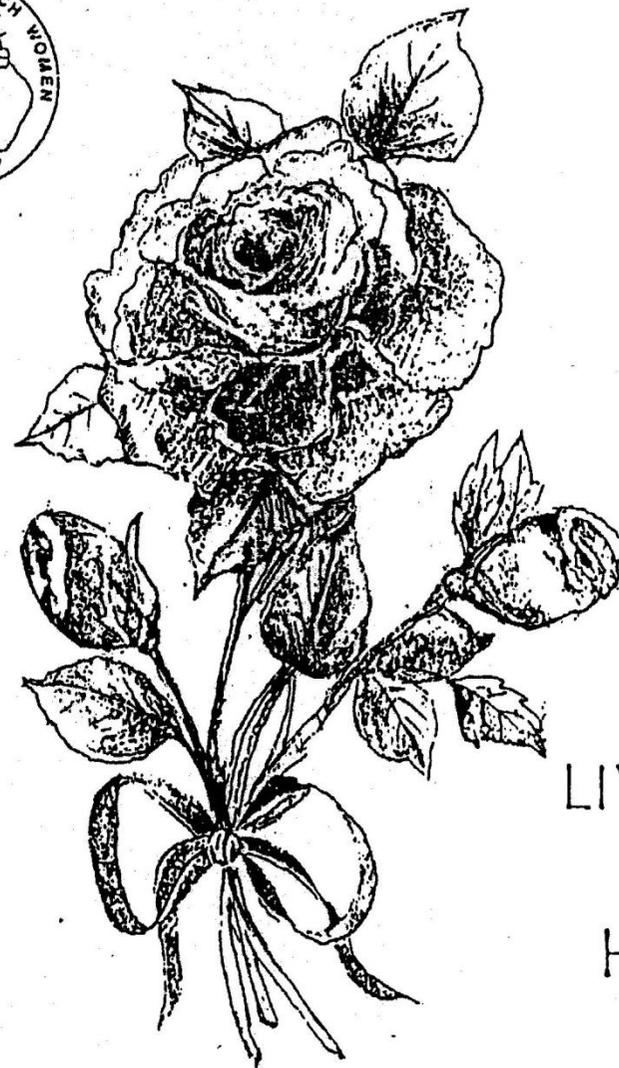


AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN



LIVING
IN
HOPE

WORLD COMMUNITY DAY - 2001

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 Churchwomen. 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 prayers for peace, justice 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.

The **General Offering** from this service is to be divided equally between Asian Church Women’s Conference, with which Australian Church Women is affiliated and which it supports annually, and the 2001 Special Community Day Project – **Talitha Kumi Welfare Centre, Pakistan** (Women Empowering Women to Overcome Violence). The centre trains women to become economically independent; makes them aware of their legal rights and family laws; enables them to learn various skills to be able to market their products; empowers them to overcome violence against women particularly sexual violence and child abuse; nurtures them spiritually and theologically and provides legal aid.

Today’s Order of Service and Cover Design was prepared by the Queensland Unit of Australian Church Women.

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**AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN
WORLD COMMUNITY DAY
Theme: “Living in Hope”**

The bud of the rose is the promise of the full bloom, just as Hope in Christ is the promise of a fulfilled life.

WELCOME AND GREETINGS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Praise the Lord.

Response: *Praise the Lord, O my soul.*

Leader: I will praise the Lord all my life.

I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

Response: *Praise the Lord, O my soul.*

Leader: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord his God,

Response: *Praise the Lord, O my soul.*

Leader: The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion,
for all generations.

Response: *Praise the Lord, O my soul.*

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

All: Creator God, help us to reach across the barriers which divide us, as we follow in the way of Jesus. May we no longer live beside each other as strangers, but through your Holy Spirit find you in our sisters and brothers created in your image... yet different from us... so that together we may show healing love.

HYMN: **AHB 68** Tune: Praise, My Soul.
‘Praise, my soul the king of heaven’.

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

Let us come to God with thanksgiving.

Leader: For things of the world, great and small, the trees, the flowers, the animals and the food You provide.

Response: *Thank you, God.*

Leader: For human life and for common hopes.

Response: *Thank you, God.*

Leader: For wisdom deepened by experience, for time made precious by its passing.

Response: *Thank you, God.*

Leader: For the Holy Spirit who guides our steps and brings us gifts of faith, hope and love.

Response: *We praise you God our Father.*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: Almighty God
You love us, but we have not loved you. You call but we have not listened. We have walked away from neighbours in need, wrapped up in our own concerns. We have gone along with prejudice, greed and injustice rather than speak out. We know that we cannot fool you, Lord, but so many times we fool ourselves by rationalising and excuses. We have been quick to claim our own rights but careless of the rights of others.

God our Father, help us to see ourselves as you see us and in the silence we repent of our sin.....(pause).

Forgive, heal and renew us that we rejoice to do Your Will. In Christ's name we pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father.....

READING:

Matthew 5:1-11

HYMN: **AHB 80**

'Immortal, invisible, God only wise'

Tune: St Denio

MUSICAL ITEM

READING:

Romans 12: 1-16

ADDRESS

"Living in Hope"

HYMN:

AHB 465

Tune: Meinw Hoffnung

'All my hope on God is founded'.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN OFFERING AND PRAYER

During a Musical voluntary all who have FLC gifts are invited to come forward and make their individual offerings and then remain standing together for the prayer of dedication.

