



IRISH METHODIST
WORLD DEVELOPMENT
& RELIEF

Service Material 2017/18

To be used in conjunction with the 2017/18 Report and 1% Appeal offering envelopes (distributed at September Methodist Synods).

*“Embracing Others,
Embracing Opportunity”*



**‘I have no
technology’ version**

**A version exists for those with
technology.
Visit the website at
www.methodistworlddevelopment.org**

Guidance

Do not confuse WDR and its work with another department of the Methodist Church in Ireland, World Mission Partnership (formerly ‘Methodist Missionary Society (Ireland)’. They each help MCI fulfil different aspects of international mission. Also, someone relating their own ‘overseas’ experience does not represent the work of WDR. Please use this carefully thought-out material for your annual Irish Methodist World Development & Relief service.

Theme:

As Methodists, we are to accept all people and accept opportunities to help all people.

Aims:

- To explain WDR, its work and that of its partners
- To help Methodists understand how faith and works amongst the materially poor are linked
- To point listeners to opportunities to engage with WDR through giving, praying and volunteering

TELL THE WHOLE STORY

You wouldn't tell a joke without the punchline nor read a book by simply reading the middle chapter. They wouldn't make sense. Therefore, we ask that you use all the aspects of the service material, i.e. introduction, children's talk, readings and adult sermon in their entirety, as everything is linked. The work of WDR and its partners will only make full sense if everything is shared with the audience. So please do not use snippets of information, do the whole thing.

Available materials:

- Sermon outline (with partner stories), children's talk, readings and prayer (in this document)
- Visual aids – Annual Reports in hands of congregation
- Children's talk – Annual Report and hearing aid

HAVE YOU ACCESS TO A DIGITAL PROJECTOR TO SHOW PPTs AND VIDEOS WITH SOUND? THEN YOU NEED THE TECHNOLOGY VERSION OF THESE NOTES. GO TO THE WEBSITE AND DOWNLOAD EVERYTHING; notes, PPTs, videos.

Teenagers, reports and envelopes:

Young adults and teenagers should stay in church to hear the positive stories from WDR. Give their leaders a week off. Reports and envelopes should be given to every family as they enter the service (not the week before or after the service).

Worship:

Please choose pieces that are appropriate for the theme and also your congregation's preference.

The Service

Pre-service

1. Make sure you have all the reports and offering envelopes that you need
2. Give out the reports and envelopes to individuals and families as they arrive

Setting the scene

Welcome to our World Development & Relief service.

The virtue of charity has been represented in art as a woman holding a baby and with a poor child (or waif) clinging to her dress. For the Victorians, 'Charity' was the belief that many in society could not look after themselves; widows, orphans, the poor and they needed a hand-out, someone to look after them. Hospitals were opened, soup kitchens, schools. And the Methodists were at the forefront of all this. All good work.

But general thinking on how best to help the materially poor has greatly changed. Irish Methodist World Development & Relief believes that the vast majority of the poor have the ability, knowledge and desire to change their circumstances. Everyone has the potential to make changes and be as God intended them. BUT they may need some help initially.

In keeping with WDR's ethos of 'People not Projects', we'll be meeting and hearing people from Lebanon, South Africa and Ethiopia. We will reflect upon how we can embrace others by embracing opportunities to help them and how they are embracing opportunities to do things in new ways.

And, by doing this, we may all know God's care and love.

Opening Prayer (based upon Colossians 2, the reading)

God of grace and God of glory,

come and be known to us

in our gathering together;

come and be present in the songs we sing

and in the prayers we raise.

From the busy byways of life,

we come to find once again

that you are always present

and always ready to receive us.

As we affirm our faith this day,

deepen the roots of our commitment,

that we may learn your calling upon our lives.

Surround us now

with the love and comfort of your Holy Spirit
and the direction and redemption of Christ.

Amen.

Children's talk

This should be 5-6 min maximum. If there are only a few children or the group is very young, just ask children to stay with their families in the seats and then speak to the whole audience.

Start 'talking' to the children by moving lips but making no sound. Go past the point of it being seemingly funny but actually a bit odd or uncomfortable. Then state (audibly) how this is how we must look to people who are deaf. Alternatively you could show a hearing aid and explain what it is for.

Image of girl on front of Annual Report

That might seem odd but that is what it would be like for someone who cannot hear, a person who is deaf.

They would know I am talking but would not know what I am saying.

