

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Minutes of Women's Committee held on Tuesday, December 11,  
1962, at 10.30 a.m. at the ACC office, 511 Kent Street,  
Sydney

PRESENT: Mrs. B.R. Wyllie (Convenor), Mrs. J.F. McKay, Mrs. J. Dey,  
Deaconess Andrews and General Secretary.

APOLOGIES: An apology was received from Mrs. S.M. Barrett.

PRAYERS: The meeting opened with prayers led by Mrs. Wyllie.

REPORT OF PROGRESS OF INVESTIGATION SINCE LAST MEETING:

The meeting surveyed the consultations which had taken place on  
October 4 and November 9 with persons invited from denominational  
organizations, Women's World Day of Prayer Committee (NSW) and  
Women's Inter-Church Council (NSW).

At the October 4 meeting representatives of the NSW Inter-Church  
Council met with the Australian Council of Churches Committee  
investigating Women's Work.

The representatives of the Inter-Church Council spoke of their  
council's desire:

- a) to develop relationships with Inter-Church Councils in other  
States
- b) to develop inter-church women's work in local areas within  
NSW.

The ACC Committee indicated that its concerns included these but  
were also broader. It believed that a national organization of  
church women was required in order to serve 3 purposes:

- a) to widen the horizons of women in the local churches ecumeni-  
cally (i.e. toward the whole world and the whole Christian  
Church).
- b) to relate women's inter-church councils in the various States to  
each other.
- c) to relate denominational women's organizations at the federal  
level to each other.
- d) to relate Australian organizations with inter-church organizations  
overseas.

In the discussion which followed, a broad tentative picture of what  
might be begun to emerge.

- a) a national organization, known as United Church Women of  
Australia with representatives from -
  - . Denominational Women's organizations
  - . Women's Inter-Church Councils
  - . The Women's World Day of Prayer Committees
  - . The Australian Council of Churches (Women's Work)
- b) As a national organization it would i) relate existing  
organizations to each other; ii) stimulate their work  
by cross-fertilization of ideas, programme suggestions,  
leadership training, etc.
- c) A major area for such stimulation would be inter-church women's  
work in the local area. This work would develop in many ways  
and from many initiatives (e.g. a Local Inter-Church Council,  
a State Women's Inter-Church Council). All such groups could  
take the name of United Church Women of Australia and be

affiliated with any or all of the constituent organizations of United Church Women of Australia.

✓ The November 9 meeting was a larger group, attended by persons invited from denominational organizations and the Women's World Day of Prayer Committee of NSW as well as the NSW Women's Inter-Church Council.

At this meeting some responded to what they called 'the vision' of plans for more effective women's work. Some saw the difficulties and said "take it slowly". Others feared domination by men in the ACC, raised problems of non-member churches and warned against a complex national organization which tried to bring together all the denominational and inter-church women's groups.

However plans were made to investigate further in another consultation early in 1963 and to consult with women's organizations in other states.

Subsequent to the November 9 meeting, the NSW Women's Inter-Church Council, on a recommendation of its Executive, resolved to withdraw from the conversation, and correspondence to this effect was received.

The meeting then considered how the ACC could pursue its purpose, and after discussion of a preliminary draft, asked each member to write down comments and revisions which would be put together and become the basis for further discussion at the next meeting.

In planning its next meeting, the Committee agreed that it must make a proposal to the ACC Annual Meeting in February. It was further agreed to invite the men members of the Committee to the next meeting, having discreetly left them at home while proceeding with conversations with the NSW organizations, and to invite also Mrs. Barrett, Mrs. McPhee and Mrs. Doratis.

It was agreed that the Committee meet again on January 10 at 10 a.m. in the ACC office.

Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_