

Report of the 21st National Conference



Australian Church Women

Geelong Conference Centre
Victoria

24-28 September 2007



Sharing the Loaf



The Conference was held in the Salvation Army Conference Centre at Geelong, a well appointed venue which proved ideal for our purposes. Situated at the edge of the Botanical Gardens and across the road from a golf course it was a bushland setting, and the landscaping of the site featured Australian native plants. We were within walking distance of Eastern Beach on Corio Bay, but apart from the day we arrived few would have explored this area.

The Conference was the culmination of ACW Victorian Unit's term of office and they had chosen the theme, 'Sharing the Loaf'. New South Wales was well represented with eighteen members in attendance.



Beatrice Kay, Lillian Hodges, Jennifer Pepper, Marie McCann, Brenda Dickinson, Nancy McLaren, Lyn Middleton, Shirley Wells, Pamela Freeman, Jan Harrison, Heather Badgery, Marie Craddock, Nola Dickson, Valma Pethybridge, Edith Ridge, Isabel Hewitt, Carmel Keys, Helen Richardson.

Early morning offered the opportunity to walk, swim, use gym equipment, or to join in group activity comprising gentle exercise, basic tai chi and circle dancing. Sessions followed a fairly traditional pattern but we enjoyed the features it contained. Morning and evening devotions organised by State and Territory Units fitted well into the theme and program, despite the fact that as far as I am aware there is no checking between Units as to what approach they will take.

Bible studies were presented by Dr Merryl Blair, Lecturer in Old Testament at the Churches of Christ Theological College in Melbourne. Her enthusiasm and vitality combined with sound scholarship to take us down familiar paths, but we were asked to see things we had perhaps never considered before.



Over three days we focused on 'Sharing the Loaf of Desperation' based on Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath; 'Sharing the Loaf of God's Overflowing Generosity' on the Miraculous Feeding and the Bread of Life; and 'Sharing the Loaf of the Journey' on the Walk with a Stranger to Emmaus. There was plenty to talk about as we met in groups following Merryl's input.

Two speakers came to share with us their particular projects connected with prayer. Janet Nelson has produced a book titled *Let Us Pray*, the outcome of writing intercessory prayers around the three-year cycle of readings as set down for Sunday liturgy in the *Revised Common Lectionary*. In addition, she has prepared prayers for special occasions and major festivals of the Church.





The second speaker was Betty Carpenter who not only spoke but showed some samples of The Prayer Quilt Ministry. Quilts are made and given to recipients who have been consulted as to whether they would like to receive them. The emphasis is centred on prayer. The layers of the quilts are secured by knots, and each knot is tied with a prayer for the person who is to receive the quilt. A Winifred Kiek Fellowship enabled Shu-Wen Chiang, the Executive Secretary

of Asian Church Women's Conference to be a guest at Conference. National Executive had asked for a quilt to be made, and this was presented to Shu-Wen when Conference members had tied knots with prayers as requested by her.

The Ecumenical Service was a memorable occasion. The Welcome to Land by Vince Ross reminded us of our heritage as Australians, and President Elaine Johnson welcomed us as members of Australian Church Women. We were able to join in the theme chorus written for Conference by Lynette Green, as well as sharing in the chosen hymns and hearing a vocal solo by Debbie Howard. Dr Jill Tabart gave a challenging address, and others contributed as they led prayers, provided music and read the scriptures.

And there were the business sessions. Some of these dealt with remembering those who have died since last National Conference - and NSW had quite a long list – Olga Badger, Rosalyn Bemrose, Olive Beverley, Heather Stevens, Jean Todd and Marjory Verco. A single stem was placed in a vase in memory of each person.



Following the death of Marjory Verco, NSW proposed Edith Ridge as a second National Life Member. The ACT Unit was very happy to endorse our recommendation, and Edith was duly welcomed in this capacity. She joined Olive Ackland, Shirley Brooks, Ailsa Skippen, Juanita Miller, Janet Watts, Shirley Wells, Eunice Reidy, and Dorothy Wright, the other National Life Members attending Conference.



Other business included the report of the Winifred Kiek Trust and the inclusion of twelve more entries for *Honouring Australian Church Women*. From NSW there were Nancy McLaren, Joan Tong and Shirley Wells in recognition of their contribution to ACW as National President 2003-2005, Asian Church Women's Conference and Fellowship of the Least Coin respectively, as well as their commitment to Australian Church Women generally. Photos had been found for two of the earlier entries, leaving only one entry in the book still requiring a photo.



Shu-Wen Chiang delivered a detailed address covering the history of Asian Church Women's Conference and changes that have taken place over the 50 years of its existence. Current concerns include sensitivity to the political situations in some member countries, awareness of gender issues and violence against women, and HIV/AIDS. One of the most disturbing sections of her report related to the destructive denominationalism in Asia, a legacy of Western mission activity which sadly is an ongoing problem. On the brighter side Shu-Wen told of the Post-Tsunami Project in India and Sri Lanka and of the success of students who were supported by funds through ACWC. Through the Christian Conference of Asia a Taiwanese woman, Rev Dominica, has worked in Cambodia in a program called 'Women's Ecumenical Accompaniment for Vision and Empowerment'. She is now to go to East Timor for two years, again with support from CCA, with the rider that if evaluation at the end of this time is positive, ACWC will take care of the program from 2009.



Kaye Viney from Alice Springs was accompanied by two Aboriginal women from Hermannsburg, Clara Inkamala and Noreen Hudson. Despite voice problems they were still able to sing for us in Aranda and Pitjantjatjara, and we tried our best to read and sing some short songs with them. Clara is a potter at Hermannsburg and some of her art works are illustrated here. It was somewhat ironical that as some ACW members resisted strongly when they were encouraged to make use of computers and internet, Clara in a dismissive way referred people to her website to find out more about her and her art and craft.



This extract from Clara's website is instructional.

"Aranda people like to learn and work in new things. My grandmother learnt to crochet for the church, my uncles learnt watercolour painting, my grandmother Clara was Albert Namatjira's half sister (they had the same mother). And now, in this generation, we are first in pottery and we are traveling the world."

Most reports to Conference were as in the Working Papers, with the opportunity for presenters to comment briefly if they wished. They make interesting reading, but I make no attempt here to tell of their content.

The launch of the much awaited Australian Church Women website was a triumph for those who have worked for years to bring it into being, and credit must go to Brenda Dickinson for her determination to make it happen. We congratulate her!

