

December 2011 &
January 2012
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The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

Anglican Women's Studies Centre

'And the Word became flesh and lived among us'.

John 1:14

Christmas is a story of God's 'YES' to the world; God's delight-filled 'YES' to the earth and the flesh and blood of our existence; God's 'YES' to those who hear 'NO' from everyone else; God's patient, passionate 'yes' to embrace us when we fail, when we are hurting, when we are desperate to hide; God's 'yes' to walking with us in the grief and the fear and the violence, and whatever else we and our sisters and brothers in this world face every second of every day.

In Jesus, God's 'YES' becomes flesh - this is the story we celebrate at Christmas. God's 'yes' seeks us out, longing to become flesh in our bodies, and in our lives. And this year for me has felt like we have embodied Jesus by our aroha for one another, and in our gatherings and our actions. Together, as women in our places of community, we have said 'YES' to making a positive difference. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the kaupapa and ministry of the Women's Studies Council this year. I am hugely grateful for all we have achieved this year, but more importantly for the relationships we have

nurtured and developed. Christmas is a time to celebrate special people in our lives and so it is appropriate to do this with our network.

It has not been an easy year for many people across our lands, and yet the work of women in every place, especially those places where little acknowledgment is given, provides hope for so many people. The Christmas season can offer us new insights; God brings hope into our world. God can change us and the world around us so that love is realised. God is right there in everything that we do and are; in the struggles and also in the moments of delight and celebration. Through coming as a child, God experiences our vulnerability and encourages us to deeply love and care for others. So let us say 'YES' to Jesus amongst us.

Christmas blessings, peace, hope, love and joy,

*The Venerable Carole Hughes
Convenor— Council for the
Centre of Anglican Women's Studies*



Please Note in your 2012 Diary Now...
WOMEN IN MINISTRY PROVINCIAL HUI
For Anglican Women in Ministry—lay and ordained
Wednesday, 27th June—Friday, 29th June 2012
St John's College, Auckland

PASTOR & PROPHET HUI: Women in Ordained Ministry

Mary and Elizabeth, a reflection

From the Gender & Generations Session

By Revd Jenny Chalmers

A couple of weeks before I attended the Pastor and Prophet Hui, I sat with a younger woman whose two children had been taken by Child, Youth and Family into permanent foster care. As we talked about the agony of empty beds and empty arms, of very limited and supervised access, we reflected on Moses' mother placing baby Moses in a basket in the Papyrus reeds in the Nile, and how the Pharaoh's daughter found the basket and took the child Moses and brought him up in the Pharaoh's court. Moses' mother was able to see and hold Moses daily as she was employed as Moses' wet nurse. My friend is not so lucky.

My friend gained a great deal of comfort from the Moses myth and came to understand that no matter how painful, shameful and awful our circumstances, there is no story in our lives that is not in some way replicated in the *Bible*. And like my young friend, many of the heroines of the Bible do not have tidy lives.

The initial Gender and Generations theological exercise at the Pastors and Prophets Hui paired generations of Bible heroines; Naomi and Ruth, Mary and Elizabeth, Rachel and Leah, Vashti and Esther, Lois and Eunice. We were invited to choose a woman with whom we identify. Trish Carter and I, both grandmothers, chose the 'Elizabeth' corner.

Elizabeth is the mother of John the Baptist. She found herself awkwardly pregnant, an elderly primigravida. Mary is a younger woman and tradition tells us that her baby was an unplanned surprise. A younger unmarried pregnant woman visiting an older pregnant woman. How the neighbours must have sniggered and pointed. Whispering behind hands, feeling righteous that they were not the ones who were not pregnant; who had ordered their affairs in a more orthodox manner.

But from this untidiness, the meeting of these two women, inconveniently pregnant, comes a song of justice, a song which, no matter how much we try to sanitise it, tell us that there will be a time when the poor will have enough, when the assets and resources of the world will be available for all.

As I reflected on the generations of women who have been ordained in our three tikanga, I was able to draw parallels in the inconvenience and untidiness of the first women who were ordained in this Province with the women of the *Bible*. Most were older women, at those first two or three momentous ordinations of 1978, processed along side the young male ordinands. Out of time and inconvenient in their assertiveness. Many of the women had been parish assistants for many years.

Most knew the heartbreak of their ordination causing a break in long standing relationships of one kind and another. For our two sister tikanga, these stories are part of their present.

