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Anglican Women's Studies Centre

CCA: Journeying Together

Prophetic Witness to the Truth & Light in Asia

By Revd Jacynthia Murphy



Women in Praise

Photo: Jacynthia Murphy

side our ecumenical whānau from Aotearoa also. The conference theme, 'Journeying together: Prophetic Witness to the Truth and Light in Asia', would herald the numerous presentations, songs, dance, and small group discussions,

Myanmar is not just a place that has recently hit the world news with its fleeing refugees, and it's not just a place where 50 million people are trying to live together in often turbulent relationships. Myanmar, I discovered, is also a place where the narrow laneways of little local markets with aromatic spices, boiling pots, colourful fruits and garments, would greet you each day with numerous little smiles, courteous salutations, and warm gentle voices.

A small convoy of Anglicans travelled to celebrate the 60th Diamond Jubilee of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) in Yangon, Myanmar. What a privilege and blessing it was to represent the province along-

with energetic praise and worship with heartfelt global reflections, would stimulate sizzling ecumenical and contextual bible studies, matched only by Myanmar's scorching 30-degree heat.

Presenters covered widely ranging and contentious topics from religious intolerance, geo-political turmoil, economic injustice, human trafficking, marginalisation, and migrants, to the ever-growing concerns with climate change, groaning of creation, globalisation and interconnectedness. The plethora of Christian concerns would be the basis for deeper discussions that smaller



groups, hailing from all over the Asia Pacific, attempted to tackle. The presentations were of a high standard from many theologians, missiologists, and practitioners, speaking into the Asian diversity where Christianity is the minority religion.

The Rev Dr Wesley Ariarajah, from the Methodist Church of Sri Lanka, opened with a captivating question, “What is mission, how should we go about it, and what do we hope to achieve through it? These missional questions are often elusive, inconclusive, and divisive!” Dr Wesley talked about the decolonisation and indigenisation of missionary theology and practice that strongly alludes to the impacts of west meets east ideologies. He talked about moving away from targeting religious traditions as the objects of mission and moving away from the temptation to become a majority community. For our little roopu from Aotearoa the all too familiar words of Rev Dr Wesley would trigger our contextual thinking.

Sister Sudha Varghese, Roman Catholic Church / Nari Gunjan (‘Women’s Voice’) compelling stories of sexual exploitation, child marriage, poverty, and discrimination against the human rights of women and girls in communities in India would move me to the verge of tears. Sr Sudha came to be known by the locals in India as ‘Cycle Didī’ who travelled many miles to do what we might know as the work of Mother Theresa. “I have lived a thousand lives and died a thousand deaths” is the way in which Sudha describes a life where she has learnt to show no fear. “If you kill me, there will be hundreds to take my place”. Amongst the many death threats Sudha has received she has become a beacon of light, love, and hope for India’s marginalised sectors.

For me, the conference was initially to be about sharing my indigenous views, challenges, and rewards. It quickly became much more than that! To contemplate a Christian life of persecution, intolerance, and often death, is beyond my understanding. We read about it in our history books and critique it in our theological studies, but no concept of this reality can be conceived until you sit amongst those who live with it each day. In one group discussion, a participant made this point, “how is it that in a world where there is 2.4 billion Christians, we are not a united voice loud enough to stop world wars and contest corrupt governments to bring about



Jacynthia with Neill Ballantyne on Day 1 of the Conference.



Official CCA Group Photo of Delegates

Photo: CCA



what unity in diversity can be.

To simply say that CCA was an exciting experience for me would fall way short of what it really was. CCA is a 21st century response that gathers hundreds of individuals intent on discovering collaborative ecumenical ways of journeying together to be the light and truth in our world. As a woman sitting on numerous three tikanga boards to consider the challenges we face in Te Hāhi Mihinare o Aotearoa, NZ, and Polynesia, I ponder about how Te

Mihinare Aotearoa

Photo: Jacynthia Murphy

God’s truth and light in the world? How is it that women in many parts of the world are not considered worthy of any status in the home and communities? How is it that little girls are ‘toys’ for a patriarchal society?” As these compelling truths surfaced and how I’d considered that my story warranted ‘air time’, I was humbly silenced and moved to tears.

The many socio-economic challenges faced by countries like India, Bangladesh, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka, to name a few, reminded us of how resource-blessed we are in Aotearoa. It’s inspiring to see Christians in Asia thriving with so little especially in places where affluence lives opulently alongside poverty. It was very difficult to know that further in the Northwest, over a million Rohingya refugees were fleeing to Bangladesh after being brutally violated and evicted from their villages where their roots stretch back hundreds of years. An angry article stated, “the amount of rape and murders the Muslim community must tolerate in the 21st Century seems to be as bad or worse than the atrocities in the 20th Century, and that was epic, now add to that Buddhists doing a rampage of ethnic cleansing in Rakhine, Myanmar”. Knowing about these realities is one thing but having them play out on the doorstep of our hui is unbelievable! It became all too clear that we had to ask ourselves, how are we journeying together to bring the truth and light to the world?

