

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN IN AUSTRALIA

In 1963, when Christian women in different states of Australia were moving towards a much needed National Committee, they heard about a mystery allocation of \$1,000.00 for the welfare of Aboriginal girls of their country. This gift from F.L.C. had come through W.C.C. in Geneva from the East Asia Christian Conference. Australia's grateful surprise became a humble desire to become a part of this Prayer Fellowship with its least coin token of concern.

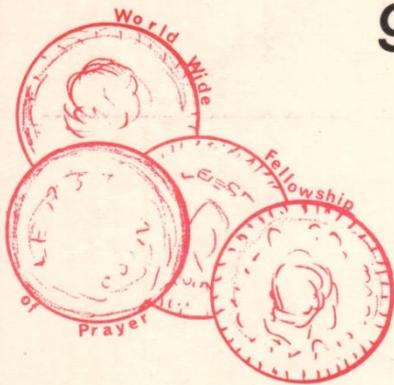
Australian Church Women became responsible for publicising and administering F.L.C. in this country.

We are grateful to the Asian Christian Women who taught us not only to pray but the lesson of giving and receiving with God's reconciling love in our hearts.

\* \* \* \* \*

# Fellowship of the Least Coin

give



AND

pray

FOR .....

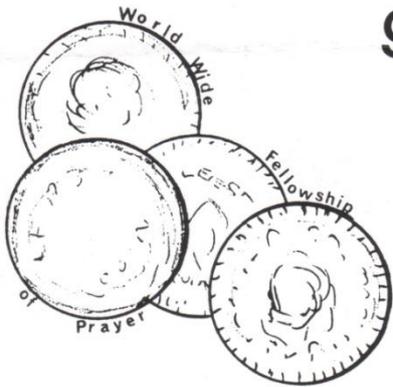
- Fatherless and orphans
- Elderly in homes and hospitals
- Lonely and homeless
- Lacking in medical attention
- Oppressed in body, mind or spirit
- Working mothers
- Students in new nations - students  
overseas
- Hungary - physically, mentally and spiritually
- Illiterate
- Persecuted for religious, race or political reasons

Australian Church Women

3rd floor 511 Kent Street, SYDNEY

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THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN

IN AUSTRALIA

The Fellowship of the Least Coin (a world-wide fellowship of prayer) is being sponsored in Australia by AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN.

The women of our churches are invited to use the attached label around a suitable jar or tin and each month to give the least coin of our country (the penny) in the service of Christ's family. As you place your least coin join with Christians around the world in offering intercessory prayers as suggested on the label.

The coins will be received at World Community Day each year (the fourth Friday of October) by the state women's inter-church councils or direct to AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN -

Room 2, 3rd floor, 511 Kent St. Sydney.

THE AIM OF AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN is:

To unite Australian Church women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to promote co-operation of men and women in the Church, family and society; to help Christian women to take a more effective place in the total life and mission of the Church; to provide opportunities for Christian worship, study and fellowship and service across denominational division; and to encourage fellowship and service across national boundaries.

MRS. C. A. PERRIAM

6/37 ORMOND ST.

ASHFIELD.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION

# FELLOWSHIP of the least coin

The National Council of the Presbyterian Women in the USA sponsored a Fellowship team in September, 1956: a group of six women, one Japanese, one Indian and four American women, one of whom was an American Indian from Alaska, started on a Pacific Fellowship Tour to Alaska, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Thailand. The purpose of the visits was to strengthen the world-wide Christian fellowship among women, to share mutual joys and concerns, to study the Bible and pray together and to reaffirm that all of us are the members of one family of Christ.

As we travelled from country to country, met and talked with the Christian women, we found groups engaged in making distinct contributions to the life of their national churches and to projects beyond their own boundaries. This warmed our hearts with joy and gratitude. We also noticed human weakness. The evils and suffering of World War II had not been forgotten by many people. Some of the leading churches in East Asia had not forgiven their neighbours for the wrongs done to them during the war.

This situation of one nation bearing a grudge against another made our hearts heavy: here we were on a goodwill tour with the purpose of strengthening the world-wide Christian fellowship, and we were meeting women with bitter spirits, the miseries of war still fresh in their minds. We met women who were prisoners within the walls of nationalism. They were not necessarily to be blamed, for they had never felt or realised the importance of the World Church and its ecumenical relationship.

We felt with increasing conviction the need for a project in which the Christian women of the world could come together by sharing their faith and resources at the international level. Such a project would be a constant reminder that all Christians belong to the one family of Christ, irrespective of race, colour, language, culture or nationality.

The idea emerged that if every Christian woman around the world put aside one "least coin" of her currency every month with a prayer of reconciliation for one person or group whom she found hard to forgive, at the end of the year she would have twelve "least coins" ready to contribute into the fund for some international project and she would have become a focus point of reconciliation. Among the countries represented so far have been women of Alaska, Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, Korea, Iran, Venezuela, Guatemala, Colombia, Lebanon, Brazil, India, Pakistan, and the U.S.A. Each country devises its own method of collecting the "least coin" every month. In the USA the women are using a printed folder with the picture of a woman from each country. Pakistan women are using clay pots to receive their "least coin".

The various women's organizations were advised to emphasize the following principles in promoting the Least Coin Fellowship:

1. Each woman should have a common standard of giving, namely, the smallest coin of the country.
2. This movement is designed to promote the sense of fellowship rather than be a fund-collecting device.
3. In order that this movement may be truly international, each country is to determine its own method of collecting the Least Coin and shall remit funds to the international treasurer.\*
4. The spirit of stewardship rests upon a common sense of responsibility in every participant and the giving must be joyful.

\* (The East Asia Christian Conference has acted as custodian of the funds, but because of difficult currency regulations in some countries, the WCC is serving in its capacity as from January 1, 1963.)

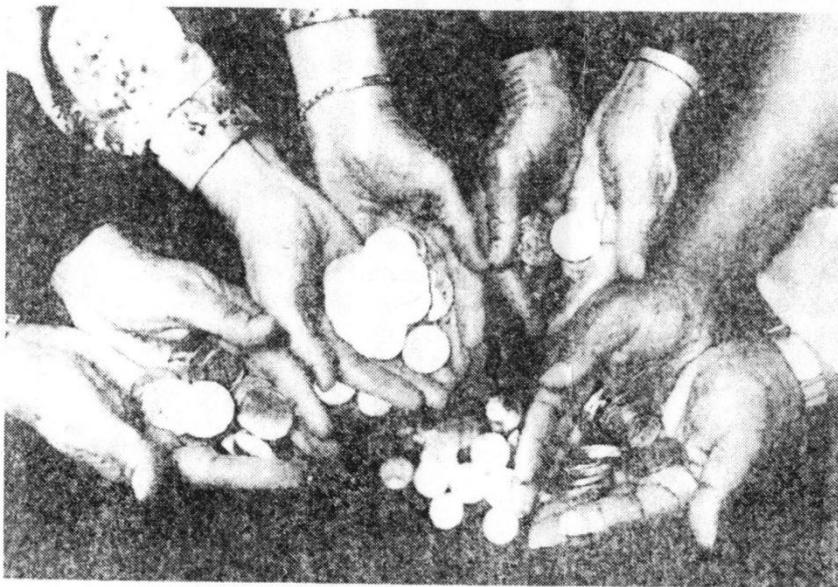
Since the idea arose in September 1956, it was decided to have the annual collection of Least Coin contributions each September. In 1961 the women of eighteen countries participated and the total offering came to \$37,754.43.

Among the various projects already assisted with funds from the "Least Coin" there can be listed:

1. Orphanage work in Korea.
2. Maintaining 12 beds in T.B. Sanatoria in India.
3. Child-care programme of the East Harlem Protestant Parish, New York City.
4. Drug-addict resettlement in Hong Kong.
5. Family Training Institute at Mindolo, Nthn Rhodesia.
6. Pastoral care of Asian and African students in France.
7. Inter-Church Aid programme of the World Council of Churches in the Cameroons and Congo.
8. Re-opening of schools in Colombia.
9. Publication of Christian readers in Ceylon.
10. Divinity School in Upper Burma.
11. Orthodox Church programme for young people in the Middle East.
12. Evangelistic work among youth in East Germany.
13. Social service among Vietnamese refugees in France.
14. Travel costs of two Japanese nurses to Nepal.
15. Audio-Visual Evangelism Department of the Church of Christ in Thailand.
16. Welfare of Australian Aboriginal girls.

