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# Bush Fire

Presbyterian Women Aotearoa NZ

**March 2019**

## **PWANZ Special Collection 10 March 2019**

The Executive team of PWANZ promote the activities of Presbyterian women, and focus on building capacity for women and girls in the Church. Particular emphasis is placed upon the roles of women to promote their voice and leadership within the Church and the wider community.

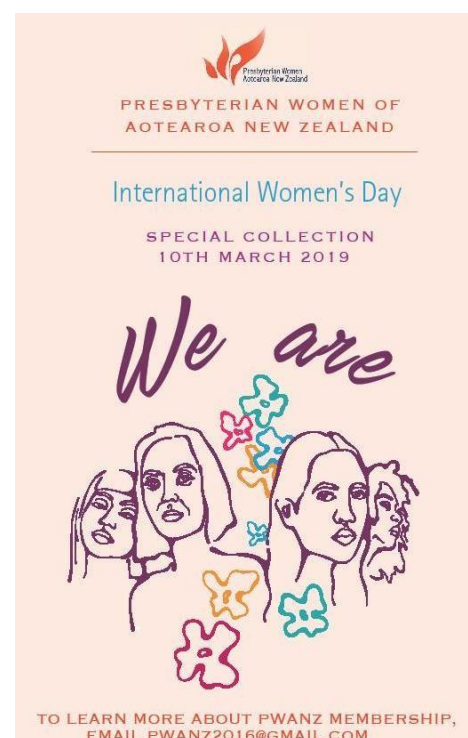
PWANZ need your support, and ask that a retiring collection be taken on Sunday 10 March 2019 as contributions will enable our administration and activities to continue over the next twelve months.

We need funds to expand the work we do – we send delegations to the UN, we held inspiring gatherings around the country with more events planned this year – we all have lots of ideas and even though we are frugal it all costs. We get no funds from PCANZ and we are asking parishes to support us.

Please help – talk to your Minister, Session Clerk and Church Council and ask them for a direct donation. Talk to your congregation and ask them to support the special collection. Be enthusiastic.

## **Presbyterian Women delegation to 63<sup>rd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63) 11 to 22 March 2019**

Our delegation of 10 will be leaving next week for New York. We wish them well and look forward to their stories when they get back. They will be sending us some photos and comments during their time there so watch our facebook page.

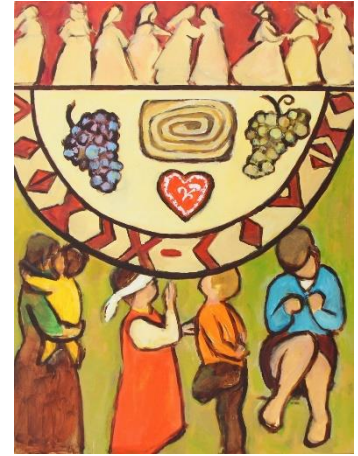


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# World Day of Prayer 2019

## What makes World Day of Prayer (WDP) special?

- We are women calling out to God for people in need throughout the world.
- World Day of Prayer is the only place that women's voices are heard in some countries.
- We are linked in strong international relationships of mutual sister resourcing.
- We use ecumenical, lay leadership by women, so this helps us in growing understanding of other cultures and denominations.
- We aim to help the world, one powerful prayer at a time.



## “Come - Everything is Ready” Written by the Slovenia WDP Committee

### Bible Study Luke 14:15-24

Warmest greetings from the women of Slovenia, one of the smallest and youngest countries in Europe. God in his goodness endowed us with natural beauty, from the Pannonian Plains to hills, to green forests, and high mountains, from the mysterious Karst underworld to the coast of the Adriatic Sea.

### WOMEN'S VOICES

**Leader:** Let us listen to the experiences of some Slovenian women. With them, let us reflect and pray. First listen to Marjeta who was born at the end of the Second World War when her country was a part of Yugoslavia, a Marxist socialist republic.

