



# Ann-Marie Wilson

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**Location:** Britain



**What I do:** Working to end FGM and violence against women and girls, specifically across Africa and the diaspora where FGM is practised.



**Empowering** people pushed to the edges of life to release their God-given potential

Dear friends,

This newsletter, updating you on news from August to October, is full of variety, including anti-FGM, hospice and church volunteering news.

I recently went to a thought-provoking event in London, which included FGM survivors and anti-FGM charities, to consider post-FGM reconstruction. This has been a controversial topic for years and it was interesting to hear from doctors globally about what is going on. Please give thanks for the doctors and nurses with regard to current progress, and for clinics which are pioneering reconstruction surgery for victims of FGM.

Orchid Project has recently published reports documenting FGM across South and South East Asia. In Malaysia, the prevalence of FGM is a staggering 93 per cent, with the majority of girls cut before the age of one. In Indonesia, the prevalence of FGM among females aged 15–64 is over 50 per cent. Per capita, the number of girls/women impacted by FGM is higher in Indonesia than in any other country in the world. Nearly 70 per cent of girls experience FGM before the age of one.

We recently attended workshops incorporating getting the ending of harmful practices on to the African Union agenda. We collaborated globally to end FGM, attending the Summit of the Future and co-hosted a webinar with The Girl Generation. We also attended Asia network’s strategy meeting and ran a communication campaign to encourage donations to the Big Give Campaign.

I recently attended a special event at Noah’s Ark Hospice (where I have been chaplain for the last four years) to celebrate their fifth birthday.

I was asked to talk at a women’s co-housing project, where 50 women over 50 live in single/two-person flats. I talked about end-of-life planning for the last decades of life for us and all our families, which uses my 11 years of healthcare chaplaincy experience. People have often not done enough advance planning as mortality is somewhat taboo. Everybody attending went away with at least one action plan, even if it was to tell their children/families what they want, rather than saying, “It’s all up to you dear, make your choice”. Please pray for those who, like me, are approaching the challenging second half of life!

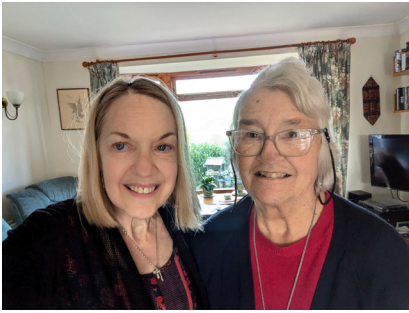
I took a solo pilgrimage to Walsingham Abbey in Norfolk, the only Marian Catholic shrine in the UK, for a



*Celebrating Noah's Ark's fifth birthday*

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**With Jesus  
With each other  
To the edges**



beautiful day experiencing aspects of our Christian spirituality, and am pleased I did. The work I do in my end-of-life care covers people to whom faith is very important as well as people of no faith, so it is good to have more in-depth Catholic experiences, building on my convent schooling and theology studies.

On a similar note, I visited All Saints' Church in Kent to see the stained-glass windows designed by Marc Chagall. What a joyful experience! This acted as a pilgrimage for those seeing how art deepens spirituality.

Many of the signs and altar cloths inside were written in two languages, Hebrew and English – very moving for my Jewish friends.

I have been updating various training and safeguarding content for CMS and other places I volunteer. I have also attended two interesting training programmes, one on organ donations regarding neonatal baby illness and end of life, and one looking at disadvantages facing black women, who can experience a higher level of neonatal death, possibly due to unconscious racism. The fact that their pain could be taken less seriously saddens me greatly.

I attended a talk on viruses and vaccines delivered by an endocrinologist friend. In our post-pandemic era, and as I will soon have another couple of vaccines because of my health condition, it was good to see how we can protect ourselves as immunosuppressed people. Please pray for my continued good health this winter.

In September I attended Orchid Project's webinar, collaborating with Birmingham University, on survivor engagement to end FGM in the Africa-led movement. It was a good opportunity to share what we are doing, while talking to others in the sector who attended as guest speakers. Please give thanks for all of those working tirelessly to end FGM.

Over August and September, I have had an abnormal number of life transitions. On a positive note, I attended the ordination of one of my friends into the Baptist Union and attended a lovely wedding in Worthing/Hove, where we shared a wedding brunch on the beach on the Sunday! Sadly, I have also had seven close friends die in the space of six weeks, which has deeply affected me. I was able to take Holy Communion to two of them, in hospital or at home a couple of times. Subsequently I have been attending funerals and two requiem masses, one in Malling Abbey for my original nun supervisor during my early years; another hosted by my Holy Trinity Brompton home group (which I have been part of since 1999) in Cockfosters, plus another funeral in Kent.

In terms of spirituality, I have been looking for a new church since leaving St Barnabas, N12, and I am pleased to have joined Christ Church, Barnet, which is walking distance from my home. I have joined a connect group and am taking on the leadership and coordination of the single-headed household lunch gatherings after the founder sadly died. Our next meetings are in November and December. Please pray that these new ventures are nurturing, and give thanks for new beginnings as we approach a new calendar year.

Ann-Marie Wilson



*Photos from top to bottom: Meeting an old supporter, Ronnie, when visiting the Lake District; talk at New Ground; the sprinkling ceremony at Walsingham Abbey; at the induction of Associate Minister Blessing Chishanu at Christ Church, Barnet*



## Empowering people pushed to the edges of life

I've been encouraged to hear recent mission stories from around my wider area of work. In South Sudan, communities have taken steps towards peace as pastors from different tribal groups reconciled, and my colleague Joan has shared a growing vision of a new tribe of peacemakers. Read more at [churchmissionsociety.org/empower](https://churchmissionsociety.org/empower)

Please note that opinions expressed in updates are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society. If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this update on a regular basis, please email [supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org](mailto:supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org) or call 01865 787400. Church Mission Society is a Registered Company No. 6985330 and Registered Charity No. 1131655 (England and Wales) and SC047163 (Scotland).