



27 February–3 March 2017
ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT

REPORT



in collaboration with the Council of Services and Development (CSD), Synod of the Nile



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About Tearfund, Call2All, Micah Global, YWAM and CSD



Tearfund is an international NGO recognised for its professional expertise in development, disaster response and advocacy. We believe that the local church is a powerful force for transformation in communities living in every kind of poverty. Inspired by the example and teaching of Jesus, we recognise that people have deeply interconnected material and spiritual needs. We seek to meet those needs by working through our local church partners. Churches are at the heart of their communities – full of dedicated, resourceful people who want to make a long-term difference.



YOUTH WITH A MISSION

Youth With A Mission is a global movement of Christians from many cultures, age groups and Christian traditions, dedicated to serving Jesus throughout the world. Also known as YWAM (pronounced 'WHY-wham'), we unite in a common purpose to know God and to make him known. Back when we began in 1960, our main focus was to get youth involved in missions. Today, we still focus on youth, and we also involve people aged 9 to 90. We currently work in more than 1,100 locations in over 180 countries, with a staff of more than 18,000.



The call2all movement is an activist, Holy Spirit-driven movement. Strategy is not just for discussion. It is time to do it! To stay on the cutting edge of what God is doing around the world in our generation, we have to: Look up! We must begin every outreach by looking to heaven. Reach out! We must never grow insensitive to human need and suffering around us – whether in our local neighbourhood or across the world. Ask questions! We are called to be disciples – that is, learners – imitating our Lord. Cross borders! Don't stay put! Consider how to break out of the mould and cross borders, which may be geographical, linguistic, generational, political, cultural or of any kind. Press on! Never give up, 'but press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has call [you].' (Philippians 3:14)



Micah Global is a worldwide community of Christians (aid/NGO organisations, mission organisations, academic/training institutes, local congregations, networks, alliances, denominational secretariats and individuals) drawn together because of their passion and commitment for integral mission. Established in late 1999 as Micah Network, the organisation now has over 550 members in 80+ countries. Underpinning all that we do is the inspiring verse from Micah 6:8: 'What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'



The Council of Services and Development (CSD) is one of twelve councils supervised by the Synod of the Nile. It works to empower churches and the community, specialising in development ministry among the eight Presbyteries across Egypt (covering 300 Presbyterian churches). CSD is committed to ministries of compassion and social justice for all Egyptians.

Christians witness to our faith as we strive to meet the needs of all human beings, especially the poor and underprivileged. The vision of CSD is to empower local churches

and to prepare church leaders to positively transform society and the church through the development of both people and place. It also supports the church's main ministry of being 'salt and light' by fulfilling people's needs and addressing some of the problematic issues in society.

1. Overview

Egypt Gathering was organised by Tearfund, Micah Global, Youth With A Mission (YWAM), Call2All and CSD. The gathering took place from 27 February to 3 March 2017 at Beit El Salam in Alexandria. The vision for the gathering was to inspire and equip the church to actively respond to its calling to address poverty and injustice in a way that meets the holistic needs of individuals and communities. We sought to create a space where participants could share learning and best-practice examples of compassion ministry. We also wanted to facilitate the creation of connections that would enable participants to offer ongoing support to each other after the gathering had ended.

The gathering was a wonderful time of building new friendships and networks. The five-day gathering brought together 227 participants from eight different countries and featured plenary sessions, workshops, group discussions, project visits and daily times of devotion and worship.

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Brazil	1
Democratic Republic of Congo	1
Egypt	202
Lebanon	1
South Africa	2
United Kingdom	17
United States	3 <i>(of whom one works in Lebanon, one in Ethiopia and one in Thailand)</i>

Some of the key themes and topics explored include:

- The MENA region context and its implications for development
- The role of young people in development
- Church and community mobilisation
- Transforming sectarianism in our communities
- Creation care
- The refugee crisis
- Gender inequality

The list of commonly-cited participant expectations includes:

- Hearing what God is doing in the region
- Learning from others and sharing experiences
- Learning from Tearfund's engagement in different places in the world
- Learning about the church in this region and the role of the church in development
- Networking and building relationships with others
- Identifying church development priorities
- Enhancing partnerships
- Learning about TILZ and other resources

- Learning how to help communities in poverty develop themselves sustainably
- Gaining a wider understanding of what is happening in the world
- Developing an understanding of different developmental approaches
- Developing an understanding of holistic mission
- Promoting interaction between denominations to help unify and encourage the church
- Learning how to shift from traditional models to understanding individual needs of the community
- Discovering new tools to deal with community needs in the light of political changes
- Gaining up-to-date knowledge of topics relating to poverty and development, especially in relation to Egypt's social problems
- Thinking together about Egypt's social problems
- Learning how to apply Jesus' teaching on being 'salt and light'
- Learning from and studying Jesus' approach

2. Key learning

Outlined below are some key learning points from the week.

2.1 Devotions

Each morning there was a contextual Bible study, hosted by René August, based around the themes of justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, and diversity and inclusion. (*For more information on contextual Bible studies see section 2.2.2.*)

Below are notes on two of the studies.

Justice

- The Bible study began by remembering that marginalisation happens throughout the Bible. The Israelites were marginalised and in the story of Jesus there was persecution. Caesar was named 'Son of God'. He was considered a superpower and he did not like Jews.
- Luke 1
 - We meet Mary – marginalised in terms of her age, race and gender. God wants to do something for, and also that will change, the whole world. Where does he choose to go? To someone on the margins of society.
 - Mary was very confused by the angel's words that God has highly favoured her and that she will have a son who will be the Son of the Most High. She would have wondered if that was not from Caesar's family? (At the time, Caesar's family would have been known as the 'Most High' family, so for Mary to have a son who would be the Most High and NOT be of Caesar's family would have been an outrageous thought.)
 - Mary is now in trouble, but the song she sings in response to the angel acknowledges that God has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted the lowly.
 - This woman, young and poor, is told she is to carry the Son of the Most High – which is Caesar's title! And he will sit on the throne of David.
 - Mary has to do something courageous (like the midwives and mother of Moses).
 - From Exodus to Luke, God comes to find those who are marginalised under governments who suppress them, and God invites them to do great things. God did that work in Exodus and with Mary he is doing it in Luke. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is doing that work right now. And he will be doing it in the future.
- We must look at historical contexts when we look at the text, both biblical context and contemporary context.
- We see the same story of God across the whole of history and when we join the dots we get an understanding our role in the story. The role in any show is to make the star look good. We are not the star, but we are here to point to God and to say, 'Look at what God is doing.'

