

Leader We bring our struggle against death, against the murder of our sons and daughters.

All **We bring all our brokenness - separated families, divided land, alienated parties, warring ideologies, superpower conflicts, fractured Churches, fragmented human communities.**

Leader We bring our hope for healing and wholeness.

All **We bring a vision of the whole earth at peace, full of plenty for all, with bread not bombs; democracy not dictatorship, respect not torture; justice not repression; co-operation not competition and conflict.**

Leader We bring the suffering and sensitivity, the courage and compassion born out of our oppression as women.

All **We bring our minds and bodies eager to be involved in reconciling, building, peace, reuniting.**

Leader We bring our love, our gentle words, our poetry and lullabies, our wailing and our laughter.

All **We bring ourselves and our sister Churches.**

All **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

HYMN **Lord Your Almighty Word** AHB 61  
Tune: 'Moscow' 664 6664

#### BENEDICTION

Leader May the God of steadfastness and encouragement enable us to live in peace and harmony with one another, having the mind of Christ Jesus, so that together we may with one voice glorify God in our Lord Jesus Christ. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **AMEN.**

Please send all offerings to State/Territory Treasurer.  
Thank you for your continued support of World Community Day.

**World Day of Prayer March 1998**  
"Who is My Neighbor?"

**Fellowship Day will be held in July, 1998.**  
Dates and venues to be announced



**Australian Church Women**

**World Community Day 1997**

## Australian Church Women

ACW came into being in 1965 when Women's Inter-Church Councils from all States and Territories came together to form Australian Church Women, fostering ecumenism and undertaking action on behalf of Church women. Australian Church Women forms a network of committed Christian women, dedicated to encourage fellowship and service across denominational, national and international boundaries.

**Fellowship of the Least Coin** monies which have been collected with prayer for peace and reconciliation during the past year are brought to World Community Day services by groups and individuals and are dedicated. These funds are then sent to State/Territory Treasurers who forward them to the National Treasurer.

**General Offertory** from this Service is to be divided equally between Asian Church Women's Conference, with which Australian Church Women is affiliated and supports annually; and the 1997 Special Community Day Project - **Bimbadeen College** in Cootamundra, southern N.S.W.

**Bimbadeen** is a Christian Training College, (which receives no government funding), providing training in Theology and Agricultural pursuits and has been engaged in training men and women for the work of ministry since 1979. The College accepts students of all denominations from all over Australia. Although Bimbadeen is primarily set up for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, students have included South Pacific Islanders, Indians and Europeans.

**Courses Offered** include Discipleship, Biblical Studies, Pastoral Studies, and Vocational Training - with emphasis on farm work.

**Purpose** To provide Biblical Education Programs for Christians to enhance leadership and employment skills and to train and equip the students for the work of ministry.

**Today's Order of Service** was prepared by the Alice Springs Branch of Australian Church Women.

We acknowledge the work of Miriam Rose - 'Aboriginal Voice'

**The Cover design** is by Captain Marie Hambleton, of Queensland.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This Order of Service is copyright and may not be rewritten or otherwise altered, except for the substitution of hymns that are considered to be more suitable and available in the local situation.

## Australian Church Women World Community Day 1997

Theme **"One People Embracing and Encircled by God's Love"**

Leader CALL TO WORSHIP Galatians 3 : 27 -28

Leader We come together to this place of Prayer  
All In the name of the God who has called us.

Leader We come into the presence of God  
All In the name of the Son who has redeemed us.

Leader We come into the presence of God  
All In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit who inspires us.

Leader As one people, called, redeemed and united  
All We come, to offer our worship and our praise.

HYMN OF PRAISE God is Love AHB 93  
Tune 'Abbot's Leigh' 87 87 D

Leader Introduces theme  
**"One People Embracing and Encircled by God's Love"** But!  
we are many people. Can we be one? We are created in the  
image of God, called to follow many paths to God.

