



From the iconz4girlz Ministry Team

Our very best wishes for a

Blessed Christmas

Reflecting on 2016

A review of some of the

Highlights of the year

With thanks to our contributors -

Teresa Matheson, Robyn Marquand,

Nancy Green and Julie Young

The Annual Girls' Brigade Pacific Fellowship Conference was held in Auckland. IFG was invited to send one of their leaders. Here are thoughts from Teresa Matheson (IFG Papakura)

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the Girls' Brigade Pacific Fellowship Conference. We learned to dream big, to consider the dreams we have for our ministry, to try new things. Personally I was challenged to Seek God for the big picture He has in mind for our IFG unit and IFG nationally as a part of Girls' Brigade New Zealand. To give what I have with enthusiasm, and watch expectantly to see what God brings out of it.

We had amazing teaching from all sorts of people, and made new friends. We enjoyed an excellent dinner to thank Jennifer the outgoing International Vice President (Pacific) for her input.

The Commissioning service for Renelle (GB Australia) as incoming IVP was very special.

The AGM covered the various country reports, upcoming events and confirming country visits as well as ratifying decisions made earlier in the conference.

We had a fair bit of fun too. The Australians taught us to do a "Tim Tam Slam" and the shopping trip was a real laugh when I got us all lost!

Thank you for the experience and the insight into the joint venture of IFG and GB.

Teresa



The NZ delegation with Renelle the incoming Chairperson of the fellowship

Leaders attended the National Leaders' Training Weekend at Totara Springs Christian Camp near Matamata in May. Here Robyn Marquand (IFG Raglan) and presenter Nancy Green from Faith Box share their experience.



On a foggy Waikato weekend in May, a group of amazing women got together and inspired each other. From north of Auckland to the Mainland we all came together in Matamata for some practical sharing time as IFG leaders. There was a range of experience among us, and it was awesome to see some young leaders there too.

Our sessions covered a wide range of things, from very cool crafts to a well put together workshop on Child Safe - not necessarily our favourite topic, but definitely a timely and important one. There were practical things to do, resources to receive and opportunities to simply chat and share ideas and stories - and swap those extra badges. Meeting other leaders from other places on the same wavelength was so refreshing! Despite the open lines of communication via the internet, when you're head down in the thick of it sometimes it can feel quite isolated. Having faces and actual conversations with other leaders has made those emails and Facebook posts so much more meaningful.

One of the most uplifting things for me was simply coming away from the weekend realising that we are all the same, but different. Our workshops included speakers and resources from a wide range of ministries throughout New Zealand - Scripture Union, the Baptist church, GBNZ, and the Parenting Place. We all come from unique situations, with unique resources, but we all have the same passion for sharing God with girls. Seeing that God-inspired dedication and inspiration was truly awesome!

Robyn :)



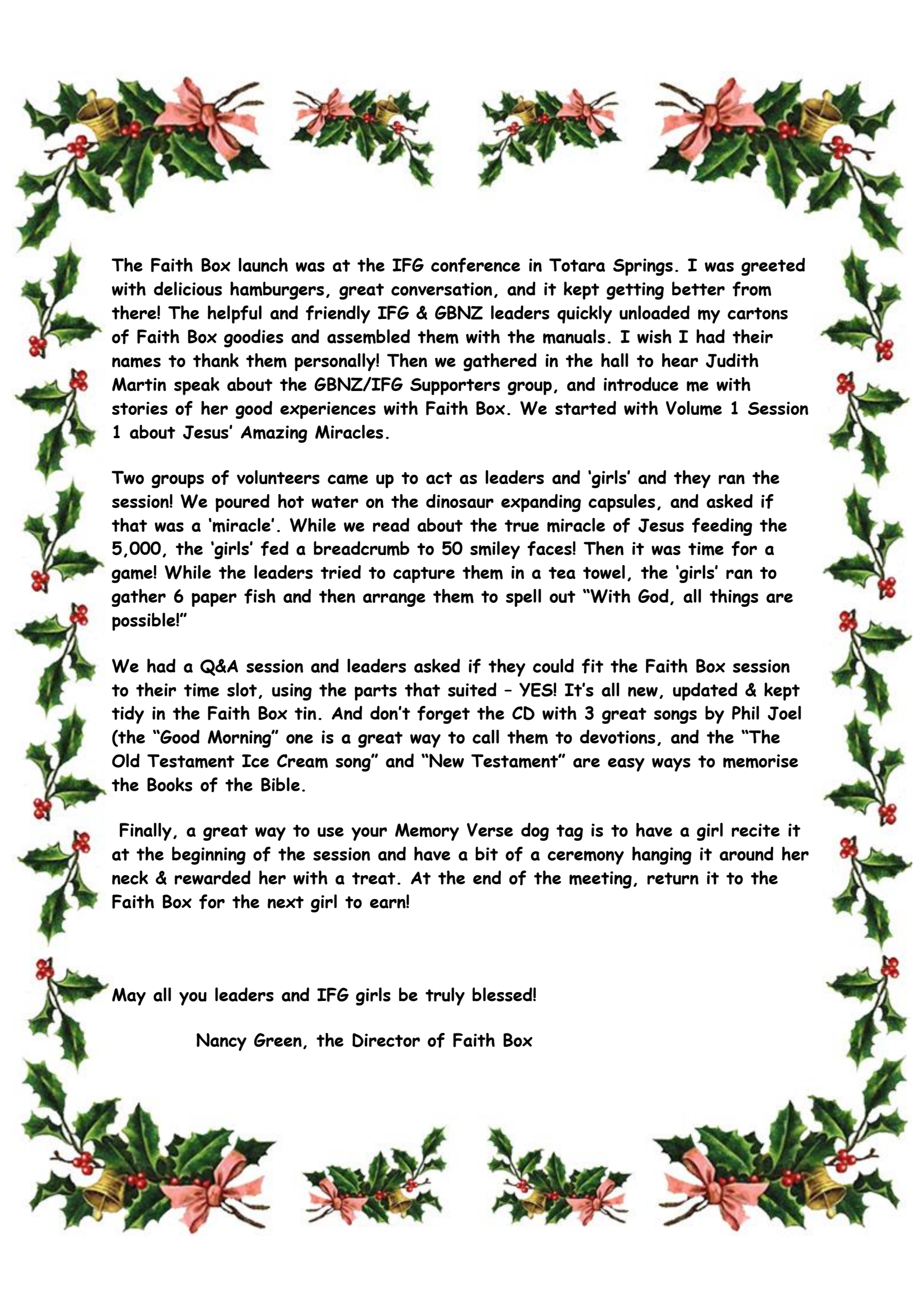
IFG leaders give Faith Box a go!

