



Methodist Women's Fellowship



August 2018

Dear Friends,

Malo e Lelei, Talofa Lava, Noa'ia e Mauri, Taloha Ni, Kia Ora and Spring Time greetings from your National Team – Lynne Scott Vice President and World Federation Correspondent, Philomena Petaia Secretary, Valmai Horlor Treasurer and Uniting Churches Link, Roz Wilkie Liaison and Cultural Link, Rev. Barbara Peddie Chaplain and Diaconate Link, Ofa Giblin and Unaisi Tikoinaka Missions Links and Moe Petaia National Council of Women Link. I want to publicly thank these wonderful women for all their work and support and ask for your prayers as we prepare for our Convention in October.

“Bula Vinaka” from our four hundred South Pacific Area sisters from Fiji, England, Australia, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Samoa who gathered at the Shangri La, Resort near Sigatoka, Fiji in early July with our group of eighty eight. There was great excitement as friendships were renewed and new friends made and we all had a wonderful time of fellowship and learning based on our World Federation theme “Chosen People Called to Proclaim” with the added words “With Hearts on Fire”. Our World Federation President Alison Judd from Dorset, England was an inspiring leader with Joy Jino and Ilaisa'ane Kapani, our Area Leaders.

We were able to assist with registrations for our Pacific sisters from the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Fiji to attend the Seminar through the Smethurst WFM @UCW Seminar Fund. Unfortunately because of the Church Conference in Tonga, women from this Unit were unable to attend. We continue to praise God for the late Ada Smethurst's gift. There are two reports in the latest “Touchstone” which you can read and share. Thankyou to my group for your support over this wonderful week. Thankyou, too, to Mataiva Robertson and Leu Pupulu the World Federation Secretary and Treasurer for your leadership. We are so proud of you both. We are pleased to report that Olive Amani Tanielu will become our next South Pacific Area President at our next World Assembly in Sweden in 2021. She joins a long list of NZMWF World Executive members.

Sadly we remember with deep gratitude and thankfulness two members of past National Executives who have died. They are Beth Ensor from Nelson – Marlborough and Hazel Waters from Canterbury. We thank their families and their MWF groups for sharing them with us and we remember them at this sad time. We also remember the late Ailsa Thorburn from Katikati, a missionary nurse in Papua New Guinea and Zimbabwe. It was so good to read the Queen's Birthday Honours List recognising Rev Setaita Kinahoi Veikune for services to the Pacific Community and now a member of our incoming National Executive and Jan Tasker now a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to education and the community. She is one of my Girls Brigade mentors too. Both are chosen, precious and called to proclaim within and outside our church.

One of our Bible Studies in Fiji was from Matthew 15: The Phoenician Woman. - Faith brought her to Jesus, faith sustained her through her difficulties and faith brought her freedom and peace. Jesus was unexpectedly in her district and she fell at his feet imploring him to heal her daughter. She screamed at him three times and would not take 'No' for an answer! She was a Gentile and a Pagan woman with no religious, moral or cultural credentials but she needed a miracle, desiring to receive the smallest portion of His grace. With a burst of boldness she pushed past all the ethnic, gender, religious and political barriers and the miracle of healing happened. She humbled herself in an attitude of worship seeking his touch. She caught His mood and He delighted in the fun! We need her faith every day! Can you share a similar experience as a chosen person called to proclaim with your heart on fire?

This month we begin a new year in our groups and districts. Thankyou to the new leaders stepping up. Let us all pray for new members, new enthusiasm and more encouragement and pastoral sharing in your groups and

your neighbouring groups. Please support your associate members, your shut-in members, your deacons, your Trinity College students, your link district and your National Executive. Can you invite your local Presbyterian women who may have no group of their own to attend to your meetings? We have a wonderful ministry to share here and throughout the world.

In June I attended the Annual Girls Brigade Conference in Auckland celebrating ninety years in New Zealand and one hundred and twenty five years in the world. I have been part of this ministry for fifty years! I was pleased to meet up with Darcia White from Dargaville MWF, Doreen Bateup and Beverley Pullar from Stoke MWF. At the Celebration Service at Papatoetoe Church I shared morning tea with Linda Clark and Barbara Sheppard. I was reminded of Proverbs 17:17 "True friendships do not come by chance. Each one is infinitely precious. They are a source of life's lasting joys so appreciate them." I certainly do!

We have had another Smethurst Meeting and farewelled Olive Amani Tanielu and Rosa Fa'afuata and welcomed Siniva Vaitohi and Amelia Hogle on to the committee. Please pray for the six recipients. Two continue their studies, one is publishing a book, and three are attending overseas conferences. We look forward to reading about the overseas experiences later. The next closing date for applications is 20 October.

I enjoyed my recent visit to Hamilton and meeting the members of the Waikato and Thames Valley district, visiting their elderly members at Tamahere Village and I also attended the Deacons Bi-annual Convocation sharing with seven members. We had sessions with Rev. Trevor Hoggard, Rev. Susan Thompson, Rev. Gloria Zanders and Catherine Hodges working with young people with disabilities in Hamilton. Thankyou again for all of our memorable visits this year and your wonderful hospitality and enthusiasm...We look forward to welcoming you at Convention. The registration forms are due by 11th August. This is the date for all Handbook papers too. We will be praying as you travel.

It is good to hear of past National Projects. Our Palestine – Gaza – West Bank projects for Palestinian refugees continue to struggle to provide health services after Israeli attacks last May. They need more help to supply medicines, medical services and physco-social care to the women and children. Several children inhaled gases. Vocational training courses, mother and child health clinics and trauma counselling sessions are ongoing. The Ama Takiloa Tongan project continues. The women were well placed to assess the recent Cyclone Gita projects on Vava'u for restoration of rainwater systems, the re-establishment of gardens and home visits to assess families' needs, All are very grateful for the recent New Zealand Methodist churches monetary donations.

Our new projects are Bellyful, a New Zealand-wide charitable trust providing meals for families with newborn babies and families who are struggling with illness – particularly those lacking a good support network. The Christian World Service project is based in Fiji and there will be more information at our Convention. At the 2017 Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa New Zealand Assembly I learnt about their Birthday Missions gifts which I would like to promote. Each member is given an envelope for a birthday donation to their favourite charity. I decided to do this for my recent birthday and was overwhelmed to receive \$850! I donated this to the local Churches Education Commission for the training of State School Chaplains and they had the course recently funded by my gift. Schools are not having Christian Religious Education classes so much but all are keen to have a chaplain as "listening ears" for the Principal, teachers, other staff, children and parents. Now there are nine new ones! Can I encourage your Missions Person to promote this idea in your church and in your groups?

Let us have more focus on Missions to remember these two years of this Christchurch National team! I was thrilled to worship twice in the new St Johns Hamilton East church and would like to end this newsletter with a blessing given to all those from Convocation during the service on Sunday. Thankyou all who were there. "May you give generously of your time, energy and talents and graciously receive the assistance others offer to you. May you walk faith-filled and confident through the many adventures of your life and ministry. May thanksgiving overflow in your heart and be frequently proclaimed in your life. May your heart be centred on the Holy One who is the ultimate source of spiritual guidance." Joyce Rupp in Prayer Seeds.

God bless you and your loved ones richly till my next newsletter. Dianne Claughton.