

Circle

Volume 50, No. 1 February 2018

**Renewing the
Life of the
Earth p10**

**Lenten Poem
p15**

**Diocesan News
p21**

The Association of Anglican Women



Theme for 2015-2018:

Grow in Discipleship, Dreams, Dedication

The Aims of AAW:

-to unite in prayer and participate in the mission of the Church

-to promote, safeguard and nurture Christian family life

Contributions for Circle

Diocesan AAW Group and Members' Items: Please help the *Circle* editorial team by sending your contributions and reports, email or hand-written, to your Diocesan *Circle* Publicity Representative so that she can collate, edit, proof and select what to send from each diocese to keep to the approximate word allowance of about 360 words per diocese. This allows for around two pictures.

Diocesan Coordinators: All copy should be emailed to the *Circle* Co-ordinator, Pat Vincent, patvincent999@gmail.com.

Text: It can be in the body of an email or attached as a Word document.

Photos: High Resolution original jpg files or raw digital photo files. These will be *large separate files, not pictures included in a Word document.*



Join us on Facebook: Search for NZ Assn of Anglican Women

Cover Photos: Front : Karehana Bay, Plimmerton, Wellington

Back Cover: Plimmerton Boating Club Wharf

Copy deadline for the next issue:

30 March

Please help us by adhering to this deadline

From the Editorial Team

Advent and Christmas have passed, and we are approaching the end of January at the time of writing this. Many people are returning from holidays and family time during the festive season, bubbling with happy memories, and we are very aware of those whose festive season was marred by accidents, sickness, loneliness and/or bereavements. To those who face 2018 with uncertainty or apprehension, we hope that our issue of *Circle* gives you a sense of being part of a magazine family, and with that in mind, we pray with you:

Circle me O God, keep hope within, despair without.

Circle me O God, keep peace within, keep turmoil out.

Circle me O God, keep calm within, keep storms without.

Circle me O God, keep strength within, keep weakness out.

Once again, a big thank-you to all who have contributed to this issue. Your generous sharing is so much appreciated.

The Editorial Team

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Your *Circle* Editorial Team: Co-ordinator: Pat Vincent - patvincent999@gmail.com
Secretary: Pamela Hartley - pamela.o.hartley@gmail.com
Business Manager: Janice Viles - janiceviles4@gmail.com
Editorial : Mary Houston - maryehouston57@gmail.com, Diana Maunder - diana.maunder@gmail.com
Graphic Layout: Anne Stainer: annestainer@gmail.com

Letters to the Editorial Team

Dear Editorial Team,

Some parishes in my diocese are forming Huddle groups. What is a Huddle, who can belong, and what does it do? Sounds interesting.

‘Wondering’

Dear ‘Wondering’,

Up till recently the focus has been on Mission with which to build the Church. Now it is realised that disciples are needed to do this, for it is effective discipleship that builds the Church, and, in turn, develops effective Mission.

A Huddle is a method used to form disciples, as Jesus did, to help teach us the craft of discipleship, and to encourage us to put in the time and effort to become good at it.

Huddles do not grow by adding new members. Huddles grow when someone decides to invite a group of people to join them on a journey of discipleship. That is: they invite a small number of people, usually 4-10, whom they feel God has called them to invest in. They meet with their Huddles regularly, at least once a fortnight, and intentionally disciple them in a group setting.

The formation of Huddles is a growing venture embraced by an increasing number of dioceses and parishes. If you wish to learn more, you will find most helpful the book ‘Building a Discipling Culture’ by Mike Breen and the 3DM Team.

Editorial Team

Below: Part of the greetings card sent to us by the AAW Diocese of Polynesia (see also photo on page 21).



*As we celebrate the birth of our
Savior Jesus Christ
the AAW of the Diocese of Polynesia, Moana
Women Missions
Wishes You peace, joy, and
May this incredible time of giving and spending
time with family bring you blessing that lasts
throughout 2018.*

Important Dates

- 17 March: Provincial Executive Meeting
- 24 March: Waikato/Taranaki Meeting in Te Kuiti
- 5-8 October: Triennial Conference



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President's Notes

Dear Members & Friends

Happy New Year and very best wishes for a wonderful year. I hope you have had the time to enjoy some of this wonderful weather we've been having – a time to smell the roses.

I've been busy sorting out all my paperwork, a chance to reflect on important things, to discard things and make room for the future. A time to think of the coming year and what it holds in store, is always an exciting thought. A time to make plans, particularly in my case as I won't be starting a new year as a teacher but a new beginning in the next chapter of my life called 'retirement'.

With AAW in my thoughts I was reading an article which said: *"The start of a new year is an ideal time to reflect on the past, take an account of your Christian walk, and consider the direction God may want to lead you in the coming days. Set aside some time to pause and evaluate your spiritual condition as you seek God's presence"* - Mary Fairchild. This is all very pertinent as we continue

our AAW journey moving forward and begin our Lenten journey.

This year promises some exciting initiatives, with our membership brochure ready to be distributed, a new website and *Circle* evolving. An exciting conference is promised in October as we honour the past, present and look toward the future. The conference pamphlet will be distributed in March.

I had the pleasure of attending all the Wellington Regional Advent Services and I spoke at two of them. It was lovely to talk to our ladies and find out what was important to them as AAW members as we journey forward together to grow our organisation. Again the fellowship of like-minded Christian women was the response. One woman said she had just joined and the reason was that someone had personally invited her.

A New Year resolution for us all could be to invite one new member to our group. It is important to



reach out to those around us in our congregations. I have been mindful of this recently and I have made a real effort with new women attending our church services with several keen to attend.

