

This Issue

- Annual General Meeting 2019 in Nelson "Reconnect & Build Capacity"
- "The Woman at the Well; its final destination" at Porirua PIPC;
- WHITE CAMELLIA AWARDS
- Nominations for the 2020 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year
- Presbyterian Women – Membership
- The Effect of Modern "Development" Trends on the Pacific
- Gender pay equity
- Pacific Islander's Presbyterian Church (PIPC) NEWTOWN Tuiga Project 2019

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BushFire

Presbyterian Women
Aotearoa NZ

September 2019



PWANZ Annual General Meeting "Reconnect & Build Capacity"

Te Kotahitanga a Hinengaro a tinana a Wairua

Where: Whakatu Presbyterian Church, 271 Songer Street Stoke Nelson

When: Friday 13 September from 4pm Meet & Greet, to Saturday 14 September 9am Annual General Meeting, followed by Lunch and Workshops. Dinner at 6pm on Saturday, at Stoke Methodist Church Hall

A weekend to share workshops, discussions, and meet with the PWANZ Executive. Vote at the AGM on the Terms of Reference update, name of the Presbyterian Women newsletter. Register by emailing pwanz2016@gmail.com for only \$20 for all meals and activities (supported by CWM funding). The programme includes presentations by our PWANZ UN Convenors, a perspective on the consequences of Climate Change on Tuvalu from our Human Rights Convenor, and update on Mission. Meeting papers are available upon request now, put the date in your diary, book your travel and organise your accommodation.

Do you have names for the Remembrance Candle, apologies for the AGM?

Email: pwanz2016@gmail.com

Executive Portfolios - call for applicants to the election of Administrator / Mission Convenor / Communications Convenor. Descriptions for these positions are available on request to pwanz2016@gmail.com

Sally Russell has expressed an interest in staying on the Executive as Mission Convenor.



President Faaolataga (Ola) Leasi Porirua 021 083 70303 perfaaleasi@gmail.com	Administrator Sandra Waldrom PO Box 17427, Karori Wellington 6147 027 702 9386 pwanz2016@gmail.com	Human Rights Convenor Tausala Iosefa Palmerston North 021 2080 857 tausala.iosefa@gmail.com	Missions Convenor Sally Russell Havelock North 021 129 9608 sallyrussell@xtra.co.nz	United Nations Convenors AnneMarie Tangney 021 069 6953 am.tangney@gmail.com Mavis Duncanson 022 028 7005 mavisj.duncanson@gmail.com Both Dunedin
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“The Woman at the Well; its final destination” at Porirua PIPC; August 2019

What a lovely warm Spring season with many sunny days and some of us already packed to travel to Nelson. Regardless of the rainy/windy Saturday morning (17th Aug) about 100 delegates cheerfully gathered at Porirua PIPC, waiting for the Woman at the Well. Rev Linda Hope set the scene with an inspirational devotion, accompanying with the 4 languages hymn (we first) sang at Ohope Marae.

The day was filled with joyful spirit and colorful Pasifika decorations. Delegates among Wellington Presbyterian from Otaki, Waikanae, Palmerston North, Hutt city, Johnsonville, Newtown, Petone, NZMWF sisters from Auckland and from Queenstown, Dr Deborah Bower. It was a day of reconnecting and meeting one another since years ago.

It was like ‘watching a live stage production’ as Deb moved from one spot to another, echoing the sensational conversation of the Samaritan woman and Jesus. As silence broke in, the gulls (nesting on rooftop) responded with high volume of chirping, as if they knew what was going on. *“I see you! I know you!”* Jesus said; brought tears to many of us, even more when Deborah stood up, for her final remarks; God has touched her on the cheeks. At last the young women were invited to share their stories and testimonies on their experiences as bystanders whilst their mothers/grandmothers grouped to their usual women’s activities back in the days. *Nowadays they’re joining us.*

Followed by a packed church service still at “Christ the King” (PIC Porirua) on Sunday led by Deborah, with the Women’s Fellowship Groups of the 3 PIC parishes (Petone & Newtown) and Sandra Waldrom and husband David Ensor. I admired the way children responded to the *story telling approach* of Deb, drawing in their attention to what Jesus did really meant when he conversed with the Samaritan woman. PIC parishioners were in awe of a remarkable sermon of lifetime, for the first time ever, a Theologian who is a woman, preached to a Pasifika congregation. The day ended with a Pasifika cuisine lunch then we farewell the delegates of the woman at the well. Thanked you Lord!



Images by F Leasi

EVENTS organised by the UN Women's Empowerment (WEPs) committee for New Zealand

WHITE CAMELLIA AWARDS

September 17th 2019

At the Grand Hall, Parliament Buildings, Wellington hosted by The Honourable Julie Anne Genter, Minister for Women. Registration is required by September 10th. Spaces are limited. RSVP to admin@weps.org.nz Payment (\$55.00 including GST) is to be deposited directly into the UN Women Aotearoa NZ account 03 0518 0161116 001. Please ensure that you use your name as reference.

Nominations for the 2020 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Awards are open.

