

Report of the 22nd National Conference



Australian Church Women Incorporated

Heritage Hotel Narrabundah
Australian Capital Territory

21-25 September 2009

Faith in the Future



Conference participants from NSW Unit –

Standing: Lyn Middleton, Nancy McLaren, Pamela Freeman Shirley Wells, Janet Harrison, Denise Secomb, Edith Ridge, Lillian Hodges, Beatrice Kay
Seated: Isabel Hewitt, Jennifer Pepper, Heather Badgery, Helen Richardson, Nola Dickson, Carmel Keys, Marie McCann



The guest speaker for the conference was Corazon Tabing-Reyes from the Philippines. Cora has succeeded Esther Byu as Secretary of the International Committee for Fellowship of the Least Coin. Her opening address retold the FLC story and indicated that we may soon have resources other than printed material that can be used to help spread the message of FLC.

Opening worship included Holy Communion with opportunity for conference participants to receive the elements, or a blessing if they did not wish to partake.

The Remembrance Service named nine women from five state units. A candle was lit in memory of each as a symbol of them and their contributions to Australian Church Women. Those remembered from New South Wales were Marjorie Baker, Joan Curtin and Keasi Kupu.



Morning and evening devotions led by state and territory units developed the Conference theme of 'Faith in the Future'.

In some respects this has been the most challenging of the ACW National Conferences I have attended. Before the event there was correspondence from the South Australian Unit (who provides the National Executive 2009-2011) that challenged the legality of the incorporation that the 2007-2009 had put in place. Incorporation of a national body requires that the Public Officer should be a resident of the Australian Capital Territory, and it seemed logical to me that the ACT National Executive should carry out this task. However, the ACW Constitution was not adhered to, nor were the State Units consulted directly to keep them in the picture, and the ACT National Executive apologised for this neglect.

In a rather tense business session the incorporation of Australian Church Women was ratified following censure of the ACT National Executive for acting without regard for the Constitution. One of the outcomes of incorporation is that it necessitates the holding of an Annual General Meeting, though this need not be face to face, and could be by teleconference.



The Ecumenical Service was held at St Benedict's Catholic Church at which the Rev James Haire preached. His message of Christianity as counter-cultural from Roman times to the present day emphasised the constant transformation that is needed at all levels as the church tries to establish one organisation from great diversity.



Bible studies were led by Rev Vicky Cullen, an Anglican priest working in Canberra. Studies were on Luke's gospel – the gospel of the underdog – and called on us to see Jesus as Man of God and Man of Prayer. We considered Jesus' ministry in Galilee, his journey to Jerusalem, the last week of his life and his walk to Emmaus.



Sessions of an informative nature came from a variety of organisations engaging young adults in ministry and service. Margaret and Ron Reeson told of a Uniting Church program called Young Ambassadors for Peace. In areas of strife, especially in Asia and the Pacific, efforts are made to bring protagonists together to enable them to see the 'enemy' as a fellow citizen and to recognise the value of the 'other'. It was certainly interesting to hear of this, but the session was rather longer than needed.

The Salvation Army in Melbourne works with the marginalised from its Bourke Street premises. We were informed and entertained by General Eva Burrows who demonstrated that much can be accomplished regardless of age. Capitalising on the current trend for students to take a gap year, the program utilises the dedication and skills of interns who train and take part in the outreach program.



“Irene’s Place” is an endeavour of Canberra Baptist Church and the Mennonite Mission network that aspires to bring together young adults into a household dedicated to discipleship, service and peace. We were introduced to four young women from the USA, newly arrived in Australia, undertaking a year with Moriah Hurst, the community coordinator. This is a new venture in Canberra and the premises being used are within the Uniting Church property at Forrest.



Beyond the locality of the hotel we visited the Museum of Australia, chosen as an alternative to Floriade because of the weather. The museum covers a great range of Australian history and there is always something new, or something that could only be glossed over on a previous visit. And of course, there was a coffee shop with a view to Lake Burley Griffin that most of us enjoyed, not to mention the gift shop.



Government House at Yarralumla is a delight. The gardens are beautiful and the house welcoming. The courtesy of the staff, the daintiness of the food on offer in splendid surroundings with lovely flower arrangements cannot fail to impress. The Governor General addressed the gathered conference participants before spending time speaking with small groups. Our return bus trip to the hotel gave us an opportunity to see many of the embassies in the National Capital where spring is reminding all of new life.



We were well catered for with comfortable accommodation and delicious food.



The Conference dinner was an enjoyable occasion in the transformed meeting room.



Singing by a cappella group *Lady's Mantle* presented a range of songs to entertain, and it was a good choice for the occasion.



Reports from National Conveners, State and Territory Units, Denominational and Associated Groups were interesting. Motions relating to social issues action were in the fields of Aboriginal life expectancy, safe surrender of newborns, the alcohol content of drinks marketed particularly to young females, and support for the Millennium goal of reducing the death rate of women in childbirth.

The matters for discussion put forward by NSW Unit brought some good discussion, though not necessarily motions. With regard to Special Days orders of service it was agreed that there was scope for changes, and indeed the representative from World Day of Prayer was happy to hear some of the ideas promulgated. There was certainly support for an ideas page giving suggestions for alternate worship styles to which the service might lend itself.

The cost of the conference in Canberra did not diminish numbers, though there were people who probably would have attended had the cost been less. Ideas floated included more basic breakfasts and lunches, and possibly the need to reduce the number of days over which the conference is held.

Addressing the vexed question of Public Liability Insurance was one which others were glad to hear. It was agreed that the new National Executive take steps to investigate what is needed and in consultation with state and territory units to take out the necessary insurance. The cost would be shared taking into account the difference in numbers in the various ACW Units.

The Website Report generated discussion regarding the need for a new Web Host as the original one was no longer in business. A new Host would need to implement a more user friendly software system and keep costs/charges at a minimum. All agreed that there was a need to be able to keep the Website secure, user friendly and updated regularly. This would need to be done with consultation between Brenda Dickinson (Web Master), SA National Executive and taking into account input from the ACT Public Officer, Helen Raymond.

One of the special aspects of National Conference is just that – it is national. Meeting people from other states after a two year absence is exciting. The time of fellowship and renewing friendships is unmatched. We give thanks to God for the ACT women who took on the organisation of this event, and pray that he will guide the South Australian women who have responsibility for the next.

Isabel Hewitt,
with thanks to Jennifer Pepper for her assistance
September 2009

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE September 2009

Vicky Cullen

Jesus, Man of God, Man of Prayer as revealed in Luke's gospel

Bible Study 1 Wednesday September 23rd Luke Chapters 1-4

Luke's Jesus is compassionate, a friend to outcasts. He fulfils the portrait of the Messiah in the OT. Jesus is the Saviour, sent to seek and save the lost, a prophet rejected by the religious leaders, seen by the people as healer, teacher, man of prayer.

