

# Women on the Frontline Newsletter

HIGHLIGHTS ON SOUTH SUDAN, GHANA AND MENTORING

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Mrs. Caroline Welby – Founder of  
Women on the Frontline

## Dear friends,

Greetings from Women on the Frontline (WFL). In our previous edition we brought you highlights of our work before, during and after the Lambeth Conference. In this edition we bring you our love and prayers as we share updates on God's faithfulness and calling when WFL joined spouses during the South Sudan Ecumenical Peace Pilgrimage, the Anglican Consultative Council in Ghana, phase three of the Lambeth Conference and possible visits later in the year.

Grace and peace,

## The Women on the Frontline team



**Edited by  
Jane Namuyre**

Women on the Frontline  
Coordinator



## South Sudan

There was a good number of women in Juba for the Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Peace. While in Juba, WFL met with 12 Bishops' spouses including Internal Bishops' wives. While we were with the spouses, we discussed the proposal to develop an Anglican Network of Bishops' Spouses as part of Phase 3 of the Lambeth Conference. The significant issue highlighted was the lack of education opportunities and even studying the bible that came into focus at the Lambeth Conference. One of the spouses, mentioned that she has set up a small programme in her diocese to teach some of her women to read as a result of the bible studies at the Lambeth Conference. The South Sudanese Bishop's talked about the bible studies on 1 Peter and its relevance to the situation in South Sudan and its emphasis on hope. In the meeting convened by WFL during the ecumenical pilgrimage, the spouses appreciated the bible study groups and how it has made lasting friendships.



The spouses were sceptical about the Spouses Network due to limited connectivity, computer literacy and literacy itself and smart phones. The spouses did mention that meeting together is hard to organize and very rare as distances are huge. The other challenge they did mention is poor roads; making travel by plane expensive as a result wives cannot meet together when bishops do due to lack of funds.

WFL has offered to partner with Mama Joyce & Lilian or another team member in South Sudan to model a WFL visit in an internal province of their choice with the hope that they would take it to other internal provinces and build a team as they move forward.

WFL believe that there must be representation on the Spouses Network from South Sudan or another Province where these difficulties of connectivity, travel, resources and education are an issue so that they are addressed and where producing resources or seeking to connect people we bear these issues at the forefront of our minds.





## Ghana

During the Anglican Consultative Council Meeting in Ghana, WFL had the opportunity to convene a separate meeting with 45 women that include Bishops' spouses, pastors' wives and four men. The Archbishop's wife, Mother Superior Appiah Sekyere, reflected on the Lambeth Conference that she had learnt much from the example of the Masai and how they subdue or kill a lion. She says spouses can overcome the lions (difficulties) in life through praise and worship to confuse the devil. She emphasises on team work.

Mother Superior Estelle Dibo from Cameroon gave a wonderful testimony of her experiences of WFL mentoring program and the importance of both the retreat and the reconciliation work.

**"I am a frontliner! We need to retreat to draw closer to God, reconciliation – needs to be on a daily basis. We have a lot of pain, hurt and insults which can give us a heavy heart. We need to reconcile daily, we need to take it back to the family. Peace is cheap, war is expensive. Give me peace"**



Pic: Mother Superior Estelle, Mrs. Caroline Welby & Mother Superior Christiana – Ghana, Feb 2023

Mama Regina, who also attended the Lambeth Conference says that women empowerment is very important, however, lack of education as some of the Spouses from South Sudan mentioned earlier is a hindrance, but we need to overcome. Regina reiterates that it is important to teach women leadership roles in the various contexts within the Anglican Communion. The Bible study reflection on 1st Peter was a highlight from the spouses in West Africa too. Regina says:

**"I learned what love is, to give your best, not selfish, encourage and smile in church. Be a good listener – like Caroline, she listened well to others".**

Caroline shared the WFL vision to the gathering of bishops' spouses and clergy spouses to promote the principles and how they would like to take this forward. She emphasised on God's calling and the gifts God has given spouses. She told spouses in Ghana that what matters is how God sees us and what he wants us to do. She adds, God's economy is different to the world economy and so we need to lean into God and God will enable us to do it. She encouraged the spouses to know that they are loved, chosen and that there is a way forward.

# Mentoring



Artwork in West Africa

Women on the Frontline has had a couple of mentoring sessions with spouses from Melanesia, West Africa, Burundi and South Sudan accompanying them on how to conduct a WFL retreat and reconciliation trainings based on their own contexts. Estelle says parity, potential and prayer principles of Women on the Frontline remain her guide and cardinal point in carrying out her ministerial work. Estelle believes every woman has potential; using available resources, she's transforming women using art, one of the elements of WFL in Cameroon.



Participant in West Africa showcases artwork

Estelle says through God's enabling grace, she hopes to put in practice the online mentoring sessions and aspires to remain Ambassador for Christ and Women on the Frontline in her Diocese and across the Province of CPWA. She says as women married to cleric, she's convinced that we too especially Bishops and Archbishops' Spouses are called by God and that we should always focus on the cross of Jesus as our enabler with all the various responsibilities that come with this calling. Estelle says we should take every advantage and opportunity to be equipped, empowered and transformed to also transform others. Women on the Frontline is that opportunity for me. How about you? Estelle concludes.

