



June 2018

Malo o Lelei, Talofa Lava, Noa'ia e Mauri, Nisa Bula Vinaka, Kia Ora.

I begin by giving thanks for the faith and example of Dorn Herbert and Pauline Mabon both from Otago National Executives who have recently died. We thank their families for sharing them with us.

I began collecting Royal Family pictures for my Girls Life Brigade Cadet Collectors badge and still do! I know you joined me watching hours of television featuring Prince Harry and Meghan and I loved the wedding service. I pray that God will bless all of those \$1.9 billion who may be now rethinking their Christian faith because of the hymns, the prayers, the sermon, the Song of Solomons reading, the smiles, the laughter, the blending of cultures, the beautiful photographs and the visible love. We praise God that our Prime Minister has chosen Pillars for the wedding gift donation and those funds will be used for scholarships.

Roz, Lynne and I have just returned from visiting some of you and we want to thank-you for your hospitality, your gifts, your thank-you cards, encouragement and support. Thank you for the invitations and the good times at Tauranga, Te Puke, Christchurch, Nelson, Blenheim, the Willow Park Samoan District Leaders Meeting, Wanganui, New Plymouth and Levin. It was also so good to meet your Presbyters and their wives and to view our wonderful autumnal scenery. God is good all the time, all the time God is so good.

I have sent my Weaving Together Report for the South Pacific Area Seminar Presidents' Meeting and the theme is "Chosen People Called To Proclaim". I know our groups have concentrated on this world-wide theme with passion. Thank-you everyone.

Our chosen person this month is Naaman's servant girl from 2 Kings, chapter 5. We are hearing about the Rohingya refugees from Myanmar living in Bangladesh and the Syrian refugees living in Jordan and Lebanon experiencing changed lives supported by world-wide charities. We have seen girls on our television screens like this nameless servant girl. Against her will she was forced to leave her home and family in Israel and was taken to Syria. She trusted the God of her people, had a heart of joy and excitement and did not lose faith and hope. Even though she was the lowest member of the household she must have served with a positive attitude and demonstrated her faith every day because her words were taken seriously. She shared the good news of Prophet Elisha with courage and confidence and healing occurred. Naaman was a man of integrity because he held the position of a Commander in Aram but had leprosy, a challenge that troubled him every day. This selfless and caring child spoke to her mistress about the possibility of healing passing on words of hope and her prayers were answered.

He was powerless over his skin disease but listened unexpectedly to this child and his wife. He was angry when Elisha would not meet him but sent a messenger instead. However his officers persuaded him to obey the Prophet and dip seven times in the Jordan River and he was healed. God used a captured slave girl to bring about this healing. She had no status in society, but her faith in a mighty God made her take a step to suggest a way for her master's healing. God's favour continued on his life and he worshipped God and spread the good news to the King and everyone that he knew. You, too; can be a channel through which the blessings of God flow to others! Pray and then speak! Miracles happen every day!

We are saddened by the continued conflict in the Gaza Strip area. Christian World service reports that Primary Health Care in three clinics there have worked with 10,481 families, 2,552 women and 1,468 children receiving mainly psychosocial support and 210 students are enrolled in vocational training, mainly for setting up market stalls. The Palestinian Medical Relief Societies are training health workers in Gaza and the West Bank. There is a great need for water tanks in the West Bank. More parent education is needed encouraging them to not arrange marriages but to enrol their daughters into tertiary education.

In Tonga, the Tonga Community Development Trust Ama Takiloa Programme, has assisted 259 local groups throughout the islands. Our Christian World Service funds have assisted the improvement of marketing plans for cultural goods and the sale of produce has significantly improved the family incomes. The disaster training teams carried out vital work during the recent cyclone on Tongatapu,

their worst storm in forty years. Thank-you to all of our congregations for supporting this recent emergency appeal.

The Council of Protestant Churches on Nicaragua is focussing at grassroots level focussing on food security, environmental protection and the strengthening of their communities. 124 young people are being trained to work with their peers on issues of overcoming shyness, literacy, communication skills, hyperactivity and domestic science. These new leaders are talking to churches, schools and youth groups about anger management and domestic violence finding new ways of working together as a family and community. 200 women have established home gardens with new varieties of fruit and vegetables, conservation skills and trained horticultural advisors are improving family nutrition. 148 women have been trained in crafts and small business skills.

In South India the Neythal group has continued its coastal monitoring programme to advocate for and protect the livelihoods of the fisherfolk who have been displaced and improve the place of women and children. 3000 college students have attended training events exploring gender issues and life skills. 5000 attended meetings ahead of local council elections to promote women candidates and their issues. Child marriages have been stopped. The Tribal women and Dalits are receiving more assistance and advocacy.

Your past support for these Special Methodist and Presbyterian Women Christian World Service Projects are still appreciated.

Our church President Prince Devanandan visited the Solomon Islands in April. He blessed the new infectious diseases ward at Helena Goldie Hospital and the Auckland Central Parish was thanked for their donation. There are now 81 beds and the Outpatients and Dental Clinic operate effectively. Funding is needed for the new classrooms for the College of Nursing and in July 24 new students will begin. This college is being integrated into the Government Health System and the provision of national qualifications. Can you help our national church raise \$50,000? We value your support of the Helena Goldie Hospital in Munda since 1933!

Our Convention planning is well underway and we thank our new Local Arrangements Committee for their energy and dedication. Our Bible Study Leader will be Merryll Blair B Theol (hons) DipMin, D Theol from Victoria, Australia. She enjoys the wonderful complexities of the Hebrew Bible in which the struggles and joys of every day existence are brought into conversation with faith in a God who is totally involved in our existence. Our theme is "Chosen People Called to Proclaim" and we will learn from the lives of Old Testament women. The registration forms will be sent soon.

Valmai, our National Treasurer, reminds all local and district treasurers to close off your books as at 30 June but all payments can be sent to her at any time during the year.

A huge thank you to Paul Titus, our retired Touchstone editor, for all the good times shared with us at meetings over fifteen years. Thank you for your support of our work and for the publicity given to us so many times. We wish you well as you journey on.

I look forward to sharing with all of those attending our South Pacific Area Seminar in early July at Sigatoka, Fiji, then with our deacons at their Convocation in Hamilton and then meeting with the Waikato-Thames Valley District at the end of July.

I am very excited to share some good news. I have met with the Mt Roskill MWF group beginning again after a time in recess. This is a multi-cultural group meeting after church one Sunday a month for lunch and their meeting. Please pray for them. Our Rotorua group of mainly younger women which began last year meets on a Saturday afternoon and spends a lot of time fundraising. Pray for them and their families too.

It is Annual General Meeting time again and I want you to take time to look back on the past twelve months and share new ideas for the year ahead. How are you encouraging new members? Thank-you to all office bearers for your time, talents, prayers and love for this ministry. God bless those standing down and those taking up the roles. Be assured of the encouragement, love and prayers of your group members and church members.

During this time of Pentecost may each of us recognise afresh the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Arohanui, Keep warm and well over Winter, Dianne, Lynne, Valmai, Barbara, Roz, Ofa, Una, Moe and Mena.