

Bush Fire

Presbyterian Women Aotearoa NZ

April 2019

To the families of the terrorist victims and communities from PWANZ members, we are overwhelmed with sorrow to hear and witness the sudden loss of your loved ones.

Like the book of Ecclesiastes 9:12 states...

“For no-one can anticipate the time of disaster. Like fish taken in a cruel net, and like birds caught in a snare, so mortals are snared at a time of calamity, when it suddenly falls upon them”

Therefore, we light the candles each day and pray each moment for God’s healing on your grief and sorrow, as we all mourn your loss. Kia kaha! We love you all!

Faaolataga-Ola Leasi

President PWANZ



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Kia ora! Warm greetings to you all

March is so full on with blessings, festivities, warm seasons, celebrations, let alone the overwhelming sense of sadness for the loss of loved ones, we acknowledged that. Indeed, March has blessed us with love, faith, prayer and the heart-giving offering and collections of the parishes of PCANZ. Thank you so much indeed.

Kia ora, Faafetai tele, Meitaki ma'ata, Vinaka vakalevu, Malo 'aupito, Mahalo, Fakafetai lahi lele! May the Lord richly bless you all.

International Women's Day - On the 8th March Judith Dunlop from United Church in Johnsonville and I celebrated with breakfast at Parliament hosted by the UN Women Aotearoa NZ committee and the Zonta club of Mana. The Prime Minister, the Honourable Jacinda Ardern was the guest speaker [see report below under Central News].

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade - NGO meeting on 'Partnering with NGOs for impact'. The new approach in collaboration with the government is to support localisation, enhancing development that focuses on NGO capacity. Priorities for aid in the Pacific are on climate change, economic resilience and inclusiveness.

SheEO at Government House in February accompanied by Sandra Waldrom. The Gathering was opened by the Governor-General Dame Patsy Reddy, followed by the Region Lead Dame Theresa Getting and a presentation from Rebecca Stewart of Pomegranate Kitchens check out <https://pomegranate.org.nz/> for the good news on this venture by refugee women in New Zealand.

The Moderator of General Assembly, Rev. Fakaofu Kaio visited our combined Pasifika parishes in the Wellington regions; on Sunday 17th March; hosted by Christ the King; PIPC Porirua. His message on embracing relationship with God and sense of calling for young Pasifika youths to take the Training and be a warrior of God.

Congratulations and welcome back to Dr Mavis Duncanson and your team of delegates who attended the CSW63 in New York. Looking forward to your sharing and reports.

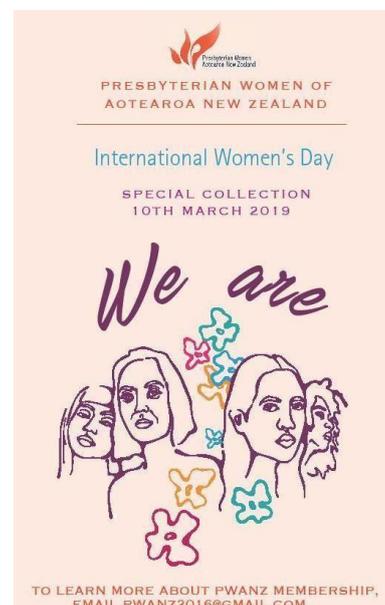
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PWANZ Special Collection 2019

The Executive team of PWANZ would like to thank those parishes and individuals who supported this year's annual Special Collection in March. Nearly \$3,000 has been received to date from twenty-three parishes.

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 hold gatherings around the country with more events planned this year – even though we are frugal it all costs. We get no funds from PCANZ and ask parishes to support us.

If your parish has yet to forward their PWANZ Special Collection - Direct Credit: ASB 12 3011 0117101 00
Name of Account: PWANZ
Reference: Church / Parish Name
Code: IWD2019



Hastings Civic Service of Unity and Peace 18 March 2019

Gathering Words – Reverend Jill McDonald, St Andrews Presbyterian Church

On Friday afternoon, we experienced a climate change in New Zealand. We are left reeling, numb with shock, anger and grief at what has happened.