The deeds of the older women of the pairs are not generally so well known. Vashti and her refusal to dance, Naomi who provided a safe and secure haven for Ruth, Leah the older sister, first to marry Joseph. Lois and Eunice, grandmother and mother, nurturers of the faith. It seems that the older women tilled

the soil or paved the way for the younger women to carry out the truly spectacular.

For every woman of the Bible and for every woman in ordained and lay ministry, like Elizabeth and Mary and Moses' mother, there is a calling to be part of history. Perhaps the calling is to be a ground breaker, to be spectacular, and birth a change of world order like Mary, like the women of the 1978 ordinations. Perhaps the calling is to be less pioneer and more ordinary. Through all of these *Bible* stories and through the stories of the women of the Pastor and Prophet hui came a strong sense of calling, of doing God's work.

In many ways during this first exercise we became reminded of and reoriented to our initial understandings that whatever our calling, no matter how humble or groundbreaking, we are called to do God's work; it is in God's hand, and it is done in God's name to God's glory. Like the women of the Bible, this is our comfort and our inspiration.

Jenny Chalmers

WSC Link Representative—Diocese of Wellington



Helen Wilderspin, Kirsten Dawson, Tricia Carter, Brenda Sio and Lilian Barrett during a Pastor & Prophet: Women in Ordained Ministry workshop

A Journey to the Unseen World

By Mary Al Kopti



From Left: Mary Al Kopti, Bernadette Surman, Revd Jacky Sewell, Revd Christopher Honore, Megan Herles-Mooar and Jenny Harper

in creation which remind us faintly of God, as when, for instance, we speak of the holy and adorable Trinity, imaged by the sun, or light, or burning rays, or by a running fountain, or a full river, or by the mind, speech, or the spirit within us, or by a rose tree, or a sprouting flower, or a sweet fragrance"

Every Sunday afternoon this year, the icon group met at St John's College for three hours. Led by Revd Jacky Sewell we journeyed into an unseen world of icon spirituality and understanding of this sacred art form, while Megan Herles-Mooar shared her expertise into the technicalities of drawing and painting icons. I valued being part of this friendly environment and the friendships made. At times the class was quiet while we concentrated and at others it filled with laughter and colour as we were guided by some serious learning methods.

I feel from this experience that I increased my patience, accuracy, spirituality and appreciated the opportunity of communicating with God and his mysteries in new ways. It became a place of prayer, joy and theological engagement within the world of art. It was also a challenging process of drawing, correcting and finishing the work. However, the process also offers the opportunity to express a journey of faith with whom-ever and whichever event of faith the icon embodies.

After an icon is finished it is consecrated during a small festive liturgy in the College chapel. This blessing of the icon marks the end of the artwork and opens the door for new horizons of continuous prayer and meditation. It is the new experience of God's presence that showed us his greatness in the beautiful images of creation.

Iconography - a form of art engraved in the Middle Eastern spiritualities, where I was born, raised and lived for many years. Therefore, I was very excited to find a group here in New Zealand where iconography is being studied.

It is striking how the world of icons reflects the majesty of Christian spirituality through art. The defender of icons, Saint John of Damascus (d. 749), was also born and raised in my home town, Damascus, and then became a monk in Mar Saba's monastery near the Dead Sea in Palestine. He laid the foundation for the theology of icons by saying,

"For the invisible things of God since the creation of the world are made visible through images. We see images

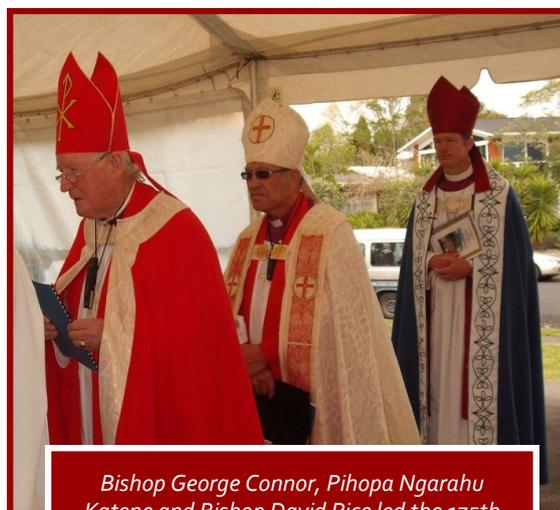
Anglicans celebrate 175 years at Maungatapu

By Tama Biddle

On Sunday, 18th of September 2011, three New Zealand Anglican bishops gathered with 100 worshipers to celebrate 175 years of Christian services at All Saints Church, Maungatapu in Tauranga.

