



The Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa

New Zealand Women's Fellowship

President's Letter – October/November/December 2009

Talofa lava, Tena koutou, Malo e lelei, Ni sa bula vinaka, Noa 'ia e Mauri, Guten morgen, Namaskaram, Kamusta, Sabah-Al-Khair, Mangwanani akanaka, Taloha ni, Top of the morning and Warm greetings to you all sisters in Christ.

Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth, goodwill towards all people.

Now we are heading towards Christmas to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour. As we think about the One who comes at Christmas, let us not see him simply as a helpless baby, but as God's chosen King, coming to show us the way of salvation and the way of wisdom; judging us by our response to him, and leading us to the peace that passes through all understanding.

In October, 35 wonderful women attended National Council with the theme: rekindle the spiritual gifts to make a difference within our Methodist Women's Fellowships. We heard some wonderful stories about Districts and new ways of coping with changes. We also realised that a year has gone since we took over this responsibility as National Executive. Thanks be to God for his guidance that made the National Council an enjoyable and a successful event. With a grateful heart, I would also thank all members of our Women's Fellowship for your prayers, love and support for us, the National Executive members throughout the year. Thank you for inviting us to visit your Districts and for your hospitality shown to us. We cannot repay your generosity but we only pray for God's providence to richly bless you and your families now and forever.

Congratulations to Mataiva Robertson of New Plymouth! Mataiva is the NZMWF President Elect. Please pray for Mataiva as she prepares for this role, and for the selection of her Executive to lead the MWF from October 2010.

We need to affirm God's gifts in all people and ensure women in your Church and Fellowship are represented on Local, Districts and National Committees.

NATIONAL COUNCIL 2009

- ❖ NZMWF Convention 2010 will be held on September 30th to 3rd October, at Willow Park Christian Centre, Auckland. The main Guest Speaker for the NZMWF National Convention is the WFMUCW President – Mrs. Chita Rebolledo Millan of Philippines.
- ❖ The new committee selected at National Council to review NZMWF Finance had their first meeting at Ruth Le Couteur's home Christchurch, on the 5 November 2009. The Committee members: Vaotane U.Samoa Saleupolu, Leu Pupulu, Marie Smith, Ruth Le Couteur and Valmai Horlor (was not available). The meeting was a good and worthwhile one which enlightened us about our NZMWF financial matters. You will be informed about its outcome in the near future.

Special Projects Distributions for 2009

| | |
|---|--------------|
| • Amount Raised (less Expenses) | \$33,090 |
| .56 | |
| • Hearing Association of NZ received | \$23,163 .39 |
| • Lauru Land Conference Women's Programme at Choiseul Solomon Islands | \$9,927 .17 |
| • Medical And Education Fund - Goldie College in the Solomon Islands | \$2,503. 85 |
| • Stamps and Coupons - Sasamunga Hospital, Choiseul Solomon Islands | \$2,742. |
| 80 | |

Recommendations:



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Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa

New Zealand Women's Fellowship

- That a Special Koha be collected specially for the Tsunami Victims in Samoa and it was sent to the Tsunami Account set up at the Connexional Office.
- That GST Refunds received be made available to pay NZMWF National Executive running expenses.
- That National Council selects a Committee to review our MTA investments.
- That Convention is held within the District of the Outgoing National Executive where possible.
- That the cost of NZMWF Council and Convention are very carefully considered.

The Special Project Fund remains as it is: that one year the bigger portion of 70% goes to a Special project in NZ, and a smaller portion of 30% goes to a Special Project overseas and viceversa in the next year.

CHURCH CONFERENCE 2009

At Church Conference Leu Pupulu and Vaotane Unasa Samoa Saleupolu were your representatives. The Conference theme: Celebrating God's Presence. The newly inducted President Rev Alan Upson and Vice President Lana Lazarus in their Team address called upon Methodist people to not hide our life-changing heart-felt experiences of God. Members of Conference were challenged to consider how our sense of God's presence could affect not just the life of Conference, but also when we return home.

On Saturday night, there was a special event to mark 50 years since the Rev Dr Phyllis Guthardt was ordained as the first woman ordained in New Zealand. There were women selected from each decade to talk about how things were done in their time when Candidating for ministry and during theological training. It was a significant historical celebration for our women especially our ordained sisters in Christ.

