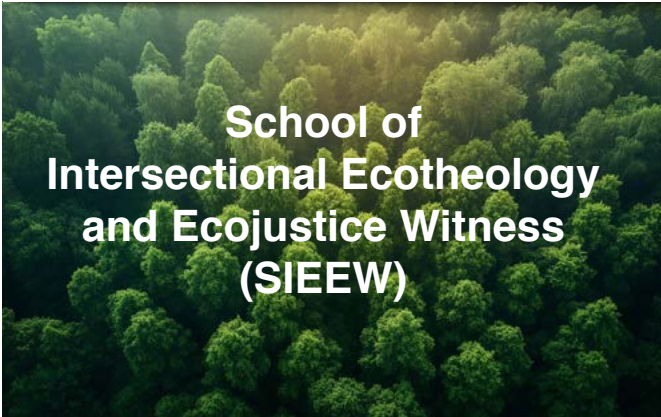
Subsequently, participants toured student-managed biogas digesters, hydroponic gardens, poultry farms, and vegetable gardens that fully illustrated the integration of ecological resilience, theological imagination, and youth empowerment.

To mark World Environment Day on 5 June, trees were planted by the participants on the campus, symbolising a rooted resistance, a nascent prophetic hope, and a commitment to ecological renewal.

“We are not *just* planting trees. We are planting resistance, memory, and futures. Every seed we place in the soil indicts the logic of empire and testifies to our conviction that faith must disrupt destruction,” declared Mkandawire. “The church must become a sanctuary of soil, a temple of trees, a people rooted in justice.”



Enroll Now

School of Intersectional Ecotheology and Ecojustice Witness (SIEEW)

The School of Intersectional Ecotheology and Ecojustice Witness (SIEEW) is a transformative and immersive program designed to empower young individuals to become advocates for social and environmental justice.

**26 Nov to 12 Dec 2025
Johannesburg,
South Africa.**

Start your learning journey with the School of Intersectional Ecotheology and Ecojustice Witness (SIEEW) 2025

The School of Intersectional Ecotheology and Ecojustice Witness (SIEEW) is looking for passionate individuals between the ages of 18 and 35, eager to learn about addressing the urgent environmental challenges of our time. Do you, as a youth of today, believe in the power of intersectionality and the need for social and environmental justice? If so, SIEEW is the perfect place for you!

Organised by the Council for World Mission, SIEEW is a transformative and action-oriented programme that aims to create safe and inclusive spaces for deep learning, inquiry, and discussions on the intersectional issues related to environmental justice and theology. SIEEW gives our students the opportunities to build a community of eco-justice witnesses and become advocates for the earth and its inhabitants.

What to Expect:

- 1. Deep Learning and Supportive Environment:** SIEEW offers a comprehensive programme that begins on September 2025, with online sessions that run until November 2025. During this phase, you will engage in lectures, workshops, and interactive discussions, all within a supportive environment that encourages deep learning and exploration.
- 2. In-person Immersion:** From 26 November to 12 December 2025, you will travel to Johannesburg, South Africa, for an immersive experience. This phase of the programme will provide invaluable hands-on learning opportunities, allowing you to work directly with environmental groups and live alongside communities affected by environmental injustices.

3. **Critical Thinking and Analysis Skills:** Develop your critical thinking and analysis skills related to environmental justice and theology. Learn how to identify and analyse systemic injustices and uncover opportunities for advocacy and activism. Gain the knowledge and tools to become an agent of change in your community.
4. **Eco-justice Witness Practices:** Engage in hands-on experiences and group collaborations to develop and implement eco-justice witness practices. Discover the power of advocacy, activism, and community organising as you work with environmental groups and live alongside communities in South Africa. Make a tangible difference in the lives of those affected by environmental injustices.
5. **Building a Community:** Connect with like-minded individuals from diverse backgrounds who share your passion for social and environmental justice. Develop a sense of community and shared purpose as eco-justice witnesses. Network, collaborate, and support one another during and after the program. Together, we can create a more just and sustainable world.

How to apply?

Applications and enquiries should be submitted to eco-eco-justice@cwmission.org by 24 August 2025.



Face 2 Face 2025 call for applications: “Land and Deep Sea Mining” in the Pacific

The Council for World Mission (CWM) invites applications for Face 2 Face 2025, an immersive cross-cultural learning programme designed to engage young people in mission and ecological justice.

