

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN INC.
National Executive Meeting, Monday 18 November, 2013
Uniting Church Building, 222 Pitt Street, Sydney

Present: Lyn Middleton (Chair), Brenda Dickinson, Pamela Freeman, Tricia Graham, Isabel Hewitt, Joy Inglis, Jan Jeffrey, Elizabeth McEwen, Jennifer Pepper, Denise Secomb

Apologies: Lillian Hodges, Nancy McLaren

Welcome: The meeting commenced at 1.15 with Lyn Middleton welcoming everyone to the first official meeting of the National Executive of ACW. Lyn advised that this meeting won't go into everything in a lot of detail, but rather will give an overview of what lies ahead.

Devotions:

Lyn introduced the devotion with our theme 'Building in Harmony' – let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up. On our first meeting, we will try to draw this theme closer and think along the lines of living in harmony with the revealed will of God. That is something we can think about as Executive: what is the will of God and how is it revealed. God's will for each one of us is different. The bible has many verses which speak clearly about God's will for his people; while God's will is different for each of us, the bible is God's will for all mankind.

Matt. 6:33 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness'; many verses speak to us about the will of God. The commandments give us an idea of what his will is for us. When Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment he summed them up by saying 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind and all your strength, and the second is like it, love your neighbour as yourself'. Jesus brought all of the Ten Commandments together. On another occasion Jesus went on to explain these commandments by using the parable of the Good Samaritan. These commandments sum up God's will for his people. Loving our neighbour as ourselves is the crux of that command. Action speaks louder than words. When we do the right thing without saying anything we might have a greater impact.

We think that preachers are those who preach from the pulpit – everything that people observe about us is preaching. 'Preach the gospel, if necessary, use words' (St Francis of Assisi). The actions of the Good Samaritan spoke so loudly that people still hear them today. We must make sure that our actions are in harmony with God's will. May we always feast on God's word and its instruction. Philippians 4:8 'whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are lovely and of good report, think on these things.' Let's feast on God's word – what we eat today, walks and talks tomorrow, remembering our walking does our talking. Keep our living and working in harmony with God's revealed will as we work together.

Prayer: The people of Nepal and their election; the people of the Philippines affected by the typhoon.

REPORTS:

President's Report:

Lyn thanked everyone once again for accepting the responsibilities of National Executive.

Two letters were tabled from Rev Lee Moon-Sook (ACWC) of prayer support during the NSW bushfires. Messages of prayer support were received from Corzzon Tabing-Reyes – ICFLC, and several other countries.

Messages of prayer support were also sent to India, where there was a stampede; the Philippines where there was an earthquake; Japan, which was hit by a typhoon; and again to the Philippines when the typhoon struck there and lastly to Nepal in response to their request for prayer in regard to the elections taking place on 19th November.

Isabel and Lyn met for a day last week to work on today's agenda, which will give an idea of what lies ahead and how we will endeavour to approach it.

Lyn endorsed everything she said in the letter dated 14/10/13, which was emailed to all members of NE immediately following the National Conference.

Vice-President 1- Denise Secomb

Denise has the Honouring Australian Church Women book and will hold onto it until she finds out what needs to be done.

Lyn then thanked Joy for the book marks prepared for the devotions at the conference. These were appreciated by all, especially when they realised that each one was different, and how much work had gone in to making them. Joy stated that while administration isn't her thing, she is happy to contribute using her artistic ability.

Secretary – Isabel Hewitt

Isabel has been playing with the prayer requests. Has had correspondence from Margaret Ker, who has sent draft Minutes. Laurel has much correspondence concerning the transfer of materials.. Minutes have been received from Victoria.

