

GREETINGS FROM VAOTANE – INCOMING NATIONAL PRESIDENT ...

As an incoming National President, I am grateful for this opportunity to greet you my sisters in Christ and members of the NZMWF in this Newsletter. Tena koutou! Tena koutou! Tena koutou! Kiaora tatou katoa. Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Noa'ia e Mauri, Ni Sa Bula Vinaka, Manaskaram, Kumusta, Sabah-Al-Khair, Guten Morgen, Mubuhay Manwanani Akanaka and Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am happy to introduce myself briefly to you. My name is Vaotane Unasa Samoa Saleupolu. I was born and raised in Samoa, and migrated to New Zealand in 1975. I am married to Asofiafia (Aso) Tauamiti Samoa Saleupolu, a Methodist Presbyter, and we have five daughters, two sons, nine grandchildren and two great-granddaughters. My passion in life includes the development of children, and liberation and development of women. My initial introduction into the MWF was through my mother's commitment to the Auso Fealofani (WF) in Samoa. During my training as a nurse, I was part of a small group of Methodist nurses who donated funds to the building of the Fale o le Auso at Matafele, Apia. In New Zealand, I have served in Palagi and Samoan MWFs, at Parishes and Sinoti Samoan Regions and District.

This is a huge responsibility which I am taking seriously and accepting the challenges it brings. My Team and I are looking forward to serving Christ through the mission of the Methodist Women's Fellowship.

May the love, peace and grace of Christ be with you all.

Shalom – Vaotane Unasa Samoa Saleupolu

REMEMBERED WITH LOVE ...

Mrs Dorothy Ford, National Treasurer on Doreen Hill's Executive, died in Cambridge on 15 June 2008. We thank God for Dorothy's life and her dedication, willing spirit and generous gifting of her talents and time and work and witness for Him.

To each and everyone who has suffered bereavement over recent weeks, may the Lord give you a special measure of His strength and peace. May your precious memories of loved ones sustain and comfort you.



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The Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa

Women's Fellowship



President's Letter – July/August/September 2008

Warmest greetings to everyone ... Malo e lelei, Talofa Lava, Noa'ia e Mauri, Ni Sa Bula Vinaka, Namaste, Taloha Ni, Kia Orana, Kia Ora

It seems no time at all since I was tentatively writing an introductory paragraph for the President's Letter two years ago! Where has the time gone? What an amazing and blessed chapter these two years have been in my life. As I have written previously, visiting the Districts has been the "icing on the cake". Visits to Districts, Fellowship gatherings, sitting alongside amazing women either in their own homes or retirement villages, has been such a rich blessing – and no, I will not forget the men who have assisted in so many ways! This God-given privilege is one I will continue to cherish. Mostly accompanied by at least one other Executive member, our "team" has travelled to, and enjoyed fellowship in, all 19 Districts. It has been evident that a great deal of work has gone into giving us so many opportunities to not only be a part of your Fellowship gathering, but also to experience the beauty and uniqueness of each of our wonderful regions. I have visited towns I know I would never have had the opportunity to see and I pray that I may be able to return before too long. (What an admission from a "mainlander"!)

Once again, thank you for the warmth of the hospitality and all those "extras" that have made our journey so special. The next journey for Ruth, Valmai, Ofa and I will be to attend the South Pacific Area Seminar in Tonga. Thank you for your prayers that we would be able to include the people on our "waiting list" who wished to attend the Seminar. We thank God for advice from the organisers that we can include these people. We expect we will have 107 women representing our New Zealand Unit. We know this Seminar, will be a further time of rich blessing.

Please continue to pray for Vaotane and her Executive team – as they journey towards Convention and prepare to take office. Thank you for your continued loving prayer support for me and the Executive "team" as we prepare for Convention and all those who will gather. My thoughts and prayers are with each and every one of you. May you have strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the future. May the Lord continue to bless, encourage and enrich my precious sisters and brothers in the Lord. Shalom

Lynne Scott

A Blessing

Go as far as you dare,
For you cannot go beyond the reach of God
Give as extravagantly as you like,
For you cannot spend all the riches of God
Care as lavishly as you are able,
For you cannot exhaust the love of God
Keep journeying as a servant,
For God will always be with you.

– From A World of Blessings, Canterbury Press

Often over the winter season activities for some are very much curtailed. I am sure I do not need to remind you of the extreme weather conditions most of New Zealand has suffered during recent weeks which have kept many of us indoors!

PRAYERS FOR WHEN YOU FEEL LONELY ...

