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The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

Anglican Women's Studies Centre

# Face to Face

*international Anglican Women's Network meets with ACC*

By Carole Hughes

*Chair IAWN Steering Group; Archdeacon of Auckland*



*Celebrations with Dragons at the final service at Holy Trinity Cathedral Hong Kong*

## The IAWN conversations with the ACC

In May this year I attended the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) meeting in Hong Kong – a meeting where representatives from each province of the Anglican Communion gather from across the globe.

Now we might ask why we spend so much time, money and effort getting people together to such a forum. Why not just get on with our ministry priorities in our part of the world? Of course, we know the importance of

gathering, networking, and meeting face to face. But essentially for me it came down to building relationships. Even though we may disagree with one another, quite strongly on many things, when we gather face to face we are forced to listen and enter into one another's contexts and experiences. It has been said, by people far wiser than me, that when we know someone's story it is very hard to hate them. When we meet people face to face the issues that we disagree on are still a part of our relationship, but they are not the whole of the relationship. Through God's



love working within us, around us and beyond us we can truly engage with one another in ways that go way beyond our differences. This was certainly my experience as I participated in many conversations at the ACC meeting.

At the first meeting of the new IAWN Steering Group (May 2019), to which I had been re-elected, I was appointed as the Chair. It is such a delight and privilege to serve the Anglican Communion in this way. Most importantly I am deeply hum-



bled by the stories of women who are struggling across the globe and the hard work that we need to engage in as indicated in our mission priorities. This ministry is vital in order to bring about social change, more specifically to ensure that women are safe, healthy and can

*Carole presenting an IAWN workshop at the ACC meeting*

I was at the ACC meeting as I was invited by the IAWN Steering Group to present a workshop on our mission priorities across the Anglican Communion. These priorities are as follows:

- +Promoting gender equality and the participation of women in all levels of decision making throughout the Anglican Communion.
- +Sharing stories of women in the Anglican Communion.
- +Supporting and accompanying Anglicans and others who are working to eradicate all forms of gender-based violence, including human trafficking.
- +Advocating access for all women and girls to education and health care, including reproductive and maternal health care and resources.
- +Advocating the eradication of extreme poverty, hunger, and environmental abuse
- +Promoting the physical and spiritual wellbeing of all women and girls, including those from migrant, rural, indigenous and other marginalized communities.
- +Supporting women’s sustainable economic empowerment and entrepreneurship, including gender budgeting and auditing.



*Women networking about IAWN representation*

fully participate in all of life and ministry.

This work is for the whole Anglican Communion to work on, and that includes us in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. Each part of the world will work on mission priorities according to what is appropriate within their context. Each province has a link person to ensure that such priorities are worked on.





As Chair of the Anglican Women's Studies Council, the Reverend Numia Tomoana is your link person. I am deeply grateful for Numia and the ministry of the Anglican Women's Studies Council as they work on sharing stories, offering gathering opportunities, praying for and serving our people, challenging the church on issues around gender justice, violence and spiritual well-being, as well as publishing, educating and networking.

Kia Kaha.

**Carole Hughes**

**Chair - International Anglican Women's Network Steering Group,**

**Archdeacon of Auckland**



*Brother Christopher John, Michael and Carole Hughes with one of the key organisers of the Hong Kong ACC team, the Reverend Chan Kwok-Keung, Sub-Dean Holy Trinity Cathedral Hong Kong.*



*The official photo of the network reps with the Archbishop of Canterbury*



# In search of a genderless God

An ongoing personal investigation into the male -female partnership

By Bridie Boyd



It’s often hard to admit our own hypocrisies. I have failed often enough. My most recent blunder was when I suggested a friend might wish to eat less sugar while I was starting on my second cupcake

within five minutes! It’s the old adage of the pot calling the kettle black.

The church, too, can be hypocritical. On the one hand, we champion equal rights, fairness, and justice. On the other, we adhere to traditional biases, outdated practices and, in my opinion, a sometimes undetected gender imbalance in the way we do leadership.

**Are you brave and honest enough to do a stocktake of your church or faith-based group?**

+How many women are on your morning tea, flowers, cleaning or crèche roster? How many men?

+At your vestry meetings, who usually makes the cups of tea or starts to clean up?

+If you have a men’s meeting such as a Men’s Breakfast, who caters for this? Do your men ever cater for, or provide crèche facilities for any of your women’s meetings?

