

# **United Nations Commission on the Status of Women CSW 60 – 2016**



**The Rev Carol L. Grant - United Nations Convenor  
Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand with  
delegation members' reports and presentations.**



**The Presbyterian Women Aotearoa NZ Delegation to the United Nations  
Commission on the Status of Women CSW60 - Carol L Grant. PWANZ UN Convenor**

The delegation of ten women participated fully in all aspects of the Commission at the United Nations in March along with many thousands of women from around the world. Once again PWANZ were asked to limited numbers of our delegation due to numbers attending CSW60.

All members of the PW delegation have wide ranging interests and backgrounds and all members network into the wider community. This ensures that their experiences at CSW60 and their insights from a global perspective will be shared with other women and girls in the church and community. For selection each person wrote a letter of application outlining their reasons for wanting to be selected, their personal background, and future contributions they hoped to make on their return. Each person reports back after a time for reflection. All were self funded. Their aspirations all agreed with the stated aims of Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa NZ



**Presbyterian Women at the New Zealand Mission in New York where we were hosted at a breakfast with other members of the New Zealand delegation.**

## The 2016 PWANZ delegation members were (from left)

**Ariana Ridley** - St John, Ambulance Up Skill Paramedic, Training Volunteers. Health and Safety Coordinator. Dunedin

**Carol Grant**, PCANZ United Nations Convenor, Senior Active Clergy. Dunedin

**Elvina Stephens** - Science and Senior Chemistry Secondary School Teacher. Girl's Brigade National Training Coordinator, Christchurch

**Lyn Heine** - Lay Minister, Co Chair of UCANZ Alpine Presbytery Council. Occupational Therapist. Westland

**Suzanne Bishop** - Secondary School teacher, Commerce/Economics, Dunedin

**Alofa Lale** - Clergy, Secondary School Teacher, New Mothers and Babies PIC, Dunedin

**Erin Pendreigh** - Mission Advisor, Synod of Otago and Southland, Balclutha

**Catherine Wilkinson** - Station Support Officer, NZ Police, Violence, Conflict, Human Rights. Wanaka

**Emily Olsen**- Police Officer, General Duties /Airport. Queenstown.

**Mavis Duncanson** - Clinical epidemiologist with the New Zealand Child and Youth Epidemiology Service. University of Otago.

**Individual comments from members are attached at the conclusion of this report.**

## The Work of the Commission in 2016



**The 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women concluded with UN Member States committing to the gender-responsive implementation of Agenda 2030.**

A set of agreed conclusions called for enhancing the basis for rapid progress, including stronger laws, policies and institutions, better data and scaled-up financing. The Commission recognised women's vital role as agents of development. It acknowledged that progress on the Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of Agenda 2030 will not be possible without gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years. For the goals to be reached, everyone needs to do their part: governments, the private sector, and civil society. The seventeen agreed global goals are: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Wellbeing, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Infrastructure, Industrialisation, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life below Water, Life on Land, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, Partnerships for the Goals.

### **An integrated approach is crucial for progress across the multiple goals.**

UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka welcomed the agreement and the commitment of UN Member States to make the 2030 Agenda, adopted last September, a reality in countries around the world. She said: "Countries gave gender inequality an expiry date: 2030. Now it is time to get to work. These agreed conclusions entrench and start the implementation of a gender-responsive agenda 2030 with which we have the best possibility to leave no one behind."

### **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**

#### **Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

The sustainable development goals seek to change the course of the 21st century, addressing key challenges such as poverty, inequality, and violence against women.



#### **Women's empowerment is a pre-condition for this.**

While the world has achieved progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment under the Millennium Development Goals (including equal access to primary education between girls and boys), women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large. Goal 5 - gender equality — therefore will be an important goal for women and girls in NZ

#### **Targets**

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

### **Events at CSW60**



The first week of CSW begins with several orientation forums and a celebration of International Women's Day. The opening addresses are by powerful speakers from around the world and set the agenda for the next two weeks. The second week is concentrated more on interaction by different countries presenting their points of view during the negotiations and these are fascinating as government representatives strive to make sure their voices are heard. Advocacy teams visit UN Missions during the second week and speak directly to individual diplomats. I enjoy the challenges of the advocacy work.

Ecumenical Women's Orientation Day, UN Women's Forum, Parallel and Side Events were some of the events attended by delegation members. Some helped to set out the Commission's priority themes, others presented current research, or promoted dialogue, and networking opportunities. Regional groups caucus together and international leaders present national progress reports. I was delighted that members of the PW attended many of these different events and opportunities each day, met together informally to compare notes, and update and encourage each other.

### **Handbooks**

The CSW Handbooks prepared by members of the NGO CS/NY Executive Committee is full of background information as well as outlines for all the NGO events. This is published on line early so that delegates can prepare well in advance. The UN Civil Society Parallel events are also on line to enable pre-booking and pre-planning. I was fortunate to be able to attend all the events I wanted except one which was too crowded. An alternative was suggested by UN Security. I was delighted to find myself listening to Sophie Trudeau and Madeline Albright discuss their insights on global politics. Two amazing women from different generations. A unique unexpected experience.

**More information about CSW60, the decisions and side events can be found at [www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw60-2016](http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw60-2016)**

## **New Zealand NGO and Government Representation**

Growing global commitment was already in evidence with a record number of more than 80 government ministers from around the world attending the Commission. Around 4,100 non-governmental representatives from more than 540 organisations participated as well, the highest number ever for one of the Commission's regular annual meetings. New Zealand's Government representatives were Jo Cribb and Helen Potiki from the Ministry for Women, and Jacque Blue and Cynthia Brodie from the Human Rights Commission. I was proud to discover that the largest NGO delegation from New Zealand was our Presbyterian Women Aotearoa NZ delegation. This has been noticed and our opinions and feedback on issues has been sought in NZ and by diverse UN entities.

## **Ecumenical Women at the United Nations**



The voices of women of faith are valued at the United Nations and we, as PWANZ, work closely with other reformed church groups from other countries to ensure our voices are heard. This strength is reflected in the morning worship held each day in the United Nations Church Centre Chapel when each denomination takes a turn to lead the service. Ecumenical Women at the United Nations holds an Orientation Day each year prior to the first day of the Commission to update members on current issues and priority themes. The UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka attends Orientation Day as well as leading the discussions at the UN.

## **Advocacy in NZ**

Presbyterian women and girls who attended CSW59 and CSW60 are speaking out in the wider community to address the huge issues for women in NZ such as active discrimination, intimate partner violence, child abuse, people trafficking / slavery, child poverty, the gender pay gap, rural neglect, underfunding of the voluntary sector, and the unconscious bias against women by decision makers on issues such as finance, leadership and participation in decision making, For example, The two youngest school girls included in the PW UN delegation to CSW59 in 2015 are still at school. They have since become UNICEF Ambassadors, and others are leaders in Presbyterian Church School Young Enterprise Projects or members of Model UN.