The work of the Victorian National Executive on ACW finances resulted in a number of resolutions, and it is to be hoped that there is greater clarity for future treasurers. We were interested to learn that the Auditor advised the reversal of the Victorian National Executive with regards to GST. The NSW Unit had proposed a change in the name of Social Justice Issues Convener to Social Issues Convener in an effort to encourage Units to tackle tasks within their capability, issues that would meet needs and not be divisive. It must be said that the response from the floor was rather fierce and the motion was lost.

There was an excursion which took us to an Aboriginal gallery and souvenir shop and then to Queenscliff on Wednesday afternoon. The weather was not kind, but it was interesting to see something of the countryside beyond Geelong, and to indulge in a cup of coffee in the brief time we had at Queenscliff.



The Conference Dinner was a 'dress up' affair, a meal where we enjoyed being waited on. Food was a notch up from the everyday, rather more like a function. The celebration marked the 21st National Conference - with a 'fake cake' that needed no cutting. We were also entertained by a young woman who sang for us.





Iris Bray, Joy Morley, Barbara Lacy, Una Birtchnell, Donna Bryan, Marian Welford, Beth Skilbeck, Joan Maher, Lola Adam
Front: Eunice Reidy, Elaine Johnson, Anne Murray



Jean Thomson, Jacqueline Hipwell, Helen Raymond, Margaret Lawton, Helen Lloyd, Jan Abrahamffy, Constance Aronsen, Fran Moss, Donna Bryan
Absent: Angela Devlin, Judith-Ann Sjostedt, Eileen Holley

The Induction of ACT National Executive 2007-2009 allowed Conference to meet those who are taking office. The inability of Queensland to commit to accepting the following National was a factor in Fran Moss who is now resident in Brisbane becoming the Special Days Convener. We express our thanks for a job well done to Victoria, and offer best wishes to ACT for their term of office.

The Conference had enabled the renewing of contact with people and the meeting of new. During the closing ceremony retiring National President Major Elaine Johnson gathered together the main thoughts of the conference and the National Executive's term of office in her final message on the theme *Sharing the Loaf*. Major Nancy McLaren, immediate past National President, spoke in appreciation of the work of the National Executive over the past two years and for the successful conference. This was followed by a lovely time of *passing the peace* as the ladies moved around the conference room to share with each other in this way. In what is almost becoming an ACW Conference tradition, the session ended with the united singing of the song ***Majesty!***



Past National Presidents: Elaine Johnson, Nancy McLaren, Aileen Mortensen, Eunice Reidy, Shirley Brooks, Lorraine Davis, Marie McCann, Lee Edwards



Past National Secretaries: Barbara Lacy, Isabel Hewitt, Maureen Clark, Margaret Florence, Jean Thomson, Helen Richardson



Past National Treasurers: Ailsa Skippen, Dorothy Wright, Helen Lloyd, Nola Dickson, Iris Bray

Isabel Hewitt
Secretary NSW State Unit Inc

with thanks to Lyn Middleton
for her assistance

IN REMEMBRANCE



Australian Church Women
National Conference
24 - 28 September, 2007

*"Joy is the promise that the tears of
yesterday will be changed into the blessings
of tomorrow".*

Since we last met in Conference, a number of our friends have passed into God's eternal presence. Like the beautiful flowers in our gardens, these women have brought a fragrance to our lives, and the life and work of Australian Church Women.

We pause to remember them and give thanks to God for their lives.

Australian Capital Territory	May Goudie
New South Wales	Olga Badger Rosalyn Bemrose Olive Beverley Heather Stevens Jean Todd Marjory Verco
Queensland	Major Miriam Pratt Ina Collard
South Australia	Dorothy Chapman Margaret Draper
Tasmania	Rev. Deirdre Hunter
Victoria	Dorothy Fry Olive Keast Freda Morris Margaret Watson AM

"After the Rain"

The garden after the life giving rain,
Is so fresh and green, so alive again.
Softness, tenderness is all around,
Plants glisten and move with hardly a sound.
Wispish and delicate, heads lifted high,
Slowly to turn to the blue of the sky.
Feathery fronds and tendrils so fine,
Sway in the breeze to sparkle and shine.
Petals unravelling their pure fragrance,
Brings peace and tranquillity, as a bird sweetly sings.
Dewdrops on branches, twinkling in sunlight,
So gently they fall, like silver in moonlight.
Wandering quietly from place to place,
Flowers have a newness to each rain-washed face.
Beauty and stillness, contentment again,
In God's beautiful garden, after the rain.

PAT KERR

Jesus said "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me though he die, yet shall he live."

We hear that word, Father God, and into your hands we commend the lives of these dear ones, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Hymn

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Riches I scorn and the world's empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Thou and Thou only the first in my heart;
High King of Heaven, my treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, after victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Dallan Forgaill (trs. from the Irish by Mary E Byrne, versified by Eleanor H Hull) Public Domain

Prayer of Intercession

Loving God, create within us and among us the deep desire for peace.
Help the leaders of the world's nations to find ways of resolving disputes and tensions that do not lead to the violence of war.
Lord, hear our prayer.

All: Lord hear us.

Encourage our communities to live in peace. Help us to protect our children from violence in the home. Encourage men and women to control anger and negotiate disputes without violence.
Lord, hear our prayer.

All: Lord hear us.

Loving God, may this conference help us all to grow in trust and knowledge of each other that we may truly share Jesus' love, in concern for all members of our communities, here and throughout the world we share.
Lord, hear our prayer.

All: Lord hear us.

We ask your blessing on those of us gathered here, our families and friends left behind who support us and the Church communities, which are our base. Grant us peaceful sleep, secure in Jesus' love.
Lord, hear our prayer.

All: Lord hear us.

Amen

Blessing

Call to Worship

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God,
who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith for ever;
who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.
The Lord watches over the strangers;

Psalms 146:5-9a (NRSV)

Prayer of Invocation

Loving Creator, you gather us together as your people in this place.
Create among us a new kind of love that as bearers of Jesus' love we may nurture each other. Open our hearts and minds to new visions of the possibilities of shared life among us, bringing new hope in Jesus' love for all humanity. Amen

Hymn

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord,
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek,
So much to be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light;
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Chorus

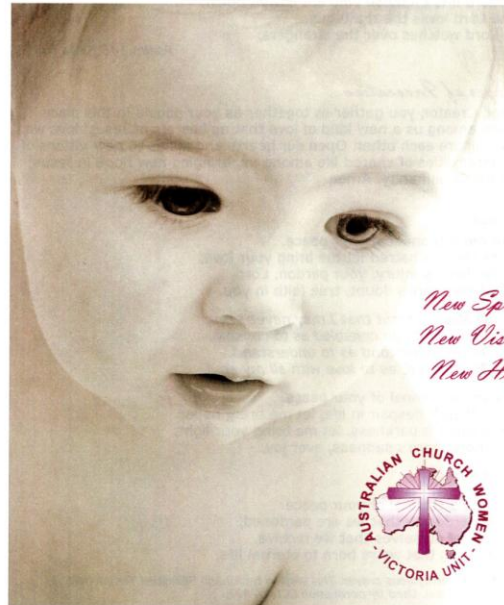
Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Based on an anonymous prayer. This version by Johann Sebastian Templehoff, arr. Betty Pulkingham. Used by permission CCLI 97892.

