



THE WALDENSIAN REVIEW

From the Editor

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Thank you once again for your continuing help with donations, purchases and prayers! Please do regularly look at our website www.waldensian.org.uk and on Facebook: **The Waldensian Church Missions!** There are always updates!

Tim Macquiban attended the Waldensian Methodist Synod (extended to the Baptists) in the Summer as a representative of the Methodist Church of Great Britain. Sara Heinrich, serving in Lucca Waldensian Church, was ordained minister.



PHOTO BY P. ROMEO

Sara Heinrich between the preachers: Daniele Bouchard (left) and Lino Gabbiano.

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Our **AWAYDAY** on 5 November in Cambridge had to be cancelled because of the train strike and we are going to **repropose** it on **28 January BUT ON ZOOM!!!**

Leslie Griffiths on all he has been up to in the last few busy months;

Albert de Lange on Henri Arnaud; and
Erica Scropo on Jacopo Lombardini

10.30–12.00
28 January 2023

WALDENSIAN CALENDARS 2023



February and August.

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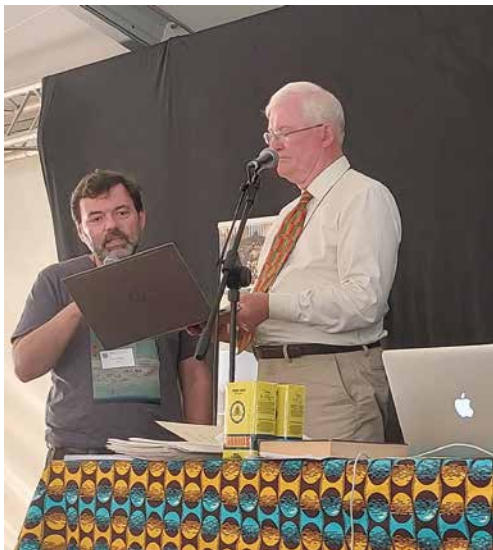
Tim Macquiban's Speech to Synod 2022

Sisters and brothers in Christ: I bring you greetings from the Methodist Church in Britain, and its President Graham and Vice President Anthony who ask God's blessing on the Synod. Their themes for their term of office are 'Love of God and Love of Neighbour' and 'Revival: The Methodist Dream'. The latter is very important for the institution I currently serve, the Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum of Primitive Methodism, as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of the founder of Primitive Methodism, Hugh Bourne. He was a revivalist preacher who formed the Primitive Methodist movement over 200 years ago, seeking to recover that early primitive zeal of the Wesley brothers, John and Charles, in spreading the gospel in all places, particularly in and to the margins of society, with and for the poor of their age/day.

I have just read the recently published book by Tobias Jones called *The Po*. It is a wonderful journey from the delta to the source of the river Po. Here are two reflections he has which resonate with two important issues for our Churches today.

First, he says that we need to respect the river, fearsome as it sometimes is, as a source of life for many. Without water we die. The current situation in our world as rivers dry up or low places are inundated by rising waters in the oceans or the destruction of floods, because of the climate emergency we face and the harm we have done to the natural world: these matters need to be addressed. Like the poet T.S. Eliot reminds us (in *The Dry Salvages*), the 'strong brown God' (the river) is almost forgotten; its retreat a 'reminder of what men chose to forget'. An apt metaphor for the human condition which turns its back on the Creator God and does not act as a proper steward of God's world.

Secondly, Jones reminds us of the geopolitical position of the Po hinterland. It has given birth to the Northern League Party that is an expression of



*Tim Macquiban at Synod (right)
The interpreter is 'our' Peter Ciaccio, now
minister in Trieste.*

narrow nationalist identity which despises and fears the so-called barbarians, those who are Other.

The present emphasis within the British Methodists is to urge support for its justice, dignity and solidarity, calling the Church to be inclusive and diverse, stressing equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of gender, age, race, social status and sexual identities. It seeks to be committed to growth with others in partnership in a *Chiesa insieme* which sees ecumenism not as an admission of decline and defeat, but as a springboard for mission as well as unity.

We rejoice in the coming together this week of Waldensians and Methodists and Baptists, seeking a common purpose and vision. We pray that we may be a *Chiesa insieme*, a welcoming and open Church gathered around the one tree which has deep roots in our common origins. Those roots go deep. They need nurturing. We seek to re-affirm our radical solidarity with God's creation and with each other as God's children.

