

## IAWN news

### A Blessed Christmas and a Peaceful New Year to All

December 2018 Issue 25

From IAWN Chair, Pumla Titus, on behalf of the Network's Steering Group:

'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' *Isaiah 9:6 (ASV)*

This is a merry time, a time of giving and sharing, a time of reflection and rebirth, celebrating the birth of our Saviour. For many of us, it is time we spend reunited with our families and loved ones, celebrating our achievements of the year with lots of food and good things.

Let us enjoy this time but please be mindful of those who do not have families to spend this time with them or, due to circumstances, are away from their families. There are also those who will be hungry, displaced, frightened, cold, alone. Please pray for them—and share with them whenever possible.

We wish to thank you all for being strong women of God. Let us continue to look out for our sisters and daughters, keep safe and continue to uplift and empower one another. Together we will strive to achieve great things in 2019.



### Anglican Church in Japan celebrates 20 years of women priests



Our sincere congratulations go to the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (NSKK), the Anglican Church in Japan, which has celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ordination of women as priests.

The anniversary theme was 'Sing a New Song'. An overnight retreat for women clergy was held at the Community of Nazareth convent and, on 1 December, a celebratory Eucharist took place at St Andrew's Cathedral in Tokyo.

NSKK Women's Desk Coordinator Kaoru Yoshitani said, "We stepped out towards a new day after the struggle of both joy and pain over 20 years. We look forward to building together more abundant partnerships and we pray for each talent lived out in diverse ministries – so that we do not fear and we hope everyone will sing a new song."

Margaret Yoshiko Shibukawa was the first woman to be ordained priest in Nagoya, in 1998, two decades after her ordination as a deacon. Read more about the anniversary celebrations at <http://bit.ly/2LqXEYc>.



**16 Days of Activism Special!** Thank you to so many for getting involved with this year's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, 25 November to 10 December. Look inside this newsletter (p.5-7) to find news of some of our activities around the Communion. Do you still have 16 Days news to share? Email [terrie.robinson@anglicancommunion.org](mailto:terrie.robinson@anglicancommunion.org).

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# News from Around the Communion

## 'Step up Women of God and be Counted!'

*From Pumla Titus, Anglican Church of Southern Africa, IAWN chair*

This is the new theme for Southern Africa's Anglican Women's Fellowship (AWF) taken up during its Provincial Council Meeting in the Diocese of Grahamstown 24 to 28 October. The AWF adopts a new theme during each biennial Council Meeting and so this new theme will be in place till the next Council Meeting in 2020.

The Council Meeting was attended by 120 women from 23 dioceses of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) - 20 from South Africa and one each from Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. The members were encouraged to use this theme and 'Step up' during the 16 Days of Activism to speak against gender-based violence and offer support to those who have been victims.



Addressing the Council, Archbishop Thabo Makgoba informed the women that ACSA has already adopted a strategy to ensure that its churches are a *safe space* for all its people, especially the vulnerable children. Anyone wanting to be ordained to serve as a clergyperson must provide a police clearance certificate. From 2019, this will be extended to all lay ministers and persons involved in youth ministry and Sunday School teaching. The Province has set up an email address to report allegations of abuse. It will set up a central register of complaints and details of what action has been taken in each case. He informed the women that the bishops have emphasized that it is urgent and important that every diocese must set up a team to deal effectively with allegations of abuse in the church. Training will be provided for all diocesan teams and the bishops will also receive training early next year.

At the end, the Council resolved that its members would also focus on programmes that:

- promote the protection and nurturing of children and young people
- protect God's creation and restore the environment
- empower women and children to prevent them from being victims of human trafficking.

The women pledged to stay 'United in Prayer, Service and Love'.

## Coordinating Women's Work in the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

*Leila Diab, IAWN Provincial Link for the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & the Middle East, reports on the work of the Coordinating Committee for Women's Work in the Diocese of Jerusalem*

The Coordinating Committee met in November alongside the Diocesan Council Meeting in Amman, Jordan.

