

Girls Friendly Society

21st World Council 25th July - 4th August University of Swansea, Swansea, Wales

Minutes

Friday 25th July – Welcome

World President, Rev. Glenys Payne welcomed everyone to the 21st World Council meeting in Swansea. Glenys said that Kate Brewer and Jan McNamara from Australia are responsible for Wales hosting this council as six years ago in Korea they encouraged Glenys and the Welsh contingent to offer to host this Council.

Glenys introduced the delegates from the 17 countries who are represented here. Unfortunately, several people from Kenya and Sierra Leone are unable to attend as they did not get visas. She also introduced the 'team' who had helped with the preparations for Council and who would be on hand to help with any problems or questions during Council.

Senior & Junior Delegates:

AUSTRALIA	Julie Smith	Tegan Hudson
ENGLAND	Hazel Crompton	Natasha Moore
GHANA	Christine N. Adjei	
IRELAND	Sylvia Quinn	Michelle Armitage
JAPAN	Asako Yonamine	Emiri Nakamura
KENYA	Carolyne Wachuka Kiarie	
KOREA	Miriam Kwon	Helena Choi
NEW ZEALAND	Helen Allen	
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Mary Bagu	
PHILIPPINES	May Y. Tanhuanco	Sarah May Tanhuanco
SIERRA LEONE	Alberta E. Bindi	
SOLOMON ISLANDS	Anne Sade	
SRI LANKA	Jeanne Withanage	
SOUTH AFRICA	Thembeke Pama	
WALES	Carol Gardner	Sarah Charlesworth
ZAMBIA	Beatrice Songwe Zulu	Mandy Malambo
U.S.A.	Delores M. Alleyne	Autumn Buck

Sunday 27th July

Session 1 – 3pm

World President Rev. Glenys Payne welcomed everyone to the opening session of the 21st World Council. She introduced the theme – Inspirational Learning Together. She reminded us that we receive inspiration from others, and we can learn from each other.

Glenys outlined the workings of the meetings. At closed meetings only delegates can speak and only through the chair. At open meetings the discussion will be open to the floor. Only delegates can vote and there is only one vote per country.

1. Greetings

Rev. Kay Warrington, World Secretary read out the many greetings:

H.R.H. Duchess of Cornwall, Patron of GFS England and Wales
Most. Rev. Dr. John Sentamu – Archbishop of York
Most Rev. Richard Clarke – Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland
Most. Rev Michael Jackson – Archbishop of Dublin and Bishop of Glendalough
Most Rev. Roger Herft, Archbishop of Perth and Metropolitan of the Province of Western Australia.
Most Rev. Philip Aspinall – Primate of Australia
Rt. Rev. Bethlehem Nopece – Bishop of Port Elizabeth
Rev. Mark Birth, Priest in Charge – St. Paul's Anglican Church, Port Elizabeth
Rt. Rev. Dixie Taclobao – Episcopal Diocese of Central Philippines
Rt. Rev. Thomas Wilson – Diocese of Freetown (Sierra Leone), Church of the Province of West Africa.
Rt. Rev. Justin Duckworth – Bishop of Wellington, Anglican Diocese of Wellington
Most Rev. Clyde Igara – Archbishop of Papua New Guinea
Rt. Rev. David Bannerman – Bishop of Highveld
Most Rev. Dr. Katherine Jefferts Schori – Primate & Presiding Primate, Episcopal Church of USA
Rev. Canon Libbie Crossman – Provincial President of MU, Australia
Joy Parkin – New Zealand, World Chair 1990 – 1993
Most Rev. Paul Kim – Bishop of Seoul & Primate of South Korea
John Perkins – Wales Former GFS World Treasurer 1984 -1987
Agnes Young – GFS Ireland
Dilys Fowler – Wales, World Chair 1984 – 1987
Wilson Graham Sumalii – General Secretary Zambian Anglican Church
Rt. Rev. Lindsley Ihove – Bishop of Popondota, The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea.

2. Minutes of the World Council Meeting held in Ireland in 2011.

The minutes of the 20th World Council meeting held in Ireland 24th June to 4th July 2011 were presented by Emilia Corrigan (Vice President)

New Zealand proposed the acceptance of the minutes of the 20th World Council.

Seconded by Wales.

All in favour.

Emila Corrigan signed the minutes.

3. Financial Report

The Financial report of the 19th World Council was presented by Gloria Good, World Treasurer for Ireland.

Lynn Carter (USA) asked what currency the report uses. Gloria replied that the report is in Euros.

Australia asked for clarification on what 'Fund' meant in the income. Emilia replied that once Ireland knew they would be hosting World Council each Diocese started to fund raise. Central Office (Ireland) also donated 2000 Euro per year towards costs.

England proposed the acceptance of the accounts.

Seconded by Wales.

All in favour.

Emilia wished to express her thanks to Gloria for the wonderful job she had done keeping the accounts.

4. Matters Arising not on the Agenda.

There were no matters arising not on the agenda,

5. Country report from New Zealand

As printed in the World Council booklet,

Unfortunately, Janet Waite (GFS New Zealand President) was unable to attend this Council as her husband is unwell and undergoing treatment. Helen Allen, currently resident in the UK was able to attend for a few days.

6. Statement of Purpose of the Girls Friendly Society (GFS)

The following was decided upon at World Council in Ireland but not formally accepted into the Guidelines.

History

The Girls Friendly Society (GFS) commenced in 1875 in England (within the Anglican Church) to offer spiritual and physical support and friendship to young women away from home who had no local support especially in “at risk” situations.

The society spread quickly around the world as women who in moving to other countries, wished to share this vision with those around them.

GFS now works in under many different names in many countries within the Anglican Communion, encouraging, as its main purpose, a continuing relationship with Christ for its members.

The motto of GFS is “Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2) and this “service” element within the calling of Christ is a central focus of the Society.

GFS offers programs for evangelism, support, empowerment, education and encouragement, sometimes in partnership with both secular and sacred organisations. Membership in some countries is now open to male as well as female. In many countries there is a strong link with Mothers Union and link organisations within the Anglican Communion.

The World Body is governed by a set of guidelines with each GFS country operating under their own constitution / rules but adhering to the basic purpose of bringing others to Christ and service to others

through the various programs offered.

The World Body meets every three years in the country of the World President, where delegates from each GFS country (and observers) meet together to review and share their work. A World Project/s is chosen for the coming three years, concentrating on growing and strengthening GFS in developing countries, with particular emphasis on programs for young women and children.

Mission Statement

GFS Worldwide aims to:

- Promote and support the ministry of GFS around the world through the provision of ministries through the provision of ministries to children, youth, families and adults in a safe and accepting environment where Christ's love is evident, and the Gospel is proclaimed.
- Through GFS programs and through the specific World Projects:
 - ⑩ respond to human need by serving others through the motto 'Bear one another's burdens.'
 - ⑩ seek to transform unjust structures of society (particularly for women and children)
- Work with other organisations within the Anglican Communion to strengthen the body of Christ.
- Through a World Executive / Team provide a central focal point for GFS ministries by
 - ⑩ Receiving and disseminating information
 - ⑩ hosting a regular gathering of the world family to share interests, joys and concerns and setting future objectives.

GFS IS WORKING WITH GIRLS, BOYS, WOMEN AND MEN – WHERE THEY ARE.

South Africa proposed that this be accepted.

Seconded by Zambia

All in favour.

7. World Project 2008 – 2011 Papua New Guinea

Val Gribble presented the unaudited accounts of the World Project - Guitnius for PNG. The project had been oversubscribed so a 4th visit had been made to PNG. She stated the response to the project has been overwhelming and expressed the thanks of GFS Australia and GFS PNG. GFS Australia had retained their own giving to the World Council to reduce the costs of currency exchange. As monies were received in Australia for the two World Projects of this period 1/5 was retained for the PNG project and 4/5 transferred to Ireland for the Korean Project.