Today, we come together in our collective sorrow.

More than anything we realise how much we all need each other. That love and peace and unity are the only things that can extinguish the evil and hate that forced itself on our Muslim Community in Christchurch.

Today we gather especially for you our Muslim sisters and brothers. We are here to tell you that we are devastated that this is happened and that we stand with you before God, before Allah in sharing the grief and pain of these dark days.

We stand with you in peace and unity and we will do all that we can to ensure that you feel safe and loved here in your city. This is your home, this is our home together.

We come together in our diversity. We come to reach out to one another in love as people who all call this land of Aotearoa New Zealand, home. In the words of our National Anthem, it is in the bonds of love we meet.

We are united as one, in peace, hope and love.

We Sing Te Aroha

Prayers for the People – Reverend Jill McDonald,

By whatever name we know God, Allah, Io, Te Atua, Jehovah, our Creator, it is the same God we worship.

Let us pray

Holy God of love and compassion, we are hurting.

We are shocked at the evil that has erupted in our nation.

We are grieving at the massive loss of life of our Muslim brothers and sisters.

We cry out to you in anguish for the Muslim community of Christchurch.

We cry out to you in anguish for the Muslim community of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

We cry out to you for Muslims of the world and the Islamophobia that they experience.

We cry out in anguish for all people who experience the racism, hatred and prejudice.

We know that you are with us in our pain and that your heart is broken too.

We pray for all who are directly affected by this terrorist attack. The injured, the mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters who have lost loved ones and who have lost friends. As they begin the slow process of healing from their injuries: physical, emotional, spiritual we know how in need of love and care they are. Embrace them with your compassion.

In the aftermath of this terrorist act we pray for all of the emergency personal: the Police, the Ambulance Officers, the hospital staff who have encountered evil first hand. These are tough days for them too as they experienced first hand these atrocities. May they know your healing love.

We pray for the leaders of our nation as they lead us through these uncharted waters and in particular our Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern as she leads with compassion and humanness.



We bring before you all of our Muslim brothers and sisters who live in Aotearoa New Zealand, and in particular those who live here in Hastings, who are feeling traumatised and fearful by what has happened. Hold them in your love.

Help us O God to reach out... To offer our love and our empathy, to cross the boundaries of inherited prejudice and misunderstanding that has separated us. Encourage us, to begin building connections and relationships with each other. Inspire us to say hello to that person that we pass by on the street who might look different to us, who might have a different accent, a different skin colour but who is actually just like us, longing for connection, longing to be included, longing to be loved.

Encourage us to be people of love. Help us to stand up against Islamophobia and racism. Help us to cross over the boundaries of difference that have divided us.

Your way O God is the way of peace and love. It is only by following Your way that evil and hatred be extinguished.

Inspire us to be people of peace and love so that all might flourish and have life in its fullness. Hold us your love.

We pray in your Holiest of Names. Amen

Central News

In Wellington on a very wet, drought breaking morning Friday 8th March, 400 women (a few brave men too) gathered at Parliament for the **International Women's Day** breakfast. Seated by 6:45am in either the Grand Hall or Banquet Hall much chatter could be heard as all present waited for the proceedings to begin. Television screens were set up at strategic points so all present could see and hear everything that was spoken. The event was also live streamed so that many other countries could share in the celebration held in the first country in the world to celebrate International Women's Day.

Hosted by the Hon. Julie Anne Genter, Minister for Women together with the U N Women National Committee Aotearoa New Zealand and the Zonta Club of Wellington we were treated to Keynote speakers: Minister for Women, Hon. Julie Anne Genter, Prime Minister, Hon Jacinda Ardern, and Wellingtonian of the Year, Lawyer, Steph Dyhrberg who focussed on the theme of equality. This was inspired by the speech made by the Prime Minister at the United Nations when she called for equality for women.

The overarching theme of the morning was "Me too" must become "We too", we are all in this together.

