

# WFWP OCEANIA NEWSLETTER

Issue 3 | 2019

## The Hope for Humanity Comes from Mothers



“History is calling for reconciliation, compassion, love, service and sacrifice. Today’s problems cannot be solved by the logic of power. ... Our present problems can only be solved by the logic of love.”

Dr. Hak Jan Han Moon  
Founder, WFWP International

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WFWP is committed to:

- Serving communities – Service projects within Australia & the Pacific Islands.
- Strengthening the family – Workshops, forums, seminars and conferences.
- Bridge of Peace - Reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past.
- Global Women’s Peace Network (GWPN) – A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development.

# Australia

## UN International Day of Peace conference Theme: Peace Building and our Environment Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup> | Victoria, Australia

### OVERVIEW

As international NGOs, WFP and UPF support the realisation of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals. These Global Goals encompass 6 essential elements:

*Dignity:* to end poverty and fight inequality

*People:* to ensure healthy lives, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children

*Prosperity:* to grow a strong, inclusive and transformative economy

*Planet:* to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children

*Justice:* to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions

*Partnership:* to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development



The International Day of Peace (“Peace Day”) is observed around the world each year on 21<sup>st</sup> September. This special day was established in 1981 by a unanimous resolution by the United Nations, after which the General Assembly declared this as a day devoted to “commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples.” The 2019 Peace Day theme was: 'Climate Action for Peace'. The theme focuses on the need of combating climate change as a way to protect and promote peace throughout the world.



Women’s Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) hold an annual 1 day conference in Melbourne to support and foster peacebuilding within our diverse multicultural city. This year, the conference was held at One Roof Event Space in Southbank, downtown Melbourne. Titled ‘Peace Building and our Environment’, the event attracted 85 participants, many of whom are

Ambassadors for Peace and members of WFWP. The organising committee comprised of UPF: Victorian Peace Council, and WFWP members.

## GOALS

1. Support the realisation of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals through implementing Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals.
2. Foster reconciliation to heal hatred and prejudice between people through the Bridge of Peace Ceremony.
3. Showcase workshop presenters who discuss how to acquire, understand, and implement the right values in one’s life and how to manage human affairs.



4. Honour the legacy of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, who encourages us to ‘Live for the Sake of Others’.
5. Share insights that enrich the lives of participants.

## PROGRAM

### Introduction

Following a video presentation on the Life and Works of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, Dr. John Bellavance, the vice-president of UPF in Australia framed the spirit of the conference with his presentation on *The Search for Meaning in the Modern World*. Dr John noted that one in four young



people in Australia are at risk of mental illness. Some psychologists suggest that one third of mental health patients are not clinically sick, but have a lack of meaning and purpose in their lives. In developed countries people often search for happiness in pleasure and fulfilment through immediate gratifications, yet still they cannot find meaning and happiness. Such widespread phenomena as depression, aggression and addiction are not understandable unless we recognise the vacuum of meaning in the lives of people. We are facing a breakdown of traditional values that often comes with economic development. The underlying teachings of Dr. Moon were proposed as a comprehensive values education program that could address such issues.

Since the theme of the day was the environment, Dr. Bellavance also spoke about Dr. Moon’s sustainability and environmental protection initiatives in Brazil and Paraguay.

## Bridge of Peace



**Anne Bellavance**, WFWP International Vice-President (Oceania) and **Meenakshi Sharma**, WFWP India President conducted the signature Bridge of Peace Ceremony. The Bridge of Peace seeks to build real and lasting friendships between people from different cultural, religious and national backgrounds. The motto of the ceremony, coined by the founder of WFWP International Dr Hak Ja Han Moon is: "If the women of the world can be sisters, the

men of the world won't go war."



The purpose of the Bridge of Peace is to enable healing and reconciliation between people who may have been enemy nations in the past. Hatred is generational, passed on by the attitudes and conversations that children learn from their parents. The Bridge of Peace seeks to break this cycle of mistrust and prejudice. By becoming sisters (and brothers) who share each other's stories and develop true

friendships, then our world view changes. This brings about a change in how we think, communicate and act; resulting in healing and reconciliation from the grassroots level.

The leading ladies for the ceremony were Shanika Kalansooriya, who provided a Buddhist perspective on the role women play in peace building and Hena Jawaid who provided a Sufi perspective. Shanika is on the left and Hena to the right.



Prior to the commencement of the Key Note Address, participants enjoyed a vocal entertainment segment by Hazel Zee, a young emerging vocal artist who sang passionately in the genre of spiritual and world music.



## Keynote address

**The Australian Family – Where did we go wrong?**

**Presented by Dr Rachel Carling**

Dr. Rachel Carling is a former MP of the Victorian Legislative Council, and a UPF Ambassador for Peace. Her keynote address focused on the importance of the family for the wellbeing of society.