The program has been a very successful promotional tool for GFS in PNG and GFS is now an important part of ministry there,

Glenys and David visited Papua New Guinea in 2012 and saw the fruits of this project.

Val will forward the audit certificate for this project when she receives it.

New Zealand proposed the acceptance of this report.

Seconded by Zambia

All in favour

The session finished at 4.20pm

Monday 28th July

Session 2 - commenced at 9.30am

Glenys Payne opened the session by speaking about communication. Important and good that there are now many ways to communicate so people are not isolated but often there is not enough time for personal contact.

How much time is there to communicate with God? Walking with God in prayer is important.

1. Japan Reach Out project to the survivors of the Great East Japan Tsunami Disaster.

Report received from Asako Yonamine about Japan's recovery from the Tsunami disaster in 2011 which occurred just before World Council.

GFS Worldwide was thanked for its support through the setting up of an Emergency Fund which has helped GFS Japan to provide support for families of the victims.

GFS launched two projects: -

- Provision of sewing machines to women's groups in the affected areas. This enabled the women to provide for their own needs and also to start businesses or fund raise.
- Volunteering at the Tsukishima Kids Day. Supporting families where the women and children have moved to Tokyo, by providing a place where they can get together, socialise and share information.

The full report is included in the World Council booklet.

2. Matters Arising from the minutes of the 20th World Council.

1. **Emergency Fund.** This was agreed at 2011 World Council but needs to be accepted to go into the guidelines.

Delegates were reminded of the agreed wording: -

- The purpose of the World Emergency Relief Fund is to assist GFS member countries with funding of emergency relief efforts in their countries in times of crisis, extreme circumstances, or natural disaster.
- Funds can be disbursed in response to a request from a member country in need, or at the discretion of the World President in consultation with her World Team.
- Requests must be made in writing by a member country's GFS President/ Chairperson in liaison with their appropriate Bishop. The request shall include a description of the need and relief sought. All requests are to be received by the World President. Others who see a need are to be encouraged to contact their country's GFS President/ Chairperson who can in turn contact the World President.
- The account will be funded by donations. Up to 50% of the fund can be accessed for any single request until the funds are replenished. Upon replenishment additional funds can be disbursed.
- Upon disbursement, the World president will advise all member countries of the need and the opportunity to donate to the fund.
- The World President/ World Treasurer shall disburse the funds to the GFS member country's President/ Chairperson in conjunction with their Treasurer.
- Member countries given emergency relief funds shall provide a written

acknowledgement of the receipt of the funds and a description of how the funds were used.
Countries receiving funds will present a brief report during the next World Council.

Australia proposed the acceptance of this into the guidelines was proposed.

Seconded by Ireland.

All voted in favour.

Emergency Fund Financial Report.

Funded by a collection during the 2011 World Council and at the closing service.

£1,110.00 was sent to Japan and acknowledged. The fund currently stands at £3161.18.

The need to make everyone aware of the fund was stressed.

Australia advised that they had raised money since 2011 World Council but had transferred it directly to Japan to cut down on currency exchange costs.

1. World Development Fund. For the administration and expenses of the world team.

This was agreed at the 2011 World Council but needs to be accepted to go into the guidelines.

The wording to go into the guidelines: -

That a World Development Fund is established to provide funds for the administration expenses of the world team, excluding the costs relating to the hosting of World Council with: -

- A capital fund established.
- All countries set a target for a gift to this fund within the next three years.
- Authorisation for the management of the account to rest with the World Team.
- A budget prepared by the World Team within the first three months of their term and provided to the President/ Chairman of each GFS country.
- The account to be audited at the end of each three-year term under the same requirements as for all World Council funds

England propose acceptance of this into the guidelines.

Seconded by Australia.

All voted in favour.

The fund currently stands at £750.78.

In response to a question by Lois Frankforter it was confirmed that no monies had been received since the collection at the 2011 World Council and that the fund had not been used by the current World Team.

Guidelines

During the debate about the previous item, it was acknowledged that the World Council booklet contained the wrong guidelines and that copies of the correct ones would be provided.

3. Promotions Officer.

At the 2011 World Council a proposal was made that the role of promoting GFS be the responsibility of the World President. It was agreed that the matter would be debated further at the 2014 World Council.

Glenys Payne expressed the opinion that it would not be possible for the World President to do it all and that it is for all countries to promote GFS.
Countries to consider further and report back later in Council.

4. Country Report. Given by Australia – see World Council booklet.

Session 3 - commenced at 11.30am.

5. World Project Report and Proposals.

Julie Smith and Gail Orchard (Australia) presented a report of a visit made to the Solomon Islands in October 2013. Report printed in the World Council Agenda Book.

GFS Solomon Islands has a strong relationship with, and its structure is provided by the Mother's Union. The goal for GFS Solomon Islands is for it to establish its own structure as an independent organisation. Recommendations put to World Council: -

- GFS Australia continues to act as mentor and supporter of GFS in the Solomon Islands and work in consultation with Solomon Islands GFS members through their GFS coordinator to assess their needs.
- GFS Australia continues to hold their funds, currently in GFS Australia accounts, raised to assist in the world project and to administer any further funds that have been raised over this current 3-year period now ending. (Money was loaned from a GFS Australia diocese to allow the project to begin without waiting for funds to arrive).
- In consultation with GFS (and MU) in the Solomon Islands we should aim to support the establishment of a separate body to administer GFS as planned in the MU strategic plans with a governing structure including a GFS Chairman.
- If it is possible when stage three training is offered, it should ideally be taken to the outerisland dioceses and not necessarily be centered solely on Honiara. It would be hoped that this training, with GFS Australia personnel, be undertaken within the next 3 years.

A conference has been planned to take forward the plans, originally for June 2015 but it will now be a later date.

Only the money loaned by GFS Australia has been used to date with \$AUD8,000.00 remaining available in the GFS Australia account.

It was noted that although it is the GFS World Vice President's role to oversee World Projects, Emila Corrigan has been happy for GFS Australia to take the lead in this.

Delegates were asked to discuss the recommendations in their country meetings.

Outline of Session 4 agenda.

Male Membership and Subscription Working Party.

Julie Smith (Australia Senior Delegate) advised that the Male Membership matter stemmed from a move to tidy up the Guidelines to remove words that were gender specific.

Val Gribble (Australia) stated that the intention was not to promote male membership and regretted that it had become a big issue.

Val also pointed out that the 2005 Guidelines already uses the terminology she/he in connection with

the Presidency of the GFS World Council - para. 1.4 bullet 3 refers.

Session 4 – commenced at 2pm.

Glenys opened the afternoon session. She said that the report of the World Subscription Working Party and Male membership issues would be introduced in the first part of the afternoon. Countries would then be able to discuss issues relating to these items plus the recommendations from Australia re the World Project in the Solomon Islands in the second part of the afternoon. The groups would then report back tomorrow.

1. Male Membership Issues

GFS Ireland and GFS USA have submitted written responses to the statement from GFS Australia to accompany proposed changes to the World Guidelines and in particular Item 4. See Appendix 1

Changes throughout the document to remove gender specific terms considering that a number of countries now have male members who may be eligible to seek office at world level.

Guidelines have used male / female terminology and it is suggested that gender specific terms be removed.

After some discussion Autumn Buck from USA proposed that each country or group of countries if they wished to join together discussed the following:

1.4 The World President shall appoint a Secretary and Treasurer and other officers as deemed necessary for the term of office.