Here in Ireland if a child is deaf there are lots of things to help them: special schools, hearing aids and being taught sign language or lip-reading.

Refer to Rama, the little girl on front of Annual Report

This is Rama. She lives in Beirut in Lebanon. Lebanon is very different to here.

But Rama is very much like you – she would like doing all the things you like to do..

But also, Rama is deaf. She cannot hear.

In Lebanon, there isn't as much help for people who are deaf.

But Rama is very lucky as she goes to the Father Andeweg (And – eh – vegg) School for the Deaf.

This school does not have everything that our schools for the deaf would have here. They struggle to do everything they want to do for over 70 children.

Our church, through World Development & Relief, helps the school with teaching materials, food, teachers' pay. Just the basic things to make the school work.

But Rama's school is doing a great thing. Something we can learn from.

Lebanon, where Rama lives, is next door to a country called Syria.

Syria is a very dangerous country. There is fighting and many families with their children have run away from Syria into Lebanon. People who have to leave their homes so they can be safe, are called refugees.

There isn't really enough room for all the refugees in Lebanon and so they stay in camps not houses.

Now we might go on a camping holiday for a few days but living in a tent all the time is very hard; through hot summers and freezing winters. Not enough food or water.

And what if you are deaf? There is no help for deaf children in the refugee camps. No special schools or teachers. You cannot hear anything anyone is saying.

Well actually, there is help now. Because people from Rama's school are now going to one of the camps.

The camp is in the Bekaa Valley and has 800,000 (nearly 1 million) refugees in it.

In just one part of the valley there are 120 children with really bad hearing loss.

None have ever been to school. None have had a hearing aid. None have ever heard any sound or spoken a word.

So, they have no way of learning like you do.

Rama's school is going to set up a small school for the deaf in the camp. Also, some of the refugee children will be joining Rama's school. ([Refer to page 2 of Annual Report showing two refugee children who've already started at Rama's school](#))

So, Rama's school, although it does not have much itself, is trying to help those who have even less.

God tells us that we should welcome strangers and help them as much as we can.

Let us pray for Rama and her deaf friends. Let us thank God for the Father Andeweg school and how they are helping others. Let us pray for the refugees. And let us ask God to make us kind and generous to people who need our help.

Pray with the children

Offering

[Make it clear that this is not the 1% Appeal offering. It should be given next week after reflection upon today's service. DO NOT give out the envelopes and reports the previous week for the offering this week.](#)

Readings

Colossians 4 v2-6

Matthew 25 v14-30

Sermon notes

First of all, thank you for the current support from this congregation as a whole and also particular individuals who have really taken the work to their hearts.

Image – married couple on page 15 of Annual Report

This is Philisiwe (Pee-lee-see-weh) and her husband Khonzuyise (Kon-zu-yee-seh). They live in a shack in Siyanda (See-yand-ah) an informal settlement on the outskirts of Durban, South Africa. They have four

children and two grandchildren. Khonzuyise lost his job when his skills were replaced by new technology. Life is very, very hard.

Now, before we start, I'd just like to point out the difference between development and relief. In times of emergency, like the recent flooding in South Asia, people need basics quickly – food, clean water, shelter, clothing and medical care. It is a case of keeping them alive, until a longer-term solution can be found. WDR responds on such occasions when it is able.

Philisiwe and Khonzuyise do not require emergency relief. Their problems are deep-rooted, have been there for years and the answer is not short-term hand-outs.

WDR's main focus is development work. The development work of our church is based upon two things:

- 1) the knowledge that, outside of emergencies, about two billion people are living in poverty daily
- 2) the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to fulfil their God-given potential.

Development is a series of long-term strategies to tackle the causes of poverty so that peoples' lives can improve and stay improved.

This couple will only be helped by long-term development. A plan of action that will bring positive, sustainable change.

As Christians, we are called to make a difference in this world.

Dewi Hughes, Christian writer and theologian, has said *"The God who has revealed himself in Jesus makes it clear in his Word to those who welcome his revelation, that our response to poverty is a crucial test of the reality of our faith. It is impossible to really know Jesus and be indifferent to the plight of the poor."*

With the children, we heard of one of World Development & Relief's partners, the Father Andeweg Institute for the Deaf, which despite its own struggle to operate, sees that it is right that they also reach out to help others. A real lesson in Christian love.

Christ always seized the opportunity to help others. He reached out to lepers, a Samaritan woman, an army officer, a friend's mother-in-law, those with physical disability, those with mental illness or possession by demons, a servant, the poor.