We should also look toward parishes without AAW groups, and extend the hand of friendship to them. Remember to keep telling our stories in our churches, particularly with AAW Sunday in February - I have the pleasure of sharing our story in Palmerston North at their AAW Sunday service. Wear your badges with pride.

Brian and I spent New Year with friends in Auckland and on the way we stayed in Te Kuiti. This gave me the opportunity to visit and talk with Mary Macnaughtan on the steering committee

**Capital City AAW's
Advent Service Altar at
St Mary's, Karori**

for the Waikato/Taranaki Diocese. I will be attending a meeting there on the 24th March to discuss the future of this diocese so I would love to meet as many of you as possible.

In January and February what is ahead of you in the coming year can sometimes look very daunting. Remember what Martin Luther King Jr wrote:

“If you can't fly, then run, If you can't run, then walk, If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.” – Martin Luther King Jr.

Blessings

Pat



Inspirational Woman - Ann Weems



Ann Weems, Poet, born Nashville, Tennessee 1934, died 2016.

In life, Ann Barr Weems was always reaching for rainbows. And—through the multihued palette of her prodigious poetry—Weems gave the world an extraordinary vision of God’s and the rainbow’s promise.

On 17 March 2016, the gifted and prolific “Presbyterian poet laureate” reached her own rainbow, dying to eternal life at the age of 81 due to complications from a brain tumour.

In an obituary published on March 20 in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, her family described Ann as “a noted writer, speaker, liturgist and worship leader”. Among her

seven published books or collections of poems, meant to be used in worship, in personal devotions, and in discussions, are *Kneeling in Jerusalem*, *Kneeling in Bethlehem* and the best-selling *Psalms of Lament*. She is also the author of the critically-acclaimed poem, *Balloons Belong in Church*, about her then four-year old son, Todd, who brought an orange balloon with pink stripes to church school one Sunday morning. Todd was murdered on the night of his 21st birthday.

Ann was born July 9, 1934 in Nashville, Tennessee. Her father was a Presbyterian minister. Her mother was a lawyer and an author of seven historical novels and children’s books, including *The Bell Witch at Adams*.

Ann was honoured with both the Lifetime Achievement Award and the David Steele Distinguished Writer Award by the Presbyterian Writers Guild.

“Ann Weems was an inspired poet, and a true friend,” Barrie Shepherd (also a poet) wrote in an email. “Her gracious ways with words

endowed her with that rare and magical ability to speak directly and movingly to the average person in the pew and at the same time to reach toward the transcendent and the sublime. Her several books of poetry and meditations have touched and illuminated countless lives; enriching the daily round of the faithful believer, as well as bringing rich new insights to the traditional seasons and festivals of Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter.

Ann's writing was deeply rooted in the scriptures, and in the daily lives, both joys and sorrows, of the people of God."

She once said that writing was for her, a spiritual exercise, a form of prayer in which one can imagine what might be and in the writing help it to come true. Let Ann have the last word with her unpublished poem, written in 2010.

Sources: Anne Gover, Google search on Ann Weems, poet

When You Hear of My Demise

*When you hear of my demise
Don't believe a word of it!
Our God is the God of the living
And I am living still!
If it were not so
He would have told us!*

*Don't believe a word of it!
And whatever you do
Please please please
Don't eulogize me!*

*Gather instead for worship!
To celebrate God
Who gives each of us Life Abundant!*

*Turn mourning into morning
Turn tears into laughter!
Turn sadness into joy!
Turn sombreness into celebration!*

*Remembering that Jesus is
The way, the truth, the life.
Gather to celebrate life with scripture
and prayer
With jazz band, with choirs, with
pipers, with dancing*

*Follow with faithfulness the life you
have been given!*

*I left this earth in Alleluias
Dancing with the angels of life
Among the stars of God.*

Social Concerns - Renewing the Life of the Earth

Renewing the Life of the Earth

My great-nephew (4) commented recently that some wilting plants looked ‘disappointed’! Taranaki, brown and with a drought already proclaimed in December, would fit that bill too. It’s an odd and unsettling sight, in an area used to an abundance of green.

As we hear of and experience the current fierceness of weather events, here and elsewhere, it brings to mind one of the fivefold missions of the church (which are also AAW’s):

- to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

As I watch the amazing David Attenborough, as I hear the news or read of new and hopeful inventions, I am aware of my mind skittering away from the warnings, the depressing realities that form at least part of the situation and towards all that is so marvellous in

creation and all the ecological efforts that are being made.

But both are vital: that we are informed about what is happening and motivated to help by the urgency of the situation; and that we are encouraged by groups like Green Anglicans (see Facebook!), by inventors of clever machines to gather plastic from the ocean, by recycling projects and so on, so that we, too, join in the move to safeguard and sustain the life of the earth.



Paul had a very clear message that the gospel is not just about humanity; the whole creation groans, waiting to be liberated from its bondage (Romans 8:21). (If he thought it was groaning then, what would he say now?) He also says that God has purposed ‘to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.’ (Ephesians 1:10).

As followers of that Christ, as children of God, what can we do this year to live in harmony with creation, to safeguard it and to

sustain its life?

For myself, I suspect the steps already taken have been baby ones and it's time to take bigger strides. Perhaps even literally, for instance, in using the car less often!

I hope to reduce my use of plastics, finding alternatives to replace containers that break and making or buying some beeswaxed cloths to use instead of clingfilm. I plan to continue to re-use and recycle what I can and reduce my footprint on the earth.

Have I got round to replacing all the lightbulbs with eco-friendly ones? Is it time to buy a second water-tank to water the garden with? Would I be open to sharing equipment with neighbours, rather than our each having our own?

There are also useful groups, such as Forest and Bird and many others, that can use our help, whether financial, lobbying or for practical projects.