Committee members from across the diocese—Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Israel—attended, with the aim of evaluating their work over the past ten years and moving forward with a new vision.



It is worth mentioning that all parishes in the Diocese of Jerusalem are represented in the Committee but since movement is difficult due to occupation in Palestine, each group has its own activity and programmes.

One of the aims of the Committee is to create new means to attract the younger generation in the Diocese in order to have sustainable leadership and involve them with global issues for their welfare and development.

Rev Bilal Habibi, rector of Kufr Yassif, addressed the committee on ways of working with youth in spite of prevailing challenges. He said that in any situation a human being needs to feel love, belonging and acceptance. So if we focus on teaching and showing love and acceptance of our young people, then the church becomes a place where they can seek refuge and role models.

He said the priest can take the lead, with young people as partners and observers. After that they work together, till the young people become trainers themselves and expand the circle of leadership, under the guidance of the pastor.

Have you joined our Facebook group at  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/IntAngWomen>?



# News from Around the Communion

Two committee members, Dua Bisharat and Hana Dagher, presented résumés of the workshops held in Amman and in Ramleh.

The workshop in Amman concentrated on the 'Development of the Spirit and the Body', looking at physical and spiritual health. The workshop in Ramleh took the theme 'Go Further Down with your Nets'. Young leaders led their service there, with meditations, singing and prayers.

Hind Zurob from Lebanon gave a summary on their work at St Luke's Centre for the disabled in Beit Mery, where they have a school for the children and also a chocolate factory and drawing on glass for fund-raising purposes. Women's work in Lebanon is lively and challenging in spite of the fact that many women have become old in age and many of the younger generation have left Lebanon since the days of the continuous war and instability.

On the second day of the Committee meeting, Reel El Far, Sana Rizik and Serpik Azar described the aims of the UN's Sustainable Development Framework 2015 to 2030. Reem asked Committee members to choose the aims most relevant to our region and to think of ways in which women can get involved.

Of particular interest were poverty, helping small farmers and eradicating malnutrition; health—including smoking, drugs and clean water; gender equality—including women's participation in economic and political life; eradication of all forms of violence with emphasis on equality and peace; and education and job opportunities for all.

The recommendations of the Committee included awareness workshops in churches; environmental programmes in Jordan and other parishes in the region; workshops for females and youth on education and equality; health education and cancer awareness; a focus on the Christian message of how to deal with others and stop human rights violations, especially in our region; and elevating the standard of women's education and distribution of tasks.

## New Worldwide President for the Mothers' Union

*Message from IAWN Steering Group chair, Pumla Titus*

On behalf of the International Anglican Women's Network, we wish to congratulate Mrs Sheran Harper, who will take over as the Worldwide President of the Mother's Union from January 2019.



Sheran Harper, Mothers' Union Worldwide President. Photo: MU

Sheran, from Guyana, South America, made history in October this year, when she was elected the first ever Worldwide President from outside the British Isles in the 142 years of the existence of the Mothers' Union. Sheran will lead a diverse board consisting of 11 trustees from 11 zones worldwide.

The Mothers' Union, a global organisation with more than 4 million members in 84 countries, is the largest women's organisation in the Anglican Communion. Its objectives seek to offer Christian care for families regardless of their faith or background and they operate through outreach programmes and projects. Its members are not all mothers or even all women, as there are many parents, men, widows, singles and grandparents involved in the projects and programmes. For more information on the work of the Mothers' Union, see [www.mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org).

We wish Sheran and her new board all God's blessings and wisdom as they take on their new roles.

## IAWN links Auckland with Ottawa

*From Revd Margaret M Dempster, Anglican Church of Canada, IAWN Steering Group member*

While on sabbatical in August, the Venerable Carole Hughes of the Diocese of Auckland in Aotearoa New Zealand had the opportunity to preach to the indigenous Inuit community of St Margaret's, Vanier, in the Diocese of Ottawa, Canada.