Reconciliation

- How many churches are there in the Middle East?
 - Jesus says there is one church!
- What percentage of the people in the Middle East are God's children?

- 100%
- So, if we are one family, even if we don't believe the same thing, we are required to work toward reconciliation.
- In the life of Jesus and throughout the Bible there are hundreds of examples of reconciliation.
- We must also be involved in this process of reconciliation.
- Luke 19:1–10 (the story of Zacchaeus)
 - Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and was rich.
 - He would have been working for the Roman empire, for Caesar and the kings of the region, even though he was a Jew. By his own people he would have been viewed as a traitor.
 - Jesus has a reputation for stirring people up and getting them excited about God.
 - Some people had questions for Jesus and were trying to get a glimpse of the person they had heard so much about.
 - Zacchaeus was trying to find the best way to see Jesus through the crowd, so climbed a tree.
 - As Jesus passed the tree he stopped, looked up, saw Zacchaeus and asked to go to his house. Observers were disgusted.
 - Zacchaeus told Jesus he knew he had done wrong, that he didn't want to be viewed as a traitor any more and he asked Jesus to help him. Jesus invited him to be all that God called him to be. Zacchaeus committed to give to the poor 50 per cent of all he had and to give back everything he had stolen (returning four times the amount to those he had cheated).
- What does this passage help us understand about reconciliation?
 - Forgiveness is not easy, especially when there is a repeat offender. It is okay to distance yourself from that person.
 - If someone makes us angry, they control us. And if they control us, then God cannot control us.
 - It is sometimes okay to be angry – there are some things that make God angry – but anger should not define us.
 - In relation to violence or inferiority, there is no easy answer. But who does God say we are? God does not call us inferior. So we must ask ourselves who we are in the eyes of God.
 - René grew up in a country where she was told by the government that she was inferior. Sometimes she believed it, sometimes she didn't. Twenty-seven years later, there are still traces of that sense of inferiority.
 - But God walks with us. We have to keep worshipping and looking to Jesus.
 - Nailed to the cross, Jesus says, 'Father forgive them they do not know what they are doing'. In one sense they know exactly what they are doing – they are killing him. But Jesus forgives; he says, 'It is finished'.

2.2 Plenary sessions

Below are some of the key learning points from the plenary sessions.

2.2.1 Welcome session

Dr Radi Iskandar, Akram Amin and Bruce Clark

During this session, participants were welcomed to Egypt Gathering and the vision for the week was shared. (*Please see the aims in Section 1: Overview*) Participants also enjoyed a time of worship together.

2.2.2 Introduction to contextual Bible studies

René August

This session introduced the idea of contextual Bible study – something which participants would be involved in each morning during Egypt Gathering.

René August works for The Warehouse, in South Africa. There they have been developing a guide for contextual Bible study. When they asked, *‘What does the Bible say about apartheid?’* they found that the Bible was being used to ignore, to defend and to oppose apartheid. When they asked what the Bible had to say about human enslavement, they learned that the Bible was being used both to support and to oppose slavery. When they asked, *‘What does the Bible say about women leadership in the church?’* they discovered that the Bible was being used both to support and to oppose women in leadership. At The Warehouse they recognise that simply asking the question, *‘What does the Bible say about...?’* does not help us to live lives of faithful obedience. We need to develop other tools and ask different questions of scripture in order to deepen our understanding of who God is and to live lives of obedience.

Throughout the history of the church, context has played an important role in determining the conclusions we reach when we answer the question, *‘What does the Bible say about...?’* For theologians answering this question, their time in history, their nationality and their socio-economic and political contexts significantly influence their conclusions. We need to read our sacred texts in the context of our countries, communities and daily lives. The lens through which we read scripture pre-determines the conclusions we come to in making sense of God’s word in God’s world.

The key concept of contextual Bible study is to find ways to weave together and make connections between three primary ‘texts’ – historical context, contemporary context and sacred text – in the hope that we will better be able to read and understand scripture. It is also in the hope that together we will find a more comprehensive perspective of scripture and appreciate the endless value of God’s words for us, the people of God.

Please note, a complete version of the contextual Bible study guide – ‘Bible Pilgrimages: Reading God’s word in God’s world with God’s people for our healing’ – will be made available soon.

2.2.3 The Middle East and North African (MENA) region context and its implications for development

Dr Radi Iskandar and Dr Andrea Zaki

This session provided an overview of the MENA region context and explored its implications for development. Key learning points include:

- In the MENA region people are facing numerous challenges, including high levels of youth unemployment, economic instability and conflict – the latter resulting in large numbers of refugees and internally displaced people.
- The church must know its role in society because, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few’.
- The church is active within the local context, especially in the recent issue of the forced displacement of Christians in Areesh.

The speakers then outlined a biblical understanding of human flourishing and how this theological thinking, and the biblical concepts of justice and mercy, can inform our community development programmes and initiatives. Key learning points include:

- The role of the church in development and in bringing social change cannot be understood without a deep understanding of the concept of the kingdom of heaven. The points outlined below can reveal a deeper understanding of the concept of the kingdom of heaven.
 - **The kingdom of heaven as a hereafter interpretation** – When Jesus was talking about the kingdom, he spoke about an aim. The Bible shows us the coming of the kingdom of God in Revelation and this vision inspires us.
 - **The kingdom of heaven as it is here now** – Although the kingdom of God is not fully revealed yet, because of Jesus Christ it already exists and we can invite people into it. Working to change the bad circumstances of people shows them the love of God. Without this we cannot invite them into the kingdom.
 - **The kingdom of heaven as a future concept linked to reality** – It provides the link between the existence of the kingdom now and its future revelation. As we show people love and support them in practical ways, we show them Jesus and invite them to join the kingdom – and we reveal God's kingdom in the world around us.
- The social and spiritual role of the church includes all aspects of life. We looked particularly at the theology of co-existence and transparency, and the theology of involving and integration.
 - The theology of transparency: the church thinking must be clear and transparent for everybody.
 - The theology of co-existence and living together: it establishes for common congregations with different denominations/religions. It establishes for the right to difference.
 - The theology of involving and integration: by building bridges with the society beyond the limits of belief.
- The church can play a role in the provision of development-related services such as microloans and childcare facilities.
- Capacity building is also important – it can bring institutional change and help communities with the challenges they face in a way that promotes their survival and wellbeing.
- The church can also engage in advocacy – advocacy involves the pursuit of real change in the value system in order to change the society.

