



Ann-Marie Wilson

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Location: Britain



What I do: Working to end FGM and violence against women and girls across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the diasporas



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

Dear friends,

As we journey through the early months of 2026, this season has been marked by meaningful encounters, quiet reflection and opportunities to serve both locally and further afield. From February through Eastertide, God's presence has been a steady thread – found in conversation in noisy rooms, pastoral prayer, street ministry and quiet contemplation.

At Orchid Project, our work continues to focus on the long-term impact of female genital mutilation (FGM), particularly on survivors' mental health. Following knowledge-sharing sessions in the Horn of Africa last year, a significant gap was identified in culturally appropriate mental health support. In response, a further international session was held on 8 April, bringing together professionals, advocates and survivor-led organisations. Speakers included Dr Suaad Abdulrehman, a psychiatrist and sexologist working with survivors in the Netherlands, and Benazir Mohamed, founder of Silver Lining in Kenya. Co-hosted with Belt of Somali Women, Silver Lining Kenya and Somaliland Family Health Association, the gathering reinforced the need for holistic healing – addressing both physical and emotional well-being (fgmcri.org).



Attending a service at the Church of Mormon featuring the Tabernacle Choir

As part of my ministerial continuing professional development, I recently visited Utah to learn more about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or as it is more widely known, the Mormon Church. I attended a globally televised service and heard the magnificent Tabernacle Choir. An unexpected blessing came in conversation with my airport assistant, a young member of the church, who thoughtfully answered many of my questions.

Returning home, I was honoured to be featured in the winter 2026 issue of CMS Magazine in an article titled The fight for women's human rights, marking two decades of anti-FGM advocacy. You can read the article on the CMS website too at churchmissionsociety.org/stories.

I was also delighted to preach at St Peter's Church, Friern Barnet, where Reverend Dagmar and the congregation offered an incredibly warm welcome. Worshipping, sharing Scripture and encouraging one another in faith was deeply grounding. I met some lovely new friends, and was especially touched to sign more than 20 copies of my book, *Overcoming: my fight against FGM*. I look forward to returning soon.

Lent and Holy Week offered rich opportunities for reflection. On Maundy Thursday, I attended the Chrism Mass at St Paul's Cathedral, renewing my vows and receiving holy oils for my chaplaincy ministry. This moment held deep significance, connecting me with my calling and the promises made within ministry. The mass was

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



particularly poignant as it marked the conclusion of my service under Bishop Sarah’s leading of the Diocese of London and healthcare chaplaincy, as she has become Archbishop of Canterbury.

On Good Friday, I joined our local Churches Together pilgrim walk with St Mary the Virgin, Monken Hadley and other congregations. Walking in prayerful reflection created space to consider the depth of Christ’s sacrifice, made poignant as I supported a local rough sleeper with hot cross buns. This brought home the compassion at the heart of the gospel. Easter services then filled our churches with light, joy, and renewed hope in the resurrection.

Amidst the build-up in this quarter, I was grateful, too, for time on retreat at Malling Abbey in Kent, where I am a Benedictine (oblite) sister. Retreat offers a sacred pause – a chance to step away from busyness and simply be present with God. In prayer, silence, and fellowship, I found renewed clarity and peace. It is often in these quieter spaces that we are reminded that we are not called to do everything, yet be faithful in what is given to us.

My hospice ministry, now with North London Hospice, is in its 11th year, remaining humbling and deeply meaningful. Supporting patients and families at the end of life is sacred work, especially with two recent patients under 45 years old, when presence speaks more powerfully than words. This April, I attended the launch of Spirituality at the End of Life, a moving collection of seven films exploring perspectives from different faith traditions, as well as the hospice’s Celebration of Life event.

I also spent a month in Central and South America researching the prevalence of FGM in the region, visiting Peru, Mexico, and several other countries. I was moved to take Holy Communion at the Cathedral in San Salvador where the Archbishop Romero was made a martyr. This important work will continue with visits to Colombia and Chile in 2027/28.

As this quarter closes, I was privileged to be interviewed by Andy Peck. Reflecting on my work, he said: “You saw a need, sensed that life needed to be different and, God helping you, did something about it.” His words were both humbling and affirming – a reminder that leadership often begins simply by noticing, caring and responding in faith.

As we look ahead, my prayer is that we continue to walk gently and faithfully, attentive to God’s leading. May we have courage to respond to need, wisdom to know when to pause and grace to support one another along the way. In all things, may we remain rooted in hope, trusting in the promise of new life that Easter proclaims.

Please pray with me that my funding will increase so that I may continue to serve in the ministries God has laid before me, as I remain on a 50 per cent stipend after five months. I would also value prayers for my continued health stability and strength. I am especially grateful for recent medical news confirming that cancer has not spread.

With every blessing,

Ann-Marie



Photos from top to bottom: With Reverend Dagmar from St Peter’s Church, Friern Barnet; with Bishop Anderson at the Chrism Mass at St Paul’s Cathedral; with Reverend Francesco at the final service led by Bishop Sarah before her pilgrimage to Canterbury; taking Communion at the church where Archbishop Romero was martyred while leading mass



Empowering people pushed to the edges of life

I hope that you’re inspired as you read about Josephat in Tanzania who has changed his future through a CMS-linked project. And, see how mission partner Ann-Marie has changed global policy impacting women at risk of female genital mutilation. Read their stories and others at churchmissionsociety.org/empower

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