

Haiti appeal passes £400,000 mark



Donations to both MRDF and the Methodist Church's World Mission Fund are supporting the emergency relief and long-term rehabilitation work being carried out by the Methodist Church in Haiti. MRDF is also channelling funds to Action by Churches Together. As well as funding food, blankets, tents and latrines, donations to MRDF have helped to provide a water purification system in the Belair neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince. This is providing 10,000 homeless Haitians with the first clean drinking water they have had since the earthquake struck.

Expressing his gratitude for the initial grant, the Revd Gesner Paul District President of the Methodist Church in Haiti said, "We thank you for standing near us at this time of severe difficulty and continue to count on your support by any means as we try to recover from this very traumatic disaster."

In his Sunday sermon the Revd George Mulrain, president of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas, said, "Our contribution to Haiti does not wait until a disaster strikes. It is ongoing. Various agencies and organisations are contributing to relief in Haiti, which is commendable. But soon the dust will settle and the media folk will turn to another 'breaking news story' as the saga of Haiti recedes into the background. Not so with us as Methodists. We are there to stay, because our motive is not to make the news headlines. The love of Christ constrains us and we stay."

The Revd Tom Quenet, Methodist partnership coordinator for the Americas and the Caribbean, is planning to visit Haiti later this month. "The figures that the Methodist Church in Haiti have sent us represent a massive loss of the Church's infrastructure to serve the men, women and children of Haiti," he said. "The destruction of schools means that the effects of the earthquake will be felt by many generations into the future, the loss of clinics means that lives will be shortened for lack of health care, the destruction of child care facilities will mean that children and young people will become vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The overwhelmingly generous response of the Methodist people means that not only are people receiving water, food and shelter in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, but also the Haitian Church will be best ready to respond in alleviating the long term consequences."



People can donate via the Methodist Church by clicking [here](#), or sending a cheque payable to the World Mission Fund to Dave Bennett, Fundraising Coordinator, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR. Postal donations should be labelled 'Haiti Appeal'.

To donate via MRDF, visit their [website](#) or call 020 7224 4814 to give by debit or credit card, or send a cheque made payable 'MRDF (Haiti emergency)' and to MRDF, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

For further information visit the [Methodist Church website](#) or contact the [Revd Tom Quenet](#).

(photos by Mike DuBose, News Service of the United Methodist Church. To see more [click here](#).)

Methodist Church establishes independent education commission



The Methodist Church is establishing an independent education commission, responsible for reviewing Methodism's approach to education in Britain. It will report to the Methodist Conference in 2012.

The commission will be responsible for identifying a set of principles and a theological rationale, which underpins Methodism's engagement with education. It will cover all forms of formal education, including the Church's responsibility for 64 state-maintained Methodist day schools and 14 independent schools across England and Wales, as well as its involvement in further education and higher education. It will also consider the Methodist approach to, and involvement with, informal education, including links to the Church's work with children and youth, and all forms of chaplaincy in education.

The chair of the commission, the Revd Dr John Barrett, would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to be considered for membership of the commission or who feels they have a contribution to make to its work. You can register your interest by [email](#).

Methodist heritage on show

Next month, Methodist Heritage will be promoting the new free, full colour Methodist Heritage Handbook at the Best of Britain & Ireland Show at London Olympia, alongside organisations such as VisitBritain, the National Trust and Hilton Hotels. It is believed to be the first time the Methodist Church has exhibited at a secular event for over 10 years.



17 and 18 March are free 'trade' days to engage with the tourism industry. Group visit organisers and travel operators are encouraged to come along and seek out interesting destinations to add to their itineraries. If you organise trips and holidays for colleagues or your local church, look at the [website](#) and see if this is a must-do event for you.

19 and 20 March are public 'consumer' days and all are welcome to come along to explore the stands showcasing tourism across the UK and discover exciting new places to stay and attractions to visit.

Methodist Heritage will be on stand M23, along with the MIC Hotel, London, and Christian Guild Holidays - so do pass by, say hello and collect your free copy of the Handbook.

Tickets cost Adult - £10, Adult Double - £15, Child (U16) - FREE, Freedom Pass holder - FREE (NB Freedom Pass ticket is only valid when presented on the door alongside a Freedom Pass).

E-news readers EXCLUSIVE - save 50% off a double ticket (admits two adults) if you book now [online](#) or call 0871 230 5589 and quote **MTD102**.

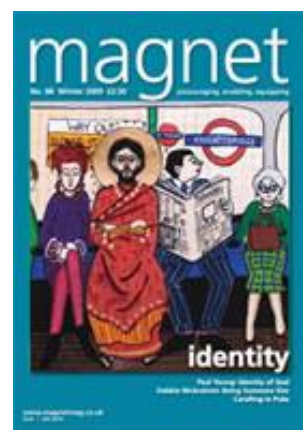
Click [here](#) for more information. You can also contact the Methodist Church's heritage officer [Jo Hibbard](#) to receive a copy of the Heritage Handbook and/or to subscribe to the new Methodist Heritage newsletter (starting in September).

Christian magazine, Magnet, reaches out to a broader Church

Magnet magazine, which until recently has been published by the Methodist Church, is now published by its own independent charity, Magnet Resources, with the aim of reaching a wider ecumenical audience.