This year Annabel Ritchie, one of the youngest delegation members was recently selected by the Royal Society of NZ to attend the Summer Research School in Bulgaria in July to build the next generation of robotic rovers that will explore Mars. She also recently received the Prime Minister's Secondary School Award for Excellence. The other youngest member, Caroline Moratti, was selected to attend the UN Youth Pacific Project in Australia and Samoa to learn about sustainable development and to participate in aid projects. These two girls were fortunate that Caroline's mother, Dr Anne Marie Tangney was also a member of the delegation. Taking girls still at school is risky on many levels because of global issues, the challenging UN and NY environments and the hard issues discussed. Younger women leaders in work or doing tertiary study have the maturity and experience of prioritising, grasping opportunities and networking needed for this environment.

### **UN Parallel Event**

This year PWANZ were privileged to be invited by the PCUSA to be a panelist in a Parallel Event panel which focused on the role of education in breaking cycles of poverty, particularly for women. A panel presentation lifted up ways Presbyterians support education in Kenya, Aotearoa New Zealand, the PWUSA and International PCUSA. A paper on poverty and violence in NZ and how the church could respond, written by Mavis Duncanson one of the PW delegation members, was widely distributed. The PCANZ 'Justice and Action' publication and partnership models from PSS Otago were also highlighted in the PWANZ presentation. Gifts from PWANZ were later presented to PCUSA UN and to PWUSA. They were received with appreciation and delight.

**The parallel event presentation is attached to this report.**



### **Observations**

1 With such a diverse group this year it was interesting that those who had prepared well prior to leaving New Zealand found it much easier to prioritise and plan each day from the beginning of the Commission so they could arrive on time to the venues, some of which were advertised with seating limits, follow topics they were interested in, and yet have flexibility to alter their programme if new opportunities were presented.

2 In our comments on the NZ Govt Draft 8th CEDAW report to the NZ Government and the UN we noted that 'the inclusion of indigenous women of New Zealand in international forums and decision making processes is essential as well as ensuring that New Zealand's indigenous women have the ability to speak at the United Nations so that their concerns can be heard.' It was uncomfortable to sit in a room while Government members spoke on Maori issues as if the Maori women present were absent. It would be ideal if more Pacifica women's voices were heard, too, on the crucial issues faced by women in the Pacific.

3 Articles about PWANZ involvement at the United Nations have appeared in the Otago Daily Times, Bush Telegraph, Bushfire, church and parish magazines, the PCANZ web site and PW Facebook pages. Once again getting any news in the corporate church magazine SPANZ has been problematic. An insert highlighting PWANZ is prohibitively expensive.

4 Useful websites on the work of the UN Commission on the Status of Women are [www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org) and <https://ecumenicalwomen.org>

5 I would like to express my thanks to all the members of PWANZ in groups large or small for their interest, generosity and support, to the Transition Team and Advisory group for their encouragement and for ensuring the UN work is highlighted, and to Knox Church Dunedin, the Southern Presbytery and Synod of Otago and Southland for their on going support. It is a privilege to serve PWANZ in this role and to ensure that our voices are heard through this UN work, throughout the church, locally, nationally and internationally. My grateful thanks to my UN reference group who always respond to my requests for assistance with such enthusiasm. I have appreciated the support of the staff at the NZ Ministry for Women, Contributing to the NGO international Caucus, and forums at the UN.

6 I have fully reported to each meeting of the Transition Team or to the combined Advisory group Transition Team meetings. The next UN Quadrennial report will be called for in 2017. With the new PW projects focus on targeting women, children and families in need the report will be able to more clearly and accurately present our current work to the United Nations The continuation of our Special Consultative Status as a faith based organisation is based on the UN review of these four yearly formal reports.

7 I am delighted that each member of the delegation has reported on their impressions so fully. The UN reports are a permanent record of our UN involvement and records the difference the experience has made to our lives, as we network here in New Zealand.

Finally I would like to thank each member of the CSW60 delegation for their participation, the manner in which they worked together, and cared for each other, for working hard and finding time for fun together, for willingly sharing information whilst there and once home again, and for sharing your experiences within your networks and workplaces. This is what makes my role so rewarding.





## **Individual Reports from CSW60 Delegation Members**

### **CSW reflection - Mavis Duncanson July 2016**

Attending the Ecumenical Women orientation day provided a sound framework for increasing awareness of gender justice issues. The opening worship set the achievement of the global goals for sustainable development firmly within the Judeo-Christian faith tradition. I was impressed by the affirmation right from the start, and right from the top of the UN hierarchy, of the important role of faith communities in achieving gender equality. Through this day, and also through hearing the opening addresses on the Monday and to a lesser extent the NGO orientation event, my understanding of gender justice broadened. Through the theme of women and sustainable development I gained new appreciation of the ways in which gender equity is integral and essential to the resolve “to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources” as well as “to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all ...” (Agenda 2030 Clause 3).

A key aspect of CSW for me was integrating aspects of social justice that I had previously inadvertently kept siloed. This was particularly the result of attending a range of side and parallel events, the morning NGO briefings and the evening debrief with other attendees from Aotearoa New Zealand. The global perspective was invigorating: Recognising the particular hardships experienced by many, many women in specific contexts and yet the commonality of issues that are faced by women in every country. I heard stories of empowerment of women and girls from diverse people: Parliamentarians in Namibia and Uganda, doctors in Nigeria; indigenous women in Canada, Girl Guides in Australia and the United Kingdom; sex workers in Northern Ireland and of course ecumenical women from so many places. High level and other side events at the UN gave me a new appreciation of the important role of careful methodical policy work in achieving a gender responsive Agenda 2030. Particularly enlightening were sessions which highlighted connections between gender-based violence and climate change, water and gender justice, and the universal, indivisible nature of the global goals.

At the Ecumenical Women orientation day we were encouraged to use social media and I found Twitter to be an amazing way to see in real time what other ecumenical women were attending, as well as to share my own experiences. Searching for the #EcuWomenCSW hashtag each evening provided an overview of participants’ activities during the day and reading the blog posts on the website <https://ecumenicalwomen.org/> informed in more depth. This is an ideal medium for introverts to use in networking! Beyond the realm of social media one of the rich rewards of these ten days in New York was the opportunity to meet and talk with so many women. There is not time to list them all but meeting face to face with people who could share such rich experience was an amazing privilege. Those who have engaged in this formal process for decades were particularly inspiring.

Listening to the national reports I was impressed by those countries who spoke openly of the situation they are in and put forward their plans to address the issues they face. In contrast New Zealand’s report seemed bland, resting on the laurels of past achievements such as women’s suffrage in 1893. The first opportunity I see to improve the lives of women and girls in New Zealand is to realistically and honestly appraise the current situation, to set up robust systems to monitor change, and to have a clear national plan of

action to bring about the change that is needed. Currently women and children are disproportionately included in households living below internationally accepted poverty lines and in family violence statistics. We are aware of gender-based income gaps and economic discrimination against widows. We have the highest level of wealth inequality in the OECD. A girl's opportunities are determined in large part by the area where she is born, her ethnicity and her parents' work or lack of work. In addition to a national plan of action for women, clear pathways to achieve the measurable targets associated with the global goals and to enact the agreed conclusions from CSW is a good way to improve the lives of women and girls here in NZ.

Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand is well placed to strategically advocate for gender equity in New Zealand and internationally. It would be good to have a policy team building up experience over several years at CSW and working towards a full submission to give a 'grass roots' perspective on progress toward the agreed conclusions. It is important for the lessons learned at CSW to be shared at the General Assembly and to be owned by the whole church. It might be possible in future to include women from the Presbyterian Church partners in Asia and the Pacific within delegations to CSW.

My experience at CSW left me with gratitude to the Presbyterian women who saw this opportunity so many years ago and opened the way for our 2016 delegation, a new awareness of the importance of the global goals in living our faith, and the importance of faith communities holding governments to account for national and international commitments to sustainability and gender equality. It was a life-changing experience and I am excited about the relevance of the global goals in my personal and professional life.



### **Debrief Paper from United Nations 60th Commission of the Status of Woman - New York trip March 13th-24th 2016. - Catherine Wilkinson**

As a privileged chosen delegate of the Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand delegation to the United Nations New York I thank The Rev Carol L Grant for this unique experience. Being a lay person in this group was an exceptional experience. When I applied to be considered for a placement, I had already an acute awareness to a few gender issues within our country, with what I thought was unfair behaviours towards women and children. I was hungry to learn more and also to see if the global impact of this topic was similar.

WOW !! To be immersed every day during this Commission with other women from all over the world was, - beyond my thought process!!! I will try to start from the beginning of this 14 day lifelong experience. Just attending the Consultation Day was the first of many highlights. Opening speeches from both USG Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka a former Deputy President of South Africa, a true UN Women, and H.E Mr Antonio de Aguiar Patriota Chair of the 60th Commission. You could feel the electricity in the air of that auditorium!!! And not to mention the unforgettable the opening session, Gaida Singers and, "Climbing Poe Tree" by Alixa Garcia and Naima Penniman presenting inspirational and empowering songs for advancing the status of women and girls in the world. It was a day packed full of interactive sessions on various themes, e.g. "No one left behind: Constraints in implementing 2030 Agenda". An inspiring speech from Woman of Distinction Award winner Bandana Ran of Nepal received a standing ovation. So the scene is set for a very action packed 2 weeks.

## **Themes for this 60th Commission of the Status of Women were -**

**Priority theme:** Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development and

**Review theme:** The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls (agreed conclusions from the fifty-seventh session)

I took me a couple of days to understand about the HOW,WHO,and WHERE of the Side events and Parallel events, plus you had to be able to get inside the buildings AND lifts to get to an event, hence I missed a couple at the beginning of the week. Then I also discovered the United Nations Building and speakers.

So with the experience of some of our delegation, I found that talking with our group during the day and meeting up for dinner some nights really helped to "debrief" and learn from others what they had learnt and listened to that day. There were SO MANY events to go to that of course there were clashes with topics that were of interest and also topics that would take you out of your "Comfort zone". My example would be - My primary focus was - Ending domestic violence against women and girls, but I also wanted to hear about other topics like - "Iran Women living with HIV", Voices of Students around the world about Empowerment in their countries" I had no idea about Women's battles for property inheritance or Widow inheritance in most 3rd world countries So I was diversifying my own thoughts and ideas. Listening to other women whom deal with these realities REALLY opened my eyes, what I thought about gender equality was only the tip of the iceberg!!!

I also learnt about the 17 Sustainable Goals implemented in September 2015 with a deadline of 2030, as a platform to show how Women and girls can and will be key to achieving each of these goals globally. I feel that number 5 - Gender equality is the most crucial to all these goals. There seems to be a gap between those, who draw up the commitments for each country and those who carry them out. Effective/equal Leadership is required and the rest of the SDGs should have a seamless positive effect over time. I think this topic - Gender Equality was where most of my new awareness evolved from. I found the SDGs most interesting.

Visiting the United Nations Building most days and listening to whatever was on, in the huge auditorium styled rooms was a privilege in itself. Remembering not to linger too long to keep within the daily schedule of moving around venues that were all a manageable distance from each other.

Listening to African Women talk about their daily struggles with inequality and their passions to stop the struggle and implement positive change so that their children can grow up in a world less harmful was moving and thought provoking.

Listening to the Iranian Women talk about death amongst their girls, stoning!!! in the hands of men who used negative power and culture as an excuse to kill, mostly over very minimal things. - Powerful that they were present at the CSW60.

But in between these mind blowing parallel events - I did get to hear Dr Jo Cribb the Chief Executive of the New Zealand Ministry for Women deliver the New Zealand statement at the United Nations in front of all the other countries prominent speakers. This was a highlight for me.

Meeting and Networking with others was a fabulous way to extend that already "buzz" that I was experiencing every day. The New Zealand Permanent Mission Tuesday "breakfast"

invitation was a great way to meet with other New Zealand delegations and enjoy a yummy start to the day - I will always treasure our little gift that we all received, yet another memento. Also later that same day we attended an evening reception, with others from other countries/groups to meet with and share. Even just sitting down, in the basement area at the United Nations building have a coffee was enough to chat with complete strangers - all having a similar goal to experience the "United Nations" experience.

Now to take all that new found experience and seek opportunities for improving the lives of Women and Girls in New Zealand. LEADERSHIP is the key, building resilient young women and giving them plenty of opportunities to develop skills to empower others. I would like to see a leadership course be implemented into the secondary schools NZQA qualification system at year 12 and 13 level instructed by women teachers whom have a huge passion for empowering young ladies. We need to be focusing on the next emerging generation. Another social group of women that need particular attention to improvement opportunities are young mums, CONFIDENCE is huge for women whom may well be in a domestic violence situation and new baby/toddler at home. Plunket NZ has always been a big part in a young mums early days, maybe something could be incorporated at this level. Also courses running with focus to getting women and girls back into part time work/up skilling with part time study etc while still being a great role model to their young children.

There are many levels within the New Zealand social system that need attention to building resilience, confidence and to empowering women and girls - our Women leaders NOW need to invest their time to mentor a next generation.

What I have personally undertaken since my return from this wonderful unique and fulfilling experience is I have become an assistant trainee Brownies leader in my small town, as the leader is a work colleague within my employment with the NZ Police. The focus is to grow confident young girls. I also have talked with my three teenage daughters thoroughly with knowledge I have gained from the New York trip. My eldest has just last week prepared and delivered her English speech for NCEA credits level 2 with her chosen topic of - Domestic violence against Women in New Zealand - very proud!! I am yet to deliver a talk to the Upper Clutha Ladies Lions group which is scheduled for the September meeting. I am also a member of that group. Contact yet to be organised with the Upper Clutha Presbyterian Woman's group to speak about my delegation position within the PWANZ

My experience is now ingrained into my thought patterns, and I use what i have seen, heard and spoken in my daily life now- with my employment, with my social dealings and my group involvements. Thank you again Rev Carol Grant - you are a very inspiring women, as all the other women in our PWANZ delegation. I cannot express enough in words how much i enjoyed and grew as an individual with this once in a lifetime experience, in an amazing City of New York that was in itself an amazing experience.

**Catherine Wilkinson, Proud delegate of the PWANZ 2016.**



## **Report on the 60th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women March 2016 as a member of the Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa New Zealand.**

As a member last year my A word theme was Amazing. My A word for the 2016 trip was Appreciation.