+When was the last time you heard a sermon or talked about the female attributes of God? (Yes they are there, and they are biblical!)

A look into many of the

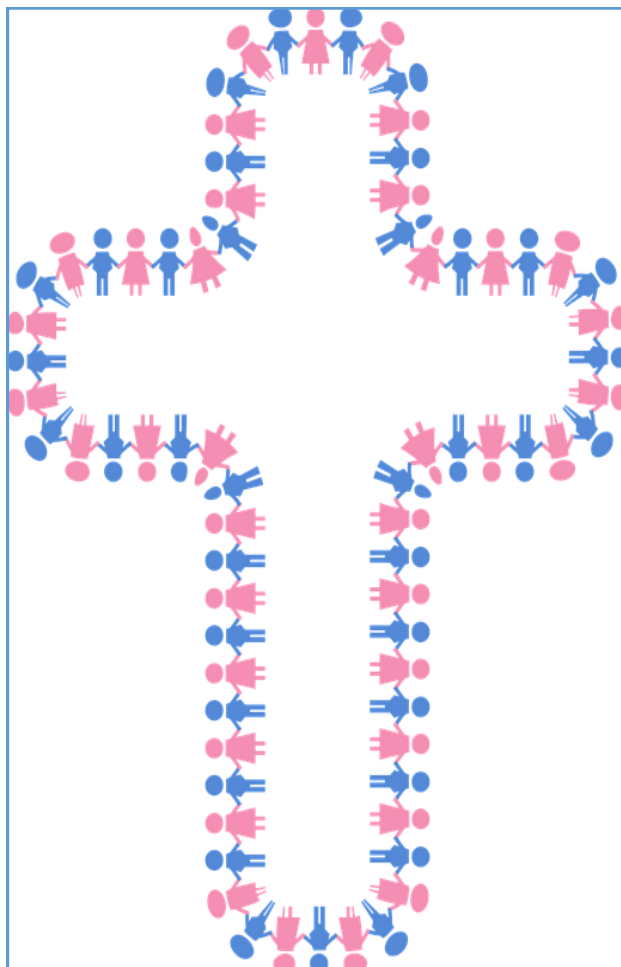
churches I have personal experience with tells me we are not doing particularly well at treating men and women equally in the day to day running of the church.

**So, we know and accept that both genders, male and female, were created in the image of God (Gen 1:27).** So it stands to reason that God has both male and female attributes. But the language we use to describe God is often skewed towards the masculine: God the Father. And I get that. The male image is one of strength, power and authority. And these aspects of God are important.

But even when we talk about God as love or God’s compassion (attributes we often think of as feminine today), we still call him Father (think of the Prodigal Son). But aren’t the attributes of love and compassion also feminine aspects? We hardly ever hear about the times when Jesus wept (Luke 19:41, John 11:35, Matt 26:38, Heb 5:7) and

wanted to gather his people like a hen gathers her chicks (Matt 23: 37). Why do we hardly ever see a reference to Mother God? And if we do, is it fully accepted or is it seen as “feminist language” and a little bit fringe?

**With this in mind, I decided to do some digging into the experiences of women in the church.** I am in the process of interviewing women, both clergy and lay, about their experiences and also delve into how they understand the feminine in God. Interviews have included a nurse and new mother, a Bishop, a chaplain, a Franciscan Nobliate and teacher, a student, and a priest. Every single interview to date has been both fascinating and a little worrying.







**My thesis is that the feminine aspects of God do not weaken the image, nor alter God fundamentally. (God is the same yesterday, today and forever – yay!).** Talking about God using feminine language is not apostasy. The Bible portrays God as having both masculine and feminine attributes and neither are portrayed as 'better'. Well, that's my opinion and I am happy to share it.

So, as I am investigating some new ways to work these ideas out in practise, I am getting the ball rolling by advocating for the inclusion of female language within the liturgy. I'm not trying to be modern for the sake of it, I'm attempting to be biblical. I'm not trying to set women above men or alienate men, but to include women and the female experience for everyone in a meaningful way.

What does this look like and how can we start to use inclusive language in our Sunday worship? On the next page is a version of the Lord's Prayer, from our prayer book, that is more inclusive in its language. Perhaps you could experiment using it? But even something as simple as beginning our prayers with this alternative is a start:

"Holy God, Mother and Father to us all, giver of life, comforter, carer and protector..."