The family, which has been redefined in so many different ways, is no longer trusted to make decisions for their own children. It is time to unite to strengthen today's families, embolden our parents and protect our children. She strongly urged the leaders and participants in attendance to hold the line and stand up for traditional family values. Dr. Carling argued that we must all take



responsibility for the decline of moral values in order to secure the future of the family in Australia. Additionally, she encouraged participants to speak to their local elected officials about the values they consider to be important, saying “we cannot expect them to do the right thing if we do not persuade them”. Many Participants were inspired to heed her call.

## Workshops:

Three workshops were held during the afternoon breakout sessions, participants choosing between one of the three workshops.

### Workshop 1: Building Peace: Somali spiritual women and peacebuilding

Presented by Stephanie Carver and Ahmed Tohow.



PhD Candidates Stephanie Carver and Ahmed Tohow spoke on the topic of Somali spiritual women and peacebuilding. Stephanie and Ahmed researched the role and capacity of Somali women to forge new forms of peace within the Somali diaspora as ‘shadow peace builders’ for the broader community. Their research is conducted in collaboration with Monash University

and the East Africa Security and Peace Forum. They argued that women could play a significant role in this process. The role of traditional Somalian values we discussed in relation to social harmony and justice in society. Before European colonial invasion, Somalians relied on these values. Somalian women played a prominent role in traditional social cohesion, and had great influence in the peace process within clans and between clans. After colonialism and civil wars instigated by



three colonial powers converging within Somali lands, these traditional values were stripped away and declined sharply.

### **Workshop 2: ‘Centering’ Journey to Peace**

**Presented by Linda Young**

Linda has served as a Christian Minister for the past eighteen years. Using this rich experience, she shared the benefits of ‘Centering Prayer’ as a means to bring inner peace into our lives on a daily basis. Linda explained that individuals who experience inner peace radiate

peace into the world. During the workshop, participants had the opportunity to actionize and practice the magic of ‘Centering Prayer’ for themselves.



### **Workshop 3: Religion/Spirituality on our mental health: a conversation we must have**

**Presented by Sharon Orapeleng**

Sharon is a mental health policy professional and Principal Consultant at Psyched Solutions in Queensland. She shared with participants how we can harness religion and spirituality as a resource to positively influence our mental health and emotional wellbeing in order to achieve optimum peace within oneself.

## **Reflection from Participants**

“It is a forum that is working towards the biggest social need of this century – PEACE.”

“Passionate group; focussing on ‘real issues’ and mechanisms to improve and harmonise humanity.” Chris

“Great meeting experience; breaking down barriers and promoting peace. A must attend event.”

“Very informative and engaging, sharing of knowledge and actions for peace.”

“Very well organised. Good seating arrangement to promote give and take. Good presentations of written media.”

“Great for raising awareness of the importance of the family and family values.”

“A highly inclusive family. Pro-humanity, outcome oriented event.”

“I was absolutely inspired by the people, the information given, and the hope given for the future.”

“Wonderful to see so many people from different countries ... Impressive ... a real World Family.



People running the event are sincere, encourage high moral qualities, and walk the talk.”

“Such a broad variety of disciplines represented in this event. The top shelf of speakers gave depth, and included great emotion. A real three dimensional presentation.” Randall

“Well organised with good speakers and relevant topics. Also, a feeling of

inclusiveness and equality! Great.”

“Very good informative event. Loved meeting people from different backgrounds to realise how very similar we are. Great work WFWP.”

## Ambassador for Peace Awards



Three community leaders received Ambassador for Peace Awards during the conclusion of the conference. The awardees were: Ayad Hadi Yousif Al-hifadhi (is pictures to the left), Pastor Amira Yousif (below left) and Abdirahman Mohamed Sheikh (below right).

We were honoured to have Rev. Yutaka (Oceania Regional UPF Director) with us for the conference to present the awards.



## **PARTNERS and SUPPORTERS**

Thank you to the Victorian Multicultural Commission for your generous donation for the conference.

Volunteers from UPF and WFWP made the conference a success and run smoothly, thank you for walking the talk!



## **Shipment to the Sun Hak Primary School and the Women’s Sewing Centre in the Solomon Islands Victoria | Australia**

It was a chilly morning when volunteers gathered to finish packing and labelling thirty two boxes of Primary School books bound to expand the library for children at the New Hope Academy and the Sun Hak Primary School run by the WFWP Solomon Islands

Chapter. We are so grateful for our volunteers and supporters, especially Doug's Mini Movers who picked up the goods and drove them across Melbourne to deliver them at the shipping company warehouse.



Partnering with *'Days for Girls'* Wandin Chapter, we were able to send thirty three rolls of quality fabric to support the development of the Solomon Island Women's Sewing Centre that raises funds to keep the school open. We are witnessing the power of community. Thank you everyone.



Travis from Doug's Mini Movers

# Faith Stories: conversations and story telling

## Theme: Young Women of Faith

Saturday July 6<sup>th</sup> | Victoria, Australia

WFWP Victoria held its third annual *Faith Stories* event on the theme of young women of faith. Throughout the day, we were honoured to have five young professional women share their stories. It is exciting to see that each year *Faith Stories* attracts a crowd of people from our rich multicultural community. We have old friends who attend each year, but also develop new friends who want to share in the knowing of faith and take a step with the ladies who speak about their journey. The deepest journey of our speaker's personal insights gives all the participants a better knowledge of our own personal traits, strengths and cultural background. After each session the audience has the opportunity to ask questions to the panel of speakers. This interaction and sharing brings us even closer together in heart.