Many of us in AAW can remember times when life was maybe less convenient but also a lot more sustainable. We hold

useful knowledge to pass on to the younger members of our families. And we can also remember that there were upsides to sharing more, waiting for things longer and so on; time spent together, the anticipation of good things and the rejoicing and appreciation of them once they arrived.

Let us rejoice in this work this year – hopefully sustaining the earth and renewing its life!

Pip Harrison

Social Concerns Convenor



Mothers' Union

Come Celebrate the Women who brought the Church to birth.

This year we held celebrations for the 40 years Anniversary of the Ordination of Women in our Province. What a beautiful occasion it was, and significant to those, who in their wisdom recognised that we all have an equal place in ministering to the people, and doing God's work. We are unique and we come to God's work with different experiences and skills, and inspired by his gift of his Son who came to save us all.

That our Church is gender equal, a matter that the World is worried about, is showing that we are grown up. That goodness comes from truly sharing our Faith. Mothers' Union has been active around its world in campaigning for gender equality, and an end to gender violence.

We are following after the women apostles of the early Church. The word 'apostle' (apostolos) means someone who is literally 'sent on a mission'. Church history is full of examples of male and female missionaries being sent by a church or driven by personal calling, and

their ministries, which have spread the Gospel. These ministries can be described as apostolic.

The first woman apostle so described in the Bible is 'Junia' in Romans 16 v 7, who was mentioned as "outstanding among the apostles". Andronicus and Junia are mentioned in the New Testament only in Paul's letter to the Romans. Paul speaks very warmly of this couple, who were possibly a married couple or brother and sister.

From the text Romans 16 v 7 we can see that Andronicus and Junia were both well known in the Church, or it seems Paul would not have mentioned them in his letter. Maybe they were related to him, or were fellow Jews, or perhaps they were imprisoned with Paul. It is likely that they had been Christians for some time, and may have been among the founders in Rome. They were considered as outstanding among the apostles.

Other New Testament women leaders supporting Jesus were Mary, his mother; Mary Magdalene, Joanna

(wife of Chuza, Herod's steward) and Susanna and many other unnamed women.

Supporting Paul were Priscilla, Lydia, Phoebe, Chloe, Rufus' mother, Timothy's mother, the four Prophet daughters of Philip, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Euodia, Syntyche and Junia. It is interesting to note that these were all Jewish women.

Gebirah (mother of Davidic Kings) held a special and powerful position in Judea, as did Judge Deborah.

Two outstanding women, post-New Testament to AD 400, feature in illustrations on the walls of the Roman catacombs depicting women in priestly garments, in ministering stances. They are Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine and Monica, mother of Augustine.

There have been in fact, many women and men through the ages who have been visionary, in taking a stance against the corruption in the Church and in society, and to this day are still influencing Church and society policies.

We celebrate Mary Sumner 1828-1921, the founder of the Mothers'

Union, with her vision of 'a world where a loving family is the best place for children of our world to find safety, and in God's love, grow strong, healthy and happy'.

Now in 84 countries with over four million members, we all have our ministries and callings. These may remain life long, or change with circumstances.

We can all learn, and be inspired in our own calling, by these wonderful women in the history of our Faith, and those women amongst us who inspire us today.

Joan Neild

Provincial President

Mothers' Union, Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia



Hymn for 40th anniversary of women's ordination

The following hymn was offered for the Tikanga Pākehā celebration of the 40th year of ordination of women to the Priesthood, to be sung to the tune, Thaxted (I vow to thee my country).

*Praise God for faithful women
who, from the Gospel's birth,
have lived their lives for Jesus
in every land on earth
by leadership and teaching,
with work of loving care,
as visionaries and mystics
in solitude and prayer.
They stand throughout our history
as signs of hope and grace,
revealing Jesus' presence
within their time and place.*

*Give thanks for their persistence
in claiming Jesus' call
to be what he has made them,
whose church includes us all:
to serve as priests and leaders,
stand at their brothers' side,
enriching Jesus' people*

*with gifts too long denied.
Old barriers have fallen;
the Gospel sets us free
to follow where God leads us
in true equality.*

*So we, who walk together
into the coming day,
give thanks for faithful women,
who join us as we pray
to share with those we care for
the truth we have believed,
and bear into the future
the light we have received.
With called and chosen women
who lead us in God's ways,
we bring our dedication,
our offering of praise.*

Marnie Barrell, 2017

Lenten Poem by Ann Weems

*Lent is a time to take time to let the power
of our faith story take hold of us,
a time to let the events get up
and walk around in us,
a time to intensify our living unto Christ,
a time to hover over the thoughts of our hearts,
a time to place our feet in the streets of
Jerusalem or to walk along the sea and
listen to his Word,
a time to touch his robe
and feel the healing surge through us,
a time to ponder and a time to wonder....*

*Lent is a time to allow
a fresh new taste of God!
Perhaps we're afraid to have time to think,
for thoughts come unbidden.*

*Perhaps we're afraid to face our future
knowing our past.*

*Give us courage, O God,
to hear your Word
and to read our living into it.*

*Give us the trust to know we're forgiven
and give us the faith
to take up our lives and walk.*

Reflection - They also serve who only stand and wait

By the time he was middle-aged, the seventeenth century poet John Milton, was completely blind, and his frustration is expressed in his famous sonnet, 'On His Blindness'. There he was, with many years of living in darkness ahead of him. How could he continue his writing, using the talents God had given him. In desperation he asks: 'Does God exact day labour, light denied?'

Then, after some thought, he answers his question thus:

'But patience, to prevent

That murmur soon replies: "God does not need

Either man's work or his own gifts; who best

Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state

Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed

And post o'er land and ocean without rest;

They also serve, who only stand and wait."