Through the Fellowship, God has blessed many participants and likewise the recipients of aid from this fund. It is a movement which invites every Christian woman to enjoy the international fellowship, to share in witnessing Christ's love for mankind, and to offer herself as an instrument of reconciliation and peace. If you are still outside this Fellowship, come and join with us in witnessing to the love of Jesus Christ which is so badly needed in the world to-day. Come and share the joy and unity of our world-wide Fellowship.

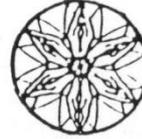
Reproduced from leaflet published by the World Council of Churches' Department on the co-operation of Men and Women in Church, Family and Society by AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN, c/o Room 2, 3rd Floor, 511 Kent Street, Sydney.



1982: ALLOCATIONS from the FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN Fund

## THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN:

This Fellowship, an ecumenical movement of prayer for peace and reconciliation, began in 1956, during a goodwill mission to East Asian countries by an international team, seeking to bring together women across denominational, cultural, colour, economic and other barriers, encouraging them to participate in the offering of their prayers, and the "Least Coin" of their currency, enabling gifts of love to be provided for projects throughout the world. While with this goodwill mission in the Philippines, to Mrs. SHANTI SOLOMON from INDIA was given the vision of forming the Fellowship of the Least Coin; it was a great privilege to have this amazing Christian lady later visit N.S.W. The Fellowship of the Least Coin operates on every continent, in more than 60 countries and continues to spread throughout Australia.



SILVER JUBILEE OF FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN, MANILA 1978.

*Representatives from Asian Christian Women's Conference:  
From Left: Rayawn Ma, Jael Cruz, Jannuan Suriyakham, Rathie Selvaratnam, Esther Baptista, Agnes Loyal, Gloria Santos.*

# Women to tackle hot topics

THE AUSTRALIAN Church Womens' national conference at camp Clayton will be holding a public seminar at the camp at 10.30 a.m. today.

Among topics which are expected to be discussed are AIDS, youth unemployment and suicide, hospice and money matters and living on the edge.

"The aim of the seminar is to take a look at what we can do for

community problems for the entire country," national president Mrs Shirley Brookes said.

"We will be discussing problems that affect everyone — from youth to the elderly and all those in between."

Mrs Major Kop, Mr Poul Bottern, Mrs Vicki Elphinstone and Mr Sean Brasch will be guest speakers at the seminar.

Mary Au, previous winner of

the Winifred Kiek Scholarship, will visit Wynyard tomorrow afternoon with the delegates to speak about AIDS.

Conference delegates travelled to Launceston yesterday for an opening service at St Andrews Kirk. President-elect of the Uniting Church and president of the Tasmanian Council of churches, Mrs Jill Tabart, was guest speaker at yesterday's service.



Discussing aspects of the National Conference of Australian Church Women at Camp Clayton on Monday are (from left) national treasurer Alison Ison, of Burnie, Winifred Kiek Scholar Malai Mahamaneerat, of Thailand, national president Mrs Shirley Brookes, of Launceston, and guest speaker Mary Au, of the Macau Diocese in Hong Kong.

# Delegates focus on love, forgiveness

'Love, accept and forgive' was the message at the opening of Australian Church Women's national conference by the president-elect of the Uniting Church of Australia, Mrs Jill Tabart.

The conference, which opened at St Andrew's Church in Launceston yesterday, involves non-denominational church women from around the country.

Mrs Tabart said that a challenge for the church was to listen more carefully to young people, and she used an example to illustrate why: "Janie was late home from school, and when asked why, she said she stopped to help a friend who broke her doll — 'Did you help her pick up the pieces, the mother asked?' — 'No, I helped her cry'."

Mrs Tabart compared the girl to Jesus, whom she said was always quick to help those in need.

The anecdote received warm acceptance from the delegates and set the mood for the five-day conference, which will end on Friday.

The national president of the Australian Church Women, Mrs Shirley Brookes, said that a variety of people were attending the conference.

"Our special guests are Mary Au from Hong Kong and Mali Mahamaterat of

By TIM ROBERTSON

Bangkok," Mrs Brookes said. "Mali has been in Sydney for six months studying hospice care and grief counselling."

The delegates will discuss issues that are of concern to Australian church women.

"A panel of four will look at youth suicide, unemployment, hospice care, AIDS and finance," Mrs Brookes said.

"Discussions will also be held with ordained Aboriginal minister Liyapidiny Marika."

Rev. Marika, from Yirrkala in the Northern Territory, said that she was ordained in 1991.

"There are three or four hundred in my congregation," Ms Marika said.

"We meet every Sunday, and there are always a few in attendance."

English is a second language for Ms Marika, but this will not prevent her from taking part in Aboriginal outreach discussions this week.



Rev. Liyapidiny Marika, of the Northern Territory, with Mrs Shirley Brookes, national president of the Australian Church Women, at the start of the ACW conference yesterday.

1994

Administration of FLC Funds

Banks for FLC Funds

1957-----FLC funds were kept with Asia Council of Ecumenical Mission in Thailand. Most probably Presbyterian women in USA also sent their contribution to Thailand.( I found no minute giving details as from where the contributions came.)

FLC funds were kept with the headquarters of East Asia Christian Conference at Rangoon, Burma till the decision was taken to keep the FLC fund in Geneva.

1st, January, 1964 FLC money was kept at WCC, Geneva in a separate ledger account. Accounts were disbursed on instruction from Association Secretary of EACC.

1974-----FLC funds were kept in a separate account in the Working Committee treasury and disbursement was made by the working committee treasurer(EACC) on the authorization of the ACWC Chairman.

1979-----FLC/ACWC accounts started to be operated separately. FLC be an international fund administered by a committee.

1981-----The FLC Fund is an international fund belonging to Christian women, who participate in the ecumenical movement of prayer called the Fellowship of the Least Coin. It is administered by an International Committee with its base in Asia.

1984-----Authority was given by ACWC for the transfer of US\$314,010.70 from accumulated fund to the Fellowship of the Least Coin upon the separation of FLC from the former joint management of ACWC/FLC in Hong Kong.

Different changes took place to promote, interpret the idea of FLC and manage and administer the funds and make the policies for its continuous growth.

The following information is taken from the letters of Ms. Margaret Shannon, Mrs. Shanti Solomon, Mrs. Rayann Ma, Mrs. Jannuan Suriyakham and from the Minutes of East Asia Christian Conference, Asian Church Women's Conference and International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

The administration of FLC Funds was done by the following.

1. 1957. Asia Council of Ecumenical Mission in Asia and most probably by Presbyterian women in USA.
2. 1964. Planning Committee of ACWC  
Co-opted members named by Cooperation of Men and Women in Home Church and Society of WCC Geneva.
3. 1972 Women were co-opted from beyond Asia with Planning Committee of ACWC.
4. 1975 A basic point presented to separate ACWC and FLC.
5. 1976 A sub-Committee was formed to formulate a draft for administering FLC Funds. The plan presented was to have 1. Working Committee of ACWC 2. World Ecumenical Bodies 3. National Ecumenical Women's Organization to represent in rotation.
6. 1977 Committee was formed with 1. members one representing each from USA, Canada, Europe, Latin America and Africa 2. Four from Asia 3. Ex. Sec. of ACWC.
7. 1979 FLC was given an autonomous status with its own constitution and guidelines.

International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin was composed of the following;

1. Four Officers of ACWC
2. two representatives from the regional ecumenical organizations in rotation;  
All Africa Conference of Churches  
Middle East Council of Churches  
Caribbean Council of Churches  
Pacific Conference of Churches  
European Women's Ecumenical Council  
Latin America Council of Churches  
North America: Church Women United, Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada
3. One representative of each of the world ecumenical organization of women --- International World Day of Prayer ----- World Council of churches Women's Desk
4. ICFLC Ex. Sec of ICFLC ex. officio  
ACWC Ex. Sec. ACWC ex, officio  
That the Chairperson of this Committee be the President of ACWC.

1980 Minutes of International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin

Composition of ICFLC

The four officers of ACWC  
One woman representative of each regional conference (council) of churches  
One representative from world organizations of women WCC and WDP  
ACWC Ex. Sec. ex-officio member

1982-----Assurance was given to ACWC that the intent in forming an International Committee was that the Fellowship of the Least Coin will continue to have an Asian base and to empower Asian women, while in the future it can also be the means of empowerment of women in other areas of the world and a network for mutual understanding, encouragement and support of women worldwide.