All World Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) shall be female.

2.3 Representation at Council meetings shall be extended to two (2) members nominated from each country (termed Senior Delegate and Junior Delegate) one of who shall ideally be between the ages of 16 and 30. **Both Delegates to be female.**

Sylvia Quinn, Senior Delegate from Ireland asked that the sentence:

GFS IS WORKING WITH GIRLS, BOYS, WOMEN AND MEN -WHERE THEY ARE.

be amended to put more emphasis on the work we do with Girls and Women.

2. World Project – Solomon Islands

There seemed to be some confusion about the World Project Fund and any money owing to Australia who have overseen the beginning of the project. Lois Frankforter. from GFS USA asked how much money had already been given to the Project. Hazel Crompton from England stated that money given to the Solomon Islands project must be used there even if Australia is to administer the money.

Money raised or donated in Australia for the World Project Fund has been used by Australia rather than transferring it to the World Project Fund currently held in Wales. This avoids the expense of

transferring money. Money donated by the rest of the World to the Project Fund amounts to £6515.02 and will be transferred to Australia in one lump sum.

It is suggested that Australia continues to hold funds for this project until the GFS in the Solomon Islands has its own constitution, at present it is governed by the MU.

Nobantu suggested we need clarity about the amounts spent on World Projects as given on page 23 of the booklet – Accounts of GFS World Council 2011 Ireland.

Maggs Hughes explained these referred to monies Ireland dealt with and are nothing to do with the current World Project. Gloria said she did have copies of the breakdown of the World Project Fund which she would leave with Emilia.

3. World Subscription Working Party.

Carol Lee (England) presented the report of the Subscription Working Party which had been formed following the 2011 World Council to prepare a proposal for a new membership structure. Carol explained that the work had been carried out by email and she wished to thank all who had been involved.

The working party decided to send out a simple questionnaire to all Presidents to get a response from their country. The questionnaire was sent out in June 2012 with a request for response by 30th September 2012. After several reminders only 10 responses had been received by January 2013. Carol stated that this shows how the problems of communication between countries and the difficulty in getting responses.

From the responses a number of recommendations are being made:

Recommendation 1

Subscriptions be set at £100 (or the equivalent) for three years and be paid in advance. Most countries agreed with this but there was concern that countries with poorer economies may find this difficult. If accepted there would need to be discussion and agreement on when and how this starts, It is suggested that once in place a request for payment be made when documents for World Council are sent out and that payment be made with payments for Council or at the Council. Some countries need such a request for accountancy purposes.

Recommendation 2

That each country has a nominated person to collect and send monies, to collate names and information of those attending World Council and ensuring that only GFS members, associates etc. attend. This was agreed by all countries responding and is primary to reduce costs of transferring money and to ease administration for the organisers of World Council.

Recommendation 3

Guidelines be produced to aid the new World President and her team in day-to-day administration. These would include costs and when payments are due (e.g. website), Newsletter and World Day of Prayer timings and any other pieces of advice on what happens, when etc. It is suggested that a document be produced and added to by each successive World President and her team so it can be passed onto the next World President.

Recommendation 4

Draft Accounts and Minutes be sent to the next World President and her team as soon as possible and within 6 months.

This caused the greatest amount of disagreement, but it was felt that it needed to be 6 months.

As the new World President takes over immediately there needs to be discussion of how the new World Team operate with no money but a requirement to produce newsletters etc. Should some money be immediately transferred and be available and a final amount be transferred once the accounts have been completed?

The biggest problem is the cost of transferring money and no solution to this was found apart from delaying money until a significant amount can be transferred- this may mean that there are delays in receiving money for the World Project etc.

Glenys thanked Carol for leading the working party and producing the recommendations.

She then asked countries to go and discuss the issue surrounding male membership and the subscription party recommendations.

It was suggested that countries with a small number of attendees might like to join together for discussions. It was left up to individual countries to decide what to do.

The meeting finished at 3.10pm.

Tuesday 29th July

Session 6 - commenced at 9.30am

Session opened with prayer.

1. Subscription Working Party.

Delegates agreed that feedback from country discussions would be heard for each proposal before a vote taken.

Proposal 1.

- Australia: felt £100 too much for countries with poor economies.
- Sri Lanka, Kenya, Ghana, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zambia: agreed £100 appropriate on condition it is a standing item on each World Council agenda.
- Ireland: felt that countries that couldn't afford a lump sum could open a bank account and pay instalments into it then hand the money over at World Council.
- Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands felt that for them £100 is a lot but would do their best and would pay by instalments.
- Philippines: £100 high for them and queried where countries got money from – advised each country raised the money.
- USA: felt that countries that can pay in advance should and those that can't. Possibly consider a scale according to country size.

Carol Lee advised that working party considered a scale but felt that every country should be treated

equally.

Proposal that subscriptions are paid at World Council would save on transfer costs.

Question raised: are we paying in arrears or advance? Nobantu Makunga (ex-World President) stated that the £45 collected now would be for Australia and £100 collected in 2017 would be for 2020 Council.

Proposal:

Subscriptions should be set at £100 (or equivalent) for 3 years and be paid in advance.

That a request for payment be made when documents for World council are sent out and that payment be made with payments for Council or at the council.

This to start for the world Council 2017.

Proposed by Wales.

Seconded by South Africa.

All in favour.

Glenys asked any country in financial difficulty with regard to the subscription to tell the World President.

Proposal 2.

It was felt that on-line registration had caused some problems. Glenys stated that even if on-line registration is used in future countries should nominate one person to co-ordinate.

Proposal: That each country has a nominated person to collect and send monies, to collate names and information of those attending World Council and ensuring that only GFS members, associates etc. attend.

Proposed by Australia.

Seconded by Zambia.

In favour: 16

Against: 0

Abstention: 1

Proposal 3.

Original wording referring to guidelines was queried as guidelines already exist. Carol Lee advised that the working party intended this to be a guide for day to day running of a World Council.

Suggestions received that the word 'guidelines' should be replaced by either manual (by Australia) or document (by Ireland).

11 delegates in favour of 'manual' and 4 delegates in favour of 'document'

Proposal: A manual be produced to aid the new World President and her team in day-to-day administration. These would include costs and when payments are due (e.g. website), Newsletter and World Day of Prayer timings and any other pieces of advice on what happens, when etc, This be produced and added to by each successive World President and her team so it can be passed to the next World President.

Proposed by New Zealand.

Seconded by Ireland.

All in favour.

Proposal 4.

Comments made: -

The residue of money should be sent to the next host country within 6 months of the end of World Council.

That it was not possible for the accounts to be completed within 6 months due to the need to have them audited - Carol Lee clarified that the proposal referred to draft accounts.

It was clarified that draft accounts are accounts that have been completed by the World Treasurer but not yet audited.

An amendment to the proposal as detailed below was requested and the amended proposal voted on.

Proposal: Minutes of the World Council and draft Financial Accounts be sent to the next World President and her team as soon as possible and within 6 months

Proposed by Australia.

Seconded by England.

All in favour.

2, Country Report. Given by Ghana as printed in the World Council booklet.
Christine Adjei also reported the death of Juliana Okine former President of GFS Ghana.

3, Country Report. Given by England as printed in the World Council booklet.

4. Youth Exchange Scheme

Presentation given by Thembeke Pama (South Africa) and Sara Rademacher (USA).

Objectives

- The exposure and experiential learning.
- Understanding of cultures in other countries.
- Knowledge exchange on areas of common interest.
- Better understanding of what it is to be a young girl and Christian values within the Anglican church.
- Opportunity to worship together and celebrate the fellowship of GFS.
- Opportunity to share one another's burdens and establish long term relationships.
- Build trust, care, sisterhood and friendship for the group and communities.
- Gain life skills on how to support each other, find solutions to problems, and become self-led leaders.