Structure of Luke

List of titles of Jesus with refs

Luke 1: 1-4	Prologue	Son of the Most High	Lk 1: 32
Luke 1:5-2:52	Infancy Narrative		
Luke 3: 1 – 4:13	Preparation for Ministry of Jesus		
Luke 4:14-9:50	Ministry in Galilee		
Luke 9:51-19:27	Journey to Jerusalem		
Luke 19:28- 21:38	Ministry in Jerusalem		
Luke 22: 1 -24:53	Passion and Resurrection		

First Study

1. Verses 1:1-4 What is Luke's aim in writing?
 2. 1: 26-46 The Annunciation. What does the angel say about the child Jesus who will be born?
 3. Read the Magnificat 1: 46-55. What does it tell us about Jesus? Compare with Hannah's Song 1 Sam 2:1-10
 4. Read Zechariah's Song, the Benedictus, Luke 1:76-79. What does it tell us about John?
 5. The Story of Jesus' birth. Luke 2:1-20, then 21-24 (Compare with Lev. 12:2-8) What do the angels tell about who Jesus is? What do the circumstances of his birth suggest?
 6. What do Simeon (v25-34) and Anna (36-38) say about Jesus?
 7. John the Baptist tells of the coming of the Lord. Read 3:3-6 and compare with Isa. 40:3-5. In verses 16-17 John tells of the coming one and at his baptism God's voice tells who Jesus is.
 8. Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee. Read 4:14-30. Compare Isa. 61:1-4 and 58:6-8. This describes the Messiah's work. Is it what Jesus does?
- Don't try to address all these questions. Choose 3 or 4 and be prepared to report your findings.

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born^a will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the

126-38: The birth of Jesus is foretold (the Annunciation). 26: In the sixth month, after the conception of John the Baptist. 31: Jesus, the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua (see Mt 1:21). 33: Mt. 28:16; Lk. 24:40, 41, 47.

mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God

for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

⁵⁶And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

^a Other ancient authorities add *Blessed are you among women*. ^c Cf. I do not know a man *among women*. ^d Other ancient authorities add *of you*. ^e Or *believed*, for there will be *f* Other ancient authorities read *Elizabeth*.

146-55: The "Magnificat" (so called from the first word of the Latin translation) is based largely on Hannah's prayer in 1 Sam 2:1-10. *Magnifies*, i.e., declares the greatness of.

world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,ⁱ the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,^j praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

on a war against a rebellious tribe, the Homonadenses. As such he was military governor of Syria, while the civil administration was in the hands of Varus. ⁷ According to Catholic teaching, the expression *firstborn son* is used here simply as a Semitic legal term and does not necessarily imply subsequent births. *Bands of cloth* were customarily wrapped around a newly born infant. ⁹ *Terrified*, see 1.65 n. ¹¹: *The city of David*, Bethlehem. Three great Christian claims about Jesus are that he is *Savior*, *Messiah*, and *Lord* (see Mt 1.21 n.; 16.16 n.; Jn 4.42; Acts 2.36; 5.31; Phil 2.11). ¹⁴: 3.22; 19.38. *Peace* . . . the lack of one letter in the later Greek manuscripts accounts for the rendering in note k. *Those*

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!^k

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

²¹After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem

ⁱ Or *the Christ*. ^j Cf. army. ^k Other ancient authorities read *peace, goodwill among people*.

chosen in accord with his good pleasure." ²²: See Mt 1.21 n. ²²⁻²⁴: Lev 12.2-8; Ex 13.2, 12. ²⁵: *Simeon* and *Anna*, not otherwise known, express faith in Jesus as Savior, Messiah, and universal Lord (see v. 11 n.). ²⁵: *The consolation of Israel* was the salvation which the Messiah was to bring (vv. 26, 38; 23.51). ²⁶: *The Lord's Messiah*, the Christ of God (9.20). ²⁹⁻³²: The "Nunc Dimittis," so called from the first words of the Latin translation. ²⁹: *You are dismissing your servant*, the figure is taken from the manumission of a slave. *In peace*, i.e., in a state of peace with God. 30: 3.6; Isa 52.10. 32: Isa 42.6; 49.6; Acts 13.47; 26.23.

Bible Study 2 Thursday September 24th Luke Chapters 4-19

This second study covers parts of Luke's sections 4 and 5- Jesus' ministry in Galilee(4-9) and his Journey to Jerusalem (10-19)

Note the verse which clearly begins his journey to Jerusalem Luke 9:51-56

We will examine further the question of his identity, especially in Chapters 5-9, and list more of his titles.

In Chapters 10-19 is a lot of material special to Luke. Some of the best loved stories are told nowhere else. (eg the Parables of the Lost Sheep, coin and son in chapter 15 and Zacchaeus in Chapter 19)

Several special Lukan themes will be explored.

1. God Saves. Jesus' mighty acts are transparently God's acts. How is this expressed in the stories of the raising of the son of the widow of Nain (Ch 7) and the exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac (Ch 8)?
God even cares for the sparrows and the grass of the field (Ch 12)

2. Salvation for all. Anticipated in 2:31-2. Look at the following references and discuss how this person was saved and why Jesus' actions were so contrary to the cultural attitudes of his time.

7:34-50 10:29-37

14:21-24 19:1 -10

- ### 3. Riches and poverty Sermon on the Plain 6:20-24

The rich fool 12:13-21

Dives and Lazarus 16;19-31

Discuss the meaning of these 2 stories. Do they relate to today?

4. Women play a significant role in Luke.

Often stories are told in pairs a male and a female. Identify the pairs in these stories:

3 couples in Luke 1 and 2

Healings in the end of chapter 4

7: 1-17

Read these stories unique to Luke: 8:1-3 a group of women support Jesus

10:38-42

13:10-17

5. Prayer Luke's Jesus was definitely a man of prayer., Before any important event or decision he would withdraw . Identify these. What was the situation? What might he have prayed for? 3:21 4:42 6:12

Discuss these stories about prayer 11: 2-4 and 5-8, Chapter 18:1-8

Bible Study 3 Friday September 25th Luke Chapters 19-24

Section 6 Luke 19:28- 21:38

19:28 After he said this he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

Jesus teaching in the temple . This section begins with the entry into Jerusalem, then weeping over the city and cleansing the Temple (19: 45-47) so it may serve as the site for Messianic teaching.

1. 20:1-40 Luke distinguishes the people who hear Jesus gladly from *the leaders who seek to trap him*.

Look at the parable v9-14. What was Jesus seeking to teach the people?

V 21-26 How were they trying to trap him with this question?

27-33 Another trap. Discuss it and Jesus' answer in verses 34-40. Jesus wins!

41-47 For what behaviours does Jesus criticise the religious leaders?

Chapter 21 In contrast Jesus commends the poor widow woman. (Themes)

2. Look at the following sections 21:29-33 and 34-36. How do these sections bring hope?

The conclusion to this section Luke 21:37-38 balances 19:45-47 and provides a sense of closure for this section

Section 7 Luke 22:-24:53 Passion and Resurrection narratives.

There is anticipation of this time earlier in the Gospel . Look up 1:33,2:35, 4:13 (compare 22:3, 31)

3. What does each of the following scenes say about Jesus and his saving work?

Jesus at table with his disciples Luke 22:14-20

Peter's denial . Luke 22:54-62

Jesus' words from the cross. Luke 23:39-49

The death of Jesus. Luke 23:44-46

The road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35

4. *Praying at the Mount of Olives.* Luke 22:39-46 What does this tell you about Jesus' methods of praying? *Angels unaware*
choose 2 ? What does he teach us about prayer in times of physical and spiritual crisis?

Jesus trial before the Sanhedrin 22:66-71 Identity. What titles are used? Does Jesus accept them?