The President-Elect is Rev. Desmond Cooper of Wellington, and the Vice-President-Elect is Susanne Spindler of Christchurch. The Church Conference will be held in Palmerston North in 2010.

The two-year presidential term will begin in 2011

There were five presbyters ordained at Conference: Tony Franklin, Rex Nathan, David Poultney, Apakuki Raticoka and 'Alipate 'Uhila. During the service, along with the Ordinands Andrew Donaldson, Amaamalele Tofaeono Siolo II, Anne Preston and Augusten Subhan were received into Full Connexion.

**** Vaotane's report to Church Conference has been posted on our web page in the Methodist Church website.**

On behalf of all the National Executive members I would like to take his opportunity to wish all of you hope, love, joy and peace this Christmas and have a very prosperous new year.

***la maua se Kerisimasi fiefia ma se tausaga fou manuia.
'Ofa ke mauma'u ha Kelisimasi fiefia mo e Ta'ufo'ou monu'ia.
Arohanui, Shalom, Soifua manuia,***

Vaotane Unasa Samoa Saleupolu, NZMWF National President.

ABUNDANT BIBLE PUZZLES

The Book Three is Green in colour, created for MWF by Rosalie M. Sugrue. It is suitable for all who love the Lord. There are books for sale at \$5 each, plus \$1 for pack & postage.

The money from the sale of the Puzzle Books will go to the President's overseas travel.

Thank you very much Rosalie for your gift of wisdom and knowledge that resulted in the production of the Bible puzzle books. May God bless you abundantly and continue to use your God-given gifts for His service.



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National Council 2009 – Willow Park Christian Convention Centre

It was booming and it started with an awesome Opening Ceremony Friday 2nd October and ending with an awesome Worship Service Sunday 4th October 2009.

We were entertained by Youth Groups from various Churches in the Auckland Area – we had Personal sharing of the lives of wonderful women who are avid members of our MWF.

At the Opening Ceremony our guest speaker was a young talented NZ born Samoan Dr Natalie Anesi Fa'amatuainu who was determine to succeed in life and at a young age she set a goal that she would no longer fail in anything she sets her mind in achieving and she is now a Doctor and loves helping people. The emphasis was on our young and encouraging them to be apart of the NZMWF and this was cemented with the election of a young NZ Born Samoan who stepped up and took on the challenges of being a young women in the NZMWF and has never looked back and is now our new President elect for 2010-2012, wishing her all the best and prayers to her for the next 12 months in selecting her angels to help her lead a wonderful fellowship for the next 2 years.

*****What's happening out there*****

Info from Mission & Ecuemical November & December 2009

UNITY IS A GIFT OF GOD

This message was strongly affirmed at the October 2009 meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Faith and Order Commission at Kolympari, Crete. Leaders of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Orthodox Church) called for humility in the search for unity, which



*The Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa*

New Zealand Women's Fellowship

they described as a an ever-unfolding journey, learning from the early Fathers and Mothers of the Church, and at the same time turning towards the age to come. They identified ecclesiology, an understanding of the nature of the 'One Church', as the crucial question, noting that dialogue on their different ecclesiologies has enabled the churches in recent decades to reach a better understanding of one another and of themselves.

A PASTORAL VISIT TO CHURCHES IN NORTH KOREA General secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Rev Dr Samuel Kobia, was invited by the Korean Christian Federation of North Korea to visit churches in and near the capital Pyongyang. The October 2009 visit included the 1987 Bong Soo Church, the smaller Chilgol Church founded in 1800, and a house church in the community of Sunam, outside the capital. North Korean President Kim Yong-nam spoke with Rev Kobia about de-nuclearisation of the region and encouraged further visits. The general secretary then attended an international consultation in Hong Kong on peace, reconciliation and reunification of the Korean Peninsula, and shared in a Eucharist celebration jointly presided over by Korean pastor from the South and one from the North.

CALL FOR CHURCHES TO STEP UP ON CLIMATE CHANGE Religious groups, including Christian churches, own roughly 8% of land in the world, much of which is forested, and in the world's financial markets they are the third largest actor through pension funds. This gives them the potential impact to move governments to address climate change and related social injustice, Olav Kjørven from the UN Development Programme Prospects told a November gathering of 80 church leaders at the World Council of Churches Global Advocacy Week. The signs are not hopeful for a binding agreement at the December Copenhagen climate change meetings, so now is the time for religious groups to speak out strongly, he said. Lois M Douway, representative of the United Methodist Church USA said that, "If we in the churches are truly going to make a change in the world. it takes listening to those who suffer and joining with them. We could indeed turn the world upside down in the name of Jesus.

