

Australian Church Women

WOMEN AT WORK



SEEK: To unite Australian women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

To help Christian women to take more effective place in the total life and mission of the Church.

March, 1982

OUR GOD IS ABLE

In 1 Peter 5:10 we read "The God of all grace .. make you perfect." This we need to link with Hebrews 4:16 which says "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

What a privilege we have of being able to come boldly into the presence of the living God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ so that He might give us the help we need and work His work of grace in us and this work is to make us perfect in His sight.

What a goal! To be perfect - with all our human weakness it seems impossible, yet the New Testament leaves us in no doubt that this is the Christian's aim and object. When we look at Jesus we are able to say "We shall be like Him, the family likeness will be in us because we are the children of the King." This is God's will and purpose for us - we don't just look up to the heights and say "I have to climb those heights" - God reaches down and says "If you hand your life over to me I will lift you up and establish you in the way you should go."

Remember when Jesus first came into Galilee, preaching the gospel, He walked to the Sea of Galilee and saw Peter and Andrew casting their nets into the sea. After calling the two men to follow Him, Jesus walked on and saw two more fishermen, James and John, who were in their boat MENDING their nets. At His call, James and John left their work of mending and followed Jesus.

The word for mending is the same word as the word "perfect" used in 1 Peter. We could exchange the English words and read, "James and John were in their boat PERFECTING their nets" and we could read "The God of all grace shall MEND you". As fishing nets suffer damage by being caught on hidden rocks and other obstacles so we are often bruised by the roughness of the world in which we live, by distress, sorrow, anxieties and by the violence of temptations and angers. "Your adversary the devil," says Peter, "as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour" and the adversary may spring upon us all and attack us unexpectedly. There are days and situations that make us all specially open to such attack and there are experiences that hurt our spirit, circumstances that bruise, griefs that cut deeply. All this Peter may well have had in mind when he said "The God of all grace shall perfect you" shall mend you - make you whole.

So that from all our hurts, all our bruising and wrestling with evil, all our struggles with circumstances, we are to get back to God always and He will mend us and keep mending us, until at last He will have perfected us.

Joyce Greentree, President
Queensland Unit.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN

Our Silver Jubilee Book, filled with memories of what has taken place over the first 25 years, 1957 - 1982. A record of experiences and these experiences will flow on in ever widening circles because it will be kept alive by women praying for peace and reconciliation around the world.

It is a good idea that a section has been included setting out accounts and projects over 1957 to 1980 of Fellowship of the Least Coin. Just what the "least coin" has accomplished is a modern miracle. It is also a reminder for us not to trust in bigness but to be helped to discover the blessings which come to the meek and humble-minded and those who are poor in spirit.

It is with great delight I recommend the history of Fellowship of the Least Coin - our Silver Jubilee Book to you.

Fran Downes,
FLC Convenor.

The following is an extract from a letter received by Mrs Dorothy May, Uniting Church manse, Lindisfarne, Tasmania, from her friend in Harpenden, Herts, England:

I can't tell you the joy I had when I saw that perfect little spoon (and it travelled so that it was immaculate.) Oh, Dorothy, what a gem - it made me feel so warm to think you should give me something so very precious and special. It is so delicate and beautifully designed. I am wondering if I can buy them in England? But you can imagine how thrilled I'll be to take it to the little groups on the circuit who still support the Least Coin Fellowship. I shall so cherish it; it now stands on the mantelpiece with other treasures.

The proud recipient of the Christmas gift died on New Year's day, Though an elderly person, her faithful support of FLC and her joyful gratitude radiate from her letter.

Mrs Jean Yule who was to have come to the Hobart N.C.M. but had an unfortunate accident just as she was leaving Melbourne, attended the February meeting of the working committee to give the report on behalf of the Australian Council of Churches which she was to have presented in Hobart. We were very glad to welcome her to the meeting and to hear her report. It was decided that we would include parts of her report in Women At Work in each issue until we had covered each section of it, as we believe it is very important that Australian Church Women should be aware of the work of the Australian Council of Churches and its needs and how members of A.C.W. can support the A.C.C.

CHRISTIANS ONE

This is the main avenue by which individuals and groups can support financially the A.C.C. and is the Council's principle source of income. Every State needs to build up its membership - for instance there are only 800 members in Victoria and when we consider the number of church members in this State, that is a very small number of "Christians One". The minimum membership fee is \$10 per annum but members may pay anything above that, up to \$25. Groups such as a local church pay \$25 pa and pensioners pay \$2.50. We are asking all State Units to encourage members to join Christians One, The postal address is:

The Australian Council of Churches,
P.O. Box C199, Clarence St., Sydney. 2001.