In Colossians, we are told to “Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity”.

World Development & Relief is one aspect of the Methodist Church in Ireland’s mission that is being effective. We can be rightly proud of our development work. WDR is one way in which we can take up the opportunity to “act wisely towards others”.

* * * *

Let us go back to Siyanda informal settlement.

Image – woman gardening on page 15

The underlying problem for those living in Siyanda, is that they are living on land that, for many years, has not been recognised as being legally theirs by the local housing authorities. This is the case for tens of thousands of South Africans across the country. So many black South Africans lost their land during colonial rule and apartheid. They were forcibly evicted to meet the white man’s greed and prejudice. For various reasons, 820 families have now settled in Siyanda. Many come from rural areas where there are few jobs but unfortunately there are often none in the cities either. They have no money to rent accommodation and so they construct rudimentary shacks where they can. The conditions in Siyanda are below basic and often hazardous. Khonzuyise says “They built a major road through the middle of this place. Now the children have to walk far to cross over the bridge. Before the bridge was built, many children were killed by cars. We farm on the edge of the road and cannot fence it so often our vegetables are damaged or stolen. And when it rains the houses fill up with water and the toilets that were constructed are far away so we had to dig our own pit latrine by our house. Taxis and bakeries cannot access Siyanda so we are cut off.”

The good news is that, many years ago, the local authorities recognised the right of the people to live in Siyanda. A promise has been made to build them better housing and deliver water and electricity. The bad news is that some of these government pledges go back 30 years and have not yet been fulfilled.

WDR partner, Church Land Programme, works alongside the people of Siyanda to help them claim their rights to housing and amenities.

Image – David and Nomusa of CLP standing with David Nixon on page 14

We have a situation where some have been left behind, living in horrendous conditions. Dorothy and over 800 other families have their red number but must now push the local government to follow through on their promises.

So, what exactly is Irish Methodist World Development & Relief partner, Church Land Programme, doing as they focus upon land and housing rights? Well, they provide training on leadership, rights and lobbying.

This is what **David Nsteng**, a staff member says “The people must empower themselves. Church Land Programme creates the space for them to empower themselves. It is new to them and it does not come in the click of your fingers. Our training enables them to develop the skills they need to successfully lobby local authorities and obtain their land and their amenities like electricity and water.” So, really, Church Land Programme are helping the people use the democratic systems and structures to obtain what is their right – reasonable housing and standard of living.

Good development does not simply hand things to the people. They work hard for anything with their new thinking and skills. World Development & Relief only works with partners that enable people to empower themselves. Partners do not do things to beneficiaries nor do they do things for them. The people must bring change themselves although they may need some initial help to do that.

Nomusa Sokhela, another CLP staff member, says “It is the people who lead because they are the ones who suffer. We support them but, even in our absence, they can continue. It has to be their own vision and commitment.”

Although this approach may seem slow, it is more likely to bring permanent change.

[Page 15 – woman in last photo](#)

We’ll leave the last words on life in Siyanda to Sindisiwe Sheza:

[Read quote out.](#)

“We don’t want to die in shacks. Our children are growing and we don’t want to see them dying in shacks. Working with Church Land Programme; it has opened our minds. We have been encouraged to do things for ourselves.”

The people of Siyanda are seeing some victories, the ablutions block, some safer electricity provision. However, as with all situations where WDR partners work, there is much more to do.

* * * *

Another story of change is happening in Ethiopia. It demonstrates all the same characteristics of people empowering themselves, sustainability and addressing the actual causes of poverty. It again shows how the Methodist Church in Ireland is not just offering hope; but bringing actual change.

Wof Washa is one of the last indigenous forests in Ethiopia. It once supported thousands of people with its natural resources but has suffered deforestation and soil erosion. World Development & Relief partner, SUNARMA, is working with 72 communities to re-establish the forest as a sustainable resource for the people and also help families develop new ways of making an income.

This is Dereje. He is the Chair of the new bee keeping co-operative. He says "Some people now have 12 beehives at home. Most of us did not have experience of beekeeping before but we got training from SUNARMA. The modern methods give nearly three times as much as the traditional ways. Also, the new hives are less susceptible to predators, diseases and environmental factors like heavy rain. From the money, we support our household with things like food, education and medicine. We can even buy fodder for our livestock. We are planning to do more of this this by cultivating plants nearby that the bees forage on."