In spite of feeling so sorely tested by God, pushed beyond his physical capabilities, he persevered

and did find a way to accomplish the work he felt called to do – by calling on colleagues to be his reader-writers.

Likewise, when we are tested by God, pushed often beyond our physical capabilities, we should try to persevere to fulfil God's call on our life, remembering that those who best bear his yoke, they serve him best.

In our parish I have the job of rostering parishioners in lay ministry. As they age, members find they are unable to fulfil commitments, and retire. My sadness is that some then see little purpose left in their lives, and slip away. Fortunately, others find ways, as did Milton, to compensate. Like one who had been Sacristan and a key figure in our parish for many, many years. She said to me: "Sorry I can't do my jobs any more." Then she smiled. "But, I'm always good for a hug when that is needed."

John's Gospel, chapter 10 verse 42, is wonderfully positive. Whatever the servant of the Gospel experiences, there is the assurance

They also serve who only stand and wait

that the servant will be upheld and sustained by the power of God. By giving oneself to God, one will find the only kind of life that is worth having. Better still, anyone who welcomes such a servant of God, welcomes God himself, so that even the tiniest kindness, such as giving a cup of water to the most humble of God's people, is not forgotten by God.

The commentator Barclay points out that 'the great beauty of this passage is its stress on simple things. The Church and Christ will always need its great orators, its great shining examples of sainthood, its great teachers, those names that are household words; but the Church and Christ will also need those in whose homes there is hospitality, on whose hands there is all the service that makes a home, and in whose hearts there is the caring which is Christian love. All service, ranks the same with God.'

What I find so reassuring is that God does not expect from us more than we are capable of doing. He does test us, and we are sometimes pushed more than we like. But, in

order to serve God, we do not have to be clever or ultra-good, rich or super-generous, beautiful or really famous. We can just be ourselves living and giving in a way that is being true to ourselves, true to God's love. Remember, God loves and appreciates even the simplest of thoughts, words and actions – especially a smile or a hug – for they also serve, who can only stand and wait.

So, let us celebrate and give thanks for all those 'ordinary' women, who touch our lives in so many little ways. Let us pray that their contributions are always recognized and remembered, for in their constant ministry, they are truly inspirational.

Mary Houston



Overseas and Outreach

The Next Step

“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps”

- Proverbs 16:9

2017 was a great year for our neighbour and close friend, Lucy. She carries both an enormous burden, and a huge victory with her chronic illness. She is the oldest person in our community with Sickle Cell disease, as most people here with it, die before age 15.

Three years ago, we joined forces with an 80-year old Italian nun to build a basic 3-room house for Lucy on our land. Lucy lives in one room, and rents out the other two rooms for income.

She’s had a roller coaster 3 years. Two years ago, I called in her friends and family to hospital because I thought she might die. She miraculously survived, but while she was in hospital her jealous friend’s son set fire to her house.

This year she’s been a great companion to our visitors, has

gained her energy back and has not been admitted to hospital once.

When my parents visited earlier in the year, Lucy was in a celebratory mood and she destined her chicken ‘Desmond’ to the pot. When she brought beautifully boiled chicken for us all to taste, Dad cheekily jibed, “I’ll cry because I loved Desmond so much”. Lucy grinned back “You cry with your teeth!”.

The next step for Lucy? Get power for her house, to make it easier to get new tenants and increase her rent money. The new electricity pole which will carry the wire to her house should be in next week. She’s excited.

After setting fire to Lucy’s, her jealous friend’s son Kenneth set fire to our hut as well. A day in court, a month in prison and a year in Primary school later, the miraculous change continues. Last week, he proudly came to us to return the book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. This is the third Roald Dahl book he’s read, and he can answer any question about it. He came 8th out of his class of 100 kids, and once his math improves,

we know he can do even better. It hasn't all been plain sailing though, as he's snuck away from school a couple of times. Old habits die hard, but there's already a huge improvement. Pray for his next step, the 5th year of primary school, that both he and his family will continue to be transformed.

We're also contemplating our next steps. Foremost in my heart is our pioneering rural health initiative, where we start up small, high quality clinics deep in rural villages. Our dream is to reach every person in the region with basic, high quality healthcare. Most donations given this year, including those gratefully received from AAW go towards this project. The four new clinics we set up in unreached areas have reached over 4000 patients, and most of those patients were prayed for by our amazing Christian nurses. Next year we plan to start another 10 remote health

centres, which is exciting, daunting and requires both serious resources and serious planning. But whatever our plans are, we need to keep reminding ourselves that whether our plans work out or not, if we keep close to God he will uphold us both in success and failure.

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.

Psalm 37:23-24

What could be next step God has in store for you 2018?

Nick and Tessa Laing



Lucy (left), our neighbour Filda and Tessa bake cakes in the outdoor wood oven

To find out more about these stories and others, check out our blog on ugandapanda.com

Overseas and Outreach continued

Cambodia

It was great to head back to the World Mate Hospital in Battambang, Cambodia after our time of Leave and Home Service, to find my activity programme in good spirits. Thanks to the combined efforts of Sokhim, my Khmer assistant and my German friend Fabienne, it had been “business as usual” while I was away (see *Circle* Vol 49 no 4.) Handmade paper had been made in abundance, setting us up well to swing into Christmas card production mode without delay. There were even extra volunteers on hand to help both with cardmaking, but also with the daily

games and activities in the wards with patients and caregivers. I am always encouraged when I see folk joining in whatever is on offer, their smiling faces testimony to how appreciative they are to have activities that fill their time and take their minds off their injuries for a while. I feel very privileged to be able to serve in this way and am thankful to God for equipping me with resources to run such a programme.