Framework

The GFS World Deputy President should remain the world coordinator and overseer of the exchange program.

- Identification of participating countries.
- Establishment of country coordinators for the exchange program.
- Compilation of briefs on countries to be visited.

Accreditation Criteria for host countries.

- Appointment of host country organiser who is member of the executive committee.
- Establishment of host country exchange program team (example of member): -

- *Special project officer
- *Family relation officer
- *Research-marketing and stakeholder relations officer
- *Administrator = transportation, accommodation
- *Daily operations officer

- Established relation with country consulates
- Determination of sending country application fee structure (relevant to host countries to be visited)

Country exchange program profile

Compilation of family profiles (where there will be home stays)

Target Group

- Young Anglican girls ages ranging from 18 – 25 + years.
- Girls that have displayed maturity, responsibility and willingness to learn and grow.
- Obtained approval and consent from parents.
- Come from a *well-structured family* (clarified that this means where support to grow the child would be given by the family)

Activities and programs:

- Camps
- Special projects in support of most vulnerable young women
- Fellowship group meeting
- Life skills training sessions
- Voluntary work

Associated Costs:

- Sending Country
- Travelling costs
- Visa and Insurance
- Subsistence allowance (groceries, entertainment etc.)

- Host Country
- Accommodation (home stay)
- Transport

- Alternative
- Host and sending countries to bear the costs of the program.

Sara raised the possibility of this idea being turned into a World Project application – to raise funds to enable girls to participate.

Poppy Winks was asked to meet with the young people present at World Council and report back with their feelings and ideas at a later session.

5. Country Report. Given by Ireland as printed in the World Council booklet.

Session 7– commenced at 2pm.

1. Country report given by Japan as printed in the World Council Booklet

2. Website Guidelines

David Payne (World Chaplain and Treasurer) reported that the former World website had been hacked and people were being directed to a gambling website, so he pulled the plug and stopped paying the fees.

Julie Smith (Australia) outlined guidelines for the management of a World Website.

1. As agreed at the 2011 World Council meeting in Ireland, the World Council will manage and maintain a GFS world web site.
2. The purpose of the GFS world web site is:
 - ⑩ to promote GFS with information about its history, structure, guidelines and policies and current activities.
 - ⑩ To encourage new membership with a secure link to the World President for further information
 - ⑩ to provide a link between current GFS countries with prayer information, newsletters and dissemination of information
 - ⑩ to provide access to web pages of GFS countries
3. The World Council will maintain a domain host, list a web name and pay all costs to maintain the website.
4. The responsibility for maintaining the website will rest with the current World President but may be delegated to another country with the skills to maintain the website. This decision will be made between the current World team and the incoming World President when the next host country is approved.
 - a. From 4 August 2014 to 19 July 2017 the registered domain will be www.gfsworld.org and will be managed through GFS Australia Inc.
5. The host country or the country maintaining the website on behalf of the host country will appoint a Webmaster who will hold the necessary skills to maintain the website. Such appointment must be approved by the current World President.
6. The member countries of the World Council have an obligation to ensure that any information on the website pertaining to their country is kept up to date. They should appoint a member within their own country to liaise with the World Webmaster to ensure that there is a regular review of the information relating to their country.
7. Any photos of children (under the age of 18) will only be posted to the website if the President of the country providing the photo can assure the World Webmaster that permission to post the photo has been obtained from the parent or guardian of the child/children. A process should begin place in each country to ensure this permission.
8. As the World newsletter is posted to the World Web page the permission to use a photo of a child/children should also be included when submitting articles and photos to the World President for use in the World newsletter

Proposal: That these guidelines be added to the current World Council Guidelines.

Proposed by Australia.

Seconded by Ireland. All in favour.

Val Gribble introduced the new world website – www.gfsworld.org – and explained to Council that the incoming World Team had looked into setting up a new website and following consultation had decided to employ a company with knowledge of the church. The cost of setting up the website had been 1500 \$AUD (£750) which has been paid by Australia. Tania Brown will be the World Webmaster.

Val had asked each country to provide two photos, some information about GFS in their country and contact details. She is still waiting for information from Ghana, Liberia, South Africa and Canada.

Work is still being done on the website and countries will be informed when the website goes live.

The World Website will be discussed at the 2017 World Council meeting to see how it has worked and if any changes need to be made.

3. Country report given by Papua New Guinea as in the World Council Booklet

4. Country report given by the Philippines as in the World Council Booklet.

Session 8 -commenced at 4pm.

1. Male Membership Issues

Delegates had met with their countries to discuss this issue. Some countries had joined together for discussion. Glenys asked for feedback before voting on a proposal.

GFS USA:

Delores Alleyne stated that GFS in the USA is for girls and women only. They realise that boys and men are members in other countries which is the choice of each country. Women and girls need a place where they can nurture relationships in a way that feels comfortable. It gives a platform to be ourselves and openly share with one another. GFS has taught young girls and women to be leaders and to rely on themselves for empowerment. It gives us a platform to work as women, with women. In many countries women are subservient to men and we don't want to see women having their voices taken away. Women should be empowered to speak for themselves representing the female majority of their group. We fear if men in some cultures take on leadership roles, we will lose our autonomy. The reasons GFS started will be lost. We cannot vote in favour of men having leadership roles in any capacity in the World Council structure.

IRELAND:

Sylvia Quinn began by saying they did not want to offend any men and that we rely on the support of male family members. GFS is a safe haven for girls and women and female leadership provides inspiration of them. If men were to take on leadership roles it could lead to a change in the name of the society. There are also concerns over safeguarding issues.

ENGLAND & WALES:

Hazel Crompton spoke on behalf of England and Wales and said they suggest there were no male officers of GFS World Council EXCEPT in special circumstances it may be necessary to appoint a male treasurer. Specific skills are needed by the treasurer of any organisation and if the only suitable person is a male then he should be appointed. This has happened in England and Wales.

The group also agreed that both delegates should be women. They also suggested removing the strap line **GFS IS WORKING WITH GIRLS, BOYS, WOMEN AND MEN – WHERE THEY ARE.**

The constitution of GFS England and Wales states the organization can only work with girls and women.

AUSTRALIA:

Julie Smith said that they believed it would be a backward step to insist that males cannot hold office. The Secretary and Treasurer are appointed by the World President and allowing males to hold these offices would allow for the appointment of a person with the most appropriate skills. Skills may be more important than gender. They suggested that only a female could be appointed as President and therefore as Vice President. The President then has the freedom to choose who she appoints as Secretary and Treasurer depending on the skills available. Also there should be female only delegates.

She suggested that these guidelines could be for a limited time, subject to review as necessary.

SRI LANKA, KENYA, GHANA, SIERRA LEONE, ZAMBIA & SOUTH AFRICA

These countries discussed the issue together and appointed Nobantu (South Africa) to speak. In the mid 1970's in South Africa boys began to be included in GFS groups. Guidelines for including boys were drawn up and GBFS – Girls and Boys Friendly Society groups were formed. Boys are associate members and men do not hold office.

Discussion followed and it was pointed whilst some countries have no issue with males being members other countries choose a different path. This discussion is at present at World level and the decision made here need not directly affect each individual country's own by laws and current practices.

Several felt that GFS should remain a female led organisation as it always has been as this presents a good role model for girls and women that they too can aspire to leadership and can be trained to use their skills as future leaders not just in GFS but in society as a whole.

Many acknowledge the support they have from husbands and sons.

