

# MIGRATION & MOVEMENT

A study course exploring migration and the global movement of people, with stories from the world church.



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# MIGRATION AND MOVEMENT

## **A study course with a focus on the world church.**

The issue of migration is seldom out of the headlines. It has been said that conflict in Syria has been the catalyst for the biggest humanitarian crisis the world has experienced since the second world war. The topic is one that touches us all. Indeed, our church partners around the world have been talking to USPG about these issues for many years, with the arrival and departure of people from communities creating both challenges and opportunities.

Of course, migration is not a new phenomenon; people have always been on the move. Let's take the British Isles as an example.

According to Prof Peter Donnelly, of Oxford University: 'Everyone in Britain is an immigrant. There was no-one in Britain 10-11,000 years ago. It is only a question of when people arrived.'

The point being made is that – whether speaking of Britain or Ireland – those described as 'indigenous' people are in fact descendants of Angles, Celts, Franks, Frisians, Jutes, Romans, Saxons, Vikings and others who have arrived over the millennia. In the nineteenth century, Britain saw an influx of Irish people fleeing famine and Jewish people fleeing persecution. In the last century, migrants arrived from the Indian subcontinent, Hong Kong, the West Indies and China. And, more recently, there's been an increase in arrivals from Africa and Europe. And the movement goes both ways; over the same period, millions have left Britain and Ireland to begin new lives around the world.

So, where do we belong, if anywhere – and why does this matter? The aim of this course is to open up these topic for discussion. We will be exploring the differences between migrants, refugees and internally displaced people. And we will be looking at the issues of human trafficking and population displacement due to climate change.

Some people migrate because they are seeking a better life, others are fleeing war, persecution or environmental disaster – while others have been abducted and forced to work as sex workers or slave labour.

Whatever the particular circumstances, we are challenged as Christians to consider our response. This study course does not claim to have the answers, but we hope it will inspire us to engage more deeply with the issues.

**For further resources, visit [www.uspg.org.uk/migration](http://www.uspg.org.uk/migration)**

**Note:** Bible passages from NRSV.



Children playing at Agape preschool kindergarten in Ma U Kyuusaung village, Myanmar. (USPG/Leah Gordon)



**Cover:** Bengali migrant workers queue for food at Choucha UNHCR camp in Tunisia. (Panos Pictures/Carlos Spottomo)

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# A SNAPSHOT OF THE GLOBAL SITUATION

**We hope the following statistics will give you a sense of the current situation regarding migration and the movement of people, both around the world and closer to home. Please also refer to the Glossary of terms at the back of this booklet.**

## **Global migration**

In 2013, globally, 232 million people migrated. This figure represents about 3.2 per cent of the world population. According to the BBC: 'Over the past 15 years, the number of people crossing borders in search of a better life has been rising steadily. At the start of the twenty-first century, one in every 35 people is an international migrant.'

## **Asylum seekers in Europe**

504,210 people lodged asylum claims in the EU between January and August 2015. That's the equivalent of 2,000 migrants arriving in Europe every day. (Frontex)

## **UK inhabitants born elsewhere**

The number of people living in the UK who were born in another country is currently about 8 million. (The Migration Observatory)

## **UK: immigration and emigration**

In the year ending March 2015, 636,000 people immigrated to the UK and an estimated 307,000 people emigrated from the UK; a net migration figure of 331,000. This compares with a net figure of 210,000 incoming for the year ending September 2013 and 320,000 incoming for the year ending June 2005. (Office for National Statistics)

## **Forced displacement**

The number of people worldwide who have been forcibly displaced due to conflict or persecution is 59.5 million. This figure includes 38.2 million people who were forcibly displaced within their own country (known as internally displaced people, IDPs). (UNHCR, 2014)



Nursery class in favela school, Brazil. (USPG/Leah Gordon)



### **Trafficked children**

1.2 million children are trafficked every year. (UNICEF)

### **Sexual exploitation**

The most common form of human trafficking (79%) is sexual exploitation.