Carole, who is a member of the IAWN Steering Group, spoke about the term *Te Pouhere*, meaning 'mooring post' in the Maori language of Aotearoa New Zealand. *Te Pouhere* is the post where indigenous canoes tie up and link together to meet and weather storms.

She likened *Te Pouhere* to the Anglican Communion, a mooring post that links Anglicans together to meet, to serve, and to weather the challenges and storms that brew up in our world.



Inuit interpreter and Archdeacon Carole Hughes, St Margaret's, Vanier, Diocese of Ottawa, Canada

# News from Around the Communion

Carole's sermon was translated by an Inuit interpreter. The message spoke to how the Anglican Inuit community is not only a part of the global Anglican Communion, but is also a vital part of the International Anglican Women's Network.

The Revd Aigah Attagutsiak, assistant curate at St Margaret's, Vanier was in attendance during the Service. Aigah had recently returned from the 2018 Sacred Circle held in the Diocese of the Arctic. Surprisingly, this provided another example of the links between our Anglican Provinces, for Aigah met there with Archdeacon Mere Wallace of the Maori Diocese of Waipounamu in Aotearoa New Zealand.

A small world? Or a *Te Pouhere*, a mooring post, where Anglican women meet and serve, and become a vibrant and vital part of the Anglican Communion.

## Elizabeth Loweth RIP

In September we were saddened to learn of the passing of long-term IAWN member Elizabeth Loweth, Anglican Church of Canada. Elizabeth was a wonderful advocate for women's rights and well-being. She was a familiar and reassuring face at the annual sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Many women stand on her shoulders.



Two years ago, Elizabeth sent a comforting message to another IAWN member who was grieving the loss of a loved one. She wrote:

"Please know, in the paraphrased words of an old prayer, that 'we give her back to you O Lord who gave her unto us, and since you did not lose her in the giving, so we have not lost her in her return'."

We send this same message, with love and prayer, to all those now grieving the loss of Elizabeth. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

## Australia: Promoting healthy, respectful relationships

The Anglican Church of Australia has announced a research project on domestic violence designed to help the Church to tackle domestic violence. Beginning 2019 the project will examine "the nature and prevalence of family violence in Anglican-affiliated families".

The three-stage project will include surveys and interviews with Anglicans within and outside the church, with clergy and church leaders, and a sample of the broader population.

The Church approached several Australian universities and research organisations to design the independent study.

"The decision to conduct research is a recognition of the extent of the problem of family violence in our culture and a desire by the Church to be part of the solution", said Tracy Lauersen, who has been leading a working group in family violence for the Church.

"Preventing violence is better than treating its symptoms and to do that we need to understand the nature of the problem, its prevalence, and any characteristics of our church communities that we need to address."

There is anecdotal evidence of family violence in faith communities, but solid research will help the Church to create best-practice prevention policies and know the best ways to assist those affected by violence.

Tracy said, "The Church has a significant role in the lives of millions of Australians and has a great desire to promote healthy and respectful relationships and to complement the work being done by government and other organisations to change the narrative for women and others who find themselves subjected to violence in any form."

## My Soul Glorifies the Lord: Jesus' female disciples

A video to watch! It has been thought that Jesus chose only men to be his disciples and apostles, but evidence suggests that this is really only half the story.

Two distinguished early church historians present their research and show how women were integral to Jesus' mission, and only if we see men and women working together do we see the whole story.



Professor Helen Bond (left) is Professor in Christian Origins at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

Professor Joan Taylor (right) is Professor of Christian Origins at King's College, London, UK. <http://bit.ly/2CfYtjC>

IAWN's Steering Group is very grateful to Paulo Ueti of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil, who translated our October newsletter into Spanish, and to Bishop Jorge Pina Cabral of the Lusitanian Church, who arranged for a Portuguese translation. These can still be downloaded at <https://iawn.anglicancommunion.org/newsletters.aspx>



# Anglicans and the 16 Days of Activism



The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, 25 November to 10 December, give an annual focus for civil society, governments, churches and all people of faith to take seriously the transformative work needed to eliminate violence and support victims and survivors. Anglicans around the Communion have, as ever, used this year's 16 Days creatively. We have added some extra pages to this December newsletter to describe briefly just some examples.