Organisers had planned this hui for 18 months to ensure a successful smooth-running day. The weather was crisp and showery, as parishioners met at Hairini Marae, and travelled to Maungatapu by bus. A marquee tent was erected to shelter any over-flow, which contained a public address system. The church service began with a karanga which included the unveiling and blessing of a tukutuku panel and the planting and blessing of a tree overlooking Rangataua Bay. Balloons were released into

the north-easterly breeze and many inspiring musical interludes were given. The day concluded with a powhiri and a hakari kai at Hairini Marae, with the sharing of a birthday cake. A huge congratulations and heart-felt thank you to each and



Bishop George Connor, Pihopa Ngarahu Katene and Bishop David Rice led the 175th Anniversary celebrations

Anniversary Celebrations continued from page 2

every person who helped in any way to produce a memorable celebration at All Saints Church in Maungatapu. Big mihi to Bishop David Rice of the Waiapu Diocese, Pihopa Ngarahu Katene from Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa and Bishop George Conner.

The All Saints building and land are owned by Ngati He and Ngai Te Ahi, and was once part of Maungatapu Marae. A chapel was built in 1836. In that year, Archdeacon Brown found 300 people present at a church service, mostly women and children, as the men were away at war. Five chapels have stood on the site, and the current chapel is an amalgamation of the 1906 chapel, which it replaced. All Saints Anglican Church embodies the harmonic relationship of Tikanga Paheka and Tikanga Maori under the umbrella of Anglican Christian worshipping. Every fourth Sunday a bilingual service is held there.

Thanks and praises to God for this special place and all the people who have come to witness and share the gospel. May God continue to bless this sacred site and all who come to fellowship the Good News of Jesus Christ. Ma te Matua, ma te Tama me te Wairua Tapu, Amine.



Introducing GATA: Global Anglican Theological Academy

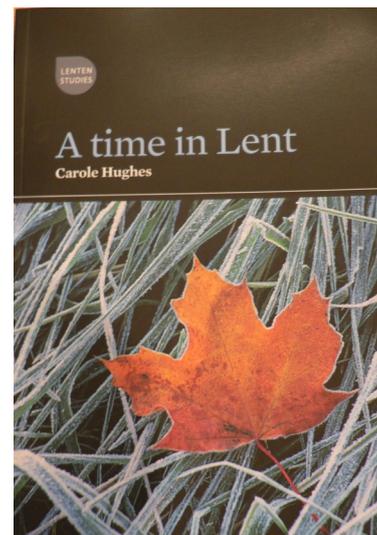
By Dr Jenny Plane-Te Paa

A Project to Make a Difference by Advocating for and Enabling Women's Leadership in the Anglican Communion.

In 2001, I was invited as one of the first lay Anglican indigenous women theologians to contribute at the international level of the Anglican Communion. The experience of being invited to contribute at the top tables of decision-making and thus of influence is always humbling because it is one of significant privilege.

When asked as I frequently am, 'why me', I have always proudly attributed my ability to contribute at the global level firstly to my parents, grandparents and Tai Tokerau whanau who nurtured me from birth into becoming and remaining a devoted Anglican and secondly to those visionary and kindly New Zealand Bishops (Vercoe, Walters and Reeves) together with my beloved Aunty Puti Murray, who twenty years ago first advocated for me to pursue a doctoral degree in theological education and then mentored me into the position of Te Ahorangi at St Johns College. It was in this way that I was able to gain the requisite professional academic teaching and leadership experience, which has enabled me to work as I have done with faith-filled confidence and with increasing regularity within the Anglican Communion.

My first assignment was as a member of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission. Next I served as leader of the Bible Studies for ACC 12 held in Hong Kong; as a member of the Lambeth Commission, and as a founder member of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Theological Education. I have worked closely with four of the Communion's networks and continue to work with numerous of the Anglican Communion's seminaries and Mission Agencies in various ways. I was a member of the Lambeth 2008 Bible Studies Group and coordinated the only combined plenary session of the Lambeth Conference, which focused on the issues of violence within the households of the Church. I found then and still do that any work at the international level is as I have mentioned, always both profoundly humbling even as it is also always profoundly challenging.