Tim Macquiban

Claudiana publishing stand at Synod with lovely Claudiana girls: Sara Platone and Debora Michelin-Salomon.



What Kassim Did Next

[Kassim Conteh has finished his studies at Queen's Foundation in Birmingham and obtained his MA in Theology.]

I arrived in Angrogna on 1 October 2022, just after finishing and sending my Master's dissertation to the Queens Foundation. I grew up in cities (Freetown and Milan), and even my last study experiences were in big metropolises such as Rome and Birmingham (from which I have just returned). I moved from a reality with a population of over a million to a small mountain town with a resident population of around 800.

I felt welcomed by the community and church council of Angrogna, which made sure I found a welcoming home when I arrived. I was told right from the start that to be a true Angrognino, I had to learn how to light the wood stove and have a pocket knife. I must say that as far as the wood stove is concerned, I have learned quite well how to light it. For the pocket knife, however, I fear that since I am black, it becomes even more difficult to convince the authorities that the reason I am in possession of it is because I am trying to become an Angrognino [obviously joking]. Another step communicated to me these days is that I should eat 'bagna cauda' [which literally means 'hot sauce'], which is a typical Piedmontese dish made with all sorts of seasonal vegetables dipped in a sauce with olive oil, anchovies and garlic. Having to deal with food, I think I will overcome this step quite easily.

In these two months of experience I can say that in addition to attempting to be an Angrognino, I am slowly learning the role of a minister, thanks

also to the accompaniment of Pastor Elisabeth Löh. I have already been involved in (or with) several acts of worship, participated in the choir, attended Sunday school, assisted and led catechism, made a few pastoral visits, and other activities related to the role. The community seems active and willing. And that makes me feel comfortable because I feel very supported by everyone and by the Lord. Of course, moving from Birmingham to Angrogna is quite a big transition, but knowing that I will not be alone in this is very encouraging.

A special thanks to The



Kassim reads from the Bible during his first solo church service.

Waldensian Church Missions for the encouragement and support they gave me in order for me to be able to proceed on my path towards ministry.

Kassim Conteh

Riesi: How to Define as an Outsider a Reality as Complex as it Fascinating?

Before arriving with my wife Noemi in this town of 10,000 inhabitants, I had already heard a lot about Riesi, but the curious thing is that the various stories failed to form a homogeneous puzzle, and now that I have been here for just over a month I understand why. Riesi is not just a town that once orbited around the sulphur mine; it is not just a small town in the Sicilian hinterland; it is not just the town where Vinay arrived, nor is it just the town that sur-



rounds the verdant Servizio Cristiano with its white buildings of distinctive architecture. No, Riesi is all this, and yet something more; I will need time to be able to identify its identity.

It would still be premature for me to try to talk about the two Waldensian 'souls' in Riesi (the Church and Servizio Cristiano), so I will focus on the Waldensian community. Like any local Church, Riesi's has had moments of very high cohesion accompanied or followed by internal frictions and fractures; however, Riesi has in itself three enormously positive factors: welcoming willingness to do and be there; being on and with the territory. Riesi is a community that has been able to welcome and make its own the commandment to be a believer in the world, proclaiming God in word and deed. This is without forgetting the importance of meeting to celebrate Sunday worship together.

My service here promises to be intense but very interesting. There were originally several congregations but today, unfortunately, only Riesi (the 'main one') and Agrigento remain. Both congregations have welcomed Noemi and me with sincere enthusiasm and desire to get to know each other and live a faith journey together.

Giovanni Bernardini

***HOPING TO SEE AS MANY AS POSSIBLE ON ZOOM ON 28 JANUARY,
I WISH EVERYONE A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS!***

Erica Scroppo Newbury, Editor

For those who receive the paper magazine by post, there is a novelty: a little brochure about the *Case valdesi* all over Italy, from Torre Pellice to Venice to Vallecrosia, Pietra Ligure and Rio Marina by the sea to Florence, Reggello, Rome, Palermo, Riesi, **WHERE ONE CAN HAVE A GREAT HOLIDAY WHILE HELPING THE CHURCH IN ITS NUMEROUS WORKS AND PROJECTS.** *On top of offering a friendly welcoming service they are often in ancient palaces or villas in stunning areas of the cities or countryside. Absolutely worth trying!*

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