RESPECT RIGHT TO FOOD

A World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in Geneva in early December is seeking new ways of alleviating poverty and generating growth. A group of religious-based organisations and civil society groups under the banner of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance has sent a petition to the WTO Secretary General asking for the world trade regulator to respect the right to food as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In their letter the food campaigning coalition, which includes Christian World Service in New Zealand, stated, "We believe it is important for WTO members to uphold a common vision of the right to food, which allows countries to produce and have access to an adequate supply of food while ensuring a fair income for their food producers.

HIV & AIDS - DESPITE PROGRESS WORRYING GAPS STILL EXIST News of a 17% decline in new infections over the past eight years has been welcomed by Christian leaders in the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance active in the response to HIV & AIDS. Yet there is concern that almost half a million children a year are newly infected through mother to child transmission. Even though we have the knowledge to prevent this, 55% of expectant mothers still do not receive the necessary treatment. An ongoing combined effort from a variety of organizations is needed to raise awareness, share information and provide support for culturally appropriate and evidence based forms of prevention.

Press Release from NCWNZ

ACC guidelines must be postponed – ACC funding rules for survivors of sexual abuse and sexual assault should be postponed until the review is completed. 'Survivors of sexual abuse



The Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa

New Zealand Women's Fellowship

should not have to wait 6 months before they are given access to support and assistance they deserve'

ACC to cut travel for home based carers – To cut travel payments to home based support workers is a step backwards. Home-based support is an essential service for many, and carers should be rewarded not penalised.

ACC discriminate against Maori Women - According to ACC, Maori are more likely to be a client for ACC subsidised counseling. Women over all make up 82% of the claimants; and while it is known that Maori women are heavily represented in this percentage, ACC is currently unable to confirm what the actual ethnicity breakdown is.

Nominations for the Regional Ethics Committees – If you are interested please contact NCWNZ National Office or visit their website: www.ncwnz.org.nz

NCWNZ launches website and public forum to mark White Ribbon Day –

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) will be launching their new website on the 26th of November, 2009 at Parliament.

The launch will be hosted by Hon Pansy Wong, Minister of Women's Affairs, and marks **White Ribbon Day** and the **16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence** with the simultaneous launch of an online discussion forum to support all those speaking out against domestic violence.

Well wishes from the National Executives:

Everywhere we go we see signs of the Christmas season – festive decorations, brightly colored lights, and carols playing loudly at the mall, Christmas specials on television reminding us of the jolly nature of the holiday. Let us not forget in the coming weeks that Jesus is the reason why we celebrate Christmas. Advent reminds us that God often breaks into our lives in unexpected ways and unexpected times. At those times we discover that we must change our ways and realign ourselves with Jesus Christ. Amid all the confusion we need to hear clearly the voice of the Baptist calling out to each one of us: 'Prepare the way of the Lord'.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Suiva'aia Te'o [Liaison link/Chaplain/V.President]



Tributes to our beloved ones who have passed on

We take this time to acknowledge the loss of our beloved ones so close to Christmas when it is a time of festivity and that we remember that they will always be with us always.

To those we have loss over the last year we uplift our prayers to all your families as they learn to rebuild their lives without seeing you but having you embedded in their hearts always, may their memories be comfort to you all.

Acknowledgement of thanks

Chita Milan

Thanking us for our concerns and thoughtfulness especially when receiving our email to be awaiting a possible 3rd typhoon to hit their shores.

Chita just wanted to acknowledge with sisters and friends like us around the world lifting them in prayers, their fears are tempered to calmness to have time to look up to God who is in control of everything.





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Samoa and Tonga

As a NZ Born Samoan on the National Executive I am overwhelmed by the thoughts and prayers given to our people back not only in Samoa but also Tonga, you have not only verbalised your support your actions have also been shown by monetary gifts, donation of clothes, blankets, food and household items need back home your love to our families back home is not forgotten and will remain dear to our hearts always. From T S Salevao

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