Trial before Pilate 23:1-25. What is Pilate's attitude to the accusation?

Crucifixion 23:33-38 Still we have we have discussion of his identity. Titles used here? Prayer – the first thing he does is pray for those who are crucifying him.

Jesus dies 23:44-49. Here again we have 3 of the special themes , prayer, salvation for all, not only Jews, and women.

Resurrection 24:1-12 It is the women who first see the empty tomb, then Peter. The Gospel ends where we started , with the "Power of the Most High" coming upon all disciples for mission.

Taking and Breaking the Bread

Among friends, gathered around a table,
Jesus took bread, broke it and said:
"This is my body; it is broken for you."

Taking the Cup of Wine

Later, he took the cup of wine and said:
"This is the new relationship with God made
possible because of my death.
Take this – all of you."

Our Lord is here, coming to us in bread and
wine.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

The bread and wine are shared.

*Those who do not wish to partake of the
bread and wine are invited to come forward,
with their arms crossed on their chest, to
receive a blessing.*

Prayer of Dedication

**Lord Jesus Christ,
you have put your life in our hands,
now we put our lives in yours.**

**Take us,
redeem us,
renew us.**

**Irrespective of what we have been,
it is what, with you, we can be,
starting now.
Amen.**

The Commissioning

The cross
we shall take it

The bread
we shall break it

The pain
we shall bear it

The joy
we shall share it

The gospel
we shall live it

The love
we shall give it

The light
we shall cherish it

The darkness
God shall perish it.

The Benediction

The light goes with you
(candle is extinguished)
The word of Christ is in you
(Bible is closed)
The cross of Christ is upon you.
(A sign of the cross)

And the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and always. Amen.

(This order was prepared for use at the Ninth Assembly
of the Uniting Church held in Adelaide, July 2000. The
material used is drawn from published resources of The
Uniting Church in Australia and the Iona community.)

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN INC



22nd NATIONAL CONFERENCE

21 September 2009

An Order of Service for Holy Communion

In the beginning, when it was very dark
God said, "Let there be light."

(A candle is lit)

and there was light.

In the beginning, when it was very quiet,
the Word was with God.

(A Bible is opened)

And what God was, the Word was.

When the time was right, God sent the
Son.

(Attention is drawn to the cross)

He came among us, he was one of us.

The Invitation

This is the table, not of the Church, but of
the Lord. It is provided for those who love
him and who want to love him more.

So, come, those who have much faith
and those who have little,
those who have been here often
and those who have not been for a long
time,
those who have tried to follow
and those who have failed.

Come, not because I invite you:
it is our Lord.
It is his will that those who follow him
should meet him here.

Now let us hear the story of how this
sacrament began:

On the night when he was betrayed,
he sat at supper with his disciples.
While they were eating he took a piece of
bread, said the blessing, broke it and
gave it to them with the words,
"This is my body. It is broken for you.
Do this to remember me."

Later on he took a cup of wine, saying,
"This cup is God's new covenant, sealed
with my blood. Drink from it all of you.
Do this to remember me."

So now, following Jesus' example and
command, we take this bread and this wine,
the ordinary things of the world which
Christ will make special. And as he said a
prayer before sharing, let us do so too.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts..
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Gratitude, praise, hearts lifted high,
Voices strong and joyful,
lives reflecting your glory ...
these you deserve.

For when we were nothing, you made us
something; when we had no name and no
faith and no future, you called us your
children; when we lost our way or turned
aside, you did not abandon us; when we
came back to you, your arms opened wide in
welcome.

And, more than that, you prepare a table for
us, offering not just bread, not just wine,
but your very self, so that we may be filled,
forgiven, healed, blessed and made new
again. You are worth all our pain and all
our praise.

So we join our voices to those of the Church
on earth and in heaven:

**Holy, holy, holy, God of power and
might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of
the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Prayer of Consecration

Lord Jesus Christ, present with us now,
for all that you have done
and all that you have promised,
what have we to offer?

Our hands are empty,
Our voices are sometimes full of wrong
things.
We are not fit to gather up the crumbs from
under your table.
But with you is mercy and the power to
change us.

So as we do in this place what you did in an
upstairs room,
send down your Holy Spirit on us and on
these gifts of bread and wine,
that they may become for us your body,
healing, forgiving, and making us whole,
and that we may become for you, your body,
loving and caring in the world
until your kingdom come.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin
against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and
the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Footprints in the Sand

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord. Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.

In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand. Sometimes there were two sets of footprints, other times there was one only.

This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life, when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow or defeat, I could see only one set of footprints, so I said to the Lord,

"You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you would walk with me always. But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life there has only been one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you most, have you not been there for me?"

The Lord replied, "The years when you have seen only one set of footprints, my child, is when I carried you during your trail and suffering."

Mary Stevenson, 1936 -

**Father of all
we give thanks to thee
for those whom we love but see no longer.
We thank thee
for thy loving wisdom and almighty power
which brought them to thy light and perpetual peace
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

They were women of character,
where are they to be found?
They are more precious than a jewel.
They bring only good not evil, all the days of their lives.

Thank you, God, for the friends who have gone before
us, for their faith and friendship. There will come again
a time for laughter and new life,
a time to gather and reset the boundary stones of our
lives.

They are like the merchant ship
which brings provisions from afar.
They get up while it is dark and feed their households.
They are full of energy and their arms
show strength.

They know their work is successful and toil
late into the night,
Their light reaches out to the helpless
and their hands give to the poor.
They are strong and dignified and look with confidence
to the future.

They keep an eye on their households
and are never idle.
May all praise them for their work.

Adapted from Proverbs 31: 1 - 20

Australian Church Women Inc



National Conference

Remembrance Service



Monday 22 September 2009

A candle will be lit for each of the following members who has died since the last Conference. We remember their lives and work, especially their work for Australian Church Women over the years.

ACT	Mollie McMahon Enid Rochow
NSW	Marjorie Baker Joan Curtin Keasi Kupu
QLD	Norah Thomson
SA	Vi Bache Jess Horton OAM
WA	Patricia May Smeeton OBE OAM

John 14: 1 - 6

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; if there were not, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me, so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going".

Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus said "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

This is the word of the Lord

5. Angels help us to adore him, you behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space;
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
praise with us the god of grace.

Words: Henry Francis Lyte 1793-1847 alt. based on Psalm 103
Music: John Goss 1800-80

Acknowledgments

The National Executive of the Australian Church Women thank the following:

St Benedict's Catholic Church and Father Ben Roberts

Speaker: Reverend Professor James Haire AM KSJ MA PhD DD DLitt DUniv,
Executive Director of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture,
Professor of Theology of Charles Sturt University and Director of the Public and
Contextual Theology Strategic Research Centre.

Pianist: Pam Wright

Readers: Monsignor John Woods.
Rev. Joy Bartholomew

Mission of ACW

Australian Church Women seeks to unite Christian women across denominational
boundaries to promote peace, understanding, and unity through faith and love in
the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit



Fellowship of the Least Coin

The Fellowship of the Least Coin Prayer Movement brings Christian women
together in a fellowship of prayer without any discrimination of race, nationality,
colour, culture or denomination. Christian women have solidarity through their
common concern and love for humankind. Women of the world are bound
together by giving of the "least coins".