Cr Mike Clarke from the City of Yarra Valley joined us again and welcomed us to the area. He shared he is encouraged by the work of WFWP to bring people together and connect communities through such events.

The stories from our speakers are so rich. We have shared a summary of their journey with you below.



## Buddhist Story by *Shanika Kalansooriya*



Growing up in Sri Lanka I found Buddhism to be a culture with many rituals and practices, rather than a spiritual path. I did, however, learn the basic principles of Buddhism such as compassion and loving kindness, which have guided the decisions I made throughout my life. While reaching adulthood I had to face my share of problems. I made mistakes and suffered as a consequence. Every time I went through a hard time I turned to my faith looking for comfort, but due to my lack of understanding of the true meaning of Buddhism, I failed to gain any lasting relief during those times.

I migrated to Australia with my son and was fortunate to meet many wonderful people here, some old friends re-uniting, and some new people. Not being able to get a job for six months and the whole experience of moving to Australia led me to re-discover my religion. It helped me to understand Buddhism and apply it to my daily life. Meeting Venerable Bodhichitta, a Buddhist nun, also assisted me to realise the true essence of my faith.

Now I try to understand the issues I face in life through the teachings of Buddhism.

- Karma follows you and you have to face the consequences at some point.
- Death is a normal part of life, guaranteed to anyone at birth. These concepts helped me to accept my mother's death during my childhood, and deal with it in a better way.
- Let go of attachments. Lord Buddha taught that all attachments bring suffering. The material things in our lives are there only to support our spiritual journey, what is important is within yourself. People will not behave the way you want them to, and that will hurt you. If you can let go of attachments to things and people, by not have expectations, it will free your mind.
- Meditation in Buddhism clears the mind, makes you calmer and helps you to let go of attachments. After a year of regular meditation I have experienced much development within myself. Lord Buddha taught to have compassion and loving kindness towards all beings in world. In "Metta meditation" we first focus on ourselves and then spread the love and kindness to every other being.

There is a big meaning in this short sentence when you wish, "May all beings be well". It is compassionate, inclusive and tolerant. If everyone, no matter what faith can look inwards and apply the true teachings of one's religion, we will have a more peaceful world.

## Unification Story by Sarah Boyd



Like most families of religious upbringing, I was taught traditions and family values. Within my church life I felt accepted and loved, however, within my school life I felt I had to hide my faith to be 'normal'. I began to feel anxious in school social settings and had low self-esteem. This division came to the forefront when my family moved to a Pacific Island as missionaries when I was 15. The process of telling my friends about my faith, and having to leave school was a massive challenge. But, my friend's acceptance and their unexpected interest in this part of my life helped me feel more

comfortable about my self-image in relation to my faith. Just as all children must make their own choice about their faith as they grow older, throughout my twenties I had periods of feeling close and distant. I have had to assess my situation and consider ways to build my faith in God.

When I got a job in a Steiner school I was thrilled, yet I found out after one term of teaching that I was wrong to think things would be different. All the challenges I had in my mainstream classroom, I also experienced in the Steiner classroom; including challenges with parents and difficult student behaviour. This experience brought me to look inwards. I started meditating, accessing self-development resources and working with a life coach.

The term 'true love' was used a lot in my upbringing. To me it meant that I had to sacrifice to show love to others, rather not expect anything for myself. This filter through which I understood true love brought me to misunderstand it in practice. Through teaching, I realised that I didn't treat myself with true unconditional love, but I had a very restrictive, conditional love for myself; I was worthy of love only if I completed XYZ. I didn't have much acceptance for myself to make mistakes and to be loved. I began to become familiar with the little Sarah inside me who was lacking that unconditional love and who would rebel when things got difficult. Just as my students respond to a restrictive or authoritative classroom management style by acting out and being disrespectful, my inner Sarah reacted the same way as my students do by sabotaging my faith routine practices. I realised it was time to be an accepting, unconditionally loving mother to myself, re-parenting the part of me that was hurt and needed love. By doing so I become more patient and loving towards my students and I could manage their behaviour more effectively.

I have been able to heal the hurting parts within me and move forward. God is giving me opportunities every day in my teaching experiences and in my life to drive me forward in growing my faith and becoming a better person.

## Sufi Story by Hena Jawaid

Hena is a psychiatrist by profession, has an Islamic background and is a stringent follower of Sufism. Hena talked about the essence of her faith and its influence on her life. She described her life long

illness due to receiving a stroke in her early teens that changed her life and caused the left side of her body to be paralysed for many years. Now she is able to get around, but still does not have full use of her left hand. During her hours of suffering and deprivation, she upheld her faith as the cornerstone that gave her courage and perseverance.



