



UNITY WOMEN'S DESK
Empowering Moravian Women for Global Change

Bags packed ...

Home & Overseas paper: March 2026

By the time you read this paper I will probably be in Arusha, Tanzania at the Unity Women's Desk Consultation. I am sure many of you have undertaken such journeys in the past to meet with women from around the Unity. An opportunity to build friendships, share ideas, learn and come home fired up with possible actions.

Having had lots of vaccines, taken anti-malaria tablets and packed gifts to exchange I set off. Already I am feeling a mixture of emotions – excited, challenged and more. However, I know that prayers will be winging their way to support us as we all meet together. We will be women from many different countries, very different cultures and languages and yet united by a shared faith and a shared desire to improve the lives of women and girls worldwide.

The theme of this consultation is: With hearts and hands and voices: Advocating for the human rights of women in the Moravian Church and communities. We will be learning about how to recognise and challenge violence against women and girls in our congregations and communities.

In Britain the level of misogyny is high among young boys and men: misogyny is most often encouraged by influencers on social media and it then leads to bullying and violence in real life. In such situations both the males and females are victims. Police chiefs in the UK have declared violence against women and girls a 'national emergency'.

I recently read some awful statistics from a report by the Youth Endowment Fund:

31% of young people in a relationship have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

33% of 13 – 17 year olds have encountered online material that encourages such violence;

In adulthood over 3.2 million women have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault and/ or stalking.

Such information confirms that the Consultation is highly relevant to us in Britain and I look forward to sharing my learning with you.

I am sure many of your Circles will be well underway with fundraising plans. Perhaps this is a good opportunity to again name those charities we are planning to support in 2026. It is hoped to donate £1000 to each of the following: schools in Nepal and India for specific projects; Motor Neurone Disease (MND) and Provincial Youth work. MND affects the nerves in the brain and spinal cord known as motor neurones. People with MND experience a range of symptoms including difficulties with movement.

I would encourage you all to reflect upon the topic of this UWD Consultation and share any relevant stories with each other.

Sr Mary Holmes