Giving skills for a lifetime. Not short-term fixes that rarely last. Dereje has embraced the opportunity and learned new ways.

And let us be clear, as Methodists, *"We don't do development instead of the gospel. We do development as a practical expression of what the gospel is."*

* * * *

Our second reading was a parable about two servants. One used what his master had given him well and the second did not. Relative to many in the world, we have been blessed with wealth. We can choose to use it effectively and generously, helping others to fulfil their God-given potential.

WDR has 17 effective development partners around the world. Last year, we were able to give £232,000 / €265,000 to them. Over 150,000 individuals are currently being impacted by our church's development work.

Themes being addressed include land, education, water, agriculture, healthcare, rights, livelihoods and many more. In Africa, South America, the Middle East and Asia.

* * * *

So, what is our response today?

WDR is building a movement of people. It involves supporters, partners, beneficiaries and volunteers. Each is playing their part. And, together, it is working. ([You could refer to pages 10 and 11 of Annual Report where a wide diversity of people are contributing to the work in many ways](#))

If your part is to give financially, then we strongly encourage you to give by Standing Order.

If you gave £15 / €15 per month; in one month it can buy 150 seedlings for a farmer in Ghana.

After a year, your giving would be able to train 100 women in their rights and new livelihoods in India.

A standing order means you can spread your giving and so give more and it also helps WDR budget for the year ahead by knowing what will be received. It is the best way to give. You can also organise tax reclaim on your gift. The reports contain Standing Order forms.

[Hold up the form in the Annual Report](#)

From an old 1980s WDR publicity leaflet we find this statement *“The 1% Appeal is not so much about money as about people and about a cross and our response to both”*.

Thank you for your current support. I hope, as Christians and Methodists, you can further embrace this opportunity to walk with us and show Christ’s love.

Prayer for the work of WDR

[For this one week, this can take the place of the intercessory prayers if wished](#)

[Before praying, you can draw attention to ‘Prayer Focus’, the prayer guide for Irish Methodism, that contains prayers for WDR and most of its partners.](#)

Lord, Father of all, we thank you for your love for all of us –

Educated and illiterate, privileged and oppressed, healthy and sick.

Lord, make us a Methodist people willing to share our blessings

and facilitate long-term and sustainable change in the lives of others.

Bless the ongoing partnerships between World Development & Relief

and those working hard to transform lives in communities across the world.

For Nomusa and David of Church Land Programme and Dorothy, Philisiwe, Khonzulise and Sindisiwe in Siyanda.

For Father Andeweg Institute for the Deaf in Lebanon, their own education work and outreach in the refugee camps.

For Dereje, his family and community and those working with SUNARMA.

For partners focusing upon women; Kopila in Nepal, Phakamisa (Pack-a-mee-sa) in South Africa, Srijan Foundation in India

For partners walking alongside those in marginalised farming communities: Practical Solutions and Evangelical Christian Union in Bolivia and Methodist Development and Relief Services in Ghana.

For partners challenging the systems and institutions that keep people poor and oppressed: Bench Marks in South Africa, Paz y Esperanza in Peru and the International Justice Mission.

For Dabane (Da-ban-ee) in Zimbabwe as they work with rural villages in bringing clean water and exploring new livelihoods with the people.

For those delivering education: Dorian and the Open Schools Worldwide team as they bring literacy and numeracy to thousands of vulnerable children in Southern Africa and Christ-Centred Ministries in Sierra Leone.

For our partner that tends and heals the sick, Wenchi Methodist Hospital in Ghana, and for East Jerusalem YMCA that rehabilitates those with disabilities.

Lord, may we join in with this movement.

Playing our part, giving what we have generously, grasping our opportunities, pleasing our master.

In Christ's name.

Amen

Blessing/Benediction

May the peace of God
Reign in all our hearts and in our nations.
May the justice of God
Inform our thinking, giving and serving.
May the love, which God has for the world,
Infect out compassion.

And may the blessing of God,
The Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer
Rest on us and remain with us
Now and always.
Amen

Readings

Colossians 2 v2-6

² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Matthew 25 v14-30

The Parable of the Bags of Gold (Parable of the Talents)

¹⁴ “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,^[a] each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶ The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷ So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. ¹⁸ But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹ “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

²¹ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²² “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

²³ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²⁴ “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

²⁶ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So, you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

²⁸ ““So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. ²⁹ For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. ³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’