GBNZ has partnered with Faith Box to provide company and unit leaders with a fun new way to run devotions. There are 68 engaging and interactive topics covering 8 terms - a whole 2 years' worth! Each session is comprised of a Bible reading, conversation starters, activities, games and crafts

"My roommate and I had just been wrestling with how to discuss Miracles with our Unit - we couldn't believe it was the Faith Box topic on the day! We were amazed at God's provision, and thrilled to receive the material. We can't wait to do the session with our girls. After Nancy packed up, she couldn't find anyone to take a photo of her on site. Then we strolled by - another miracle! We told her our testimony and all took photos together to celebrate!"

Dorothy Otto (IFG Paeroa)





The Faith Box launch was at the IFG conference in Totara Springs. I was greeted with delicious hamburgers, great conversation, and it kept getting better from there! The helpful and friendly IFG & GBNZ leaders quickly unloaded my cartons of Faith Box goodies and assembled them with the manuals. I wish I had their names to thank them personally! Then we gathered in the hall to hear Judith Martin speak about the GBNZ/IFG Supporters group, and introduce me with stories of her good experiences with Faith Box. We started with Volume 1 Session 1 about Jesus' Amazing Miracles.

Two groups of volunteers came up to act as leaders and 'girls' and they ran the session! We poured hot water on the dinosaur expanding capsules, and asked if that was a 'miracle'. While we read about the true miracle of Jesus feeding the 5,000, the 'girls' fed a breadcrumb to 50 smiley faces! Then it was time for a game! While the leaders tried to capture them in a tea towel, the 'girls' ran to gather 6 paper fish and then arrange them to spell out "With God, all things are possible!"

We had a Q&A session and leaders asked if they could fit the Faith Box session to their time slot, using the parts that suited - YES! It's all new, updated & kept tidy in the Faith Box tin. And don't forget the CD with 3 great songs by Phil Joel (the "Good Morning" one is a great way to call them to devotions, and the "The Old Testament Ice Cream song" and "New Testament" are easy ways to memorise the Books of the Bible.

Finally, a great way to use your Memory Verse dog tag is to have a girl recite it at the beginning of the session and have a bit of a ceremony hanging it around her neck & rewarded her with a treat. At the end of the meeting, return it to the Faith Box for the next girl to earn!

May all you leaders and IFG girls be truly blessed!

Nancy Green, the Director of Faith Box



Girls' Brigade NZ National Conference

National Conference was interesting. It was great to meet other people from around the country and start to work out who is who within the organisation. It was great to see a few faces I had met at the IFG training in May. The general meeting was very formal with remits, discussion topics and voting. I went as an observer from our Canterbury/West Coast area so just got to listen for most of meeting sessions. I enjoyed being able to be part of the table discussion for how the Girls' Brigade movement can move forward in unity. I also enjoyed the social barn dance on the Saturday night and having an hour Saturday afternoon to go to some local shops and cafe. If you would like to be part of the National Conference in the future, you need to be one of the representatives from your area. If you want to suggest any changes about anything, these need to be discussed at your area meeting and your area presents the idea to the Board by early 2017. So I encourage you, become part of the bigger picture and help make changes so Girls' Brigade can move forward in strength and unity.

Julie Young

Girls' Brigade NZ holds an Annual General Meeting to which members of the National Council, representing the various GB Areas, attend. Biennially this meeting is included in a weekend National Conference hosted by a Girls' Brigade Area. This year the conference was in Ashburton. On alternate years the AGM is for one day only and is usually held in Wellington.

This year Isabel Ross, Charmayne and I from the IFG Ministry Team attended as delegates for our respective GB Areas and Julie Young (IFG Westside Christchurch) was invited by the Canterbury West Coast GB Area to attend as an observer. As a Ministry we have been lobbying GBNZ for many years to allow IFG, who now make up about 25% of the membership, to have representation on the National Council in their own right. (Anyone may attend but only delegates have speaking and voting rights). Acceptance and change takes time.



I received a recognition in the Queens' Birthday honours this year and am now a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM)

In October Charmayne was one of my guests at the investiture held at Government House in Wellington. A very special day.

It has been a privilege to have had the opportunity to come and visit with so many of our leaders over the course of the year. You truly are an inspiration.

I trust that you will rest well or be very active over the holidays - whatever it takes to recharge your physical batteries - and that you will find spiritual refreshment for another year in His service in 2017 and to those completing their tour of duty in IFG leadership, a special thank you.

Charmayne joins with me in sending you our thanks for all you have sown into the lives of IFG girls this year and our best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas as you celebrate the wondrous birth of our Saviour.

Chris Brunt MNZM