Devotions

24 September 2007

*Australian Church Women
21st National Conference*



*New Spirit
New Vision
New Hope*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We thank you, loving God for the great gift of Jesus.
We thank you that we gather here as women who would serve you and share your love.
We give you thanks for safe travelling.
We give you thanks for quiet spaces for reflection.
We give you thanks for the opportunity to share our lives in this conference.
Help us to discover new ways of being your people.
We thank you in Jesus' name for the privilege of being servants for the sake of the world.
Amen

Scripture Readings

I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
and delight in my people;
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it,
or the cry of distress.
No more shall there be in it
an infant that lives but a few days,
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;
for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth,
and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.
They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
They shall not build and another inhabit;
they shall not plant and another eat;
for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,
and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
They shall not labour in vain,
or bear children for calamity;
for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—
and their descendants as well.

Isaiah 65:19-23 (NRSV)

Selected verses from Matthew 25

Meditation— "The Isaiah Vision"



*New Spirit
New Vision
New Hope*

Closing Hymn

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.

Chorus:

*Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church
Gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us
Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
Shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter people are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
Walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people,
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
Making your kingdom come.

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Benediction

Music Prelude

Mrs Maureen Daniels

Procession of Banners

Welcome

Major Elaine Johnson

Acknowledgement of the Land

Vince Ross

Call to Worship

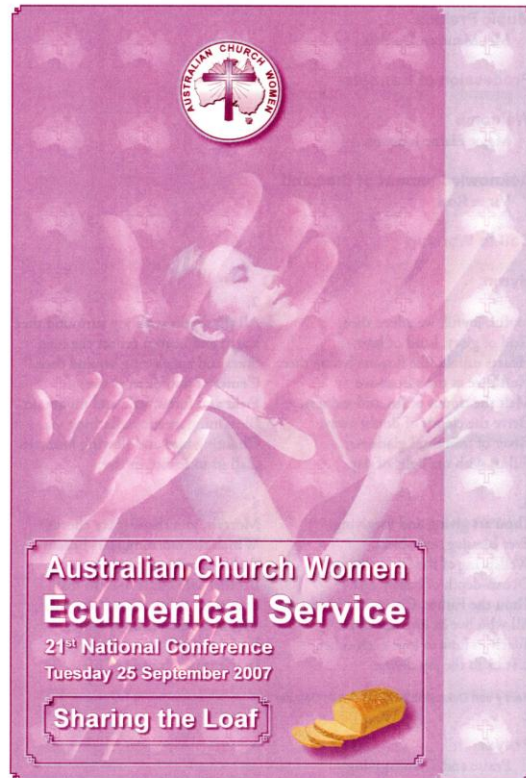
Hymn

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1.
Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee,
Hail thee as the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
Drive the clouds of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day. | 2.
All thy works with joy surround thee,
Earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee,
Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Bloss'ning meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in thee. |
| 3.
Thou art giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest.
Thou the Father, Christ our brother--
All who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine. | 4.
Mortals, join the mighty chorus
Which the morning stars began;
Father-love is reigning o'er us,
Brother-love binds man to man.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music lifts us sunward
In the triumph song of life. |

Henry van Dyke (1852-1933) Public Domain

Prayer

Praise and Thanksgiving



Welcome to Guests

Response

Rev. Dr Kevin Yelverton - Inner City Church Association Representative

Scripture Reading

John 6:32-40 - Mrs Ronnie Palmer

Responsive Prayers

Confession and Intercession - Rev. Marian Welford

Vocal Solo

Mrs Debbie Howard

Conference Theme Chorus

Break the bread, share the loaf.
There are millions waiting to be fed.
Break the bread, share the hope, share the loaf.

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Greeting

Ms Shu-Wen Chiang

Scripture Reading

Luke 7:36-50 - Mrs Barbara Lacy OAM

Vocal Solo

Mrs Debbie Howard

Introduction of Guest Speaker Dr Jill Tabart

Mrs Eunice Reidy

Address

Dr Jill Tabart

CLOSING PRAYER: (ALL)
 Shirley - *Responsive Lord's Prayer*

Leader: Our Father Which art in Heaven
Response: Help me to believe this day that there is a power to lift me up which is stronger than all things that hold me down.

Leader: Hallowed be thy name
Response: Help me to be sensitive to what is beautiful, and responsive to what is good, so that day by day I may grow more sure of the holiness of life in which I want to trust.

Leader: Thy Kingdom come
Response: Help me to be quick to see, and ready to encourage, whatever brings the better meaning of God into that which otherwise might be the common round of the uninspired day.

Leader: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Response: Help me to believe that the ideals of the spirit are not a far off dream but a power to command my loyalty and direct my life here on a real earth.

Leader: Give us this day our daily bread.
Response: Open the way for me to earn an honest living; but let me never forget the needs of others, and make me want only that benefit for myself which will also be their gain.

Leader: And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.
Response: Make me patient and sympathetic with the shortcomings of others, especially those I love, and keep me sternly watchful of my own. Keep my eyes lifted to the highest, so that I may be humbled; and seeing the failures of others be forgiving because I know how much there is of which I need to be forgiven.

Leader: And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil
Response: Let me not go carelessly this day within the reach of any evil I cannot resist, but if in the path of duty I must go where temptation is, give me strength of spirit to meet it without fear.

Leader: For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.
Response: And so in my heart may I carry the knowledge that Thy greatness is above me and around me, and that Thy grace through Jesus Christ my Master is sufficient for all my needs.

All: Amen.

BIBLE READING:

John Chapter 6 Verses 1 - 13 (Dramatized)

READER:

Bible Reading and Devotion from Smith Wigglesworth Devotional Book entitled "The Bread of Life".
 John Chapter 6 Verses 32 - 33

SING:

"Spirit of God, thou art the Bread of Heaven" 603 Together in Song.

Verse: Spirit of God, thou art the Bread of Heaven.