### **Forced labour**

An estimated 20.9 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide, of which 9.2 million are estimated to be trafficking victims. (International Labour Organisation)

### **Displacement due to climate**

At the 13th Economic Forum in Prague in May 2005, Prof Norman Myers of Oxford University said: 'When global warming takes hold there could be as many as 200 million people [displaced] by disruptions of monsoon systems and other rainfall regimes, by droughts of unprecedented severity and duration, and by sea-level rise and coastal flooding.'



## STUDY 1

# NOWHERE TO LAY HIS HEAD

We begin our journey with a focus on Jesus:  
his person and his teaching.



Evelyn Magang-an harvesting camote (sweet potato) crop, encouraged by the USPG-supported church community mobilisation programme in Mountain Province, Philippines. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## Opening reflection

Take a little time to read through the statistics and glossary in the front and back of this study guide. Take it in turns to share your thoughts on the various topics. Allow space for people to share their lack of understanding and any fears or prejudices. Our aim is not to judge each other, but to investigate our personal feelings about global phenomena.

## Bible readings

### Matthew 8:18-22: Would-Be Followers of Jesus

<sup>18</sup> Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. <sup>19</sup> A scribe then approached and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>20</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." <sup>21</sup> Another of his disciples said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." <sup>22</sup> But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

### Matthew 25:31-46: The Judgment of the Nations

<sup>31</sup> "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, <sup>33</sup> and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup> And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' <sup>40</sup> And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' <sup>41</sup> Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; <sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' <sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when

was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’<sup>45</sup> Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’<sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

## Questions

- Looking at Matthew 8:18-22, in what sense did Jesus have ‘nowhere to lay his head’? What is the significance of this statement for followers of Christ?
- In Matthew 25:31-46, how do you understand the principle cited by Jesus that, ‘just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me’? What is this passage asking us to do?
- How does our understanding of Matthew 8:18-22 impact on our ability to follow the teaching in Matthew 25:31-46?

## Around the world: England

**A Filipino worker in London shares her story. We’ve kept her identity anonymous.**

I came to London because my employer moved here and wanted me to take care of his sister, who was paralysed and had high blood pressure. But they were not good to me, so I ran away.

They came to the UK because it was easier for them to get medication and healthcare. But the sister was always angry and shouting at me, so I was scared to be alone with her. And the working arrangements were very bad. I was not allowed to go out and I got no days off. I slept on the floor and was not given enough food. So I ran away.

Now I am sharing a room with another Filipina worker. I am a part-time cleaner, visiting different houses each day; it’s hard to find full-time work because of the visa laws.

My family are in the Philippines, which is my home. I really miss them. I have three girls and a boy. Of the girls, two are married and the other is working in the Middle East to help support the family. I send money home to pay for medicine for my husband, who has diabetes, and to pay for my son’s school fees. I’ve also helped them to set up a small catering business to bring in an income. I plan to go back when my youngest child finishes at university, or earlier if the business succeeds.

When not working, I go to church, and I belong to the Filipino Domestic

Workers Association, which helps me; they give me hope, knowledge and confidence. The association is campaigning to bring back legal rights for migrant domestic workers, many of whom are being treated like slaves by their employers.

Most of all, I thank God for giving me strength to face the sad realities of my life and stand firm.

## Questions

- Putting yourself in the shoes of the Filipina woman speaking in the article, take turns to share your response to this story.
- Read the entry for 'Migrant domestic workers' in the glossary at the back of this booklet. Reflect on how you feel about this situation happening in the UK.
- How might we, as a local church, reach out to migrants on our doorstep?

## Prayer

God, our rock and our redeemer,  
We pray for those forced to leave to support families;  
We pray for lives torn apart by absence and loss;  
We pray for people missing loved ones and home;  
We pray for chaplains, pastors and advocates in this context.  
May we be willing to share our selves with the stranger in our midst.

## How your donations will help

At USPG, we believe that every person is made in the image of God. That's why we are busy raising awareness of the plight of refugees and migrant workers in our world, supporting the world church to respond to their needs, and encouraging the church here in the UK to get behind that work. Your donations are helping us to respond to this issue, wherever we find the need.