This year's programme, “Land and Deep-Sea Mining,” will take place on the Pacific island of Nauru from 1 to 11 October 2025. It will explore the severe environmental degradation caused by over a century of phosphate mining, initially by colonial powers and subsequently by the independent nation itself. This extractive history has resulted in a barren landscape of limestone pinnacles and the degradation and loss of fertile land.

The programme will help participants critically engage with post-colonial perspectives through a deeply contextual experience and understand how empire and global capitalism have adversely impacted ecosystems and communities in places like Nauru.

Programme highlights include:

- Environmental exposures
- Community encounters
- Theological reflection and dialogue
- Mentored projects and advocacy

How to apply?

Applications and enquiries should be submitted to eco-ecojustice@cwmission.org by 22 August 2025.



WCC conference denounces destruction of Armenian culture, urges international collaborative action

As a collective Christian response to the forced displacement of the Armenian population and the ongoing destruction of their sacred heritage during a military operation by Azerbaijan in September 2023, the World Council of Churches (WCC), alongside the Protestant Church in Switzerland, convened a two-day conference in Bern, Switzerland, on the Preservation of Armenian Religious, Cultural and Historical Heritage in Artsakh and Nagorno Karabakh from 27-28 May.

The Council for World Mission (CWM), represented by Rev. Dr Graham McGeoch, Mission Secretary for Discipleship and Dialogue, also attended the conference which drew an international gathering of ecumenical and faith leaders committed to truth-telling, memory preservation, and coordinated global action to safeguard humanity's shared legacy.

Armenians face forced displacement, heritage erasure

Over the two years since the Azerbaijani occupation, more than 120,000 Armenians were left homeless, many of whom had suffered repeated forced displacement during previous conflicts that took place in the 1990s.

Actively building upon current international legal frameworks, including the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and relevant UNESCO conventions, the conference was one that found itself deeply rooted in the principles of human dignity, religious freedoms, and cultural rights while recognising the inseparable relationships shared between cultural heritage and identity, and justice.

The conference sought to not only highlight the plight of the Armenians and bear witness to the widespread destruction of their sacred and cultural sites but also aimed to create a platform whereby the global church and its partners can reaffirm their moral imperatives, underscore spiritual responsibilities, and renew the community's commitment to interfaith collaboration; while calling for coordinated international action to prevent further erasure of Armenian culture, support the return of native Armenians to their land, and to work actively towards the liberation of numerous Armenian hostages in captivity in Baku.

In a statement released after the conference, the WCC repeated its stance that the destruction of cultural heri-

tage constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law and an affront against humanity.

“We call on the international community, particularly the United Nations and UNESCO, to ensure accountability and uphold their mandates for the protection of cultural and religious heritage,” reads a statement released by the conference. “We also affirm the right of return of displaced populations to their ancestral lands under conditions of safety, dignity, and non-discrimination.”

Heritage protection a step towards reconciliation

Participants of the conference also heard firsthand accounts from survivors and representatives of Armenian communities from Artsakh and Nagorno Karabakh of the horrific conditions through which they had survived and drew invaluable lessons from similar cases of cultural destruction in history that have happened in other countries such as Cyprus, Greece, and Iraq.

“[This conference] asserts the importance of preserving memory and protecting identity in times of political transition and in contexts of occupation. Heritage, when protected, can be a source of reconciliation. When destroyed, it deepens trauma and injustice,” said the conference statement.



4th International Conference on Financing for Development Seville, Spain, 2025

NIFEA conference: “Faith communities to move beyond charity, drive structural transformation”

In a concrete step to address the various injustices of debt, climate finance, and economic inequality, especially in the contexts of the Global South, the Council for World Mission (CWM), in collaboration with World Council of Churches (WCC), World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), Lutheran World Federation, World Methodist Council, United Society Partners in the Gospel, All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), and ACT Alliance, jointly organised an on-line conference on 1 July attended by more than 100 global participants, including representatives from faith communities, civil society, and multilateral institutions.

Entitled, “New International Financial and Economic Architecture (NIFEA): Faith-based Perspectives on Financing the Future,” the one-day virtual conference served as a platform for faith-rooted perspectives on the moral and ethical crises

underpinning the global financial system. The ecumenical think-tank also sought to galvanise its participants to reimagine an economic architecture grounded in care, justice, and ecological restoration.