- (1) Come for my need in Jesus Christ the Lord.
 Broken in him whose life was freely given
 In deathless love he only could afford.
- (2) Thou art the bread that satisfies for ever
 The inward health that overcomes disease.
 The love that lives through death subsiding never
 My secret fortress and my soul's release.
- (3) O bread from God, I choose Thee now with gladness
 Though sweet the taste of earthly gain may be,
 My spirit pines in poverty and sadness
 Unless my sustenance be found in thee.
- (4) Lord God I come, thy life in mine is waking
 What e're I am I bring into thy care,
 Thy loving hands will bless me in breaking
 Of bread thou gavest and I long to share.

READER:

Our God provides all our needs
 Matthew Chapter 6 Verses 31 - 34

**AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN
 CONFERENCE 2007**

**MORNING DEVOTION
 TUESDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2007**

TASMANIAN UNIT



GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTION

READER:

The night has passed and the day lies open before us, let us pray with one heart and one mind.

PRAYER - ALL

Heavenly Father as we rejoice in the gift of a new day, so may the light of your presence set our hearts on fire with love for you so that our joy and in knowing Jesus as our Lord and saviour will be a witness to those whom we meet today. Amen

SING:

"I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart" 139
 I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart
 I will enter his courts with praise
 I will say this is the day that the Lord has made
 I will rejoice for he has made me glad.

He has made me glad, He has made me glad,
 I will rejoice for he has made me glad.
 He has made me glad, He has made me glad,
 I will rejoice for he has made me glad.



SING:

"Seek Ye first" 96

- (1) Seek ye first the kingdom of God
 And His righteousness
 And all these things shall be added unto you,
 Allelu, Alleluia
- (2) Man shall not live by bread alone
 But by every word
 That proceeds from the mouth of God
 Allelu, Alleluia
- (3) Ask and it shall be given unto you
 Seek and you shall find,
 Knock and it shall be opened unto you
 Allelu, Alleluia

OUR FATHER

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

WE GIVE YOU THANKS, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY FOR BRINGING US SAFELY TO THE EVENING OF THIS DAY. WE HUMBLY ACKNOWLEDGE HOW GOOD AND GENTLE YOU ARE. YOU SHOWED YOUR GOODNESS WHEN YOU GAVE US BREAD FROM HEAVEN AND THAT BREAD CONTAINED ALL GOODNESS. AMEN

HYMN:

EVERY MORNING THAT BREAKS (THE SOURCE 1193)

MARK ALTROGGE & BOB KAUFMAN 2002 - CCLI 97892

EV'RY MORNING THAT BREAKS THERE ARE MERCIES ANEW;
EV'RY BREATH THAT I TAKE IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS PROVED,
AND AT THE END OF EACH DAY WHEN MY LABOURS ARE THROUGH,
I WILL SING OF YOUR MERCIES ANEW.

WHEN I'VE FALLEN AND STRAYED THERE WERE MERCIES ANEW;
FOR YOU SOUGHT ME IN LOVE AND MY HEART YOU PURSUED.
IN THE FACE OF MY SIN, LORD, YOU NEVER WITHDREW,
SO I SING OF YOUR MERCIES ANEW.

AND YOUR MERCIES, THEY WILL NEVER END;
FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS THEY REMAIN.
AND WHEN THIS WORLD'S BEAUTY HAS PASSED AWAY
YOUR MERCIES WILL BE UNCHANGED.

AND WHEN THE STORMS SWIRL AND RAGE THERE ARE MERCIES ANEW;
IN AFFLICTION AND PAIN YOU WILL CARRY ME THROUGH,
AND AT THE END OF MY DAYS WHEN YOUR THRONE FILLS MY VIEW,
I WILL SING OF YOUR MERCIES ANEW

OPENING PRAYER:

I AM THE LIVING BREAD WHICH CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, WHOEVER EATS THIS BREAD WILL LIVE FOREVER. BECAUSE THERE IS ONE BREAD WE WHO ARE MANY ARE ONE BODY, FOR WE ALL PARTAKE OF THE ONE BREAD.

ANTIPHON 1:

THE LORD IS MERCIFUL; HE GIVES FOOD TO THOSE WHO FEAR HIM TO MAKE THEM REMEMBER HIS WONDERS.

PSALM 110 (111)

I WILL THANK THE LORD WITH ALL MY HEART IN THE MEETING OF THE JUST AND THEIR ASSEMBLY. GREAT ARE THE WORKS OF THE LORD; TO BE PONDERED BY ALL WHO LOVE THEM.

MAJESTIC AND GLORIOUS HIS WORK, HIS JUSTICE STANDS FIRM FOR EVER. HE MAKES US REMEMBER HIS WONDERS. THE LORD IS COMPASSION AND LOVE.

HE GIVES FOOD TO THOSE WHO FEAR HIM; KEEPS HIS COVENANT EVER IN MIND. HE HAS SHOWN HIS MIGHT TO HIS PEOPLE BY GIVING THEM THE LANDS OF THE NATIONS.

HIS WORKS ARE JUSTICE AND TRUTH; HIS PRECEPTS ARE ALL OF THEM SURE, STANDING FIRM FOR EVER AND EVER; THEY ARE MADE IN UPRIGHTNESS AND TRUTH.

HE HAS SENT DELIVERANCE TO HIS PEOPLE AND ESTABLISHED HIS COVENANT FOR EVER. HOLY HIS NAME, TO BE FEARED.

TO FEAR THE LORD IS THE FIRST STAGE OF WISDOM; ALL WHO DO SO PROVE THEMSELVES WISE. HIS PRAISE SHALL LAST FOR EVER!

THE LORD IS MERCIFUL; HE GIVES FOOD TO THOSE WHO FEAR HIM TO MAKE THEM REMEMBER HIS WONDERS.

ANTIPHON 2:

THE LORD HAS ESTABLISHED PEACE FOR HIS CHURCH; HE FEEDS US WITH FINEST WHEAT.

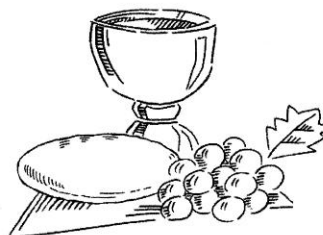
PSALM 147

O PRAISE THE LORD. JERUSALEM! SION, PRAISE YOUR GOD!

HE HAS STRENGTHENED THE BARS OF YOUR GATES; HE HAS BLESSED THE CHILDREN WITHIN YOU. HE ESTABLISHED PEACE ON YOUR BORDERS; HE FEEDS YOU WITH FINEST WHEAT.



A Prayer at Evening



TUESDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2007

HE SENDS OUT HIS WORD TO THE EARTH AND SWIFTLY RUNS HIS COMMAND. HE SHOWERS DOWN SNOW WHITE AS WOOL; HE SCATTERS HOAR-FROST LIKE ASHES.

