

MWI September 2019 Article for Methodist Newsletter

GOD MATTERS

God certainly has plans that you cannot fathom at times. If someone had said to me a few years back that one day I would be All-Ireland President of Methodist Women in Ireland I would not have believed it, but here I am writing my first article for the Methodist Newsletter. I feel so honoured and privileged to be asked to consider this position, so after much thought and prayer I agreed. I know I am not stepping out in my own strength, but that God has promised to be with me. Isaiah 41 v 10 *'So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.'* I have always tried to base my Christian life on the words of scripture, and I know they are as relevant today as they were when they were first written. I can rely on His promises. I have chosen as my theme '**God Matters**'. God matters to me. Does He matter to you? My vision for my two years is to encourage MWI branches that God Matters and also to encourage women to ponder on issues that matter to God. Our MWI mission statement is 'To Know Christ and to Make Him Known'. Are we facing up to this statement? John 17 v 3 *'Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent'*.

MWI, like our church connexion, has been embracing the change from eight districts to three and I am delighted to report that we 'hit the ground running'. We have had consultation meetings over these last two years; with much prayer and discussion and the expertise of Louise Wilson in facilitating these consultations, MWI can now report that we have embraced this change. Each of the new districts will have a **Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer**. These are: **Southern District** Vice President - Wanda Hogan, Secretary - Barbara Fennell, Treasurers - Heather Gandola and Barbara Bryan. **North Western District** Vice President - Olive Rowe, Secretary - Carmel Irwin, Treasurer - Maureen Young. **North Eastern District** Vice President - Audrey Burrows, Secretary - Shirley Culbert, Treasurer - Janice Walker. We are so grateful to these ladies for taking up the challenge and we wish them God's blessing as they help to lead MWI Districts. I am excited for the way ahead and believe with God's help we can move forward in these new districts with expectation and enthusiasm knowing that **God Matters** about MWI.

I wish my predecessor, Elizabeth McWatters God's blessing as she will no doubt find other ways to serve God and to thank her for her faithful service in leading us through these last two years. To all the General Officers I say a big thank you for their continuing support as I face new challenges in my term of office.

In my engagements I have listed the first District events and which I hope to attend. May I encourage you to also attend your relevant event.

Joan Strong

All-Ireland MWI President

Joan's installation service will take place in Glengormley Methodist Church, on Saturday 14 September at 2.30 pm.

SEPTEMBER ENGAGEMENTS

Sunday 15th One day Conference in Cloughjordan – 10.30 am

Saturday 21st G.I.G.G.L.E.S. half day event in Enniskillen Methodist – 9.15 am

October 5th Launch of North Eastern District, half day event – Coleraine – 10.15 am