

## Pastoral Ministry & Violence

### APCPCC 2017 Report

**The 11<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Congress of Pastoral Care and Counselling (APCPCC) was held in Jakarta, Indonesia during the 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017.**

The AIP (Indonesian Association of Pastoral Care) and the Convener of the Congress, John Livingstone on behalf of the APCPCC Committee were very welcoming and picked up all the International delegates from the airport which is no small thing in Jakarta because of the enormous amount of traffic. We were introduced to the concept of “Rubber Time” Jarem Karet when a 45minute journey took 2 and half hours. Needless to say we needed a pit stop, which happened to be at the STT School of Theology where a christening of sorts took place!

There were 13 delegates from across the globe and 150 Indonesians from their many different islands and regions gathered together – at times it was like ‘Bable’ meeting and trying to communicate. Yet the morning worship each day said and sung in English and Bahasa helped to bind participants together as we attempted to sing in each other’s languages. Certain words transcended the situation like ‘Hallelujah’ and ‘Amen’. There was a thoughtfulness given to the prayers and song choices in line with the theme of calling on God for mercy and justice and for light to break through where evil, darkness and brokenness have taken root.

The main sessions were all translated into English and Bahasa Indonesian depending on who was presenting. In the workshops translators came and sat with individual participants and translated by whispering directly into their ears!

During the evenings there was much traditional singing and dancing. An award-winning choir came and performed several times. Presentations were made for the local people and the new executive for the APCPCC was announced, for which I have been requested to act as Secretary. This executive will be responsible for organizing the next congress in 2021 alongside the Convening Association depending on where it will be held which is still to be decided, Australia and NZ are top of the list of suggestions since we haven’t hosted an APCPCC since 2001 which would be 20 years if we host the next one.

**Rev. Daniel Susarto representing the National Board of API (Indonesian Pastoral Association)** the local body of pastoral carers and supervisors who have collectively helped to organize the event opened the congress with an impassioned speech and introduced us to the theme of the conference Pastoral Ministry and Violence. This is a poignant topic in Indonesia with many local Indonesians having come from the more rural areas where trafficking and domestic helper abuse is a reality and greatly affects their local communities. It became evident within the workshops and electives that the church leadership was looking for fresh ways to deal with this problem.

Daniel also outlined the congress organizer’s approach to including the environment in their understanding of having been violated by mankind and hence the session by Dr Rebecca Young on violence against the environment.

**Rev. Professor Emmanuel Y. Lartey, Emory University, Atlanta Georgia gave the opening Plenary Session - *Pastoral Ministry in the face of violence against women and children*.** He was a passionate and considered presenter who has been doing pastoral work with families with both victims and men who are perpetrators in the US. The statistics he presented are sobering and challenging. His main point was that the abuse of women and children is at an average of around 30-35% across the world in some places lower and in some places higher but on average 1 in 3 women are physically, emotionally and or psychologically abused. The most common form of violence is in the form of sexual abuse against women and children. Up to 1 in 5 women and 1 in 20 men report having been violated as children in this way.

There is currently no culture, religion or socio-economic group whether rich or poor where this is not the case and this is mostly happening within intimate partnerships, which means it is happening in Christian churches mostly going undisclosed. The main cause he put down to living in a

“Global Culture of Violence” because of the:

- Glorification of violence
- Justification of violence
- Normalisation of violence
- Minimization / denial of the pernicious nature of violence and the
- Tendency to Victim-blame

Prof Lartey listed typical risk factors and tendencies within intimate partnerships as well as primary prevention strategies. The primary prevention strategies he mentioned included combining economic empowerment of women with gender equality training, promoting communication and relationship skills within couples and communities, for longer-term results enacting legislation and developing policies that: culturally address discrimination against women, promote gender equality, support women and help to move towards more peaceful norms are paramount.