Hena mentioned faith as a unit of love which became the source of her energy, passion and motivation. She is an ardent reader of theology and history. She has learnt a lot from the mystical side of faith via the school of Sufism. This has enabled her to identify people from all faiths as unified global citizens who have different perspectives.

Hena highlighted that Sufism nurtures tolerance, patience and amicability in the human soul. She further added that God's nature is absolute, and all faiths tend to lead to self-actualisation. She quoted Ibn e Arabi, Rumi, Attar and Bulleh Shah in her narration. She finds peace and solace in her faith and keeps her going during life's difficulties.

The emblem of love and compassion for Hena is the life of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. She feels prayers are self-disciplinary actions with the true nature of worship being to show love, care and humility towards each other.

### Latter Day Saints Story by Pania Pickford

Growing up, having faith in Jesus Christ was a core part of my family. I was taught that I was a daughter of God and didn't ever really doubt this.



However, as I grew older I felt the need to really know for myself if the teachings of my parents were true. Both my parents encouraged me to seek a testimony of God for myself. I found that in addition to study and prayer, living the teachings of Jesus Christ made me happy and helped me through difficult times. It is this that strengthened my faith and helped me to stand on my own two feet.

When I was 22 years old, I volunteered to serve an 18 month mission for the Church. I felt a desire to share what had brought me so much understanding and happiness. I was called to serve in Manchester, England. Being away from family and the comforts of home and sharing my faith in this vulnerable setting every day was a life-changing experience. This was where I started to

really come to know Jesus Christ and His love for all people. Complete strangers would open up to me about the darkest periods of their lives, sharing with me trials that I could scarcely imagine, let alone relate to. But incredibly, I felt God guiding me to know how to help. Street corners became sacred places and I can honestly say these are the places I came to know God and Jesus Christ. I came to understand to a small degree, how much God love's all of his children, regardless of race, socio-economic status, religion, or past mistakes. My eyes were opened and I became less judgmental of different life experiences and beliefs. I was welcomed into the homes of many beautiful people of faith, including Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, Jews and Christians. I was strengthened by their faith. As I felt God's love for each of these people, I realised how much He must love me.

I remember one Christmas Eve riding a bus home, excited to have a day off to relax with members of our church by enjoying a traditional English roast, share presents and a Skype call to my family. A man on the bus caught my eye. Most people were avoiding looking at him. He looked and smelled like he hadn't washed in weeks, or changed his clothes. He was seemingly drunk and depressed. I'm ashamed to say it, but, I really didn't want to talk with him. But I had the feeling that I should, so I tried making small talk. I was barely getting an intelligible word from him in response, but was attracting sideways glances from the other passengers. I don't remember the conversation, but, I do remember an overwhelming feeling of love that came over me. I knew wasn't my own. I knew it was Christ's love. God was helping me feel for just a moment, how He felt for this downcast man. It was a powerful feeling I will never forget. On Christmas Eve, Christ himself wanted to let this poor man know that he was loved.

My faith has become even more real to me since becoming a wife and mother. I really know that family is central to God's plan and that He guides my family. Knowing that I have made promises to God and to my husband in our church's temple motivates me to work at making our family one that can last forever.

**Feedback from participants:**

"This is the best interfaith event that I have attended in 25 years. The women of various faiths clearly testified that love is the central value of their faith and life. This type of event enlightens the



mind and touches the heart, leaving one with a clear sense of our common humanity. In a world divided by religion, nationality and race, the work of WFWP is critical. Women will lead in the creation of a culture of heart." John

"I really loved taking part in the Faith Stories event. I felt a real affinity with the other ladies despite our differences in belief." Pania



“Very nice and personal, easy to connect with each other.” Tua

“Great event! I would definitely recommend. I had a great, wonderful time and learned a lot. Very nice to learn what other people/regions believe and follow. The event makes us become aware and understanding of others.” Belki

**See you all next year at the 2020 *Faith Stories*.**

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## Australian Leadership Conference: Critical Challenges Facing Australia

Friday July 12<sup>th</sup> | NSW, Australia

On Friday 12 July 2019, the Universal Peace Federation, Australia and the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace held the Australian Leadership Conference 2019 at the Jubilee Room of the Parliament of New South Wales in Sydney. Around one hundred high quality guests attended including parliamentarians from Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Island, Fiji, Afghanistan, India and Nepal, as well as academics, civil society leaders, lawyers, religious leaders, authors, writers and social commentators. Special guest was Chairman of the Washington Times, Mr. Tom McDevitt. He introduced True Mother’s Enlightened Grand Strategy for building a world of lasting peace. He also called for strengthening of the US – Asia Pacific alliance for peace and security.

The Conference was hosted at the Parliament by Hon Lou Amato, Member of the Legislative Council, who welcomed everyone to the parliament. In the opening session, Asia-Pacific Regional Chair Dr Chung Sik Yong gave the welcoming remarks after the traditional welcome to country by indigenous elder Mrs Pearl Wymarra. Dr Yong shared True Mother’s heart and vision with the participants. He testified to True Mother’s amazing leadership. IAPP Asia-Pacific Chair Hon Ek Nath Dhakal presented a report about the impressive record of IAPP around the world. He explained about UPF’s worldwide activities and True Mother’s projects. Participants were moved and amazed

to see how True Mother is leading diverse and high level activities in every continent of the world. This was followed by a presentation from Mr Thomas McDevitt, about the history and work of The Times and its inspiring development and global impact. Three new Ambassadors for Peace were appointed.

