

### From our National Convenor:-

Well done ladies, another year over Praise the Lord! Our God is so Big so great and so mighty theres nothing our God cannot do! May the love and joy of baby Jesus be with you all this Christmas time.

I wish to share the following study from the Prayer and Study Department in The Harvest Field, November 1971

*Lafulafu*

### CHRISTMAS IS FOR CHRISTIANS

Reading: Luke 2:1-21

#### The Rush

Every year about this time we are reminded in many ways that soon Christmas will be with us again. Shops are dressing up their windows and advertisers offer suggestions of gifts – each year more novel and expensive. Our local districts add to the demands by pressing for our attendance and participation and all the hurly at homes that leads to the day. At home houses are cleaned, gardens put in order, menus planned – gigantic meals are prepared for the influx of guests.. The Church adds its share of activities – breakups, Christmas socials and parties are involving expenditure of time and energy. The whole season is one of rush and bustle.



#### Where is the real meaning of Christmas?

God did not rush us about and surround the birth of His Son with crowds and activities. He had been preparing for this event for many years. Quietly, the preparation had gone on; the prophets foretold the coming, and the family background was prepared. When the time was right, the Son wasn't born in a royal palace or even in a great home. The girl chosen to be the mother of Jesus was not a princess - she was just one who thought deeply on the events of life. We are told she "pondered these things in her heart". When the shepherds and the wise men visited with their gifts, and were received with hospitality and dignity but not amidst royal servants. This was the family and the mother God chose for His Son. This woman was the one to whom the early teaching and the upbringing of this special child were committed. From her He was to learn the things God has ordained that all children should learn from their mothers. So Christmas has a special message to women. In our hands lie the early training and example that our children receive. Christmas is a time to review our charge. It was not to the important people of Israel that the Christmas message came. The very nature of the work of shepherds meant two things – they were somewhat outside the mainstream of religious activity. They would be unable to observe all the religious festivals set down by their religious authorities, they would not be looked upon with favour by the synagogue leaders. They received the message, because they were naturally in communion with the things of nature as they sat quietly under the stars. We can experience just this feeling ourselves when we camp out at night. It will be hard to find quiet this Christmas. All our world is full of noise and bustle. What have we made Christmas in our world into? Does Christmas still proclaim the birthday of the Saviour, or is it just an excuse for noise, excitement, parties, visitors and presents?

### CHRISTMAS IS FOR CHRISTIANS

Without Christ there would be no Christmas. Are we who call ourselves Christians prepared to keep a quiet period to refresh ourselves this year;

#### Questions for discussion

1. How can so unique an event as the birthday of the Christ Child be celebrated?
2. How should we as Christians personally mark the event?
3. What is the church's responsibility to those who do not recognise the coming of Christ into their lives?



### **First Church, Martinborough**

Two classes at Martinborough School have had extra warm feet this winter, thanks to volunteer knitters



from the Organisation of Presbyterian Women, who have turned out 50 highly individual pairs of slippers for the children and one pair each for their teachers. This was a very practical way of celebrating our 50th Birthday and giving to the community at the same time. Please find photo attached.

It is with regret that one of our very active members, Barbara Evans, passed away on the 24th of July. She was very active locally but also at district level and had served as Treasurer and Co-ordinator for APW. Knitting the slippers was Barbara's idea and even though ill health stopped her participating other APW members carried out the plan.

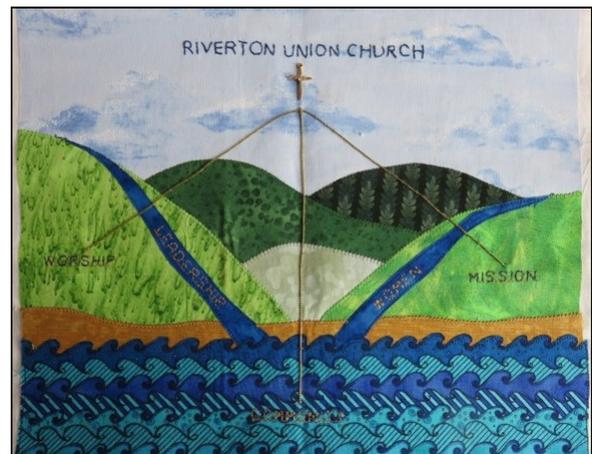
**Rosemary Ward**

### **Riverton Union Church Fellowship Group**

The Display of Talent in September at the Union Church was a sight to behold. Part of the display was the colourful blankets, jerseys and hats, which have been knitted by people around Riverton, and further afield. These beautiful warm garments and blankets are on their way to help keep needy children warm in Muldova.

The display of items for Muldova was enhanced by craftwork of all kinds - needlework, photography, woodwork, shell work, home spun articles, knitting, and sewing.

The sales table was very well supported, especially with home baking, and visitors enjoyed a friendly cup of tea, using the fine china cups. Money raised will go to the mission work of the Riverton Union Church.



**Beth Wilson**

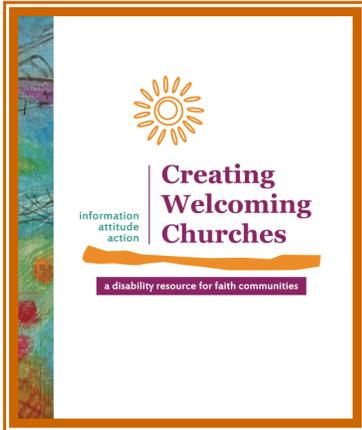


## “Presbytery of Ashburton 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.

This year the Presbytery of Ashburton will be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We are collecting stories of both men and women in the parishes. Were you someone who lived in Ashburton or do you know someone who lived in Ashburton, if so please consider sending us your story or their story and a photo.