So have an honest think about how you view God, mull over any subtle bias in your church, and think about how you might start to use more inclusive language in support of a balanced image of God.

*This opinion piece was written by Bridie Boyd. Bridie is a youth worker and advocate for inclusive church here in Christchurch. If you are interested in this topic, check out her Youtube interviews, called "Women & God" with various different interviewees such as the Reverends Herles-Mooar and Riley, and our previous Bishop.*

*Bridie is continuing to interview and investigate aspects of the feminine divine.*

*If you would like more information, want to talk about your experiences, or do an interview, get in touch on [boyd.bridie@gmail.com](mailto:boyd.bridie@gmail.com)*

## *Alternative version of the Lord's Prayer*

*A New Zealand Prayer Book / He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa page 181*

Eternal Spirit Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all.

Loving God, in whom is heaven.

The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the earth!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen





# Havea Makes History

Words by Mark Chamberlain

Photo by Jo Bean

## *The first Tongan to be ordained in Christchurch Diocese*

Kofe Havea was ordained to the Christchurch Anglican Diocese on Saturday 1 December 2018 thus becoming the first Tongan to be ordained in our diaconate. Friendly, open and a former travel consultant, Kofe has worked for the Anglican Church for some time now taking up a variety of roles – ministry assistant, pastoral visitor/carer, and Cursillo lay director to name a few. But let's step back and have a look at the journey to priesthood that had humble beginnings.



Kofe was born in the Kingdom and coral island of Tonga, in Nuku'alofa, its capital. Early in her life the family moved to Suva, Fiji, so her father could train in ministry at St John the Baptist Theological College.

At the age of ten, Kofe was 'adopted' by her mother's younger sister and her husband. With two sets of parents and multiple cultures in her life, two teachers and two clergy bringing her up, is it any wonder Kofe is an extraordinary human? Both of her fathers were ordained – her adopted father was Suffragan Bishop (in Polynesia), her birth father was the sole resident vicar in Tonga and both her mothers were teachers.

As a young child Kofe watched her fathers ministering to the extremely poor in their communities (both Indian and Fijian) and this contributed to her coming to a faith of her own at a young age; she was confirmed when she was just 12yrs old. Kofe was at a Travel Agents' conference in Wellington when she met a fine young man called Leni. They married and over

time had four children: Sita, Joshua, Sosaia and Tupou. Rev'd John Day, vicar of St Barnabas, Fendalton at the time, saw her talent and snapped her up to join the ministry team which she did in 1997.

Kofe remembers that time with fond memories.

"It was a most wonderful time of learning and being embraced in ministry and faith. I developed further as a Christian as I visited the elderly and coordinated assistance for the needy and the poor. I met many fantastic people and thrived on the relationships formed within the staff team."

In 2008, the dynamic duo of Leni and Kofe recognised a need within the Christchurch Tongan Anglican community for a service in the Tongan language. So began monthly worship at St Barnabas which thrived and soon moved to weekly.

This last year (2018) Kofe has been at St John's College training for the ordained ministry.

"I felt the call to ordination relatively early on, but initially tried to pretend I hadn't," says Kofe.

However, God's prompting isn't easily ignored and eventually she conceded.

"I had a special ministry with dying parishioners and grew to really care for them as, over the months, we walked their final journey together. But just at the point of death, I had to step aside for an ordained minister to take over. I yearned to walk the whole way with them and realised it was time to respond to God's call.

And amazingly, here I am, back in Christchurch about to start a new journey at the Upper Riccarton-Yaldhurst parish –

**Viiga i le Atua! Praise God!"**

*Reprinted with kind permission, from Anglican Alive, Diocese of Christchurch*





# Scholarship Funding

## Thinking about study options?

The St John's College Trust Board provides scholarships to Ordained Clergy, Candidates for Ordination and Lay Members of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia pursuant to the provisions of section 7 and section 3(1)(c) of the

[St John's College Trusts Act](#) 1972.

Applications are able to be submitted twice a year, with deadlines for submission being the 30th of September and the 31st of March each year. Applications submitted by 30 September are for courses of study that will commence in the first half of the following year, and March applications for the second half of the year.