The many youth stewards, who chaperoned us to where we needed to be, would be that daily face of hope and love in a world of diversity. Hailing from all corners of Asia, they would delight us in our daily worship with flamboyant styles of dance, rhythm, sound, and colour. Constant reminders of why we were gathered and the many intolerances we live with, would be splashed across the stage and in this world so full of difference, their presence would be a tangible example of

Tiriti o Waitangi and a 25-year-old Pouhere has stirred us to journey together, and I thank God for the blessings we share in a country free of religious intolerances, human atrocities, and gender-related persecutions, that plague many of the provinces in Asia and beyond. And as I wrestle with my own intolerances of the many things that affect our environmental, cultural, social, and economic wellbeing in Aotearoa, I must remind myself that Myanmar was not just a place that I visited, it is a place that visited me!



Conference Selfie

Photo: Jacynthia Murphy



Congratulations Anne Purcell & Brenda Reed for Creating Breathing Spaces —ADHB 2017 Health Excellence Awards: Chief Executive's Award Winners

Earlier this year, Anne Purcell and Revd Brenda Reed received financial support from the **AWSC Council's Mentoring Programme** to help them attend an international conference in Hawaii to present the workshop "Creating Breathing Spaces" which they developed through the Glen Innes Family Centre (GIFC) in Auckland (see June 2017 AWSC Newsletter). The **AWSC Council's Mentoring Programme** is available to support Anglican women in theological education, professional and leadership development and ministry formation activities. Anne and Brenda's strong Anglican faith has helped formed their ministry in developing outreach programmes that address community needs and the AWSC Council congratulates them and the team at GIFC on being recognised for their work at the recent Auckland District Health Board's (ADHB) Health Excellence Awards where they were the Chief Executives Award Winners for the *Creating Breathing Spaces* programme. As Anne said, "Just want to share with you our amazing news, the **Creating Breathing Spaces** work with parents in Tamaki was entered for the Auckland District Health Board, Health Excellence Awards this year. We were delighted to be finalists, even more fabulous was to be announced as the winners of the CEO award on the night. I am planning to pursue this practice led, research based way of working in community further and have received a Te Kotahitanga scholarship which will enable me to develop my doctoral research proposal this coming year. St. Mary's Church Glen Innes have provided a base for Breathing Spaces along with funding from Hostel of the Holy Name that has helped to resource how we connect with local parents. Our latest addition to the Breathing Spaces family is **Baby Buddies** that is meeting weekly at the Anchorage Dementia Day Centre, this project is in collaboration with Tamariki Ora Team and Glen Innes Family Centre. Again, acknowledging support of Anglican Women's Studies Centre on this journey".

The AWSC Council looks forward to being able to support others in their journey through our Mentoring Programme in 2018. Please email anglicanwomenstudies@gmail.com to enquire about applying for funding support.



Bible Quiz

At the recent AWSC Hui in October, Revd Jenny Quince entertained the group with this Bible Quiz. See how well you can do! *Disclosure: Answers on Page 5 supplied by Google*

1. What was Eve's punishment for eating of the Tree of Knowledge?
2. Who followed her mother in law Naomi to a new land and who did she marry?
3. Who was Ruth the great grandmother of?
4. Obed was Ruth's son, Jesse was his son and David was the youngest of Jesse's eight sons, who was David's son who succeeded him as king?
5. Who was seen by David bathing on the rooftop and whose mother was she to become?
6. Who was a prophetess and powerful female judge?
7. Who was the first woman to see Jesus after the resurrection?
8. Who were the parents of John the Baptist?
9. Who was turned into a pillar of salt and why?
10. One woman wanted to listen, and one wanted to cook and clean. Name them both?
11. Who was their brother and what happened to him?
12. Name the parents who had a baby in their old age and what did they name him?
13. Name Abraham's son by Hagar the bond slave?
14. Who was Miriam and what did she do?
15. What else did Miriam do?
16. What was Moses wife's name?
17. Who was the Queen who encouraged her husband Ahab to worship Baal instead of Yahweh?
18. How did she die?
19. Who tricked Samson into telling her the secret of his power – then betrayed for eleven hundred pieces of silver? What was his secret?
20. Who was the first wife of Jacob?
21. Who was the love of Joseph's life and name one of her sons?
22. Who was Samuel's mother and why did she give him to the service of God?
23. Who did the woman named Jael murder under the guidance of Deborah?
24. Who was Priscilla?
25. Name the prophetess who spoke about the impending birth of Jesus in the Temple.
26. Who was Abigail?
27. Whose wife had a dream that Jesus was innocent and should not be crucified?
28. Who was Lydia of Thyatira?
29. Who was Dorcas also known as Tabitha.
30. Salome wife of Zebedee had two sons who were they?
31. A daughter of Herodias was also named Salome what was she famous for?
32. What did Isaac's wife Rebekah do?
33. Which Queen did Esther replace as the wife of the Persian King?

**BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS—Courtesy of Google!**

1. Painful childbirth.
2. Ruth. Boaz.
3. David.
4. Solomon
5. Bathsheba. Solomon.
6. Deborah
7. Mary Magdalene.
8. Elizabeth and Zachariah.
9. Lot's wife because she turned to look back at the destruction.
10. Mary and Martha.
11. Lazarus. Jesus resurrected him.
12. Abraham and Sarah had a baby named Isaac.
13. Ishmael.
14. Sister of Moses who put him in the basket and sent him down the Nile River.
15. She helped Joshua capture the city of Jericho. Hid Israeli spies in her Inn.
16. Zipporah.
17. Jezebel.
18. She was thrown out of a window and eaten by wild dogs.
19. Delilah. His secret was his hair.
20. Leah.
21. Joseph and Benjamin.
22. Hannah - Because she was barren she had asked God for a son and promised to give him into God's service.
23. Sisera - Captain of the army of King Jabin. Jael hammered a tent peg into Sisera's head while he slept.
24. She travelled with her husband Aquila as a missionary with Paul.
25. Anna.
26. She was the woman who prevented David from taking revenge against her husband Nabal. Also became one of David's wives.
27. The wife of Pontius Pilate. Claudia.
28. A Roman woman who traded purple cloth. Became a Christian.
29. Disciple. Known for making clothes for widows. She was raised from death by Peter. (Acts 9:36).
30. James and John disciples of Jesus.
31. Demanded the head of John the Baptist on a plate.
32. Tricked Isaac into giving her favourite son Jacob the birth right over Esau his twin.
33. Vashti.

NZ Jingle Bells

(Adapted)

Dashing through the bush.
In a rusty old Holden
Kicking up the dust
Chilly bin in the boot.
Mere by my side
The kids all hanging loose
It's summer time and I am in
my singlet, shorts and thongs.

**Oh! Jingle bells, Jingle bells, Jingle all the way.
Christmastime in Aotearoa, on a hot summers day, Hey
Oh! Jingle bells, Jingle bells, Jingle all the way.
Christmastime in Aotearoa, on a hot summer's day.**

Hitch hiker climbs aboard
He is welcome too
Engine's getting really hot
Dodge the possum tails
We can see nana's house
And all the whanau there
Waiting for us to come
by the para pool

**Oh! Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way
Christmas time in Aotearoa, on a hot summer's day, Hey
Oh! Jingle bells, Jingle bells, Jingle all the way.
Christmastime in Aotearoa, on a hot summer's day.**

Christmas day the kiwi way
By the bar be que.
It's all good for the hood
To celebrate this way.
Come the afternoon
Koro has a moe.
The kids and Uncle Fred
Are swimming in their clothes

The time's come round to go
We take a whanau snap
Then pack the car and all shoot through
before the washing up!

**Oh Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way
Christmas time in Aotearoa, on a hot summer's day, Hey
Oh! Jingle bells, Jingle bells, Jingle all the way.
Christmastime in Aotearoa, on a hot, hot summer's day.**



Merry
CHRISTMAS



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The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies, commonly known as the Anglican Women's Studies Centre was set up to serve and to advance the interests and needs of the women of this Church particularly those undertaking Theological training.

The Link Representatives from each Diocese and Hui Amorangi have been chosen for their leadership ability to identify, gather, facilitate, resource and encourage women in their educational preparation for ministry whether lay or ordained. It is hoped that the Anglican Women's Studies Centre can continue to enjoy the support of each Diocese and Hui Amorangi in this endeavour.

The issue of increasing numbers of women in representative positions across the councils and committees of the Church is seen as a high priority and the practice of intentional mentoring by those already in national and international representative roles is seen as a good way to expose women of this Church to fulfil their potential as leaders.

Ensuring that women's voices and stories are heard now and in the future is also one of our continued aims whether it be by traditional methods of publication or using more contemporary technologies like web publication. We remain optimistic that through continued support, the needs of women throughout this Province will be valued and recognized.

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EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER: The Anglican Women's Studies Centre is committed to encouraging and enabling women's voices and perspectives from across the diversity of the Church to be shared more widely. We acknowledge that women's experiences of church differ considerably and that resultant theological perspectives also differ considerably. In general, the AWSC does not exercise editorial control, rather we welcome as many voices as are willing to contribute.