Anne and Anthony McCormick

Below: L: A group from a "World Race" team, singing to entertain patients.

R: A group of volunteers making Christmas cards in the activity shelter.



*O&O stories compiled by
Shelley Vette,
AAW O&O Coordinator*

Diocesan News - Polynesia

At the Biennial General Meeting of the AAW Diocese of Polynesia in November we elected our Executive Committee for the next 2 years: President, Katherine Vaka is from Tonga. Vice-President, Milly Fong; Secretary, Kelera Oli; Treasurer, Eni Fong; O&O, Ruth Lal; *Circle* Correspondence, Litia Smith; and Kindergarten Co-ordinator, Asenaca Savuti, are all from Fiji.

Recently, we had a successful two day workshop on Gender Equality and Human Relations & SASA Faith (Start Awareness Support Action).

Workshop - Human rights comes with responsibilities.

SASA Faith is an initiative in which leaders, members and allies of a religion come together to prevent violence against women and HIV. It involves a process of community mobilisation - an approach and corresponding activities that engage everyone in living the faith-based values of justice, peace and dignity. With SASA Faith you will do the following:



- Raise awareness about violence against women, it's connection to HIV, and how they both hurt everyone.
 - Strengthen support for women experiencing violence and for men committed to non-violence
- SASA means 'Now' in Kiswahili. Now is the time to prevent violence against women and HIV.

Blessings
Litia Smith



Litia Smith is a young mother and President of AAW at St Christopher's Church, Nadi. She was formerly president of the episcopal unit, Viti Levu West. She is currently Coordinator of the *Circle* correspondents - Diocese of Polynesia.

Diocesan News - Auckland

On 11 October, several AAW members attended the Wednesday morning service of Holy Communion at St George's, Epsom, to join in the celebration of Gwen Farquhar's 99th birthday. Gwen has been a loved and faithful AAW member of St George's Morning and Evening Fellowship groups for many, many years. Photos were taken of Gwen blowing out candles on her birthday cake followed by a delicious morning tea. The following song from the 1960s (adapted and accompanied by Jackie Pittman) was sung with much feeling:

*May You Always walk in sunshine,
Slumber warm when night winds
flow,*

*May you always live with laughter
For a smile becomes you so.*

*May good fortune find your door-
way*

May the bluebird sing your song

May no trouble travel your way

May no worry stay too long

May your heartaches be forgotten

*May no tears be spilled
May old acquaintance be
remembered
And your cup of kindness filled.
May you always stay so happy
May your faith in God stay true
May you always feel His love
And know we love you too.*



Diocesan News - Waikato/ Taranaki

Golden Oldies Mission Trip to Fiji – September 2017

A wonderful time of fellowship greeted us as we arrived in Suva at the Bible College accommodation where we were greeted by Rev Amy Chambers and her family. Her daughter Caroline very ably looked after all our needs.

Pam McAuliffe from our AAW group, joined in the trip this year, and felt it was a real challenge coming to terms with the village living conditions of our fellow Christians, but did realise that they were truly appreciative of our visits and donations.

Medical supplies were given to the Medical Centre, and packs of baby wear given out to new mothers. Some of these were made by previous member Erena Roberts. Tools, to be distributed where there was a need, were sent over by former Golden Oldies, Margaret and Jim Copland. Much more was taken over, with bags bulging to the limit.

First year attendees to this Mission are called Interns, and those who have been before are labelled as Graduates. This means that instead of Graduates travelling

to the same places as before, they give their time for several days in a particular area. However, this year, three of us (one, a trained and prepared teacher and two of us, untrained and unprepared) were placed in front of classrooms of children, probably 8-10 year olds!!!

Someone said “God has a sense of humour”, and I’m sure he did! However, we survived with stories, singing, finger knitting, children drawing and writing stories.

The whole group visited the same villages for services, dinner, entertainment and lots of fellowship. Villagers now have a real bond with the Golden Oldies Mission group, and respond so well with our members. They have nothing, but provide a delicious meal – and are happy to see us.

Every time we attend services or visits to villages, we wear our sulus, and the men skirts and shirts. It is a mark of respect, and very comfortable to wear.

Bring on 2018!

Norma Benton

Holy Trinity AAW, Fitzroy, New Plymouth

Diocesan News - Christchurch

Our main project in 2017 was to encourage members to use their creative talents to make arts and crafts for the Fabric, Arts and Crafts Fair in October, 2017. We had lots of fabrics for sale, and a large, creative collection of arts and crafts. On the day, we took \$1,200 and continued to sell the crafts at other opportunities.

On 17 December 2017, Jocelyn (Treasurer) and Jude (President) delivered a cheque of \$3,000 to the Christchurch City Mission to help furnish a living room, at the new Women's Night Shelter, due to be

completed at the end of January, this year.

Thank you to all members who helped with this worthwhile project. There are always unexpected benefits from working together towards a specific project; making new friends, joining a new group to learn a new skill or hobby. Well done! The Christchurch City Mission appreciates our involvement and financial support.

Jude Mackenzie

*AAW Diocese of Christchurch
President*





This page: Fabric, Arts and Crafts Fair stalls

Opposite page: Bishop Victoria at the presentation of the cheque



Diocesan News - Nelson

Cathedral AAW

In December Nelson Cathedral hosted the Regional AGM and Area Day which was attended by 32 members from Groups throughout the Region. We would like to welcome Anne Webb as our new Executive Member. Anne comes from Holy Trinity, Richmond.

The Dean, Mike Hawke, spoke to us on the subject of AAW and Mother's Union serving overseas and his first-hand experience in Fiji and Papua New Guinea. We shared a lovely lunch and then took Communion in the Cathedral which was led by Fr Steven Jordan. Following Communion we were invited to see the wonderful collection of Christmas trees being displayed in the Cathedral.