A service to give thanks and celebrate the life of the Presbytery of Ashburton will be held on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 10am at St Andrew's to be followed by a shared lunch. On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 10am a plant is to be planted in the Ashburton Domain to mark the occasion. If you know anyone who served on Presbytery please tell them about these two occasions.

Any questions then please contact **Dellwyn Moylan** ph 3086598.



**The book “Creating Welcoming Churches”**, which was the focus of the New Zealand part of our 2012/13 special project, was launched in Auckland on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October – a short very formal but meaningful service in the Cathedral in Parnell, including a blessing with all the ‘smells’, followed by speeches and supper. It was great to see so many disabled people in one place, appreciating what had been done for them.

Because I'm not comfortable driving round the central city, I travelled by ferry and bus, and was billeted in the central city over night. Another first for me – my hostess, in a motorised wheel chair and I walked a block of Queen St, giving out 4 plates of left over food to homeless people! I was also pleased to be able to make use of the excellent hearing loop in the cathedral.

Another launch is planned in Wellington.

**Rae Simpson**

“The Auckland Launch of Creating Welcoming Churches went very well at the Holy Trinity Cathedral on Thursday night. Here is an article <http://www.anglicantaonga.org.nz/News/Common-Life/Making-churches-more-accessible> It is on Facebook and has gone round the Anglican network, world wide. Many thanks to all people who supported this, it was a great credit to the power of community. If people have ideas as to where it could be promoted, please let me know. It is hoped a workshop will be developed for church groups based on the book.”

**Rev Vicki Terrell,**

**MANAWATU PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN** Members from Levin, Feilding and Palmerston North were hosted by St Davids Night Owls for their Regional Day held on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November, the theme being 'Reaching Out' Michal Baken, our St Davids Youth Worker gave us her vision for building our new Youth Group. She told us how this fits in with her tertiary studies. Three speakers from Te Aroha Noa Community Services in Highbury told us about the programmes they manage and how the Highbury community has been turned into a vibrant soceity. Very recently this committed group have celebrated 25 years of service. The programme was seeded by Central Baptist Church Palmerston North. The twenty year history of the Palmerston North Street Van Ministry which reaches out to vulnerabld young people on the streets at night was portrayed by Mr Lew Findlay. The Manna Book Shop was well supported as well as other trading tables selling greetings cards, jewellery, stamps, craft and produce.

Jessica who received our prayer quilt has completed her radioactive therapy and is generally making good progress.

**Marjorie Empson**



**World Day of Prayer 2015**

*Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March*

*Jesus said to them*

*“Do you know what I have done to you”*

Planning for this event is underway. Find out the time and venue of your local service, and plan to be there.

The 2015 service is planned by women from the Bahamas

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**From the Executive Secretary of the PCANZ**

17 November 2014

Greetings on behalf of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

At our recent meeting the Assembly warmly commended and affirmed its active support of the work of Presbyterian Women. We acknowledge the continuing valuable service you offer to the church and the community as you seek new ways to celebrate the ministry of women and girls within the life of the Presbyterian Church.

Assembly was encouraged to both read and to hear about the current work Presbyterian Women is involved in and is supporting. You remain an inspiration to us all.

To all members our sincere and grateful thanks.

Yours in Christ

*Wayne Matheson*

**From Bev Quigley**

Resources:

*A new study for Christmas, which includes the challenge of making a Christingle. 2013 Worship Christmas Gifts - still available. Any request, I will try and help.*

Mission Birthday Envelopes

*I have a good supply.*

*Please send 4 x 80c stamps to help with costs.*

*Contact: Bev Quigley*

*Phone: 03 686 1207 or text 021 078 0030*

*Post: 11 Birch Street, Gleniti, Timaru 7910*

*Email: [bev@timarupres.org.nz](mailto:bev@timarupres.org.nz)*



**National Council of Women**

Kate Sheppard and her team fought hard for women's rights. NCW works to see that those rights are retained and increased.

On the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> October, the NCW Conference was held at Waipuna Lodge, Mt Wellington. Although attendees were mainly older women, it was heartening to see a group of really "clued up" younger women with legal and other professional skills stepping up. Our first vice president, Vanisa Dhiri is one of these. The remits which were circulated were all passed, but interestingly, the ones regarding early registration of pregnancy, and abortion law reform were most contentious. No matter which way we think, it is for us as Christian Women to listen to the dialogue, understand the reasoning, and to make our voices heard.



**PWANZ Website**

[www.presbyterian.org.nz](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz)  
Click on 'National Ministries'  
Presbyterian Women  
Gleanings newsletter

**Material for the next  
issue of Gleanings**

Is due by Monday 16th February  
To Rae Simpson  
[lestrsimson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lestrsimson@xtra.co.nz)  
12 Kotanui Ave  
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*If you wish to receive your own copy of Gleanings via email, please contact the National Secretary, Shona Bettany, [revsbettany@xtra.co.nz](mailto:revsbettany@xtra.co.nz) with the following details – Name, Email Address, Contact phone number, Church.*