So it is a global problem which Prof. Lartey encouraged us to find collaborative solutions to as a global community at the conference by sharing stories and seeking to understand pastoral ways forward. The four pastoral responses Lartey suggested were to:

- 1) **Expose the issue** (Joel 2:1) – “Blow the trumpet in Zion” call to action – by breaking the silence on the issue. Create Church and community cultures where this issue can be talked about more freely.
- 2) **Research** (Deut. 13:14) – “inquire and make a thorough investigation” – examine your own culture
- 3) **Educate** – (John 21:17) – “study to show yourself approved” (2 Tim 2:15; “**feed my sheep**” – e.g. USA “men stopping violence” program. Education must be age, cultural and gender appropriate. Most effective form of communication was found to be story telling, art, drama, music.
- 4) **Care for the victims and the perpetrators** – (John 21:16) “take care of my sheep” – perpetrators need pastoral care too.

This was a necessarily confronting kick off to the congress, which took the theme of the conference firmly by the horns, so that any discomfort delegates had about the subject

matter couldn't be ignored, ensuring that people engaged openly with it. This challenging presentation set the tone for the rest of the conference.

For the second day of the congress

**Prof. Dr Takaaki David Ito** shared his Dimensional Projection Model and experiences of practicing inter-faith spiritual care in Japan. Based around his doctoral studies David took us through his model step by step with application points along the way called:

**Towards the General Theory of Inter-Faith Spiritual Care: The Dimensional Projection Model, A Perspective from Japan Experiences**

It could be of interest to obtain a copy of his model and the pros and cons of each aspect of it to see how or if this could be applied into an Australian inter-faith scenario of supervision and pastoral care.

David was the current outgoing president of the APCPCC and an involved member of the ICPC (International Counseling and Pastoral Care Congress).

**Violence against the Environment: Rev. Dr. Rebecca Young**

The second session on the second day was run by Dr. Rebecca Young, currently residing in Morocco and originally from the USA. She had previously taught at the STT School of Theology in Jakarta Indonesia for ten years. Rebecca being fluent in Indonesian, meant she could simultaneously translate her session and she was a lively and engaging speaker who clearly understood the culture of the people she was interacting with.

She shared her theology of the environment from her Biblical perspective and encouraged delegates and especially Christian church communities to see the gravity of violating God's creation by personifying creation.

**Electives and Workshops**

Afterwards there were several electives to choose from...

I went to one by **Dr Theresia Citraningtyas** – who had been educated in Canberra Australia in Psychology. She invited people from the elective to share what they would like her to address – there are many female pastors in Indonesia and the participants shared heart-breaking story after heart-breaking story of all kinds of abuse within and without the church within the close knit communities they work in. They were crying out for answers to these complicated situations and to work out what a Christian response can be within the poverty and the circumstances where they find themselves covering topics of domestic violence, child trafficking and domestic maids abuse by the Indonesian Government itself.

It seemed however that the main guts to Theresia's session was to present the "Drama Triangle" in detail and to see this as the answer to everything which was raised. I found this a confusing approach since when I teach the drama triangle myself, I always warn that due to the power imbalance involved in abusive relationships that these are the exceptions to the straight-forward use of the drama triangle, because advocacy may be needed. This session was in Indonesian and translated for me individually so there is

every chance that I could have got things a bit lost in translation. I was also left wondering if the many deep and unthinkable examples that were shared were addressed and if not how useful this is as a presentation method.

The other elective I was able to attend was on the concept of Pastoral Coaching. I found this an interesting choice at a pastoral congress on violence as it didn't seem to be that connected. It was trying to address bringing Christian pastoral techniques into business settings to show how acceptable good pastoral skills can be. I suppose if pastoral coaching is in existence perhaps the likelihood of abuse happening in work relationships may be reduced.

The main differentiating factor of when to use Coaching or Counseling seemed to be to do with mental health. So if a person is well and in a good place then Coaching is used to set goals and help the person progress towards these. The insinuation was that if a person is not mentally in a stable place then the person needs some counseling before coaching techniques can be employed.

There was a model put forward but since this was in Indonesian and the person translating for me happened to be a business coach himself he told me about the GROW model: GOALS, REALITY, OPTIONS, WRAP UP as a similar but easier formula to remember which I was glad of.

There were other electives one really popular one was on what can be done from a Christian perspective legally and locally to aid those violated against.