A joint message was drafted at the conference and addressed to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), urging a profound transformation of the global financial system.

The FfD4 meeting, coordinated by the United Nations, brings together governments, international financial institutions, civil society, and the private sector to collectively shape global policies that mobilise resources for sustainable development. It convened from 30 June to 3 July in Seville, Spain.

Not remaining complicit in neutrality

Featuring two panels that spoke on and sparked dialogues over tax jus-

tice, debt, and climate finance, with contributions from experts grounded in faith, economics, and activism, the sessions also in brought together prophetic voices from attending youth, women, members of Indigenous communities, and the global church—ruminating on lived experiences of economic violence and sharing stories of spiritual resistance.

“Africa’s debt is robbing us of our future. While billions are paid to creditors, our schools crumble, our dreams are deferred, and our potential is mortgaged away. We are not asking for charity—we are demanding justice,” cried Simbarashe Hunzvi, a youth economist and activist based in Zimbabwe.

Meanwhile, CWM Mission Secretary for Ecology and Economy, Rev. Daimon Mkandawire, brought home the reality that the prevailing global economy system is not neutral ground but a battleground of morals, where faith demands resistance to injustice and reinvestment in life-flourishing alternatives.

“Our faith does not permit neutrality in the face of injustice. To finance a future that leaves no one behind, we must begin not with GDP metrics, but with the sacred worth of every being and the call to repair what Empire has broken,” stressed Mkandawire.

A move beyond charity towards structural reform

Being more than just a platform for powerful discussions, the conference also sounded a clarion call for faith communities to move beyond charity towards structural transformation—resisting death-dealing systems and reimagining an economic order grounded in justice, sustainability, and the dignity of all creation.

The ecumenical event rallied global faith communities and partners to move towards increased collaboration between faith-based organisations and global economic reform movements.

As a global missiological role-player and partner, CWM has also pledged to continue to advocate for reparatory climate finance and alternative financing mechanisms through upcoming multilateral forums.

Additionally, the development of a new policy brief based on insights gleaned from the panel sessions was announced.



Ritual, Resistance and Liberation

A Global Intersectional Perspective

New CWM title explores potential of rituals for liberation

The Council for World Mission (CWM) is releasing *Ritual, Resistance, and Liberation: A Global Intersectional Perspective* in late June, published in conjunction with SCM Press, a British publisher of theological titles.

This book is part of a new series of volumes from the Council for World Mission's DARE (Discernment and Radical Engagement) programme.

Authored by Dr Jin Young Choi, Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins and Professorial Chair in Biblical Studies of the Baptist Missionary Training School at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, *Ritual, Resistance, and Liberation: A Global Intersectional Perspective* explores the intersections of ritual with mechanisms and forces of power such as patriarchy, tradition, colonialism, authoritarianism, and capitalism.

The 240-page volume also details the potential of rituals for resistance, resilience, and restoration.

Helmed by 12 contributors with links to ten countries – Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, India, Mexico, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, and the USA – the

collection of writings draws readers to reflect on discursive and performative ritual spaces where painful histories are revisited, traumas of oppression healed, and where impossible futures of coexistence and flourishing are reimagined.

Scan the QR code to order the book.



Consultation notice: proposed changes to permanent endowment funds

In keeping with the modern missiological landscape and demands that come from supporting missional work, the Council for World Mission (CWM) has put forward a proposal during the recent Board of Directors meeting in Songdo, South Korea, to update two historic funds under its care: the Missionaries Support Fund and the Harold Granger Bequest.

As the two funds were established over a century ago, they feature purposes and permanent endowment rules that limit their flexibility in addressing the demands of modern missional work.

“Updating the purposes and releasing the capital for use—while still maintaining restrictions aligned with the funds’ original intent—will allow for more effective support of modern missionary work, particularly through the Mission Support Programme (MSP),” explained Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum, CWM General Secretary.

The proposed changes will aim to align the use of these funds with CWM’s current mission strategy, which emphasises leadership development, equitable resource sharing, and collaborative engagement with member churches.

“By enabling both the income and capital of the funds to be used, CWM hopes to better respond to growing needs, including support for newly admitted member churches and the upcoming launch of MSP (V) in 2026,” said Keum after the proposal was approved by the Board to proceed with the formal legal process of freeing up the funds.