Elizabeth Alfred,
President.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Mrs Colonel Florence Saunders on January 28. She was known by those of you who belonged to A.C.W. in its beginnings. Mrs Saunders was a worthy representative of The Salvation Army on the Women's Inter Church Council of Victoria, which later became the Victorian Unit of Australian Church Women. She served as secretary from 1952 to 1958 and then was elected president in 1958 and served until the end of 1959. She again served as secretary from 1963 to 1968 representing the Council on a number of occasions on National Committees and also a member of the National Working Committee.

For her services she has been highly respected and was appointed a Life Member of Australian Church Women. At the funeral service a number of members of Australian Church Women attended as a mark of respect and payed tribute on that occasion.

An extract from a letter received from Mrs Helen Stutchbury, secretary of the Leura group of A.C.W, reads as follows:

I have much pleasure in enclosing herewith a cheque for five pounds sterling for the Winifred Kiek Scholarship Fund. It came about in this way; Mrs Audrey Sattler of the Leura Anglican Church attended our local Fellowship Day Service and was so impressed and enthused that she sent a copy of the Order of Service and other literature which I distributed that day, to a friend in England, Mrs C. Riseley. Mrs Riseley was so impressed that she sent the enclosed cheque to Audrey Sattler as a donation to the fund.

We are only a newly-formed group, being only one year old, so you will realise how pleased we feel that our influence has extended overseas!

REPORT

Rathic Selvaratnam X

My journey of discovery, fellowship and enrichment throughout Australia is an affirmation of the unity we share as a people of God. I found a strength in my journeyings in places where I felt refreshed, stimulated, nourished and nurtured by the warmth of love and concern, of giving and sharing as we met, listened and celebrated together Fellowship Day in Marysville and Rye, Victoria, Paramatta and Newcastle in New South Wales, Rockhampton, Darwin, Perth and Bunbury - the Thanksgiving Service of the Silver Jubilee of the F.L.C. in Launceston, Devonport in Tasmania, Adelaide and Port Pirie in South Australia.

There were discussions and fellowship and sharing the celebrations of the Silver Jubilee with the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship and other A.C.W. as well as with the Greek Orthodox women in other states and we realised that the deepest and most abundant source of power in the world today is the celebration power of God through prayer and we claim this as we (A.C.W.) come together for celebration days on WDP, Fellowship Day and World Community Day.

There were times of reflection as to what we as A.C.W. should be doing in our role and encounter with our Aboriginal sisters, our Asian and migrant refugee sisters and our rural women whose lives of isolation and loneliness was something we had to act on to give wholeness to everyone. The meeting of our Orthodox sisters at the Hellenistic Centre in Perth was very exciting and it was the first time they had entertained churchwomen other than their own and what a joy it was over the years in the world after seeing the filmstrip of the F.L.C. of the first decade of giving and one of them mentioned that "it was like the Parable of the Feeding of the Five Thousand" the generosity of one small boy prompting others in the crowd to share what they had with others."

...to be continued

Our 1980 Winifred Kiek scholar, Dien Sumiyatiningsih, has been awarded a World Vision scholarship which will enable her to continue her theological studies at Ridley College, Melbourne, for 1982. We congratulate her and assure her of our continued love and interest in her activities.

She will be residing this year at the home of Doreen and Jim Strack, 66 Tennyson Street, Moonee Ponds, 3039.

TOURISM AND PROSTITUTION

One of the Commissions at Asian Church Women's Conference is Social Renewal and one focus in this is Prostitution and Tourism. What are women in Australia doing about this? Are we aware that it is one of the side effects of tourism, one of our most expanding industries?

It was brought to my notice recently that in some of our tourist publications Escort Services are blatantly advertised. One particular magazine, available free at motels, hotels, railway stations and information centres, was one such paper about which some people in Victoria decided to protest. As a result of some letter writing I see in their most recent issue that this advertising has been reduced from eight pages of colour ads. to one page of small type. A big improvement.

Look at your own State tourist advertising and see if there is some way in which you can influence the type of advertising in this area.

Olive Ackland.

AUSTRALIA/BURMA PRAYER PARTNERSHIP

It is now necessary to issue a further schedule to give opportunity for you to plan ahead and ensure as many Christian women possible are involved in this ecumenical outreach of prayer.

MONTHLY SCHEDULE

NEW SOUTH WALES	-	APRIL 1982
A.C.T.	-	MAY
QUEENSLAND	-	JUNE
TASMANIA	-	JULY
NORTHERN TERRITORY-		AUGUST
WESTERN AUSTRALIA	-	SEPTEMBER
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	-	OCTOBER
VICTORIA	-	NOVEMBER
WORKING COMMITTEE	-	DECEMBER

In order to maintain interest and furnish a quarterly report, we would be grateful to receive any information concerning your prayer partner activity. Perhaps you may like to add any names of contacts that you, your unit, branch or group may have with Burma and forward to the Convenor,

Isabel Macintyre.