Appreciation for again having the opportunity to be part of work done at this high level and all that it entails. Meeting people from around the world sharing their stories and experiences that can be both so different and so similar. Hearing the visions and dreams of women and girls for a different and equitable future. Being part of the ongoing conversations that continue out past the Commission gathering via email.

Appreciation for the delegation that I was part of. This wonderful group of New Zealand women who shared of themselves and engaged so enthusiastically in all that was available.

A special appreciation for Rev Carol Grant's work in pulling together the delegation; opening it up to include women of influence in strategic organisations and roles; and putting a structure in place to gather us together including the accommodation. And at the same time giving us a freedom to engage with those topics of particular interest to us and not stifling us with a set schedule.

I appreciated renewing acquaintance with parts and people of New York that I had met previously in 2015 - Scotty's Diner; United Nations points of interest; landmarks. And I appreciated the new things and experiences of this trip. Madame Butterfly at the Metropolitan Opera House; real New York bagels; the Jewish Holocaust Museum.

Three highlights amongst the presentations and work of the commission that I would like to expand on were the Albert Schweitzer Institute presentation by an occupational therapist and a social demographics researcher who did much of her work in New Zealand; presentations by young women from The Grail, North Carolina university students and a drama group; and the presentations on the place and welfare of those working in the sex trade.

The Albert Schweitzer Institute presentation spoke of engaging with cultures to find and build on existing concepts and traditions to promote health and wellbeing and an equality of gender. The social demographics researcher had done recent and enjoyable work with Maori communities in New Zealand. The occupational therapist was a tutor who regularly took teams of students to Guatemala to both give them practical clinical experience and encounter a culture very different from their own to learn from.

I went to several young people presentations that had a glorious impatience and high level of engagement about them. A 14 year-old student from Rwanda raising awareness and being an activist in her high school community! A 17 year-old New York schoolgirl using rap to express and raise issues of gender and transgender in the education setting! A North Carolina university student taking on gender attitudes and issue in the defence forces. The drama group who came out pointing forcefully and stating "Did you know the weight loss industry is a something billion dollar industry?" And then going on to compare this amount with other things such as a small country's GDP, or the amount invested in some areas of research – or not as the case may be.

The most disturbing and challenging presentations for me were the ones about the sex trade. Last year when we were there we were challenged by many other delegates as New Zealanders about our legalised prostitution legislation. The arguments were that this was never something that you would raise or encourage your young women to aspire to as a way of life. So I thought that I should make some effort to learn about the issues that drive this. I went to two presentations that were so very different that they have caused me to continue reflecting ever since.

The first presentation was titled “Which Policies Best Respect Sex Workers’ Rights? A conversation With Sex Worker Rights Defenders.” It was not a polished high tech presentation. It contained within it a former human trafficker’s story of how he was drawn into this at age 14. It made for challenging listening and it promoted the New Zealand model as the best and preferred one by sex workers because it allowed for the establishment of a trust relationship with other society institutions such as Police and Inland Revenue and gave them some recourse when abuses occur. Questioning at this session was controlled through the means of asking for and collecting written questions and responding within the time allowed.

The second presentation was quite, quite different. Sponsored by Women Graduates-USA, Canadian Federation of University Women, United Nations of the USA and the United Nations Foundation, its title was “The World’s Oldest Oppression: Violence Against Women and Girls: Prostitution, Trafficking, and Non-State Torture.” A panel of well-spoken women; harrowing stories of the worst of family degradation of their girl children; and the concept of much of this as torture – all served to really disturb me confronting me with a reality so different to mine. And this one promoting the criminalising of users of the sex trade, which the previous presentation had rejected as being unworkable and driving practices underground.

It was refreshingly fortunate for me that we met together after this to have tea and then go out to see the Empire State Building by night. To replace some of those so disturbing images with the magic that is a great city lit up and in the company of people who have a reverence for life and living.

The disturbing nature of those presentations gave another Appreciation moment of gratitude for a life that has been so blessedly different. And comes with the challenge that given this how do I responsibly and helpfully use this gift of my life to share into those other lives that are lived more fearfully and precariously?

It is these thoughts that cause me to continue to reflect on the direction and tasks that God might be calling me to.

So once again, my Appreciation for all the work that makes this delegation possible.

**Lyn Heine**

**End Discrimination Against Women**

*Become a CEDAW city*



## **Highlights of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women CSW 60 New York March 2016 - “Leaving no one behind” - Ariana Ridley**

### **Awareness from UN interactions**

Prior to this event I believed I had a reasonable understanding surrounding gender inequality not only on a personal or national level but additionally on a more global scale. Attending such an event confirmed how inept my understanding was, realising that on a global scale the inequalities faced by women throughout the world is astronomical from torture to leadership inequalities the impact was profound.

### **Parallel and side event themes**

Aside from the provoking and sickening reality of the stories and impacts of child trafficking, sexual violence and mutilation experienced by attending some parallel events, overall the events were reassuring, well organised, enlightening and encouraging with comfort taken from the many attended that globally there are many organisations and individuals who are working hard towards the 2030 Goals.

### **Networking**

Due to a short stay my international networks were limited, but within New Zealand many contacts were formed, meeting the most amazing and inspiring women I have ever come into contact with.

### **Lives of women and girls and the opportunities I see for improving**

To encourage and empower women and girls to believe in themselves, and that education is the key to self-belief. To ensure that all are treated fairly and appropriately and to encourage the women within my organisation to engage in leadership, inequality and equality issues and have the courage to stand up for what they believe in. This will be done through education and wellness workshops, yoga courses and the Women's Network.

### **Spin off ideas PWANZ**

More awareness of the individuals that attended either local newspapers or newsletters. For individuals to actively share their experiences to make more people aware of the CSW and what it achieves along with NGO's. I have done two presentations to management and personnel, of which was well received. Recently I had the pleasure of presenting to the St John Women's Network Group at our National Office. It was very well received and those present felt that not only is it worth while to attend for many reasons, but the knowledge and leadership values I have gained have been immeasurable.

### **The experience**

Reflection is such a powerful tool. I find I am still disturbed, provoked, confused and challenged by the conversations and workshops I attended. However for all the inequality, torture, shame, disengagement and inequality there is, I am reassured by the fact that there are many organisations, officials, governments and individuals who have set goals, boundaries and landmarks to ensure no one gets left behind.

Additionally I have so much gratitude and respect for Carol Grant who challenged me to consider such a life changing event to New York, and for the other inspiring and talented women who attended the PWANZ delegation.

Carols organisation, knowledge, care and reassurance was outstanding. I cannot thank Carol and the Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand for accepting and allowing me to attend.

**With sincere appreciation**  
**Ariana Ridley**



### **CSW 60 by Alofa Lale**

Being selected to be a member of the PWANZ delegation to CSW60 in 2016 at the United Nations in New York has been a major highlight for me in my life. Never in my wildest imaginings did I ever think I would go to New York, let alone be representing PWANZ at the United Nations. After a lot of support from family and friends as well as people in the community the dream became a reality.

The Parallel events and Side events provided much insight and awareness of gender issues whilst being run alongside UN events. There were so many exciting speakers and inspiring stories of women who are paving the way for other women and often without much support or fanfare. Women who were at the coalface of business, human rights, worldwide organisations and many more presented seminars which while being very informative were also very inspiring and encouraging for me.