It was also suggested that the World President would wish to choose the office bearers and she naturally chooses people who are compatible with one another and work well together and that if the right person for the job is male this should be acceptable. It was felt that it is important to choose the right person for the job. Suggestion was made that perhaps a limit of one male officer in World Council.

Everyone agreed that there was no problem having a male chaplain.

Julie Smith (Australia) pointed out that for the last three years there has been a male World Treasurer and that this had not had any detrimental effects.

Glenys said that David had been appointed as the person best qualified for the role and the committee had agreed to his appointment.

She asked the USA to state their proposal.

GFS USA proposes that all Officers of World Council be female. This includes President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Seconded by Zambia.

Australia asked for an amendment to the proposal be made that this would take effect from 2017 as GFS Australia are trying to find a World Treasurer and at this point are not sure who it may be.

This was seconded by Papua New Guinea.

It was decided that if the first amendment be accepted then it could not be postponed but would have to be brought into force immediately.

Ireland suggested that if there were extenuating circumstances then Council could be aware of them and something would be sorted out.

Carol Gardner (Wales) pointed out that nowhere in the guidelines does it say that officers need to be members. She went on to say that the biggest problem is finding someone willing to be Treasurer who is capable to doing the job really well.

At this point the USA withdrew their original proposal and suggested each officer in turn is considered.

GFS USA proposed that the World President shall be female.

Seconded: England

All in favour.

It therefore follows that the Vice-President shall be female.

Australia then proposed that The World President shall appoint a Secretary and Treasurer and other chairs as deemed necessary for the term of office.

Hazel (England) said that the situation in each country will be different and that Council has to trust the World President to appoint appropriate officers as she is aware of the situation in her own country.

Japan stated that sometimes the World President may find difficulty in appointing a female office and may have to appoint someone appropriate to carry out the work,

USA suggested an amended proposal:

The President shall appoint a female Secretary and a female Treasurer and other female chairs as deemed necessary for her term of officer.

Seconded: Zambia

for the proposal: 11

Against: 5

No abstentions.

As this point David stated that he felt his position as World Treasurer was untenable and left the meeting.

Sylvia Quinn stated that tribute be paid to David for his work during the last three years.

Before the meeting closed Glenys asked Cheryl The Revd Cheryl Selvage to lead us in prayer as we considered the future.

Meeting ended 5.30pm.

Thursday 31st July

Session 9 - commenced at 9.30am.

The session opened with prayer.

1. Feedback on Youth Exchange Scheme

Poppy Winks reported that the youth thought the scheme was a brilliant idea and all wanted to be involved but they are also realistic and aware that the scheme needs more thought about how it will work, in particular how finances will be worked out between host and sending countries.

Tegan Hudson added that the scheme would be a good way of promoting GFS in countries that are having a hard time keeping people in the young adult age bracket.

Other comments were positive and included the need to make young people first in our priorities, how to maintain continuity between Junior Delegates from one World Council to the next.

The team for the Australian World Council includes a World Youth Officer who can be instrumental in making the scheme happen.

The scheme was considered further during session 14.

2. Country Report. Given by Sierra Leone as printed in the World Council booklet.

In response to a question about the age range of members attending their camps, Alberta responded that it is age 7 upwards.

Glenys added that transport is difficult in many countries and in particular when GFS is asked to establish GFS in more remote areas.

Session 10 – commenced at 11am.

3. **Guest Speaker:** Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin. Chaplain to the Queen & Speaker's Chaplain.

4. **Country Report.** Given by Solomon Islands as printed in the World Council booklet.

Julie Smith (Australia) spoke about some queries raised – it is not possible for a bank account to be set up in GFS' name in the Solomon Islands, so money is held in Australia.

Julie presented the GFS Australia accounts for the Solomon Island's World Project and requested that this be added to the money held in the worldwide fund to be used to further the work started in the Solomon Islands.

This generally met with approval, but comment was made giving concern about lack of details of how World Project funding is used and asking in future that each project has a detailed scope and a time frame showing start and completion dates.

Proposal made by Wales: -

That Australia's proposals recommending the continuation of the Solomon Island's project until such time as funds run out are accepted.

Seconded by Ireland.

All in favour

Friday 1st August

Session 11 – commenced at 9.30am.

The World Chaplain opened the session by asking Council to stand for a minute's silence in memory of Lyn Calvert (Australia) who had sadly passed away that day. Lyn was to be the World Secretary for the coming term.

The opening prayers were then led by Rev. Rowena Kemp (USA)

1. Point of Governance.

Glenys asked Carol Gardner (Wales) to introduce this.

Carol said that following the decision on Tuesday that there should only be female officers she wished to remind members of Council that GFS is a voluntary organisation and a charity and that its affairs must be open and transparent. The main area of public scrutiny is an organization's accounts, and the role of Treasurer is becoming ever more complex especially at World level where transfer of money between countries is involved. It is therefore vital to have a qualified and skilled person as Treasurer. Carol pointed out that when World Council was last held in Wales in 1987 there was also a male treasurer.

Carol therefore proposed that there be an addition to the decision made on Tuesday. She proposed that **in special circumstances a suitably qualified and skilled person of either gender may be able to hold the position of World Treasurer to be able to meet our governance responsibilities.**

Seconded: Ireland

All in favour.

2. **Country report** given by South Africa as in the World Council Booklet
3. **Country report** given by South Korea as in the World Council Booklet

Session 12 – commenced at 11am.

4. **Guest Speaker: Right Rev. John Davies, Bishop of Swansea & Brecon**

Saturday 2nd August

Session 13– commenced at 9.30am.

Glenys opened this session with prayer.

1. **Country report** given by United States of America as in the World Council Booklet
2. **Promotions Officer**

Following further discussion on this role the following proposal was made from the Chair (by the World President)

Whilst recognising that the role of the World President is to promote and support GFS Worldwide it is not possible for her to take on the role of promoting the work of GFS in

individual countries.

Each GFS country should be responsible for their own promotion using the GFS website wherever possible.

Seconded; South Africa

All agreed.

3. Country report given by Wales as in the World Council Booklet

4. Country report given by Zambia as in the World Council Booklet

5. Guest Speaker: Lynne Tembey, Mothers' Union Worldwide President.

6. World Guidelines

Julie on behalf of GFS Australia presented a statement to accompany suggested changes to the World Guidelines.

The current World President on her visit to Australia, discussed the difficulties of making formal decisions in between World Councils for the good of GFS countries.

Australia offered to draft some changes to the World Guidelines for distribution to world countries. While addressing the original request of the World President other minor changes have been suggested.

Outline of changes made:

1. The statement of purpose which was adopted at the 2011 World Council is now attached as an Appendix and noted in 1.1
2. 1.2 There is no clause in the current guidelines that states that one of the purposes of World Council is to make decisions which would be considered a major role of the World Council, therefore a change has been suggested to include this as one of purposes of the world council.
3. 1.4 allows the commissioning of a world team, rather than only the World President. Slight changes have been made to relate to the current practice of choosing a host country two terms ahead. Some changes to grammar.
4. Changes throughout the document to remove gender specific terms considering that a number of countries now have male members who may be eligible to seek office at world level.
5. 2.5 has been added as the new clause to allow decision making between World Councils.
6. 2.8 A new dot point to allow for the host country to be chosen two terms ahead.
7. Guidelines have been renumbered.,

Australia would suggest that these changes are now circulated to world countries to be adopted prior to the next World Council following the suggested process for voting in such a situation. (2.5)

Glenys said that decision making between World Councils is the main thing to be discussed here. Australia proposed that:

Decision making between meetings of the World Council.

Matters which are brought to the notice of the world President in their term either as motions or discussion items can be referred to member countries for a decision between meetings of the World Council.