HE HURLS DOWN HAILSTONES LIKE CRUMBS. THE WATERS ARE FROZEN AT HIS TOUCH; HE SENDS FORTH HIS WORD AND IT MELTS THEM: AT THE BREATH OF HIS MOUTH THE WATERS FLOW.

HE MAKES HIS WORD KNOWN TO JACOB, TO ISRAEL HIS LAWS AND DECREES. HE HAS NOT DEALT THUS WITH OTHER NATIONS; HE HAS NOT TAUGHT THEM HIS DECREES.

THE LORD HAS ESTABLISHED PEACE FOR HIS CHURCH; HE FEEDS US WITH FINEST WHEAT.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Cor 11:23-25

THIS IS WHAT I RECEIVED FROM THE LORD, AND IN TURN PASSED ON TO YOU; THAT ON THE SAME NIGHT THAT HE WAS BETRAYED, THE LORD JESUS TOOK SOME BREAD, AND THANKED GOD FOR IT AND BROKE IT. AND HE SAID "THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS FOR YOU. DO THIS AS A MEMORIAL OF ME. IN THE SAME WAY HE TOOK THE CUP AFTER SUPPER, AND SAID "THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN MY BLOOD. WHENEVER YOU DRINK IT, DO THIS AS A MEMORIAL OF ME".

INTERCESSIONS:

LORD JESUS CHRIST, MANNA FROM HEAVEN, YOU MAKE INTO ONE ALL WHO SHARE THE ONE BREAD. GRANT PEACE TO ALL WHO BELIEVE IN YOU.

RESPONSE: LORD GIVE US THE BREAD OF ETERNAL LIFE

LORD JESUS CHRIST, HEAVENLY PHYSICIAN, YOU GIVE ETERNAL REMEDY AND THE PLEDGE OF RESURRECTION TO THOSE WHO EAT YOUR BREAD.

RESPONSE: LORD GIVE US THE BREAD OF ETERNAL LIFE

LORD JESUS, GUIDE LEADERS AND GOVERNMENTS. GIVE THEM WISDOM AND INTEGRITY.

RESPONSE: LORD IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER

LORD, WHO IS THE SOURCE OF FREEDOM, BRING FREEDOM TO THOSE IN CAPTIVITY OF MIND AND BODY, COURAGE AND STRENGTH TO THE YOUNG, PATIENT TOLERANCE TO THOSE NO LONGER YOUNG.

RESPONSE: LORD IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER

RECEIVE THE DEPARTED INTO YOUR ETERNAL KINGDOM AND SUSTAIN OUR HOPE TO BE WITH YOU FOREVER.

RESPONSE: LORD IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER



Psalm 23—The Message Bible

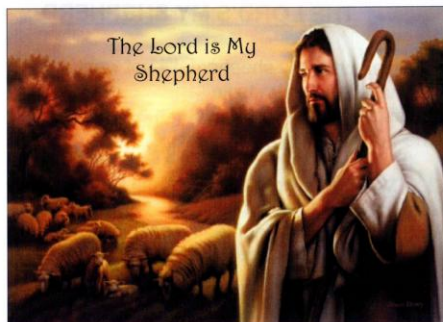
God, my shepherd! I don't need a thing
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
You find me quiet pools to drink from.

True to your word you let me catch my breath
And send me in the right direction.

Even when the way goes through Death Valley
I'm not afraid when you walk at my side
Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure.

You serve me a six course dinner right in front of my enemies
You revive my drooping head, my cup brims with blessing.

Your beauty and love chase after me everyday of my life
I'm back home in the house of God for the rest of my life.



Australian Church Women's Conference

Geelong

September 2007

Devotions led by the
Alice Springs Unit

THE LORD'S MY SHEPHERD

1. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green, he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.
2. My soul he doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
E'en for his own name's sake.
3. Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill,
For thou art with me, and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.
4. My table thou hast furnished
In presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows
5. Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me;
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.



Scottish Psalter, 1650
The Salvation Army Song Book
CCLI No. 49132

KING OF LOVE

1. The King of love my shepherd is
Whose goodness faileth never
I nothing lack if I am his
And he is mine forever
2. Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul he leadeth
And where the verdant pastures flow
With food celestial feedeth
3. Perverse and foolish oft I strayed
But yet in love he sought me
And on his shoulder gently laid
And home rejoicing brought me
4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill
With thee dear Lord beside me
Thy rod and staff my comfort still
Thy cross before to guide me
5. And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never
Good shepherd may I sing thy praise
Within thy house for ever



Henry Williams Baker (1821-77)
The Salvation Army Song Book
CCLI No. 49132

Afterward Gleanings from ACW SA Unit members: for post conference reflection!

Reflection at the end of the day:

Some simple questions to ask ourselves at the end of each day:

For what am I most thankful?

Least thankful?

When did I feel most fully myself?

Least myself?

- * The Widow of Zarephath: Kings 17:8-16 (Pat)
- * Ruth and Boaz: Ruth 2 (Judy, Aileen)
- * The Feeding of the 5000: John 6:1-21 (Margaret)

* "Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear, and do not refuse to help your own relatives." Isaiah 58:7b, GNB: (Maureen)

And Jesus said unto them, "I am the bread of life." John 6: 35a, KJV: (Dorothy)

* Give a hungry woman a bread roll and she'll eat for a day - teach her how to bake her own, and she'll never go hungry. : (adapted) (Shirley)

- * "I will bless her with abundant provisions." Psalm 132:15a, NIV
- * "Let us not make a mistake—that the hunger is only for a piece of bread. The hunger of today is so much greater for love. To be wanted, to be loved, to be cared for, to be somebody." Mother Teresa (Judith)

"May God's window of love
open for you every morning
and
Jesus' arms enfold you
every night.
(Judy)

Cover: *Leaves and Fishes*, 2003, oil on panel 36 x 24 in
Nicole Maynard New York Used with permission



**Australian Church Women
National Conference
Geelong 2007**

Wednesday evening 26 September 2007

ACW SA Unit Inc



The Lord's Prayer: Janet Mead

"Granny Davis"

Baker's Dozen

Prayer

Lord God, through faith in your Son Jesus, we are knit together as one; you know our needs before we ask.

We pray for all ACW members; we thank you for the National Executive, who have shared the loaf of their time, talents and energy so as to make this conference successful.

Most loving God bless and keep them in your care

We pray for the farmers and their families watching their crops being destroyed through drought, flood, or fire.

Most loving God bless and keep them in your care

We pray for women around the world, who are hungry and struggling to feed their children.