In Melanesia, Dorah Dawea, the Archbishop's wife in the Anglican Church of Melanesia, and the Mother's Union Coordinator, Tagolyn, are transforming bishop and clergy wives there using art an element of Women on the Frontline ministry and prayer, one of the main principles during, after and before a visit. Dorah and the team in Melanesia say the artwork presentation was really helpful since many of the clergy wives were not good at writing and public speaking, hence drawing helps them to reflect and identify the challenges and experiences they come across during their ministry with their husbands.



Sharing experiences through art



Group photo in Melanesia

The spouses and Mothers Union members in Melanesia were able to recognize their God given gifts, purpose and value in the ministry alongside their husbands. The retreat and reconciliation training enabled them to identify a quiet space to share with each other the challenges they meet in their ministry and enabled them with the opportunity and confidence to speak freely. The Bishops' spouses, clergy wives and Mothers Union members in Melanesia say, one large impact that spells out clearly through this training is the prayer partner.



## Trips

Women on the Frontline is in conversation for possibility of potential visits to the Church of South India and Papua New Guinea (PNG) later in the autumn or next year. PNG is interested to have WFL experience. As they are closer to Melanesia, we thought it would be appropriate to work with them to create a hybrid team as a way of building experience. While in the Church of South India (CSI), we WFL hopes there would be a possibility of a visit in September. This will be the Platinum Jubilee of the CSI Women's Fellowship and they are inviting other women leaders to join. We hope to run a retreat with the Bishops' wives and a reconciliation training with both the Bishop's wives and the wider group of women.

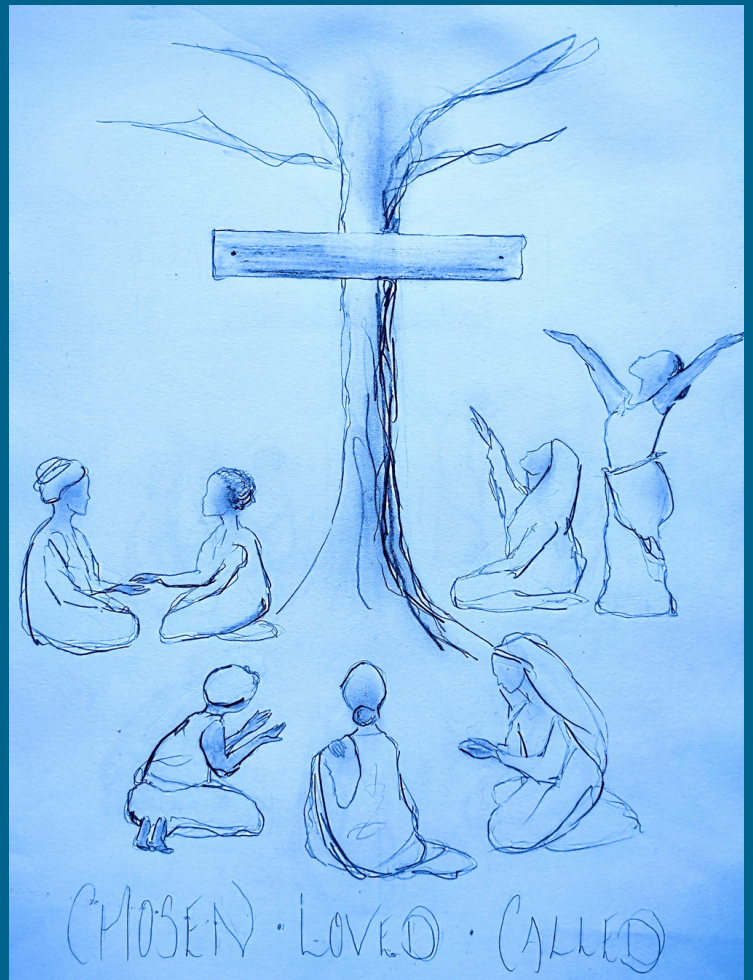
## Support

We are so grateful for the continuous and generous support of J.C Flowers, Lambeth Partners, Anglican Communion Fund, St. Andrew's Community Foundation, friends and all well-wishers.

The work of Women on the Frontline has impacted Dioceses, communities and brought hope to many spouses and women in the countries we visited because of your financial and prayer support.

Please continue to pray for:

- the potential visits to the Church of South India and Papua New Guinea mentioned above
- the mentorship programme
- the toolkit – due to be piloted in the Autumn, revised based on feedback and then launched in January 2024.



Artwork by Keren Lewis, part of the WFL team. It depicts women praying together – one of the WFL principles during, after and before visits.

If you would like to become a friend of Women on the Frontline and help us support the spouses, the Mothers Union and women in this Ministry, whether with prayer or by making a donation, please contact the WFL team at [wfl@lambethpalace.org.uk](mailto:wfl@lambethpalace.org.uk)

To keep up to date with future activities of WFL, please look out for the Archbishop of Canterbury's Reconciliation Ministry page/website and the next newsletter coming up soon.