Hymns are from *Together in Song* (Sydney: HarperCollins Religious, 1999). CAL licence #5466E.

Entrance Procession

Processional Hymn: In Faith and Hope and Love

Refrain:

*In faith and hope and love
with joyful trust we move
towards our Father's home above.*

1. Christ our star, our map, our road to the Father's high abode.
Refrain
2. Christ, our bread along the way; Christ, our rescue when we stray.
Refrain
3. Christ our shelter, Christ our friend, our beginning and our end.
Refrain
4. Christ, our hope and our reward; our redeemer and our Lord.
Refrain

Words: James Phillip McAuley 1917-76
Music: R. Connelly 1927

Welcome to Country and a greeting from the National President

Prayer to proclaim God's Word

Heavenly Father, you have spoken to the world through your prophets in
ancient times and then through your only Son.
Your message is in the Scriptures and your word is living and dynamic.
It is more penetrating than a two-edged sword, reaching the very depths of
human beings.
Help us to listen for your word in the Bible, in the Church, and in the world.
Let us be transformed by its power and bring it to others in our turn

Reading: Mark 1: 21-28

Hymn: To God be the glory

1. To God be the glory, great things he has done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life in atonement for sin
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory! great things he has done!



Australian Church Women Inc

Conference Service

St Benedict's Church, Narrabundah ACT

Tuesday 22nd September 2009

'FAITH IN THE FUTURE'

2. O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God!
and every offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.
Praise the Lord! ...
3. Great things he has taught us, great things he has done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and great will be
our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see.
Praise the Lord! ...

Words: Frances Jane van Alstyne 1820-1915 alt.
Music: William Howard Doane 1832-1916

Psalm 46: 1-7 NIV

Response: **God is our refuge and strength**

God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging. **R**
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells. **R**
God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day. **R**
Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. **R**

Hymn: Here I am Lord

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?
Here I am Lord; is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night;
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain;
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
and give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?
Here I am Lord ...

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame;
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts are satisfied.
I will give my life for them.
Whom shall I send?
Here I am Lord ...

Words and Music: Daniel L. Schutte 1947 – suggested by Isaiah 6

Reading: Romans 12: 1-5

Hymn: Be thou my vision

1. 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.
2. Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou my great Father, thy child let me be;
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.
3. Be thou my armour, my sword for the fight,
be thou my dignity, thou my delight;
thou my soul's shelter and thou my high tower:
raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.
4. Riches I scorn and the world's empty praise,
thou my inheritance, now and always:
thou and thou only the first in my heart;
high King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

5. We walk by faith, not by sight – We pray for the deceased members of
Australian Church Women. They have journeyed long; may we honour their work
on earth as they now share their eternal reward in heaven. Lord hear us.
Response. Lord hear our Prayer.

Let us join together in the prayer our Lord taught us.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

Leader

We thank you, God, for the fellowship of the Australian Church Women
and for the influence we have had in local and national affairs. Inspire us to touch
minds and hearts of people everywhere. We pray for all members that they may
be aware of changing social needs, and, inspired by that awareness, may continue
to serve you with love and loyalty. When we return home help us to live filled
with love for you, our families and everyone around us, through Jesus Christ our
Lord.

All. Amen

Collection for the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

Hymn: O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr

1. O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr
all the power belongs to you.
Hold me by this power, O Lord,
you alone are king.
2. Now we praise you for your Word,
living, true and full of light.
Yours the hands that rest on me:
hold me for all time. *To be sung twice.*

Words: Aboriginal people of Arrernte Land, versified by D'Arcy Wood 1936 –
Music: Australian Aboriginal melody

5. 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.

Words Gaelic c. 8th cent. *tr.* Mary Elizabeth Byrne 1880-1931
Music: Irish Traditional Melody. harm David Evans 1874-1948

The Speaker – The Reverend Professor James Haire

Prayers of the Faithful

Leader

Lord God our Father, grant that in everything we do we may be filled with the
love of Jesus Christ. Help us to see the claims of your love in every part of life,
and having seen them, to accept them, so that everything in us may be remade by
your love.

1. We walk by faith, not by sight – Lord we ask your blessing on the members of
Australian Church Women: that we may all accept one another, wherever we
stand, wherever we tread. We pray that Christians from different traditions will
grow in communion through their common calling. Lord hear us.
Response. Lord hear our Prayer.

2. We walk by faith not by sight – Lord we pray for generosity of heart – that in
sharing our faith journey we remain open to your call to listen without judgement
and to speak without malice. Guide us to put our trust in you, enlighten us with
the grace of your Holy Spirit, and our minds as we are called to decide important
issues. Lord hear us.
Response. Lord hear our Prayer.

3. We walk by faith, not by sight – We pray for those who come from other
countries and make their home in this land. Help them to overcome difficulties of
custom, language and race. Let us welcome and befriend them, that in your great
family we may live as members of one another. Lord hear us.
Response. Lord hear our Prayer.

4. We walk by faith, not by sight – We pray for leaders of nations, that they will
listen to the voice of the Spirit through whom wars and discord can cease. We
pray for peace so all may walk without fear and struggle for daily life. Lord hear
us.
Response. Lord hear our Prayer.

Prayer for a Productive Faith

O Lord, increase my faith and let it bear fruit in my life.
Let it bind me fast to other Christians in the common certitude
that our Master is the God-Man, who gave his life for all.
Let me listen in faith to the divine word that challenges me.
Help me to strive wholeheartedly under the promptings of my faith
in the building of a world ruled by love.
Enable me to walk in faith toward the indescribable future
that you have promised to all who possess a productive faith in you.

Benediction: In faith, let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Recessional Hymn: Praise, my soul, the king of heaven

1. Praise my soul the king of heaven;
to his feet your tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
praise the everlasting king!
2. Praise him for his grace and favour
to his people in distress;
praise him still the same for ever,
slow to chide and swift to bless:
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
glorious in his faithfulness.
3. Father like he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes:
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
widely as his mercy flows.
4. Frail as summer's flowers we flourish,
blows the wind and it is gone;
but while mortals rise and perish
God endures unchanging on.
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
praise the high eternal one.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN INC.

CONFERENCE SERVICE

ST. BENEDICT'S CHURCH
NARRABUNDAH, CANBERRA, A.C.T.

TUESDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER 2009

THEME: "FAITH IN THE FUTURE"

SERMON

James Haire ¹

Text: Romans 12: 1- 5

Margaret Mead, the American anthropologist, while attending the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Nairobi in Kenya in 1975, and surveying the vast crowd (including a High Court judge from the Caribbean, a used-car salesman from Memphis, Tennessee and a bare-footed Kenyan tribesman, recently converted, who had just walked for three days to see what it was the whole thing was about), said: "You people are a sociological impossibility. You have absolutely nothing in common, except your extraordinary conviction that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world."

We are perhaps not such a sociological impossibility. However, it is true that for so much of this area there is the powerful conviction that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world, and therefore that, individually, and communally, we seek to live in his way.

