

Ann-Marie Wilson

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The call in action

Dear friends,

The last few months have been richly rewarding for me, and this January I am so grateful to mark the beginning of the year with a week of retreat, reflection and prayer, first spending a few days with St Barnabas Church staff, where I am a member of the pastoral team, and then on to spend time with my lay sisters at Malling Abbey in Kent. It has been precious to pause together, rest, and to pray about 2021, and the sense of promise and the challenges for 2022.

28 Too Many successes

Globally, it has been an especially important time of year with the annual November/December 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. We felt immensely privileged to support this by launching our 33 new reports on the 32 countries across the diaspora in the EU. Looking ahead to the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation on 6 February, we are excited to be speaking to the EU Parliament about Liberia and FGM law, and at a number of other key events. Then in March it will be a very special time for our charity, as we celebrate 10 years! This decade has seen us established as a global research charity, fulfilling our foundational goals of seeing a 10 per cent reduction in FGM prevalence in 10 countries in 10 years.

We have recruited an executive producer and film advisor for an exciting new film project led by young anti-FGM professionals. We have also commissioned a film on FGM, starting on 8 March in Kenya where, although there is marked progress, there are some worrying new practices.

Training and teaching

I have been delighted to be part of CMS's global community of practice for workers supporting children at risk. We gather monthly on a Zoom call, sharing learnings and discussing practice, and I led January's session with a presentation on FGM risks today.

My chaplaincy work in hospices, and in the community more generally, is very dear to my heart, and I am excited to be shadowing Ruth, a CMS mission partner and fellow worker from my time in (what is now) South Sudan. I will join her for a week of intense paediatric palliative care chaplaincy to see how her hospital work differs from my



Name: Ann-Marie Wilson

Location: Across 28 countries in Africa and the diaspora

My call: Working to end FGM and violence against women and girls, specifically across Africa and the diaspora where FGM is practised – aiming to reduce it by 10 per cent in 10 countries in 10 years.

My role: Through the charity 28 Too Many, which I founded, undertaking country-specific research and sharing knowledge with influencers to prevent FGM and protect girls.



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Braving Storm Arwen for my birthday!

hospice experience. We also spoke at the chaplaincy training for CMS pioneers.

I have just finished my training for a weekly listening counselling support service for Marie Curie nationally, as my chaplaincy role in the Hampstead hospice has been slow to restart post-COVID. I will support people who are living with life-limiting conditions, their carers, or those recently bereaved. This has some similarities with my St Barnabas Church pastoral role, for which I am taking a mental health first aid course. I have supported three people over the last six months.

Leisure and pleasure

My birthday treat of swinging in the trees at Go Ape in Trent Park was deferred by Storm Arwen! So we hope for a calmer, sunnier day in March! In the run-up to Christmas, I had Advent, carol and nativity services, followed by midnight communion and Christmas Day services. I also helped at the local Precious Woman dinner and the Senior Christmas Tea – where I danced with a senior and our sticks!

I had a lovely Christmas Day and Boxing Day with my bubble family before heading for the Lake District for a week with 10 cousins over three generations. I also saw three local friends at church and over New Year. Sadly, I have attended two funerals this month, as well as my first baby naming – reminding me of the cycle of life.

As I approach my seventh year of “living with”, I am grateful for all I can still do. I am learning Braille and have attended the Royal National Institute of Blind People’s (RNIB) Living Well with Sight Loss course. I continue to adapt to my changing circumstances and have been discussing the next season with CMS and my board. I am due to have my second (right) hip replacement some time from spring, and hope also to be taking a six-month study break over the summer, followed by some untaken COVID holiday. Please do pray for this season of transition.

Prayer points

- My health and that of friends struggling with mental health and cancer
- 28 Too Many work, team, funding and future
- Positivity and strength for those who are facing challenges
- Seasons of transition for all the organisations with which I serve

Wishing everyone a peaceful, hopeful spring – it was springing at Malling Abbey, with crocuses, snowdrops and early blossom!

With love,

Ann-Marie



Photos from top to bottom: Representing Harriet Tubman at Precious Woman Christmas Dinner; Marie Curie’s annual remembrance service; walking in the Lake District with my cousins over New Year; St Barnabas Church staff retreat in Hampshire

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Pioneer Mission Leadership Training at CMS, designed by pioneers for pioneers, equips students for transformational mission in a dynamic and supportive learning community. Find out more at pioneer.churchmissionsociety.org

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org or call 01865 787400

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