

Liz Robertson, Bristol Branch

This year's CMA Ladies' Conference was extraordinary. For me, and many others I've spoken to since, it marked a step forward and a great spiritual development of this precious gathering of CMA ladies and friends. Don't get me wrong: all the Ladies' Conferences I have attended (all but the first one, I believe!) have been lovely and empowering, but this one felt like God was doing a 'new thing'. In their reflections on the conference, Kate and Roberta both mentioned how the content of the sessions seemed to build upon one another during the weekend. The 'unpacking' of all aspects of the beautiful and strategic accounts of the woman who anointed the feet of Jesus was truly humbling and uplifting. Sandy does a phenomenal job of planning and organising the conference, but it shouldn't be underestimated the amount of time she prays and seeks God's wisdom and direction each time. We praise God for leadership like this. More than a year before the conference she phoned me to discuss the sessions, already with their

titles. God has the 'long view'. We should never forget that. He knew what all of we attendees at the conference needed to hear and experience, learn and be blessed by. Like every time God speaks or moves in our lives, it takes time, reflection and prayerful waiting on Him to process what He is doing and how He is leading. I'm certain that He will continue to 'unpack' the revelations and blessings we all experienced.

For me, this year's conference came during a testing time, owing to the health issues I've faced in the last couple of years and the aftermath of major surgery in August '24. Physically and emotionally, the conference and the leading of two sessions were a huge challenge, and I was quite fearful before the conference; however, Father God knows our needs. Sandy was so gracious and changed the timings of my sessions so that I could rest; many others helped me set up the resources for the sessions; still more made time to see if I was OK and whether I needed support.

One of our lovely ladies from the continent, who blessed us by her presence with us, spoke prophetically into my journey of healing; it has profoundly changed my outlook. Praise God. Something that seems to have come through all these reflections is the love we share. It is often said amongst us that CMA is a family. If you go to any of the national events (I'm writing this after the AGM and Fellowship weekend) you come away knowing this to be true. It's not a cliché to declare it, but an outworking of the Body of Christ is tangibly experienced in the CMA (UK).