**Voices of Many People** (could use four readers)

**Aborigine** I was born in the bush, I had no house, I lived in a wurly, I had no money. Nature was my bank, I looked after its capital and drew on its interest. Bush tucker was my natural food, I was shown how to follow tracks and challenge the cunning of the animals. I watched the men make dugout canoes, three pronged spears for spearing fish and shovel spears for spearing kangaroos and wallabies. I saw them diving to catch fresh water turtles with their bare hands. I learnt how to tease out fibre from the 'marapan' palm tree and to make string from it and from string make dilly bags and fish nets. From my parents and my group I learnt my 'culture' - how to look out on the country, the bush, my world. My life was filled with beautiful stories, my people could not read, they did not write, they remembered and they told and retold. The extended family was the human side of our

world. It gave us support. We developed as people by interaction within that family. I developed a love for the bush and especially for its quietness. I do believe that in quietness is our very search for God. I began to experience in that quietness the great Spirit, the Father of us all.

### European

We came to this Southern Land for many different reasons. Some were forced to come, others were starving, yet others came because of oppressive governments. Still others were lured by tales of gold, and others came for the sheer adventure of settling in a vast open empty land. We brought our European and Eastern ways of thinking, customs, foods and dress with us whether they were suitable or not. All who came, found a strange land, a land of fire, drought and flood. A land where trees did not produce fruit, where grasses could not be harvested for grain. So we set about using the trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers from the Northern Hemisphere. We introduced animals of the north, and only now, 200 years after the first boatloads came, have we realised how much damage we have done to the land, the natural animals and above all to the original people whose home this was and is. But we have survived and established our ways and our culture under the Southern Stars.

### Asian/Pacific

Why we are different! We are rich with so many islands, hills, mountains and seas. Our culture is rich in every way - dance, music, food, language and ways. We respect elders and our extended family is always around to help us in our struggles and trials. Some of us might be very poor but our motto is "to share and give to others what we have and can". We love our food and music and we share them. We love our families who look after us, be it extended or not. "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" is another motto we learnt. We are very hospitable - we will give our own bed to our visitors, strangers or friends. We are very friendly and we worship God as often as we can. Some of us do not have freedom of speech, religion or choice.

### The Path We Have Come

Fourth Reader We have come to this land "Lucky Australia" we say. A land of such beauty, riches, and vastness we could not believe existed. We get used to this heat in the vast land. We acquire the rich culture in which we share our own. Even our own language we soon forget, we call it "Aussie" style after we get used to it. We raise our families and most of us prefer to stay in this beautiful

land and die here. We call ourselves "Australians" and we feel we belong and love this peaceful land. We thank God for the riches of this land for before we came, some of us did not have food to eat or clean water to drink.

HYMN **God tja mirithin marr ngamanthin** "Sing Alleluia" No 78  
Tune: 'Milingimbi'

All **We are different in our skin colour, dress, and language .  
Can we be one?**

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader Gracious God, we come confessing our sins and failings. We acknowledge Your right to direct us,

All **but we have been faithless and disobedient servants.**

Leader We have sung praises to You with our voices,  
All **but we have not lived lives of praise as joyful,  
redeemed people.**

Leader We have accepted Your love and grace as if we were entitled to it,  
All **and we have not treated others with forgiveness & love.**

Leader We have made our vows to be humble followers of Christ,  
All **but we have sought to exercise power & to control others.**

Leader We have prayed for the coming of Your reign of peace and justice  
All **but we have not acted as lovers of peace and supporters of  
the oppressed.**

Leader We are among those for whom Your Son prayed 'that they all  
may be one';  
All **but we have refused to share life with other Christians  
from whom we differ.**

Leader We acknowledge our failings and our disobedience, we are unworthy to come into Your presence,  
All **but we come with penitent and thankful hearts, in  
confidence of Your compassion and forgiveness.**

All **God was in Christ, reconciling this world, not counting our  
(standing) sins against us, but entrusting to us the message of  
reconciliation. Thanks be to God.**

OFFERING  
Leader

For Special Project Bimbadeen College  
Our Father God, on this World Community Day we are glad to give back to You what You in Your kindness have already entrusted to us.

All  
(standing)

We pray for Bimbadeen College at Cootamundra where this offering will be used. Bless those who will benefit from our gifts - the students, their families, the staff and their families, the different races who study and work together, the community of Cootamundra. May all be encircled by Your love and care. In the name of Jesus Christ we now pray together

The Lord's Prayer - Our Father.....

HYMN

When I Needed a Neighbour AHB 558  
Tune 'Neighbour' 13 10 and refrain

Leader

Why did God lead us on different paths and seemingly make us different?