CWM members are also invited to review the proposal and share their comments via email at cwm.ogs@cwmission.org by 30 August 2025.

The proposal can be read in full [here](#).





CWM sends emergency grant to South African flood survivors in Mthatha and Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape (EC) province of South Africa was recently hit by intense floods, caused by heavy rain and an unusual extreme cold front, that devastated homes and displaced communities.

The flood in early June struck while many were still asleep. Floodwaters reportedly rose more than three meters in many places while heavy rains and snow swept across the countryside.

Home to a largely rural population of 7.2 million, the EC province immediately found itself grappling with an extremely difficult task of providing timely rescue and aid to its beleaguered population due to terrain and a lack of equipment and personnel.

Mthatha, located in the OR Tambo District Municipality of the EC province, was hardest hit and authorities have warned that a rapidly increasing death toll will exceed the 100 reported at press time.

According to official numbers, more than 4,300 residents have been affected by floods that have uprooted more than 4,000 households and inflicted roof damage on another 1,963 families.

The raging waters have also disrupted classes for more than 48,000 students, causing widespread damages estimated at 220 million U.S. dollars.

CWM stands in solidarity with flood survivors

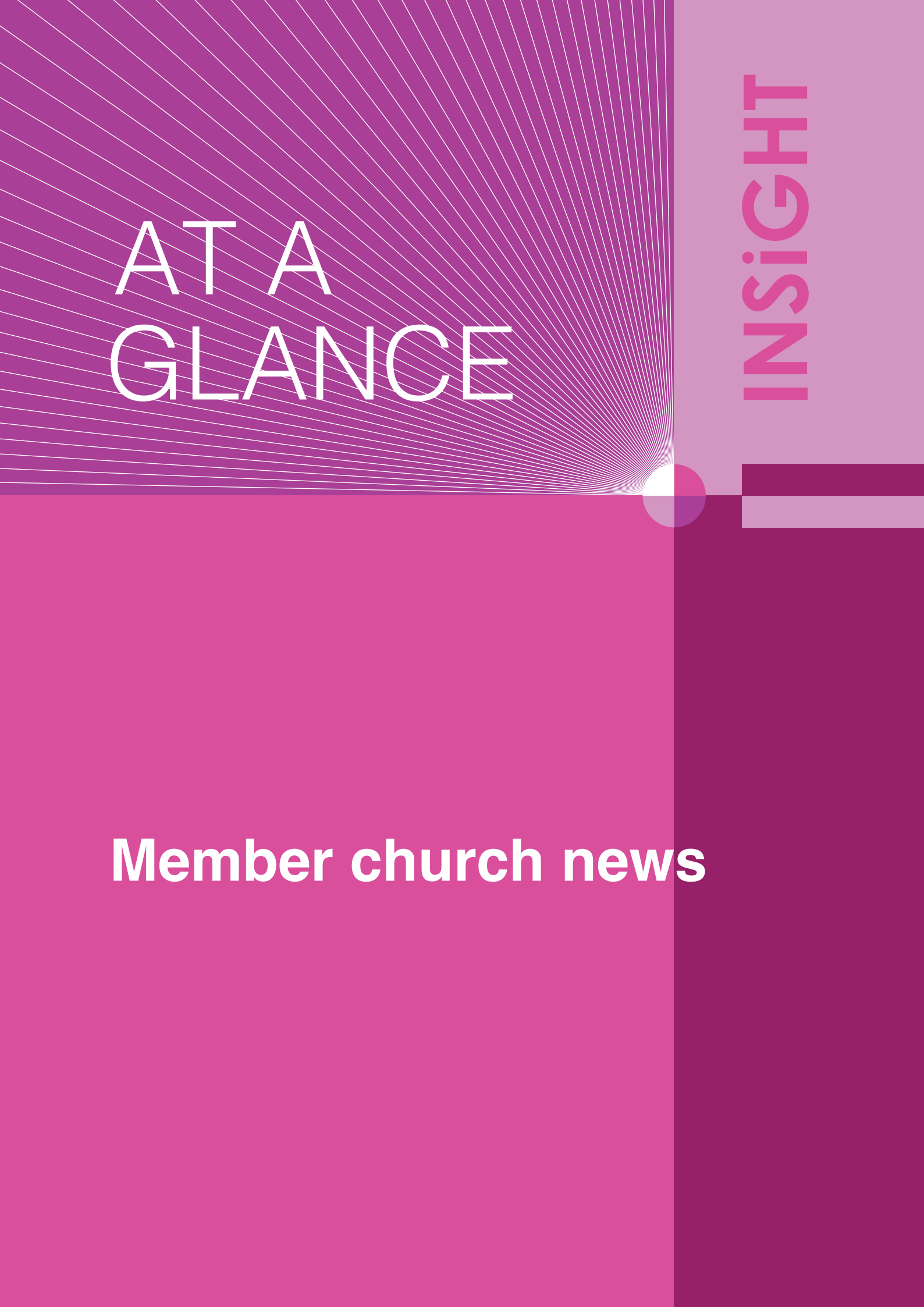
The Uniting Presbyterian Church in South Africa (UPCSA) sounded the call for aid soon after the disaster, expressing its shock and dismay at the “continued incidence of extreme weather and subsequent devastating flooding in Mthatha and surrounding areas in the Eastern Cape.”