## STUDY 2

# WHERE IS MY HOME?

Most of us consider it vitally important to have somewhere we call home. But why is this so and what does it mean to have a 'home'?



Lin Lin was helped by USPG-supported volunteer health workers in Ma U Daw Kyuusaung village near Toungoo, Myanmar. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## Opening reflection

Where or what do you consider to be your home? You might like to consider such themes as location, land or home ownership, ancestry, culture, nationality, and anything else that comes to mind. Share your thoughts with the group. Comment on the importance or otherwise of 'home' to you.

## Bible readings

### Matthew 2:13-23: The Escape to Egypt

<sup>13</sup> Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." <sup>14</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son." <sup>16</sup> When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. <sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: <sup>18</sup> "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more." <sup>19</sup> When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, <sup>20</sup> "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." <sup>21</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

## Questions

- First, the Holy Family travelled from Nazareth to Bethlehem (where Joseph was born) to register for a census. Later they fled to Egypt after God warned Joseph about Herod in a dream. Then they returned to Nazareth. Reflect on the challenges of these different journeys and how the parents would have felt.
- Compare this biblical narrative with the stories we hear in the news today about migrants. In each case, consider how the decisions to relocate are being taken. Perhaps you have a personal experience of migration you can share.

## Around the world: Myanmar

**Article by Davidson Solanki, USPG International Programmes Manager.**

When Burma was granted independence from the British in January 1948, the Burmese and Karen people – who had been in conflict since the nineteenth century – attempted to live peacefully side by side. But the truce was short-lived.

Fighting intensified and hundreds of thousands of Karen fled to escape attack by the ruling Burmese. Over the decades, the Karen took refuge in camps on the Myanmar-Thai border, where they created fragile settlements, always fearful of ambush. People went hungry because there was no land to grow food, healthcare was scarce, and education was provided in make-shift schools.

Today, Myanmar has undergone democratic reforms and there are only small pockets of conflict between the Burmese army and the Karen people. (Some figures put Myanmar's population at 53 million, of which approximately 7 million are Karen.)

Internally displaced Karen are returning to the areas they used to live, although few have been able to re-settle in their villages because they have been taken over by the Burmese.

A young Karen teacher in Mei La camp on the Thai border said: 'Because of the conflict, my family could not stay in our village. Six of us fled in 2003, and stayed in the camp for 12 years. I could not work or earn money, so we depended on support from the UN and NGOs. Now I am planning to return to Myanmar, but I don't know what jobs there will be and I don't have land. I no longer know where my home is. I think it might be easier to stay in the camp or migrate to another country.'

Alongside the practical challenges, the Karen are struggling to come to terms with the scars of oppression and upheaval. The Anglican Church of Myanmar is assisting returnees with re-homing, access to clean water, sanitation, health and education.

## Questions

- Imagine what life would have been like for the Karen people who had to leave their homes, then return years later to a different village. How might the local people in the new villages respond to their arrival? Share your thoughts with the group.
- Reflect on how the church has been reaching out to the people, both in the camps for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and on their return following exile. What lessons can we learn as a church? How can we be a good host?

## Prayer

O God, our refuge in the storm,  
Our hope in times of trouble,  
The Son of Man had no place to lay his head;  
May we see Jesus in the migrant and the refugee.  
Break our hearts with your compassion for the exiled.  
Help us to offer welcome to those seeking safety and shelter.

## How your donations will help

We are supporting the Church of Myanmar as it reaches out to Karen villagers who are returning home after spending years sheltering from the Burmese army on the Thai border. We are helping to fund a team of volunteer health workers and a clean water programme that means better health, sanitation and crops.



## STUDY 3

# THE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

Whoever we are and wherever we live, we are all endeavouring to support ourselves.



Pupils from St. Marks' School, Lozane, eating food provided by the supplementary feeding programme supplied by the Anglican Church, Zimbabwe. (USPG/Lambeth Palace/Leah Gordon)

## Opening reflection

One of our biggest concerns is to know our job is secure and we have enough money to survive. Have you ever experienced a financial threat to your survival? Have you ever moved location to improve your life situation? What were the challenges? What was it like settling in a new place? Share your experiences with the group.