Most loving God bless and keep them in your care

We pray for women living in the midst of war, or political unrest; for all people enduring the effects of natural disasters.

Most loving God bless and keep them in your care

Jesus fed thousands of people with seemingly little effort.

Most loving God, thank you for opportunities to change lives by becoming generous stewards of the resources you first give to us. Amen.
(Pat, Anne, Margaret)

Song: Eternal God SASB 5

Eternal God, our song we raise, in thankful, overflowing praise,
For men of faith whose power was thine, whose love no barrier
could confine;
They humbly offered Christ their bread, and lo, the multitudes were
fed!

O may no longing of our own obscure the path by Jesus shown!
We would not thirst for earth's reward and lose the blessing of the
Lord;
His cup of pain and grief and strife that yieldeth up the gift of life.

Our great redeemer liveth still, His love sustains us in thy will;
Because he conquered, we shall win His cross before, his joy
within.
Our cheerful banners are unfurled, for Christ has overcome the
world.

Catherine Baird (1895-1984)

Benediction:

I do want you to experience the blessing that issues from
generosity. And now I have it all—and keep getting more! The gifts
you sent were more than enough, like a sweet-smelling sacrifice
roasting on the altar, filling the air with fragrance, pleasing God.
You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his
generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus.
Our God and Father abounds in glory that just pours out into
eternity. Receive and experience the amazing grace of the Master,
Jesus Christ, deep, deep within yourselves

Philippians 4: 17b, 18-20, 23: (The Message) (Judith)

"Granny Davis"

Some companies might claim to be the 'best thing since sliced bread' but Associated British Foods (ABF) is sliced bread. ABF introduced sliced bread in the United Kingdom during 1930's.

The first sliced bread is said to have been produced into Australia in 1939 when Henry Gough hand-sliced bread for his customers in Sydney.

"Queen" of sliced bread, actress Myrtle Woods died at the age of 101 in Melbourne in May 2001. (Myrtle has been recognised as the world's oldest performer by the Guinness Book of Records.)

Better known to a generation as "Granny Davis," the actress played the part of the sliced bread marketeer for 17 years from 1963.

It was her role at 63, as "Granny Davis" that won hearts of all ages.

"Into her 90's she was still taking aerobics classes, as though she was young. At her 101st birthday she was high kicking while dancing," said Bert Newton at her funeral.

Her photograph appeared on millions of bread wrappers and her live commercials on Channel 9's 'In Melbourne Tonight' closed with the slogan, spoken with Granny integrity "Granny's bake makes grannies great!"

By slicing bread, the loaf seems to go further and more are fed.

Australian Church Women South Australian Unit Inc

1936-2006



**Praise God from whom all
blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here
below;
praise him above, ye heavenly
host:**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost.**

*traditional hymn - words by thomas
ken - 1674*

Baker's Dozen

Each of us is invited to receive God's abundant over-flowing love. We are invited to sit in his presence celebrating the life giving bread that is more than enough! More than enough to release us from what ever it is that weighs us down.

There was a little girl living in a neighborhood that had a bread man who came to the house every Saturday morning. He sold bread, doughnuts and other pastries out of the back of a panel truck. Usually her mother only bought their weekly bread supply, but on one Saturday morning she splurged on a dozen doughnuts. And much to their delight and surprise, the bread man gave a bag with 13 doughnuts rather than 12. They were happy that there would be more than enough to go around in their quite large family.

It was years before the girl found out that this wasn't just an error on the bread man's part; he meant to give them thirteen. A baker's dozen!

Many of us remember this now seldom seen tradition of the baker throwing in an extra doughnut or bun whenever someone bought a dozen. What's the meaning of that extra doughnut? Is it a sign of the generosity of the baker? For that family being on the receiving end of the baker's dozen it was an extra blessing from God! It was a sign of God's generosity!

God's love is like the Baker's Dozen blessing us with more than enough.

Celebrating with thanksgiving

**70th ACW SA Unit Inc
70th Community Concern
Events
50th Asian Church Women's
Conference
50th Fellowship of the Least
Coin
40th Winifred Kiek
Scholarship
20th Jubilee 150 Trust
Anniversaries**



May we raise greater consciousness of the need for justice in providing education and meaningful work for those who live without these necessities.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy.*

May we help make this a "lucky country" for all Australians by working to give everyone access to the earth's abundance.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy.*

May human relationships be nourished by mutual cooperation.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy.*

May justice be done in our society by providing safe, clean and renewable energy.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy.*

In all of this may we, in the spirit of Micah, walk humbly with our God.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy. Amen.*

AN AUSTRALIAN HYMN:

"God of gum tree and of quandong" ..

PRAYER:

God of Mercy, in you, past, present and future are brought together in one great hope. Renew our faith in you, so that the past may not hinder us, the present overwhelm us, or the future frighten us. Our nation has millions of years embedded in the dreamtime and you have brought us this far. Continue to lead us so that we may carry your message of mercy and justice in our hearts. *Amen.*

BLESSING:

May the life force of the Southern Cross shine on and through us.

Amen.

May the strength of our diversity unite us.

Amen.

May the mercy of our Creator and Sustainer penetrate deep into our hearts and minds.

Amen.

Taken from the Supplement to Morning and Evening Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Worship begins with praise to God. Today we want to praise Him for our country, Australia.

We pause for a moment to visualise our 'land' – its shape and colour, places of isolation; the places where it is scorched, fertile, sandy, its vast plains and deserts, its rocky mountains and its surrounding oceans and seas; and the Southern Cross shining over all.

Let us pray: Creator of all that is, strengthen us in love, root us in your Mercy, as we give glory to You, Source of Life, Living Word and Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

HYMN: 'Holy Ground'

Presentation of symbols of Australia

PRAYER

Creator of life, today we take time to remember that we are a diverse people with a deep fountain of stories and resources. We pray that the stories of the land, of the first Australians, of the newcomer, of Australian Church Women, will be heard, will be enriched by the telling and will sustain us on our journey. This we ask in faith.

Amen.

PSALM:

An Australian Canticle of Praise inspired by Psalm 24

Act justly before God who will respond with mercy and delight.

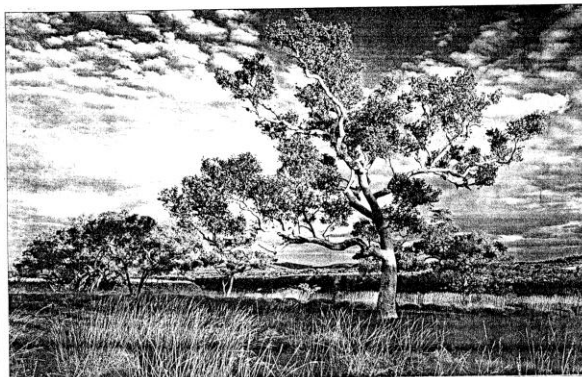
This land is God's, and all that is in it, the red earth and rainforests, the oceans and mountains. All that dwells on this island continent belongs to God.



AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN

Conference Devotions

Western Australian Unit 2007



Loving God, you are Creator of all that is and we praise you for creatures unique to this great south land – fish and birds, animals and plants, flowers and trees in their diverse kinds.

For the ancient peoples of this land who maintained its sacredness for centuries.

For convicts and settlers who bore the hardships of wrestling with a harsh environment.

For migrants down through the years who have provided a diversity of culture that enriches an already bounteous land.

For those who seek to enter our country in search of freedom, safety and new hope.

For our poets and writers who give us maps of meaning, for artists who show us deeper levels of seeing than we could ever know alone, for musicians who paint the beauty of sound and impress it on our open ears.

For prophets who show us what is possible and where we need to change.

For those with clean hands and pure hearts who do justice and act with mercy, who have integrity and do not waver when strong winds blow. For all of these, Creator God we praise and thank you this day.

READING: Micah 6 : 8

This then is what Yahweh asks of you:

To live justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with your God.

INTERCESSIONS:

Mercy goes beyond the requirements of justice and today we renew our hope in the future of our country.

That we may acknowledge with respect the dignity of all persons.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy.*

In a spirit of love and tenderness may we answer the invitation of Micah and renew our belief in the sacredness of the earth and the sanctity of all life.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy.*

May we bring greater awareness of the justice needed to provide adequate housing and food for all.

- *God of our wide brown land, hear us in your mercy.*

Commitment of Australian Church Women:

Leader: Lord, you have never waited for us to become perfect before showing us the measure of your love, or commissioning us to serve you in our world.

All: We dare to believe you are always calling us to a new venture; pointing us to new horizons in ministry, and will never cease to do so.

Leader: This is a task, Lord, we cannot do alone; we need you as our guide, and the love and support of each other.

All: On this occasion we therefore claim the privilege of committing ourselves anew to your service, through Australian Church Women.

Leader: With your help we will bear one another's burdens, and love our neighbour as ourself.

All: We will accept disappointment and frustration, opposition and rejection and not lose heart.

Leader: We will love your world as you love it, bring friendship into our work, and courage into our politics.

All: We will bring freshness into our homes, excitement into our studies, and adventure into our church.

Leader: Stir into flame the gifts you have given us, and the faith to use them without reserve, that your Spirit may be a force of cohesion in our community, of enthusiasm and happiness in our work, and our courage and consolation when times are tough.

All: As your disciples, make us know the freedom to move into the unknown and untried, to see the opportunities of the new day, and to serve our present age with compassion, imagination, and courage.

All: Lord, be with us until we have done our part and share in your joy.

Amen

Presentation of President's Bible

Presentation of Badges and Sharing of a Promise

Prayer of Dedication

Devotions – Incoming National Executive

Australian Church Women National Conference 2007



Installation & Dedication

"Sharing the Loaf"

Introduction:

Let us remind ourselves of the Aims of Australian Church Women:

To unite Christian women from those Churches and Christian Communities which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and commit themselves to the glory of the One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

To promote co-operation, understanding and reconciliation between men and women in 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 women of different denominations to worship, study and serve together.

To encourage fellowship, service and understanding nationally and internationally.

Let us sing our Conference Theme Song:

Share the Loaf, Share the Loaf,
There are millions waiting to be fed.
Break the bread, share the hope, share the loaf.

As Christ shared the loaf with thousands
They were fed and satisfied.
As we share the Christ with others
Feed and bless us nation-wide.
Break the bread, share the hope, share the loaf.

God has mercy, God is faithful
When we share Christ we share hope.
Bread gives life, sustains and strengthens.
Jesus is the Bread of Life.
Break the bread, share the hope, share the loaf.

Introduction of Incoming National Executive:

Leader:

We give thanks to God for the women from ACT Unit who have accepted the role of National Executive for 2007-2009.

We acknowledge their different personalities, gifts and talents being offered in service to the Lord Jesus Christ through Australian Church Women.

We thank God for their willingness to accept the challenge of using these gifts, and giving their time and energy to serve as National Executive.

Leader to Incoming National Executive:

Recognising the gifts you have been given by the Holy Spirit to offer to the Church, the members of Australian Church Women have appointed you to be the National Executive for the next two years.

During this time you will have the practical and prayerful support of members of Australian Church Women throughout Australia, and the knowledge that when God calls people to a task He also equips.

Do you accept and welcome this responsibility, and commit yourself to faithfully carry out the task to which Christ has called you?

Incoming National Executive:

We will, trusting in God for His guidance and strength and relying on His grace.

Leader to Members of Australian Church Women:

As members of State and Territory Units and Affiliated Groups, will you commit yourself to prayerfully support the National Executive 2007-2009, and to uphold the aims and objectives of Australian Church Women.

All: We will, with God's grace.

Your mercy will not fail us,
nor leave your work undone;
with your right hand to help us,
the victory shall be won;
and then by all creation,
your name shall be adored,
and this shall be our anthem:
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Edward Hayes Plumtre 1821-91

Prayer: Lord, this evening we have celebrated the dedication of the new National Executive of Australian Church Women. We pray that you stay with them as they take on this role. Help them to keep the Gospel as the centre of their faith, and bless them as they work in your name.

O God, our loving Father, may we all live each day in your service, encouraging others to come to know your love and care for each of them and also for us.

May we in faith become closer followers of the teachings given to us by your Son Jesus Christ, and passed on by your disciples through the ages.

May our service to others be the turning point in their lives, and may we always follow your loving ways.

We ask all this in the name of your Son Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying:

Our Father in heaven . . .

Blessing: *May the Lord watch over us, while we are separated from each other.*



National Conference 2007

EVENING DEVOTIONS

Thursday 27 September



ACT UNIT

"Faith in the Future"

Reading: Hebrews 11.1-4 (GNB)

To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see.

It was by their faith that people of ancient times won God's approval.

It is by faith that we understand that the universe was created by God's word, so that what can be seen was made out of what cannot be seen.

It was faith that made Abel offer to God a better sacrifice than Cain's. Through his faith he won God's approval as a righteous man, because God himself approved of his gifts. By means of his faith Abel still speaks even though he is dead.

