

Methodist Women in Britain Yorkshire North and East District Conference
Cober Hill Scarborough 2018

Water of Life, Water for Life, this was the theme for this year's conference, led by Sandra Goodwin (Connexional MWiB President).

The weekend, which was attended by 40 people across the District, was challenging and thought provoking as we looked at water and climate change and the effect this is having around the world. A world in which water like here, has been privatised, and therefore is a commodity to be sold to those who can afford it. Unfortunately, there are many across the world who cannot afford to buy clean water and therefore only have access to disease laden streams to fulfil the very basic need of water to drink, prepare food and to clean with.

We watched one clip from Bolivia which showed a family who lived within sight of the water treatment works, and in fact had the water pipes to which they could have been connected running alongside their house, but as the cost just to have the water connected would have been a year's wages for this poor family, and that was just to be connected this wasn't possible. The nearest water was a stream at the bottom of a steep hill, and this is where they had to carry their water from on a daily basis.

They had lost one child, who had died because of dirty water, and their 10-year-old daughter broke all our hearts as with tears running down her face she explained that she had no friends, that no one would play or talk to her because they said she was dirty. The justification being that the family did not have running water, and therefore could not wash clothes so easily, nor themselves or anything else!

We saw people fighting over water, and people making money as they sold clean water from jars to those who needed it and hadn't got. One man's misery creating another man's profit. We also heard about Cape Town becoming the first city to run out of water, and this will happen possibly now in June this year, as the city struggles to stretch the limited precious resource that it has left at present.

The statistics for the number of hours many women and children across the world spend carrying water are horrific, for example, women in Africa spend 200 million hours collecting water a year. This of course has a huge knock on effect to their ability to make a living and be educated, which helps to keep them in poverty – and remember that this is not clean water.

So next time you blithely turn on a tap and leave it running you might think about this article, and perhaps we could be thinking about what we as a church, or you as an individual could do to change things in some small way. Perhaps consider toilet twinning, more info here: <https://www.toilettwinning.org/> or donating to water aid, more info here: <https://www.wateraid.org/uk/>

At the end of the weekend we all came away, challenged by what we had heard, certainly more knowledgeable and looking for a way to do something, feeling blessed through the great fellowship and friendship we had shared, and extremely well fed. Perhaps next year ladies you might feel called to come with us. If you would like any more information, please speak to Elaine Turner Tel.no. 01482 867573 or email jetbev2@gmail.com

Sue Jakeman

March 2018

Connexional MWiB President Mrs Sandra Godwin and District President Mrs Janice Clark.



The Collage made during the Saturday afternoon creative workshop:



Anyone for Cricket? Janice Clark and Janet Whelan preparing for the game as umpires!