## Bible readings

### Genesis 42:1-17: Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt

<sup>1</sup> When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why do you keep looking at one another? <sup>2</sup> I have heard," he said, "that there is grain in Egypt; go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die." <sup>3</sup> So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. <sup>4</sup> But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he feared that harm might come to him. <sup>5</sup> Thus the sons of Israel were among the other people who came to buy grain, for the famine had reached the land of Canaan. <sup>6</sup> Now Joseph was governor over the land; it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup> When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognised them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke harshly to them. "Where do you come from?" he said. They said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food." <sup>8</sup> Although Joseph had recognised his brothers, they did not recognise him. <sup>9</sup> Joseph also remembered the dreams that he had dreamed about them. He said to them, "You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land!" <sup>10</sup> They said to him, "No, my lord; your servants have come to buy food. <sup>11</sup> We are all sons of one man; we are honest men; your servants have never been spies." <sup>12</sup> But he said to them, "No, you have come to see the nakedness of the land!" <sup>13</sup> They said, "We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of a certain man in the land of Canaan; the youngest, however, is now with our father, and one is no more." <sup>14</sup> But Joseph said to them, "It is just as I have said to you; you are spies! <sup>15</sup> Here is how you shall be tested: as Pharaoh lives, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here! <sup>16</sup> Let one of you go and bring your brother, while the rest of you remain in prison, in order that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you; or else, as Pharaoh lives, surely you are spies." <sup>17</sup> And he put them all together in prison for three days.

## Questions

- Famine in Canaan compelled Joseph's brothers to seek sustenance in another land. It was a potentially dangerous expedition (v4). Share what you can discern from the passage about the brothers' motivations, hopes and fears.
- Now consider the treatment of the brothers: accused of being spies and imprisoned. From Joseph's perspective, his strong reaction has been determined by both personal and political concerns. Compare Joseph's reaction to his brothers with: 1) your own reaction to immigrants, 2) the government's reaction to immigrants.

## Around the world: Zimbabwe

**Article by Farirai Mudiwa, who supports church-led community development in Manicaland, Zimbabwe, supported by USPG.**

The economy of Zimbabwe crumbled in 2008 and began to stabilise when a coalition government was set up in 2009. However, the economy hit fresh trouble after elections in 2013 were disputed. Since then, struggling employers have been letting workers go. Legally, employers need to give only three months notice and they are not obliged to pay redundancy. Critics say this has effectively turned the country's entire workforce into temporary workers.

Families are suffering because thousands have lost their jobs. Little wonder, in a survey conducted by the church, almost everyone said at least one close family member had migrated to South Africa to seek employment, taking any job they can find.

Sadly, 92 per cent of interviewees said their relatives had faced abuse and discrimination in South Africa, including xenophobic attacks, with some women and girls trapped into sex work and men working for less than the minimum wage.

In an economy where job opportunities are decreasing by the day, a church-led programme in Zimbabwe is helping communities to devise new sources of income. The programme encourages communities to use local skills and resources to set up projects.

One participant said: 'We have discovered we have many locally-available resources that we can use to improve our livelihoods. I no longer feel I need to migrate to earn a living. My husband lost his job, but our lifestyle has not changed because God has enabled us to see the resources around us.'

## Questions

- Some migrants succeed in finding a better life abroad. But the benefits are not so clear cut for Zimbabweans who migrate to South Africa. Put yourself into the shoes of a Zimbabwean who is struggling to make ends meet. Would you consider migrating to South Africa? What would be the pros and cons?
- One response of the church in Zimbabwe has been to help villagers to develop income-generation projects. How could the church in Britain and Ireland support people in their communities who are economic migrants?
- How has the church in Britain/Ireland benefited from the arrival of people, including Christians, from other cultures?