Treasurer's Report – Jennifer Peffer

1. The Bank Account has finally been opened at the Carlingford Branch of the Commonwealth Bank. Both Deposit & Cheque Books have been ordered and should arrive later this week. This is a Fee-free Society Account. Jennifer has Net Bank access to get accurate details for Statements to present for Executive Meetings. Hard copy statements will be sent at 3-monthly intervals at no additional cost.
2. Jennifer will arrange for someone to countersign cheques which will be payable once the cheque book is available.
3. The current Bank Balance is \$2026.50. This represents the \$2000 advance from WA National Executive and 2 cheques from SA for proceeds of sale Winifred and payment of Invoice 52 'Legend and Legacy'. SA pointed out a discrepancy in the Statement included with the Working Papers of Conference, which Jennifer will look into.
4. Payments outgoing: ACW NSW will need to be repaid for the \$900 they paid to secure the booking for the 2015 National Conference Venue, also prior to our next meeting should have to pay for the Public Liability Insurance cover and also any Petty Cash Advances decided at this meeting.
5. Jennifer has contacted all the State Unit Treasurers requesting that they complete the Annual Assessment Form for monies collected during 2013. She has suggested that the return date for the monies with this form should be December 20 to give time for monies to come in from World Community Day Services and also time for monies to be cleared through accounts for those units who have a financial year end at 30 December.
6. Petty Cash Advances: Jennifer asked who on National Executive should receive a Petty Cash Advance. She would expect monies spent would be recorded on forms she would provide with appropriate receipts attached. Isabel advised that she would rather work on a claims basis. Lyn said that if anyone has petty cash it would be the treasurer, but Jennifer advised she would rather try reimbursement before going to petty cash.
7. Public Liability: As firm quotes are only given with a 30-day option, Jennifer cannot follow this through until the end of November. Her understanding is that if we go with the group option we get a greater cover, worldwide for an amount considerably lower than the option to pursue the 'convenient' January/December option. This would mean a difference of \$800.

Jennifer suggested that she circulate the information and executive members send back comments.

Lyn suggested that a decision could be made today, and this issue was discussed further. It is a few hundred dollars cheaper to do the group one. The issue of getting certificates out in time for World Community Day was discussed and it was agreed that this could be managed in the time frame.

Tricia moved that Jennifer be given permission to go ahead with arranging the group Public Liability option. Seconded by Isabel. Carried.

Denise thanked Jennifer for all the work she has done in arranging the bank accounts and insurance.

Minute Secretary:

The issue of sending National Executive Minutes to State/Territory Units was discussed and decided that one hard copy to each unit is appropriate, sent to the secretary.

Whether minutes should be sent to all denominational national bodies was considered. This needs to be checked.

Winifred Kiek Convenor:

Lyn had the W.K. folder which has all the applications for the 2014 scholars.

Isabel commented that according to the timetable, states need to be asked about the number of leaflets they require in Oct/Nov.

To prepare the leaflets photos are needed of the applicants. Isabel will send an email through Cynthia Gifford asking if she has the photos. Lyn stated that the bulk of the leaflet is done.

When considering how many leaflets Lyn said she will look at orders from last year and duplicate. WA should have the numbers from last year.

Nancy will be asked to send Christmas letters to past scholars. Lyn has the addresses on file and these will be forwarded to Nancy.

Special Days Convenor – Pamela Freeman

At the handing over of information regarding Special Days [National] at the end of National Conference (WA) 2013, it became apparent that both Tasmania and Victoria unit had not had the opportunity to prepare a Fellowship Day Order of Service for more than a decade. Those representing these Units were approached regarding the likelihood of each unit being able to take on such a role. There was no objection to being listed and approached for this matter.

Therefore, in 2014 [March] Tasmania is to be offered the task of preparing the Fellowship Day Order of Service for 2015, with the approval of National Executive from NSW.

In 2015, [March] Victoria is to be offered the same opportunity for the Fellowship Day Order of service for 2016, after approval from NE from NSW and conferencing with the next Incoming NE.

Enquiries have been made to NT [Darwin] regarding ability to participate in such a roster. Pamela is awaiting a response.

