

Council for World Mission Legacies of Slavery Project



CWM's legacies project is primarily about addressing the roots of racialised inequalities and injustices today and owning that they lie in part in the rhetoric, praxis and fund raising of mission societies like CWM's forebear London Missionary Society. LMS, with others, developed and perpetuated a racist colonial anthropology with which it recruited, made money and occupied White and Black minds, lands and bodies, dressing in in Christian vision.



CWM continues to pursue the legacies project work, following the Board's commitment to address our complicity through acts of repentance and reparation. The work focuses on these general areas:



- ▣ Strategising and advocating the long-term scope of this work with the CWM Board and with member churches
- ▣ Continuing scrutiny of the CWM archive
- ▣ Critiquing Whiteness
- ▣ Promoting Black critique
- ▣ Extending and connecting the legacies work with regions beyond the geography of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade



Work in progress:



"THERE COMES
A TIME WHEN
SILENCE IS
BETRAYAL."

MLK

CWM Act of Repentance and Apology

August 23rd 2021

The Board has set this date for CWM's act of repentance and apology. It will be a virtual event hosted on-line by CWM and led by the Board of Directors. In this we aim to confess the legacies of slavery in our life and begin the process of sending CWM to being an organisation committed to reparation and anti-racist action. It will be a moment in which CWM speaks for itself, not its members, but calls on its members to bear witness to the same need for self-transformation if we are to enable life to flourish in a world where race continues to divide and oppress. It will also enable CWM to press for similar action by other mission organisations and especially the governments of the former and current colonial powers.



Regional gatherings (March – June 2021)

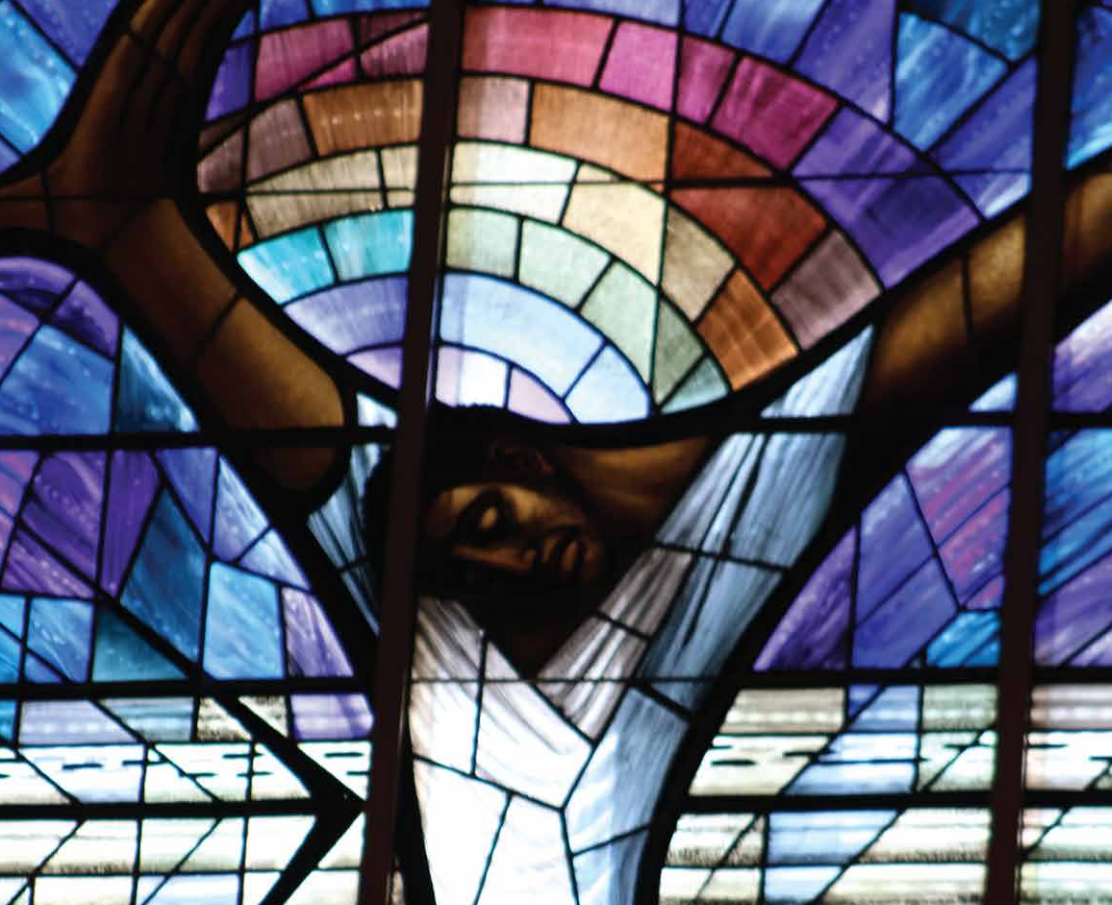
There will be a series of regional meetings to familiarise the wider membership with the Legacies findings as we move to the act of repentance