Magnet is known for colourful and thoughtful meditation pages, its seasonal worship resources, insightful and stimulating features, Bible study and prayer focus. It is of value both to individuals in their personal spiritual journeys and to leaders of worship, Bible study and house groups.

The Revd Dr Martyn Atkins, general secretary of the Methodist Church, said, "This is an exciting time for Magnet, and a fantastic opportunity to bring their high-quality material to an even broader audience. We wish them well and look forward to enjoying the magazine as it grows and develops."



You can phone 0844 736 2524 or email Felicity for a free copy or subscribe [online](#).

National BBC radio appeal will benefit countryside people



On 7 March BBC Radio 4 will broadcast an appeal to help the Arthur Rank Centre (ARC), a Christian countryside charity and resource unit supported by national Churches (including the Methodist Church), the Royal Agricultural Society of England and the Rank Foundation.

For all its beauty, life in the countryside can be tough. Over 900,000 rural households live in poverty, and problems such as depression, stress, relationship difficulties, health, finance and business difficulties can go undiagnosed and unheard.

The Revd Gordon Gatward, director of the ARC, said, "The ARC was chosen for an appeal because we have been supporting rural communities and their churches for over 38 years. Initiatives that have come out of the ARC have given thousands of people hope over the years: Rural Stress Helpline, agricultural chaplains and rural officers, Arthur Rank Training and community development projects like Hidden Britain, Care Farming, Farm Crisis Network and the ARC-Addington Fund."

You can discover more about its activities at its [website](#).

You can hear the BBC Radio 4 Appeal on Sunday 7 March at 7.55am or 9.26pm, or on Thursday 11 March at 3.27pm. It is also [online](#) all that week.

The Boris Trajkovski Scholarship



The Boris Trajkovski Scholarship is funded by the Methodist Church's World Mission Fund. Awarded annually, it will go to a student from the Balkans region (Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovia, Croatia (Eastern), Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Bulgaria).

The scholarship, run in conjunction with The Irish School of Ecumenics Trust (ISE), honours the memory of the former President of Macedonia the Hon. Boris Trajkovski, the winner of the World Methodist Peace Award in 2002 for his significant contributions to peace, reconciliation and justice.

Applications are welcome from all Christians who can demonstrate a commitment to the vision and mission of the Methodist Church's World Mission Fund. The scholarship will support the ongoing work of reconciliation in the Balkans by helping an individual who has been involved in ecumenical, inter-faith, reconciliation or peace work to follow a one-year, full-time masters degree at ISE in ecumenical studies, international peace studies or reconciliation studies.

For more details click [here](#). (NB For September 2010 entry the deadline for applications is 16 April 2010.)

General Elections resources now available

Key political issues are uncovered and explained in a handy guide produced by the Methodist Church and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. [Faith in Politics – Preparing Churches for the General Election 2010](#) has been prepared by leading Christian experts and campaigners involved in political affairs.

The election materials do not support a particular Church view or political party line, but help people engage with a range of important issues facing the country, however they may decide to vote.

In addition, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland has produced guidance for local churches about holding hustings meetings with parliamentary candidates. Both of these publications, and more resources, are available from www.churcheselection.org.uk.



Partners across the world

Catch up with the latest that the Methodist Church is doing in Haiti, Chile, Pakistan, The Pacific Theological College Education by Extension, Nigeria, Serbia, Lithuania and Estonia by reading the latest [World Church Relationships bulletin](#).



Running, walking ... and changing lives



Every year, many people take part in sponsored events to raise money for MRDF's life-changing work - and this year is no exception.

District chairs Leo Osborn and Ruth Gee will be walking the 70-mile route between Sunderland and Wearhead during Holy Week to raise money for an MRDF project in Cameroon. The districts, which are members of the charity's Partner a Project scheme, are hoping to raise thousands of pounds for a project that provides agricultural training to poor farmers.

A few weeks later, the Revd Dr Neil Richardson, a former president of Conference, will be running the London Marathon for MRDF. It will be his 8th marathon for charity, but his first for MRDF. "I promised to run the Marathon on behalf of MRDF back in 2003 - and now I have the chance," Neil said. "MRDF works with some of the poorest communities in the world and focuses its help in ways that really make a difference."

And you, too, can make small miracles possible with MRDF by taking part in the British 10K run. The charity is looking for six people to get sponsorship for the event in London, which includes historic landmarks such as the Houses of Parliament and Tower Bridge along its route. Contact MRDF if you think this could be you.

Bible Fresh



Bible Fresh is a partnership of over 50 agencies, festivals and denominations (including the Methodist Church) who are joining forces to encourage and inspire churches and individuals to make the most of the Bible in 2011.

2011 is the 400th anniversary of the King James version of the Bible.

Bible Fresh offers a host of ideas and resources to inspire and equip individuals, churches and community to read, meditate, listen, learn and live the Bible.

To find out more go to their website www.biblefresh.com.

Inter Faith Relations on the web



The Inter Faith Relations pages on the Methodist Church website are regularly updated.

As well as the latest information, May I Call You Friend? - case studies of sharing the Christian faith in multi faith situations, together with Bible studies and discussion questions - and Faith Meeting Faith - 30 questions frequently asked about inter faith relations, which acknowledge the diversity of views among Christians - are now available as downloadable pdfs.