

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Oct / Nov / Dec 2011
Issue 4

Greetings Sisters in Christ,

As we draw nearer to the end of 2011, we look back and reflect as we recount our steps through this year. How thankful we are to our Almighty Father for the great things He has done for us all. For all that we have achieved and received in this year, may our Heavenly Father be glorified. It has been a trying year with many obstacles that have been faced by us all. We have been met along the way with sadness, struggles and despair however the very fact that you are reading this is a reminder that in Christ we have the victory! He has remained true to His word and has not forsaken us. And very soon we will celebrate and remember the special day our Saviour was born into this world – the greatest gift of our lives. We are the reason he came to earth so for that let us remember the reason for this season.

Since returning from the World Assembly, it seems the months have flown by so quickly. I wrote to you prior to our departure and now am pleased to report what has happened since then.

There is quite a lot to absorb in this quarterly issue so hope this makes for some good night reading.

WORLD ASSEMBLY

What an experience!!

The 12th World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women assembly (held in Johannesburg, South Africa in August) was attended by over 700 women from around the world. It was a great gathering that was filled with joyful fellowship and included among other things, powerful bible studies, inspirational sermons as well as some intense sessions about the Millennium Development Goals. A WFMUCW action plan has been drafted and will be available soon on the website (www.wfmucw.org) once it has been finalised. I encourage you all to print this out for your fellowships and continue to promote and carry out the WFMUCW goals so that we can work further toward achieving the United Nations 2015 goals. It is our mission to shine Christ's light to the world so I humbly urge you sisters, to continue to make that difference in your community so that hope is restored to those going through major life challenges.



Some of the delegates from New Zealand at the 12th WFMUCW World Assembly in South Africa

At this gathering, the new World Federation Executive and Area executives were appointed. It is with great pleasure that I announce the newly appointed executives for the next quinquennium (2011-2016):

World President:	Anne Conan	South Pacific Area	(Australia)
World Vice Pres:	Regula Stotz	Europe Continental Area	(Switzerland)
World Secretary:	Carla Boyce-Smith	Latin America	(Panama)
World Treasurer:	Leu Pupulu	South Pacific Area	(New Zealand)

The new South Pacific Area Officers are:

Area President:	Lynne Scott	New Zealand
Vice President:	Joy Solomon	Solomon Islands



It was a proud moment for both the South Pacific Area and the NZ Unit to witness the appointments of our New Zealand nominees Leu Pupulu and Lynne Scott. May the Lord equip both Leu and Lynne as they take on their new challenges. They carry on a proud tradition of New Zealand members who have served on previous World/Area Executives such as Vera Dowie, Ruth Le Couteur and Rev Judith Parkes.

I want to thank the members who travelled with me (there were 15 of us altogether). I personally felt one of the highlights was the strong bond that was formed within our travelling unit.

Helen Kim Memorial Scholar – Our Helen Kim Memorial Scholar Lise Malaeimi represented our Unit very well and I praise God for using Lise in this programme to carry out His work. I am sure you will all have an opportunity to hear Lise speak about the Helen Kim Scholarship programme she participated in at the Assembly.



DISTRICT VISITS

Tongan District

It was a real blessing for me to visit the Tongan District during the 23rd - 25th September 2011. I was fortunate that my visit coincided with the Tongan District MWF Choral Festival so I was treated to some beautiful singing from some wonderful Tongan Womens' choirs. There were over one thousand people in attendance! It was a very humbling experience to be gifted some special Tongan cultural gifts such as tapa, necklaces and my very own "taovala." These also doubled as birthday gifts (as my birthday is the 23rd September). Some of the singing during this weekend was absolutely breath-taking. Also in attendance were Leu Pupulu and Naofetalaiga Etimani from the National Executive. Malo 'aupito!



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Wanganui / Manawatu District

Naofetalaiga and I visited the Wanganui/Manawatu district in Wanganui during late November. It was a most enjoyable gathering with some of the members having travelled considerable distance. It was also amazing to see some of the goods including fresh homegrown veges, that were on sale for raising funds for our special project.

Thank you to both these Districts for their warm invitations and their wonderful hospitality.