Member church Legacies processes

CWM staff are also engaging with and available for legacies conversations within the member churches. Two churches in the Europe region, the URC and UWI, have launched their own Legacies processes, through which they are addressing their own history and complicity in enslavement and the racism which has grown out of that. An ecumenical conversation has begun in the Netherlands responding to wider community pressure to address Dutch colonial history. Conversations with colleagues from member Churches (and ecumenical Partners) in the Caribbean underscore how the legacies of slavery agenda is timely and urgent to highlight and expose the historic roots of contemporary inequality in the Jamaican (and Caribbean) context, especially over land rights and access





Developing regional models for ongoing work

CWM is moving beyond the first phase of the Legacies work, particularly addressing the dynamic of Anti-Black racism within the framework of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade. We want now to examine the inter-sections with the other regions and spaces, White Colonial Christianity occupied in the name of Christ. This is to show the continuities and be open to dis-continuities, but to continue to confront the global pandemic of Anti-Black racism. There will be regional gatherings to plot out a relevant process. Exploring intersections with Indentureship will provide a key plank in this work, as it gathers South, East Asia and the Pacific into the legacies of slavery.

Pacific Legacies Talanoa process

CWM has arranged with Trinity Theological College, Auckland a series of 6 talanoa to address the legacies of slavery and colonisation in Aotearoa and Oceania. They will address the impact Christian mission has had on Pasifika history, rhetoric and politics. Scholars and activists from several Pasifika contexts will gather to map out some of the key areas mission must address in order to fully de-colonise itself of its racist premise and practice.

