

Going Places

with Adventist Women in the South Pacific

December, 2011



REMEMBER:

- ***This is the message of Christmas: "We are never alone"***

Taylor Caldwell
(1900-1985)
English novelist.

- **10 December** - International Human Rights Day
- **2 March** - World Day of Prayer
- **3 March** - SDA World Day of Prayer
- **8 March** - International Women's Day

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The Spirit of Christmas

It was Christmas 1979! I wanted my 2 children to experience an Icelandic Christmas for once in their lives so the 3 of us travelled to Iceland, but my husband stayed behind with his family. The Adventists in Mauritius (my husband's home country) don't really celebrate Christmas the way we in Iceland do. It was the first time in my life that I didn't receive a Christmas present!

My Icelandic family had decided because of the sheer number of family members that we'd no longer buy presents for each other, but that our children would draw a name of a cousin and buy that person a present. All the children got a present from a cousin and of course from their mother and father. We were at one of my sister's place on that fateful Christmas Eve and of course all got at least 1 present, I was the only one without one that evening. I sure felt 'left out' and have never forgotten that feeling.

The spirit of Christmas, of Christ, is to love and to cherish others at all times. Here's a quote I just love and it tells me what Christmas is really all about: "It is the personal thoughtfulness, the warm human awareness, the reaching out of the self to one's fellow man that makes giving worthy of the Christmas spirit." (Isabel Currier). It's the 'reaching out

of the self' that makes giving worthy of the Christmas spirit my friends!

Christmas should be a time when we remember why we are Christians and why we are on this earth. Giving gifts to people who are in need of nothing can be a daunting trial. What to buy or not to buy! I'd like to suggest that instead of buying an expensive gift, why not write a letter to your loved ones telling them how much you love them and why you love them! Share with them that perhaps you've made a donation to ADRA in their name, instead of buying an expensive present! You might be surprised at their reaction to that. I did that for my husband a few years ago and he received a framed receipt for the amount donated! It said: "this is to certify that ADRA has received a donation of... on your behalf."

I've gotten over the 'no present Christmas' many years ago, but it taught me a lesson that I've never forgotten. Make people feel they're loved! Not just by giving a gift, but by the way you treat them.

In my family, we're changing our Christmas giving. I love giving presents, especially to my grandchildren, but I prefer them to realize that I love them and that's why I give them a present. The gift doesn't have

to cost a lot of money. It's the thought that counts, right? I'd like to challenge you to make a change this year. Why not give a gift to someone you know won't receive a gift this year? Someone in real need! It's more blessed to give than to receive!

May the Spirit of Christmas live in you and yours, not just over Christmas but during the coming year as well.



"Gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas."

Peg Bracken





Women's Ministry Retreat for the North New Zealand Conference

A successful Women's Ministry retreat was held at Tui Ridge Park in North New Zealand (NNZ), on the 7-9th October 2011. Seventy four ladies attended the whole retreat and four who attended for Sabbath only.

The guest speakers were Leanne Entermann (Teacher/Chaplin at Ipswich Adventist School, Queensland), and Erna Johnson, (Women's and Prayer Ministries Director for the South Pacific Division).

The theme of the retreat was 'The Master's Mosaic.' The Master's original creative design of healthful living is like an intricate Mosaic made up of many different little pieces that fit perfectly together – resulting in a picture of a full, productive, purposeful and happy life. This mosaic of 'Creation Health' pieces, encompasses the following concepts. **C** - Choice, **R** - Rest, **E** - Environment, **A** - Activity, **T** - Trust in God, **I** - Interpersonal relationships, **O** - Outlook, and **N** - Nutrition. This is a picture of total health. Leanne challenged us with the thought from John 10:10, 'The thief does not come except to steal, and to

kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life. And that they may have it more abundantly.' The challenge being, "Are you living life to the fullest?" and for us to take at least one concept home with us that we will change to improve our health status.

Our early morning worships were taken by Erna Johnson, which greatly complemented the concepts that Leanne presented, and uplifted prayer and Jesus to us all. Erna also challenged us with the concepts of Christian living found in the latter part of Ephesians 4.

Pastor Eddie Tupai (President of the NNZ Conference), conducted our closing Sabbath time, by sharing what is happening in the conference, as well as uplifting us spiritually.

Over all we enjoyed a weekend of spiritual refreshment, fun and fellowship.

Thanks to the NNZC Women's Ministry Retreat team.



Val Jones
Partners-in-Ministry Coordinator
North New Zealand Conference



Leadership Training in New Caledonia

Over the weekend of September 1 – 4, 2011, a leadership training was held in Noumea, New Caledonia. Women's Ministries leaders from most of the churches on the island, together with the WM leadership team of the Mission got together to learn and share new strategies in reaching our women and young women.