In 1975 the UN recognised it as a day dedicated to the rights of women, but its beginnings were long before that. It was first celebrated in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland in 1911, and in some countries was soon established as a public holiday.

The yummy breakfast was a forum where women from all walks of life and organisations together with young women from secondary schools met on common ground to be inspired to carry forward the messages of the keynote speakers. It was a privilege to be present. Judith Dunlop

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.

Annual General Meeting 2019

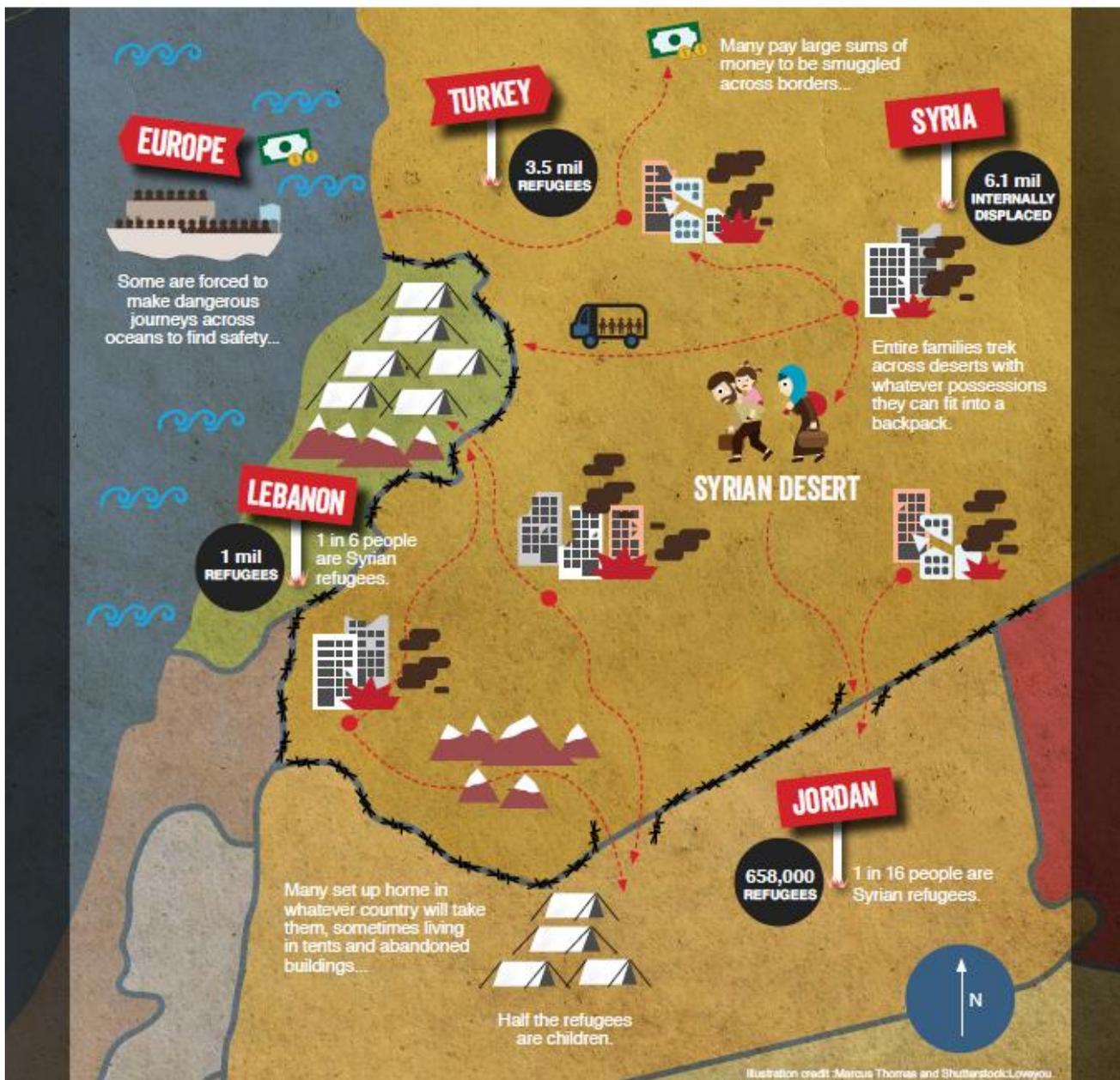
Whakatu in Songer Street Stoke, Nelson will host the AGM of PWANZ over the weekend of 13 and 14 September 2019. The programme, and meeting papers will be available closer to the time, but this is early notice to put the date in your diary, book travel and organise accommodation.