**Marjeta:** My name is Marjeta (*Mar-yeta*). My mother, who had just been widowed, and my grandmother both taught me how to pray as they shared their faith with me. At that time, our country was a socialist-communist state, religious people were considered second-class citizens and when I finished secondary school, I could not get a student grant and had no other sources of funding to allow me to study. I went abroad, as did many other workers from the former Yugoslavia. In Switzerland I found a job, but I certainly felt strongly how foreign workers were looked upon. After retiring, my husband and I returned home. I am very happy that we were accepted in the community of my native parish and I try to share my happiness by volunteering in the parish, and also by participating in the World Day of Prayer.

**Reader:** We Slovenes have experienced what it means to be a refugee and a migrant worker. At the end of the Second World War, many had to leave their country, either because of their opposition to Communism or to find work abroad, so that their families could survive. We have to confess that now we tend to forget this experience when it comes to our attitudes towards people who have had to leave their own ruined homes in search of peace and a better life.

**Leader:** Let us listen to Mojca, a young woman, who grew up in the newly established state of Slovenia after independence in 1991.

**Mojca:** My name is Mojca (*Moy-tsa*). I am thirty-four years old. I was able to study, since in Slovenia third level education is free of charge. When I was twenty-one years old, I fell in love and got pregnant, but my boyfriend left me. It was very difficult to continue the studies, but I received support from my family. I was among the best students in my class. I raised my child, and had a second one with my husband, who accepted my first son as his own. I am a researcher in a scientific institute. I wish, however, that the balance between family care and work would be more favourable to families and less restrictive to women in their working place. In spite of the full legal equality, women still have to bear a double burden.

**Reader:** We give thanks for all those women who overcame the barriers to raise their children in the midst of adversity. We thank you, God, for the communities that surround women and children with love.

**Leader:** Let us listen to Marija, an eighty-year-old lady, living in the countryside.

**Marija:** My name is Marija (*Maria*). I'm already over eighty years old and I live with my son's family. My son and my daughter-in-law are unemployed. My modest pension from my work in a factory is what sustains my family. We produce the food for our consumption on our small farm. On the other hand, my neighbour lives alone in a big house, with a farm which she can no longer maintain and work. Her children moved to the city to find jobs.

**Reader:** We recognise that in many places aging parents and the elderly people are not receiving the care and attention they deserve. They feel isolated and in need of mutual encouragement and togetherness. We should develop initiatives for intergenerational cooperation. We are grateful for our grandmothers and grandfathers who have helped us to keep our Christian faith alive.

May all hear and joyfully accept the invitation to your banquet.

The website has a bible, study, worship service, music and children's activities. Go to:

<http://www.worlddayofprayer.co.nz/resources>

## **2019 Executive News**

### **Being in the Story**

#### **Presbyterian Women in Ministry Retreat 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019 in Wellington**

There is a strong appetite to do something about gender inequality in our church.

**Date and Time:** Wednesday 22 May 1pm – Thursday 23 May 2pm

**Venue:** Our Lady's Home of Compassion, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay Wellington

**Cost:** \$150 if you want to stay in (there are 25 rooms available at \$70 and 1 at \$110 - among the 25 rooms there are 6 twin rooms which could be shared at \$50 per person). Includes breakfast \$70 if you stay elsewhere

Please register your expression of interest to [jill@standrewshastings.org.nz](mailto:jill@standrewshastings.org.nz) indicating whether you seek accommodation or not. You will be notified of payment arrangements and programme once this is finally confirmed.

## **Central News**

A Women's Gathering at Christ the King, Porirua will be held on Saturday, August 17 from 10am to 4pm. Dr Deborah Bower will be a key note presenter along with a programme of workshops, and opportunity for fellowship.