Fellowship Day 2014: At the request of NE [then from WA] approaches were made to the ACT Unit in June 2013, about the possibility of that unit being able to prepare the Order of Service for this gathering. This was agreed to and details of theme etc. were submitted to ACT Unit in late August with the request to have the draft returned by early November. Contact has been made with the ACT Unit and as several members have been ill, the said document is still to be sent.

World Community Day 2014: New South Wales State Unit Inc has accepted responsibility for producing this Order of Service and Cootamundra Branch has willingly accepted this challenge. Details have been forwarded to this group. A draft copy is expected by early February.

All themes for the Special Days 2014 -15 have been decided under the overriding theme of *Building in Harmony*.

Social Justice – Jan Jeffery

Jan asked if there is anything to give her guidance in this role and is there something she should be doing now. Lyn suggested being alert for anything at National level that cuts into social justice. If an issue is going before parliament get whatever information is available. Often parliament websites or local members can give information.

Isabel suggested that Jan could send an email to other states advising that she is the Social Justice Convenor.

Website Manager – Brenda Dickinson

Brenda is keen to get in touch with people who have been state website managers. These are the things Brenda has identified as needing to be updated on the website:

- Contacts as before, substituting Lyn's name and email address, Isabel's home address and email.
- The FLC link is good, but on ACW site should remove '2011 Report' because in fact the FLC website is up to 2013.
- WKS page not advanced beyond 2011
- ACWC – why the link to World Day of Prayer Australia? Perhaps ACWC could be more prominent, and if there is need for a further link it could be to WCC or CCA (www.cca.org.hk).
- Report by Laurel Pearce in Working Papers would update the 2012 on website.
- National Conference Report needs to be updated to Perth – will look at the report from Newsette to see if any adjustment needed.
- Prayer requests are valid, but should be posted when received and removed after, say, two weeks.

Need to update everything that says 2011. Brenda contacted people who used to be website manager and has sent an email to the states asking if their details if changed.

Lyn stated that the President's Report could go on now. Brenda will follow that up.

We pay \$45.50 for 2 years for the Domain name and there is a hosting charge. Brenda would like to have a link to FLC, WK in there so people can bring that up.

Australian Women's Coalition – Tricia Graham

Tricia attended a Meeting of the Australian Women's Collation which incorporated their AGM last weekend, November 9th and 10th. There were delegates from thirteen of the eighteen member organisations.

During the meeting she was acknowledged as the Australian Church Women's Delegate to AWC and Major Jenny Begent (Salvation Army) was elected as the new President for a two year term.

They plan to advocate in the areas of –

- Family Violence – the increase after extreme events, lack of food, water security. Women's Health – in the areas of cardio vascular, diabetes, osteoporosis and mental health.
- Equal Rights.
- Rural Women.
- Asylum seekers.

They will do this by meeting with the heads of women's organisations, letter writing to politicians, (also promoting AWC), building a knowledge bank and grant writing.

AWC would like to know which of these main areas ACW are most interested in.

The next meeting will be held on either Saturday 22nd or Sunday 23rd, February 2014.

Tricia has asked for Leave of Absence from AWC for the period February 26th to September 26th, 2014. AWC wish to be advised the name of her deputy during this time to attend any meetings and accept correspondence.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Meeting Dates: Lyn thought the executive might need to meet during January, and suggested everyone let Isabel know the available dates.

Isabel will look at a roster for Devotions.

Perth Conference Debrief:

Lyn asked for feedback from the Conference.

It was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. National Executive congratulates the outgoing NE for a most successful conference. Ideas gleaned were added to an in-house³ 'Tips for Conference' list. Any further suggestions can be sent to Isabel.

National Life Members Book:

The National Life Members' Book is here, along with the WKS Book – the responsibility of the Vice Presidents. Joy will look at the Life Members' Book from a creative viewpoint and make suggestions.

Special Project 2014

An application from the Victorian Unit was circulated by Pamela. Applications should be received by February.

AGM 2014 – will have to work this out.

As it was getting late, Lyn decided to leave the remaining Agenda items for discussion at another time and the meeting closed at 3.15 pm.