



Gleanings

Association of
Presbyterian Women

Advent is very close and that brings a new liturgical year. The following prayer may be meaningful:

Gracious God, you are the author and source of our lives. You spread before us many pathways in this world of wilderness, and we are free to choose our own path. In our process of choosing, Great Spirit, lend us guidance. In our moments of despair, encourage us and broaden our perspective. In our moments of failure, empower us with strength to try again. In our moments of victory, teach us humility. Send us your loving spirit, that we may be agents of care and concern. Open our ears that we may hear each other. Warm our hearts that we may care for one another and enlighten our minds that we may be about the tasks you set before us. Amen.

- Cyril Colonius



Situation Vacant:

Mission Convener National Co-ordinating Group.

Area of responsibility:

- To liaise with the Global Mission Office as necessary
- To meet annually with representatives of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, the Special Project Working Group and Christian World Service staff early each year to discuss the upcoming overseas part of the Special Project. To also discuss the NZ part of the Special Project with MWF.
- To forward the recommendation to the P&A Group for their approval
- To meet with a small group (e.g. MBG Convener, Regional member/s) to recommend MBG and Stamp money allocations to the P&A Group
- To be responsible for an Annual Report to be published in the APW Annual Report

If you are interested in this position, please be in touch with
APW Secretary, Jill Little,
P.O. Box 489, Feilding.
bobandjill@hyper.net.nz

Snippets:

Heather Tate has recently signed a petition calling on Burma's powerful ally, China and the UN Security Council to step in and pressure Burma's rulers to stop the killing. The petition exploded in a few days to over 200,000 and is being advertised in newspapers around the world, delivered to the UN Secretary General, and broadcast to the Burmese people by radio.

Bridgebuilders Fifth International Conference, Taiwan, 28 May – 3 June 2008 This occasion will provide an unique opportunity to meet Asian Christian women. Please refer to September Gleanings for details. Registration forms are expected by December.

Recently Lafulafu Ekenasio represented APW at a meeting of the Wellington NCW to hear Dr Judith Davey speak on the topic "Preparing for the Agequake" Details are available from Lafulafu.



APW Allocations from Mission Birthday Gift & Stamps, year ending 30.09.07

Total received MBG	24,359.55
Stamps	6,746.51
Total	\$31,106.06

Allocations:

Global Mission Office	\$10,000.00
Prison Ministry, Thailand	\$2,000.00
Jagadhri Hospital	\$2,300.00
St Thomas' School	\$2,000.00

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White Ribbon Day 25 November

NCW reminds us it is time to start planning for White Ribbon Day 2007. This campaign was started on 25 November, 1991 by a men's movement in Canada and has been officially adopted by the United Nations as its International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Community groups that want to distribute ribbons in their towns and regions can order their ribbons through the Families Commission. The website has a range of ideas.

jodavey@nzfamilies.org.nz

Scholarship, Myanmar		
Women to train in Thailand	\$5,000.00	Total per Global Mission \$21,300.00
Turakina College	\$3,822.00 received	
	(\$6,800.00 is total required)	\$4,200.00
Christian World Service Appeal for Cambodia		\$3,000.00
PCANZ Youth Ministry		\$1,500.00
Christian Broadcasting Assn		\$1,000.00

Without the commitment and dedication of the women of APW, these gifts would not be possible. A very warm thank you to everyone for this amazing result! Please pass our thanks on to your parishes

- **Alison Linscott, Mission Convener.**



Vintage Volunteering

(continuation)

On arrival at the prison, I was greeted with a broad smile from Noi, who looks after the Prison Shop. This was the first time I'd been recognized like this by a Thai person, and she'll never know how much that smile meant. Following Kathryn's notes carefully, I managed the rest of the day without mishap. It was good having another person there for some of the time as each could only speak to one prisoner at a time. On some days, the Indian man's wife was there, and a young German man. Those for whom German was their first language appreciated Philip's visits. Sometimes the Pastor from the Community Church was able to be present. Those with deep theological questions liked to speak with him, but on that particular day there were just the two of us.

Prisoners who had money lodged with Kathryn had shopping requests ranging from simple things like bottled water and yoghurt which were available at the prison shop, to sandals and tee-shirts. Invariably these more complicated requests were from either of the two, large-framed men. One of these has very big feet. As Thai folk are quite slight, these shopping requests presented challenges. Those who didn't speak English or Thai, put their requests through other prisoners. Kathryn is a fluent Thai speaker.

The women had part of their day set aside for work, but it appeared that the men had nothing organized. Several had developed their own programmes. One was teaching English to others. Another was learning Chinese. Yet another had taken responsibility for running Church Services and devotional times. One man had been coughing blood, so Kathryn arranged hospital visits and tests. He told me that it was probably a good time to have TB as he had nothing else to do except rest. Those who have positive attitudes to their time *inside* seem to cope better than those who maintain their innocence and continually write letters to Embassies, lawyers and others for Kathryn to pass on for them.

The women's visits were quite different, though at both prisons, visitors and prisoners were kept apart physically with a wall of glass and chicken wire. With the women, visiting is one on one and only for fifteen minutes. One speaks through a phone. With the men, *farang* visiting is in a separate partition from the Thai visiting, but the women are all together. I found the noise difficult as everyone was shouting into the receivers at the same time. It was hard to believe that either of the two *farang* women belonged in prison. They were both attractive, vibrant women at the peak of their lives, separated from families, and paying

a heavy price for their involvement in crime. One told me she had time to think about her family and to pray for them as she had never done before.

In Thailand older women live with their families. Both prisoners and the Thai people were intrigued that as a more senior woman, I had the freedom to leave country, home and family and spend a couple of months volunteering. I learnt a lot in Thailand. It wasn't always easy with traffic, heat and non-existent footpaths and finding that I was illiterate when I tried to read notices and labels on food packages. It was sad not to be able to speak to the Thai folk, though we could still smile at each other.

Was my time worth while? I hope that for Kathryn, I was able to relieve her of some of her load and to provide company. We did fun things together like visiting the elephant park, and socializing with others from the Community Church, and we had many laughs together. I'm not likely to do it again, but I'm glad that I've done it once. As I said earlier, *Why should the young folk have all the fun?*

- **Betty Scarlet**

**Greetings to all,
Nan Burgess, Editor**