The President/Chairman/Leader of GFS in each member country will be responsible for returning one vote from their country in the time frame designated by the World President with at least 2/3 of the member countries submitting a vote before a decision can be made.

The World Secretary shall record all such discussions and decisions as business proceedings and provide each member country with a copy of the proceedings within one month of the decision. The documents will become part of the World Council minutes.

Any decision made will come into effect immediately.

Seconded: Ghana

Discussion then followed on the possible problems with communication and ensuring that all countries are allowed their say. There may be a problem with information reaching some countries and perhaps a system needs to be in place to ensure this.

It was also suggested that it would be necessary to establish how many countries are involved and to establish a quorum which may change from Council to Council. Discussion centered on whether the baseline should be the total number of member countries of GFS at present (ie 23) or the number in attendance at this council (17).

Concern was also expressed about what matters may need to be considered between Councils and suggestions were made that the word 'urgent' be inserted into the proposal to ensure that it was decisions that couldn't wait until the next Council that would be sent out for consideration. What constitutes 'urgent' would be at the discretion of the World President.

Val said there are many issues around the Guidelines that need to be sorted out. The updated version of the existing guidelines needs to be sent out with the minutes.

Many people felt that the Guidelines needed to be discussed at Council and that urgent matters are things that need dealing with immediately,

An amended proposal was then put forward:

Decision making between meetings of the World Council.

Any urgent Matters which are brought to the notice of the world President in their term either as motions or discussion items can be referred to member countries for a decision between meetings of the World Council.

The President/Chairman/Leader of GFS in each member country will be responsible for returning one vote from their country in the time frame designated by the World President with at least 2/3 of the member countries submitting a vote before a decision can be made.

The World Secretary shall record all such discussions and decisions as business proceedings and provide each member country with a copy of the proceedings within one month of the decision. The documents will become part of the World Council minutes.

Any decision made will come into effect immediately.

Proposed: Australia

Seconded: Ghana

All in favour.

7. Philippines Project

The Philippines is holding funds from the 1987-1990 World Project and are asking permission to use the funds to re-establish the project.

Julie Smith (Senior Delegate, Australia) made the proposal that

GFS in the Philippines be congratulated on the safe keeping of the 1987- 1990 World Project monies and that this World Council give approval for the World President to liaise with the GFS and existing Bishop in the Philippines to re-establish the project with the existing funds held in their account and to report to the 2017 World Council with a full audited financial and progress report.

Seconded: Wales

All agreed.

8. World Project 2014 – 2017 – Japan.

Lynn Carter (USA) began by saying that at everyone attending both this and the last Council has been moved by Japan's report on their outreach project to help the survivors of the great East Japan tsunami and earthquake disaster. A number of people have asked the Japanese delegates what we can do to help. With this in mind the following proposal has been submitted for consideration.

As no proposal for a World Project has been submitted for consideration, we have decided to ask your indulgence to consider a late proposal for financial assistance to continue our Outreach project to the survivors of the great East Japan tsunami disaster.

Background

Three years have passed since a 9.0 magnitude earthquake followed by 39-metre-high tsunami struck the north eastern region of Japan. As of March 2014, the National Police have reported that 12,884 people have died and 2,640 people are still missing. Many survivors are still living in temporary housing was set up by the government and they are still struggling to get their lives back.

The earthquake also destroyed the 1st Fukushima nuclear plant, causing a meltdown. As a result, about 140,000 people had to leave their homes to escape the ill effects of radiation.

People around the world rallied to support the victims. The Japanese people themselves came together to help. We, the members of the Girls' Friendly Society in Japan, joined in the outreach effort of the Nippon Sei Ko Kei, the Anglican Church in Japan. The task is so overwhelming that we just find ourselves praying for guidance every moment of the way,

After careful evaluation of the survivors needs, GFS Japan launched two projects.

1. We provided sewing machines to women's groups in the affected areas.
2. We volunteer monthly at the Tsukishima Kid's Day.

Objective for the next three years: 2014 -2017.

1. To evaluate the ongoing needs of the Sewing Machine Project and to supply sewing machines, fabric, thread and other sewing notions where there is a critical need.
2. To assist the women of the Sewing Machine Project to market their handiwork.
3. To continue to support the monthly Tsukisima Kid's Day with refreshments and activities.

Budget: **\$10, 000 USD** **£5895 GB** **1020350JPY**

Sewing Machines (3 large industrial machines	\$2000
Sewing supplies (fabric, thread etc,)	\$3000
Activity Supplies for Kid's Day	\$1000
Refreshments for Kid's Day	\$500
Travel for Kid's Day	\$3000
Communication (fliers, newsletters, postage etc)	\$500

Person(s) Responsible:

Asako Yonamine, National President GFS Japan and Senior Delegate

We are very grateful to the GFS World Council for considering our proposal for assistance that will help us to continue our Outreach Project to the survivors of the great East Japan tsunami disaster. With your help we will be able to support the women and children in the Tohoku Region to resume a more normal lifestyle.

Session finished 12.45pm

Session 14– commenced at 2pm

Lynn Carter said that during the lunch break she had learnt that the infusion of funds in the World Project account exceeds the amount in the budget so she suggested that the budget figures given this morning should be doubled.

It is hoped that with good communications and possibly using a Facebook page it will be possible to sell the goods being made on this project.

The proposal is that the World Project 2014 -2017 be to support the continuation of the Outreach project to the survivors of the Great East Japan tsunami and that the budget be \$20,000. Glenys thanked Japan for putting the proposal forward and to Lynn for her help with it.

Wales proposed that we accept the above as the World Project for 2014 -2017.

Seconded: Australia

All in favour.

Glenys, as World Vice President will oversee the project.

9. Country report given by Sri Lanka as in the World Council Booklet

10. World Council 2017

This is to be held at Swanleigh Conference Centre, Perth Western Australia from 10th - 19th July 2017. It will be winter in Australia and it may be wet!

Swanleigh is an Anglican conference centre that sleeps 243 in variety of bedroom configurations, but none are ensuite. It is close to the airport in a rural setting.

They are also investigating the possibility of home stay.

11. World Council 2020.

Thembeke read out the following:

To the World President of the Girls' Friendly Society and the Council

Greetings to you all in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

After much prayer and thoughts, we would like to extend an invitation to the World Girl's Friendly Society to have their 2020 Council held in Southern Africa. The Church in Southern Africa was greatly enriched by the previous visit to our Country when we hosted the 1999 GFS Conference. If our invitation is accepted the contact and coordinating person will be Mrs. Thembeke Pama, email address is thembekapama@gmail.com

We send you our warm greetings and prayer for your conference.

Stephen Matlosane

Rt. Rev. Stephen Diseko

Liaison Bishop for Young People's Organisation in ACSA Province.

The invitation was accepted by Council.

Thembeke went on to thank Council for this opportunity for South Africa and said that it would be a challenge which they were willing to accept with the prayers of all at Council and throughout the world. God assists us all as true Christians to bear one another's burdens. We are one family, and we can strengthen one another and together we can more for our countries.

12. Youth Exchange Scheme

Following the introduction of this in session 3 on Tuesday the junior delegates and other young women had met to discuss this.

Tegan Hudson (Junior Delegate from Australia) made the following proposal:

A GFS Youth working party is formed primarily to develop the Youth Exchange Program in order to bring the proposal forward to World Council in 2017.

This will be facilitated by the World Youth Officer and will consist of all current Junior Delegates and other skilled members as deemed necessary (including senior members to bring experience to our group) [See list below]

Each Junior Delegate will be responsible for contacting relevant GFS members in their country and conveying the opinions and ideas of these members to the working party.