## Drama and road marches in Burundi



Archbishop Martin Blaise Nyaboho, Primate of the Anglican Church of Burundi, leads hundreds of people in a march against gender-based violence. Photo: Anglican Church of Burundi

Jeanne Françoise Ndimubakunzi, Provincial Co-ordinator for the campaign against gender-based violence (GBV) let us know about a long list of activities in different dioceses of the Anglican Church of Burundi.

These included recording a drama on tackling GBV for radio broadcast and public performance; a national forum on promoting women's involvement in leadership and decision-making bodies to work against GBV; a road show promoting the ending of GBV and HIV/AIDS and offering voluntary HIV testing; and public marches involving hundreds of people in Makamba and Matana dioceses to raise awareness. Read more at <http://bit.ly/2S59REv>.

## North India: Shillong Cathedral gets involved

From IAWN Steering Group member, Revd Moumita Biswas (third from left in photo)

The Women's Fellowship of All Saints Cathedral in Shillong, Diocese of North East India, Church of North India, organised a worship service on 2 December to raise awareness of the 16 Days of Activism. This is the first time in the Diocese and in the Church of North India that this campaign has been introduced and commemorated.



Along with Women's Fellowship members, clergy, deacons, young boys and youth also participated in the worship and sang a special song to create awareness about promoting gender justice.

The women leaders compiled the liturgy from different resources sent by IAWN. Contextual Intercessory prayer was offered. Biblical reflection and information about the campaign was shared by me.

The day before the Service a group of young boys, led by Deacon Lanky, prepared songs to use as an advocacy tool during the worship and looked at how boys and men can play their part in ending gender-based violence.



The women planned that next year they will promote the 16 Days campaign throughout the diocese and reach out even to the grassroots in a more activist mode.

## Side by Side on BBC Radio 4, UK

On Sunday 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of GBV and the first day of the 16 Days, the UK's BBC Radio 4 Sunday worship was broadcast from Glasgow University Chapel in Scotland.

The worship was led by Side by Side Scotland, the Scottish chapter of the international Side by Side faith movement for gender justice movement.

**BBC  
RADIO**



The broadcast featured brave and moving testimonies from three women: Revd Moumita Biswas, Director for the seminary in Shillong, Church of North India;

Elaine Ferreira, a priest in the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil who established, and now runs, a safe house for women escaping domestic violence in Ariquemes – a city where no such facility previously existed; and Isabel Phiri who is Deputy General Secretary of the World Council of Churches.

The recording of the programme can be listened to on-line for a limited number of days at <https://bbc.in/2S6EyJH>.



# Anglicans and the 16 Days of Activism

## Fiji: 'My faith says No!'

*Adapted from an article in the House of Sarah newsletter*

The House of Sarah in Fiji, Diocese of Polynesia, coordinated leaders from across nine faith and cultural groups to produce an inspirational media campaign advocating for an end to violence against women and girls.



*"My faith says no!" Anglican Diocese of Polynesia*

The multi-media campaign for this year's 16 Days of Activism was called 'Fijian faith leaders are taking a stand against rape and violence against women and children'. It features television and cinema advertising, complemented by campaign posters and calendars featuring faith leaders who each proclaim, "My faith says no to rape and violence against women and children".

The House of Sarah's campaign was developed with support from UN Women via the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (the 'Pacific Partnership') funded by the European Union and the Australian Government with cost-sharing from UN Women.

"Engaging faith communities in the prevention of gender-based violence is necessary especially if we are looking into societal change in behaviour, perceptions and attitudes", said Revd Sereima Lomaloma of the House of Sarah. "This is a major step ... having faith leaders making a stand publicly."

Watch the advert at <http://bit.ly/2CjHM72>.