1983-----In connection with the comment on ACWC/FLC relationships in the Minutes, Shanti Solomon stressed the importance of mutual support and interpretation.

1987-----Following statement from ICFLC:

- (1) That the President of ACWC shall be the Chairwoman of ICFLC.
- (2) That the Executive Secretary of ICFLC shall be an Asian woman living in Asia.
- (3) Nevertheless, in the light of the fact the ICFLC is becoming a more International Committee and a woman from each region is to be invited every year, will the Executive Committee of ACWC consider from 1990 onwards reducing their membership of ICFLC from four persons including the President to three persons including the President. This would help to emphasise the international character of the Committee while at the same time maintain its essential Asian origin and character.

- 1988-----
- (1) That we initiate a process of discussion and decision-making so that by 1990.
  - (2) The Constitution of ACWC may be modified so as to facilitate the development of ICFLC
  - (3) A Constitution be drawn up for ICFLC which would provide for
    - (a) the election of its members and the laying down of their terms of office.
    - (b) the election of a Chairperson who would take office at the conclusion of the 1990 meeting.

- (c) a statement of the theological basis and methodology of the Movement.
- (d) a statement of the policies to be followed in making Grants.

1989-----A sub committee on Constitution reported the proposal for the statement on guidelines for ICFLC. A brochure was prepared containing the statements on the basis of the FLC, guidelines for the composition and working methods of the International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

1990-----The members of ICFLC agree that the subject of representation, and the chairing of ICFLC should continue to be a subject of ongoing discussion during the next four year, and that a further resolution should be moved at the 10th Assembly of ACWC.

1991-----Representation of ACWC on the ICFLC and Chairing of ICFLC meeting. (from pg.15, b+c) - Question was brought up as to whether this 10.c ongoing discussion is to be in ICFLC or the ACWC Executive. Decision was for the ACWC Executive, but in order that this item is not lost, Ruth Harwood moved and Jenny Phuah seconded that the ICFLC discuss the representation of ACWC on the ICFLC take place at its 1993 meeting, prior to the 10th Assembly of ACWC in 1994. It is important that it be retained in the minutes, so the wish of this committee will be known by the ACWC prior to its assembly. This item will continue to be discussed at the ACWC Executive.

1992-----It was moved and seconded that a team to ICFLC committee members, non-ACWC members, meet with the ACWC Executive Committee in August 11993 to share the deep concerns concerning the future of the FLC movement.

The details of the information brought back memories of the endeavours and commitment of the founder Mrs. Shanti Solomon and of other pioneer women and men who accepted the vision of FLC not to keep to themselves but share it's joy and blessings with others, to distribute the love of God, share in sacrifice of Jesus Christ and explore hope in the holy spirit. Let us step forward to share the richness in the heritage of FLC with the people in present to transfer the spirit to the generation to come.

Two very important issues have been the concerns of our discussions, they are representation of ACWC and chairing of ICFLC. I count it a great privilege to be chosen to work for the promotion of this prayer movement, I feel it has become part of me. I tried not only promote it to others but live it with its spirit of peace justice and reconciliation. At some occasions I felt I failed but strength of God and his love renewed me in the spirit to move on. With the same experience

I would like to share some concerns where discussion and recommitment is needed to do justice to the nature of FLC to consider it as international. I would like to affirm that the vision of Mrs. Shanti Solmon was international, it is very clear, it came out from the experience of international fellowship. There are enough evidences that it was promoted to women of the whole world. Probably this became the basis to organize it into International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin. It became international in its functions on global level but the levels where there are participants it did not become ecumenical, interdenominational or one can say the movement for all women in the christian church. The examples are:

1. In some regions there are no structures or committees which work to link with ICFLC.
2. The function of Women desk in regions is to receive the grant for the desk that has no relation to the promotion and interpretation to FLC.
3. There had been very minor efforts to collect the contributions from the women having the idea that it is a very small amount and here I feel we fail to recognize the importance of the meaning of FLC. If we try to justify that it has not gone in some parts of the world because the people are poor and oppressed and mainly women are badly affected by poverty and oppression then I would say that we need to go back to the beginning of FLC. The vision of Mrs. Solomon was influenced by her experience of her culture of poverty and oppression, there was a message of freedom and hope in FLC for her and for other women with whom she shared it. There was a message that we come out of our own selves, our timidity, our weaknesses and feel the strength in the unity of being together in the body of Christ. My concern is how to make it a movement of women at all levels? How to make it more inclusive? What has to be our approach? Are we still of the mind to have compassion for the poor and because of that compassion we do not take courage to bring out the strength from their powerlessness?
4. I would like to give few suggestions for FLC to live and be a source of strength for more women than it is at present.
  - a. Help women desks to make FLC their project in their programmes. ACWC, Church Women United USA and Women Inter-Church Council Canada can be taken as models.
  - b. This is an immediate need that a portion of FLC contribution should be spent on promotion, on personnel and on the programme of promotion of FLC.
5. There should be a very critical look on structure and function of ICFLC. Does it only exist to decide for the project grants and matters relating to grants? Who are the members of the committee? Whom do they represent? Do they represent only the women desks in their regions or the interest of those women who are participating in FLC? Are they sent by the women from their region?

6. Why one aspect of FLC that is to give grants is taken seriously and to participate in praying and giving contributions is ignored? The information I have gathered from the FLC Fund statements I received from Geneva from 1988-93 give the evidences to the reality, that FLC is global for FLC fund distribution but only few regions have taken care that it is interpreted and promoted in its fullness.

Please do take care that FLC remains to strengthen unity of Christian sisters of the global Church and to affirm in our faith that we are all part of ONE body of Christ. May Jesus Christ be our partner and companion in our struggles and guide us to the right directions.

I appreciate and applaud the commitment, participation and contribution of those women and men who strengthened the movement of FLC. Their efforts are of immense value. let us continue building FLC, adding solid bricks of our commitment to theirs so the house of FLC may stand on firm foundation encountering the situations of all kinds, opening its gates for comforting people in their stress and pain, uplifting people from the state of fear, suspicion and uncertainty, and strengthening people in their weaknesses and struggles.

May God watch over us and pour His love and graciousness so that we may be empowered to become the instruments to find the greater purpose in FLC.

Shirin Samuel  
Ex. Sec. ICFLC

13rd, March 1994

# Mrs. Shanti Solomon,

## a great woman of VISION and PRAYER

A tribute to the Mother, the Founder and the First Executive Secretary  
of the Fellowship of the Least Coin

The Fellowship of the Least Coin, a worldwide Ecumenical Movement of Prayer for Justice, Peace and Reconciliation, was conceived and born out of a vision given by God to Mrs. Shanti Solomon.

In September 1956 she participated in the Pacific Fellowship Mission team of women from different countries who felt the urge to go and seek reconciliation with the people in war-torn countries in Asia. On the trip her visa for Korea was refused. She remained in Manila, Philippines to wait for the group's return. During that time she reflected on the national and economic barriers that keep women apart. She realized that prayer surpasses national boundaries, and if each woman set aside the "least coin" whenever she prayed for peace and reconciliation, even the poorest woman could participate on a somewhat equal basis with the more affluent woman who would also set aside the same "least coin" when she prayed. So the movement was born and spread so quickly not only among women in Asia, but also among women of all the continents in the world. "Prayer", not 'money' has always been the primary emphasis of the Fellowship of the Least Coin Ecumenical Prayer Movement. It has become a simple, yet, a unique act of praying for justice, peace and reconciliation.

**"FORGIVENESS"** had been Shanti Solomon's testament of Faith. She again and again admonished saying **forgiveness and reconciliation are the basis of our Christian faith and we have to learn and practice it in our lives to prove that God is love and we Christians have to learn that we should be ready to forgive those who have hurt us most, because Jesus does the same and is always ready to forgive us. This as a reminder is needed most today.**

**Through the act of prayer we learn to get reconciled with those who hurt us most, and thus enjoy peace of mind. Forgiveness brings reconciliation which breeds love for our enemies and promotes peace. The setting**



*A person of beauty is a joy forever.*

aside of a least coin is intended to be a symbol of the giver's willingness to forgive – a reminder that we must often take the first step if there is to be genuine reconciliation. The smallest coins collected as a fund become a message of love and peace to those who are helped. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." God help us to be the agents of peace.