## Prayer

O God of Justice,  
Whose son overturned the tables in the temple,  
And challenged the hypocrisy of the Pharisees,  
Cause us to feel anger and shame at the ways our lifestyle reduces humanity,  
And to repent and act justly on the impulse of love share your gifts  
For a fairer world and for your kingdom on earth.

## How your donations will help

In Zimbabwe, we are working with the Anglican Church to support a programme that encourages communities to identify their skills and resources, then devise income-generation projects, such as livestock and agricultural initiatives. As a result, villagers in Zimbabwe are less likely to take on dangerous or badly paid jobs, such as mining in South Africa.



## STUDY 4 AGAINST OUR WILL

In ideal circumstances, we would be free to move and live where we choose. But this is not always the case.



Bolivian street vendors in Sao Paulo,  
Brazil. (USPG/Heidi Schmidt)

## Opening reflection

This week we are looking at forms of modern slavery, including bonded labour and human trafficking. Share in the group your understanding of these issues. You might like to draw upon the media, personal experience or encounters with people who have experienced these things. Is there a story or situation that has particularly caught your attention?

## Bible readings

### Philemon 8-21: Paul's Plea for Onesimus

<sup>8</sup> For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, <sup>9</sup> yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love – and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. <sup>10</sup> I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. <sup>11</sup> Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. <sup>12</sup> I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. <sup>13</sup> I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; <sup>14</sup> but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. <sup>15</sup> Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, <sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother – especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. <sup>17</sup> So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. <sup>18</sup> If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. <sup>19</sup> I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. <sup>20</sup> Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. <sup>21</sup> Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

## Questions

- What does this challenging passage tell us about God's position on slavery or bonded labour?
- How does God show value and care for the person enslaved?

## Around the world: Brazil

**Article by Luis Benavides, a lawyer with CAMI (Centro de Apoio e Pastoral do Migrante, meaning Support Centre and Pastoral Care for Migrants), based in Sao Paulo.**

There are an estimated 600,000 immigrants living in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The vast majority are here to find work, having come from other Latin American countries, in particular Bolivia, where there are few employment opportunities.

Many were lured to the city by recruiters who promised jobs with a salary, housing and food. Yet, on arrival, many found themselves in situations akin to slave labour, working up to 15 hours a day and living in unsanitary conditions with a poor diet.

David and Isabel came to Sao Paulo with the hope of building a better life for themselves. They paid a recruiter in Bolivia to find them a job and were required to hand over their personal documents. They ended up on a production line sewing clothes, being forced to work from 6.30am until 10pm each day, then sleeping on the same premises. Whenever they asked for their wages they were verbally abused and threatened with being reported to the police for having no documents.

Finally, David and Isabel and some of their fellow workers refused to keep working for no pay. The factory owner responded by trying to sell the workers to another factory in a bid to recoup the money he had paid the recruiter. At this point, CAMI heard about the case and stepped in, encouraging the victims to go to the police. On this occasion, the factory owners were arrested – caught red-handed in a police raid. But such happy endings are few and far between; thousands of immigrants are suffering in silence.

CAMI is working closely with the Diocese of Sao Paulo to raise awareness about the dangers of this type of labour recruitment, which is a form of human trafficking. We endeavour to investigate situations of slave labour and rescue workers. We offer legal support and counselling, and help immigrants to find real jobs.

## Questions

- Whether working as slave labour or for low wages in poor conditions, immigrants the world over are being exploited by the rich. In the above story from Brazil, imagine yourself into the roles of 1) immigrant, 2) recruiter, 3) factory owner, 4) CAMI staff worker: in each case, what is your motivation? What needs to change so that people are no longer vulnerable to exploitation?
- There are many low paid immigrants working in Britain and Ireland, many of whom may have been trafficked. How might your church get involved in addressing issues of trafficking: 1) globally, 2) locally?

## Prayer

Liberating God,

You call us to bind up the broken hearted and set the captives free.

Open our eyes to the reality of modern slavery,

And to those in our midst who are trapped.

Thank you for those who are making a difference,

And may we, who are free, live lives that free others.