2.2.4 The role of the church in responding to social injustice

Tawfik George

Through an upfront presentation and a time of question-and-answer, this session helped to further unpack the role of the church in responding to social injustice – the distinctiveness of the role and its mandate within the mission of God. Key learning points from this session include:

- We are all peacemakers, as we have been called to be the sons and daughters of God.
- We can become overwhelmed by the scale of need and the problems that we see in our world. For example:
 - Laws and legislation that discriminate against people and perpetuate inequality
 - The cost of food – the floating of the Egyptian pound and devaluation and deregulation of the currency have caused significant problems
 - The refugee crisis – officially there are 2–3 million refugees from Sudan in Egypt (in reality estimated to be 4–5 million); there are also 3 million Syrian refugees in Egypt

- Unemployment
- Disability
- The number of street children
- Family breakdown
- High levels of education illiteracy
- Gender-based discrimination
- Corruption
- Religious-based discrimination
- However, we must 1) stand against the devil and 2) continually submit ourselves to Jesus and renew our covenant with him, asking him to give us the strength to address issues of social injustice. Jesus instructs all those who are weary to come to him (Matthew 11:28).
- We need to use our knowledge of what is happening and be moved to action. Sometimes we can be so content with our current circumstances that we lose the sense of ambition and motivation to respond to social injustice. We cannot make choices and decisions in the presence of the Lord and then not turn them into action.
- Some reasons why people do not take action: lack of resource, lack of vision, fear of not knowing what it would be like 'outside the box'.
- In response to the above we must:
 - Rely on God's promises and provision – remember he does miracles
 - Have faith
 - Face situations with positivity, even among such injustice
 - Come together as a church body – each member of the church congregation has a role to play
 - Work diligently
 - Network and build good connections with people who can provide resources
 - Share resources among organisations, churches and individuals
 - Grow in sympathy and continue to ask God to break our hearts for what breaks his
- Key biblical texts:
 - Paul's Epistles
 - Philippians 4:13

2.2.5 Head, hearts and hands

René August and Bonolo Makgale

Through the lens of René's and Bonolo's South African experience, this session examined the reasons why it is necessary to engage people's heads, hearts and hands, and how to do this in order to develop champions of justice. It did so while exploring the importance of mobilising youth in development and facilitating inter-generational dialogue. It also gave space for participants to consider their experiences of injustice (both given and received) and space for prayer and reflection. Key learning points from this session include:

- 'Changemakers' is a five-day training course run by The Warehouse for young people (aged 18–25) from South Africa. It gives them training on how to respond to social injustice and to find creative ways of advocating for change in their contexts.
- It is important to create spaces like this where young people can come together to engage with issues that are important to them. In such spaces they can find healing from past or current traumas (eg racial discrimination in the case of South Africa) and also where they can form strategies for implementing what they have learnt when they go home.
- Such spaces can also allow for prophetic imagination. South Africa is very diverse, with lots of racial segregation. 'Changemakers' gives young people a space where they can imagine

a new South Africa, the South Africa they want to see. Collectively they can imagine a new world of justice.

- What is key if we want young people to be involved in changing their societies?
 - The church needs to set out to support young people, enabling them to shine a light in their communities.
 - Young people can be radical and that is not necessarily problematic – we need to allow them to try new things.
 - If the church stops investing in young leaders we will see a lack of outstanding leaders in the future. If we invest in leaders, producing good ones, then they will go on to train and produce more good leaders. It is a continuous cycle.
 - Half of the world's population is under the age of 30, so if we have gatherings where that age group is not properly represented, then we miss a whole section of what God is doing in the world.
- An example of young people making history in South Africa:
 - During the 1976 uprising against apartheid, high school children (just 13–18 years old) took to the streets to say that the system was unjust and unfair, and that they would not tolerate it any longer. The police responded with violence but it woke up the country and was a significant turning point.
- What is meant by 'Head', 'Heart' and 'Hands'?
 - Head: why we do what we do. It involves reflecting on our worldview, on our theology and biblical interpretation, and on our political economy. With all the inequality that we see in the world (where eight men have wealth equal to that of 50 per cent of the world's population), the head allows us to engage with the issues and realities. Theological reflection helps us to understand how to respond to the world around us.
 - Heart: who we are. Jesus said, '*Your kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven*'. It is we who are responsible for bringing the kingdom of God on earth. As we seek to do this and pursue social injustice, we must keep growing and checking ourselves. Spiritual formation is very important. We also need to acknowledge and address the impact our past has had on us.
 - Hands: what we do – advocating against and fighting injustice. This is the theology of Jesus. It is as important as fasting, prayer, Bible studies or attending gatherings. It must be an integral part of our lives.
- A fourth 'H': Hope
 - Hope involves creating a space for dialogue across generations. We must have cross-generational conversations: all ages have a contribution to make and these conversations bring hope. This is biblical – Jesus disciplined twelve and remember the stories of Saul and Barnabas, Paul and Timothy, Moses and Aaron, and Elijah and Elisha. The problems younger people face today are different from those of previous generations. We learn more about understanding the world when we engage with people whose experience is different. When we work for justice, it is too big a goal to achieve for all in our lifetime. The only way that our work can continue is to collaborate with people who are younger than us. If we are not working with people of a younger generation, then it doesn't give hope. If we were working for our own kingdom then we could work alone, but we are working for God's kingdom and it involves us all.
- We must work with one another and also with non-Christians, engaging in our wider communities and with the government.

A time of question-and-answer then took place.