Miss Dorothy Wagner, who worked with Mrs. Solomon for many early years in building the FLC into an international movement, says, **"Her name so well described her. Shanti means Peace. She was a wise peacemaker! Through the Fellowship of the Least Coin she has encouraged prayer and peace making throughout the world."**

Rev. Mary Cline Detrick, the former Chairperson of the International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin (ICFLC) resounds, **Indeed, a peacemaker had been born into the world, and she embodied peace in the broad areas of service that she was pleased to assume. She embodied living simply on behalf of others and being constantly in prayer.**

Greatness and magnanimity of heart were reflected by the simplicity and genuine humility of Shanti. She won the hearts of people and established a lasting relationship with them in her calm and quiet way attending to the needs of others with a listening heart and compassion. She knew and was acquainted with grief and pain, and yet never allowed herself to be bitter or hardened by hatred and deep hurt. She followed the example of her Lord Jesus Christ in order to forgive and to pursue peace. She said, **"Forgiveness is not a case of holy amnesia that wipes out the past. Instead it is the experience of healing that drains out the poison from the wound."**

We, thousands and thousands of women around the global Christian Community are celebrating the life, the vision and the work of Shanti in many ways and forms in memory

of her and in giving thanks to God, who is her Maker, her Source of Vision, Hope and Strength.

Let us listen to the Voices of Tribute and Thanksgiving from all over the world.

*"Thank God for her life, work and vision which has united us with the people of Christian faith beyond our countries' boundaries."*

*"Shanti Solomon, a Saint who let the light in. She shed the light of the gospel into the dark corners of separation. Her concept of prayers for peace united with coins for reconciliation has changed women's lives throughout the world. Although Shanti Solomon will be missed, her legacy will live as long as there are people who care."*

*"We have lost this great woman. She is an icon of the great gift that women bring to the church. Thousands of women know her name and will remember her with affection. She was an inspiration to so many women."*

*"We drew inspiration from her simplicity, love for people of less importance, patience and humility."*

*"It is very sad to lose the founder and mother of FLC, but we share the glory of knowing that she is with her Lord whom she loved and served so well. We are sharing the news with our women and asking them to honor her in any way that is possible through their local program."*

*"It is a time of rejoicing and celebration of the life of a remarkable woman who has left us a beautiful legacy of prayer."*

*"We have known Mrs. Shanti through her lively ministry through FLC and all what it stands for. We are both blessed and honored to be identified with Shanti and the movement she established and we renew our commitment promoting the justice, peace and love, too."*

*"We thank God for the manifold ministries He so graciously achieved through Shanti."*

In memory of our beloved Mother, Aunt, Sister and Friend Shanti, may we pause to allow ourselves to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and be inspired to do justice, to love kindness, to forgive and to walk humbly with our Lord.

Glory and honor to God who turns the simple, the humble and the least into great and miraculous deeds.

— **Esther Byu**  
Executive Secretary, ICFLC  
October 31, 1998

## ACROSTIC

Written in honor of the  
FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN

- F** - ellowship of the Least Coin indeed  
**E** - xpresses Christian unity among women  
**L** - oud and clear we sing its praise  
**L** - east coin we set aside for  
**O** - ther women of every nation  
**W** - ith the institution of this fellowship  
**S** - hould you not care about others?  
**H** - elp to bring joy and hope to them?  
**I** - ndeed their suffering to alleviate?  
**P** - romoting oneness among Christian women.
- O** - ften we miss by not sharing in this  
**F** - ellowship of the Least Coin.
- T** - ogether we must join hands to  
**H** - elp the poor, needy and distressed  
**E** - very soul oppressed will sing for joy.
- L** - ord of all we pray  
**E** - cumenical relationships we must promote  
**A** - ssist us in every way to  
**S** - trengthen our faith in our living God  
**T** - rusting that we will play our part.
- C** - ome all ye faithful in the Lord  
**O** - rganize yourselves to participate  
**I** - n this all important programme  
**N** - ever, never give up the struggle.

Written and composed by  
Mrs. ELMIRA I. SELLU  
Coordinator, United Methodist Women, Sierra Leone

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN  
MOVEMENT OF PRAYER  
FOR  
PEACE, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

PACIFIC FELLOWSHIP MISSION TEAM

Margaret Shannon of Presbyterian Church in United States organized Pacific Fellowship Mission Team to visit Alaska, Japan, Korea, Philippines and Hong Kong after the second world war in second half of 1956.

PURPOSE OF THE TEAM

- (1) To extend and deepen the concept of worldwide Christian fellowship among women.
- (2) To share the mutual joys and concerns.
- (3) To study the bible and pray together.
- (4) To rejoice together that all belong to one body in which there is one spirit.
- (5) To reaffirm in their faith that they are all members of household of God and the head is the living Christ.

THE TEAM MEMBERS



Shanti Solomon



Ellen Lang



Marion Wiltsie

FOUNDER OF FLC



Teruko Ohashi



Amy Carl



Margaret Shannon

ORGANIZER OF PACIFIC  
FELLOWSHIP MISSION TEAM

The team members spent three months in Christian witness in the countries they visited.

## DREAM OF SHANTI SOLOMON

Shanti Solomon, a team member from India could not go with the team to Korea because of visa restriction. She kept wishing there was some way to continue warm fellowship that was felt when women of several nationalities travelled together. Those weeks of life within the team offered a taste of the wonder of the fellowship in Christ's love where people are not divided into South, North, West and East. Suddenly she thought of most meaningful way in which every Christian woman, rich or poor, educated or illiterate could share in this precious relationship, that thought was the plan for the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

Shanti said to the team members.

"Every Christian woman in Asia and every Presbyterian woman in America was to put aside every month the 'least coin' of her country, such least coin' to be decided by all the women, remembering that it should be no more than the poorest can set aside. At the end of a year every woman would have coins ready to contribute into the Fund for International Project".

## MEMBERS RESPONDED AFFIRMING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SHANTI'S DREAM

They felt that they would want to give to non recurring grant to the short term projects. In this way they could perhaps be International in their Christian outreach through the years. Their earnest wish was that if they embarked on a venture such as this, it would be an enduring one.

## SEEDS OF FLC SPROUTING

The first FLC offering was given by Filipino women in 1957. The offerings were collected with Asia Council on Ecumenical Mission, Thailand. The National President, Grace Salsbury informed Shanti Solomon that Presbyterian Women of USA were ready to participate in Fellowship of the Least Coin. She prayed at the time of first offering of FLC for the right spirit among American women. "Forgive us for trusting in bigness. Help us to discover the blessings which come to the meek and humble-minded and those who are poor in spirit". A month later, women of Korea also wrote to Shanti that Korean women's Presbyterian and Synodical officers have gladly voted to join in the 'Least Coin' Project, together with Christian women in other lands.

EAST ASIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES ADMINISTERED THE FUNDS. Asian Church Women's Conference (ACWC) at their first meeting in Hong Kong in 1958 under the chairmanship of Rayann Ma accepted the idea of FLC to make it their project and share it with others.

Rayann Ma (Hong Kong), the first chairman of ACWC designed the unique symbol of FLC. It is a circle representing the whole world, enclosing many pairs of hands folded in prayer. The hands belong to each woman sharing in the dedication, concern and ministry of the Least coin.



#### 'CIRCLE OF PRAYER'

A devotional booklet prepared each alternate year to be used when making an offering to the Fellowship of the Least Coin. The devotional articles are written by women from all over the world representing the struggles and hopes of women of their region/country.

The first 'Circle of Prayer' was prepared by the women of Hong Kong under the leadership of World Church Committee Women's Association, Hong Kong Council, Church of Christ in China in November, 1959. It has continued inspiring and enriching women. Volume 13 of 'Circle of Prayer' with the theme of "Partnership In A Changing World" is ready for use. Volume 14 with the theme of "Christ Our Vision and Hope" is being prepared.

#### FLC OFFERINGS ARE SHARED WITH THE NEEDY AND SUFFERING

FLC continues growing where women participate in prayer and they commit to become an instrument of Peace, Justice and Reconciliation by offering their coin as a token of their solidarity to the needy. The offerings are sent from different countries and individuals to the World Council of Churches, Mr. T. Wang, Chief Accountant, 150 Route de Ferney, P.O. Pox. 66, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. The amount coming from each nation is not disclosed so that there are no comparison.