The New Zealander of the Year Awards are looking forward to receiving nominations for those who deserve acknowledgement for what they do for their communities and for New Zealand.

Nominations will remain open until midnight 15 September 2019. Visit their website or email:

office@nzawards.org.nz

Presbyterian Women – Membership

PWANZ needs your support and contributions to enable our administration and activities to continue over the next twelve months. These funds expand the work we do – we send delegations to the UN. We are frugal, however it all costs. We get no funds from PCANZ and ask you to support us. Join Presbyterian Women: 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;

Direct Credit: ASB 12 3011 0117101 00

Name of Account: PWANZ

Reference: Your Name

Code: Subs2019

Mission Update

Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC)

The Effect of Modern “Development” Trends on the Pacific

By Rev. James Bhagwan General Secretary, PCC

Presented at Reweaving the PNG Household – Towards a PNG Ecological Framework for Development held in Alotau, PNG August 19th – 23rd, 2019

For the full article go to: <https://pacificconferenceofchurches.org/f/climate-initiatives-must-change>

At the opening of the Pacific Forum leaders meeting Rev. Kalahati Kilei, President of the Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu, spoke on the final parable of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, from Matthew 7: 24 -27 – the Wise and the Foolish Builder and reflected on the household, saying that, “*in our Pacific culture, ‘house/home – fale’ is an integral part of our culture as it builds the very foundation, security and resilience for our children, our families and island communities. House is not simply a dwelling place or a shelter, it goes well beyond such perception. A house is where relationships are created based on love and justice, where wisdom from the house flows. This is the particular aspect of our Pacific life that cannot be found elsewhere – only in what we call “HOME.”*



To build a house on the rock, he said, was a call “to build a strong spiritual foundation that is based on love and justice.” Referring to the wind and the rain and the waves in the parable as, “cyclones and rains’ that not only tear down our communal way of living and force us to accept the logics offered by neo-capitalism that relationship is only possible in the market space.” Rev. Kelei, observed that these were “the new rains and cyclones that deteriorate and shook the very foundation of our faith in God – these rains and cyclones draws boundaries with our neighbours.

He challenged leaders that the future of the Pacific, “must not be measured by commercial terms – but rather determined by the smile and the happiness of our children. Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith was convicted, killed because of the economic and political ideologies of the time – hence, he took that cross, pain and agony into his own hands because of his love and compassion for the whole world.”

Rev. James Bhagwan General Secretary, Pacific Conference of Churches goes on to say:

The Western model of development, based on an ideology of domination has severed the sacred thread that connected economics, ecology, and morality with devastating consequences. We have forgotten that an eco-system is a system whose elements interact with their surroundings, the ecological, social, intellectual, and spiritual context as a unit - the whole household.

While the roots of our Pacific indigenous science and technology, philosophy and wisdom go back many millennia, the story of the severing of the sacred connection between economy, ecology and the sacredness of the household of this planet, is only a few hundred years old. For while there have been structures of dominance, structural legitimization of oppression and economic imperialism for more millennia, the present model of development and the widespread exploitation and destruction of the environment is very much a result of the modern age.

The Pacific has an opportunity to establish an economic ecological framework that is meaningful to the region, and indeed the world. A framework in that envisions what an economy might look like if it were to be based on the value of leaving our ecological value intact rather than extracting it.” This narrative of development requires the changing of the story and reweaving if we are not only to survive the climate crisis, the social and economic crises in our region- but are to flourish.

One attempt to change the story at the turn of this century was the World Council of Churches project called the Island of Hope. The Island of Hope recognised that while Western economics revolve around profit and economic growth, the traditional economies of the Pacific are concerned with people and the total quality of their lives; caring and concern for others within the extended families and compassion for all people, especially for the sick and elderly are values of the communities; respect, hospitality, generosity, and forgiveness are other marks of the traditional communities. Nobody is excluded. The land, the sea and people are integral parts of one entity. Subsistence farming, a sustainable agriculture and the sensitivity of the sacredness of the trees and the sea are part of their identity. While

traditionally these values operated mainly within the context of the wider family or clan, Jesus challenges us to extend them to all, because we are all members of the family of God

The Island of Hope is in tune with nature and by sharing and caring, to which people want to journey in order to celebrate life in all its fullness (Isa. 25:6). The Island of Hope has the "mana" (power) to draw human beings together.”

The Island of Hope is sustainable, wholesome, peaceful and all-embracing. The concept of the Island of Hope is not merely a dream. It is founded in reality and has been our normal life in our islands.

This concept of the Island of Hope resonates very strongly with the PNG Household framework.

A key task that has been identified is agreeing to define the aggregated data on our shared ecological biodiversity as a regional good. Combining modern technology with traditional knowledge and practices, people living on remote islands can become data collectors and auditors for the ecological value of our ocean continent. Armed with such data we can account for it as regional equity, use it for risk informed decision making in the face of environmental uncertainty and, indeed, define the very substance of our ocean continent.