## How your donations will help

In the Amazon, we are working with the Anglican Church to support a social action programme that is raising awareness of issues such as human trafficking, drug gangs and bonded labour. The programme also provides practical support for vulnerable communities at risk of exploitation.



## STUDY 5

# TRAPPED AND ALONE

In times of conflict, families flee for their lives and many, particularly children, can end up alone and without access to the help they need.



A young boy in an informal camp close to the railway lines in Idomeni. Thousands of refugees were forced to move when the camp was closed by the Greek authorities in May 2016. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## Opening reflection

Since January 2015 more than a million refugees have made the difficult journey to Europe. Eighty per cent of these were from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, and 90,000 were unaccompanied children. Europe has struggled to cope with the influx and has been divided about the best way to resettle the refugees, leaving many feeling trapped, vulnerable and alone. Share in your group your understanding of the current crisis in Europe.

## Bible readings

### Psalm 142

<sup>1</sup> With my voice I cry to the Lord; with my voice I make supplication to the Lord. <sup>2</sup> I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him. <sup>3</sup> When my spirit is faint, you know my way. In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me. <sup>4</sup> Look on my right hand and see - there is no one who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for me. <sup>5</sup> I cry to you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.' <sup>6</sup> Give heed to my cry, for I am brought very low. Save me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me. <sup>7</sup> Bring me out of prison, so that I may give thanks to your name. The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.

## Questions

- This psalm of David's is honest and raw. He has done nothing wrong and yet finds himself in danger and feels trapped and alone. Re-read the passage out loud, this time putting yourself in David's shoes and imagine it is you in the cave writing this psalm. Can you relate to his situation? Share with the group how you would feel and what your concerns would be.
- In Psalm 142, David says there is no escape (v4) but then he says, 'The Lord will deliver me so that I may give thanks to Him' (v67). What can this psalm teach us about how to pray in times of difficulty?
- What can friends, the church and others do to support those who feel alone?

## Around the world: Greece

**Article by Rebecca Boardman, USPG Refugee Response Facilitator, working with the Anglican Chaplaincy in Greece.**

USPG has been working with the Anglican Chaplaincy in Greece since 2015 to provide practical and logistical support for its refugee work. This has involved supporting rescue teams for refugees who land on the Greek islands and providing aid and legal advice for refugees gathered in Athens.

The closure of the northern borders of Greece left 54,000 refugees stranded in the country (as of June 2016). Many have seriously inadequate support, including 22,000 children. It is unclear whether they will be able to relocate to other European countries.

No-one was prepared for this situation and, in the middle of its deepest recession in modern times, Greece does not have the resources to respond. There is a critical shortage of suitable accommodation, and thousands are living in overcrowded centres and camps where they are vulnerable to smugglers and traffickers.

Refugee support organisations estimate the refugees will require significant assistance for years to come.

In order to take the burden off Greece, in September 2015 the European Commission Council established an emergency relocation scheme to move 66,400 refugees to other 'allocated' European nations by 2017. The processes for asylum, relocation and family reunification are very slow and complicated so, despite a push to accelerate the process, in June 2016, eight months after the process was started only 881 refugees had been relocated.

In the meantime, all the others can do is wait. Unable to plan for the future, it is perhaps understandable that tensions sometimes run high.

The churches in Athens are working together to tackle this challenge head on. Through the shared belief that the 'guests' in our midst must be seen and valued as individuals, we are committed to caring for all who seek our help.

The Salvation Army, in Athens, is offering Greek lessons to refugees. These are led by USPG-funded translator Arash. Arash and the church are also helping to provide reliable information to help reduce people's vulnerability to trafficking.

USPG also funds Lighthouse Relief, which is providing refugee children and mothers with safe spaces. Time is made for children to have fun, for example by screening family-friendly films.

## Questions

- How do we stop ourselves from feeling overwhelmed by the scale of the crisis in Europe and remain hopeful of change?
- The Anglican Chaplaincy in Greece is a small church but is committed to providing practical help and hope to the refugees. Reflect on why the chaplaincy has decided to call the refugees 'guests'. What can we learn from this and how can we play our part?