#### GRANTS

Grants are given in the name of the whole fellowship to such projects as health, literacy, social concern and leadership development, to programs of ecumenical concerns for world peace, justice and reconciliation, grants to enable women to meet in regional world wide gatherings and emergency grants and disaster relief and rehabilitation.

"Embury Close  
Sheltered Housing"  
Limerick - Ireland



Child labours  
in the field all day  
- Egypt

"Likpe Bula"  
Community Market Shed,  
Ghana, Africa

Women selling at the  
market under the trees



FLC is an inclusive movement. Prayer has no boundaries, no human or situational limitations so FLC movement of prayer is widened constantly. Every day through media and through our relationships with each other the problems and difficulties are revealed, we are reminded to pray and contribute our share to build a peaceful and just community of people respecting each other as very dignified creation of God.

### Prayer of The Fellowship of the Least Coin

O Loving Creator,  
we present ourselves in your  
divine presence to thank you  
for all the bountiful gifts of life.  
We are especially grateful for the  
Fellowship of the

Least Coin

which binds us together in  
love and forgiveness around the globe.

Free us from all doubts and prejudice,  
we pray, inspire us to live in solidarity  
with humankind that we,  
may know the joy of giving and receiving.

Dear God, accept this least coin

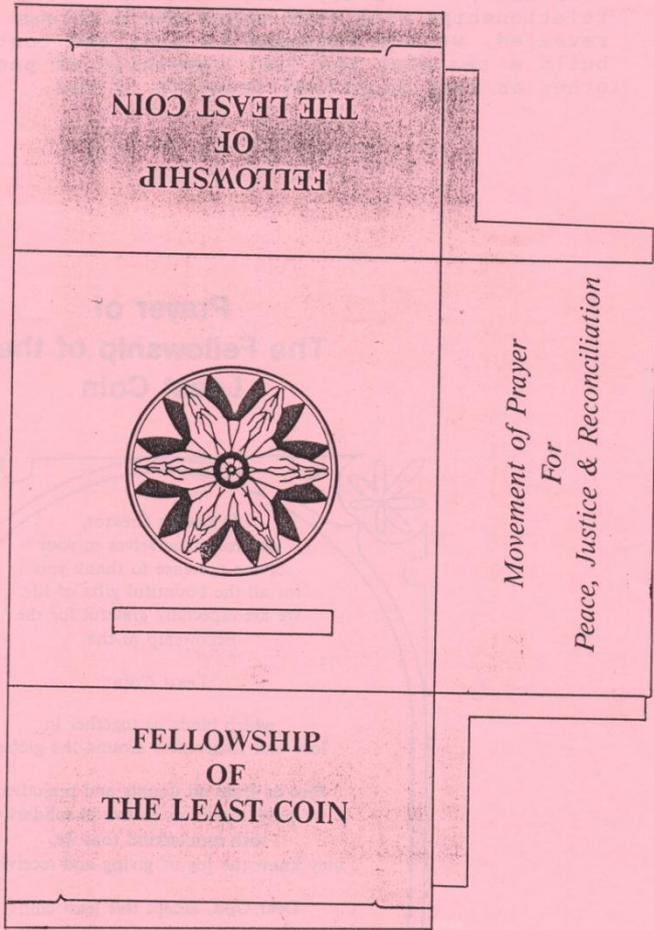
"token of love".

Make us mindful of the miracles of  
these coins. Let us honour your creation  
with love, as shown through the  
life and resurrection of  
your Son, Jesus the Christ.

Amen

mirrored on, see  
less, no doubt  
a witness

You Are Invited  
to  
Participate  
with  
Global Community  
of  
Christian Women  
in  
The Fellowship  
of the  
Least Coin

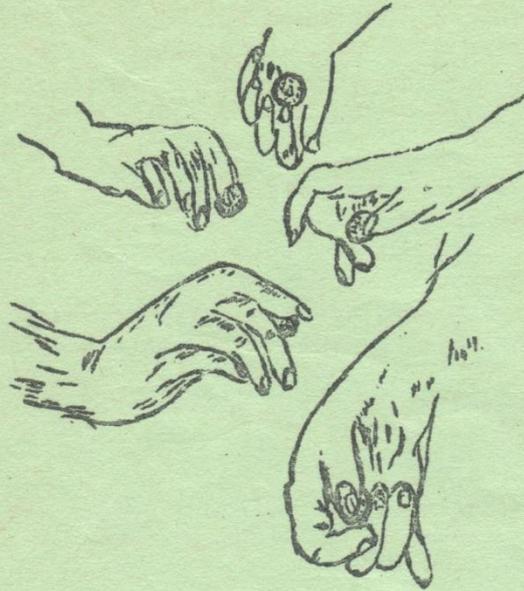


Mrs. Shirin Samuel  
Executive Secretary  
of

International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin  
c/o CCA Centre, Pak Tin Village, Mei Tin Road, Shatin, N.T.  
HONG KONG

April 1994

# SMALL BEGINNINGS



## SMALL BEGINNINGS

*by Fran Downes*

Let's go on an international journey in quest of the least coin, to discover what it is doing in six continents around the world. The Fellowship of the Least Coin has been referred to as one of the most remarkable calls to international sharing of our times, and it is a powerful influence for good that women have. It also can be thought of as a modern miracle.

We must start on our journey in Japan, because the Fellowship of the Least Coin was born out of the distress caused when a bomb was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. On our way we meet with an American woman writer who had decided for herself to find out what anything so meagre as a least coin can do. She visited 10 nations where the women themselves explained how they were trying to help to the best of their abilities in housing, food shortages, famine and floods. As this American writer travelled round she found, among these Asian women, what the power of prayer does in their lives. She also said, "I have caught the spirit of the least coin which shares concern for every race and creed."

It is not in this American writer that our interest lies, but in an Indian woman - Shanti Solomon (whose first name means "peace", and her surname "wisdom").

To understand how much the Fellowship of the Least Coin can mean, both to women who have nothing and the women who have everything, we need to listen to Mrs. Shanti Solomon as she unfolds her dream - the yearnings of her heart for uneducated, deserted women, whether in the African bush, Vietnam ricefields, or in Australia - that women may have a new sense of their own identity and of their kinship with other women around the world.

Shanti, even though she holds two degrees, is so humble, and she really cares. She knows what it is to be hungry and without money, and about injustice - her father was murdered because he became a Christian.

In 1956 the National Council of Presbyterian Women in U.S.A. sponsored a group of six women - one Japanese, one Indian and four American - for a Pacific tour to take in Alaska, Korea, Japan, the Philippines and Hong Kong. The purpose of these visits was to

strengthen a world-wide Christian fellowship among women  
to share mutual joy and concern,  
to study the Bible,  
to pray together and to re-affirm that all of us are  
the members of one family in Christ.

This team first visited Tokyo where together they planned their continuing trip; but the postwar bitterness from one country to another and towards the American women, because of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, dismayed them.

And then the Japanese team member and Shanti were refused visas for Korea. The rest of the team wanted to call off the visits to the other countries, but Shanti said, "No, you go on as planned. I want to ponder all this in my heart. I will wait for you in Manila with our Christian friends, studying to see if perhaps I myself have wrong thoughts."

She said to herself - the wounds of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are still raw - that I can understand - but the Americans too lost many of their sons in the tragedy of war. As Shanti searched her Bible she found the answer she was looking for in the story of the Good Samaritan who helped the man who fell among thieves. She said, "We village women in India have drawn away our skirts from the troubled war-torn mothers and children everywhere. We have been like the priest who passed by on the other side, saying 'this is not my business'."

Shanti was still pondering while she and a group of women in a Manila church read together the Gospel of Mark. When they reached the twelfth chapter - where Jesus comments that the widow who gave her two small coins, worth one cent, had given more than any other person because she had given all she had, Shanti's heart gave a great leap. The widow's mite - that is the answer! You have to give yourself along with your least coin - real giving is throwing off pride - only when our hearts are empty of self can God fill them with love and forgiveness. Why could we not start a fellowship where all women - any woman - shall pray for another in a different land? There must be some token of her concern - possibly the smallest coin of her country - which, like the widow's mite, would help sick or troubled people everywhere and bring about reconciliation between people.