Let us listen to His Word

Reader 1.

1 Corinthians 12: 4 - 12 Gifts from the Holy Spirit

Reader 2.

John 17: 17 - 22 Jesus prays for His disciples and all believers

Leader

Let us join our many voices together as we read truths that were found.

All

Many who came settled on the seaboards of this Island Continent, particularly the Eastern and Southern seaboards, but some people dared to come away from there and go Inland. This Inland country has been quietly, but nonetheless definitely changing us, making us different people.

We have come to love the brilliance of the stars, the Great Milky Way, the other constellations and particularly our own constellation - The Southern Cross with its two pointers. The quietness of this country, especially at night, lets us feel the presence of God. As we quietly wait in silence, we learn of God.

The past wherein are our roots, is important to God because it is the way He has led us. Far more important to God is the present and the future and the way in which we use them.

As we find God in His creation and through all His people, we learn to walk humbly with Him in the company of His people. No matter the colour of our skin, our culture or language we are one with each other as we experience His love together.

Leader

Let us celebrate our diversity as we sing together

HYMN

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace 'Sing Allelulia' No 66  
Tune 'Channel of Peace'

ADDRESS

"Reconciliation"

OFFERING

Fellowship of the Least Coin (Dedication of the Offering)

All  
(standing)

Our Creator, we present ourselves in Your Divine Presence to thank You for all the bountiful gifts of life, and especially for the Fellowship of the Least Coin, which binds us together in Your love of sacrifice and forgiveness around the globe. Free us from all doubts and prejudices, and inspire us to live in solidarity with humankind to experience the joy of giving and receiving. Dear God, accept this Least Coin 'Token of Love' and make us mindful to honour Your creation with Your love which was manifest in Your Crucified and Risen Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Leader

The work of reconciliation and peacemaking is long and hard, and we must strengthen each other to be honest and to persevere so what shall we bring to this work of peace and reconciliation?

All

We bring our tears, our days and nights of weeping. We bring our prayers, our mornings and evenings of petition.

Leader

We bring our sorrow at our sin and our collusion with evil. We bring our repentance for evil done in our name and for our sakes.

All

We bring our love & our anger, our passion & our indignation at those who kill people, dreams, family, and wholeness.

Leader

We bring our commitment to life, and the nurturing and continuity of life.

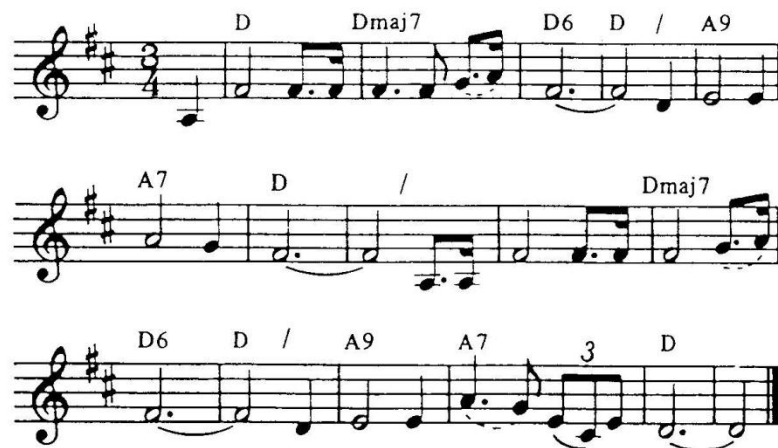
All

We bring our peacemaking, our mediation, our family building. We bring our caring for all creation, our cradling of a children, our embrace for the whole world.

# 78

MILINGIMBI

Australian aboriginal melody



*God tja mirithin mǎrr-ngamathin*

- 1 So God loved the people of the world  
he gave his only Son,  
who was born by the Spirit from heaven  
and came and lived as one of us.
- 2 His blood for our sins was shed;  
his love is without end!  
He has given us the fullness of life,  
to live in heaven with him.
- 3 And so we give glory to Christ,  
for he alone is Lord.  
Every colour and race is his own,  
the Saviour of the universe.

Aboriginal people of Arnhem Land  
versified by D'Arcy Wood 1936

*This may be sung unaccompanied*

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