

Going Places

with Adventist Women in the South Pacific

March, 2013

Empower – Reach Up

REMEMBER:

- May 12 - Mothers Day
- May 14-21- National Families Week
- June 8 - Women's Ministries Emphasis Day
- July 7-14 - NAIDOC Week (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee)
- August 24 - Abuse Awareness Day

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Conference pictures 2
- GIGI 4



"So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this,

no one left out, no one left behind. I know you're already doing this; just keep on doing it." 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (The Message)

Encouraging one another seems to be a very important factor to a Christian's daily life. Affirming another person for what she is does wonders for that person. Women are always giving, but are not often on

the receiving end of gifts and service.

Encouraging/Empowerment is one of the main reasons Adventist Women exist. (Read our Vision and Mission Statements at the end of this short message and you will understand.)

We understand that women have many Gifts that God has given them and we want to help women understand what these gifts are and encourage them to use them for God's glory. So, have you spoken encouraging words to someone today? Have you empowered someone recently? Have you told someone that their gift/talent

has blessed you? Try it and see what happens!

Women's Ministries Vision Statement:

"To lift up Jesus Christ, that through His transforming grace women will be empowered."

Women's Ministries Mission Statement:

"To elevate women as persons of inestimable worth because they have been created and redeemed."

Erna Johnson

The Power of Encouragement

"Patience and encouragement come from God. And I pray that God will help you all agree with each other the way Christ Jesus wants". Romans 15:5 NCV

"Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds". Hebrews 10:24 NASB

Are you a woman who is a continuing source of encouragement to your family and friends? Hopefully so. After all, one of the reasons that God put you here is to serve and encourage other people—starting with the people who

live under your roof.

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen" (4:29 NIV). This passage reminds us that, as Christians, we are instructed to choose our words carefully so as to build others up through wholesome, honest encouragement. How can we build others up? By

celebrating their victories and their accomplishments. As the old saying goes, "When someone does something good, applaud—you'll make two people happy."

Today, look for the good in others and celebrate the good that you find. When you do, you'll be a powerful force of encouragement in your corner of the world... and a worthy servant to your God.

Promises of Hope for Women, 2012

News From Around the Division...

Community Services Team for Tsunami in Solomon Islands

On Wednesday 6th February 2013 at about 12 midday, there was an enormous earthquake that struck Santa Cruz Island, Temotu Province, on the eastern side of Solomon Islands at 7.0 on the Richter scale. A few minutes later, a very strong and powerful wave, about 6 meters high, came up from the sea, and went 500 to 600 meters inland, sweeping away 20 Communities which comprises of 510 – 600 households. Among the communities that were destroyed, were 50 Adventist households which were completely wiped out.

The Solomon Islands Mission formed a disaster relief committee and planned a disaster relief strategy. A big white tent was hired and we had a 48 hour appeal in the Kukum Adventist Church car park. Donations of all sorts including clothing, pots, plates, cutlery, tents, mats, and lanterns were brought in and a total of SDB\$30,000.00 was also collected and was converted into the much needed items for the Tsunami victims.

35 men, women and youth volunteered to take the relief supplies and distribute them to the victims. The mission nominated the Community Service Director, Beverly Maega,

assisted by Pr. Ivan Vagha the Youth Director, and Pr. Jack Maega, the Senior Pastor for Burns Creek Adventist Church to lead the team. The team boarded the MV Anavon, and braved the storm of wind and rain for 42 hours in the open sea to reach the destination.

On arrival the team sorted out clothes, bed linen, kitchen utensils and food and put it into a bag labeled with the household name of those affected. The community service team then went to each community to pray, listen to their stories on how God saved them, and hand them the much needed supplies which were received with tears of gratitude. Many victims have shown an interest in the Seventh day Adventist faith because of the service rendered. The community service uniform used in the relief operation was called "the uniform of love, uniform of life, uniform to fairness" by a female victim. Pray for the victims and our work in Temotu Region.

Thank you for your prayers

Beverly Maega

Adventist Women & Community Services Director
Solomon Islands Mission



Women's Ministries Leadership Training in Tonga

Women's Ministries leadership training took place for the first time for the Adventist women of Tonga, February 11-17, 2013. Forty women participated and graduated with levels 1 and 2 of the Adventist Women's Leadership Certificate. The president of the Tongan Mission was on hand to help with passing on the certificates. Our Adventist Women's Department is under the leadership of Mele Vaihola.





FGM—Disempowerment of Women

Imagine for a moment you are 12 years old girl, ready to enter into womanhood only there is one ritual you believe you must undergo before you can be considered a woman, ready for marriage or to be accepted as part of the community of women.