## Seeing Injustice, Imagining Change

*Elaine Cameron, Scottish Episcopal Church, writes:*

Hosted by the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane, Scotland's first female Bishop, Anne Dyer, led an inspirational day marking the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence.

Bishop Anne helped 50 people from 5 dioceses to prayerfully explore medieval and contemporary paintings through a feminist lens, revealing the hiddenness of gender injustice.

At times I felt rather like blind Bartimeus. How could I not have seen how art has often presented domestic violence in such a way that we do not see how entrenched it is; that it has been carefully depicted to appear normal? Titian's

painting *Tarquin and Lucretia* portrays the rape of Lucretia. But because this rape triggered the establishment of the Roman Republic, it makes violence against women part of the visual imagery of political power. So injustice is embedded in our art, but we are groomed not to see it.

In Velazquez' lovely painting *Kitchen Maid at Emmaus*, our eyes are drawn to Jesus blessing the bread in the background; but if we look as women, we see this is the moment that the kitchen maid realises who Jesus is.



When we see injustice, we must then imagine change. What might it look like? Who might be involved? In groups we were challenged to ponder what contribution we can bring as Christians, aware that western values are often imposed injudiciously, and that we need to learn from others' stories.

Above all, in responding to God's call to seek justice, we should allow ourselves to be transformed by prayer.

Bishop Anne considered paintings of inspirational women such as Jacob Lawrence's paintings of Harriet Tubman leading slaves to freedom. Imagining the impossible, Harriet lived out the biblical stories of liberation told to her by her grandmother.

If Bishop Anne were repeating this event again next week, I would be there, hoping to hear more distinctly and see more clearly. See Bishop Anne's blog at <https://aoepiscopal.scot/picturing-prayer>.

## 16 dias de Ativismo contra toda violência contra Mulheres

The Episcopal Anglican Church in Brazil ran a series of articles and videos for the 16 Days (in Portuguese) which were promoted on social media. See <http://sn.ieab.org.br/>.



Sandra Correia de Andrade

Membro da Catedral da Ressurreição - Brasília/DF

Watch this video of Sandra Andrade at <http://bit.ly/2EyqkvO>

# Anglicans and the 16 Days of Activism

## Belize: #HearMeToo

Research has shown that the pandemic of violence against women and girls affecting one in three women in their lifetime is not a recent phenomenon. But in the last year there has been an increase in determined and brave grassroots activism and also a renewed social media conversation using hashtags such as #MeToo, #TimesUp, #ChurchesToo and #HearMeToo.

The Anglican Diocese of Belize and Trinidad & Tobago in the Church in the Province in the West Indies hosted an event for the 16 Days with the theme #HearMeToo.

In collaboration with the National Women's Commission, the Diocese held an ecumenical service at St John's Cathedral in Belize city.



## Trinidad & Tobago: Pray; Connect & Explore; Act

The Very Reverend Shelley-Ann Tenia, Dean and Rector of the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity in Port of Spain let us know that the Board of Social Responsibility of the Diocese of Trinidad & Tobago organised 16 Days activities under three headings: Pray; Connect & Explore; Act.

Activities began with a Prayer Breakfast with the President of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes ORTT invited as guest speaker, and an inter-faith Healing Service planned by the Reconciliation Subcommittee.

The Healing Service focused on healing for those who have been affected by gender-based violence or domestic abuse.



Representatives of the Inter-Religious Organization joined the Service, offering moving reflections from their various traditions as we listened to scripture and prayed together. Candles were lit as a symbol of hope for those who still live with violence daily, those who have died because of violence, and for the rehabilitation of perpetrators. Individual prayer concerns were pinned to a wooden cross together with the commitments of those present to participate in the process of healing and restoration as we work toward nonviolence.

## Resources highlighted by Side by Side for the 16 Days



The Steering Group for the international Side by Side faith movement for gender justice used the 16 Days to promote 16 resources to help us engage with the transformational *metanoia* (change of heart) and cultural change that the values of our faith require of us if we are to live together in just relationships.