## **Presbyterian Women – Membership**

Join Presbyterian Women for just \$10 per year? Join now at this reduced rate till 30 June 2019. NB: Following the recommendation at the AGM 2018, individual membership will increase to \$20 per annum from 1 July 2019. Membership includes:

- BushFire newsletter;
- a vote at the Annual General Meeting;
- participation in PWANZ's submissions to Parliamentary Select Committees;
- a voice advocating for women and women's rights in the wider church;
- joining an organisation with Special Consultative Status at the United Nations and sends an annual delegation to the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW);

## **Annual General Meeting 2019**

Whakatu in Songer Street Stoke, Nelson will host the AGM of PWANZ over the weekend of 13 and 14 September 2019. The programme, and meeting papers will be available closer to the time, but this is early notice to put the date in your diary, book travel and organise accommodation.

## **National Council of Women of New Zealand Te Kaunihera Wahine o Aotearoa**

Nationally PWANZ is a member of the National Council of Women and around the country many of our members are too.



Vanisa Dhuru, National President writes in the March newsletter The Circular

2019 has begun with a busy period. While our country gets back to discussing and debating the issues of the day, NCWNZ steps forward to continue to battle the causes.

This month marks International Women's Day. The theme for International Women's Day 2019 is 'balance for better' – and this means we need a better gender balance in income equality, in leadership, in safety and health, in education and all areas of life. This would look like a gender-balanced boardroom, a gender-balanced government, gender-balanced media coverage, a gender-balance of employees, more gender-balance in wealth and gender-balanced sports coverage."

We don't currently have gender balance. For example, our new Gender Dashboard shows that women and men work the same number of hours each day – but women only get paid for 35% of their work, while men get paid for 63% of theirs. Pacifica women earn just 72 cents for every dollar that Pākehā men earn.

The World Economic Forum's 2018 Global Gender Gap Report shows that true gender equality could be over 170 years away. This is absolutely unacceptable.

## **Mission News**

### **Let the Children Live: People-centred Development in Fiji**

CWS prepare great resources to for on our projects, including a power point presentation and notes to accompany it. Email [pwanz2016@gmail.com](mailto:pwanz2016@gmail.com) for your group's copy.

Special Project Talk 2018 – 2019 Slide One

Thank you for working so hard to support the Special Project and remembering Christian World Service in your prayers. We value our special relationship with you.

Your fundraising efforts are giving hope to people in Nicaragua and Uganda. Last year you raised \$29,988 for Nicaragua where CEPAD trains and supervises 120 young people in community based psycho-social care. Your efforts will secure funding for their young people's programme for a number of years. They also speak in schools and churches, emphasising violence prevention. 2018 has been a tough year for the country. In April conflict broke out after protests over the social security system. More than 300 people have been killed and the underlying causes have not been resolved. Now farmers in one region have lost their crops in major flooding. Please keep CEPAD and the people of Nicaragua in your prayers.

From the Centre for Community Solidarity in south Uganda: "The caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children wish to extend their heartfelt gratitude to Methodist and Presbyterian women who have generous and compassionate hearts like that of Christ. The work of loving our children is one that lasts a lifetime. It was the case 10 years ago when we started, and it continues today as we help caregivers construct rainwater tanks. We remain, incredibly grateful to CWS and their supporters in New Zealand more especially Methodist and Presbyterian women for their love, kindness, compassion, generous and invaluable contribution. May God bless you all, Best Regards, Charles Rwabambari





## Slide Two

This year the Special Project is raising funds for the Go Organic! Grow Organic! Project of Christian World Service partner, Social Empowerment Education Programme (SEEP) in Fiji.

Now SEEP is taking a big step forward. The Special Project will help fund this work in villages where it works and in new villages specifically targeting i-Taukei (indigenous Fijians) landowning units where major developments like mining are planned or underway.

The programme will:

- Help these communities to prepare in case of disaster
- Improve agricultural livelihoods using organic and 'slow food' methods
- Strengthen local participation especially for women and young people, growing 'organic' democracy from the grassroots up



One way SEEP teaches people to value traditional foods and eat a balanced diet is through food stalls. Here women tell other women to "Roast in Bamboo".

SEEP encourages communities to protect their land and ocean from harm. They run educational programmes on issues of concern and join campaigns to protect Fiji's future from deep sea mining for example.