The Church in Rome was in the process of formation. It was formed of Christians of Jewish descent, and Christians of Gentile, or non-Jewish, descent. It would seem that the Christians of Jewish descent had very considerable economic power. They had, however, suffered political oppression. In 49CE they had been expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius, along with all the other Jews. On Claudius' death in 54CE, shortly before Paul wrote Romans, they had been allowed to return. The Gentile Christians had, on the other hand, much more political influence, although in all likelihood they were largely economically disadvantaged. They also probably had the numbers; they were in the majority. So here was the Church in Rome, a minority of the economically powerful and politically oppressed, and a majority of the poor, but politically correct. It was the perfect combination for social chaos, as it is in every situation where these factors exist. What probably existed was a collection of rather poor Gentile house-churches, and at least one rather grand synagogue, now converted into a Church building. However, did they meet together? Paul actually never calls them

¹ The Reverend Professor James Haire AM KSJ MA PhD HonDD HonDLitt HonDUniv is Professor of Theology, Charles Sturt University (CSU); Executive Director, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture (ACC&C), CSU; Director, Public and Contextual Theology Strategic Research Centre (PACT), CSU, Canberra; Past President, National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA); Past President, Uniting Church in Australia (UCA); and a Member of the Executive, Christian Conference of Asia (CCA).

“the church” (*ecclesia*).² The church could therefore be understood as “the body of Christ”, the Second or New Adam. It was to be a united, multi-ethnic, socially-diverse and theologically-varied body. It is a picture related to Christ, and also related to God’s Spirit. A spirit was what God breathed into Adam’s clay body in Genesis.

The picture of the church needs to be seen over against the social perceptions of First Century CE Roman society.

Let us look at that world.

First, in the world of Early Christianity, social groupings were based on kinship, ethnic issues, power, and politics. Kinship was the central factor of social organisation. The kinship group was the focus of individual loyalty, and had decisive influence over individual identity and self-awareness. The security of each individual was grounded in the community, sharing as they did common interests, values, and activities. Hence, the most basic unit of social awareness was not the individual. Individual consciousness was subordinate to social consciousness.³

Second, religion, like other social factors, was enmeshed in kinship and politics. Membership of a religious community was not necessarily based on religious relationships, but on bonds of kinship that gave structure to religious associations. Membership in religious groups was either involuntary or voluntary. Involuntary members belonged to a religion because, for example, they were born into a particular family. Voluntary membership in early Christianity stood in contrast to family-based religion. In the First Century C E the religion of voluntary members resulted in a newly-created kinship group.⁴ Although it appeared to be similar to, or to look like, any other kinship group, it was in fact a created or fictive kinship grouping. In Early Christianity, language of the natural kinship group, for example “household (of faith)”, was used for a created kinship group. Indeed, the struggle of the Christian community as a totality, for example in Rome, can be seen in relationship to these two types. It struggled as to which of these two types it in fact belonged.

Third, there is considerable evidence in the First Century C E within Graeco-Roman culture of intense expressions of emotion, through outbursts of anger, aggression, pugnacity, and indeed violence. Moreover, these appear to have been very public and socially acceptable.⁵

² He could, for example, have used the Jewish concept of “the temple”; there were two famous pillars at Solomon’s Temple, named Jachin and Boaz (I Kings 7: 15-22).

³ MALINA, B. J. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981, 55-66; 60-64; MEEKS, W. A.. *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983, 90-91. Cf. THEISSEN, G. *Social Reality and the Early Christians: Theology, Ethics and the World of the New Testament*. Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1992, 272 – 278.

⁴ THEISSEN, G. *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (edited and translated by John H Schutz). Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982, 27-40. Cf. ESLER, P. F. *The First Christians in their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific approaches to New Testament interpretation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994, 6 – 12.

⁵ PEARSON, L. *Popular Ethics in Ancient Greece*. Stanford: University Press, 1973, 193; WEDDERBURN, A. J. M. *The Reason for Romans (Studies of the New Testament and its World)*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988, 81-83. Cf. LOADER, W. R. G. *Jesus’ Attitude towards the Law: A Study of the Gospels*. Grand Rapids (Michigan) and Cambridge (UK): Eerdmans, 2002, 177.

Fourth, in such an atmosphere, concern for honour and shame was significant. This was because honour determined social standing and was essential for social cooperation. Honour was the outward approval given to a group or an individual by others whose honour was not in question. The honour of an individual normally was dependent upon the outward approval given to one's group. On the other hand, people became shamed when they transgressed group standards or when they sought a social status to which public approval was not given. Honour was ascribed, for example, by birth into an honourable family, or by it being given or bestowed from honourable persons of power. It was acquired by outdoing others in social interchange. A person's sense of self-worth was therefore established by public reputation related to that person's associations rather than by a judgment of conscience.⁶

Over against these four factors outlined above, Paul summons Christians to new social roles. They are based on mercy, peaceable conduct and reconciliation in a culture where expressions of oppression and violence seem to have been normative. The call for transformation now means new expressions of group identity. No longer based on kinship or ethnicity, group identity nevertheless seeks to retain the intense cohesion of former groups. Paul's community members bind themselves together as one body in Christ. This metaphor is poignantly suitable in a society where self-awareness arises from group association rather than from individual worth. The ideals of honourable and shameless conduct are altered in that they are not primarily derived from society outside. Rather, enhanced honour for the community derives from its incorporation into its risen Lord. Patterns of social co-operation are modified as a result. A new communal identity as one body in Christ is thus reinforced. The social groupings see their identity as coming from beyond themselves. Their self-understanding and their life together are defined by the kindness or mercy of God and by the truthful harmony (or peace) which God gives. The other factors in the transformation include cohesiveness within the group based on an understanding of God's action from outside. For that reason, attitudes of peaceful harmony are central to the community's identity. Moreover, no other identity marker (ethnicity, gender, class, or status) may be accepted as absolute. Honour derives from the faith-life of the community, originating from beyond. The original groupings are transformed by the new ideal of a central awareness of their relationship with God.

We thus see the radical way in which Paul took hold of Graeco-Roman categories of group identity, and then applied to them new metaphors, including that of the body of Christ, so as to create in them a totally new identity.

Paul summons Christians to new social roles. They are based on mercy, peaceable conduct and reconciliation in a culture where expressions of violence seem to have been normative. The call for transformation means new expressions of group identity. No longer based on kinship or ethnicity, group identity nevertheless seeks to retain the intense cohesion of former groups. Paul's community members bind themselves together as one body in Christ. This metaphor is poignantly suitable in a society where self-awareness arises from group association rather than from individual worth. The ideals of honourable and shameless conduct are altered in that they are now for Christians not any more primarily derived from society outside. Rather, enhanced honour for the community derives from its incorporation into its risen Lord. Patterns of social co-operation are modified as a result. A new communal identity as one body in Christ is thus reinforced.

I remember last year travelling on a bus from Dublin airport up to Belfast and was shocked to hear Romanian and Bulgarian voices on the bus. What were they doing in Ireland? Then a Romanian lass in the seat in front of me leant back, handed me a tract and asked me if I would like to experience the gospel. I felt so ashamed. Here was the very expression of the church as

⁶ MALINA, 27-48.

one body in Christ. Ireland needed to be converted as much as anywhere else and our arrogant assumption that we alone were the purveyors of the gospel were unmasked.

The social groupings see their identity as coming from beyond themselves. Their self-understanding and their life together are defined by the kindness or mercy of God and by the truthful harmony (or peace) which God gives. The other factors in the transformation include cohesiveness within the group, based on an understanding of God's action from outside. Moreover, no other identity marker (ethnicity, gender, class, or status) may be accepted as absolute. Honour derives from the faith-life of the community, originating from God. The original groupings are transformed by the new ideal of a central awareness of their relationship with God.