When the rest of the team met again with Shanti in Manila and she told them of her idea, the American women said, "We do not think our church women back home would want to be bothered saving only twelve pennies every year."

"That is what is wrong with you Americans", Shanti pointed out. "You do not understand how humiliating it is to be always on the receiving end as we are in Asia. The paisa, the least coin of my country, is only worth a fraction of an American penny, but even the poorest village woman can afford to give it to someone worse off than she is."

"The village woman needs to do this for her own sake to stand up proudly. It is important that the rich and poor, educated and illiterate, can give on the same level. If you of the West draw aside you will be the loneliest women in the world - your great wealth has divided us - let's see if the least coin can draw us together."

After a few months the American women back home gladly joined the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

The idea of praying and giving - person to person on an equal basis in both East and West - has swept round the world, and now is to be found in the six continents and in over 80 countries.

This is not another denomination - or an organization with monthly meetings and deadly dull reports. It must be a sharing by women everywhere, insisted Shanti, regardless of political or theological differences. It sprang up in the Far East, in India and Manila - spread through all Asia - then leapt the oceans to the West - because it answered the desperate need of women everywhere.

The decision that individual women as well as groups might join the Fellowship of the Least Coin has opened the door of participation to Roman Catholic women and others, but surprise was shown when Buddhist and Moslem women applied for membership in this Christian women's movement. And the answer was, "Why not? You pray to the same God, and if you want to help in Christlike giving to the needy of all nations - "Welcome". After all, how can we foster the peaceable kingdom unless we exhibit equal tolerance ourselves? Our job as women is to show love.

You cannot see a prayer or an atom, but both can have great power for good.

If only women all over the world taught understanding in their homes to their children, who knows what might happen? To release this power may take time, but what other practical way is there to help this world of ours?

FROM THE OFFERINGS:

It was never dreamt that after 19 years, over one and a half million dollars would be given for projects round the world.

Trying to put into the words of Spanish or English, or any other language, how the women of the Fellowship of the Least Coin are helping in relief work for the sick, homeless and down-trodden of six continents, is rather like describing a sunrise to a blind person - all one can do is to give a feeling of colour and glory!

As a major part of Least Coin offerings is spent on relief work and evangelism, it was also decided to reserve some for ventures of international fellowship among women, or to send women delegates to ecumenical meetings, because when women meet each other in person, forgiveness becomes easier. The movement to unite all women in prayer and mutual giving took a great leap forward whenever women of cultural and political differences met face to face.

The following are but a few projects that have been helped in the last year:-

In Hong Kong, Least Coin provides bread and shelter for crippled T.B. men too old or twisted to go out to work; they sit in their rooms doing light handwork, weaving and embroidering - which is such a gracious art in this centre, where tourists beat down prices!

There also, nurseries have been set up so that children, especially babies under two years old, do not have to be confined alone all day in a sort of chicken coop, because their mothers had to leave them while they worked on the roads.

Help is also given to Helen Keller Homes for blind babies, in Jerusalem.

Assistance to crippled children in Kenya.

Homes for aged Christians, and Family Life Education in Delhi, India.

Training programmes for native Indians in North Western Canada.

5.

Gifts to 46 Pastors' wives in South Vietnam.

Home for retiring women in Japan.

Opportunity was made on Women's Day of Prayer in March 1974 for women from Asia and America to celebrate this service with Japanese women at Hiroshima. The theme was "Make us Builders of Peace", and the world-wide Order of Service was written by the Japanese women.

ALSO HELPED ARE:

Handicapped persons in Argentina - Rehabilitation programmes.

Girls' Brigade Pacific Fellowship - Training in Papua New Guinea.

Aborigines in Australia - Development training in community life.

In 1976 Australia received \$4,000 for Nungalinga College, Darwin, and \$2,000 for Missionary Sisters of Charity in their work among the Aborigines and outcasts at Bourke, New South Wales.

-----oOo-----

The first information about Fellowship of the Least Coin came to us here in Australia in 1963, when the Australian Council of Churches received a cheque for \$1,000 from the women of Asia for work among Aboriginal girls.

Imagine our surprise on receiving this money, and our embarrassment that the women of Asia, where utmost poverty is to be found, sent us Australians this gift. What a humbling experience this was! In 1964 the Fellowship of the Least Coin began here, quietly spreading from one State to another.

In Australia last year \$5,000 was given from our least coins. Since 1963 Australia has been given gifts towards seven projects - so not only do we send, but we receive.

God has blessed many participants, and likewise the recipients. Although these least coins were never considered to be the most significant part of the Fellowship - these combined gifts have encouraged thousands of women to enjoy international Christian Fellowship and to share in the healing power of love, in witnessing to Christ's love for mankind.

Thus a modern miracle was born. It has brought together women round the world in prayer and reconciliation - for when we have prayed and when we have listened, only then can we give our least coin token.

Unfortunately, so many women here in Australia have not caught the real vision. They seem to think it is just giving money - 5 cents, 10 cents, or even 20 cents - and not even a prayer. It would not matter if we did not give the coin - except for the equal sharing with our Asian sisters.

Never before as now, are our prayers for reconciliation and peace for the world needed more. We are the nation builders of the world, leaders in our own right. Our life is indeed a many-splendoured thing. It is we who know the miracle of loving and being loved. The wonders of the modern world have been laid at our feet, giving us time to live, to work and to be quiet.

Our boundaries of love and service have extended beyond our homes into the cities, the slums and the outlying villages. The world has become our parish. We have become the eyes of the world. May we be aware of our many-splendoured lives, and our responsibilities in our homes and in the eyes of the nation. Remember that we can no longer live on our individual islands, that we cannot live alone, and that we all belong to the same world.

A FELLOWSHIP PRAYER:

*Father, we would pray that it is not with a careless hand that we give our coin, even if it does not mean much to us. We pray for the women in other countries who give their least coins like us, but go without their evening bread to share from their poverty.*

*Father, within your cup which feeds your lambs, our coins, through You, become the golden coin of fellowship and love.*

*Amen.*

----oOo----

N.B. The Devotional Handbook of the Fellowship of the Least Coin is "The Circle of Prayer", and it contains monthly prayers for use by women all over the world as they participate in the Fellowship. The Symbol on the cover is six pairs of folded praying hands, representing the six continents.

A set of 30 colour slides with commentary (tape or cassette) is available from - Mrs. J. Strack, 66 Tennyson Avenue, Moonee Ponds, Victoria 3039. No charge, but return by Registered Post.

## THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN.

(CONDENSED & UPDATED FROM BOOKLET "SMALL BEGINNINGS" WRITTEN IN 1974)

The Fellowship of the Least Coin has been referred to as one of the most remarkable calls to international sharing of our times and it is a powerful influence for good that women have. The Fellowship was born out of the distress caused when a bomb was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, by an Indian woman, Shanti Solomon, whose first name means means "peace" and her surname "wisdom". Shanti, even though she holds two degrees, is so humble and she really cares; she knows what it is to be hungry and without money, and about injustice - her father was murdered because he became a Christian.

In 1956, the National Council of Presbyterian Women in U.S.A. sponsored a group of six women - one Japanese, one Indian (Shanti Solomon) and four American - for a tour to take in Alaska, Korea, Japan, the Philippines and Hong Kong, the purpose of the tour being to strengthen a world-wide Christian fellowship among women. The team first visited Tokyo, where together they planned their continuing trip, but the post-war bitterness from one country to another and towards the American women, because of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, dismayed them. Then the Japanese team member and Shanti were refused visas for Korea. When the others wanted to call of the visits to the other countries, Shanti said "No, you go on as planned. I want to ponder all this in my heart. I will wait for you in Manila."

As Shanti waited in Manila, she said to herself "The wounds of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are still raw - that I can understand - but the Americans too lost many of their sons in the tragedy of war." As she searched her Bible, reading in the Gospel of Mark, where Jesus comments that the widow who gave her two small coins had given more than any other person because she had given all she had, Shanti's heart gave a great leap. The widow's mite - that is the answer! Why could we not start a fellowship where all women - any woman - shall pray for another in a different land? There must be some token of her concern - possibly the smallest coin of her country - which, like the widow's mite, would help sick or troubled people everywhere and bring about reconciliation between people.