Possibilities for networking were endless whether over a cup of coffee, lunch or even while waiting for a seminar or session to begin. Easy conversations ensued and telling of individual stories that usually began with "I am..." Lifelong friends have been made from CSW60. These stories are continuing to be shared even now well after CSW60 over Facebook and email.

I would really love to be able to offer the opportunity for more Pacific women to attend a CSW in the very near future. As a growing number of New Zealand born Pacific youth grow up in New Zealand, strong families and community networks of support are needed to strengthen and engender a keen sense of identity, of who they are and who they will become. CSW60 is a great way to expose young Pacific women to new ideas and forums for sharing them with others. At CSW the youth were very well represented and there were many events being run by and for this growing group of young women.

CSW60 was a life-changing experience for me. It has made me more aware of the impact that I can have on women in my corner of the world. I came away encouraged and determined to meet obstacles head-on and not to give up when the doors are closed to me. The stories that other women have shared whether as part of CSW60 or in passing the time with each other has made CSW60 come alive for me. I have returned to Aotearoa strengthened for the journey ahead of me knowing that there are other women who are also striving to do their part where they are.

My heartfelt thanks to Rev Carol Grant our group leader for her wisdom and guidance, from the time I sent in my application and well after I returned home. It was also great to travel with such a great group of women warriors who have a great sense of fun and humour. Thank you to PWANZ for the opportunity to represent you as part of this delegation to CSW60. I would love the opportunity to travel to another CSW in the not too distant future. Last but not least, a big thank you to my family and friends as well as the many communities to which I belong for your support and love. God is good! All the time!



**Report - Suzanne Bishop**  
**Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand delegation member**  
**United Nations Commission on the Status of Women CSW 60 - March 2016**

The 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women concluded with UN Member States committing to the gender-responsive implementation of Agenda 2030. A set of agreed conclusions called for enhancing the basis for rapid progress, including stronger laws, policies and institutions, better data and scaled-up financing.

Leaving no one behind became a hope by women and girls around the world and for those of us fortunate to have attended CSW 60.

The Commission recognised women's vital role as agents of development and acknowledged that progress on the Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of Agenda 2030 will not be possible without gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

When we went to CSW we went as PWANZ representatives but we were equal to every one else there. No one was any more important than anyone else. To that end we all respected each other as equals. How this worked in the sessions was that we listened to the speakers and then at question time our opinions and input was as important as anyone else's in the world.

When I went to New York my key areas of interest were empowering women financially and while I did pursue that, I think my avenue of pursuit changed. One area that was totally unexpected for me was that of widowhood and its implications. This was the first session that I went to. As a new widow I knew about social discrimination and I had experience some economic discrimination – however, it was after listening to these sessions that I found that discrimination was firmly embedded in our society and I wanted to help bring change. The speakers kept talking about the poor African women, while I kept thinking about the poor New Zealand women who were also suffering widowhood. I found that it was OK for me to speak because I actually counted too. In two of the sessions on widowhood that I went to there was a world renown lawyer speaking – she was amazing – 84 years old, looked 65 but she was still fighting for widows around the world. She was an inspiration. Later in the week I happened to find myself sitting beside her in the foyer of the UN building. I struck up a conversation with her. We talked as equals – Whoa!!! All of us were on the same side without egos.

There were some fabulous sessions and they were so inspirational. As an Economics teacher of nearly 40 years, I received the biggest Economics lesson of my life – from the women of Uganda. I wrote to them afterwards and asked for their speech, which they were really happy to send me. World famous people were prepared to interact with a stranger from NZ. It brought home to me that you actually didn't really know if the woman sitting beside in a session you was a Prime Minister or a cleaner - you just talked to them as an equal.

The session about water was an inspiration – 'them that control water, control the world'. I asked some big questions here but didn't get great answers...but they did listen. They talked about all of the careers in water and why women weren't getting these jobs. I asked what the jobs were and how the girls in my classes would find out about them – they couldn't answer me. These were experts in the field of water and I don't really understand why they couldn't give me examples beyond plumbers. I can understand what they are

saying but who is going to give the information about possible careers if it is not those people on the ground. Our young girls need them to help.

I enjoyed some sessions where they spoke of creative ways to make employment easier for women. They talked of flexibility and up skilling, better ways of appraisal but were appalled when they heard about the zero hours contract we had in New Zealand.

The sessions on trafficked labour were riveting – more because I realised that trafficked labour was not just in the sex trade but also in every sector of the economy. Most people don't realise which industries this occurs. I have become very suspicious of various service industries in Dunedin and realised that human trafficking occurs in the NZ fishing industry, dairying, construction, horticulture, prostitution industry, forestry, beauty and hospitality. There are articles about businesses being prosecuted for trafficking every couple of days in the Otago Daily – we just don't usually call it that. It gets glossed over under some other heading.

I did not enjoy some of the sessions from some very conservative women. I did not think that they did anything to empower or further the cause of women. I also found that these groups presented a very biased viewpoint. But the UN Commission on the Status of Women is a global forum where all voices can be heard and viewpoints expressed even if they are vastly different to our own.

One of the key things for our delegation was that we all had different interests. We all went to different sessions and came away with different feelings. I think we all grew over the time in so many ways. It was easy to become enraged about the situation for women when we were in New York because we were with people of like minds. It is harder now that we are home where people either don't care or think it is OK here so what are we on about. Lots of people just seem to accept inequality for women

Overall there were 9000 women there together and each one had an opinion as important as any other. It seemed pretty powerful to be there. Learning and sharing with like minded women. We have to go out and empower others now

Thank you to Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand for giving me this opportunity to gain first hand experiences in a global forum and to empower me to make a difference here in New Zealand in so many different places and ways. For me personally, this experience has been life changing



## **SUMMARY OF THE 2016 UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**by Elvina Stephens**

Prior to going to the commission, I did a lot of reading and research of which I was to become very grateful. On the first day I felt completely out of my depth and was very worried about how I was going to survive, let alone contribute to the commission. Everything had an acronym CSW, SDG, agenda 21, CEDAW, BPfA, Agenda 2030, CCUN, and UNESCO just to list a few. Some I knew what they were talking about while others I had to google to establish what they were. For me the turning point was when a group called Climbing Poetree got up and rapped two spoken word poems. These poems spoke of the inequality in the world and how with God, one person can make a difference.

The ten days of the commission were both inspiring and enlightening at the same time. It was a chance for each delegation to say what things are currently like in their own countries. Also, to share what initiatives had worked and which initiatives had not worked as well. As delegates, we were able to say things as we saw them without political agenda or motivation. This meant that we could effectively hold governments to account and have direct input to policy. Each day you got to choose from a range of events run by different governments, NGO's or the United nations (UN). Each event had a panel of four to five speakers that presented their perspective, statistics, and initiatives on the topic. Then the microphone would be opened to the floor for any questions, to make statements and to discuss the topic.

Most topics focussed around Agenda 2030 which is a set of seventeen goals for sustainable development worldwide. These discussions gave a chance for women to voice their perspective and for this to be then presented to a largely male dominated political system. The commission resulted in thirty legally binding conclusions that all 193 member states need to implement or continue following. Amazingly, normal people like myself can have a voice which as a collective, can rise up and change the world.