LIST OF JUNIOR DELEGATES & OTHERS:

World Youth Officer: Tegan Hudson

England: Natasha Moore

Ireland: Michelle Armitage

Japan Emiri Nakamura

Zambia: Mandy Malambo

Korea: Helena Choi

Wales: Sarah Charlesworth
USA: Autumn Buck
Philippines: Sarah May
Tanhuanco
USA Sara Rademacher
Esther Lee – Korea
Poppy Winks – England

They also suggested the possibility of running a pilot program before the next World Council. This scheme could not be a World Project as it would be ongoing and not time limited.

Seconded: England
All agreed.

(a) Facebook Page

Tegan then put the forward a proposal for a GFS World Facebook page.

A GFS World Young Adult Facebook page be established for worldwide teens (above the age of 15) and young adults involved in GFS. This would be run by the World Youth Officer.

She asked us to remember Hebrews 10:24 “And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds”.

The Facebook page could provide

- ⑩ updates on activities around the world
- ⑩ correspondence by current junior delegates
- ⑩ connection to a global family
- ⑩ promotion of GFS

The Facebook page could help with communication and keep ongoing the spirit and friendship of GFS between World Councils.

Discussion followed on this focused on any age limit for users and whether it should be an open or closed book. It was also suggested that any countries with a social media policy share it with others as it is always useful to pool resources.

Lynn Carter (USA) suggested that we start with a closed group of all the junior delegates and that can invite others to join and so build the group.

Proposal: Australia
Seconded: USA

All agreed.

A set of guidelines for Facebook site and use of photos will be developed. Session ended 4pm.

Sunday 3rd August

Session 15 Summing up - commenced at 9.30am.

Glenys Payne spoke about a stole made by a GFS member in Melbourne for use by the World Chaplain which would be blessed during the closing service.

Lynne Tembey gave her thanks for the love offered to her and answered questions about how people can join Mothers Union.

David Payne thanked all clergy who had celebrated the Eucharist and to countries that had taken evening worship. Also, Kay Warrington for putting the services together.

World President's Report

Glenys spoke about the privilege of being World President and of visiting Australia, Papua New Guinea and Ireland, being welcomed and sharing. It has made her think that the only way to learn about each other is to live with others and share. That thoughts about the Youth Exchange Scheme will be exchanged and that an offer has been made for a pilot scheme to take place.

She thanked her team – fun, fellowship and faith kept them going, time together is needed in our world today.

During council we were blessed by sharing each other's reports and the message of what is happening in other countries. She welcomed the new World Project in Japan as a wonderful thing and stressed the importance of putting plenty of resources onto the World Website.

Thanks were given to our inspirational speakers, Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Bishop John Davies and Lynn Tembey. Glenys' prayer is that all of us should be inspired as we go out into the world and to our branches.

Glenys wished Val Gribble and her team well as they prepare for World Council in Australia. The minute book was handed over to Val.

Sarah Charlesworth presented Glenys with a gift of the 2014 Royal Doulton figurine and Kay Warrington thanked Glenys on behalf of everyone present for leading us sensitively and with fun.

At 10.15 Glenys declared the 21st World Council closed

Closing service

2.00pm: The Closing Service and Commissioning of the World President and the World Team was held at St Mary's church, Swansea. The preacher was The Most Reverend Barry Morgan, Archbishop of Wales.

The following were commissioned:

World President:	Val Gribble (Australia)
Deputy World President:	Kate Venables (Australia)
World Chaplain:	Father Isaiah Masida (Papua New Guinea)
Assistant World Chaplain:	The Revd Cheryl Selvage
World Secretary and Webmaster:	Tania Brown (Australia)
World Youth Officer:	Tegan Hudson (Australia)
World Project Officer:	Julie Smith (Australia)
World Project Officer:	Christine Rooney (Australia)

A reception given by the Lord Mayor of Swansea preceded the Gala Dinner at which the World President introduced her theme ‘**YOU** are called to serve through GFS”.

Girls Friendly Society

**21st World Council
25th July - 4th August
University of Swansea, Swansea, Wales**

Outline of Events

Friday 25th July – Welcome

Glenys said that there would be a book for people to enter names of GFS members who have died since the last Council and those members who are unwell.

Our World Chaplain, The Revd David Payne asked everyone to stand for a minute's silence in memory of those who have died.

Glenys asked people to let Hannah know if there were any birthdays or anniversaries during World Council.

Glenys then gave housekeeping notes and explained about the buildings we would use. She apologised for the building work going on around Fulton House. She also explained what was in the conference bags and how to obtain World conference t-shirts.

Information was given about the arrangements for the journey to Brecon and for the Opening Service. Glenys also explained what would be happening on Sunday morning. Service times for local churches were available if anyone wished to attend these services.

An informal meeting for the Delegates took place when the delegate packs were handed out and Glenys briefly explained how Council sessions would be run.

The young people present meet with Poppy Winks, Frances Payne and Hannah Charlesworth to talk about events during Council.

Evening Worship was led by the World Chaplain, The Revd David Payne.

Saturday 26th July

Opening Service

All present travelled by coach to Brecon Cathedral for the opening service of the 21st Council. The celebrant and preacher was The Rt Revd John Davies, Bishop of Swansea & Brecon.

Evening

A Welsh evening of entertainment was organised by Nerys & Nia plus friends who provide entertainment at banquets at Cardiff Castle.

Evening Worship was led by the World Chaplain, The Revd David Payne.

Sunday 27th July

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by Australia with The Revd Cheryl Selvage, as celebrant.

There was free time before the first Session of Council at 3pm

Evening

Entertainment was provided by Tipyn o Bopeth (Welsh Folk Dancers). As well as demonstrating various dances they also encouraged everyone to take part.

Evening Worship was led by England.

Monday 28th July

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by Papua New Guinea with Father Isaiah Masida as celebrant.

Session 2 & 3 held in the morning.

Session 4 held after lunch.

Session 5 Discussion Groups

Evening

A disco with photos of previous World Councils and Scenes of the area.

Evening Worship

Tuesday 29th July

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by Australia with Bishop Kay Goldsworthy as celebrant.

AM – Sessions 6

PM – Sessions 7 & 8

Evening Worship was led by Sri Lanka.

Wednesday 30th July

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by The Revd Tim Williams, Conference Chaplain as celebrant.

Delegates and Observers travelled to Cardiff to visit the Senedd the home of the Welsh Assembly. The visit was sponsored by Ann Jones who was unable to be present due to illness. The Children's Commissioner for Wales, Mr. Keith Towler addressed the group and talked about his role. The young people then had a tour of the Senedd building.

Afterwards the group went to the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagans. In the evening groups of delegates visited Felinfoel, Penllergaer, Gorseinon and Killay where food and entertainment were provided.

Thursday 31st July

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by USA with The Revd Rowena Kemp as celebrant.

AM Session 9

Session 10 **Guest Speaker: The Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin.**

Rose spoke about her childhood in Jamaica where she was a GFS member and that from age 14, she had an overwhelming sense of being called to ministry.

She came to England to study as a Church Army Officer and became a Lay Evangelist.

One of the influences in her life was a poster “Do not go where the path leads. Go where there is no path and leave a trail”.

Ordained in the Lichfield Diocese she moved to London where she received opposition in her first parish. Having made it clear that she was there to stay the congregation started to grow in numbers.

In addition to being a priest ministering to two congregations she is Chaplain to the Queen and Speaker’s Chaplain to the House of Commons.

Her message to GFS: what we must do to engage young people in a world where we compete with e.g. internet, what is the GFS Unique Selling Point, what are the issues faced by the age group that will connect them to us.