The second session was entitled the **“Values that Will Sustain our Future.”** The presenters were current and former Members of Parliament, Hon David Clarke (moderator for the session), Hon Lou Amato MLC, Hon Vijay Jolly MP India, Hon Ross Robertson, MP from New Zealand, and Hon Tagini Makario, MP from Solomon Islands. Hon Vijay Jolly serves as Standing Committee member of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) and is a senior leader of Indian’s ruling party (BJP). They each spoke eloquently about this important topic. The Deputy Minister for Administration and Finance from Afghanistan was also a distinguished guest at the conference.

The third session was on the theme **“Media Bias, Freedom and Responsibility.”** Washington Times Chairman Thomas McDevitt gave an excellent presentation based on his many years of experience in the media arena. We were also honoured to hear from Mr Patrick Byrne, the National President of the National Civic Council who spoke on the topic: “Resisting the Assault on Freedom of Speech, the Foundation of a Tolerant Democracy.”

Session 4 was a real eye opener as three courageous Australian women spoke about **“Australia’s Changing Moral Compass.”** Professor Margaret Somerville spoke about Progressive Verses Traditional Values explaining how Australia’s moral compass has been, is being and is likely to be changed in the future. Barrister and university lecturer Sophie York explained about the recent change in the definition of marriage, and Wendy Francis, Director of the Queensland and Northern Territory branches of the Australian Christian Lobby, spoke articulately about the growing legal battles religious people are having in expressing and living out their religious beliefs.

The conference concluded with the fifth session which incorporated the **inauguration of the Oceania Chapter of the Youth and Students for Peace.** This session was led by YSP International President Dr Robert Kittel with special remarks from Hon Alvick Maharaj, Assistant Minister of Employment, Productivity, Industrial Relations, Youth and Sports in the Government of Fiji. The Leader of the Myanmar Youth Min Zaw gave an inspiring message as did Mica Camara, Secretary-General of YSP Oceania. Oceania Regional Director Rev Yutaka Yamada encouraged all the youth to aspire to great heights by spreading and developing YSP as quickly as possible.

The Conference was a great success. We give thanks for the hard work of Regional Group Chair Dr Chung Sik Yong, Hon Ek Nath Dhakal, Mr Thomas McDevitt, Dr Robert Kittel, UPF Australia President John Adamedes, UPF State leaders John Bellavance and Steve Evans and their teams and all National Leaders and WFWP and YSP leaders from New Zealand, Fiji, Solomon Island, Samoa, Vanuatu, Marshall Island and the entire Oceania region.



*Figure 1: Group photo of Australian Leadership Conference participants in the Jubilee Room at the Parliament of New South Wales, Australia. Around one hundred high quality guests attended including parliamentarians from Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Island, Fiji, Afghanistan, India and Nepal, as well as academics, civil society leaders, lawyers, religious leaders, authors, writers and social commentators.*



*Figure 2: Hon David Clarke, moderator for Session 2, outlines the challenges currently facing Australia*



*Figure 3: Asia-Pacific Regional Chair Dr Chung Sik Yong welcomes the participants*



*Figure 4: Hon Louis Amato, Member of the Legislative Council, was the parliamentary host for the Conference*



*Figure 5: Hon Ek Nath Dhakal, Chair of the UPF and IAPP Asia Pacific, presented a report about the impressive record of IAPP around the world.*



*Figure 6: Special remarks from Hon Alvic Maharaj, Assistant Minister of Employment, Productivity, Industrial Relations, Youth and Sports in the Government of Fiji.*



*Figure 7: Hon Ross Robertson who was the longest serving Assistant Speaker of parliament of New Zealand. Formerly World President of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA).*



*Figure 8: Hon Makario Tagini, (at the podium far left), Member of Parliament from Solomon Islands, addressing the conference on the topic "Values that Will Sustain Our Future"*



*Figure 9: Youth and Students for Peace Oceania Secretary-General Mica Camara speaking in Session 5 at the launch of YSP Oceania*



*Figure 10: Min Zaw, leader of the Myanmar Youth, supporting the inauguration of YSP Oceania*



*Figure 11: Some of the Nepalese dignitaries who attended the Conferenc, photographed with Dr Chung Sik Yong and Hon Ek Nath Dhakal.*



*Figure 12: Mr Patrick Byrne, Australian President of the National Civic Council, gave a very important talk on “Resisting the Assault on Freedom of Speech, the Foundation of a Tolerant Democracy.”*



*Figure 13: Professor Margaret Somerville spoke about Progressive Verses Traditional Values explaining how Australia’s moral compass has been, is being and is likely to be changed in the future.*



*Figure 14: Oceania Regional Director Rev Yutaka Yamada encouraged all the youth to aspire to great heights by spreading and developing YSP as quickly as possible.*



*Figure 15: Barrister and university lecturer Sophie York explained about the recent change in the definition of marriage.*



*Figure 16 Washington Times Chairman Thomas McDevitt gave an excellent presentation based on his many years of experience in the media arena.*



*Figure 17: Contribution from Hon Vijay Jolly who serves as Standing Committee member of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) and is a senior leader of Indian's ruling party (BJP).*



Figure 18: Wendy Francis, Director of the Queensland and Northern Territory branches of the Australian Christian Lobby, spoke articulately about the growing legal battles religious people are having in expressing and living out their religious beliefs.