Applications relating to Ordained members of the Church and Candidates for Ordination will be considered under the provisions of section 7 of the Act, whereas applications relating to Lay members and Group Scholarships will be considered under the section 3(1)(c) of the Act.

Applicants applying for scholarships under section 3(1)(c) of the Act should note that their applications will be subject to the availability of funding after all section 3 applications have been considered.

There are different application forms for ordained members, lay members and ministry groups. For more information and for application forms, go to

<https://www.sjctb.co.nz/scholarships>



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## Matthew Fox in Auckland in early July

Matthew Fox, spiritual theologian, Episcopal priest and activist for gender justice and eco-justice, will be giving four lectures in Auckland. Matthew will be speaking on: “Creation Spirituality: Reawakening Mysticism, Protecting Mother Earth”.  
**Thursday 4th July, 7.30pm, Selwyn Chapel, Holy Trinity Cathedral, Parnell** “Spiritual But Not Religious: The Future of Religion and of Spirituality and of the Earth”.<sup>1</sup>

**Friday 5th July, 7.30pm, St David’s Presbyterian Church, Khyber Pass.** “On Becoming More Deeply Human in a Time of Earth-Crisis and Apocalyptic Warnings”.

**Saturday 6th July, 2pm, St Luke’s Presbyterian Church, 130 Remuera Road.** “Spiritual Practices for Preparing Spiritual Warriors and Earth Activists in Our Time”.

**Saturday 6th July, 7.30pm, St Luke’s Presbyterian Church, 130 Remuera Road.** “From Despair and Denial to Hope and Empowerment: How Creation Spirituality Can Enlarge Our Souls and Develop our Warrior Capabilities Toward Healing Mother Earth”.

**Sunday 7th July, 9.30am, Preaching at St Luke’s Presbyterian Church, 130 Remuera Road.**

Cost for lectures: \$10 each, or \$30 for all four.

Registration: email [pamela@stlukes.org.nz](mailto:pamela@stlukes.org.nz) to specify which lecture(s) you are interested in

in





# WE NEED YOU

## 40 Years of Women's Ordination to the Priesthood

within the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

*A new AWSC Publication Project to celebrate this milestone*

### **THREE TIKANGA EDITORIAL TEAM -VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

The AWSC Council is looking for a small Editorial Team ,comprising volunteers from each of the three tikanga for our next publication's project over a two year period starting next year.

### **SEEKING WRITERS —Expressions of Interest**

The intention of this publication is to present a variety of essays and anecdotal stories of the experiences of ordained women from each of the three tikanga. It will be an opportunity to mark the significant milestones within each tikanga of women's ordination; the women past and present who have been ordained and their journey towards ordination; to acknowledge the journey and advocacy towards gender equality; to celebrate the many achievements and contributions of ordained women in this three tikanga Province; to share the stories of who mentored those being ordained and why.

These suggestions are just the starting point so we look forward to receiving an email expressing your interest in writing an essay or story along with your proposed topic so that the Editorial Team can contact you.

**Ceridwyn Parr AWSC Administrator**







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Ceridwyn Parr, Administrator

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The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies, commonly known as the Anglican Women's Studies Centre was set up to serve and to advance the interests and needs of the women of this Church particularly those undertaking Theological training.

The Link Representatives from each Diocese and Hui Amorangi have been chosen for their leadership ability to identify, gather, facilitate, resource and encourage women in their educational preparation for ministry whether lay or ordained. It is hoped that the Anglican Women's Studies Centre can continue to enjoy the support of each Diocese and Hui Amorangi in this endeavour.

The issue of increasing numbers of women in representative positions across the councils and committees of the Church is seen as a high priority and the practice of intentional mentoring by those already in national and international representative roles is seen as a good way to expose women of this Church to fulfil their potential as leaders.

Ensuring that women's voices and stories are heard now and in the future is also one of our continued aims whether it be by traditional methods of publication or using more contemporary technologies like web publication. We remain optimistic that through continued support, the needs of women throughout this Province will be valued and recognized.

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##### Diocese of Wellington

† *Position Vacant—tba*

**EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER:** The Anglican Women's Studies Centre is committed to encouraging and enabling women's voices and perspectives from across the diversity of the Church to be shared more widely. We acknowledge that women's experiences of church differ considerably and that resultant theological perspectives also differ considerably. In general, the AWSC does not exercise editorial control, rather we welcome as many voices as are willing to contribute.