History

March 20th and March 27th

Rhetoric

June 20th and June 27th

Politics

Sept 19th and Sept 26th

More details from CWM Pacific

nikotemo.sopepa@cwmission.org

fuata.vareasingh@cwmission.org

Trinity College

nvakauta@trinitycollege.ac.nz





Research on Children and Racism

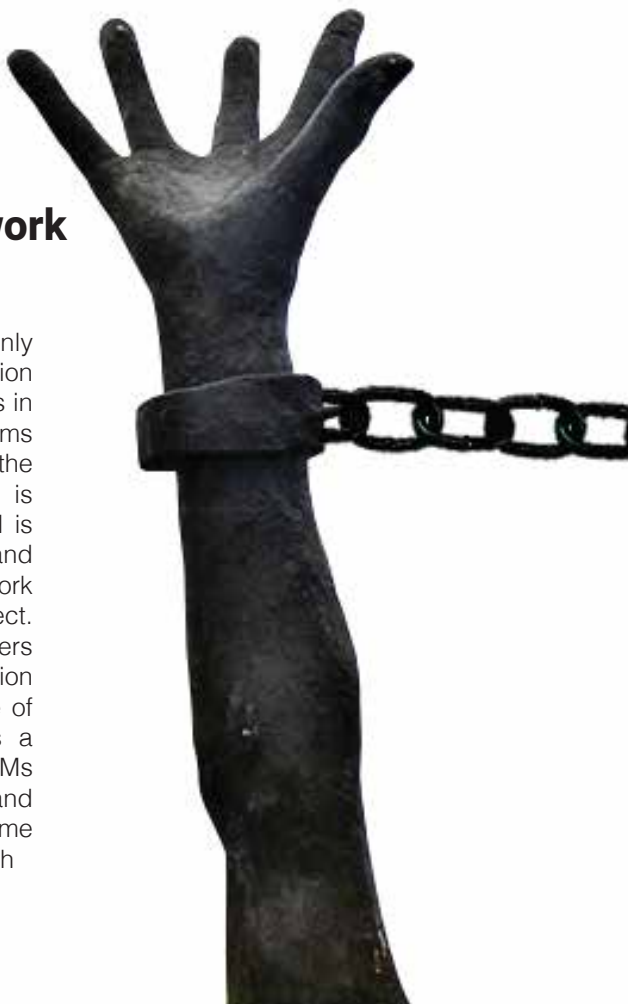
It is clear from the CWM archive how much of the racist mission thinking of LMS and others was targeted at children. They were told stories of native cruelty and white missionary heroism so that they might give their money to the work of LMS and so that they might consider becoming missionaries themselves. We are seeking to consider how to amend for this through two research projects based in the UK. The first is based in the Oxford Centre for Religion and Culture who are overseeing further archival research on the materials produced for mission Christian education. The second is based in Birkbeck college, London, who are overseeing research into contemporary Christian Education materials to examine what materials exist or need to be created to enable churches to be safe spaces for children of all races. Both are scheduled to report in the summer of 2021.

Caribbean art project visualising Legacies of Slavery

CWM is working with the University of the West Indies Institute of Caribbean Studies and Reggae Studies and the Edna Manley College to produce artwork that further unmasks the legacies of slavery in a Caribbean context. These will be community art projects enabling artists and communities to name for themselves the ongoing legacies. Artwork is scheduled for presentation by Aug 2021.

Reparations and Economic Justice work (ZacTax)

The legacies of slavery are not only located in Christian mission organisations but root themselves in the economic and political systems which grew out of colonisation in the dominance of Capitalism, which is itself a legacy of slavery. CWM is committed with WCC, WCRC and LWF in economic justice work together through the NIFEA project. CWM is working with these partners to make reparation for colonisation and climate change a key piece of our advocacy and action. As a result, CWM has commissioned Ms Priya Lukka, an economist and reparations activist, to map out some key elements of a campaign which



calls for a global tax to enable reparation, the Zac Tax. Meetings are planned to engage member churches in Europe and Caribbean, alongside our NIFEA partners to help steer the work and shape the outcomes.

Whiteness work:

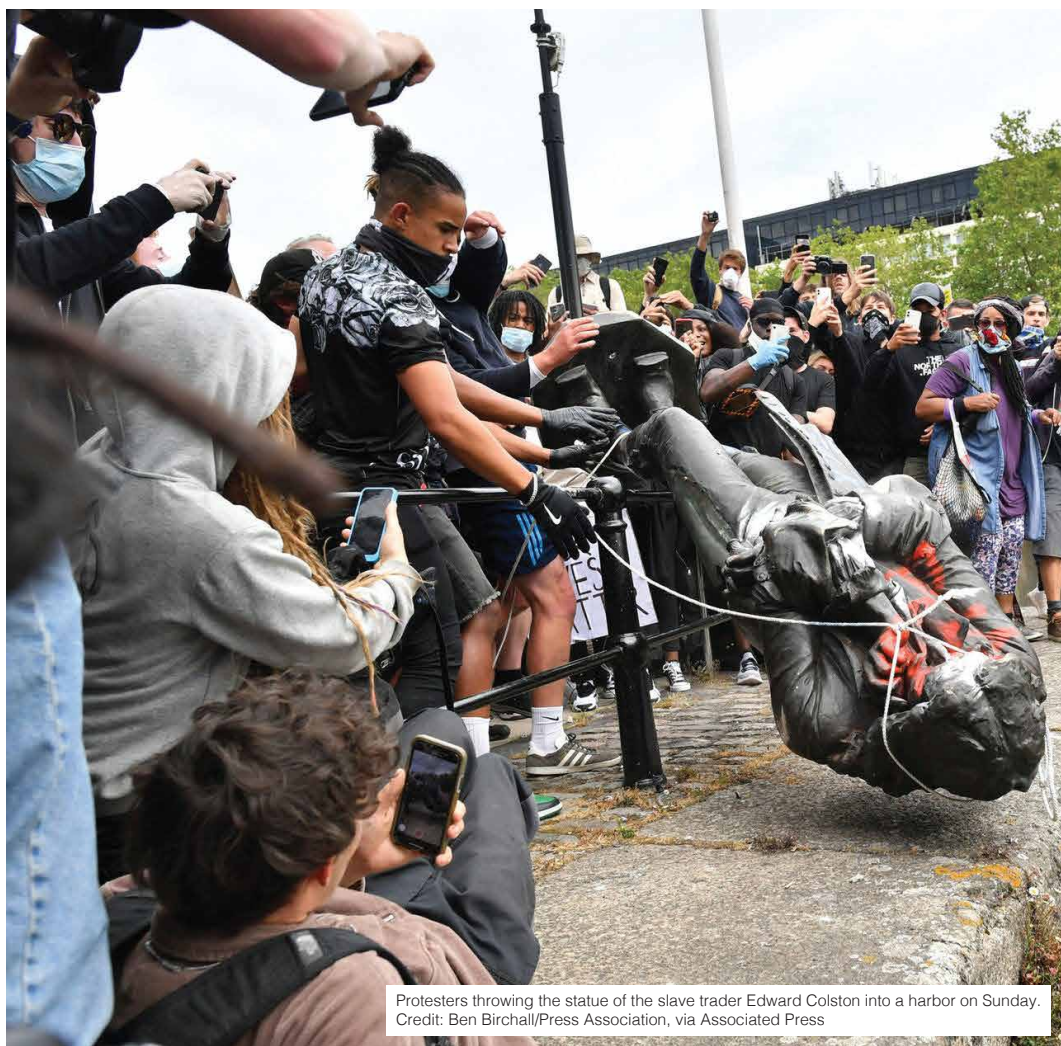
Covid revealed again the racialised nature of inequality and injustice in our world. 2020 also gave a moment of challenge whether in reality Black lives matter. CWM legacies work has begun to address Whiteness therefore in a series of ways. We will shortly launch the Mayflower project which will address the history of White colonial violence from the perspective of the communities worldwide who have had to spend 400 years resisting it.

Materials have been produced to open up anti-racist visions of Church and the implications this has for how white people and systems function in churches. Work will begin shortly to look at the ways Liturgy has been a vehicle for White supremacy, especially in the Ecumenical and Development sectors. A series of symposia will begin to unpack this further. Inter-religious perspectives on whiteness are also being sought, which will connect with the ways White supremacism became Christian supremacism as well as see if Whiteness is being addressed in other faith traditions to Christianity.



Praying down the Statues

Building on the legacies street bible studies where people have gathered to read the Bible on sites of colonial and racist violence work is beginning on examples of how churches can pray down the statues and sites commemorating historic figures with connections to enslavement and racist oppression. 2020 saw moments inspired by the Black Lives Matters movements which exposed the lauding of figures whose exploits and profits from enslavement are commemorated in statues and public sites. This has spurred calls for statues to be removed and for history to be told more honestly and critically. As we move to our own act of confession CWM is developing other public and virtual acts of witness to expose hidden history and challenge the veneration of such figures as Nelson, Rhodes and others.



Protesters throwing the statue of the slave trader Edward Colston into a harbor on Sunday.
Credit: Ben Birchall/Press Association, via Associated Press

Wider Advocacy

CWM legacies work continues to be shared with other partners as requested, particularly with the WCC as they restart their Programme to Combat Racism, it has also enabled dialogue with new partners like the PCUSA. Plans are developing to bring together UK based mission societies to see if there is common concern and energy to develop a wider legacies commitment.



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