## ***Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC***

**Excerpts from: Presentation at Pacific Women's Watch (NZ) Conference, 3 November 2018  
by Jane Prichard QSO**

UN ECOSOC is the United Nations Economic and Social Council

See: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/about/>

### Types of Status

1. General consultative status as an international body with a least one member in each of the regions designated by the United Nations.
2. Special consultative status as a national body for organisations with substantial membership, active in one country.
3. Roster for organisations not large enough to be granted full status but who may have special expertise in an issue or issues related to the United Nation's work and who may be called upon from time to time to provide information and data on a specific issue related to ECOSOC work. Such organisations may apply for Rostered status or be invited onto the Roster by ECOSOC.

### What benefits does the status bestow?

1. General consultative status – representatives can attend all meetings of ECOSOC, submit a statement or make an oral statement and appoint on an annual basis a Permanent Representative.
2. Special consultative status – representatives enjoy the same benefits except that they are not eligible to make an oral statement. If however the matter they wish to address is of great importance and very relevant to ECOSOC work they may be permitted to speak.
3. Rostered status - benefits are only enjoyed if the organisation on the Roster is invited by ECOSOC to bring a statement.

### Obligations under the status are: -

1. Support of ECOSOC programmes
2. Encouragement of other organisations to apply for consultative status

#### When did the various types of status originate?

1. The first granting of status was in 1946 when ECOSOC was established
2. Rostered status also began in 1946
3. Special consultative status as a national body was established by ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31.

Following the important impact by NGOs at both UNCAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, established in 1964) and the UN 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women and NGO Forum in Beijing, 1995, ECOSOC was keen to include more NGOs (non-government organisations) within its status framework so the new category for special consultative status as a national body was established in 1996. Status within this new category was first granted in 1997.

#### **1998, Special Consultative Status gained for Association of Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa New Zealand.**

The organisation had the prerequisites for applying because it had been granted 'Observer status' at the UN 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women, Beijing. The application was made in the second year after the new category had been established. Presbyterian Women had over a hundred years of family and community projects behind it. The organisation had considerable resources and was an autonomous body outside the structure of the church. Presbyterian Women made its own decisions and was well known for its projects in underdeveloped countries.

We had a considerable advantage as the organisation's name had the first letter 'A' and applications were being dealt with in alphabetical order. Starting with 'A' to 'F' gave the advantage that in the one session an application can be heard the first time and then be passed at the second hearing. As the session opened many applications were declined for a variety of reasons. It very soon became obvious that church related organisations were not acceptable.

By the time the application was submitted, the national executive of Presbyterian Women had moved to another part of New Zealand and the new Board of Officers needed to own the application. They then wrote up their application with my guidance and help. The new Board then asked me to represent them in New York when the application was considered in May 1998.

In the evening of the first day I checked very carefully if there was anything in our application that showed any relationship with the church. On the second day our application came up for consideration and the New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations sent a Secretary to the session who greeted every member of the voting committee to see whether they supported us. When it came to the vote there was a unanimous vote for us to be granted the status and several country representatives who had tended to vote against many other applicants shook my hand and congratulated me on our many community projects that they had enjoyed in their own or neighbouring countries. We were unaware of our own impact. The NGO Committee chairperson banged his gavel and announced 'Status granted'. Everyone present was jubilant because at last an organisation had been granted ECOSOC status. The atmosphere became much more positive. We had been completely unaware of the very productive results of our family-oriented projects over many years.

It is interesting to recall that the session in May 1998 opened with a celebration and recognition of the first five women's organisations to be granted ECOSOC status at the outset in 1948. A representative from each of these five organisations was present for this 50 year commemoration. The five organisations were the International Council of Women, International Federation of University Women, ZONTA International, Business and Professional Women International and Soroptimists International – known as Five O. Presbyterian women had received much encouragement from Methodist women who had urged us to apply for the ECOSOC status. Methodist Women had 'General Status' (International) and Vera Dowie, a local Auckland Methodist woman, had been in New York to take their application many years earlier and had urged me to make an application for Presbyterian Women under the new category of special consultative status

Jane also guided Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) application in May 2009.