1st Pacific Region WCTU Conference

Glenda Amos – World Director for Children's Work

From May 7 – 10, 160 delegates from the Pacific Island countries gathered at Fulton College in Fiji for the first Pacific Region Woman's Christian Temperance Union Conference. On the first evening, the host nation, Fiji welcomed the delegates and the flag bearers from each country with the traditional beating of the Lali and the blowing of the conch shell. Fulton College staff wonderfully catered for the conference making sure that all were well fed and comfortably accommodated. Representing Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Fiji, those who attended enjoyed the times of fellowship, the seminars conducted and the reports and strategic plans that were presented.

The theme of the conference was Christ - the light of the world. The delegates were reminded that Christ calls us out of darkness and asks us to shed His light and reveal His glory to others. We can go with Him to search for the lost and reclaim those who are victims of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

The seminars presented at the conference included Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and Marijuana; Drugs of the South Pacific (Betel Nut and Kava); Alcohol and Tobacco; Recovery from Addictions and How to Have Healthy Families. Workshops on the departments of the WCTU included Christian Living; Education; Community Work; Home Protection; Working with Children and Dealing with Youth in Crisis. Suggested activities in these areas were explored and the participants were encouraged to choose projects which they could work on in the next 6 months. The presenters were Miss Sarah Ward - the World President for WCTU; Pastor Kevin Amos - from Newcastle, Australia and his wife, Glenda Amos - WCTU world director for children's work.

Each morning and evening, groups from the various areas presented devotionals on the theme which were further emphasised by the puppets - "Arpee" and "Smukey."

The evening sessions were times when the various countries gave reports on what was happening in their areas and presented special items. The delegates also spent some time during the conference in their country groups and considered what goals they wanted to achieve in the next year, the next 3 years and the next 5 years and presented their strategic plans in the closing meeting.

One feature of the conference was an afternoon prayer walk on the Thursday. The attendees divided into groups of around 8 – 10 and went with their respective leader to 4 prayer stations where they explored the different aspects of prayer (Adoration; Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication) and engaged in sharing Bible promises, life experiences, needs and praise and in praying together. The campus grounds offered a beautiful venue for this activity.

The challenges that are faced in the Pacific Islands are daunting. Drugs are destroying the youth, families are being broken up, resources are limited and distances are vast. We ask that you will pray for these dedicated people as they return to their homelands, that God will use them to make a difference in their homes and communities.