

BushFire

Presbyterian Women
Aotearoa NZ
July 2020



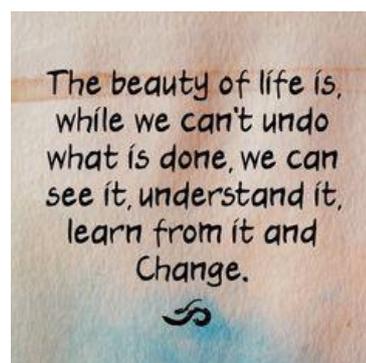
I am writing this column in the midweek of Kiribati language week – so *Kam na bane ni mauri* - Greetings everyone. Welcome to July's wintery panui.

Recently, I read through the AEWA (Asian Ecumenical Women's Assembly) 2019 convention report and I came across such a powerful phrase of President Simarmata. I needed to update myself with faith news and stories as I missing out attending this wonderful convention (though it was paid for) simply due to the sending away my husband Perema, in November 2019.

Moderator Archbishop Dr Willem Simarmata, CCA states "*I see the reality of our global Christianity, ... that the churches have been transformed into 'churches of women'. The power of women is extraordinary in determining the future direction of Christianity.*" The first-ever AEWA (Asian Ecumenical Women's Assembly) was held at Presbyterian Bible College (PBC) and organized by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA); in Hsinchu, Taiwan. The overall theme was '*Arise, Be Awake to Reconcile, Renew, and Restore the Creation*'.

It does similarly reflect and embrace our faith and perseverance in continuity to fellowship regardless of aging, pandemic impact, membership decreasing and so forth. Our holistic response to the pandemic reveals the life of Jesus in our body by praying and thinking for others. Lovingly supply essential support for the vulnerabilities and the needy in our neighbouring women's groups and community including cancelling/postponing gatherings to prevent viral transmission.

We are called with sense of empowerment, to innovate strategic changes to shape our way forward as Presbyterian Women. This is built from our controversial views and the wise advice and recommendations of our local presbyterial leaders and members. Thus to take intentional steps, to continue fellowship via alternative techniques that are available and accessible for all. In response we acknowledge and pay tribute to you all honorary/senior members, advisors and mentors. Thank you for pushing the go button to arise, and be awake to reconcile. We will endeavour to navigate the best option for a gathering, be it actual or via the internet, in 2020.



anonymous

Finally I wish to acknowledge the various contributors to this month's panui. Keep warm, keep praying, keep smiling. *Faaolataga-Ola Leasi*

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Kiribati is a republic comprising 32 coral atolls and one raised coral island stretched along the equator in the Central Pacific.

It is home to around 116,300 people, more than half of whom live on Tarawa Atoll, and also the South Pacific's largest marine reserve. Kiribati is low lying and as a result extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change including rising sea levels and the challenges associated with salt water inundation of fresh water supplies.

Below is a short prayer that could be used at the start of your day, to open a meeting or small gathering.

Tataro | Prayer

Kiribati	English
Ti na tataro	Let us pray
Tamara are i karawa	Our heavenly father
Ti bubutiko am kakabwaia n te wiki aei	We ask for your blessings this week
Nakoira ao n tatabemanira nako	To each and every one of us
Ti tataro n aran Iesu. Amen	In Jesus name we pray. Amen



Asian Ecumenical Women's Assembly

The Christian Conference of Asia's first ever Asian Ecumenical Women's Assembly (AEWA) concluded with a resounding call for women to be advocates and catalysts of reconciliation, renewal and restoration in the world.

In a communique issued at the end of the AEWA, participants affirmed:

"At this critical time of our history, when the whole of God's creation is groaning due to irresponsible human action, greed and continuing discrimination, violence and exploitation of women and children, without repenting from the sin of greed, and without reconciling and doing justice to God's creation, women and the marginalized communities in particular, the world will not experience justice and peace."

"We are with one voice in asserting No to a culture of violence and exploitation of earth's resources. We affirm that we need to stand together in solidarity towards realising justice and peace at this Kairos moment of our planet Earth."