- **Question:** René, as a minister and someone who is passionate about advocacy and social justice, how do you make the connection between social justice and Jesus?
- **Answer:** We advocate because we see Jesus doing it in scripture. Jesus chose to be born in poverty. When Mary and Joseph brought their offering to the temple (a sacrifice of thanksgiving for their child), it was that of the poorest of the poor. So the choice of God to be made flesh in a poor body tells us something about needing to embody powerlessness, even lack of resource, when we want to follow the example of Jesus in any place. We cannot come having everything we need and knowing everything we need to know. Jesus came into the world as God, but poor and needy for help. We should be prepared to enter communities as someone who is in need and requiring help. Not having the resources, we need people – we need each other.
- **Question:** How do you encourage people to advocate for change?
- **Answer:** Jesus gave attention to the poor people – the needy, dirty, unclean people. They got help and healing from him that no one else gave. Jesus would stop to touch a leper, a spiritual act of healing but an act that was socially problematic. Touching someone with a contagious disease! Jesus advocated in a way that made people feel socially awkward. Imagine God, through Jesus, right on your street – Jesus had conversations with women and meals with notorious sinners (eg Zacchaeus).
- **Question:** You are a black woman who lived through apartheid; how has pre- and post-apartheid changed your narrative and shaped what you do?
- **Answer:** René is an Anglican minister. Sometimes pastors come to her and say it is not true that she is a pastor. She grew up in a church where she was told her voice should not be heard because she is woman. She has experienced lots of people telling her to not speak, to be quiet and stay in the corner – which is what she originally did. But her calling from God was that he intended her to be a pastor. God is not surprised that she is a woman or that she is black. She has come to agreement with God about who she is and her true value in him. We need to have our mind renewed to understand God's views about us and about others. God has called us here and he loves us – that is enough. In a post-apartheid South Africa, a part of God's calling is to share that understanding and to encourage and support women to know that too. God is not surprised by where you come from or how much money you have.
- **Question:** I am a young, white woman who has spent time in South Africa. What is the role of a white woman in empowering people and helping to resolve community issues?
- **Answer** (from René): My picture of the kingdom of God is a picture of the whole world. It has to involve everyone – we are all created in the image of God. There is a lot to do and, because in South Africa white skin represents power, I know it can be difficult. I work alongside people and listen to their dreams. Then I help them fulfil these dreams in such a way that they can say, '*Look what I was able to do*'. It is not about what we can do for people but about what they are able to do for themselves. We need to walk alongside others and take on the very nature of a servant, as Jesus did. Also, silence can be powerful – taking time to listen without speaking may be of greater value than you can imagine. Embrace opportunities to listen.
- **Question:** Can social aspirations come into conflict with political trends and cause difficulties? For instance, women's rights and their situation in Egypt have improved but there is still conflict between our church and the political situation. How can we address this?

- **Answer** (from René): God's dream in scripture is a dream for all. It can be difficult to know what to do when the dreams of political leaders differ from what the kingdom of God should look like. When we are invited to help people to imagine a new South Africa we encourage them to think about all people. And remember the story of Cain and Abel – God loves even those who perpetrate injustice. We must ask God to help us to love others as he loves them. Where there is a law in our country that does not show love to everyone equally then we need to find ways to resist, to speak out and to protest against that law, as it contradicts the love of God.

2.2.6 Why does identity matter?

Ramy Taleb

This session aimed to help participants understand how identities can be divisive and to consider those factors which unite us. It explored what it truly means to find our identities in Christ and to have multiple 'identifications', with Christ as the primary. It also provided a theological understanding of what it means to be made in the image of God and how that should impact practically on the way Christians engage in the world.

Ramy's background:

- He is from Lebanon.
- His whole organisation is centred on the concept of forgiveness.
- It is his goal to share his identity as a Christian man and the identity of the church too.

Key learning points from this session include:

- Key Bible readings: Isaiah 43:19, Romans 12:2, Isaiah 65:17
- Participants were asked, '*What shapes our identity as a person?*'

Some answers suggested were:

- Our name
- Our birthplace/background
- Our cultural parameters
- Our date of birth
- Our family
- Our friends
- Our past actions and experiences
- Our identity in Christ is the most important!
 - On a reconciliation course in Dublin, Ramy found himself in a room with a man from Palestine. (This is significant given the history of Lebanon and the conflict with Palestine.) Sharing space with a Palestinian was confusing and challenging for Ramy. He felt they could not be on good terms with each other. Although he did not know the man, his identity as a Palestinian made Ramy angry. However, their lectures were on tolerance and forgiveness, and God began to challenge him. He had to ask himself, '*What actually is the problem? Why don't you like him?*' He realised it was a problem of identity. By not being clear about our own identity, we are confused by questions about the identities of other people. We need to remember that we are all made in the image of God.
- How can we represent the image of Christ on earth? The answer is that we need to mirror the image of Christ on the earth. We need to sit together, delve deep and think about customs we have inherited – are these biblical or not? For example, in Egyptian society women are often perceived as inferior and seen by men as objects of enjoyment. This

perception has infiltrated into the culture of the church. The church has even found biblical reference for gender inequality, eg 1 Corinthians 11.

- As Christians we need to help everyone irrespective of their creed. This is emulating Christ.
- 2 Corinthians 5:16–17
 - When we give our lives to Jesus, everything changes.
 - We do not belong/conform any longer to the world.
 - We have been assigned a new identity.
- Why was this message sent to the church in Corinth?
 - Corinth was a big, multicultural city, previously destroyed by war and later refounded by the Romans.
 - In practical terms, it was a Greek city colonised by the Roman empire, with a population that was a mixture of Greeks, Romans and Jews.
 - Identity in Corinth would have been complicated and convoluted, with primary loyalty to Caesar in Rome, so it was important for church members there to think about their new identity in Christ.
- 1 Corinthians 12 – the body of Christ
 - We are all one in the body, whether we are Jewish or non-Jewish, slaves or free. The church included all kinds of people at this time, both rich and poor. Paul understood that our identity does not come from such things – our identity is found in Christ. There is no discrimination.
- We can be tempted to act in the same way as Adam and Eve: when problems exist in our churches we can try to pass the blame. Even though God had instructed Adam not to eat he tried to put the blame on Eve. Do not pass the blame.
- January 25 Revolution – the Egyptian revolution of 2011: at the time there was mistrust between different groups and this was reflected inside the church.
- Everything we do and think should relate back to our identity in Christ. We need to walk the talk. We are the body of Christ, we are made in his image and we should emulate his examples.
- We have to be renewed and regenerated, and live in a way that is different from those outside the church. Purify all of your old habits – it is God’s desire to change us, restore us and transform us.
- Reflective questions:
 - What cultures in Egypt affect the church’s identity?
 - What in Egyptian history has led to changes in the identity of the Egyptian church?
 - What traditions has the church adopted that it needs to be healed from?

