



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

August 2014

Dear Friends, Greetings to You All.

So many things have been happening lately it is hard to know where to begin. However for some there has been sadness with the death of a family member or friend and we extend our sympathy to you at this time and know that the loving arms of our Lord will surround and support you. Please send tributes to Merrill.

At the beginning of July 38 Women represented the New Zealand Unit at the South Pacific Area Seminar of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women. (WFM&UCW) which was held in Brisbane. A special time to meet with about 230 Fellowship members from the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoan, Tonga, Fiji, Australia and New Zealand. A time of Fun, Fellowship and Faith Sharing. Each unit gave a report, a cultural presentation and led devotions.

Our NZ presentation was well received – we gave some of the history of the Fellowship starting with a skit on the activities of the MWMU and the Ladies Guild. Then the formation of NZMWF, the support of ministry students, deacons, NCW. We acknowledged the leadership given by NZ women, Margaret Gordon, Vera Dowie, Ruth Le Couteur, Judith Parkes, Lynne Scott, Leu Pupulu to the World Federation. The Special Projects were listed and several women spoke of financial support received through the Kurahuna, Smethurst and Friendship Funds. The Samoan, Tongan and Fijian women spoke of their history and becoming part of the NZMWF. Dances which followed these always involved many of the audience.

The other units all thanked NZ for the financial assistance that had been given to them from the Smethurst Fund

In their reports all of the units made concerned comment about the violence against women and the need for help and education to halt this. The damage by natural disasters which have affected all of the countries is an ongoing concern.

The singing sessions led by Rev Amelia Koh-Butler who had been an opera singer for many years and has a passion for using creative music and drama in worship.

The songs presented by the units for the Area Song were very good and the NZ one 'Pacific Women' written by Diana Roberts was very well received.

The life story of Rev Amel Manyon from Sudan who now lives north of Adelaide was a very sobering time and made us realise our fortunate we are.

"A Challenge to Live with Risk, Compassion and Celebration"

Annual Meetings – some have already been held others will happen soon.

Thank You to all who have shared leadership or been Martha's and worked in the background. Thanks to all who attend the Fellowship meetings and activities.



For those who have accepted new leadership roles, many on a shared basis we know that you will enjoy this experience. Unfortunately some fellowships no longer stay affiliated but there are still women who wish to remain in contact and we need to be aware of them as many continue supporting the Special Project.

The 2014-15 Special Project – "TOGETHER WE CAN"

Through CWS – 'The Right to Life and Livelihood in Tamil Nadu, South East India'. Coastal people are some of the most vulnerable in India. Large scale industries and tourism are taking over their land. There is loss of income jobs and access to coastal waters.

The New Zealand Project is 'Diabetes Youth New Zealand'
A volunteer group specifically for assisting and supporting young people, with diabetes. Camps are held in various locations. Unfortunately type 2 diabetes is on the increase particularly for younger people and we all need to be aware of the ways of reducing this trend.

Information about these projects will be emailed with this letter and hard copies will be available at Convention for Districts to distribute to the Fellowship groups.

50 years of NZMWF has been celebrated and enjoyed by so many with lots of fun and laughter but also with remembrance of the many who throughout the decades have led us and helped us to know – where we have come from and where we are going. The books that have been compiled are very interesting and show a great history. We have been making contact with women who have been on National Executives. This has been most interesting. Tricky at times trying to find people.

Membership Fees \$9 are due now - \$3 for District and \$6 for National.

CONVENTION will be at El Rancho 11 – 14 September. Safe travelling Registrations need to be sent to Merrill Baker by the 12 August.

"As water takes up the shape of its container, so does God fill who we are. Instead of comparing ourselves with others, we should try to celebrate the diversity of creation and our unique place in it."

Blessings to You All and we look forward to seeing you at Convention.

Marie Smith

18 Sunny Glen

Waikanae 5036

President.nzmf@methodist.org.nz