The three most important lessons I learnt from this experience would be;

1. All countries have major issues and every country worldwide suffers from inequalities. Sometimes people need a vehicle like CSW to discuss and voice these issues and provide an opportunity for governments and the rest of the world to stop and listen to them. I realised sometimes I need to stop, listen and care about the issues and challenges of those around me. I don't need to know all the answers, I just need to know when to stop and listen and when to rise up and act for change.
2. Knowledge is important but is not the same as wisdom. Wisdom is the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgement. We know about these sustainable development goals, NZ helped write them. So how do we apply wisdom to help reach the targets for the year 2030? Now is the time for us to join together and improve this world one change at a time.
3. True leadership is not only the lead voice but also the people alongside them in quiet support. No leader is successful standing on their own. As a leader, sometimes you need to be that support person. Other times you need to challenge the voice. As a leader, a diverse network of people is vital. To build this network you can't hang back and wait for opportunities, you must move out of your comfort zone and take risks, talk to people, ask questions and listen to others. Then awesome things can happen like this inspirational experience of contributing to the UN commission on status of Women 2016.

In Conclusion around the world women and men alike are calling for equality. No country in the world has yet achieved the sustainable development goals. Some voices are silenced. Some cry out in anguish. Some are no longer heard.

Is your voice heard? What collective voice are you joining? But most importantly, how can we make sure Christian women in NZ are heard?

I will conclude with a quote from Helen Clarks speech “No society on earth is free of gender imbalance between masculine and feminine. Both men and women are affected by gender injustice, and need each other for true progress” Thank you for the experience of attending CSW 2016. Epically to Carol for organising everything for us and for having us all at the same accommodation which made it a lot easier to network with the other PWANZ delegates and far more enjoyable.

**Many thanks, Elvina Stephens**



### **CCSW 60 Comments by Erin Pendreigh**

My journey to understanding the complex nature regarding gender equality and all that this subject covers previous to going to the UN was a personal one – based on personal experience and observation. Preparing and then attending CSW60 enlarged my understanding, enlarged my worldview, it challenged some perceptions I had, it gave me language to use when talking with others about this remarkable inequality, it grounded my previous personal understanding into facts and figures regarding the landscape in the west and more narrowly here in New Zealand, attending challenged my naivety regarding the media and portrayal of our government,

I found the parallel and side events harder to engage with. At times this wasn't because of the topic or the panel but because of the space being too small for the people attending. The panels were also more open to their topics being high jacked if you were by people wanting their story to be heard. I can only imagine how important that would have been for the women (to have their story heard) but at times the convener was not able to bring the event back to the story at hand. It was powerful to hear stories from especially the African continent – it made me more desperate though to hear from panels in the west – mainly because I feel we think we have it all sorted in the West but our discrimination and lack of justice is just better hidden under our western veneer.

I found the networking hard to do. I did appreciate the make-up of the delegation itself. We were all quite different and looking for different things personally at CSW60. It was good to have the opportunity to meet with delegates from other NZ NGO's. Although there wasn't an immediate networking opportunity I know that in my role with Presbyterian Women the benefit from attending CSW60 will be evident

I am still processing how I as an individual, how I as part of an organisation such as the Presbyterian Church, and how we as women can be part of a movement that can change and improve, and even shed light on this real issue of gender here in New Zealand.

I am now the Coordinator of the Transition Team for PWANZ. Applying for this role was a direct result of going to CSW60. I feel passionately that we need to fight for PWANZ to be in existence – albeit in a new form. I haven't spoken specifically to groups about my trip to the United Nations – but I am using what I saw, experienced and was inspired by in all my conversations with leaders of our churches here in the south and nationally.

This trip was all I thought it would be and more. My employer sent me as part of the delegation to help me expand my world view. I am fundamentally changed by going on this trip - I feel it but people have also commented in regard to the change they see in me. To be honest if my employer hadn't have paid I wouldn't have been able to attend.

- I wish I hadn't missed the Ecumenical Day that was run on the Saturday before I arrived.
- I would comment that the second week of the CSW event had less energy around it. If I had have understood that I may have timetabled some things differently.



## **CSW 60 report from Emily Olsen**

As I reflect on the 60th Commission on the Status of Women I can say that I have always known that there are Gender Injustices, both in New Zealand and throughout the world. What I didn't know was the huge breadth and depth of these issues. What I learnt about, were the devastating costs that these injustices are having on the lives of real women. I still struggle with the scale of the problem, from the LGBT communities in America, to the girls unable to attend school in Pakistan. The scale is enormous and I am unsuccessful in knowing where to start in both talking about these issues and acting on them. My general thoughts are that no country has a 50/50 balance of equal rights and all countries have room for improvement.

What enlightened me most about the Side Events and Parallel Events was the passion with which women spoke about their individual causes. The people who impressed me were extremely articulate, but the people who I will always remember were passionate, made that way because of their incredible and often devastating experiences. I will never forget the ex-prostitutes who spoke about Prostitution Law Reform and the Nordic Model for change. Nor could I forget being in the same room as Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka when she talked about women as the agents for change – her passion was explosive.

Every day was an opportunity to network with NGOs from around the world. There was also the opportunity to talk with people from Government organisations – The Maori Womens Welfare League, the Counsel of Women and Pacific Women's Watch. The great thing about the Commission was that it opened the door for thought and communication.

To improve the lives of women in NZ we have to acknowledge the problems and talk about them. We need to talk about violence in the home and show our children what healthy relationships are. We need to look legislatively at keeping stepfathers who are abusive, away from their partner's children. We still need to tell our girls that they can be anything. My hope is that in 150 years time, their descendants won't need to be told this because they will have an innate knowledge that this is just the way it is. I think that we need to let our young women know that they are good and clever and capable and that they can make a positive difference. They need to know that they are doing a good job.

The 60th Commission highlighted the plight of so many women globally. Each country has its own needs and often these needs are widespread and diverse. The women who spoke at the side events had stories that were sometimes heartbreaking and often uplifting. The greatest message that I took from the Commission was one of hope in the next generation. The women that I went with made this trip a fabulous experience. They were strong minded, yet thoughtful – Because of the diversity of the group, the experience was unique and unrepeatable in the best possible way. This is an experience that I will always be appreciative of and I will never forget. I was privileged to have the opportunity to attend what was for me a once in a lifetime experience. If only there were no need to have a 61st Commission on the Status of Women.



## **CSW 60 Parallel Event Title - March 2016**

### **Breaking Cycles of Poverty through Education: Models from Presbyterian Churches**

#### **Parallel Event Description**

Education for women and girls reduces poverty, improves health, and improves the distribution of income. The Millennium Development Goals have helped many communities in the Global South to bring previously uneducated children into the classroom.

The Sustainable Development Goals challenge the world to do even more in the area of education. Presbyterian Churches have helped hundreds of thousands of girls learn to read and write and hundreds of thousands of women to deepen their education. In hundreds of communities, Presbyterians were the first to open up opportunities for formal education for girls. Panel members will reflect on ways Presbyterians continue this tradition and engage in ministries of education today. Each panelist will lift up models of educational ministry. A question and answer period with participants will follow.

