



Reflection

Most people never knew her name. She was an elderly lady in a bright red suit who often visited Chicago's Children's Hospital. She always brought teddy bears and made sure every sick child had one to cuddle. So they just called her the Teddy Bear Lady.

Her name was Gladys Holm, a retired secretary. She lived alone in a tiny apartment in a not so flash part of town. It wasn't that she couldn't afford better housing, but only her lawyer knew how wealthy she really was.

When she died at 86, Gladys had assets worth over \$18 million. She had never married and had no heirs. Her Will simply directed that her entire estate be made over to the Children's Hospital. The gift was for medical research to find new ways of treating sick or disabled children.

The hospital staff were stunned by the news. No one had the slightest idea that the sweet old lady was so wealthy. As they pieced together more of her life story, they discovered something else. The teddy bears were just a cover for her real purpose which was to find out more about the financial resources

of the sick children's families. When she learnt that parents did not have medical insurance or even enough money to pay expenses, she quietly took care of the bills herself. Gladys had learnt the secret of a truly rich person - possessions are meaningless without people to share them with.

The hospital memorial service for Gladys was absolutely packed and on every seat was...*a teddy bear.* - (From St George's Church Newsletter)

With recent fuel, power, food and mortgage costs soaring, life has become harder for many. Unlike Gladys we are not millionaires, but God has generously given each of us gifts that we may gladly share with others in need.

A prayer of John Calvin.

Lord save us from being self-centred in our prayers, and teach us to remember to pray for others. May we be so bound up in love with those for whom we pray, that we may feel their needs as acutely as our own and intercede for them with sensitivity, with understanding and with imagination. We ask this in Christ's name.

- Heather Tate.

New Programme material:

"**The Joys of Spring**" a selection of ideas and activities for a Spring Programme is now available from our Resource Convener, Mrs. Lois Diaper, 7 Wordsworth Place, Stoke, Nelson 7001 Ph 03 5471456.

Email elljayd@clear.net.nz

Free on line, or \$2 to cover printing and postage. Stamps will be very acceptable as payment.

2008/9 Special APW/MWF Project

The major part of this year's project is to aid *The Hearing Association of New Zealand's Communication Project*. Hearing loss is a huge handicap to ordinary people. This project will see us provide the relevant information about hearing loss to both our members and the general public, and hopefully make help affordable. This project will consist of a number of smaller projects that utilize different media approaches.

The overseas component of the Special Project will support women in Luru, Solomon Islands. (More information will be provided next month.)

-Rae Simpson



Church was another very moving experience.

Giving colour to her talk, Glenn displayed many precious items from the Holyland, and we were fascinated by them as Glenn explained their significance.

Regional News:

At the invitation of the **South Canterbury Presbyterial** fifty women and men recently enjoyed luncheon at the Grosvenor Hotel, Timaru on a lovely sunny winter's day. A varied menu invited choices of mains, coffee and dessert and the meal was most enjoyable with people coming from all round the Presbyterial.

Following the meal, we were de-

lighted to have the Rev Glenn Barclay speak to us, drawing on the wealth of experience she gained when she served in the Middle East. There are so many places significant to people of Christian faith and it was fascinating to hear how moving an experience it was for Glenn to be there. Eating a fish breakfast on Easter morning with the site of the feeding of the five thousand so close was a highlight. "Waiting for the Light" a six hour service in the Greek Orthodox

Manawatu and Wanganui Presbyterians gathered in Bulls to meet with the Moderator, the Rt Rev Pamela Tankersley – over 45 members attended. An interactive workshop proved very engrossing with everyone participating. The theme was Luke 8 “God knowing us by Name”.

“I have your name written on the palms of my hands. You are precious and honoured in my sight, and I love you.” We discussed the value of our names and knowing our place in God’s Kingdom. In particular we discussed Joanna and Susanna and the many other women who used their own resources to help Jesus and his disciples. We formed into groups and gave ourselves new biblical names; and later acted out scenarios of how the different sections of Herod’s court might have reacted

at Joanna’s disappearance to follow Jesus. Our gathering was thought-provoking and in some cases very funny. We thank Pamela for giving us so many new thoughts and insights from our Bible readings.

–*Anne Harris.*

Parish Group Activity: Knox Church, Whakatane rocked to the sound of laughter and lively discussion when our Women’s Fellowship hosted a seminar on “Positive Ageing” presented by Presbyterian Support Northern in conjunction with AGE Concern. Some of the topics discussed were:

- Perceptions, myths and attitudes about growing old
- Issues that older people face
- Facing change
- Exercise, diet and why they are important
- Coming to grips with technology
- Interacting with relations, friends, children and grandchildren

The three hour session was interactive

and informative and loads of fun. The forty plus over 65’s shared in a convivial lunch and comments were hugely positive and warm for this FREE event – a rarity in this day and age.

– *Margaret Gurr*

St Paul’s, Timaru have contributed the following items to Operation Cover-up. This year the goods have also included shoes for children in the orphanages. A donation of \$50 was given towards the cost of freight. There were 38 blankets, 32 hats, 4 scarves, 4 hooded jackets, 1 matinee jacket, 3 bed capes, 1 sleeveless jacket, 2 cot rugs, 1 adult jersey, 2 pair of pyjamas 1 pair of trousers, 1 hooded sweat shirt, 16 cakes of soap, 15 toothbrushes and 7 face cloths.

– *June Rae.*

Mission

Early in August, the Rev Andrew Bell hosted a Global Mission Summit at Otahuhu, attended by 24 people. Over the two days we discussed mission and what it means for us, what it means for recipients, the theology of mission and the practice of mission. It is great that APW has a high profile in the mission initiatives of PCANZ, but sad that not all parishes give mission the same priority. It was concluded that mission is the core business of a Christian Church. Further to this the church is people, and that the primary focus of each and every Christian is mission. Mission to the person sitting next to you in the pew, mission to the person walking past the church door, mission to neighbours, the neighbourhood and the country as well as mission to the international community. Mission is a two-legged athlete with an aid and development leg as well as an evangelism leg. Mission leaves the other person better off both physically and spiritually. We agreed that we must affirm the

Global Mission Office as our primary mission agency, and that it is important for each of us to be ‘Global Mission Enthusiasts to promote and encourage mission activities.

Mission Birthday and Stamp Money. Once again GMO is overwhelmed with our donations. Recipients from our allocations included St Thomas School, Jagadhri Hospital, Katherine McDaniel’s Thailand Prison Ministry and scholarships for women in Myanmar to attend training in Thailand. Global Mission Office is in good heart and will be able to continue their work through the continued generosity of individuals, congregations and APW.

–*Rae Simpson, Mission Convener.*

Fellowship of the Least Coin: Why the least coin? When the East Asia Christian Council was being established in the 1950’s, a women’s conference was held in Hong Kong. It was suggested that people could give once a month to a general fund that could then support mission outreach in the region. During the discussion that followed, a lovely Indian

woman, Shanti Solomon, stood up and said that in her country there were so many poor churches who would be ashamed of how little they could raise in a month, or even in a year. However, she had a suggestion to make that could help to equalize things between rich and poor churches. If each woman in the Fellowship, once a month, put the least coin of her country into a special box with a special prayer for outreach mission, then all could make an equal contribution to the wider work of the church. This was agreed and the Fellowship of the Least Coin with its logo of a double circle of praying hands was born. The “Least Coin” has for over fifty years funded an amazing number of projects in East Asia and the Pacific. – *Nancy Jansen.*

On behalf of NCG, Heather Tate expresses thanks for the encouraging response to the 2007/8 Special Project. Details will come in a later issue together with the results of the Survey that was sent to all parishes.