All Saints

The AGM was held as our October meeting. Unfortunately this meeting was not well attended, which was a pity as we had a very good speaker from *Big Brothers, Big Sisters* to talk to us. Chelsea told us of her role with this organisation and how they reach out into the

community. The mission of *Big Brothers Big Sisters* is to make a positive difference in the lives of young people through strong and enduring professionally-supported mentoring relationships*.

In November Joy Bradley gave us a very interesting talk on her trip to India and the Leprosy Mission in Delhi.

The December Advent Service was built around the activities of Advent week. As in the past we invited members from other groups to join us. We had a Christmas supper and our committee provided a little entertainment with a Vicar of Dibley skit. Proceeds from the collection were forwarded to the Executive for the provision of hygiene products for schoolgirls who need them.

Stoke AAW

There is concern amongst the Stoke AAW about the future of their Group. The members are keen to carry on but they are in the need of someone to take on the co-ordinator's position.

*(for more information go to their web site: www.bigbrothersbigsisters.org.nz)

Diocesan News - Waiapu

St John's Otumoetai AAW held their Christmas party at the beautiful, tapestry-filled home of Deidre Freeman. After time to walk around and enjoy the garden and also to admire Deidre's 180 tapestries the 28 members present gathered together to sing Grace. A bountiful lunch was served which included strawberries and ice cream.

Deidre then entertained us on her organ and we joined in singing a selection of Christmas Carols. A



wonderful day full of friendship and fun.

Our thanks to Deidre for sharing her home and talents with us again.

Diocesan News - Nelson continued

Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they work to keep their Group together.

Holy Trinity - Evening

Our annual AAW dinner was held at Teapot Valley in November. 48 people attended including clergy and members from other groups. Entertainment was provided during the evening, which included a quiz, a speaker and a singing group which

invited the diners to join in the carol "Silent Night".

Holy Trinity - Afternoon

In October, Jean McConachie gave an illustrated talk about her visit to family members in the USA and Canada and also her visit to Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon.

In November we went out for our Christmas Lunch at Club Waimea in Richmond. 28 people attended, including 7 clergy and 2 husbands.

Diocesan News - Wellington

Belmont Archdeaconry Advent Service

The liturgical New Year began with St James' Church, Lower Hutt hosting the annual Advent service. The bells summoned us in to a sun drenched church where we heard the Advent story in readings and hymns. The Rev Dorothy Howard introduced each hymn with information about the writers.

The readings and the lighting of the four candles centred on the prophecies from Isaiah, Micah, Matthew and Mark with favourite Advent hymns to follow.

As well as representatives from the parishes, we welcomed Pat Vincent and Heather Dawson to the service. Summer had indeed come early to us in the Hutt Valley.

Pamela Cook



Waikanae

Caroline Stuart from Waikanae AAW headed an outreach project to provide small hygiene packs to Wellington Hospital. These packs were for people who suddenly found themselves in hospital without a toilet bag. They contained a facecloth, toothbrush and paste, soap, tissues and a comb. 70 of these small hygiene packs were made up and delivered to the Hospital Chaplain for distribution.

Chaplains say all bags were well-needed over the Summer when patients were caught short on admission.



Caroline Stuart with one of the hygiene packs for Wellington Hospital



Waikanae *Circle* deliverer, Gillian Kalafatelis

MU activities

In the Wellington Diocese the St Mark's Group's community project is the donation of feminine sanitary items for the Wellington City Mission.

The Epiphany Group had a successful AGM, with the addition of 2 new members to the committee. A good discussion was held on how they would spend their funds, which included supporting a child to a Summer Camp.

Diocesan News - Dunedin

Southland AAW - Advent Celebration Luncheon

Southland AAW Groups gathered in Gore for an Advent Eucharist Service at Holy Trinity Gore, which was led by Rev Gary Griffith-Smith. Following the service we then enjoyed a luncheon at the Gore Racecourse Restaurant with much laughter and sharing together.

Anne Gover gave the background of the song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' which was mentioned in the Christmas edition of *Circle* magazine and a Christmas Quiz had members thinking. The question of how far Mary had to travel to visit

Elizabeth was one that stumped most people. Did you know that, according to tradition, it was 100 miles?

Another question that created much discussion was the one that asked, 'Which historic period(s) mention fruitcake?'