Figure 19: Group photo of the launch of the YSP Oceania

# New Zealand

## My Faith and Human Rights Annual Peace Symposium at the Wiri Mosque July 29<sup>th</sup> | Auckland, New Zealand



WFWP members attended the Interfaith Symposium, as well as many guests of different faiths. We were greeted with a song and a recitation of the Holy Quran translated in English and Maori. Zabila Cheema, President of the Ahmadiyyan Women's Association gave the welcome address, emphasising their focus of love for all and hatred for none. She asked why religion is being blamed for societal problems and why there is so much hatred of religion even though religions urge people to love and show compassion, to live for the sake of others and uphold human rights. She asked how and why we got to the state of homelessness in New Zealand with people sleeping in cars, and the March fifteen terrorist attacks.



Ruth Cleaver

Ruth Cleaver, President of the Auckland Interfaith Council, and founding member of WFWP NZ was the chief guest speaker. She spoke of her personal faith as a member of the Family Federation for World Peace. She showed slides of Rev. and Mrs. Moon and a map of North and South Korea, divided along the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. Communism in North Korea denies God and religion and is at odds with South Korea, which is strongly a Christian nation. Communism is against anything other than the state and thus the philosophies of materialism and idealism conflict. Materialism says we are just stuff, while idealism says we are spirit; with humans being in the image of God. The US Declaration of Independence was signed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1776, declaring that, "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" are inalienable rights. Eleanor Roosevelt reiterated these rights in her preamble at the founding of the UN in 1947. We are a human family with inalienable rights.

Hui Ling of Soka Gakkai gave a Buddhist perspective on human rights. There are three thousand members of Soka Gakkai in New Zealand, and twelve million worldwide. Hui explained that we have a choice to be our better selves. The awakening to our value, our limitless potential and unique mission gives us human rights. We use friendship and empathy to change the world. Soka Gakkai members are opposed to nuclear weapons.



Hui Ling



Anna Featherstone

Anna Featherstone of the Church Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints spoke from the Christian perspective. Anna has a degree in languages and throughout her travels came to appreciate people and places in the world. She is an interfaith Specialist for the Church of Jesus Christ in West Auckland and a member of the Auckland Interfaith Council. The founder of the LDS, though innocent, was imprisoned and killed, and founding members were persecuted and lost their lives or limbs. Hence we advocate for freedom of religion. We also serve others in our humanitarian divisions, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and visiting the sick. Her faith has increased through the gospel and through spiritual experiences. Anna explained that faith leads to action to do good. Rights become obsolete when we love others as ourselves. Then doing what is right becomes unselfishly motivated, as opposed to a stance in which we demand our rights. Rights are written by the Divine in the sunbeam and in nature. Our faith communities are essential to bring about human rights, by helping others to thrive rather than just survive. May we all become the sunbeams of divinity?



Naomi Johnson (left)



Lajavati Devi Dasi (right)

Naomi Johnson from the Beth Shalom Progressive Congregation presented the Jewish perspective. We try to emulate God’s attributes, as we are created in his image. Moses gave us commandments. If we take a life then it is like we have killed an entire world. We are the partners of God. To love your neighbour appears 36 times in the Old Testament. Tithing goes to help others. In the book of Ruth, we see an obligation to make the world a better place beyond the well-being of our own community.

As Jews, we know how it feels to be disadvantaged. Injustice cannot be passively accepted. We collect cans of food all year for the City Mission. At 13 years of age our young people undertake a project to help others. Rabbis address all injustices. We pressure appropriate authorities to address violations of human rights.

Lajavati Devi Dasi is an education consultant and a member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. She presented the Hindu perspective on the theme. God our father gives all his children the same instructions. Our religion is based on duties and we have massive canonical texts and verses about our duties. We do not have a book on human rights, but we chant, “may there be well-being for all, may no-one ever suffer. Let there be peace, peace, peace.” We don’t talk about rights, we talk about duties. We believe in re-incarnation. If you behave like a dog, you might come back as a dog. There is a lot of cruelty being carried out by human beings. The call is to look inside and examine how I am behaving. Hindu faith emphasises controlling the mind. We sing on the street to praise God’s name. We are all interconnected as God’s children. You can feel the atmosphere when you walk into a room. Even the mind of a chicken can move an inanimate object. We are super powerful human beings that can achieve anything we put our minds to, but we lack the will sometimes. Let’s include animals in our acts of kindness. Look inside and do some little things to improve our mind. I don’t need to be annoyed or unhappy, God is looking after us.