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A handy collation of some
Lenten Studies programmes
which offer some guidelines
and starting points to work
together, as the people of
God, during Lent.

GATA continued from page 4

Reflecting on my own experience as one of the very few women entrusted leadership responsibility in theological education and broader representative roles anywhere in the Communion, I have always understood the twin strategies of advocacy and mentoring as being of vital importance to ensuring rightfully diverse representation in leadership and in any decision making forum (*even as I recognize the processes of selection are always at risk of being unduly politicised and the resulting quality of representation often remain problematic*).

After a decade of top level work it was becoming disturbingly apparent that still far too many Provinces regarded women's leadership as either theologically perverse or as something to be offered and controlled for as a limited patriarchal concession.

And so beginning from around 2005, I resolved to work closely with my very small peer group of highly qualified and highly motivated Anglican women theological educators and church leaders drawn from across the Communion to develop and refine a suitable strategy for ensuring that the faces of Anglican theological educational leadership and of broader representative leadership in the Councils and Commissions of the Communion more accurately reflect the ethnic, gender and clerical diversity of the Anglican Communion.

In February 2009 during a meeting of women theological educators and women PhD students from across the Communion, our previously ad hoc women leaders group was formally blessed into being as a sub-group of the Anglican Communion's Theological Education Commission by the Director of TEAC and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The women leaders group became officially known by the acronym GATA or Global Anglican Theological Academy. An executive committee was established comprising Professor Kwok Pui Lan from the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Professor Esther Mombo of St Paul's University in Limuru, Kenya, Professor Judith Berling of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, Rev. Dr Bev Haddad from the University of Pietermaritzburg in Durban, South Africa and myself from St Johns College as Chair.

By ready consensus we were agreed that our priority project was to focus in the area of greatest leadership need. We resolved then to identify ways in which we could individually and collectively use our professional status, experience and our own visions for quality theological education to more intentionally and effectively, mentor women from the two-thirds world and from indigenous peoples and communities to become both scholarly leaders and or leaders in lay or holy orders for the Anglican Communion.

We have a particular preference for mentoring those whose studies engage issues of Anglican ecclesiology and of missiology, broadly understood.

We are seeking therefore to increase the contributions of women from across the Anglican Communion in scholarship, in theological educational leadership and in representative roles, where issues facing the Anglican Communion are being officially addressed.

When GATA began, members of the Executive each recognized to our ongoing dismay that we were among just a mere handful of women in senior leadership roles in theological education, particularly in Anglican seminaries and colleges, throughout the Communion. We further recognized, ethnic subjectivities aside, that of the Communion's then three women leaders in theological education, only two were women of colour, both were lay and both were in extremely tenuous professional positions. As of May 2010 both these women of colour have been displaced and as of May 2011 only one ordained white woman holds a Principalship in any seminary anywhere in the Anglican Communion.

The necessity of the work of GATA is thus or at least ought to be, self-evident!

The executive group has met regularly over the past three years and is now poised to gather again with our fledgling inaugural group of outstanding young women scholars and leaders.

GATA's immediate mission objectives are three-fold.

Firstly we are constantly seeking to update our fledgling and still very modest global database of young, articulate Anglican women of colour; women of two thirds world; women of indigenous nations and communities, who either are or ought to be in PhD programs. These young women traditionally described, as '*minorities*', are our primary target group. As the project evolves we intend to broaden the base of our participants but for now the profile of those most gravely underrepresented is of Gospel necessity, our priority.

We have begun to mentor already a small group of young women drawn from across the Communion (Kenya, Namibia, Malaysia, South India, Philippines, New Zealand) each of whom has obvious and fairly immediate potential for theological educational and thus for other representative forms of leadership.

We are well aware of the structural, attitudinal and resourcing constraints which militate against minority women from a good number of the Provinces of the Communion and remain actively committed to strategizing and implementing ways of subverting these institutional injustices wherever possible, even if it has meant advocating for the resources needed to enable some to undertake their studies outside of their home context.

Secondly, we are actively involved in exploring ways to establish a globally recognized PhD program with an intentional focus upon nurturing and equipping those young women in our target group for theological educational and other church leadership within and for the Anglican Communion.

With respect to the PhD programme we are also seeking to exemplify something of the radically creative possibilities which can be developed as modern technology now enables us all to be more intimately and readily acquainted with one another across the previously often impenetrable divides of geographical, economic and cultural difference.