2.2.7 Transforming sectarianism in our communities: becoming ambassadors for peace

Rev Nadim Nassar

During this session, Rev Nadim Nassar helped participants to consider how a) individuals, b) churches and c) NGOs can be ambassadors for peace. This involved looking at what the Bible says about peacebuilding and what it means to be made in the image of God, and how this biblical understanding can have a practical application in communities. Key learning points from this session include:

- Jesus was a radical person (Matthew 23).
- Jesus at his most radical said, ‘*Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees*’; he showed himself to be a revolutionary against the decay of the time.
- We need to look at Jesus and see how he responded to the situations he faced.
- Three notable cultures:

1. **The culture of the sacred text.** Sometimes the sacred text needs explanation and interpretation by a learned person - in Jesus' time these people were the Scribes.
2. **Our own culture.** When Jesus was teaching in the middle of a crowd, he spoke into his culture, eg drawing parallels with a shepherd. We need to ensure that preaching and teaching in our churches is relevant: why preach about 'the good shepherd' in an urban context where people may never have seen a shepherd? Maybe in a city draw parallels with a bus driver – we trust our life to them and they take us from A to B.
3. **The culture of God.** Culture can be defined as customs, traditions, thoughts – a whole pattern of life for a group of people at a certain time in a certain place. Though God is beyond our understanding we know he is the creator, the maker, the provider, the redeemer, the teacher and that he is love.
 - Jesus said, '*I am the way and the truth and the life*'; if we are keen to dig deep we will get to the truth and so get to Jesus.
 - We, as Christians, know who God is – he is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - Biblical quotes are not to be whipped out like a gun – it is too easy to mix up day-to-day sayings with words from the Bible. And if you quote something from the Bible to back up your argument, it does not necessarily mean that you are right and I am wrong – the Bible can also be used to back up counter arguments.
 - The Bible is a collection of books – we need to remember this as we read and learn from it. All the truth is Christ, and all Christ is truth. Whether considered in single or plural form, the Bible is a collection of stories, breathed and inspired by God. We need to put Jesus, not our teachings and traditions, at the centre of the church.
 - Revelation is the core heart of the Bible – God is revealed through the Bible. Unity comes from God. We must have unity despite our different denominations.
 - We should not become legalistic followers of the book. We need to read the Bible through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - With free will and by choice, are we willing to step out of our comfort zone? To be an ambassador for Christ is an experience, an experience on the inside! Remember the story of the woman (Luke 7:37–39), a sinner in the eyes of the Pharisees, who came to Jesus while he was sharing in a meal at the house of a Pharisee. She stood behind Jesus, weeping. Jesus ignored all the barriers of social norms and expectations. He spoke with her and forgave her sins. She had stepped out of her comfort zone to come to Jesus and he responded.

2.2.8 Information session

Mariam Tadros

During this session the speaker shared information about ways of keeping in contact with each other and continuing personal learning and reflection. This included information on the Tearfund International Learning Zone (TILZ)¹ and Communities of practice (CoPs)².

2.2.9 Closing session

Dr Radi Iskandar, Akram Amin, Sheryl Haw and Steve Goode

During this session, closing reflections were shared and time was set aside to thank participants for taking such an active part in the gathering, and to thank speakers and facilitators for their contribution.

¹ tilz.tearfund.org

² For more information please visit http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/resources/communities_of_practice/

2.3 Interactive learning session

Walk the talk

Sheryl Haw

This session offered a practical, interactive learning experience. Participants were given a scenario-based exercise, looking at the needs of refugees and planning an effective response to meet real, rather than perceived, needs.

The 'Walk the talk' experience was based on the Missional Cycle, an important framework that helps to guide our response to enable community transformation. The elements of the cycle are:

1. **Know the word:** reading and teaching the Bible from the missional perspective.
2. **Know our potential:** as individuals, as families, as a church, as organisations.
3. **Know our communities:** every community has gifts, skills and capacities, as well as vulnerabilities, concerns and needs.
4. **Know our vision:** bringing together God's call, our gifts, and the gifts and needs of communities, we can develop a shared vision – Micah's vision – of communities living life in all its fullness, free from poverty, injustice and conflict.

Overcoming obstacles:

Inevitably some actions we would like to take in our communities will meet obstacles. This is where advocacy and lobbying come in, as we seek to implement the necessary changes and/or to remove the obstacles encountered.

Key learning points and reflections from participants include:

- *'Come let US serve together!'* – we become friends when we serve alongside others.
- We often overlook the people God has chosen – instead focusing on those who seem to be the obvious people and organisations to respond to a challenge, situation or problem.
- Our churches should reflect the whole community.
- People with a disability are often hidden away but the church needs to be inclusive, reflecting the inclusive nature of God.
- We need to listen to people's stories.
- We need to ask ourselves, *'What would our community look like if God answered our prayer for it?'*
- Sometimes there is division among those in the church. We need to transform the church from the inside. Church is not a building – it is the congregation who are church. We need to become true people of God, ambassadors for him, reconciled with him, so we can then serve the community.
- We are the body of Christ and this is global. We need to share our skills for the benefit of God's church.
- How to love your enemies! As we pray for someone, we start to love them. When start to love them, we are willing to help them and become their advocate. This may cost us money as well as time! God tells us to pray for our enemies and, as we do it, God gives us his heart for them and then we start to love them. When we say we will pray for someone, it leads to response.
- We should offer our gifts for the benefit of one another.
- Integral mission is a lifestyle leading towards God's mission of Shalom.
- Relevant biblical teaching:

- Colossians 3:23 – *'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.'*
- Deuteronomy 10:12–22
 - People of God need to follow his ways and love the Lord their God with all their heart.
 - God is the owner of everything on earth and in heaven.
 - God loves everyone unconditionally.
 - God wants the church in Egypt to become ambassadors of Christ and to spread the gospel throughout all Egypt.
 - God is loving and compassionate.
- We should ask ourselves, *'What does good news look like for people in different situations – for a soldier, a street child, a prostitute, a person in poverty?'*
 - For an orphan
 - Good news is a family – but adoption in Egypt is a complex and difficult issue, widely understood to be illegal in many cases.
 - For a refugee
 - Good news is to be safe and accepted.
 - An invitation into a family home.
 - For a prostitute
 - Good news is a safe walk home.
 - Inclusion in a loving family.
 - Acceptance by the church.
 - Job opportunities that do not involve selling their body.
 - For a foreigner
 - Good news is a church service that includes their own language and music.
- **Summary**
 - Root all actions in scripture.
 - Know our gifts, bring them to the altar of God and explore how to partner with others.
 - In order to be a blessing to our communities, build relationships with them, know their needs and understand their skills.
 - In order to bring us together, establish a shared vision for Egypt and for our communities.