Saddia Mustensar spoke representing the Ahmadiyyan Muslim Women’s Association. She originates from Pakistan and holds a B.Sc. Saddia explained that the Ahmadiyyan faith is persecuted in Pakistan. Islam champions women’s rights. Before Islam, female babies were buried alive to protect the family honour. Women were badly treated and sold as slaves. Islam encourages

equality for women and equal treatment for female babies in order to secure a good place in the next life. Women now have the right to education. Fatima established one of the first universities. We are encouraged to question everything. Mohammed said we should not raise a hand to a woman. Most Muslims prefer a ban on physical contact. Islam encourages control in men and women should dress modestly and cover themselves to ensure their safety. Men are also required to lower their gaze. "Humanity First" is an Islamic organisation that promotes basic human rights to education, peace, and safe water through the supply of hand pumps.

In the concluding session, a woman from the Quaker faith emphasised that we are all equal, and that God exists in every person. It is not enough to tell others that your religion is peaceful. You must show it as well. All thoughts are nothing without outward manifestations. Only those who feel the pain of others feel the pain of God and are truly human. Let us pray for absolute global peace.



Group photo of the Speakers

It was a great event and very enlightening.  
Report by: Lia Goijarts and Felicity Cairns

# Celebrating the United National International Day of Peace

## September 21<sup>st</sup> | Auckland, New Zealand

On Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019, WFWP NZ in collaboration with UPF, FFWPU, Nix crew and YSP celebrated the United Nations International Day of Peace at the Kelston Community Centre, West Auckland, New Zealand. The overall theme “A life of Service is the Real Path to Peace”

Mr Geoffrey Fyers, Secretary –General UPF NZ was the MC for the day. He warmly welcomed the participants and invited up the local Maori leader and AFP Rev Bill Tangariki to open the event with a prayer.



Mr Geoffrey Fyers



Rev Bill Tangariki

Seventy people from different NGOs and communities attended. The speakers spoke passionately and enthusiastically on the topic. The 1<sup>st</sup> Speaker, Mrs Tracey Dean an Ambassador for Peace and Coordinator for the Waikato Regional Council, spoke on Climate Action for Peace. The 2<sup>nd</sup> session: The Values that will Sustain our Future was presented by Mr Adel Jamati, Director of UPF NZ followed by Rev. Stan Stewart from the St. Helier’s Presbyterian Church and Mrs Anne Pala, Founder of Nix crew, Ambassador for Peace, Advocate for Community Development and local business owner. Anne played a vital role in securing the venue for free by negotiating with the Auckland City Council and therefore we could utilise the venue for free with the support of the Auckland City Council. A big thank you to Anne.



Mrs Tracey Dean



Mr Adel Jamati



Rev Stan Stewart



Mrs Anne Pala

After the Lunch break, Exhibition of Peace activities followed – Four New Ambassadors for Peace were appointed and were presented the AFP award respectively.



Ambassador for Peace awardees

Next the Women’s Federation for World Peace NZ showcased a moving and heartfelt “Bridge of Peace Ceremony” Introduced by Mrs Felicity Cairns WFWP NZ president, with 3 representative couples representing 2 different nations Tonga - Japan, NZ Maori – NZ Pakheha, and thirdly 2 different cultures -2<sup>nd</sup> generation New Zealand/ Japan - Cook Island/ Jamaican descent.



Mrs Felicity Cairns



Grace Prentice Jung & Temura Shelley



Sisterhood pledge signing

The closing remarks were given by Mrs Matapa Shelley, WFWP NZ executive committee member. She gave a summary of the events of the day and thanked every-one who contributed to the success of the day.



Mrs Matapa Shelley



Participants



Group Photo

A big thank you to Mr Barry Noel (Photographer) for taking the photos.

# Solomon Islands



## Jenny Graduates from SI National University June 20<sup>th</sup> | Honiara, Solomon Islands



We are so proud and overjoyed to announce the graduation of our First Pacific Scholarship Fund recipient, Jenny Quta Moreha'a. On June 20<sup>th</sup>, Solomon Island National University (SINU) conducted its graduation ceremony for the 2018 graduates. After two years of full time study, Jenny was awarded her Diploma of Teaching certificate in Early Childhood Education and is now teaching at the New Hope Academy early learning centre operated and managed by WFWP SI.



Jenny's life changing opportunity was made possible through the generous donations of our WFWP Victoria members, and through those participating in our major fundraiser, the annual Pacifika Festival and Charity Walk, held on the first Saturday of March each year.



Jenny shared her happiness to the Board of WFP Victoria, and requested that her message be passed onto those who made her dream come true.

“Thank you so much for sponsoring my course, which I have achieved on Thursday 20th of June 2019. I feel so blessed to have this opportunity to study at Solomon Island National University (SINU) for the last two years. I can't express my heart of gratitude towards WFP Australia. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you so much.”