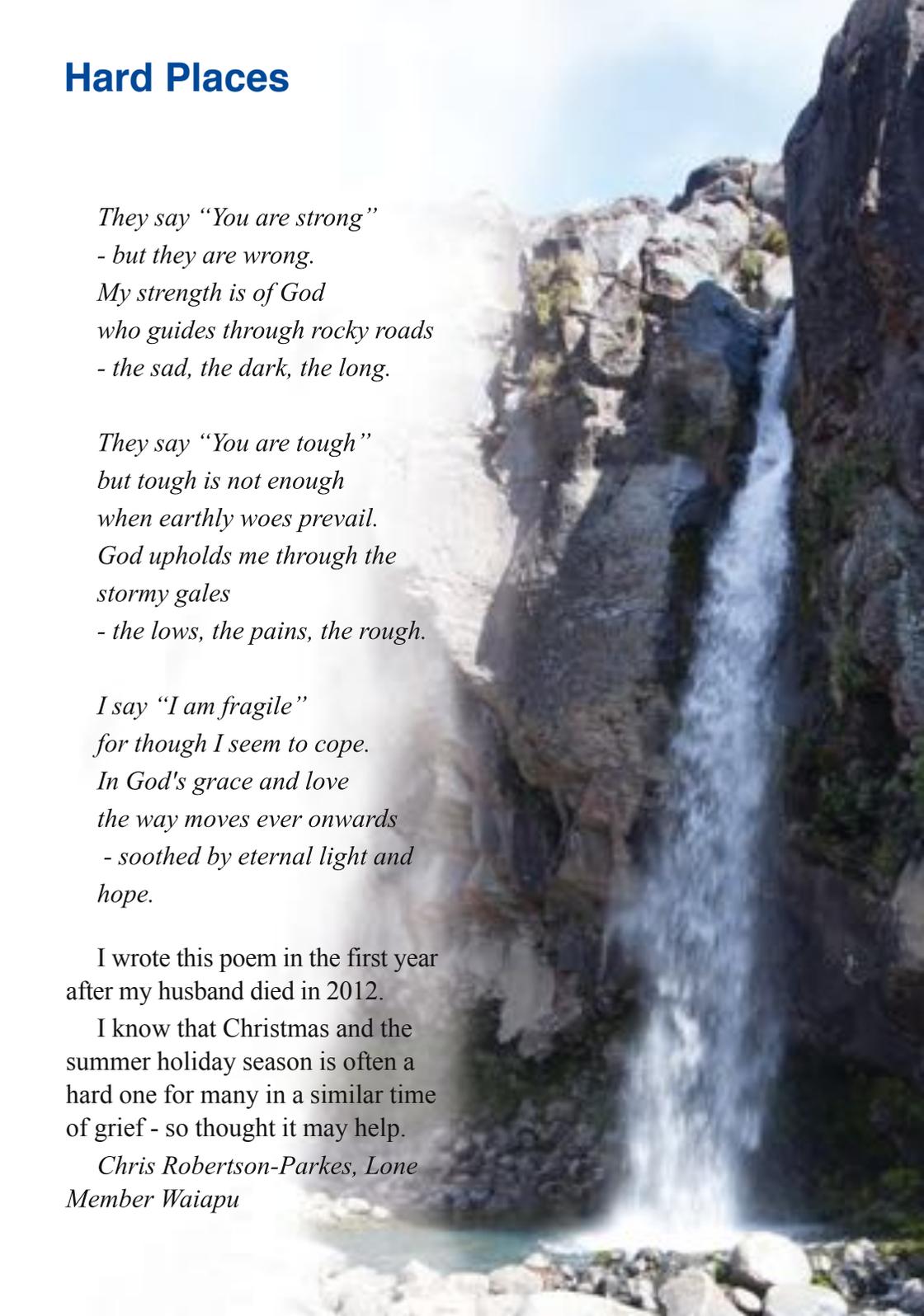
Choices were: Ancient Egypt / Roman Empire / Middle Ages / Victorian England / All of the Above.

Surprisingly, "All of the Above" was the correct answer.

At the conclusion of a delicious luncheon, those present decided that we would meet again in June for a Southland AAW Mid-Winter Christmas Luncheon.



Hard Places



*They say “You are strong”
- but they are wrong.
My strength is of God
who guides through rocky roads
- the sad, the dark, the long.*

*They say “You are tough”
but tough is not enough
when earthly woes prevail.
God upholds me through the
stormy gales
- the lows, the pains, the rough.*

*I say “I am fragile”
for though I seem to cope.
In God's grace and love
the way moves ever onwards
- soothed by eternal light and
hope.*

I wrote this poem in the first year
after my husband died in 2012.

I know that Christmas and the
summer holiday season is often a
hard one for many in a similar time
of grief - so thought it may help.

*Chris Robertson-Parkes, Lone
Member Waiapu*

Mothers' Union - Australian Conference

The theme of the Australian 125 year conference in Launceston was Faith, Hope and Love. 125 years ago in the vicarage at Cullenswood several women launched MU in Tasmania. Five granddaughters of those women spoke to us and it was very poignant.

Lynne Tembey, MU Worldwide President, spoke about the new

Constitution and about her very hesitant start to belonging to MU and telling us that sometimes it takes years for a person to want to belong. She also had suggestions on how we can encourage others to join.

Lynne said we are immersed in God's Spirit; we should always be listening to, respecting and learning from every voice, developing our sense of belonging and our contribution to MU. This year members are being urged to capture, share and celebrate all activities and achievements and discover the best of what we share.

Lynne Tembey told us to think global and act local, and to wear our badges! So that people can see what MU members do and say in our communities.

Several people asked about Christchurch, and the cathedral. We were able to tell them about the result of the Synod discussions on the future of the cathedral.



*Heather Dawson
MU President,
Wellington Diocese*

On Growing Older - A Mother Superior's Prayer

Lord, Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older, and will some day be old.

Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to try and straighten out everybody's affairs. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details - gives me wings to get to the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. Help me to endure them with patience.

But seal my lips on my own aches and pains - they are increasing, and my love of rehearsing them becomes sweeter as the years go by.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet: I do not want to be a saint - some of them are so hard to live with - but a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

This prayer was found in a frame in a corner of the Lady Chapel of Rochester Cathedral and is thought to be two or three hundred years old.

Hot Cross Buns

The Hot Cross Bun we know, is the spiced sweet bun made with currants or raisins, marked with a cross on top, and traditionally eaten on Good Friday in Britain, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa and some parts of America. The cross represents Jesus' Crucifixion; the spices signify those used to embalm him at his burial.

This bun has links with the Ancient Greeks who evidently had cakes marked with a cross. Another theory is that the buns originated from St Alban's Abbey, where Brother Thomas Roccliffe developed a similar bun that was distributed to the poor on Good Friday starting in 1361. However there are no known recipes recorded before the eighteenth century.

Today Hot Cross Buns in their many varieties are often available from New Year till Easter; not just in Holy Week; and in some places they are available year round.