We are called to a life of praise, the praise of God, which embraces all of our personal and social life, in all its practical, ethical, religious, political and intellectual aspects. It is a praise which stands counter-culture, over against the idolatrous self-worship of individuals and even nations in our time. In our time especially we are called to stand against that self-worship, and to stand for the true praise of God, the praise of all our life, in public and in private. This is the heart of the Christian faith.

God in Christ has created us to share in this new humanity. God has given us a new identity, a new harmony with God's very self, and thus a new human community one with another.

Twenty years ago, I took part in a theological conference over Easter at Glencolumbkille, on the west coast of Ireland. On Easter Sunday, the twelve of us or so climbed into a number of cars and set off to find the local church for the Easter Day services. We found one church in the middle of a paddock. On the front door were nailed a notice indicating that the church was in a state of disrepair and that services were being held in the school house. The hole in the roof indicated that the church indeed was in a state of disrepair. We went over to the school house and sat in the desks designed for people a third of our age, with the marks of the graffiti of generations in the woodwork. Eventually the minister arrived and began the service. From what he said and did, three things became clear. First we were approximately pit-stop number three in his journey around his various congregations. Second, he kept his preaching gown in the boot of his car and he also kept hay there. He didn't always separate the one from the other. Third, he had had a sad ministry. He had started in Dublin. Things had not gone well and he had moved west. Things continued to not go well and he continued to move west until he reached the Atlantic and there he stopped as the next point west was Canada. He went through the service until he reached the sermon. Then he said: "Today I have no sermon for you, not because I am lazy or incompetent, but because I have reached the end of my tether, I cannot write sermons. But as it is Easter Day, I will read you again the Easter story." So he leant up against the school house wall and read us Mark 13-16. He read it with thought, repeating parts that fascinated him or which he found it difficult to understand. At the end his eyes looked up at us full of tears and he said "There's hope for an old fool like me and there is absolute certainty for each of you." I have met many who attended our conference over the years. Our papers have long since been forgotten, but everyone says to me when we meet do you remember the man from Glencolumbkille? He did the right thing: he proclaimed the gospel, but more importantly, he absolutely believed it." That is the heart of being part of the body of Christ.

When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die - I scarce can take it in;
then on the cross, our burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away our sin:

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home - what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim: My God, how great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!

Words: Carl Bobberg (1859-1940), tr. Stuart K. Hine
Swedish melody arr. Stuart K. Hine.
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ACW SA Unit

Have Faith in God

Oh Lord, you lead me by the still waters,
quietly restoring my soul,
you speak words of wisdom, the promise of glory,
the pow'r of the presence of God.

Have faith in God,
let your hope rest on the
faith he has placed in your heart,
never give up,
never let go of the faith he has placed in your heart.

Oh Lord, you guide me through all the darkness,
turning my night into day,
you'll never leave me, never forsake me,
The pow'r of the presence of God.

Have faith in God,
let your hope rest on the
faith he has placed in your heart,
never give up,
never let go of the faith he has placed in your heart.

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Responsive Prayer

Lord help us to retain our faith even in the shadows of the
journey of life.

Never let go of the faith he has placed in your heart.

Faith in the Future



**National Conference
Australian Church Women
Canberra ACT
September 2009**

**Devotions
Australian Church Women
South Australian Unit**

Forgive us when we do not trust you as we should and our
faith is weak.

Never let go of the faith he has placed in your heart.

Teach us to be bold and to know you as a faithful God.

Never let go of the faith he has placed in your heart.

Grant us contentment and trust even when we do not know
what is before us.

Never let go of the faith he has placed in your heart.

Compassionate God be gentle to us when we fail and help
us to

Never let go of the faith he has placed in your heart.

God of the past, present and future, thank you that your
faithfulness remains constant and true.

**Never let go of the faith that he has placed in your
heart.**

How Great Thou Art

O Lord my God! when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed:

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!

May the God of *patience* be with you, waiting for you with outstretched arms, letting you 'find out for yourself', and may His patience with all the young who fall from small heights and the old who fall from greater heights be your patience.

May the blessing of patience be on us.

May the God of *peace* be with you, stilling the heart that hammers with fear, doubt or confusion; and may your peace, the warm mantle of your peace, cover those who are troubled or anxious.

May the blessing of peace be on us.

May the God of *joy* be with you, thrilling you with His nearness, filling your throat to ringing, singing exultation.

May the Blessing of Joy be on us.

May the God of *love* be with you—listening to you—telling you His secrets, giving Himself to you, drawing you close as you tremble at the edge of self-gift, and may His love in you light fires of faith and hope, and may the fires grow and burn and burst and inflame the earth; and may His love in you glow in your eyes and meet His love glowing in the eyes of your friend. May the blossoming of love—the blessings of friendship—be on you.

May the blessing of love — the blessing of friendship — be on us.

May the True God be within you — drawing you even nearer, speaking to you of unity — true community where distinction of persons is also oneness in being.

May the blessing of community arise from within us, radiate around us and remain. Amen



4

'Faith Brings Blessings'

Psalm 126 'Psalms Now' by Brandt.

'Flight 425' 'God Loves my Kitchen Best'



Reading. 'True Happiness' from the Sermon on the Mount.
Matthew 5: 3-12.

3 Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

4 Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!

5 Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised!

6 Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully!

7 Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them!

8 Happy are the pure in heart; They will see God!

9 Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children!

10 Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them!

11 Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers.

Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven.

What is it? 'Chicken Soup for the Soul'

2



'Faith Brings Blessings'



ACW Conference
21st–25th September 2009

Hotel Heritage Canberra ACT

Devotion prepared by ACW Queensland Unit.

Sharing time:- Share with a person near you, a blessing that has happened to you recently.

Puppies for Sale. 'Chicken Soup for the Soul'

'SING OF A BLESSING'



Blessing

May the God of *strength* be with you, holding you in strong-fingered hands; and may you be the sacrament of His strength to those whose hands you hold.

May the blessing of strength be on us.

May the God of *gentleness* be with you, caressing you with sunlight and rain and wind; may His tenderness shine through you to warm all who are hurt and lonely.

May the blessings of gentleness be on you.

May the God of *wonder* be with you, delighting you with thunder and birdsong, sunrise and sunset, filling your heart, giving you wide-open eyes forseeing the splendour in the humble and the majestic; may you open the eyes, hands and hearts of the blind, deaf and insensitive.

May the blessing of wonder be on us

May the God of *compassion* be with you holding you close when you are weary, hurt and alone; when there is rain in your heart; and may you be the warm hands and warm eyes of compassion for your friends when they reach out to you in need.

May the blessing of compassion be upon us.

May the God of *simplicity* be with you, opening you to clear vision of what is real and true, leading you deeply into the mystery of childhood; and may our dealings with others be marked by the honesty which is simplicity.

May the blessing of simplicity be on us.

3

BENEDICTION.....
repeat together

Father,
We are different in many ways, but in you we are one body.
It is only in you, Lord, that we become whole, for your spirit is within us.
Help us to use our being for your service.
With our voices use us to spread your message and give you praise.
With our ears to listen to your word.
With our eyes to look and see the wonders of your creation.
With our lips to pray for each other.
With our hearts to listen to your voice in our prayers.
With your spirit within us let us show your love to all who we meet
We are one body in you Lord, one mind, one heart, one spirit.