When the rest of the team met again with Shanti in Manila, and she told them of her idea, the American women said "We do not think our church women back home would want to be bothered saving only twelve pennies every year." "That is where you Americans are wrong" Shanti pointed out. "You do not understand how humiliating it is to be always on the receiving end as we are in Asia. The least coin of my country is only worth a fraction of an American penny, but even the poorest village woman can afford to give it to someone worse off than she is." It is important that the rich and poor, educated and illiterate, can give on the same level. Your great wealth in the West has divided us - let's see if the least coin can draw us together."

After a few months, the American women back home gladly joined the Fellowship of the Least Coin. The idea of praying and giving - person to person on an equal basis in both East and West - has swept around the world, and now is to be found in the six continents and in over 80 countries. It was never dreamt that after 34 years, some millions of dollars would be have been given for projects around the world.

A major part of Least Coin offerings is spent on relief work and evangelism, but some is reserved for ventures of international fellowship among women and ecumenical activities, because when women meet each other in person, forgiveness becomes easier - when women of cultural and political differences meet face to face.

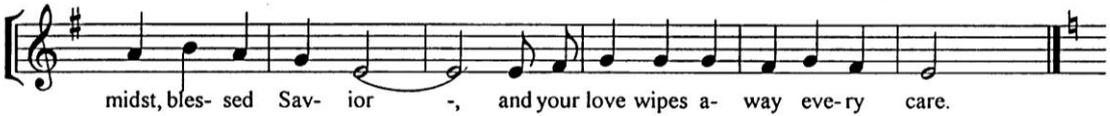
The first information about Fellowship of the Least Coin came to us here in Australia in 1963, when the Australian Council of Churches received a grant of \$1,000 from the women of Asia for work among Aboriginal girls. What a surprise, and a humbling and embarrassing experience, that the women of Asia, where utmost poverty is found, sent us this gift! In 1964, the Fellowship of the Least Coin began here, quietly spreading from one State to another.

Thus a modern miracle was born. It has brought together women round the world in prayer and reconciliation - for when we have prayed and when we have listened, only then can we give our least coin token. Our boundaries of love and service have extended beyond our homes into the cities, the slums and villages - the world has become our parish. Never before, as now, are our prayers for reconciliation and peace for the world needed more.

An F.L.C. Prayer: "Father, we would pray that it is not with a careless hand that we have our coin, even if it does not mean much to us. We pray for the women in other countries who give their least coin like us, but who go without their evening bread to share from their poverty. Father, within your cup which feeds your lambs, our coins, through you, become the golden coin of fellowship and love. Amen"

Prayer for FLC  
When the heart is in quiet submission

Music: Maija Vuorinen 1996  
Lyrics: Winsome Bennets 1995



2. We are gathered before You in worship,  
Christian women united in prayer,  
Bound together in mutual commitment,  
Our resources and witness to share.
3. We would ask for Your guidance and wisdom  
As we strive towards justice and peace,  
For repentance, forgiveness and freedom,  
That oppression and bondage might cease.
4. So instill in our hearts greater love, Lord,  
And strenghten our faith, as we join  
To earnestly pray for Your blessing  
On the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

Winsome Bennets 1995

THE LEAST COIN

So small a coin,  
Its jingle is scarcely a sound,  
Yet it rings like a celebration gong  
The whole world round!

So small a coin,  
Its value is nothing worth;  
Yet it buys what no millionaire can buy,  
The gentlest gift on earth.

So small a coin,  
It cannot bear the name of sacrifice,  
Yet it ransoms from indifference a love  
Beyond all price.

So small a coin;  
Here it lies hidden in my hand  
And now it is given, suddenly we are one  
From land to land.

So small a coin,  
How can the God of the universe be aware?  
My whispered dedication echoes on and on;  
He knows I care.

So small a coin!

*(By Mrs. Margaret Knauerhase)*

## HISTORY OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN IN AUSTRALIA

As we in Australia prepare to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of F.L.C. our minds go back to the wonderful and timely way God led us into the Fellowship, and we thank and praise Him for the privilege of being able to join with our Christian sisters in so many countries, to pray for Peace, Justice, Reconciliation and to offer our least coins for those in need. We have been truly blessed.

In 1963 the Interim Committee of Australian Church Women was struggling to find ways in which to co-ordinate the work of Christian Women in the churches in Australia. The Winifred Kiek Scholarship had been devised to help train for leadership women from the Asian countries and to offer them experience in Australia which they could not obtain in their own country. But it was felt that something with practical implications as well as spiritual values was needed.

At this time a Mystery donation of \$1,000 US dollars was received by the Australian Council of Churches from the Fellowship of the Least Coin for work amongst Aboriginal children and women. "What is this Fellowship of the Least Coin?" and "Where has the money come from?" were just two of the many questions asked by the Council of Churches.

Mrs Verco, one of our members (and a present Life Member of Australian Church Women) had heard about the Fellowship whilst on a visit to the U.S.A. and after many enquiries were made, the women of the Congregational Fellowship were able to tell the moving story of a group of dedicated and concerned Asian Christian women who saw the great need for God's reconciling love in a world torn apart by hate, suspicion and greed.

Australian Church Women were asked to promote and administer the Fellowship in Australia. Help for Australia had come from Asia where utmost poverty was to be found. It was a humbling and startling thought.

God had answered our prayer for a project which would unite Christian women together in prayer and giving around Australia.

Miss Theima Skillier, our Secretary, produced a label to put on a bottle/container for "least coins" and to remind the givers to pray. The first issue was soon used. Later Deaconess Mary Andrews asked an artist friend to design a label which had the Cross at the Centre with a woman kneeling in prayer beside it. Superimposed on the label were the words "Fellowship of the Least Coin - We live and pray for Peace in the World; Peace in the Home; Peace in the Heart."

Promotion of the Fellowship has been faithfully carried out by our Church Women and today in practically every part of our Continent, individuals and groups are praying and offering their least coins and the meditations from the Circle of Prayer have helped us understand more fully the needs and problems of our sisters in Christ.

Australia was represented at the F.L.C. Silver Jubilee meetings in Manila, and the challenge of those meetings was shared by the ladies who attended. Major Eileen Holley attended the 40th Anniversary celebrations in New Zealand and encouraged us by her interesting and informative report.

We are grateful to the Asian women who taught us not only to pray, but the lesson of giving and receiving with God's reconciling love.

Again we have been truly blessed - Thanks be to God.

(Compiled from various F.L.C. records.)

Shirley Wells  
National FLC Convener

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN SHARE THEIR REFLECTIONS  
ON FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN

Reflections from Nancy McLaren, National President

What a privilege I have had to be the Convener for the Fellowship of the Least Coin in New South Wales for the last two and a half years.

During my time I have had the privilege of speaking at services where I have been able to promote the wonderful history of this great movement.

To see the way that people have responded to the legacy that has been left to us by Shanti Solomon in not only giving of our least coin in our currency but the prayers and participation that have taken place has been wonderful.

Reflections from Vera Wilson, Western Australia

One of my early memories of FLC was the occasion of Mrs Shanti Solomon's first visit to W.A. not long after FLC was established in Australia. She had to cancel several flights from India because of delay in getting her visa and finally arrived at Perth Airport in the middle of the night. The State President and I were at the Airport to meet her and saw her for a few minutes as she had to rejoin the plane to keep a speaking engagement in Adelaide the following day - having already missed the meeting we had arranged to welcome her to W.A. When I rang the S.A. Convener after the plane left here she was relieved to know that Shanti would arrive in Adelaide the following morning.

Another memory is of the W.A. celebration of the 40th anniversary of FLC. Early in the year we contacted all FLC Groups and suggested that anyone who wished could make a little red bag and during the year fill it with 40 five-cent pieces. These were to be brought or sent to the Community Day Service in October. The response to this idea was amazing and the Treasurer was not popular at the Bank when she turned up with many hundreds of five-cent pieces!

Reflections from Anne Kennedy, Victoria

Fellowship of the Least Coin has captured the imagination of church people here in Victoria. The amount of prayer and reconciliation has resulted in amazing spiritual and financial support for all. The Circle of Prayer booklet is well received.

\* Mrs Fran Downes (Life Member) and Rev. Elizabeth Alfred attended the FLC Silver Jubilee celebrations held in Manila in 1980. A Special Service was arranged by Winifred Kiek Scholar, Mrs Rathi Selvaratnam in October 1981 at Collins Street Baptist Church.