“I completed my study at the end of 2018 and was awarded with the Certificate Diploma of Teaching. It was a joyful moment for me and my beloved husband, who came to witness my achievements during the ceremony. We are really grateful for the scholarship offered to me through WFP Australia. Your help really put us on another level in life. Without your financial support I could not achieve my goal. Please let's keep in touch for the betterment of WFP worldwide.”

# PNG

## Sewing Project Jiwaka Province, Papua New Guinea



PNG is a new WFWP Chapter headed by Betty Kaime as the National President. We are very excited to bring you our first report; we look forward to many more. This photo shows our new Board members. Betty is located back left.



The PNG Sewing Project in Jiwaka started in June this year with four sewing machines donated by WFWP members. The goal is to sew 'meri' blouses and outfits. A PNG 'meri' blouse is worn by most PNG women. It is loose, comfortable and can be worn with just about anything. Annie, Clara and Christy are the trainers.

WFWP members get together each week for one day training for flower arrangement decoration. WFWP PNG initiated a flower planting competition project where members visit each other's garden to see who has the best garden.



WFWP leaders distribute different plants and seedlings for planting. We have a lot of fun in exchanging ideas, experiences and flower planting. The flower pots are hired out for different public and church events.



Every third Saturday, WFWP members gather at the public market to perform community service clean up.

## WFWP Mission and Vision



WFWP Chapters adhere to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families are resolving the complex problems of our societies and world.

Vision: Women working together to realise one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.

Mission: Empowering women as peace builders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and world. Through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation and humanitarian service, WFWP International aims to create an environment of peace and wellbeing for future generations and people of all races, cultures and religious creeds.

# Samoa



## Books for the Islands Itu o Tane College Savai'i, Samoa



WFWP Victoria shipped boxes of good quality children's reading and text books to Itu o Tane College to stock up their existing library. We want to bring to you some photos taken by the college principal.

Located on the outer island of Savai'i in Samoa, the College is a co-educational secondary school. We are very grateful to the College's Principal, Mr. Laufou Faamanu Manase, for picking up the books from Port Apia, ferrying them to the island of Savi'i and bringing them to the College.



Mr. Laufou Faamanu Manase shared these words, "thank you to the Victorian schools who donated the books and to WFWP Vic. for the great help with all the books and materials that were donated, which really assisted with the school and its development."

# Vanuatu

## WFWP Vanuatu get together

September 25<sup>th</sup> | Port Villa, Vanuatu

Vanuatu WFWP held a meeting to welcome Aila Willitts, the New South Wales, Australia Chapter President and the Australia, Vice-president.

Women’s Federation Vanuatu has a new president Annie-Claude Malere Nasak (back row, second from right), who is a teacher in French school in Port Vila and is a mother of three children. Her husband fully supports her activities, both in Port Vila and also in her home island of Tanna which is famous for its coffee and stunning live volcano.



Mrs Annie-Claude Malere Nasak invited former president Mrs Anna Nalau and senior advisor Mrs Leias Cullwick, and her current team of volunteers to meet with Aila.



WFWP Vanuatu also arranged a meeting with the President of the Republic of Vanuatu, Tallisobed Moses, and Hon Nakou and his wife (MP in Tanna). The President was grateful for all schoolbooks, sewing machines, solar lights and reading glasses WFWP Australia had provided to women and children in Efate Island (Port Vila) and Tanna Island. He emphasized how important it is to focus on smaller outer islands because, “Efate and Tanna islands

are fortunate and better off” than other smaller islands. Hon Nakou and his wife promised to cooperate with the President’s wishes.

The First Lady was also invited to join the First Ladies Summit taking place in Palau in December 2019. She was unable to meet WFP representative but The President was happy to receive us on her part.



Left to right: Mrs. Nakou, Aila Willitts, President Tallis Obed Moses, Hon Nakou (Tanna MP)

## Global Women’s Peace Network



Purpose: A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development. It seeks to ensure mutual prosperity and lasting peace through feminine peace leadership rooted in a culture of care, responsibility and education in family values.

GWPN inaugural assembly: the founders of WFWPI, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her husband Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon called for a new era of women’s leadership in peace building. The assembly highlighted the need for a body of NGO leaders, whose collective wisdom and judgment can complement the deliberations of the United Nations; which as a body of government representatives is overwhelmingly male. GWPN is a project of WFWP international.

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We thank all our members, sponsors and supporters for their contribution to WFWP Oceania.

## Feeling inspired?



## Support our Pacific Islands Humanitarian Service Projects

Volunteer: Get involved with one of our Oceania Chapters. Contact us to find out how.

Donate: Make a financial contribution to our WFWP Island Projects, where 100% of your donation supports humanitarian projects. Within Oceania, WFWP is a fully volunteer based NFP charitable organisation.

Used sewing machines: Sent to our *Women's Sewing Centres* in Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, PNG, and Samoa, where local women start cooperatives to support their families. Please ensure that your sewing machine is in good working conditions. The Women's Centres are also in need of fabric and tools.

### Quality junior and secondary school

books: *Books for the Islands* donates to primary and secondary schools within the Pacific to either establish school libraries, or enrich them.

Contact us to organise a pick-up or drop off time.