GATA continued from page 5

Thirdly by way of exemplifying/modelling scholarly excellence the GATA Executive have formally contracted for a unique publishing project drawing upon both the particular expertise and academic passion of an elite group of the Anglican Communion's finest women scholars and writers.

Canterbury Seminar Programme:

The GATA Executive have identified a five year cycle of mentoring for those young women currently being mentored beginning with a biennial face to face seminar program based at the International Studies Centre in Canterbury, England. The purposes of the seminar are:

- ⇒ To educate participants about the structures of the Anglican Communion and the ways in which they, as emergent women scholars and potential leaders, can develop themselves as contributors to the Communion through their scholarship and or their participation in the various programs and leadership opportunities offered or overseen by the Instruments of Communion and by the Communion's educational institutions;
- ⇒ To have participants develop their skills in presenting their scholarship to an international group with attention to contextual issues and the contributions the scholarship can make to the Anglican Communion;
- ⇒ To expose participants to the scholarship and voices of senior women scholars across the globe addressing and critiquing issues of the Communion
- ⇒ To establish ongoing mentoring relationships between members of the executive group of GATA or our local collaborators (the mentors) and the GATA participants, as well as facilitating an ongoing on-line network of mutual support and discussion among the participants.

The seminar comprises a weeklong comprehensive program of introduction to and encounter with, various leaders and various sites of critical importance to gaining understanding of what it means from both an historical and contemporary perspective, to belong to the Anglican Communion.

During the seminar, the participants are also acquainted with the career paths and experiences of the mentors; participants will be invited to present something of their own research with particular emphasis on the contextual issues and the ways in which it can contribute to the wider Anglican Communion; they will meet key figures from the Anglican Communion Office and learn about the history, structures, and programs of the communion; they will meet with key women leaders from within the Church of England; they will establish ongoing relationships with one of the mentors; and they will make a commitment to participate in an ongoing on-line interchange with all present.

Following on from the Canterbury meetings the executive group (the mentors) regularly follow up with their assigned mentees, and we each take responsibility for ensuring that the on-line sharing continues in order to provide constant nurturing and mentoring for the Communion's precious

younger women scholars.

We monitor their progress and when and where appropriate we work to encourage and or to advocate for them for positions in theological educational leadership or other forms of representative leadership in the many official committee's and Commissions of the global Anglican Communion.

GATA is then one of the most exciting and transformative projects for Anglican women's leadership. It is slowly attracting the attention of many of the younger leaders of the Provinces of the Communion who share our concern at the shameful statistical evidence which shows women to be virtually invisible in theological educational leadership and still seriously underrepresented in all other forms of church leadership in spite of our faithful presence and our undoubted abilities to undertake any and all forms of leadership. Our prayer is that with a program of strong advocacy, mentoring and network building we will begin to redeem our currently unacceptable status quo.

As Chair of GATA, I am particularly indebted to the Women's Studies Centre for its generous ongoing support of the mentoring project and for its solidarity with the kaupapa for although the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Aotearoa has traditionally and for a time, justifiably prided itself on being at the vanguard of enabling women's leadership across the institutions and leadership Councils of the Church, the current statistical evidence presents a rather disturbing new reality.

Women's leadership in our beloved Province is still very much a fraught arena. While many consider the numerical quota solution to be a satisfactory response, what this avoids is the concurrent qualitative assurance that women being selected for representative work are well equipped and enabled to be more than merely token. Commensurate with this necessary analysis is the need also for appropriate safeguards to protect against the unjust structural silencing of the voices and views of strong and capable women.

We have I believe the opportunity within our Province to regain our previous ascendancy in terms of women's leadership. It remains a source of deep pride and boundless hope that we will now collectively recommit to the urgent project of achieving equitable gender justice and that we will do so with all the generosity of spirit and the grace filled yearning for God's justice that has so characterized much of what has made us one of the Communion's exemplary Provinces in the past.



*Dr Jenny Plane Te Paa
Tikanga Maori Councillor—Centre for
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Advent 2011*

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The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies, commonly known as the **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.

**WOMEN IN MINISTRY
PROVINCIAL HUI
26th—29th JUNE 2012**

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 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 fulfill 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 website publication. We remain optimistic that through continued support, the needs of women throughout this Province will be valued and recognized.



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