

BushFire

Presbyterian Women
Aotearoa NZ
October 2020



Kia ora! Greetings

In spring and summer times; “*He has made everything beautiful in His time*” (Ecc 3:11). We’ve endured layers of lockdowns and knitted us together through thread of prayers for one another. Thank you for your continuous prayers, support and patience. The executive have met occasionally via zooming, in resolving a date for AGM. As a result, I wish to officially announce that our **Zooming AGM**, is being scheduled for **Saturday 5th December** from 9.30am to 10.30 am.

More information in this Panui and/or contact Ruth Stevens.

Blessings!

Faaolataga-Ola Leasi



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Thought for 2020: Be Kind

AGM

The Annual General Meeting of Presbyterian Women Aotearoa NZ is being held by zoom at 9:30 am to 10:30 am on Saturday, 5 December 2020.

We are having a zoom meeting as planning too much as the possibilities of partial lockdowns are still with us. This year the AGM will focus on the business which needs to be done, accepting and approving the performance report and electing the next executive and anything else which is required. The Methodist Women held a zoom AGM and it worked well so we can do it.

An email will be sent inviting everyone to attend and a zoom link will be provided. Now is the time to start planning to include those who don't have their own device to zoom on. If you haven't done this before it is easy.

Special Project

Our current joint project with Methodist Women continues for the following year as groups couldn't meet and plan for the early part of the year when all the activity happens.

UN Women

While our travel restrictions are so limited and the USA still in the height of infection we will not be sending a delegation to any UN Women event in March 2021.

Suffrage Day – Women in Parliament Jenny Saywood

PWANZ is a member of the National Council of women and this is from the latest newsletter **The Circular #637 October 2020**

Women's exclusion from Parliament dates from the NZ Constitution Act 1852 passed by the British Parliament. It barred women from Parliament as voters and as elected representatives. It was also restricted to males aged 21 and over who owned property and who were registered to vote.

When the Electoral Act 1893 was passed on the 19th of September 1893, New Zealand became the first self-governing country in the world in which all women had the right to vote in parliamentary elections.

The women who took part in the winning of the franchise not only wanted to raise the profile of women, they wanted the vote so that they could use it for the benefit of the whole community. Many of the women involved belonged to the Women's Christian Temperance Union and had been raising funds to provide the homeless with a night shelter, ran soup kitchens, organised the first kindergartens and aided women to form trade unions. Kate Sheppard who was leading the Suffrage movement was also the vice-president of the Canterbury Women's Institute.

After the general election in November 1893, Kate Sheppard resigned her presidency of the Christchurch Women's Christian Temperance Union and went to England. On her return in 1894, she resumed her endeavour and in 1896 established the National Council

of Women New Zealand. She had been influenced by meeting suffrage groups and members of the International Council of Women whilst in England. Whanganui women Mrs Jessie Williamson, Mrs Margaret Bullock and Mrs Ellen Balance were members of the very first meeting of NCW in Christchurch.

However, having achieved the franchise, many women felt they had achieved their aim and given travelling to national meetings could take two weeks away from home, enthusiasm dwindled and NCW went into recess in 1905. Interest in reconvening began in 1917 as a result of the 1914-18 War. Kate Sheppard resigned soon after, but not before she provided a list of matters which still needed support including overcrowded schools, unfair treatment of women teachers, an increase in the government grant for education. NCW was formed with the belief that if women worked together, they could come up with new and better ways of organising and improving the lives of men, women and children.

The next fight for women was to be able to be elected to Parliament. In 1919 the Women's Parliamentary Rights Act was passed but it took 14 more years of battling against prejudices and the influence of powerful men to finally succeed in having women in Parliament. One of the reasons for the non-promotion of women was that it was thought they would not have the physical stamina to cope with the demanding hours. Several women put their names forward for each of the next five elections and some of the 21 bi-elections, but it was not until 1933 that Elizabeth McCoombs won the Lyttleton by-election after her husband, who had held the seat, died.

In 1969, 50 years on, there had been only 11 women elected - one of these was the first Maori woman, Iriaka Ratana. The low percentage of women in Parliament did not change until the 1980s. From the 1990s, women have made up about 30% of the members. This grew to 38% in 2017 when 46 women were elected, the highest number ever. Currently the Green Party has the highest percentage of women and the Labour Party has the highest number of woman members. We have had three women Prime Ministers, two of these as a result of a general election and in 2020 both major parties have women as their leaders. You could argue that we are making progress but that progress can only be described as painfully slow.

Trading stereotypes for a job well done

A directory of women and gender diverse people working in the trades in Aotearoa New Zealand. [Tradespeople](#) is a directory of women and gender diverse people working in the trades in Aotearoa New Zealand, who are available to help you with repairs, maintenance, or those projects you want done.

Founded by Emma Kaniuk, Tradespeople started as a response to a challenge my friends and I had: we'd love to support local women and gender diverse people when we wanted to sort something around home or work, but struggled to find them. Only a small percentage of tradespeople in Aotearoa New Zealand are women: around 10%, with only 3–4% on the tools. They're talented, they're masters of their craft, and they are forging trails so that others can see that a career in trades is both possible and rewarding.