“What brings the tragedy closer is that it involved some of our own members, and it is the location of our General Assembly, which met from 28 June to 3 July. Our congregations are already mobilised and offering assistance and care to those affected,” said Rev. Dr George Marchinkowski, General Secretary of the UPCSA.

Marchinkowski also announced a Mthatha Disaster Fund to provide monetary aid and in-kind donations to flood survivors.

In solidarity with UPCSA and to help with the church’s work to alleviate the suffering of the affected communities, the Council for World Mission (CWM) dispensed an emergency grant.

As aid efforts continue to progress in the disaster zones, CWM seeks the collective prayers of our partners and members for God’s timely intervention and mercy in this difficult season for the communities of Eastern Cape, Mthatha, and the UPCSA.



AT A
GLANCE

INSiGHT

Member church news



Church of South India celebrates prophetic strength of women in Philosophia graduation

During the 16th Church of South India (CSI) Triennial Women's Conference, 62 Philosophia graduates from 23 dioceses were celebrated and dedicated by Rev. Dr Pricilla, President of the CSI Women's Fellowship; and Rev. Dr John Samuel Ponnusamy, former Principal of Gurukul Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Philosophia is an eight-month online course launched by the CSI Women's Fellowship on 26 September last year with the goal of inspiring and influencing women members to come to the forefront of the church while gaining the correct interpretation and knowledge of the Bible.

Graduates were conferred certificates by Ponnusamy, Dr Laila Vijayan, a Professor in the Old Testament at United Theological College (UTC), and Dr Saju Mary Abraham, a Professor in the New Testament at Kerala United Theological Seminary (KUTS), in recognition of the graduates' spiritual and theological formation.

Mementos were also presented to the graduates by Pricilla in honour of their commitment.

During the ceremony, Ponnusamy also spoke at length on the prophetic strength of women in Scripture while Saju emphasised to the female graduates the importance of living out their faith through bold action. A reflection led by Vijayan delved into identity and leadership through biblical women like Deborah and Mary.

Graduates, Sis. Thelagavathi and Mrs Jyothiraj Manchala, also took to the stage to express their heartfelt testimonies. A special song titled "Philosophia," composed and performed by Mrs Suneela from Rayalaseema, added to the joyous celebrations.

The graduation was concluded with a dedication prayer, commissioning each graduate to step out with Jesus in faithful service and witness.



Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar president calls for prayers for upcoming General Synod

In a message to Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) members, FJKM President Rev. Dr Irako Andriamahazoso Ammi appealed for prayers as “the FJKM will face an important period in its history this year and that is the 20th General Synod.” The General Synod will be held in Tolagnaro (southeastern coast of the island) from 13-20 August.

The General Synod, which takes place every four years, is the decision-making body of the FJKM. Ammi stated that important decisions affecting the policy of the FJKM for 2025-2029 will be made during the General Synod, including the form of its witness within the nation and all over the world.

One hundred members of the Central Committee comprising the new FJKM President and the Executive Committee will be elected during the General Synod. “These people will be chosen to undertake valuable and vital responsibilities, and to be held accountable for sacred and very heavy duties, so pray for the General Synod” emphasized the current President of the FJKM.