2.4 Workshops

Below are some of the key learning points from the seven workshops which took place on Thursday, 2 March.

2.4.1 Fundraising and helping communities find their own long-term solutions

This workshop looked first at traditional fundraising models before exploring alternative fundraising models, shifting from INGO donors to the principles of CCM (church and community mobilisation).

Key learning points included:

- Traditional fundraising:
 - The community has limited control as often the donor dictates how/when/where the money will go.
 - Giving to those in need is good (consider Jesus' teachings) but the wider mission of God encompasses far more.

- It is important to know the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation – build on your strengths and work on your weaknesses.
- If you receive donations it is important to manage these well (we have a responsibility to be good financial stewards). This requires good human resource processes and monitoring-and-evaluation systems.
- The workshop then looked at new fundraising models by considering Tearfund’s ‘church and community transformation’ (CCT) process. This makes the shift from a traditional ‘needs-based’ approach that requires external support, to an ‘asset-based’ approach. The starting place for an asset-based approach is to consider what resources communities already have and how these can be used and developed more effectively.
- The first stage of CCT is ‘church mobilisation’ (CM), the process of envisioning local churches in integral mission, to see a responsibility beyond their church buildings and to understand mission as encompassing far more than traditional evangelism. CM supports churches in identifying their own resources and needs, and in gaining technical training where required. Attending Egypt Gathering was identified as an example of CM. An outcome of CM is that the church identifies and responds to needs within the community.
- The second stage of CCT is ‘church and community mobilisation’ (CCM), which occurs once the church is mobilised. Community members across all demographics participate in identifying existing resources and in responding to needs in the community. The church does not lead the community – it is a collaborative and united effort where all members are included and involved. A helpful tool in recognising assets in different forms and across the whole community is to consider six categories of resources: human; social; physical; natural; economic; and spiritual.
- Once CCM is working effectively and community members have identified needs, the next stage of the CCT process requires advocacy to be incorporated. Often the needs of the community are those that should be provided by the government: education, health, security, etc. CCT advocacy supports communities in understanding their rights and the role of government at both local and national levels.
- The group shared examples of positive outcomes that resulted from churches and communities working together, and also examples where challenges occurred or could be anticipated.
- Reasons for engaging in CCT:
 - It encourages communities to take ownership of their own long-term solutions to development.
 - It is more sustainable.
 - It has a rich theological underpinning – helping to restore people’s relationships with God, with self, with others and with creation.
 - **With God:** seeking God’s will in the process, deepening the relationship.
 - **With self:** giving dignity, worth and value to people; giving them ownership over their development; inspiring change from an attitude of dependency to one of capability (made in the image of God: Genesis 1:26; spiritual gifts: 1 Corinthians 12:1–11; the parable of the talents: Matthew 25:14–30).
 - **With others:** encouraging communities to work together to best benefit everyone; communication, relationships and cross-community value are improved as people identify individual assets and resources so all can work together and contribute effectively (the body of Christ: 1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Ephesians 4).

- **With creation:** the responsibility of each community to steward their God-given land and resources effectively and to use them wisely for the benefit of all (Psalm 24:1)

2.4.2 How do we assess impact?

This workshop looked at how the LIGHT wheel can help us understand holistic change in the development context. It is a great way of understanding the *whole life transformation* that the church and Christians are seeking and to ensure we are looking at all these development areas. The session also looked at the challenges in using the LIGHT wheel tool and how they can be overcome. Group discussion were around questions we might ask or things might we look for to discern if transformation is happening, and challenges we have to work through and how we approach them.

2.4.3 Youth engagement

During this workshop, participants considered the importance of engaging youth in development and the different approaches to doing this. Key learning points include:

- The Egyptian revolution has created unique challenges and opportunities for youth-led development.
 - The Egyptian revolution has been a painful experience for many Egyptians.
 - The church has been divided in its response to the revolution.
 - Some young people in Egypt have seen it as an opportunity to be more engaged with civic society; others have become disillusioned and distrustful of authority.
- Youth and young adults are powerful change agents in community development.
 - Stories were shared from the UK, Lebanon, Thailand and South Africa of instances where young people have successfully participated in or taken leadership roles in development.
 - All these examples required leaders to build relationships with young people and entrust them with roles and responsibilities.
 - Young people have unique spheres of influence in society and can bring about challenge and change where no-one else can.
 - Often young people are open for new ways of doing things in communities where historically there has been resistance.
- Mentoring is crucial.
 - Even if a church leader does not share the vision of involving youth in development work, members of the congregation can still be proactive in engaging young people.
 - One-to-one mentoring is a powerful way of encouraging and including young people, no matter what their ability.
 - Each workshop participant was encouraged to identify several young adults from their home churches who they could invest in.
- There is a desire to hold a youth gathering in Egypt.
 - The Egyptian participants expressed the desire to take the conversations and learning from this workshop to the next step. They all agreed that Egypt, as a country, should take advantage of this moment in history to harness young people's energy for good.

2.4.4 Breaking the bonds of addiction

The facilitator shared his experience of working with addicts, outlining what he and his team are doing to break the bonds of addiction. He explained how to create a therapeutic community to help drug users and their families cope with addiction. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic the key learning points cannot be shared.

