

A Letter from the President

Dear Federation sisters,

During the last two years I have been very aware of standing in a line of amazing women who have held the office of World President in previous quinquennia. It has been a particular joy and delight to have been able to visit four of these women in their own homes. The first was while I was still Area President when Ann Connan invited the World Executive 2011-2016 to meet in Melbourne. I was fortunate to be able to visit her home and see the striking display of crafts and memorabilia from her travels to the 9 Areas during her term. Then in 2017 I was able to visit Elizabeth Kissak, World President from 1976-81. She still lives on the Isle of Man and at 100 years of age was still reminiscing about her Federation experiences and envisioning what the future could hold.

The Joint European Areas Seminar in Belfast in June 2018 was the first of ten such seminars that Dr Edith Loane had been unable to attend. Thanks to Wanda Hogan (Helen Kim Memorial Scholar for Ireland) I visited Edith immediately afterwards and spent a joyous hour with her recalling her time as World Treasurer 1981-86 and President 1991-96. Right to the end of her life, in July this year, she was passionately interested in the activities of the World Federation and encouraging women to get more deeply involved.

Then in July, while in Seoul for the World Methodist Council meeting, I was fortunate indeed to be able (with Mataiva) to visit Dr Oknah Kim Lah, still living in the family home from where she travelled extensively as World President 1981-86. This remarkable woman was in her late 60s when she retired from office and launched a new initiative in a purpose-built building at the bottom of her city-centre garden: the Kakdang Welfare Foundation. This is still functioning 40 years on as a training centre and is now managed by Oknah's daughter-in-law, Heryun.

From where did these women get their energy and drive? How did they inspire their members before the days of internet and Facebook? What sustained them through challenging times? I fervently believe it was the power of prayer. Now, I bless all of you who remember me in your prayers as I seek to serve the Federation to the best of my ability. I praise God for the strength I discover at moments of weakness, the faith I receive in times of doubt, the vision I am given of a growing, fruitful global movement still empowering women and children to reach their potential and make this world a better place.

You will recall that 26th October is the anniversary of the signing of the original World Federation Constitution in 1939. I want to encourage all of you to make use of the World Federation Prayer and to do so, wherever you are, at around 12 noon on the **26th day of every month**. In doing so, we shall bind ourselves together in mutual support, remember those who have gone before us and recommit ourselves to the work to which God has called us.

The World Federation Prayer: (written by WFMW Executive members 1986-91)

Creator God, rooted in your loving care, nurtured through your Son Jesus, challenged by your Holy Spirit, we are in the world to bring peace with justice, reconciliation in love, and hope for all people. May our lives extend as the branches of our Tree of Life, bearing fruit of Unity and Love. We offer praise and thanksgiving through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Every blessing,

Alison

Alison Judd
World President, World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women
www.wfmucw.org