Coastal erosion children at the village of Narikoso, Fiji, where the ocean has forced the village to relocate

Presbyterian Women Aotearoa Nz is a member of the national Council of Women and around the country many of our members are actively involved with local branches. In 2019 one of their focuses is on gender pay equity and this is from their September newsletter

Women share 'heart-breaking' stories of pay discrimination

Media release by the Human Rights Commission, 27 Aug 2019

Several women have come forward about their appalling experiences of discrimination over pay and progression opportunities in workplaces across the country.

These women who are part of the Human Rights Commission's [Pay Transparency Campaign](#) want information on pay scales and career progression made readily available by employers.

"As a Pacific woman of colour, there is extra effort and hoops that I need to jump through. There is a group of people in society that miss out because of what they look or sound like and that is so wrong. Pay Transparency will correct this wrong," says Nia Bartley from Wellington.

Pay transparency is knowing whether you are being paid fairly compared with people in the same or comparable roles. A transparent mechanism is an essential component of pay equity that will provide employees with pay information to make a pay equity claim against employers.

"Without pay transparency, it is sort of like fighting fog. You are trying to validate to yourself and others that this problem exists. If we have pay transparency in place, then it's a much easier process. We need to work a lot harder on creating a fair and equitable society," adds Nancy McShane from Christchurch.

Equal Employment Opportunities Commissioner Saunoamaali'i Karanina Sumeo says New Zealand needs pay transparency because workers, especially Māori, Pacific and Asian women are being paid far less than men in the same or similar roles.

"So many brave women are now sharing their heart-breaking stories of how they continue to be undervalued and underpaid in the workplace. Many are parents, carers or the main income earners for their households. We need to stop talking about fairness and dignity and just get on with it!" says Saunoamaali'i.



Demand Pay Transparency

The Commission has also formed a coalition of 10 partners who are also calling on the Government to urgently introduce pay transparency in the workplace to close the gender pay gap.

Partners include the Public Service Association, Council of Trade Unions, National Council of Women, YWCA, PASIFIKA, Diversity Works, Rural Women, Women in Urbanism, Coalition for Equal Value Equal Pay and the Women Empowerment Principles Committee.

"Pay which is a fundamental part of an employment agreement isn't as transparent as it should be. You have to wonder why and who does it serve? It definitely doesn't serve the people who are being paid," says Kerry Davis of the Public Service Association.

"How can employers be fair and good leaders in the public and private sectors if they are knowingly paying some of their staff less compared to others for doing the same job?" asks Vanisa Dhiru of the National Council of Women.

"Collective Employment agreements can provide excellent pay transparency. All working people need transparent systems of salary setting and clarity on how to progress. This ensures the removal of decisions made at the discretion of the employer," adds Richard Wagstaff of the Council of Trade Unions.

The EEO Commissioner says making pay visible will identify unconscious bias and deep discrimination within the workplace and help New Zealand close the gender and ethnic pay gaps.

"The Government and employers urgently need to act. Pay transparency is essential to ensure our workforce, especially women are professionally respected and receive equal pay for equal value of work. This would be a significant step towards eliminating discrimination," says Saunoamaali'i.



Faaolataga Leasi and Sandra Waldrom attended the NZ NCW Conference 31 August 2019

Pacific Islander's Presbyterian Church (PIPC) NEWTOWN
Combined Women's Fellowship
Tuiga Project 2019



Belford Family. Mrs Alisa Belford (left) Tuiga Maker. Briana Belford (centre) granddaughter and Tuiga wearer of 'Penina o le Vasaloloa.'

A Tuiga is a ceremonial headdress from Samoa. In the past, the Tuiga was only worn by the Manaia and Taupou (son and daughter) of the High Chief. The original Tuiga was assembled in 4-5 layers and made up of natural materials sourced from the depths of the Pacific Ocean and forests. It also included a layer of natural hair. Today the Tuiga is worn not only by the Manaia or Taupou of a village or clan; but a person selected by leaders of a family or organisation to represent them in a significant occasion or ceremony.

The Combined Women's Fellowship were introduced to the Tuiga Project by Taeaomanino Trust. It was brought to us with the kaupapa to share the significance and beauty of the Tuiga through conversations with each other, our daughters, sisters, girl cousins, aunties and grandmothers; followed by the making of contemporary Tuiga. We started the project by inviting the Rev. Prof. Dr Uili Feleterika Nokise to share his cultural knowledge of the Tuiga; who shed light on the spiritual and life-giving aspect of the Tuiga.

The Tuiga Project has allowed rich conversations not only amongst women and girls but with the whole aiga. Conversations flowed about genealogy, history, heritage, our Pacific homelands, the impact of colonisation and Christianity, natural and artificial materials, our environment, our culture, cross-cultures, spirituality, relationships, pacific women's handcrafts and more. It has invigorated family connections and has been a special highlight not only to the Combined Women's Fellowship but to our Ekalesia, family, friends and community who attended the presentation of the handcrafted Tuiga, made by our women and worn by our daughters, granddaughters, nieces and sisters at the Tuiga Tausala held on Saturday 10 August. It was a blessed day and a beautiful gathering witnessed by many to honour God for the richness of culture and family.

Written by Peseta Pele Tui
Chairperson, PIPC Newtown Combined Women's Fellowship