

Make a difference where you are

(www.anglicandiocesepe.org.za)

by Brenda Hallowes

Gender Issues were the topic of discussion at a workshop held on Saturday 14 June at St Nicholas Church in Charlo. Hosted by the Diocesan Gender Desk committee, it was well attended by participants from a number of parishes and denominations.

Ethel Pittaway, lay canon for gender issues, opened the meeting with some of the Biblical examples of the way Jesus treated women with respect and love. She also gave details of some of the issues faced by people in our greater PE community and recounted some chilling examples of abusive situations known to her. The participants listened in silence, knowing that this was just the tip of the iceberg.

The key-note speaker was Antony Jennings who had everyone actively listening and responding to what he had to say about our personal role in an evil situation. He used the example of William Wilberforce, a man who steadily and patiently fought the horrors of slavery from his position in Parliament in the 19th Century. It took enormous courage and dedication to stick to his mission in the face of resistance and apathy from his peers. Antony challenged us as Christians to get involved saying we cannot blame the government or expect them to solve this problem. Abuse and gender stereotypes confront us daily as family members, neighbours, work colleagues, teachers and health workers. He introduced important points which lead us to action: purpose, conviction, passion, vision, inspiration, influence and leadership.

The participants then broke into community groups and talked about practical ways in which we as individuals can be a catalyst in our own circle of influence.

For more information or to ensure you're on the mailing list contact: Ethel 083 398 6218.