Hymn: *Have faith in God, my heart* (TIS 619)

Have faith in God, my heart,
trust and be unafraid;
God will fulfil in every part
each promise he has made.

Have faith in God, my mind,
though oft your light burns low;
God's mercy holds a wiser plan
than you can fully know.

Have faith in God my soul,
his cross for ever stands;
and neither life nor death can pluck
his children from his hands.

Lord Jesus, make me whole;
grant me no resting place
until I rest, heart, mind and soul,
the captive of your grace.

Bryn Austin Rees 1911-83
Words © Mr Alexander Scott
Used with permission from HarperCollins

Meditation: *A Precious Faith*

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we thank you that you are a light and guide on our journey of life. Sometimes the way ahead seems difficult to accept, but give us the Faith, Lord, to accept. We claim your promise to be with us always. May we, wherever we are, continue to experience the breadth and depth of your love and the fellowship of believers who share our faith.

Hymn: *Your hand, O God, has guided* (TIS 456)

Your hand, O God, has guided
your flock from age to age;
the wondrous tale is written,
full clear, on every page;
your people owned your goodness,
and we their deeds record,
and both of this bear witness,
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Your heralds brought glad tidings,
to greatest as to least;
they bade them rise, and hasten
to share the great King's feast;
and this was all their teaching,
in every deed and word,
to all alike proclaiming
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Through many a day of darkness,
through many a scene of strife,
the faithful few fought bravely
to guard the nation's life.
their gospel of redemption,
sin pardoned, earth restored,
was all in this enfolded:
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Hymn -

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A precious blood-bought soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfil;
O may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will.

Arm me with jealous care,
As in Your sight to live;
And O! Your servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give.

Closing Prayer -

Our gracious, merciful God, as we return to the places from which we have come, grant us strength equal to the work you have for us to do; give us wisdom and perceptive minds as we show your love to those in our communities.

Help us we pray to bring compassion and understanding to those who are in need. May we find joy as we share the Good News of Your love to a needy world.

Hear our prayer, O Heavenly Father, as we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour,

Amen.

ACW CONFERENCE DEVOTIONS
QUEENSLAND UNIT

Vessels Fit For Service

Psam78:1-7 (Read Responsively)

L. O My people hear My teaching; listen to the words of My mouth.

R. I will open My mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old.

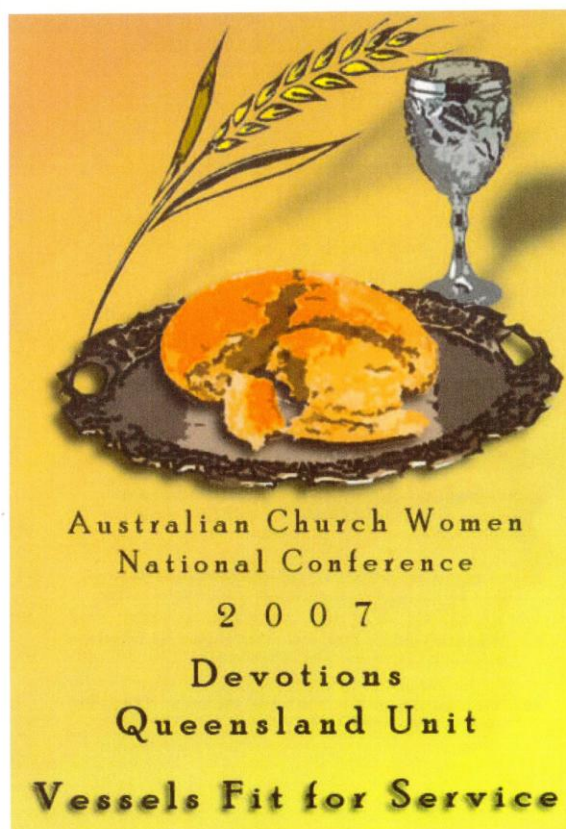
L. What we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us.

R. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders he has done.

L. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which He commanded our forefathers to teach their children,

R. So the next generation would know them, even then children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.

All. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget His deeds but would keep His commands.



Voice 1. I want to buy a vessel - I can't tell exactly what I want, but I'll know it when I see it.

Voice 2. Look at this one. Isn't it just a beautiful thing? It's so elegant and would just fit in that little niche you have on your wall.

Voice 3. What do you think of this? It's such a solid shape, very functional and easy to care for. It would be perfect as a fruit bowl. All it would need is a polish every now and again.

Voice 4. This may be a bit fragile but you can see its contents quite clearly. It would be worth the price just to have it to look at it and just use it on special occasions.

Voice 1 Look, I've found it! This is just right. I know it's been broken and mended but I want something to hold the communion bread at the Ladies Retreat. I don't want something that is beautiful or for fruit or expensive.

This plate is a reminder that God gave His Son for us; whose body was broken for us.

As we remember Jesus in the Breaking of Bread, we are reminded that ordinary though we may be, like this plate, we have a special trust placed on us to bring this message of forgiveness and love to others.

The early disciples did this, as is recorded in Acts 2:42-47. Each of our churches varies in the manner it worships God; in its hierarchy and in its emphasis.

But we have a common link in the call to pass on to future generations the Good News we have received; the grace of God; His love, and the wonder of the forgiveness that is ours.

'AN AUSTRALIAN HYMN'

Tune: "What a Friend we have in Jesus"

God of gum tree and of quandong
Granite rocks and rolling plain;
God of pasture, sheep and cattle,
Fallow land and crops and grain.
You are always here to help us,
Even when we do not know.
Help us all to know your presence
That our spirit life may grow.

Ploughing, seeding, patient waiting
for the harvest of the soil;
Shearing, branding, culling, feeding,
You are with us in our toil
In the workshop, store and office
Classroom, kitchen, garden too.
Help us see your gifts and glory,
Serve you well in all we do.

Scattered in our congregations,
Yet one body called to be
Reaching out to all your children;
Serving our community.
Thanks to you for love which binds us
For the strength to do your will.
Father, keep us true and faithful;
May we love and serve you still.

Thank you to Neville Threlfall for permission to use these words.

1.
My life must be Christ's broken bread,
My love his outpoured wine,
A cup o'erfilled, a table spread
Beneath his name and sign.
That other souls, refreshed and fed,
May share his life through mine.

2.
My all is in the Master's hands
For him to bless and break;
Beyond the brook his winepress stands
And thence my way I take,
Resolved the whole of love's demands
To give, for his dear sake.

3.
Lord, let me share that grace of thine
Wherewith thou didst sustain
The burden of the fruitful vine,
The gift of buried grain.
Who dies with thee, O Word divine,
Shall rise and live again.

Albert Orsborn (1886-1967)

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