#### **Parallel Event Sponsor Maximum 5 organisations**

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Presbyterian Church of East Africa, National Woman's Guild. and Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand

#### **Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand**

##### **The Rev Carol L Grant, United Nations Convenor Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand**



Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa. Greetings to you all. Thank you for your introduction.

In New Zealand we traditionally introduce ourselves, not by our background as is usual at events such as this, but more personally. Because we are people of the land, we speak of places which ground us in the country we call home. I will do this in English on this occasion.

So my name is Carol Grant. I was born in Christchurch City (Otautahi) the centre of which was devastated by a series of large earthquakes five years ago. My rivers are the Waimakariri and the Rakaia, wide braided rivers which flow across the Canterbury Plains. My sacred mountain is Aoraki, the highest peak in New Zealand. I now call the city of Dunedin (Otepoti) home. It is situated in Otago, one of the southern most provinces in New Zealand.

I lead a delegation of ten amazing women here at CSW60. You will be able to tell the Kiwis amongst you by their accents. They may sing a Waiata or response at the end of my presentation

#### **Introduction**

New Zealand a small young very beautiful scenic country, consisting of two larger and several small islands down at the bottom of the world near Antarctica. We straddle on the Pacific Ring of Fire. Huge tectonic plates grind and twist our two main islands so we have stunning mountains, deep fiords, continual earthquakes, often small but frequently severe,

and specular volcanic eruptions, geysers and boiling mud pools. Along with our Pacific Island neighbours, we are learning to cope with natural disasters, rising sea levels, and the effects of climate change. We are fortunate that our founding document is the Treaty of Waitangi between the people of the land, the Maori and the Crown. Under its umbrella we are learning to address past and present grievances and to work together for the good of all the people who have come to call New Zealand home.

The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has a proud history of social justice, advocacy and action. Our congregations are often small, a mix of city and rural parishes, and our society is rapidly changing around us. The work of Presbyterian Support or PresCare is a treasure of our church and has been an instrument of social transformation throughout the nation.

Presbyterian Women also have an extraordinary history of interfacing with the church and community, and we have had the privilege of Special Consultative Status with the United Nations since 1998. We are not afraid to speak out and to speak up when many other remain silent. Our mission activities and special projects target women and girls in New Zealand, the Pacific and around the world.

Presbyterian Women are privileged to be able to join with the Presbyterian Church USA and panel members to introduce a model of our organisations working together that we have found useful in our part of God's world.

For Presbyterians in New Zealand, there comes a time when you can no longer be silent, a time when you are moved to speak, and to act. For Presbyterian Women, the PCANZ, and Presbyterian Support. That time is now.

Our mandate, as we all work together, is the verse from Luke 4 :18

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to set the oppressed free”.

We believe the Church is called again and again to be an agent of change in our communities, and to learn what is currently happening to families, women and children in our country to, understand how we can make a difference, to act, and to speak out. We agree that education for women and girls and their extended families reduces poverty, improves health, and improves the distribution of income.

The Millennium Development Goals have helped many of our communities to bring women and children back into education especially solo and teenage mothers.

The Sustainable Development Goals are challenging us to do even more to assist women and girls who bear the brunt of poverty and violence.

The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (the Presbyterian Church) is engaged alongside government and non-government agencies in delivering social services to mitigate and address child poverty and family violence. We are represented on the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services and involved in regular meetings with senior government ministers to raise social justice issues and advocate for change.

Presbyterian Support New Zealand, a denominational agency delivering social services, and the parent Presbyterian Church work through the PresCare partnership to respond to



the needs and nurture the wellbeing of children and families in Aotearoa New Zealand.

PresCare has developed resources to educate church members about child poverty, family violence and social transformation. This is particularly important in a social context where there are many misconceptions and misunderstandings about poverty and family violence.



Local congregations and Church schools have worked with State schools to enhance educational opportunities through breakfast clubs, sports academies, food gardens, homework support and youth trusts. There remains a challenge to further explore the gendered nature of poverty and family violence, and for the Presbyterian Church to be explicit about the ways in which empowerment of women and girls is achieved through these activities.

Presbyterian Women are currently challenging the church to hear the voices of women and girls, in leadership positions, in the pews and in the wider community.

The call to action this year from our Moderator, the Rt Rev Andrew Norton, is directed towards two of our most enduring problems in our communities – family violence and child poverty. In New Zealand hundreds of children are living in poverty. Nearly half of all homicides and reported violent crime is family violence related. These are sobering facts.

We believe the Church is called to participate in transformation for the the good of individuals, communities and societies as a whole. The process of transformation, we find, is a long one, requiring long-term commitment, courage and perseverance. Social transformation examines the nature of change; it encourages us to take a look at ourselves as we seek to become effective change agents, and looks at some of the common obstacles to change, as well as offering some tools to help in the process of bringing about change. Change starts with individuals choosing to do things differently; it starts with connection and engagement to develop understanding, and builds toward taking action.

**We are working in partnership across the Church and I would like to introduce some of the ways we are doing this nationally and locally.**

**Partnership model between . . .**

Presbyterian Church Aotearoa New Zealand,  
Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand,  
Presbyterian Support New Zealand, our social service agency



**1 The Justice & Action study booklet** has been produced by PresCare – the partnership between the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and Presbyterian Support – to help equip congregations to take action on family violence and child poverty.

Social transformation is the theme of the resource. The booklet came from the research commissioned by Moderator, the Rt Rev Andrew Norton, to enable the Church to speak out and have a voice on the issues of child poverty and family violence. Justice & Action examines the complex causes and impacts of child poverty and family violence and considers the unique role of the Church in bringing about change. All congregations were sent printed copies of the Justice & Action booklet. Copies of these are available for those who are interested in this resource. There is also a fact sheet prepared by a member of our delegation. **NB Attached at the end of this report**

## **Partnership Models from Dunedin City where I live**

### **1 Cosy Homes Vision: Every home in Dunedin is warm and cosy by 2025**

This vision is bold and ambitious and intends that warm and cosy homes become the Dunedin norm within just over a decade.

In Dunedin City there are approximately 40,000 houses and it is estimated that 18,800 dwellings (46% of households) have residents in (or at risk of being in) fuel poverty. Exposure to constant low temperatures presents a health risk for occupants and a drain on the Dunedin economy and health and social services. Stakeholders identified the benefits of a 'joined-up' approach to deliver not only good health and well-being outcomes that will also be good for the Dunedin economy.

Health care is one of the biggest costs associated with poor quality housing. A large number of both young and old Dunedin residents suffer unnecessary respiratory conditions as a result of living in cold houses. Our topography, climate and housing stock presents a challenge that Cosy Homes is addressing. Many of those living in cold damp houses are single older women, young solo mothers and students.

The Cosy Homes Group members include representatives from a variety of backgrounds, including: the church, community, landlords, funders, government agencies, housing providers, public health, local government, national organisations and research groups.- Cosy Homes is about working together to achieve a shared vision and ensure that Dunedin residents will welcome friends and family to a warm and cosy home, which has affordable energy costs and a healthy indoor environment. It does not matter whether they are homeowner or tenant. Our key words: Connect, communicate, educate and coordinate. The first project is to launch a free ceiling and under floor insulation, for Community Services Card holders in homes with no or not enough insulation.