## Prayer

O God, you know the difficulties we each face,  
You know when we feel trapped and alone.  
Help us to remember that you love us and will never abandon us.  
May we work with you to bind up the broken-hearted,  
And set the captives free, and proclaim freedom to the prisoner.  
That all may know they are loved and are not alone.

## How your donations will help

The Diocese in Europe invited USPG to be the official agency for channelling donations from Anglican churches to support the diocese as it reaches out to vulnerable refugees. Your donations are helping to provide medical support, food and shelter for refugees, with a particular focus on the situation in Greece, but also Hungary and Turkey.



## STUDY 6

# LIFE ON THE MARGINS

Around the world, extreme weather and rising sea levels have claimed lives, destroyed infrastructure and displaced large numbers of people.



Children sitting at the base of a tree in Mangochi, Malawi, where USPG has been supporting community health work. (USPG/Leah Gordon)

## Opening reflection

As a group, consider the links between climate change and poverty. You might like to consider issues such as a country's economic situation, infrastructure and the availability of emergency services, healthcare, food security and so on.

## Bible readings

### Genesis 1:26-31: God creates humankind

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."<sup>27</sup> So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.<sup>28</sup> God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."<sup>29</sup> God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food."<sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.<sup>31</sup> God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

## Questions

- What is your understanding of the injunction to subdue the earth and have dominion over everything in it? What might this look like in practice?
- The earth's resources are finite – and billions of people want need their share. What does being a good steward mean in today's globalised world? Consider people, animals and the environment.
- It is generally accepted that increases in extreme weather can be linked to the activities of developed nations: in particular, the amount of pollution we create and unsustainable patterns of consumption. What should be our response as Christians living in a developed country?

## Around the world: Malawi

**Article by the Rt Revd Alinafe Kalemba, Bishop of Southern Malawi.**

Malawi has seen an increase in temperatures and intense rain over the past 40 years, leading to drought and flooding, poor harvests and hunger. In 2015, the floods in Malawi were devastating, with the loss of life, animals, homes and crops. Life came to a standstill and seemed meaningless.

Churches and other organisations provided food, shelter, counsel and companionship. One church member said: 'When our lives were reduced to nothing, we were dead. But God, through his people, brought us back and gave us new life. It's like a rebirth.'

The floods were a result of climate change. Our weather and seasons are no longer stable or predictable. People have been displaced, affecting their welfare. Many have been put in camps, which lack privacy and which have disrupted community cohesion. Health and education systems have been paralysed. People are confused.

Now we are in the process of relocating people to more suitable areas. There is resistance among some because it will mean leaving the land of their ancestors, which is especially a concern among people with traditional beliefs. It means starting life again from scratch. Relocation is also very costly, especially in terms of building materials for new homes. So we are working together to try and make sense of the situation.

Happily, as part of our relief efforts, the people were given maize and beans for planting and they have been able to harvest from these crops.

When I was young the rains were consistent. Around late October and November we knew the rains were going to come. Safe in this knowledge, we could plant our crops and make preparations. But now the rains are unpredictable, and when they come they are not enough or they are too heavy.

While there are a lot of factors contributing to climate change, I don't think it is being caused by the poor nations, yet we are the ones suffering the most, and we don't have mechanisms to respond.

So whatever the nations of the world can do to ease this problem, it needs to be done now if we are to save human lives. And we need to do it together.

## Questions

- What is your response to this story?
- Share with the group any experiences you've had of the power of nature to damage or destroy. How might these experiences be similar or different if we compare our experience in developed countries with the experience of people in Malawi?
- What new insights has this study inspired regarding how you might engage with environmental issues: personally, as a local church, as part of the world church?

## Summing up: Looking back, looking forward

- As a group, take it in turns to share how this study course has impacted upon your understanding of migration and related issues.
- If you feel comfortable, make a pledge regarding how you might turn these insights into action - both as individuals and as a study group or local church. Write out your pledge using the template at the back of this booklet and please tell us what you have decided to do (mikeb@uspg.org.uk).