May we show our faith in the future...
One day at a time.

AMEN

For your private readingHebrews 11: 1, 6-10

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

When things go wrong,
As they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must -
But don't you quit!

HAVE FAITH IN THE FUTURE.....

ACW NATIONAL CONFERENCE

CANBERRA 2009

Conference Theme.....Faith in the Future

Evening Devotions

Presented by
NSW Unit



Tuesday, 22nd September 2009

Faith in the Future—One day at a time

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us sing: **There is a Redeemer**

PRAYER

A time of reflection and prayers on 'FAITH'

All are invited to join in the personal prayers led by the reader of each section

No. 1 Faith is Following Jesus—Matthew 4:10

Lord I hear your call to follow You. Please enable me to follow You faithfully into the future you have planned for me

No. 2 Faith triumphs over fear - Mark 6:36

Lord, You know how often fear confronts me as I seek to live my life for you. Speak to my heart the encouragement that enables me to take my fears in hand. Help me to learn and trust your promises.

No. 3 Faith makes the heart calm and joyful—Psalm 33

Almighty Father, enable me to recall constantly each day who You are and what You are to me. Let faith flow into courage and praise.

No. 4 Faith is the foundation for generosity—2 Cor. 9:8

God, you are good to me; gracious, kind and generous. Help me to be the same. Open my eyes to see you, and my heart that I might be a blessing to others..

No. 5 Faith opens our eyes to divine realities—Rev. 4:1

Sovereign Lord, let me never for a moment forget that You are the King.

No. 6 Faith to fight—Joshua 1:5

Lord, sometimes I feel weary and occasionally as if I am totally on my own. Help me to hold on to Your promise to be with me always.

No. 7 Faith that grace inspires—Ephesians 2:5

Gracious Father, keep me looking at You and Your grace and not at myself, my weaknesses and my failures. Give me today a renewed appreciation of Your sovereign mercy **AMEN**

BIBLE READING: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven:

A time to be born and a time to die,
A time to plant and a time to uproot,
A time to kill and a time to heal,
A time to tear down and a time to build,
A time to weep and a time to laugh,
A time to mourn and a time to dance,
A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
A time to embrace and a time to refrain,
A time to search and a time to give up,
A time to keep and a time to throw away,
A time to tear and a time to mend,
A time to be silent and a time to speak,
A time to love and a time to hate,
A time for war and a time for peace.

Reflection

Let us sing: **In Christ Alone**



Please turn page for Benediction

Meditation: "Seeds Have" ...
Potential! Power! Persistence!
Rev. Marian Welsford

Song:
God gives us a future, daring us to go,
Into dreams and dangers, on a path unknown.
We will face tomorrow, in the Spirit's power,
We will let God change us, for new life starts
now.

Holy Spirit teach us, how to read the signs,
How to meet the challenge of our troubled times.
Love us into action, stir us into prayer,
Till we choose God's life, and find a future there.

ELIZABETH SMITH.

Benediction:
May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill
you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled
with the life giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim
over with hope.
Amen

ROMANS 15: 12-13. THE MESSAGE, EUGENE PETERSON.

Australian Church Women

"Faith in the Future"



Morning Devotions
23rd September, 2009
Victorian Unit

Prayer:
God of the inner light, come to us ... on the golden rays of the
morning, warming moods that are frosty, enlightening minds
that are gloomy; And, as the sun swings higher, so may our
lives rise to you in the active praise of this day's tasks, through
Jesus, our risen light, Amen.

"ON THE RAYS OF THE MORNING" BY BRUCE PREWER, "AUSTRALIAN PRAYERS"

Song:
This is the day, this is the day,
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has made;
We will rejoice, we will rejoice,
And be glad in it, and be glad in it.
Oh, this is the day that the Lord has made,
We will rejoice and be glad in it;
This is the day, this is the day,
That the Lord has made.

SCRIPTURE IN SONG NO 40.

Reading: *The Sower and his seeds.*
Jesus was travelling throughout the towns and villages, talking
to the people about God's kingdom, and sharing the Gospel
message.

His twelve special friends were with him, as well some of the
women who provided their daily needs, and they seemed to
gather many other followers as they moved along.

One day he spoke to them and told them a story.

A farmer went out to sow his seeds for harvest:

1. Some of the seeds fell on the well worn tracks, and it was
walked on and the birds quickly picked it up!

2. Other seeds fell on the rough edges of the tracks, and it
sprouted quickly, but soon withered and died because
there was not much soil for good roots!
3. Another lot of seed landed in amongst the weeds and
thistles, so of course the weeds grew as quickly as the
seeds, and choked out the good plants!
4. But then of course, there were many other seeds which
fell in the rich and fertile soil, and they grew well and
strong, and brought a rich harvest.

So what does all this mean, asked his disciples.
Well you have been with me and have some knowledge of
God's Kingdom and you are familiar with his ways, but others
need stories to help them understand, their eyes and ears are
open but they don't see or hear anything, so this story is for
them! The seed is the word of God!

1. The seeds that fell on the road are like people who hear
God's word, but Satan moves in and takes it away from
them, so they don't believe and are not saved.
2. The seeds that landed on the edges, are those who hear
and begin with great enthusiasm, but it doesn't go very
deep or last too long, so they are lost!
3. The seed that fell amongst the weeds are like those who
hear and accept, but become side-tracked and over run
by all the busyness and other interests of daily life.
4. But the seed that landed in the good rich soil, well they
are the ones who hear and understand, who takes
God's word to their hearts, and live by it, come what
may, to bring a good harvest.

Loosely based on LUKE 8: 4-15, THE MESSAGE.

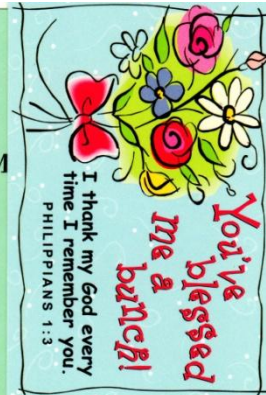
AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN

National Conference 2009
"Faith in the Future"

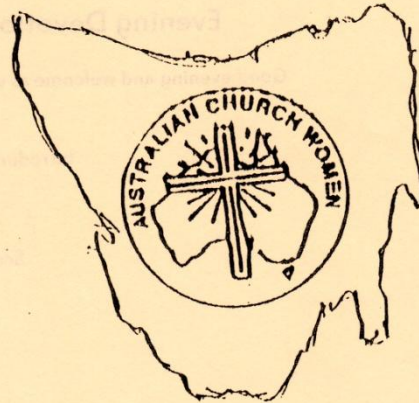
Greetings and blessings from
Victorian Unit
AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN

"Sowing the seeds"

PUMPKIN



AZALEA



Evening Devotions with Tasmanian State Unit.

Good evening and welcome as we meet together for reflective devotions at the end of this day..

IntroductionOur Faithful God.....

Hymn AHB 537

Scripture Hebrews 11: 1-6

Prayer for evening

REFLECTION

Hymn AHB 451

Prayer.....in the evening.....

President Shirley Brooks and Secretary Juanita Miller pray God's Blessing upon every person present this evening.