Everyone experiences loneliness at one time or another. Turning to the Lord in prayer is more important than ever when you are lonely because He loves you and you can believe in His promise to stick by you and never leave you. (Hebrews 13:5) Use these biblical prayers to help sustain and encourage you when you are experiencing loneliness.

HOPE – God of hope, fill me with all joy as I trust in you, so that I can overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. When I am feeling lonely, I put my hope in You because you are my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer in whom I take refuge. (Romans 15:13, Psalm 18:2)

GOD'S LOVE – Jesus, sometimes I feel so rejected. Because you were rejected by men, you understand what that feels like and have compassion on me. Even when I feel pushed away by others, I thank you that neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will separate me from your love. (Isaiah 53:3, Romans 8:39)

PEACE – Lord, may your peace, which transcends all understanding, flow over me and guard my heart and mind. During seasons of loneliness, open my eyes to the peace I have with you. (Philippians 4:7, Romans 5:1)

COMMUNITY – When you created the world, God, you said it was not good for man or woman to be alone, but during lonely times I tend to withdraw from those around me. Help me to remember that when I feel lonely it does not mean something is wrong with me – I am just longing for the community you have created me for. (Genesis 2:18)

GOD'S PERSPECTIVE – Lord, your ways are so much higher than mine, and you think about things differently than I do. Show me how you are looking at my loneliness. What do you want me to see or understand about it? Teach me your ways, O Lord, so I can walk in your truth. (Isaiah 55:9, Psalm 86:11)

PROTECTION – Jesus, when I am lonely, I may be tempted to form close bonds with the wrong people or to make bad choices just to numb the pain. Help me to trust in your protection instead of trying to escape this lonely season. (Proverbs 13:20, 2 Corinthians 6:14, Isaiah 50:10-11)

COURAGE – Jesus, when I am lonely, I sometimes focus only on myself. Strengthen me to look beyond my own wants and problems so I can reach out to others and create relationships. Help me act on the fact that I did not receive a spirit that makes me a slave again to fear, but instead received the Spirit of sonship. (Romans 8:15)

FRIENDS – You have promised to set the lonely in families, God. Guide me to true friends who will stick closer than a brother or sister so that we can carry each other's burdens and in this way fulfil Your law. Show me how to be the kind of friend who picks another up when they fall down. (Psalm 68:6, Galatians 6:2, Ecclesiastes 4:10)
(Source – "Discipleship Journal")

APPRECIATION AND THANK YOU!!!

It is that time of year again ...the time of annual meetings! Thank you to all who have undertaken leadership roles during the last year at local Fellowship and at District level. The ongoing vitality of our organisation has been in your hands and we gratefully acknowledge the time, talent and commitment you have made. To those continuing or taking up office, we wish you every blessing and joy.

ANNUAL RETURNS – Please remember to return the pink form to National Secretary as soon as possible after your District AGM. Thank you.

CONVENTION: To be held at **Waikato Diocesan Girls' School, Hamilton, from Thursday 2 October to Sunday 5 October.** Registrations Forms, including Day Registration Form, have already been sent to District Presidents. Highlights will be – Guest Speaker, Rev Diana Tana; Celebration Dinner – 25 years of Smethurst grants and the induction of new President, Vaotane Saleupolu and Executive, on Sunday morning. Mataiva Robertson will share her experiences of participation in the Bossey Scholarship Programme and also as our Helen Kim Scholar.

Please note the first catered meal at Convention (for those fully registered) will be Thursday evening..

CONVENTION REGISTRATIONS – We apologise for an error made when writing Catherine Dickie's address. It is 7B Wilfred Street, Hamilton 3200. Catherine would appreciate the correct spelling of her street name.

CRAFT STALL

Please remember the craft stall at Convention. Districts are encouraged to contribute to the stall. ***Please price items for sale prior to Convention.***

SMETHURST

At Convention we will be celebrating 25 years of the Smethurst Bequest. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed their "story". It is not too late if you have been on the committee or have received a grant to contribute your story (or submit photographs if you have them). Please send to Lynne Scott as soon as possible.

SMETHURST TRUST COMMITTEE

Marie Smith and Nelma Woodfield will complete their term of office on the Smethurst Trust Committee at Convention. A huge thank you to Marie and Nelma for the outstanding contribution each has made through Smethurst, and will continue to make in the wider work of MWF.

WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST AND UNITING CHURCH WOMEN SOUTH PACIFIC AREA SEMINAR – TONGA – 13 – 19 SEPTEMBER 2008

Please continue to pray for those organising the Seminar and all travelling, participating and fellowshiping during the Seminar and our sisters from other Pacific Units. Hear all about the Seminar at Convention!!!