

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Minutes of the first meeting of the Committee appointed by the Annual Meeting, 1962, to examine the possibility of some kind of relationship with Women's Inter-Church Councils in the various states and with women's denominational commonwealth-wide federations, and report back to the Executive for further examination and implementation; and to review the constitution and activity of the United Church Women of USA and its relation to the NCC of the USA.

The meeting was held in the office of the Australian Council of Churches on June 5, 1962.

Present: Revs. B. R. Wyllie (in chair), H. L. Perkins, Mesdames M. McKay, K. Dey and M. G. Wyllie.

Apologies: received from Deaconess M. Andrews, Mrs L. Williams, Rev. D. Taylor.

General Discussion: Considerable time was spent in a general discussion on the amount of interest and concern in the Ecumenical Movement shown by the various women's church groups. It was agreed that in most instances ecumenical ideas and enthusiasm had not filtered through to the women's groups in the local church.

It was agreed that it would be unwise at this stage to attempt to establish a women's ecumenical organisation in Australia. It was also agreed that any approaches should be made through denominational groups rather than Women's Inter-Church Councils. It was pointed out that in the existing inter-church groups there were some representatives who were not interested in the Ecumenical Movement, e.g. the Baptist Women's groups. Women's Inter-Church Councils bring together only a small representative section of the women of the churches.

The Women's World Day of Prayer is the only activity which brings all the women of the churches together. Unlike Women's Inter-Church Councils this operates in both urban and rural areas. The committee responsible for the Women's World Day of Prayer has no other function than organising the Women's World Day of Prayer.

It was felt that the task of organising women in Australia on an ecumenical basis would be long and slow. It is in the local church that interest and support must be promoted.

A review of the programme and activity of the United Church Women of USA (which is an integral part of the National Council of Churches of the country) showed a number of ways in which interest could be aroused in local churches.

Resolutions: The following resolutions were agreed upon:

1. That study material suitable for use in local church women's groups be prepared. To this end material already produced will be sought from (a) United Church Women (USA), (b) New Zealand, (c) Congregational Women's Fellowship of Australia (d) Mr Val Brown and the General Board of Religious Education.
2. That the following people be written to for suggestions and co-operation in preparing material: Mrs June Wright, Mrs Joan Coates, Miss Joan Macneil, Mrs Rose Symons, Miss Catherine Ritchie.
3. That this material when prepared be circulated through women's denominational groups (federal where possible).
4. That the next meeting be held in the last week of September.

Mr Perkins intimated that there would be some money available through the Australian Council of Churches Literature Fund for the publication of this material when prepared.

Confirmed: _____

Date: _____