



Ann-Marie Wilson

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Location: Britain



What I do: Working to end FGM and violence against women and girls, specifically across Africa and the diaspora where FGM is practised.

Dear friends,

August was a month of both refreshment and renewal for me and preparation for the next phase. This involved having detailed discussions with the head of policy and advocacy, head of research and programming and the chief executive of the Orchid Project, where all of the 28 Too Many team have moved across to paid permanent roles. In these discussions I was invited to become part of the launch team to open the office in Berlin, along with a new role to supplement my research advisor role.

As in years before, our CEO, Asenath, spoke at the Commission on the Status of Women, leading a joint event with the Africa lead programme to end FGM and the Kenyan government. We have also been working to support grassroots organisations to fulfil my founding dream to launch a pan-African network to end FGM.

Orchid has also been setting up an ambassadors' group with colleagues based in Africa and attended an Africa Union Tanzania conference to talk about global funding.

In terms of research, along with publishing updates on Mali, Ethiopia and Nigeria, we have published a policy legal options report for Somalia, jointly working with IFRA. Most exciting to me, is work on a country profile of Malaysia, as it marks the beginning of research on several countries early next year in Asia. Having done several country programmes across Africa, we are also doing a "what works" state of play report which will help research and programmes across "porous" borders.

Finally, we are working on developing a capacity strengthening project to build grassroots capacity for localised research, which will give us new authorship.

Please pray for all of Orchid Project and the research team globally.

After all of the above, I hope you agree that rest and refreshment was needed! As such, I visited the beautiful country of Croatia, where I was humbled to learn about the complex history and politics of this region, having volunteered in Kosovo as my first mission field project with Medair in 2001, at the height of the conflicts there.

I was also pleased to go on a pilgrimage to Derry, Ireland, following in the footsteps of Saint Columba, after having felt a calling begin in Iona, Scotland, which I visited during Easter 2022. There was plenty of walking and a little sailing as I experienced how Saint Columba would have sailed, bringing the gospel from Ireland to the rest of the UK.

On a more local basis, I have become involved in joining a bring-and-share lunch in Barnet for single, isolated local people on Sundays.



*Beautiful Croatia: refreshment
and prayer space*

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**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**



Please pray for further clarity in my sense of calling, reconfirmed in Ireland.

September: I have started a one-year course at St Mellitus College, Central London, supplemented with Zoom tutorials on essay writing and punctuation! This term's lectures are applied theology, which despite all of my previous studies, is something I have not undertaken before. Having just got my feet under the table, I joined the other 300+ students at a residential weekend, looking at all different faiths.

I am also pleased to have completed my three-yearly safeguarding and domestic abuse training as part of my lay minister role, as I prepare for my relicensing in November.

I have recently had my role with Orchid Project doubled, and am now additionally working with the chief executive, treasurer and head of communications and fundraising to secure funds for new projects in Asia alongside updating all our work in Africa.

At the end of the month, I visited cousins in the Lake District, who needed me to go to them, as they are a family of eight. We celebrated my investiture and had a general catch-up.

Please pray for both them and my bubble family, who both have foster children with them. Every child deserves a home for good. Also please keep a very close family in Manchester in your prayers whom I visited while there.

October was an extremely busy month, beginning with attending a celebration evening for the 40th anniversary of CARE, a charity which lobbies for change.

I attended a police high level stakeholder meeting and shared updates on our work at Orchid Project. As support, each month I receive executive coaching and spiritual direction to debrief on the work I do. This includes volunteering with people who are coming to the end of their lives.

I started a six-week Art & Healing course, to enable me to process the work I do with Noah's Ark Children's Hospice.

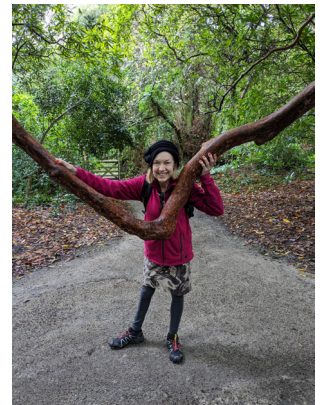
I gave an interview to Christian Radio and I am currently giving blessed communion to a St B's congregant each month.

Over half term I went grape picking at Daws Hill Vineyard and visited The Eden Project. Both life-long wishes. I also have a week-long residential course for college studying sacraments.

Prayer requests:

- ▶ As my mission season with St Barnabas seems to be coming to an end, please pray for other funding to address the shortfall. Thanks to those who have already helped.
- ▶ As I prepare for lay minister relicensing under my new vicar, pray that we get to know each other and work well together.

Ann-Marie Wilson



Photos from top to bottom: Ireland pilgrimage; sailing Saint Columba's Way; Eden and the lost gardens of Heligan, Cornwall refreshment weekend; 40th anniversary for CARE



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