It was wonderful to see old friends still passionate about WM and to see new as well as young women attending. God continues to bless Women's Ministries in New Caledonia. Arielle Allet, the WM Director is an enthusiastic leader

and the leadership is right behind her as they minister to the women in New Caledonia.





A Christmas Look at Women's Ministries

With Christmas just around the corner - again!!- it's time to reflect on another year almost finished. And for us, that means a good look back on our year and asking ourselves a few searching questions, the most prominent of which is, I think, this one.

Why 'Women's Ministries'? Why are we involved in WM? Why are you holding this magazine on behalf of a 'WM Department'? Why are we spending money and putting in endless hours of time and effort?

We really need to be able to give clear, concise answers to these questions or we are in danger of being involved in a seemingly endless round of activity just for the sake of it.

To be honest, when I first heard of Women's Ministries my mental picture was a combination of militant females fighting for the right to be heard, embroidery circles and a self-pity support group. I think that was MY problem and born of ignorance. As with other times when I had arrogantly jumped to conclusions, the Lord already had His cure in mind. He threw me in the deep end and I was appointed Women's Ministries leader for a whole country, without even showing the slightest interest in the job.

This drove me to the Bible to try to find the 'bottom line' of WM. Was it Biblical at all? All I had heard was that women should be silent and not try to teach men, which wasn't much help!! I remember sitting down with my Bible on my lap and asking God to give me direction.

Immediately the words came into my mind, "Have you ever read Titus?" In that book I found my first mandate for Women's Ministries.

"...teach the older women... to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so no-one will malign the word of God." (Titus 2:3-5) It was about women mentoring other women to live lives that bring honour to God.

As time went by I discovered Romans 16, which listed eleven of the women who assisted Paul in his ministry and "worked alongside him".

But Acts 2 was the real show-stopper for me! I'd read that passage many times and never seen something so obvious!! When Peter was explaining to the crowds that the disciples were not drunk at nine o'clock in the morning, but that the Holy Spirit had fallen on the church in a powerful way, he quoted from the prophet Joel saying, "In the last days, God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit on ALL people. Your sons and DAUGHTERS will prophesy... Even on MY SERVANTS, both men AND WOMEN, I will pour out my Spirit.'" (Acts 2: 17,18) And this was indeed was the case. Look back at Acts 1: 13, 14 and you will discover that among the one hundred and twenty people gathered in that upstairs room were eleven of the disciples and "the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers." "The women' refer to the women mentioned in Luke 23:49 as "the women who had followed him from Galilee".

In Luke 8:2,3, these are named as "women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases" namely, Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna and 'many others.' "These women were helping to support them out of their own means". These women were ACTIVELY involved in

the mission of Jesus while He was here on earth and they travelled with Him. They followed Him right to the foot of the cross and right on to the upper room, where He confirmed their ministry by pouring out His Spirit on them. They were now to "prophesy" and tell the good news of Jesus to all they met.

When talking to the prophet Joel, the Old Testament 'Jesus' had called these women, "MY SERVANTS, both men and women." Later, as recorded in the New Testament, when Jesus first began His public ministry, He gave His 'Mission Statement' in the synagogue in Nazareth, which was to "preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour". Surely then, it is the mission of His servants to do the same. Being Jesus' 'servant' means being involved in the same mission Jesus had.

As His women 'ministers', it is our privilege to do for Jesus, through the power of His Holy Spirit, what He would still be doing if He was still living here on earth.

One of the things Jesus said He came to do was to "release the oppressed". Surely women are still one of the most oppressed groups on earth; and it is our privilege to spread the news that in Jesus "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

This Christmas let's remember that we are here to do Jesus' work, to serve as He served, to love as He loved, to defend the weak and care for the poor; and let's remember that Jesus accepted and encouraged women to work actively, alongside Him in His service, and confirmed that, with His Spirit, at Pentecost.

Why women's ministries? Because Jesus said so!

Janette Kingston

WM Director, South Australia

There's nothing sadder in this world than to awake Christmas morning and not be a child."

Erma Bombeck (1927-1996), American author and humorist.





The Women's Ministries Directors across the Division decided at their last meeting to start a special ministry to the teenagers and young women in our local churches. Without knowing about the others intentions, the French Polynesian WM and the South Queensland Conference WM organized a weekend retreat for their teenagers over the weekend of October 21-23. The material used for this weekend is called "Real Beauty", and teaches us what beauty is all about. It's not what the media shows us, but what comes from within because we are created in God's image and He knows us best.

The girls were divided into small groups throughout the weekend, with a female adult in each group to guide the discussions. It was a real blessing to everyone involved, and the girls have asked for a longer time next time! We, the Women's Ministries Leaders are absolutely thrilled that this was accepted with such enthusiasm. We thank Tamyra Horst, the author of the workshops, for her wonderful insight into teenage girls. May God be glorified in all things we do for our women of all ages.



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We are here to help women reach their potential!