### **APCPCC / ANZACPE Relationship**

Later in the day and during the evenings there were opportunities for the delegates to form small meetings or social groups as well as attend cultural evenings. One night I was requested to attend a meeting to represent ANZACPE along with other International delegates and representative members of the API. It turns out it is customary at these congresses to hand over the presidency and other exec roles to a new exec for the next term. Unfortunately it seemed that there were several others like my self, representing organisations who were not briefed or who had the authority to take on a role such as this. So some clarification was needed to the group about how the organization works and how it differs from the ICPC. It seems there are some similarities between the organisations currently to consider the future of these types of forums and their usefulness for delegates. David Ito the president for APCPCC suggested that a strength would be to continue to pursue a strand offering input to International Supervisors. He was willing to continue to organize this part of future meets due to his ongoing role with the ICPC, but that he needed to pass the presidency of the APCPCC over. Another meeting was held to finalize exec positions. I said that I would act as a secretary for as long as I could and took notes and wrote up minutes. JP Sabbithi (Hawaiian Hospice) took on the reigns as President and an Indian delegate Imtinenla Aier took on the role of Treasurer. It was felt that having an Indonesian representative for the sake of continuity from one exec to the other would be helpful and John Wuisan the president of the organizing committee from the APCPCC joined the exec for this purpose. As mentioned above Australia/New Zealand hasn't hosted for 20 years and so is high on the list as the next host country in 2021. The President committed to contact ANZACPE after the congress to gauge interest, since in the past these decisions have been able to be made at

the congress and then announced. It struck me that to make these kinds of decisions more communication would have been needed in advance or at least people attending to be at a certain level within an organization to make such decisions.

The next day there was a cultural trip to visit 'mini Indonesia' with other delegates which meant we could relax and soak up some of the Indonesian culture beyond the Hotel this was good for bonding especially across the International delegates. However it seemed that the more local Indonesians either weren't interested or invited or couldn't afford to join the group. This saddened me since they represented the Church in Indonesia. There are some local Supervisors starting to try to form and train up to serve the rural areas, however I fear that the stricture of the training and the distances and costs this would involve for those I met excited by Supervision may eventually prove to be too restrictive.

On the last night as part of the closing ceremony there was a great celebration of each island or community representing their community as well as the international delegates joining in the singing and dancing. It is a very joyful culture. However one lady who has written a book about the trafficking difficulties, took off her shoes and came down to the front wearing all black with a scarf around her head. She read out a poem from her book in Indonesian, which I asked Dr. Becca Young to translate for me. Although it does not rhyme in English in the same way as it sounded in Indonesian it was an impactful moment, which represented the reality and need for the theme of the conference and a Christian response.

***Human trafficking by Ririn Pringgandani***

*The lifestyle of young people today*

*Is not much different between the city and the village*

*Innocent girls attach themselves to dreams*

*Of becoming a famous star on the dramatic stage*

*Offers coming from men wearing ties*

*Who promise millions in salary*

*And a fancy life as a socialite.*

*Lulled by promises as sweet as honey*

*These girls veer far from their hometowns*

*Their parents have to release them completely*

*So that their daughters will be successful overseas*

*Yet their hopes drown in deceit*

*Not placed in the capital city; instead they are stranded*

*in housing for illegal workers*

*With hundreds of other girls suffering the same fate*

*Trapped in darkness that drives them to despair*

*Giving themselves over to inhumane treatment*

*Becoming maids in foreign lands, or slaves to lust in their own country*

*No one cares about them, and they have no other choice*

*But to keep going while screaming in their hearts*

*While waiting for help that they aren't sure will ever come*

The rest of the book hasn't been published in English but it has Chapters such as:

“The experience of the Timorese church in regards to the relation between the migrant workers and the church”

“Human trafficking from a sociological perspective”

“Human trafficking and women”

“Case studies of victims of Human trafficking”

“The process of becoming an Indonesian migrant worker: full of traps and snares”

“Timorese culture and human trafficking”

“Critical notes on labour administration and oversight in the Timor province”

“People are more valuable than money”

“Selling people is a betrayal”

“Solidarity with women in human trafficking”

I would love to find a way to publish this book into English so that this story can be told beyond Indonesia. In general it was a great privilege for me to represent ANZACPE in this way and to be provoked to think about how this affects supervisory practice where there is always Power involved. So thank you for the opportunity this gave me. My overall reflection on the congress is that there is *“a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance”* from Ecclesiastes 3:4