By Matters India Reporter

Hsinchu, Nov 28, 2019: The Ecumenical Women's Assembly concluded November 27 with calls for Asian women to become advocates and catalysts of reconciliation, renewal and restoration in the world, communities, and Churches.

Organized by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the week-long assembly asserted that the world will not experience justice and peace without repenting its sin of greed. It also wants the Churches to promote justice.

More than 250 women attended the November 21-27 assembly, hosted by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan in Hsinchu City. The assembly noted that the whole of God's creation is groaning due to irresponsible human action, greed and continuing discrimination, violence and exploitation of women and children.

A statement from the assembly underscored the need for reconciling and doing justice to God's creation, especially to women and the marginalized communities. "We are with one voice in asserting NO to a culture of violence and exploitation of earth's resources. We affirm that we need to stand together in solidarity towards realizing justice and peace at this Kairos moment of our planet earth," the participants declared.

They expressed appreciation for the space AEWA provided them to "recommit to God and affirm that the nurturing and sustaining roles of women are crucial, and our voices must be heard for the liberation of the whole earth."

The need to work tirelessly for the realization of a better world for women and men and the whole of creation was echoed in the comments shared by the participants in the closing session. The assembly ended with an ecumenical Eucharistic Service led by Bishop Genieve Blackwell of the Anglican Church of Australia with the assistance of a group of intergenerational women representatives from various churches across Asia.

The homily by Rev Abus Takisvilainan, vice moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, encouraged the participants to have perseverance and renewed faith in God in pursuit of their tasks and goals. She also commended the CCA for bringing together a diverse group of intergenerational women to discuss the pressing concerns of the time. The first woman vice moderator of the 154-year-old PCT encouraged the participants to learn about the differences among people to respect and celebrate their diversities, but never to rebuke or discriminate against them.

The participants shared reflections on their time in the assembly and the many insights that they take back with them to their local contexts.

Dr Eun Ha Kim from Korea took the participants through the history of Asian women's participation in the ecumenical movement and called for new strategies for women leadership to emerge in church and society.

Rev Romella Robinson from Pakistan shared a moving testimony on the many challenges of Christian women in her country. Rev Romella shared the experiences of her own denomination and said, although women are ordained, they are asked to 'stay silent as much as possible', and their gifts are limited to volunteer work. In most churches, women ministers are not permitted to administer the Sacraments.

Wellorich Anderson Sokhlet from India said that much progress had been made in the context of increased women's participation in her Church. However, she noted that it was always male leadership that had the final say, even if women were 'empowered' to make decisions. Despite her community following matriliney, she said that patriarchal customs had crept into church practice. Wellorich's church has seen the decades-long struggle for the ordination of women, and she hopes to see this change in the near future. "As women," she said, "We must voice out our support for each other, and not criticize and bring down anyone. We must seek first the kingdom of God – righteousness and inclusivity will then follow."

We Stand with Refugees



We are in this together.

What happens on the other side of the world can affect us. Life can change without warning. Covid-19 has reached many refugee communities and it is hard for families to stay safe. Join this year's Operation Refugee to show you stand with refugees.

Operation Refugee is a fundraising challenge for you. Make it reflect your commitment to people who urgently need food, education and healthcare. Turn it into a personal challenge, or better, invite others to be part of a team.

Choose between a food or walking challenge. Sign up to do the challenge between now and November 30. CWS will work with you to make it successful. We know how importance kindness is when things are tough. Send your message of hope to refugees. [REGISTER NOW](#)



Food for Life is a challenge to survive on refugee rations for 2 or 5 days. We can supply you with the rations - just a small amount of rice, split peas, kidney beans, salt, flour, fish and oil – or you can buy your own food on a \$32 budget. You can buy extra food when you raise more money!

OR

You can choose to organise a Pop-up Banquet for a group large or small. You choose the menu, organise some help, cook the food and invite anyone for a feast. Charge an entry fee or invite donations to Operation Refugee.



Walk the Talk is a walking challenge – though you can make it something else. Set a goal of the number of steps or kilometres you intend to travel over 5 days. By using FitBit, Strava, MapMyFitness or manually updating your fundraising page, track your progress toward your goal.

OR

You can organise a group walking event. You choose the group and organise the route. Encourage team members to get as many sponsors as they can.