

Home and Overseas Paper - May 2022

Many Moravian Churches in the British Province will be supporting Christian Aid Week which runs from 15th-21st May this year. This month I thought it would be good to provide some background to this organisation which many of us support year after year. Christian Aid is the international development agency for 41 sponsoring churches – including our own. The organisation's statement of belief is as follows:

“Our belief that poverty can be ended is based on our understanding of scripture and the work of a creative, loving God.”

Christian Aid began in 1945. It was founded by British and Irish churches to help refugees following the Second World War. Christian Aid Week was launched in the 1950s to raise extra funds – refugees from mainland Europe were assisted as well as refugees from Palestine, Korea and China. As time has gone on Christian Aid has moved into other areas to help alleviate poverty in the world. It supported the establishment of the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) programme to provide opportunities for young people to work overseas and make a difference. In the 1960s Christian Aid created the Disasters Emergency Committee to enable development agencies to work together in times of crisis. Christian Aid also tries to educate its supporters about the root causes of poverty and carries out political lobbying to obtain more aid from governments and to change consumer and government practices to bring about fair trade and reduce debt in developing countries. More recently, Christian Aid has campaigned and continues to campaign against the causes of climate change. Developing countries are being and will continue to be disproportionately affected by the effects of global warming pushing their people deeper and deeper into poverty.

Christian Aid is working in 29 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean; working with vulnerable people in many different ways so that the quality of their lives will be improved.

Christian Aid describes itself as ***“... a global movement of people, churches and local organisations. We are the changemakers, the peacemakers, the mighty of heart.”***

So, how can we help?

1. Financial donations

Christian Aid will accept donations at any time of year but there is a focus on fund-raising during Christian Aid week. I remember as a young person in my late teens and twenties participating in door-to-door collections but understandably and particularly in the past couple of years this has been less popular. However, envelopes are available from Christian Aid for “deliver-only” and to put in your church for the congregation to use. There is also the facility to set up an e-envelope so people can donate easily online. Perhaps there is a Christian Aid co-ordinator in your congregation who obtains and distributes these resources. Along with another Sister, I am the co-ordinator for Fairfield. If there isn't such a person in your congregation, perhaps this is something your MWA Circle could take on.

2. Prayer, worship and study

The Christian Aid website is filled with resources which can be downloaded – daily Bible readings, pointers for sermons and prayers, prayer diaries, reflective films and more!

By the time most of you are gathering to read this Christian Aid Week will be underway – so if this information is too late for this year – perhaps you can bear it in mind for next.

Sr Janet Cooper.