## Prayer

God of the seas, the land and skies,  
Forgive our selfishness and greed,  
Where we see this world as a commodity to use.  
Renew our love for the earth,  
Deepen our respect for the soil,  
And help us to change our ways in order to save this planet.

## How your donations will help

We have sent an emergency grant from our Rapid Response Fund to support the relief and rehabilitation work of the Anglican Church in Malawi following major flooding in recent years. We are also working with the church to develop a disaster response programme.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## **Asylum seeker**

In the UK, an asylum seeker is someone who has asked the government for refugee status and is waiting to hear the outcome of their application.

## **Climate change**

According to the Met Office: 'Climate change is a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns or average temperatures.' Examples of climate change include rising temperatures; changes in rainfall patterns; changes in the timing of the seasons, resulting, for example, in birds migrating or flowers blooming at different times of the year; rising sea levels; retreating glaciers; shrinking sea ice and ice sheets.

## **Climate justice**

According to Friends of the Earth, climate change and the global energy crisis threaten billions of people. The main cause of these challenges is 'our unsustainable level of consumption, which uses large quantities of energy for production and transportation. Fossil fuels like oil and coal take millions of years to form and are being used far faster than they are being replaced. The burning of fossil fuels also releases billions of tons of carbon dioxide in to the atmosphere, creating climate change. Oil is now running out, but the world is not ready to make the shift to sustainable renewable energy production and consumption. At the same time, over a billion impoverished people in the world have no access to energy. They are also the ones who will be hit the hardest by climate change impacts.'

## **Expatriate**

A person who lives outside their native country. (Oxford Dictionary)

## **Human trafficking**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) defines trafficking in persons as 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve

the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation'. Typically people are trafficked to be used as forced labour or sex workers or for the removal of organs.

### **Immigrant**

A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.

### **Internally displaced person (IDP)**

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): 'Two elements are decisive in identifying who is an IDP: (1) the coercive or otherwise involuntary character of movement – that is, movement caused by armed conflict, violence, disasters, and the like; and (2) the fact that such movement takes place within national borders.'

### **Migrant**

A simple definition of a migrant might be someone who makes a conscious choice to leave their country to seek a better life elsewhere. Sometimes this is called 'economic migration'. However, it should be noted that there is no consensus on a single definition of a 'migrant'. According to The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford: 'Migrants might be defined by foreign birth, by foreign citizenship, or by their movement into a new country to stay temporarily (sometimes for as little as a year) or to settle for the long-term.'

### **Migrant domestic workers (MDWs)**

Under UK law, MDWs can only remain in the country if they stay with the employer who brought them here. With MDWs 'tied' in this way, many employers have felt able to abuse their employees and effectively treat them as slave labour. Human rights groups are lobbying the UK government to change the law so MDWs can leave abusive employers yet keep their visas and remain in the country with new employers.

### **Refugee**

A person who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country...' (Definition quoted from the 1951 Refugee Convention).



# YOUR DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The articles in this study course have been prepared by our world church partners.

Each contributor belongs to a church that receives direct support from USPG. Our financial assistance to them helps to fund vital work that has a huge impact on the lives of ordinary people. Your donations help to make this happen.

Within each study we have included an indication of how your financial support could enable our global partners to put the gospel into action among the communities they serve.

Now you have explored migration and the movement of people through this course, please consider how you will respond.

**For more details, email [info@uspg.org.uk](mailto:info@uspg.org.uk),  
call 020 7921 2200 or visit [www.uspg.org.uk](http://www.uspg.org.uk)**



Pupils holding seeds at Chidzikwe Anglican Secondary School, Zimbabwe. USPG supports community livelihood programmes in Zimbabwe. (USPG/Leah Gordon)





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# MIGRATION AND MOVEMENT

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† **We are USPG.** We are a Christian charity working in partnership with local Anglican churches around the world. Together, we work with local communities to improve health, put children in school, tackle discrimination, nurture leaders, give a voice to women, and much more. Founded 1701.

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