2.4.5 How do we respond to corruption?

This workshop considered different types of corruption and the different actors involved. It also helped to raise awareness and mobilise the church to fight corruption within the church itself. Key learning points from the workshop include:

- Definition of corruption: 'Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain'. This is the working definition used by Transparency International.
- The causes of financial corruption are as follows:
 1. **Political causes** – such as lack of freedom and lack of a democratic regime, also weakness of media.
 2. **Social causes** – including wars, their effects and consequences in society.
 3. **Economic causes** – such as deteriorating economic conditions and the high cost of living.
 4. **Administrative and organisational causes** – such as overly complex procedures (bureaucracy).
- The manifestations of financial corruption are: bribery; nepotism; favouritism; mediation; extortion and forgery; looting of public money; delay in the completion of transactions.
- We need to ask, '*Is there any corruption in the church? What is the relationship between leaders and the church?*'
- There is a relationship between poverty and corruption:
 - Corruption undermines democracy and good governance.
 - Corruption erodes the institutional capacity of government.
 - Corruption can increase the cost of business, eg the price of illicit payments or the cost of negotiating with officials (paying bribes).
 - Corruption diverts public funds away from services, eg education and healthcare provision.
 - Corruption deters investment and reduces economic growth.
- Relevant Bible passages:
 - Proverbs 28:18 – 'The one whose walk is blameless is kept safe, but the one whose ways are perverse will fall into the pit.'
 - Luke 19:1–10 (The story of Zacchaeus)
 - Acts 5:1–11 (The story of Ananias and Sapphira)
- We can face up to corruption through some theological basics as follows:
 1. The concept of the new creation in Christ
 2. The concept of communion and unity in Christ
 3. The concept of the Christian agency
 4. The theology of resistance and protest
 5. The nature and mission of the church ('salt and light')
- Good governance is key to addressing corruption. The definition of governance used by IFC (International Finance Corporation) is '...the structures and processes by which companies are directed and controlled'. The IFC goes on to say that good corporate

governance 'makes companies more accountable and transparent to investors and gives them the tools to respond to stakeholder concerns. It also contributes to development.'³

- The definition of governance used by OECD is '...the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority necessary to manage a nation's affairs'. The OECD goes on to say 'Within government, governance is the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources'⁴. Key to overcoming corruption at the national level are democratisation, transparency and accountability.

2.4.6 Peace and reconciliation

Key learning points from this workshop include:

- Peacemakers are the 'salt and light' in the world.
- The qualities of salt:
 - It dissolves, and once dissolved it has an effect – it gives taste to, or preserves, food
 - It is pure
 - Its colour is white
 - It retains its own properties
 - It dissolves in something
- The qualities of light:
 - It illuminates the dark or the way ahead
 - It reveal the facts
 - It declares itself (visible, not hidden)
 - It cannot hide and it gives a sense of security
 - It can shock when seen for the first time
- Peacebuilding
 - Being salt – we must dissolve/embed ourselves in communities where we want to see change and we must work with them. We must have a different 'taste' to what is currently happening in those communities.
 - Being light – we must offer a different reality. Our presence as peacemakers may be shocking for people – it may be a very different approach from their usual experience.
- God's word is the true light in our lives. We must:
 1. Understand God's word and know its importance and relevance.
 2. Know the power of the living word through our personal relationships with God.
- Philippians 2:5 – If you are going to be a peacemaker you must have the same mindset as Christ.

2.4.7 Gender equality

Participants were encouraged to consider the following:

- The difference between sex and gender. Understanding this is essential because social constructs of gender is the the thing we can challenge and transform.
- As men and women, we need to be open to change and to gaining experience of each other's roles, so that we can transform the norms that have been put on us by society.

3

http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/ifc+cg/priorities/overview

⁴ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Development/GoodGovernance/Pages/GoodGovernanceIndex.aspx>

- Jesus is our model for everything. Many of us have read how Jesus dealt with lots of different people; that is our model for relationships. We should try and treat people as Jesus treated them, remembering he treated men and women as equals.

Together participants completed exercises which set out the gender norms we have been taught through nurture, searching for any aspects within them that show the character of Jesus.

2.5 Project visits

On Wednesday, participants had the opportunity to go on a project visit, always a highlight of Compassion and Justice gatherings. The participants were split into five groups, each visiting one of the projects below.

2.5.1 Outline of project visits and visit-specific learning

Joy Foundation for Development

Joy Foundation works for the development and empowerment of marginalised individuals, especially female heads of households and people with disabilities, who are living in remote and poor areas. Through different activities, Joy Foundation helps individuals to discover their talents, enabling them to become productive members of their communities and to find meaning in their lives. One activity is through the use of paper arts using, for example, rolled paper, recycled trash and tree leaves.

El Saraya School

El Saraya School is one of the social ministries provided by the El Saraya Presbyterian Evangelical Church. The school is dedicated to the education, rehabilitation and care of children with mental disabilities, in order to give them better access to an integrated and positive life within their communities. Recently the school started to include services for children with physical disabilities as well.

Village of Hope Organisation

Village of Hope provides an integrated system of rehabilitation programmes for children with disabilities. This involves community-based rehabilitation, whereby families and the community are supported to integrate the children into society in a positive manner, contributing to their well-being.

Community members and a leadership committee promote voluntary work to support the rehabilitation of children with mental disabilities. Educational workshops help to equip and train the children for work. Educational activities include carpentry and training based in a bakery or in a greenhouse. Village of Hope aims to raise awareness and promote inclusiveness through seminars, conferences and celebrations. The staff also organise many social, artistic, sports and entertainment activities.

Village of Hope works in coordination with government and non-governmental institutions to promote the rights of children with disabilities. The committee seeks to ensure sustainable development of financial and human resources to continue the mission and to campaign for the social security of those with disabilities.

The Coptic centre for rehabilitating children with disabilities

This project provides a holistic service for children from poor families, children who have severe mental, physical and intellectual disabilities.

Rehabilitation centre for addicts

Participants visited a centre for the rehabilitation of drug and alcohol addicts run by Father Theophilus. The centre has a capacity of 30–35 beds and offers accommodation for rehabilitation for one to six months. The men accessing the services at the centre have access to a 12-step programme for drug rehabilitation and alcohol treatment in addition to cognitive behavioural therapy. Each person accessing the service is also given a supervisor who is an ex-addict – this provides invaluable support as their supervisor knows how the recovering addict may be feeling, physically and emotionally.

Participants were inspired by their project visits, which left them excited about pursuing holistic mission and with lots of ideas to take back to their own communities.

2.5.2 General learning from project visits

Key learning points from the five project visits include:

- We must not be afraid to partner with government.
- It is important to have the support of the community.
- ‘Corporate social responsibility’ is a great idea and there are many businesses with funds specifically for supporting community need.
- It is important to have sufficient human resources for what you are doing.
- Everyone has value – we need to help others realise the value of people living disabilities.
- Love is key – participants who attended the rehabilitation for addicts centre heard many stories of how love heals. In addition, it is important to share our affection and emotions, and to seek to repair relationships. (The addicts do this as part of their journey to recovery.)
- Addiction is an illness that affects the brain.