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).

Mission News CWS Operation Refugee



Your support for refugees is one way you can show your deep concern for families who have faced danger and uncertainty. CWS is excited to launch Operation Refugee for 2019 as one way to provide much-needed help to refugees.

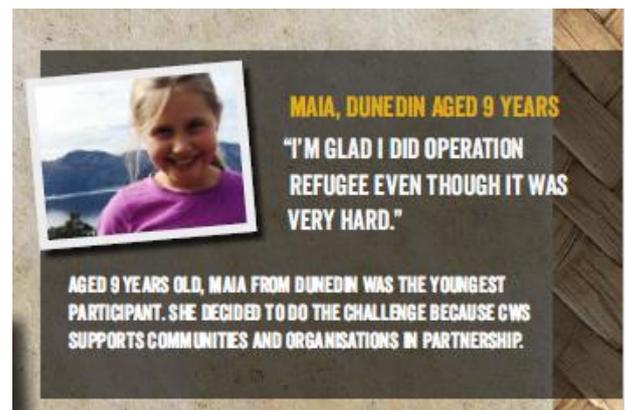
Together over the last 3 years we have raised over \$140,000 supporting Syrian Refugees living in Lebanon and Jordan. Our government has also matched some of the funds, doubling the work our partner the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees can do. We know it's been a lifeline to so many families who would not have been able to access good quality food parcels, take part in education programmes or receive healthcare without it. **We want to show that refugees are not forgotten. They still need our help and support.**



Challenge someone from your congregation to eat refugee rations for five or two days or walk the talk and support them along the way. Perhaps its something your youth group could tackle. Go to: www.cwsoperationrefugee.nz

5 TIPS FOR THE CHALLENGE

1. Make your effort count. Set a high goal. Last year one person raised over \$2,000 and a team raised over \$5,000. If you are new to the challenge start with \$500 – you can always increase it later.
2. Recruit some friends to join you and make a team. Choose a crazy name, print a t-shirt and organise a weekly check in so you can keep each other on task.
3. Tell everybody what you are doing and why it is so important to show their support for refugees by getting behind you. Make it manageable. Ask a close friend or family member to give you a down payment. Once you get your first donation, ask the next person to match it. Ask two friends for the equivalent of a dinner out and two colleagues for lunch money. You are on your way.
4. A few days before you start the challenge, hit the social media. Use your artistic abilities to tell your story. Share Operation Refugee posts that you think will attract support. Post pictures of yourself or the team enjoying your rations, or doing the walk, even a bike ride – whatever works for you.



In 2019 we have introduced some new exciting developments to Operation Refugee. As well as the tried and true food challenge, eating refugee rations for five or two days, we are introducing a walking challenge.

Refugees walk many kilometres either fleeing from one country or just in their daily life. We are giving you the opportunity to experience what it is like to walk in their shoes. This year you can opt for the walking challenge. You set a goal of walking say 40 km instead

of eating refugee rations for 5 days. Either using your Fitbit watch, cell phone, or manually record your steps or distance walked on your fundraising page. Supporters will see how much you have walked and make their donation.

This year, you choose the challenge - Be the lifeline, eat refugee rations OR walk the talk.

What else is NEW? The dates of the challenge. This year it's up to you when you do the challenge. The dates are April 1 to the September 30, 2019. Choose the 5 days (or 2 for Operation Refugee LITE) that suit you when you register. If you don't we will assume you are doing it from June 16-20.