The resources are of course useful all year round. Find them here: <http://sidebysidegender.org/gbvresources>.



Side by Side also posted a series of thought-provoking videos for the 16 Days. Watch here: <http://bit.ly/2rOz1Mg>.

## 'Walking through domestic abuse'

In Scotland, the Mothers' Union is a member of the Scottish Interfaith Group on Domestic Abuse which created a film called 'Walking through domestic abuse' where survivors – women, men and children – talk about living through domestic abuse.

Watch the video here: <http://bit.ly/2BzBfTY>.



# News from Around the Communion

## Purple ribbon day for The Episcopal Church

*From Revd Dr Paula Nesbitt, The Episcopal Church, IAWN Steering Group member*

Purple ribbons and scarves to recognize the need for more women in church leadership were worn on a special day at The Episcopal Church's 2018 General Convention. Lay and ordained women and men supporting the need for gender equality in all areas of church leadership gathered for a rally and witness, seeking change to areas where women are severely under-represented, paid less than men for similar work, and subject to harassment, exploitation, or abuse in their ministry.



*Sister Faith Anthony, Order of Saint Helena, offers the Rev Hershey Mallette Stephens a purple scarf to commemorate the need for more women in church leadership. Photo: Paula Nesbitt*

This was one of several remarkable activities that supported gender equality and justice at the Convention.

A few days earlier, a Liturgy of Listening had been held, led by bishops sharing stories submitted by women and men of sexual abuse, harassment, and other misconduct in the church; and confessing for the church's role in sexual mistreatment and misogyny.

This was followed by a covenant written and adopted by the House of Bishops for the practice of equity and justice for all. The bishops committed their dioceses to eliminate exploitation, harassment and abuse, and also to use the power of their office in humility for serving others, to wipe out pay and benefit inequities, and to help parish search committees eliminate prejudice when seeking new clergy.

## Women in Pakistan working toward a dignified life for all

*From Alice Garrick, IAWN Provincial Link, Church of Pakistan*

"We ask justice, we ask equality, we ask that all the civil and political rights that belong to citizens of the country, be guaranteed to us and our daughters forever."

*Susan B Anthony*

The Women Development & Service Society (WDSS) of the Church of Pakistan has been struggling to eliminate violence against women through various programmes.

The Diocese of Raiwind is located in the centre of Punjab

where the congregations mostly belong to the marginalized section of the Pakistani society, with many families living below the poverty line. In rural areas, people earn their livelihood by agriculture and bondage labour. In slum and semi-urban areas, people work as maids, factory workers, mechanic, hawkers and shopkeepers. The majority in this area live in substandard housing. Within this society exists the Christian community estimated to be 4 million (2.5%); strong in faith but 80% economically depressed, socially deprived and politically depressed. The Christian community is generally denied access to development opportunities especially in the rural and marginalized areas.



The majority of the women in the Christian community work in menial jobs such as labourers at the factories, or as domestic servants in the private residences of the affluent. These women are often approached by their male colleagues or men at their place of work to start sexual relationships. This can lead to their becoming victims of sexual exploitation and vulnerable to HIV and sexually transmitted infections. The stigma attached to these illicit relationships gives rise to many social issues in their families, society and at the places where they work.

The issue of involvement with the sex trade is not openly discussed in Pakistani culture or in the church. In Raiwind, former Diocesan Bishop Samuel Azariah began an initiative to rehabilitate those involved in home-based prostitution. A Rehabilitation Centre was set up in October 2005 providing services which include daily and weekly clinics for general health services and provision of medicines; vocational skills training for young females; and educational support to children of destitute families. The midwifery and sewing & stitching training have been running successfully. The women involved get an opportunity to work in a profession regarded as acceptable for women. The stitching vocational training is being provided to illiterate young women and those who have left the educational system.

Your prayers are very much appreciated.

Send your news and photos to our Newsletter editor  
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