Comment from one participant:

- In Egypt there are over 350 churches. Think about the impact we could have if we collectively acted on the issue of disability – we have to make sure that there is decent publicity around the services offered to children with disabilities. What if we hosted an open day or an event to raise funds for this? It is good for us to pray but we also need to match that with action. Egyptians are labelled as being unproductive – let’s challenge that stereotype! We could also begin to offer products created in these centres in the mainstream market to help generate money. I believe we need to engage more with the government to help mobilise the situation.

Rene’s reflection on integral mission:

- In the beginning, after God created the world, humanity and all creation, and called it good, the ‘fall of man’ resulted in four relationships that were broken – relationships with creation, with self, with each other and with God. Throughout the Bible, we see God’s work of trying to restore each of those relationships.
- The participants were then encouraged to think about their project visit and how they saw God at work repairing these four relationships. They were also encouraged to reflect on these two questions: When did you find it easiest to give/receive love? When did you feel God’s presence the most?

3. Participant learning

During the gathering participants were given the opportunity to write down one significant thing they had learnt. Some of these were:

- We must give young people the chance to be involved with responding to local community needs.
- Heads think, hearts feel, and hands intertwine and work.
- God speaks in different ways.
- The contextual Bible study is a balanced way of studying the Bible and it opens our eyes to different dimensions.
- Peacebuilding is a Christian message. Peace is a great blessing for the whole world – and especially for Egypt.
- When the mind is filled by God's word and the heart is filled by God's love, my hands will do God's will.
- We should not limit our response to need based on our talents and knowledge – we are the body of Christ and together we can respond.

4. Gathering commitments

On the second-to-last day, participants were given the chance to form cluster groups to discuss different topics and draw up action plans for how they were going to apply what they had learnt and support one another going forward. Cluster groups were formed on the following topics:

1. Combating addiction
2. Gender equality
3. Disability
4. The refugee crisis
5. Youth mobilisation
6. Working with children at risk
7. Anti-corruption
8. Business/micro-finance

Full details of the cluster groups and resulting commitments were [recorded](#). CSD will continue to liaise with these cluster groups to encourage the outworking of their action plans.

5. Summary statement

At Egypt Gathering we thought about how the church can be a beacon of God's kingdom. As Christians, we are called to share the good news of the gospel and be good news in communities! We are called to be 'salt and light' in our communities (**Matthew 5:13–16**), helping to bring holistic transformation to individuals' lives and to communities. Pursuing social justice and reaching out to the most marginalised members of society is an integral part of what it means to be church and disciples of Christ. We reflected on the holistic nature of God's mission – it is not just about evangelism or doing social action projects. Rather we are called to live our entire lives as an act of worship – this is our true fast (Isaiah 58). We thought about how poverty is not just lack of economic resources but is fundamentally about broken relationships – broken relationships with God, self, others and creation. The mission of God is to see humankind's relationships with God, self, others and creation restored, and for God's kingdom to be realised 'on earth as it is in heaven' (**Matthew 6:10**).

We therefore need to consciously ensure that our development practice is Christ-centred and based on biblical teaching. This necessarily means that our ministries must be holistic; we cannot separate the spiritual from the economic, or the economic from the environment, or from the political and social contexts we live in. All these areas are instrumental to seeing individuals thrive and communities flourish. Evidencing this, many of the development challenges we looked at during Egypt Gathering have an impact on one another. For example, conflict can cause environmental degradation and can result in large numbers of people being displaced and seeking refuge in other communities or countries.

A reflection was shared on the final day of the story of the five loaves and two fish (John 6; Mark 6). God requires us to use what is in front of us – we must look at the gifts and resources in our

churches and communities. We are called to live out with conviction our call to love our neighbour. We must be the change we want to see!

There was recognition among participants that although we may come from different backgrounds, organisations and denominations and differ in our theological positions and understanding, we must be gracious with one another and find ways to unite as the body of Christ. We can become overwhelmed by the scale of needs if we do not find our common identity in Christ. By showing the world that we can be united despite our differences and diversity, we are able to bear witness to the gospel and show the world the nature of the kingdom of God. This is particularly important in Egypt at the present time, and there was a desire among the participants to reflect on their understanding of the gospel and challenge themselves and their churches to fulfil this role. The disciples began a movement – twelve very different individuals but all called by God according to his purpose. We too are part of God's mission of bringing his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. We must find our common identity as God's sons and daughters (2 Corinthians 6:18).

6. Next steps

6.1 Knowledge, attitude and practice survey

A follow-up KAP survey was given out at the gathering, as many participants do not have an email address. Those who do have also received an electronic version of the document. We are currently awaiting responses.

6.2 Communities of practice

We will explore setting up an online 'community of practice' space for Egypt Gathering participants.

6.3 Networks

CSD have committed to forming over time national and possibly regional networks around social justice issues and integral mission. The first attempt to do this will be CSD following up with the thematic cluster groups formed at the gathering and the action plans each group created. The next step will be to arrange physical meetings for the cluster groups.

6.4 Action plans

As mentioned above, the majority of participants formed thematic cluster groups during Egypt Gathering. These were focused on following themes:

- 1) Combating addiction
- 2) Gender equality
- 3) Disability
- 4) The refugee crisis
- 5) Youth mobilisation
- 6) Working with children at risk
- 7) Anti-corruption
- 8) Business/micro-finance

The aim is for CSD to facilitate these cluster groups and ensure their continued existence.

7. Acknowledgements

We would like to explicitly acknowledge the efforts of all the staff at the Council of Services and Development. They worked tirelessly to make the gathering possible, helping to coordinate the complex planning and implementation with patience and dedication.

Special mention must also go to the Egypt Gathering Programme team. They committed time and effort to ensuring the gathering consisted of engaging and informative sessions, bringing together some of the very best speakers on holistic mission and the topics we engaged with.

We would also like to acknowledge the wonderful support and enthusiastic cooperation of Beit El Salam. Thank you for all your efforts in making Egypt Gathering run as smoothly as possible.

Finally, we would like to express appreciation to all the individuals who attended the gathering. Thank you for your interest in, and passion for, being 'salt and light' in your communities. We recognise that it is only through individuals, churches and organisations seeking to respond to the holistic needs of individuals and our communities in a Christ-centred way that will truly see individuals flourish and communities thrive.

The Egypt Gathering Steering Committee