

## SEPTEMBER METHODIST NEWSLETTER MWI ARTICLE

As we are now easing out of lockdown, I am delighted to share with you the thoughts of our Executive Officers on lockdown. We have all had our own thoughts on this unusual time, as shared in the August MWI article. (It is good to reflect on how we felt about lockdown.) Now, let us hear in 30 + words how our Officers felt:

### **Liz MacBean, All-Ireland Secretary**

My thoughts are that during the lockdown clichés like “live for today, you never know what’s round the corner” etc became all too true when everyday life disappeared overnight and we were left to realize what the important things in life really are! As lockdown eases it’s alright to give ourselves permission to take things at our own pace being thankful the Lord has been very much with us on this journey.

### **Barbara Fennell, All-Ireland Treasurer + Southern District Secretary**

Living in a rural area, lockdown has been an experience: services online and not being able to see families and friends. Some weeks our car did not move from the driveway. Walking our country roads, we were able to get to know our neighbours a lot better rather than a wave as you pass them in a car. God always has a plan for us.

### **Wanda Hogan, Vice President of the Southern District**

Life in lockdown has been full of contradictions. Work, rest, new, old, same, different, challenges and opportunities ...blessings hidden throughout. I have experienced the full spectrum of emotions. What a gift to know that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. Hebrews 13:8.

### **Olive Rowe, Vice President of the North Western District**

Life is different during lockdown but work on a farm continues. Missed meetings with MWI ladies. Thankfully MWI has risen to the challenge with Prayer Time daily at 7.00 pm organised by Joan our President and Zoom meetings in our district have been a blessing.

### **Audrey Burrows, Vice President of the North Eastern District**

Lockdown was very surreal and at times emotionally overwhelming. Gaining a new perspective on what in life was truly important and necessary was a lesson learnt. The spiritual renewal from a closer walk with God along with the daily blessings, encouragement and fellowship experiences through virtual church remains very precious.

### **Pat Jamison, All-Ireland Missionary Secretary**

PPE, donning and doffing, social distancing, only 3, 4 or maybe 5 per room, one way systems in corridors, daily zoom meetings, trainings cancelled or reformatted, shielding, staff permitted to work from home - all terms and words used very little post lockdown and now

used daily as nurses. Life has and is still busy and we have continued to see patients, however we do so with more protective equipment than before.

**Louise Wilson, Area President of World Federation of Methodist & Uniting Church Women**

“and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him...” While it has been sad not to be able to hug my grandchildren or see my daughter in Scotland, lockdown has provided an opportunity: to stop and rest; encourage and be encouraged by family and friends; to assess priorities; and to spend more time **with** God, rather than **for** God.

**Elizabeth McWatters, Past President**

I had recently returned exhausted from a Sri Lankan mission trip when lockdown was announced. As I live alone, I thought of it as a retreat, to be still with my Heavenly Father. With my engagements being put on hold, I spent time on line/phone encouraging friends, praying, reading, and crafting. I thank God for this time in my busy life to draw closer to Him.

Thank you all for the variety of thoughts on lockdown. Lockdown has not been easy, but it is also good to have honest and reflective thoughts (as well). Our Executive Officers' experiences covered; from missing family; friends; getting to know our neighbours better; virtual church and zoom are blessings; prayer and getting close to God are real assets; getting our priorities right; challenges as a NHS workers and knowing that even as lockdown eases we can take it at our own pace knowing the Lord is with us.

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.

2 Corinthians 12:9.

Joan Strong

All-Ireland MWI President