**Who qualifies?** If the home was built before the year 2000 **and** the home owner or main tenant has a Community Services Card **and** there are children under 17 or adults over 65 living in the home or someone with high health needs **or**; the landlord has eligible tenants living there. Other programmes among many, between the church and community, in our city are:

### **2 Life Ready – Work Ready**

**Youth Grow's 'Life Ready – Work Ready'** This was established as a joint effort between Presbyterian Support Otago, two local Presbyterian congregations, and the Ministry of Social Development as a 'real work for real pay' opportunity. Youth Grow is set in a horticultural and nursery setting for 16 - 24 year olds disadvantaged in the job market or facing barriers to employment. In addition aimed to enhance social participation in the community, provide a skill base to assist with employment and reduce long term dependency on welfare. This provides a safe environment for women and girls especially.

### **3 Buddy Programme**

Enriching children's lives with shared time, friendship, fun and encouragement. Children are shaped by their experiences, and for some children their experience of life is not as positive as it should be.

The added dimension of a positive role model from outside the family unit who can befriend an 'at risk' child reaps benefits that shape a child's life into the future.

The Buddy programme, since its inception 25 years ago has sought to make a difference in the lives of 'at risk' children. The saying that 'it takes a village to raise a child' is demonstrated through this programme where in our twenty first century world, the village is the broader connections with others in the community beyond the family unit.

The contributions that many volunteers have made to this programme is a real credit to the individual's giving generously of their time and commitment. It simply could not happen without them. So many young lives have been changed. Many of these volunteers are church people, young and older, and many of those assisted are from single parent families where boys do not have a male role model or girls have no female role models to interact with on a one to one basis. Friendships made often last well beyond the time of the programme.

#### **4 The 'Out of Gate' Programme**

Family Works staff and Presbyterian Women support women released from New Zealand Prisons to settle back into the community. For the Otago region, Christchurch Women's is the predominant release Prison, but there are other women from around New Zealand who choose to come to Otago make a new start.

The programme, 'Out of Gate,' is designed for women who have served a short sentence (under 2 years) and who believe with the right support, they are very likely to remain out of prison. The first few months following a short prison sentence can be very difficult for women. With no job, often damaged or broken family relationships and frequently no place to live, a return to old ways, or an unsafe relationship is a risk.

The Out of Gate programme, funded by the Department of Corrections, aims to reduce the risk of re-offending by supporting women at this critical time. In Otago, the Family Works team is currently working with eleven Out of Gate clients, one in Oamaru and ten in Dunedin.

**A story.** One of the women we are supporting is Jodi (29). Jodi is a young mum from Gore. She left school and home at 15, and had her first child, a baby girl, at 16. She was a hard working young woman, juggling three part-time jobs and a growing family. (her story)

#### **Long term release**

Another more private group of women help with health needs for women who have been in prison for longer terms. These are referred when they come to Dunedin on release. Assistance with health needs, basic things like clothing, toiletries, opportunities for social interaction, accompanying them to job interviews and so on. This is an advocacy model essentially. Friendship builds trust and confidence and these interactions often become long term.

#### **Conclusion**

Up and down New Zealand the Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Women, and Presbyterian Support are working together on many different levels, in many different ways appropriate for their community, to educate women and girls and to assist families and

groups of 'at risk' young people. We still have much to do but together we can make a difference. These partnership models work well for us in New Zealand.

Sources : PCANZ, PSNZ PSOtago, PWANZ

## Maori Song - Waiata

Tūtira mai ngā iwi,  
tātou tātou e  
Tūtira mai ngā iwi,  
tātou tātou e  
Whai-a te marama-tanga,  
me te aroha - e ngā iwi!  
Ki-a ko tapa tahi,  
Ki-a ko-tahi rā  
Tātou tātou e  
(Repeat)  
Tā-tou tā-tou e E!!  
Hi aue hei !!!

## English Translation

Line up together people  
All of us, all of us  
Stand in rows people  
All of us,  
all of us  
Seek after knowledge  
and love of others -  
everyone  
Think as one  
Act as one  
All of us, all of us  
All of us, All of us!!  
Hi aue hei !!!

## Poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand<sup>1</sup>

- Since the implementation of neo-liberal economic policies in the 1980s the proportion of New Zealanders living in relative income poverty and material hardship has increased. This increase has been most marked for children aged under 18 years. In 2014 there were 305,000 children (29%) aged 0-17 years living in relative income poverty.<sup>2</sup>
- 'Non-income' measures of material hardship estimate that in 2014 around 14% of New Zealand children were going without things they need such as adequate nutritious food, appropriate clothing and footwear, a warm dry house or medical care when needed.
- Children living in sole parent families are more likely than other children to be living in relative income poverty or material hardship. In Aotearoa New Zealand most sole parents are women.
- There is also strong ethnic disparity with Māori and Pacific children in New Zealand more likely to live in relative income poverty and material hardship. An estimated 39% of Māori and 51% of Pacific children in New Zealand experienced material hardship in 2014.
- Addressing child poverty is important to enable children to have "sufficient family income to participate as equal members of New Zealand society".<sup>3</sup>
- Since the 1980s Aotearoa New Zealand has had the biggest increase in income gaps of any developed country and also has high wealth inequality. In 2010 the median net worth for men was NZ\$100,000, for women NZ\$90,000 and for sole parents NZ\$15,000.<sup>4</sup>
- There are strong associations between poverty and family violence. In New Zealand around 14 women are killed each year due to family violence.

## Educational responses<sup>5</sup>

- The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (the Presbyterian Church) is engaged alongside government and non-government agencies in delivering social services to mitigate and address child poverty and family violence.
- The Presbyterian Church is represented on the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services and involved in regular meetings with senior government ministers to raise social justice issues and advocate for change.
- Presbyterian Support New Zealand, a denominational agency delivering social services, and the parent Presbyterian Church work through the PresCare partnership to respond to the needs and nurture the wellbeing of children and families in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- PresCare has developed resources to educate church members about child poverty, family violence and social transformation. This is particularly important in a social context where there are many misconceptions and misunderstandings about poverty and family violence.
- Local congregations and Church schools have worked with State schools to enhance educational opportunities through breakfast clubs, sports academies, food gardens, homework support and youth trusts.

There remains a challenge to further explore the gendered nature of poverty and family violence, and for the Presbyterian Church to be explicit about the ways in which empowerment of women and girls is achieved through these activities.



<sup>1</sup> Child poverty monitor technical report <http://www.nzchildren.co.nz>; Justice and action resource from Presbyterian Church <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/for-ministers/prescare/justice-action>; State of the nation report from Salvation Army <http://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/research-media/social-policy-and-parliamentary-unit/latest-report/moving-targets>

<sup>2</sup> Defined as equivalised household income less than 60% of contemporary median income after housing costs.

<sup>3</sup> Boston, J. & Chapple, S. (2015). The child poverty debate: Myths, misconceptions and misunderstandings. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books

<sup>4</sup> Rashbrooke, M. (2015) Wealth and New Zealand. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books

<sup>5</sup> Justice and action <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/for-ministers/prescare/justice-action>