Dates for upcoming District visits are:

Nelson / Marlborough	February 23 rd	North Canterbury	March 12 th
South Canterbury	March 13 th	Waikato / Thames Valley	April 16 th

NATIONAL COUNCIL 2011

From the 30th September - 2nd October, the biennial NZMWF National Council was held in New Plymouth. The venue for the gathering of NZMWF District leaders and representatives was the Belt Rd Camp site which overlooks the beautiful Taranaki coastline. It was a wonderful weekend of fellowship during which time we were able to discuss important NZMWF business, elect a new NZMWF President elect, enjoy bible studies and devotions together and still find time for a bus tour of some of the new Plymouth's most beautiful sites. Our combined Sunday Service with the combined Taranaki Methodist Parishes (and shared lunch) was a fitting end to the National Council weekend. Congratulations to Marie Smith who is the new NZMWF President Elect. We wish Marie all the best as she puts together her executive committee in preparation for their commissioning at the 2012 NZMWF Convention.



National Council Delegates on the New Plymouth Foreshore

Jackie Ryan of Christian World Services (CWS) was present to receive a cheque for \$7,802.46 that will go towards the 2010/11 Special Project (International Project) – The Redevelopment of Haiti. The component of the 2010/11 Special Project funds (\$18,205.75) raised for the national project - Habitat for Humanity, was sent to Habitat for Humanity.

The 2010-2011 “Stamps & Coupon” and “Medical & Education” funds raised (combined total of **\$4,632.86**) had been donated in June to Trinity Theological College as support towards their 2011 students trip to the Holy Land. We were blessed to have two students, who benefitted from our assistance, attend National Council along with the Trinity College Manager Nicola Grundy, to report back on their Holy Land experience in person.

During the weekend we also had presentations given by Helen Kim Scholar Lise Malaeimi about her South African World Assembly experience and also Esme Cole and Jill Kaiser about Childrens Ministry which is the 2011/12 national Special Project. Council concluded with a combined service with the New Plymouth Methodist Parishes at the Whiteley Centre.

Our NZMWF Convention 2011 will be held in New Plymouth – further details of the venue and dates will be finalised and circulated in our January Bulletin.

METHODIST CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND CONFERENCE 2011

Congratulations again to one of our very own NZMWF members Mrs Olive Tanielu, who was inducted at Conference as the new Vice President of the Methodist Church of New Zealand. We wish both Olive and President John Roberts the very best with their new roles.

Conference 2011 was held at the ASB showgrounds, Epsom in Auckland. It was quite a conference with up to 3000 people attending to celebrate diversity and unity as Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa. The gathering started on Friday 4th November with the Tauwiwi and Te Taha Maori meetings. I was blessed with an opportunity by the Tauwiwi Executive Officer, Rev. Aso Samoa Saleupolu to share about the work of NZMWF at the Tauwiwi meeting. Of course I couldn't turn down such an opportunity so Friday afternoon was dedicated to profiling NZMWF and encouraging parishes to engage further in the work of their local MWF and our national body. It was very encouraging to look around and hear the buzz of conference members at their tables talking about what NZMWF meant to them and ways to encourage women to be part of their local fellowship.

I was also involved in this year's Conference as the chaplain for Vice-President Olive Tanielu which was a real privilege for me. It was an honour to work alongside the newly inducted Presidential team and Rev. Lynne Wall who is chaplain for President John Roberts. Organising the serving of communion for the 3000 people who attended the Sunday morning Ordination Service was a challenge but one that resulted in a special communion that will be a lasting memory for me.

A huge thank you to Rev. Setaita Veikune and all of Vahefonua Tonga which includes the Tongan District Womens Fellowship, who hosted the Conference. They worked tirelessly to ensure that everything ran smoothly. Their hospitality was amazing. I would also like to thank the Mafutaga Tamaitai Sinoti Samoa Ekalesia Metotisi Niu Sila for assisting with morning and afternoon tea also.

PRAYER REQUEST

I would like to respectfully ask that we continue to uphold our members in prayer, especially those who are unwell such as Rev. Judith Parkes and Margaret Gordon who continue to receive care.

I pray you have a wonderful festive season. We look forward to what 2012 brings. May the grace and love of our Heavenly Creator be with us all.

With love and prayers,
Mataiva Robertson