We must listen to the next generation and not impose our ideas, helping them to face the issues of the day. We must teach them to think about others, not just themselves, to think about what is happening to children in the trouble spots of the world. To make our young people aware of the importance of having an education – lobby MPs to speak out about countries where girls are not educated. To include boys in our conversations to help them see what it is like to be a young woman and how to treat them, to teach boys self-restraint and self-respect. To speak out about female genital mutilation and arranged marriages at a young age.

Our responsibility is to teach young women how to bear themselves, making the vision of women being equal happen so that seeing a woman in high positions is not seen as exceptional and to be applauded.

We must consider what GFS is doing between World Councils in our local organisations. How we can keep in our vision the stories of young girls and make them our stories.

“No limitations rule my efforts. I will achieve. I will excel. I will overcome obstacles and I have the potential for greatness”.

PM – free time

Evening

Each country took their turn to entertain at the Skit Night.

Evening worship was led by The Revd Tim Williams, conference Chaplain.

Friday 1st August

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by Australia with The Revd Sonia Roulston as celebrant.

Session 11

Session 12 4. Guest Speaker: The Rt Revd John Davies, Bishop of Swansea & Brecon

Bishop John had celebrated and preached at the Opening Eucharist in Brecon Cathedral.

Bishop John talked about sowing seed. He mentioned Psalm 126 and that sowing the seed and harvesting are hard work. He then went on to talk about the Parable of the Sower and the need for careful preparation for sowing the seed. Seed is valuable and has great potential.

We need to pay careful attention to each other and remember that we all Christian people come from the same stable.

As members of GFS, we should consider ourselves as sowers. If we look at the origins of GFS, we see that Mary Townsend was a woman of faith and her vision led her to do great things. This work bore great fruit. The organisation has accomplished much.

Like the sower the GFS breaks new ground and tries to remove obstacles and allow growth.

Great work is yet to be done – possibly with other organisations.

He concluded by praying that GFS would be fruitful, careful, prayerful and loving in all we do.

Glenys thanked Bishop John for giving us much food for thought.

The **International Day** was held in the afternoon.

Evening

Entertainment was provided by Dunvant Male Voice Choir with Elizabeth Bevan (Soloist)

Evening worship was led by the Young People.

Saturday 2nd August

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by Zambia with The Revd Robert Shibuwa celebrating.

5. Guest Speaker: Lynne Tembey, Mothers' Union Worldwide President.

Lynne started by thanking GFS for the invitation to speak and for starting her journey of faith as she had been a member of GFS as a girl.

She told us about her journey with the MU which began when newly married. Someone from the MU talked to her about the organisation and she thought about joining. Although she thought the MU sounded like a brilliant group, she was reluctant to go to the meeting but was encouraged by her husband and has been a member ever since. The MU has given her amazing opportunities and has opened many doors. She said the golden thread throughout her life has been God being there.

When she became World President her 7-year-old granddaughter said that Nana has the whole world in her hands! Lynne said she does have some help from friends!

Lynne explained that there are 16 people plus herself on the MU Trustee Board. Six of these trustees represent different areas of the World. The board meets twice a year for five days to discuss strategy and activities. Later this year 34 Provincial Presidents will meet for 7 days.

Mary Sumner who founded the MU in 1876 saw a need in the society of her time and put faith into action which is what MU members still do today.

MU members are involved in many different projects including

- ⑩ Providing virtual babies for use in schools in Salisbury diocese
- ⑩ Bye Bye Childhood Campaign
- ⑩ Literacy and Financial Development Program in Burundi, Ethiopia, Malawi, Sudan and South Sudan
- ⑩ AFIA (Away from it all holidays)
- ⑩ Family Life Program in Uganda
- ⑩ and many, many more

Lynne said that the MU had a voice at the UN which helps to make some governments realise that women need to have a voice.

The MU website shows what work is done around the world.

Val Gribble thanked Lynne for talking to us and expressed the thought that GFS and MU should work closely together.

Nobantu suggested that once a member of GFS you are always a member and that many are members of both organisations. When she moved to Port Elm there was no GFS, so she joined the MU and was then able to start a GFS branch. She ended by saying there is no conflict just partnership in Christ.

Glenys thanked Lynne for not only coming to talk to us but also for joining us and being part of our fellowship for a few days.

Evening

Entertainment was provided by Saxophone Group.

Evening worship was led by Ireland.

Sunday 3rd August

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by Australia with Archdeacon Michael Hillier as celebrant.

Closing service

2.00pm: The Closing Service and Commissioning of World President was held at St Mary's church, Swansea. The preacher was The Most Reverend Barry Morgan, Archbishop of Wales.

A reception given by the Lord Mayor of Swansea preceded the Gala Dinner.

Monday 4th August

Morning Eucharistic Worship was led by Wales with The Revd David Payne as celebrant.

DISCUSSION CORRESPONDENCE FOR MALE MEMBERSHIP IN GFS

Male Membership of GFS - response from GFS Ireland:

With reference to the statement from GFS Australia to accompany suggested changes to the World Guidelines GFS Ireland would like to refer to item point 4 in this document:

“Changes throughout the document to remove gender specific terms considering that a number of countries now have male members who may be eligible to seek office at world level.”

GFS in Ireland has concerns with this statement especially the final wording underlined.

We disagree with this statement for the following reasons:

- (a) Putting this statement in writing automatically opens a channel that might be abused.
- (b) Men becoming heavily involved at World level could result in the Society's name being altered.
- (c) In the interest of Safeguarding Trust, men working with girls could prove problematic.
- (d) It could be dangerous if men gained authority at Diocesan, Nation or World level. **

*** At the moment GFS members worldwide are Christian people – in the event of this changing through intermarriage or some other misadventure men in authority could prove dangerous in countries where women are under threat and experience abuse. GFS at the moment may be a safe haven for some women in these situations.*

Note:

- (a) GFS in Ireland is aware that men are welcome in suitable situations in some countries. However, we feel it important women remain in management. The Society is for the empowerment of women, particularly in countries where women are looked down on.
- (b) GFS was started by a woman; Elizabeth Townsend and the Society has been run successfully by women for nearly 140 years. We would like to see this situation remain.

The Girls Friendly Society in the United States of America Proposal for inclusion on World Council Agenda

Position on males in leadership roles.

On behalf of the **Girls Friendly Society in the United States of America** we are responding to GFS World Council Guidelines drafted by Australia in 2013.

Our position in the United States as a GFS organisation is that we cannot give an affirmative vote to men having any leadership role in any capacity in the GFS World Council structure.

The Girls' Friendly Society in the USA is an organisation just for girls and women. Boys and men are not permitted to join the organisation under our by-laws.

In the United States we strongly believe that it changes the whole dynamic of the organisation allowing men to hold a leadership role within the GFS World structure.

For males to represent the views of girls and women, which our organisation has stood for from the beginning. One hundred and thirty-seven years and still very relevant today. Women need a place where they can nurture relationships in a way that feels comfortable.

In many countries, women are subservient to men and we certainly do not want to see these women having their voices taken away. These women should be empowered to speak for themselves representing the female majority in their group. It gives us a platform to work as women, for women and with women. We fear if males in some cultures begin taking leadership roles away from the women, we will certainly lose our autonomy and lessen our role as women, which the organisation for girls was established so long ago.

It gives us a platform where we can be ourselves and openly share our feelings with one another. GFS has taught young girls and women to be leaders, to be strong, and rely on themselves for empowerment. The inclusion of boys and men would destroy their status and diminish their importance in many of our member countries. GFS would lose its purpose to promote the status on women in the world. The reason that GFS was started will be lost.

*Submitted on behalf of GFS in the United States of America.
Delores M. Alleyne GFS/USA President.*