All: We bless you, Lord God, creator of the world; from you every good and perfect gift comes.

We ask you to accept these offerings of the Fellowship of the Least Coin, gifts gathered from far and near. We thank you that even by this act of giving, when it is accompanied by prayer, great things can be accomplished.

We ask you to help us to become instruments of peace, justice and reconciliation wherever we are; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

As a visual theme representation, we suggest you use a bowl of coloured flowers (roses if possible). During each Intercessory response place a white flower in the bowl.

INTERCESSIONS

Reader: 1Thessalonians 1:3

Leader: In life's journey people struggle with doubts and fears. We pray for those whose lives are without hope – the homeless, the unemployed, the lonely, the hungry and the poor.

Response: *May they be led to you, the source of all meaning and find in you hope, forgiveness and reconciliation and the Way, the Truth and the Life.*

Leader: We pray for all families, for parents and children. Comfort them when they are beset by doubts and difficulties. May they enjoy each other, honour freedom and forgive as freely as we are all forgiven.

Response: *May they be led to you, the source of all meaning and find in you hope, forgiveness and reconciliation and the Way, the Truth and the Life.*

Leader: Our Father, the God of Peace, we bring before you our broken and divided world. We confess our own part in creating disharmony and division and we ask your forgiveness. We pray that you will arouse the desire for peace in the hearts of the people of all nations and renounce from them the dissatisfaction and anger that lead to conflict and war. Give wisdom to leaders and governments in all parts of the world, and teach them to follow the path of understanding and reconciliation.

Response: *May they be led to you, the source of all meaning and find in you hope, forgiveness and reconciliation and the Way, the Truth and the Life. Amen.*

GENERAL OFFERING AND DEDICATION

(Asian Church Women's Conference and Talitha Kumi Welfare Centre, Pakistan)

All: We bring our gifts to you, Lord God, in gratitude and hope. We ask you to bless the work of the Asian Church Women's Conference, as it brings together women of many nations and cultures, to encourage one another and to be your witness as they serve people in their communities.

We pray that you will bless the Project, which has been chosen to receive funding this year. Grant that the work done will prosper and be a source of blessing to all who receive encouragement, support and help. May they always seek your guidance in their decisions and planning. We ask this in the name of Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

HYMN: AHB 14 Tune Nun Danket
'Now thank we all our God'

DISMISSAL:

LEADER: Go forth into the world in peace:
be of good courage
hold fast that which is good;
render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the faint-hearted;
support the weak;
help the afflicted;
honour all people;
love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

BLESSING:

LEADER: May God, the source of hope, fill you with all joy and peace by means of your faith in Him, so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Talitha Kumi Welfare (Little girl stand up) Centre
(Women Empowering Women to Overcome Violence)

Description of the Project:

Pakistan, culturally, is a male dominated society. Man is considered superior to woman. Woman no matter how highly qualified, trained and well equipped is always looked down upon in the society, in the family and in the Church.

The girl child in the family has a secondary position. There are several proverbs used to belittle her e.g. that the woman's place is under man's feet, that the woman's place is not less than a shoe, male child's birth is celebrated and the girl child's birth is lamented and mother is cursed for bearing a girl child. Generally girls in the families are deprived and do not enjoy the same facilities in the family as their brothers do. She is expected to help the mother in the house, look after her younger brothers and sisters, or to work as domestic help whereas the brothers go to school and enjoy social and cultural life. She is considered a burden on the parents therefore she is either forced to do child labour or falls victim to childhood marriage or even sold in marriage. She is so vulnerable that she hardly knows how to protect her dignity and respect. She is often molested and raped by her own family members. After marriage she falls prey to her in-laws and husband, who maltreat her and ends up having 8-12 children. She usually becomes a victim to stove burning or ends up on the street, brothels or becomes the most vulnerable person in the society.

Vision

The community women of Shabnam Colony Kot Lakhpat, Lahore, envisage a welfare centre for the community. The women of the area wish to bring together women who are either school dropouts or have never had an opportunity to attend school. There are over 20,000 women who have not had any opportunity to develop the talents of their life. Due to the poor economic conditions they work as domestic help where they are not only economically exploited but are also sexually harassed. There is a dire need to give more opportunities to young women so that they can improve their quality of life and live with respect and dignity.

Achievement:

1. Economic Empowerment

Women will be able to learn skills and become economically independent and live with dignity and respect. We believe that economic empowerment is the key to control conflict between man and women. Most of the problems we are facing today are because of economic disparity between man and woman. Man is powerful because he has control over finances. A woman is dependent on man for all her needs. The women will be trained in skills.

Women will be trained in three different areas according to their choice.

Courses will be conducted on:

1. Food preservation: i.e. pickles, jams, juices etc.
2. Cleaning/packing of foodstuffs: i.e. spices, lentils, rice etc.
3. Boutique i.e. tailoring and embroidery
4. Candle making and clergy garments

All materials will be provided. The project will provide a sale point so that women can sell their own products without involving the middleman.

2. Legal Aid

Sense of security and confidence will be developed among men and women especially those who are victims of violence and exploitation. Their cases will be registered with the Centre which will take full responsibility and pursue through police stations, courts and concerned high officials.

3. Seminars

Seminars will be conducted on health awareness, female diseases and general health, legal aid and empowering women to overcome violence.

4. Health

Facilities will be provided to the community. Community doctors will be attending the patients.