\* In November 1996, a Special Service was held at Collins Street Baptist Church to celebrate 40 years of FLC. The Speaker was Mrs Rathi Selvaratnam, who was President of Asian Church Women's Conference from 1966-1970.

Reflections from Eva Cooper, South Australia

It amazes me that wherever I give a talk, people are surprised to know how many countries are involved and that FLC has spread world wide. The Circle of Prayer booklets are widely used in South Australia and people are amazed to hear how the smallest coins can amount to such a large figure and be used to help so many people.

In 1981 the Silver Jubilee was celebrated with a Thanksgiving Service and Dinner - Mrs Rathi Selvaratnam (a former President of ACWC and the first Winifred Kiek Scholar) was the Guest Speaker.

/over

Reflections from Janet Abrahamffy, Australian Capital Territory

In 1964 the World Community Day collection was £27.10.0 and in 1965 our first FLC collection was £18.11.10d. As half pennies were the least coin at that time, it meant that 8,924 half pennies were collected, hopefully changed in to larger coinage for the W.C.C. collection.

Over the years our collections have steadily risen. I don't think Shanti would approve, but if we can raise money for worthwhile projects to help Christian women, anywhere in the world, to have self respect, dignity and to stand on their own feet - well I don't mind if we get coins from unbelievers (who in all probability just throw their least coins away) as we dedicate our collections at our World Community Day services to helping others, maybe even some of the unbelievers who threw the coins away in the first place. We will just have to pray all the harder to cover Shanti's wish for a prayer with a coin.

For my part, I have enjoyed going around to various church groups to tell them about FLC. The only problem for me is, I admire Shanti so much as a person and her idea, that I find it hard to know when to stop talking about her and her FLC.

Reflections from the Solomon Islands

Extract from "Speech of Words of Thanks" by the Executive of Solomon Islands Central West Union Girls Brigade and the United Church Womens Fellowship for the 2001 FLC Grant of \$2,500.

"The Funding Agency - Fellowship of the Least Coin which enabled us to purchase a durable, high quality Yamaha Boat has alleviated the soring expenses of hiring boats. In the first three months the boat made a total of sixteen day runs and if this is calculated at the normal hiring rate of \$200 per day, a saving of \$3,200 has been made (an average of \$500 per month).

We convey our grateful thanks for meeting our need in extending God's kingdom in this little part of the world."

Reflections from Shirley Wells on the Fortieth Anniversary Celebrations of FLC in N.S.W.

Over 100 women gathered together to give thanks to God for His enabling and guidance over the years, and for the privilege we have had to be part of the Fellowship for 34 years. Our International visitors en route, or returning from their meetings in New Zealand gave glimpses of the work of FLC in Asian countries and we were inspired and encouraged by their visit.

The cutting of the Anniversary cake by Shirin Samuel was a highlight of the program and a time of sharing at lunch was enjoyed by all.

**Allocations from the FLC to Australia, (In American Dollars)**

1963	Australian Council of Churches for work among Aboriginal children and girls.	\$1,000
1964	Christian Bookshop, New Hebrides Girls' Hostel, Tahiti	\$1,000 \$2,000
1965	Aoba Islands Hospital	\$1,000
1966	Pacific Islands Christian Programme of Methodist Church Home and Family Programme PCC Radio Work, Melanesian Council of Churches	\$1,000 \$1,000 \$1,000
1968	Work among Migrant Youth in Victoria	\$1,000
1969	Marriage Guidance and Family Institute, Pacific Islands Handicraft Training Programme, Suva. St. Christopher's Multiracial Home, Fiji Girl's Hostel, Tahiti Pacific Islands Lay Leadership for Women	\$1,500 \$1,000 \$2,000 \$1,000 \$1,000
1970	Nutrition Seminar, Haiti Pacific Urban Industrial Mission Marriage Guidance and Family Institute Assistance to PCC General Secretary's Housing	\$1,000 \$2,000 \$1,000 \$1,000
1971	Marriage Guidance Institute, Victoria Marriage Guidance Institute, Fiji Development Training in Community Life for Aboriginal Australians	\$1,000 \$1,500 \$1,000
1973	Aboriginal Health Education in Australia International Social Service, Victoria Boat, for Vatnabare Hospital, Duke of York, Rabaul New Britain Aboriginal Resource Centre, Darwin Kindergarten Training in Australia for Fijian	\$ 700 \$ 500 \$ 700 \$1,000 \$1,000
1974	Girls' Brigade; Pacific Training. PNG Training for Fijian Kindergarten Teacher	\$2,500 \$2,500
1975	Aboriginal Medical Service, Australia Nungalinya College, Darwin. Australia	\$1,500 \$5,000
1976	Care for the Outcasts of Society, Bourke NSW	\$1,000
1979	Australian Church Women, Christian Causeways Pacific (bringing NZ and USA Churchwomen to National Meeting in Sydney)	\$2,000
1980	St. Christopher's Home, Fiji	\$1,000
1983	Mamre Family Support for Handicapped Children Research - Handicapped Children in the Outback Services to Vietnamese refugees, Victoria Leadership Training - Aboriginal Resource Centre	\$1,000 \$1,500 \$1,500 \$1,500
1984	Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Congress	\$3,000
1985	Minibus for Vietnamese Evangelical Church, Adelaide.	\$2,000
1986	Nungalinya College - National language, literature and computer facilities for Aboriginal women.	\$4,500

1987	Family Care Ministry	\$1,000
1988	Meningie Aboriginal Christian Centre (Machines to teach women sewing and self-reliance)	\$3,000
1989	Operation Understanding. To finance a Christian Aboriginal Woman and White Woman together to travel to each State in Australia to meet with ACW members and other Christian Women in an effort to develop better understanding and relationship between all women.	\$5,000
1990	Women's Prison Chaplaincy in South Australia.	\$3,000
	Leadership Training for Women in New Guinea-Tasmania.	\$1,000
	Women, the Church and Domestic Violence - Victoria	\$5,000
1992	Ministry to Women leaving Prison in Victoria. To provide follow-up to assist with providing basic needs.	\$5,000
	Spiritual Project for Aboriginal Women.	\$3,400
	Women's Refuge and Training Centre in Tasmania.	\$2,000
1994	Kuri-Ngai Partners - Liaison officer - NSW.	\$6,000
1995	Mail Bag Club and Junior Mailbag - YWCA - Q'ld.	\$ 500
	Shalom Christian College - Q'ld. applied for by NSW.	\$5,000
1996	Lowarda Aboriginal Corp. WA.	\$3,000
	Jewellery and Artifact Business.	
	The Girls Brigade, NSW	\$2,000
	Yappera Stage 2 Development	
1997	WEC Missionary Training College	\$2,000
	Resources for women training for ministry.	
	Launceston College, Tasmania	\$4,000
	School Chaplaincy, Australia.	
1998	Brenton Carey hostel Pakistan - applied for by NSW Unit.	\$5,000
	Young Aboriginal Women Self Esteem program, Redfern, NSW.	\$4,000
	Somali Refuge Women's Sewing Group, Auburn, NSW.	\$4,000
2000	Cressy- Campbell School Chaplaincy, Tasmania.	\$2,000
	Leadership Development Girls Friendly Society, Qld.	\$3,000
	AIM Bible College Computer Project, Northern Territory.	\$3,000
	North West Hospitals Chaplaincy, Tasmania.	\$2,000
2001	Womens Fellowship/Girls Brigade - motorised canoe, Solomon Islands.	\$2,500
	Parents Support Group, Woolloomooloo, Sydney.	\$4,000
	Facilitating Faith Community (Parish) Nursing, W.Aust.	\$2,500
2002	Train the Trainers, Heath Education, East Timor.	\$3,700
	Girls Friendly Society, National & International Conferences, Anglican, Q'ld.	\$2,000
	Embracing People with Intellectual Disabilities, West. Aust.	\$2,500
2003	Somali Womens Sewing Group, Melbourne.	\$3,000
	Churches Together Aboriginal Partnership, Q'ld. Churches.	\$3,000
2005	'Journey to Wholeness'. A project of Uniting Care, Kwinana, Western Australia.	\$3,500
	'Grace in Restoring Life' for the Women's Space at Hope Street Urban Compassion in Woolloomooloo, N.S.W.	\$4,000