The pain is excruciating as you sit in the dirt, lean back against your mother screaming, because you do not know if you can bear this much longer, as a woman using a razor blade or some other implement which would not be clean is cutting away your womanhood. But you do not think of what is being taken away, nor what may be the results of this age old ritual where you may bleed to death, contract HIV from the dirty blade and suffer many medical problems in the future. It is believed that a woman should not experience intimacy with her husband, all that matters is that you will bear him children and care for them as well as ensure there is food on the table when he returns.

FGM or female circumcision, is sadly still practiced widely throughout Kenya and although it is illegal, there is still a staggering 27% of women aged between 15-49 who undergo this ritual, which can also be carried out on girls as young as 4 years old.

As women, this is a subject that should abhor us and drive us to do all we can to stop this ancient and barbaric practice which is part of a process of disempowering women and defeminisation of women and girls. The reasons for having this done: “so you do not become a prostitute”, “no-one will marry you if you are not circumcised” and “to make you into a woman” are dangerous misconceptions and do not keep the girls “chaste” as they may intend. Many girls soon after they have healed become pregnant, if they are in school, drop out leading to early marriage.

As I lived and talked with the Maasai women and was involved in the Alternative Right of Passage programs run for young girls in the highlands of Kenya, I knew this was a cause God had called me to champion and to give these women truth and knowledge instead of the lack of understanding and ignorance they were led to believe.

The Right of Passage Programs are run for young girls who are of the age where they may be forced or encouraged by their parents or community to undergo FGM. They are given information which is based on their worth as a woman in God’s sight, their rights as women to know their bodies and say what will happen to them as well as the dangers and myths surrounding FGM. Knowledge is power allowing these girls the ability to make informed decisions and say NO to this illegal and immoral practice.

Because the majority of these girls come from families which are very poor, funds are needed to run these programs as well as weekend programs to share the same information for the women. Whilst I ran short workshops, the women realised they needed to know more about this and have asked me to share with them the information which they have been denied in the past.

These programs are supported by the Maasai Pastors whom I am working with and they are excited to have me return and teach not only the women, but run programs for the men to raise their awareness of the issue with FGM. Please feel free to contact me should you wish to help in empowering these young women to say no – education means saying “no” to circumcision.

Barbara Parkins, CEO - Kisaru Nkera Initiatives
Masai Mara, Kenya
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GIGI - A Magazine For Young Girls



A Testimony

1 week ago, I received an email from a 15-year-old girl asking me how much it would cost her to purchase 10 GIGI magazines. I emailed her

back that afternoon and told her that the magazines are \$10 each (bulk orders) making it a total of \$100. I felt in my heart that she would be devastated and wouldn't go ahead with the order – however, minutes later she sent me this reply -

“Thank you — can I order 10 magazines for next Friday? Cause I'll be paid next Thursday night.”

When she sent the money in a small envelope, it had a little note stating that these magazines were going to be used as witnessing material for the girls at her new school.

I get goose bumps just thinking about the love this young girl has for God and her friends. What teenage girl is going to use \$100 of her pay to buy Christian magazines? Let me tell you, very few. This beautiful young woman could have used that money to buy clothes, shoes or makeup – yet she chose to use it for God.

May the Lord bless her young life as she continues to be a shining light at her new school.

Esther Espinoza

Owner & Co-founder of GIGI Magazine & 5 Sisters Ministry

FLOURISH Through the Power of His Love Finding Your Identity in Christ

110 ladies enjoyed the beautiful tranquillity at the Orchard Glory Farm Resort in the Chittering Valley from the 2nd – 4th November, 2012. Four of these ladies were friends but not Adventists.

Our speaker Stephenie Bailey brought the Bible alive through a series of workshops. This was challenging for many of us as it took us out of our comfort zones. It did give us a different way to look at the scriptures and stories in the bible. We were taught how to voice the scriptures by involving movement to it. Maybe a hand gesture, steps or body movement which enabled us to remember the scriptures easier.

In our groups we explored a portion of the life of a woman from the bible. We had to imagine what she saw, what sounds she heard, what she would smell and taste, and how her bones

and skin would feel in this situation. We also discussed what God was saying in the story and what value can we learn and apply in our lives.

Saturday night was a time for massages, crafts, movies and relaxing. Others enjoyed buying and browsing from the ABC. Of course a weekend away would not be complete without wonderful food. Thank you ladies from the Swan Valley Church for providing such delicious meals.

This retreat was one filled with joy and sorrow for me as I have resigned my position as Women's Ministries director. It has been a privilege to serve the women of this conference for the past 6 years and I would like to thank them all for their prayers, friendship and support.

It is with great pleasure that I announce that Raewyn Jones has been appointed as the new director for 2013. I wish Raewyn and her advisory Julie Knopper, Lois Lloyd, Tammy Kanny, Bridget Ralebala and Melinda McDonald God's richest blessings.

Christine White, Western Australia



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We are here to help
women reach their
potential!