Around 400 participants are expected at the gathering. All members of the church are urged to pray for the preparation, budget, documents, infrastructure, and the meeting process including the decisions and the various elections, and for the

post-general synod when the newly-elected persons will implement the major decisions.

Ammi highlighted that the General Synod is “not an issue for the people who will gather in Tolagnaro alone, but is actually a work of the entire FJKM churches, so each individual – in their personal prayers, each household in their daily communal prayer, each church and each ministry, each branch, each regional synod, will organize a time to pray specifically for the General Synod and observe a moment of fasting.”

The current President of the FJKM acknowledged that many discussions and ideas are circulating around the General Synod as it is a turning point in the life of the FJKM. Therefore, he exhorted the members to hold fast to the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 16:18: “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

To conclude his message, Ammi encouraged FJKM church members to pray that the glory of God will be revealed, “because I believe that when the church prays, God reveals his glory.”



Kiribati Uniting Church organises gender equality theology outreach

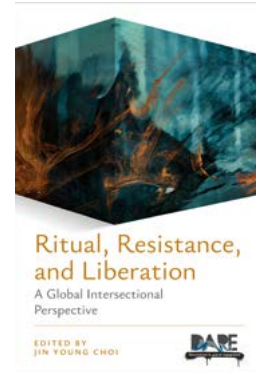
The Kiribati Uniting Church (KUC) facilitated a workshop on gender equality viewed from a theological perspective. The workshop, which was held from 28 May to 4 June, was part of the KUC Gender Equality Theology (GET) Project which promotes societal inclusion and peace within families.

More than 20 participants attended the workshop which included pastors, deacons, and church representatives from different villages. The workshop proved to be a safe space for the participants who openly shared, dialogued, and listened intently to each other as ideas on gender in relation to Kiribati culture, God, and the Bible were presented.

Most of the topics discussed offered a new perspective and understanding of the patriarchal Kiribati context where women are always considered second class. The workshop also opened a new pathway to understanding the contextual issues in families and how to address them as Christians.

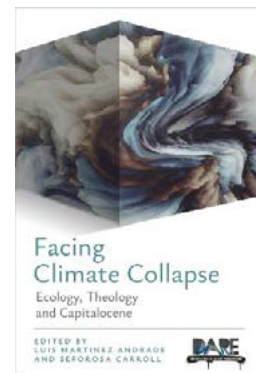
Ritual, Resistance, and Liberation

This volume explores the intersections of ritual with mechanisms and forces of power such as patriarchy, tradition, colonialism, authoritarianism, and capitalism on the one hand and ritual's potential for resistance, resilience, and restoration on the other hand. With links to ten countries - Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, India, Mexico, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, and the USA - the twelve contributors collectively demonstrate the ways in which ritual can operate as a mode of resistance and liberation.



Facing Climate Collapse

Collectively offering a rigorous examination of diverse theological perspectives, including ecofeminist antiwar theology and a reimagining of salvation in the context of climate change, the chapters in this book present perspectives on ecological justice, indigenous wisdom, and congregational ecclesiology in Southern Africa. With contributions from various academic voices, including many from the Global South, this volume invites readers to engage with innovative concepts, challenge established paradigms, and explore fresh approaches to the pressing ecological issues of our era.



Decolonizing Development and Religion

In this volume, present-day development and decolonial discourses are engaged together from a plurality of perspectives from various continents around the globe. In the chapters that follow, the work of junior and senior scholars enters into conversation around specific communities that exist in the tensions of traditional and capitalist economies and religions, providing models of flourishing that produce alternatives to the prevalent neoliberal models of development that are wedded to neocolonial economic, political, and religious structures.



These books are part of a new series of volumes published by the Council for World Mission's DARE (Discernment and Radical Engagement) programme.



Council for World Mission Ltd.

114 Lavender Street
#12-01, CT Hub 2
Singapore 338729

T: (65) 6887 3400
F: (65) 6235 7760
E: council@cwmission.org
W: www.cwmission.org

Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in Singapore
Unique Entity Number 201206146Z

Copyright © 2025 Council for World Mission Ltd. All Rights Reserved.
Content may not be reproduced, downloaded, disseminated, published,
or transferred in any form or by any means, except with the prior written
permission of Council for World Mission Ltd.