My maternal grandmother came from West Coker in Somerset. She was the trained cook at 'the big house', but her hot cross buns recipe was a family one, passed down to her by her mother. The buns are different in texture from those we buy in our shops, and from those I have made from modern recipes. She used to make them on Maundy Thursday, to be eaten at breakfast, lunch and tea on Good Friday. They were the size of a small saucer – to prepare, she would dunk them under cold water, pop them into the oven to warm through and serve with lashings of butter!



Recipe - Hot Cross Buns

First (Yeast) Mixture

- Mix together:

1 1/2 tsp dried yeast (25g compressed yeast) and
1 dessertspoon sugar.

(If using compressed yeast it will liquefy.)

- Then add 150ml cold water.
- Have ready in a large mixing bowl, 100g sifted flour. Make a well in the middle and pour in the yeast mixture. Mix to a smooth batter until bubbly; cover with a cloth and put to rise in a warm place until it doubles its size.

Second Mixture

- Meanwhile, sift together:
500g flour, 1 tsp salt,
1 tsp ground cinnamon,
1 tsp ground spice,

1/2 tsp ground nutmeg

1/2 tsp ground ginger.

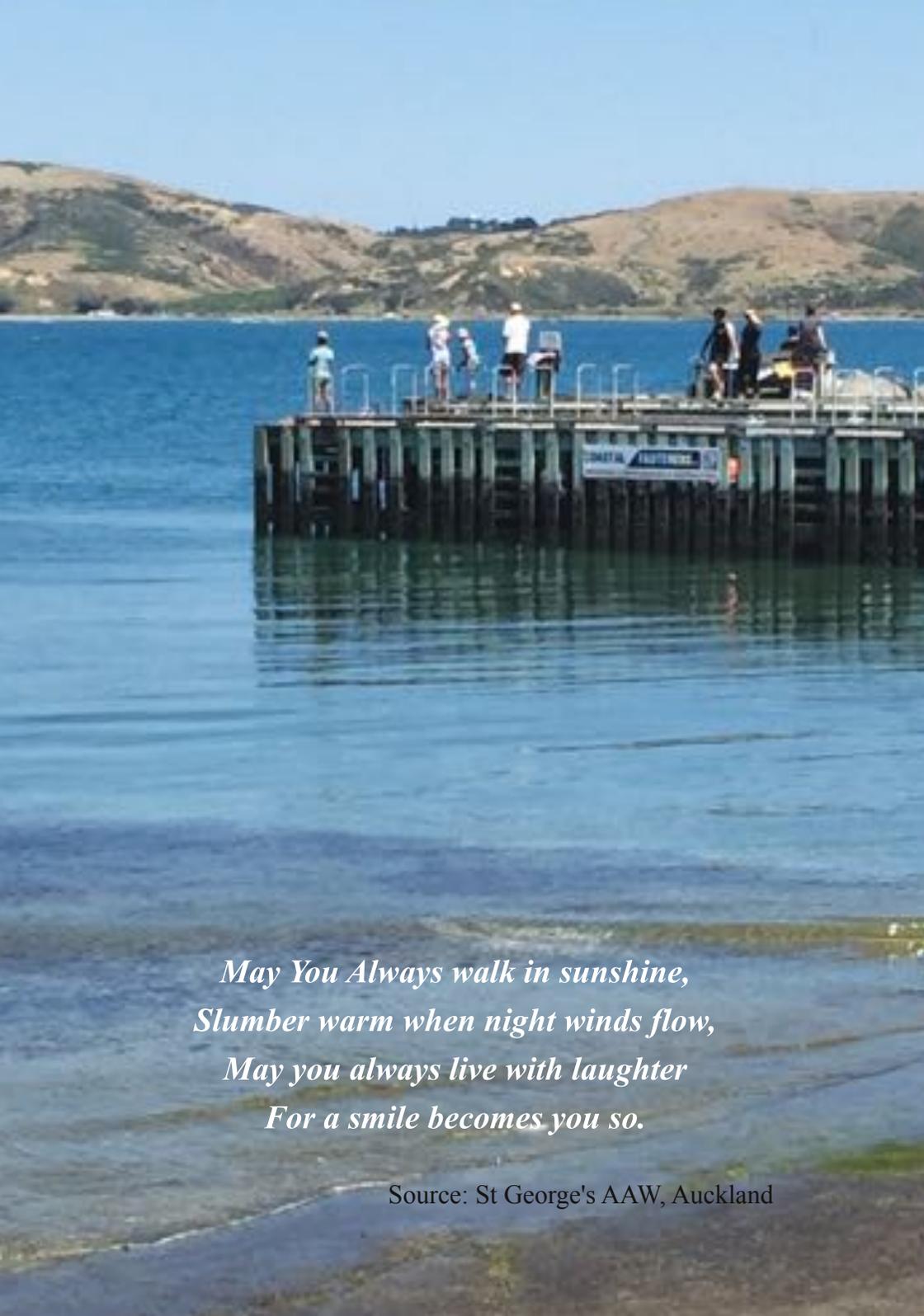
- Rub in 125g fat or butter.
- Add 125g sugar and 150g currants and mix well.

• When the yeast mixture in the big bowl is ready, gradually stir into it, this second mixture, adding alternately, a beaten egg and another 300ml lukewarm milk.

• Knead this lightly for a few minutes, cover with a cloth and leave in warm place till risen to double its size (perhaps an hour or even longer).

• Form into little buns, arrange on greased and floured oven trays. Leave to rise again, about 1/2 hour, cut a cross on each, and bake in a fairly hot oven.





*May You Always walk in sunshine,
Slumber warm when night winds flow,
May you always live with laughter
For a smile becomes you so.*

Source: St George's AAW, Auckland