2. We must leave behind us
sins of yesterday,
for God's new beginning
is a better way.
Fear and doubt and habit
must not hold us back.
God gives hope and insight,
and the strength we lack
3. Holy Spirit teach us
how to read the signs,
how to meet the challenge
of our troubled times.
Love us into action,
stir us into prayer,
till we choose God's life, and
find our future there.

John Michael Brierley 1932.

Blessing:

Lord Jesus Christ you have put your life in our hands. Now we
put our lives in yours.
Take us.
Shake us.
Remake us.
No longer is what we have been important. It is what, with you,
we can be.
go in faith to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

Good Morning.

Let us begin our devotions with a prayer.

God of our lives we welcome this new day. It is your gift to us, a
new creation, a promise of Resurrection. Thank you for the sleep
that has refreshed us. This day, Lord, is full of promise and
opportunity. Let us waste none of it.

Hymn

1. Thank you for giving me the morning,
thank you for every day that's new,
thank you for all my hurts and troubles
I can take to you.
2. Thank you for all my friends and helpers,
thank you for people everywhere,
thank you for showing me Lord Jesus,
how to help and care.
3. Thank you for times of working, playing,
thank you for all that I can do,
thank you for all that is bright and cheerful,
and for music too.
4. Thank you for comfort in my sadness,
thank you for all who understand,
thank you that your hand hold and leads me,
everywhere I am.
5. Thank you for speaking to me, Jesus,
thank you for meeting with me here,
thank you, because you love all people,
those both far and near.
6. Thank you that you're so good and loving,
thank you that I am filled with you,
thank you, you make me feel so glad and
thankful as I do.

Martin G. Schneider 1930



National Conference 2009

MORNING DEVOTIONS

Thursday 24th September



ACT UNIT

Reading: James 2 14-18

My brothers, what use is it for a man to say he has faith when he
does nothing to show it? Can that faith save him?
Suppose a brother or a sister is in rags with not enough food for the
day, and one of you says, "Good luck to you, keep yourselves warm,
and have plenty to eat", but does nothing to supply their bodily needs,
what good is that? So with faith; if it does not lead to action, it is in
itself a lifeless thing.
But some may object: "Here is one who claims to have faith and
another who points to his deeds." To which I reply: "Prove to me that
this faith you speak of is real though not accompanied by deeds, and
by my deeds I will prove to you my faith."

**Christian faith is basically faithfulness, that is, commitment and
loyalty to God. Our Lord's words in the Gospels stress the far
reaching effects of faith, on the attitude and the life of the
believer. Faith is not something that can be taken up on Sunday,
then laid aside for the rest of the week. Faith gives us the
courage to face even the greatest difficulties in life.
Let us thank God now, for our faith and let him fan into flame
the gift that he has given us so we can with renewed faith face
the challenges ahead.**

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, help us walk with you the way of the beatitudes and live
out your mission in today's world. Unite us to all peoples of our time,
so that together we may create a world in which your spirit is present
and experienced, bringing peace and harmony to all.
May we transform our lives in the hope of Resurrection and through
compassion and love, offer all people a future lived in faith and your
abiding presence.

Hymn

1. God gives us a future
daring us to go
into dreams and dangers
on a path unknown.
We will face tomorrow
in the Spirit's power
we will let God change us
for new life starts now.

LEADER – (to incoming National Executive):

In recognising the gifts and talents that you have to offer, the members of ACW 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 them.

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

INC NATIONAL EXECUTIVE: *We will, trusting God for his guidance and strength, and relying on his grace.*

LEADER: We are pleased to hand over these badges to the new National Executive members.

PRESENTATION OF BADGES

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let his presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us. **Amen.**
(St Teresa's Prayer)

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN INC

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2009

"Faith in the Future"



Installation & Dedication

Incoming National Executive

24 September 2009

INTRODUCTION BY PRESIDENT: Mrs Jean Thomson OAM

Conference Song:

We have faith in the future,
raise your voices in praise and song
that Australian Church Women
remain ever faithful and strong.

We have faith in the future
as servants of His word,
Australian Church Women's prayers
will always be heard.

We are called Christ's disciples
with compassion and charity
befriending the poor and lonely,
and welcoming refugees

Lord, lift us in your spirit,
fill us with life anew,
that Australian Church Women
remain ever faithful to you.

PRESIDENT JEAN INTRODUCES THE INCOMING NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

President:	Miss Margaret Flint OAM
Vice President:	Mrs Dorothy Ferrier
Vice President:	Major Wanda McKeand
Secretary:	Mrs Judy Burge
Treasurer:	Ms Christine Barber
Minute Secretary:	Mrs Pat Walker
W K S Convenor:	Mrs Maureen Clark
F L C Convenor:	Mrs Margaret Greenslade
Special Days Convenor:	Captain Judith Brown
Social Justice Convenor:	Mrs Kath Smith
Publications & Publicity:	Vacant

ACT OF COMMITMENT:

LEADER: Let us now pray to God, our loving Creator, that he may hear our prayers as we come together with the new National Executive at the beginning of their term of office.

May these newly elected members of the National Executive lead Australian Church Women through service and dedication.

ALL: Lord, hear us.

LEADER: May we show our support for them through all that we do and in our service to them, to each other and to God.

ALL: Lord, hear us.

LEADER: Help us to do our best and to learn from our successes and our mistakes.

ALL: Lord, hear us.

LEADER: Guide us through the hard times and help us to encourage and support each other.

ALL: Lord, hear us.

LEADER: May we be reminded that we each have different gifts and each play a part in building up faith within Australian Church Women.

ALL: Lord, hear us.

ALL: Most gentle God, guide us along the right path; Jesus Christ be always there beside us. Comfort us by granting these prayers which we make with love and hope and faith in the future. **AMEN.**

I wish for you my friend, this happiness that I've found;
 You can depend on him, it matters not where you're bound,
 I'll shout it from the mountain top: I want my world to know,
 The Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.
 I'll shout it from the mountain top: I want my world to know,
 The Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.

Kurt Kaiser
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Leader:

Loving God, we give thanks for the service of the outgoing ACW
 National Executive through 2007-9.

As we remember ACW's links with FLC, WK Trust, ACWC, AWC,
 NCCA and State & Territory Units we pray that the presence of the
 Father enfolds us, the peace of the Saviour be upon us and the Spirit
 be within us. Amen.

Leader:

Jesus said, 'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot
 be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel
 basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.

All: In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they
 may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.'
 (Matthew 5:14-16; NRSV)

Turning Darkness into Light!

'I am the Candle of the Lord'

Music by Joy Webb; Sung by Mike and Jenny Clark
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**Cloth for the Cradle, Worship resources and readings for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany*
 Copyright© 1997 WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow G51 3UU
 # The Pattern of Our Days, Liturgies and Resources for Worship,
 Edited by Kathy Galloway the Iona Community

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, many 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.

Bernadette Farrell
 Reproduced with permission under licence CCLI 172432

Leader:

When all things began, the Word already was,
 The Word dwelt with God,
 and what God was, the Word was.
 Through him all things came to be;
 no single thing was created without him.
 All that came to be was alive with his life,
 and that life was the light of the world.

All: The light shines in the darkness,
 and the darkness has never put it out.
 (from John 1:1-5)

Stories: Maureen and Margaret

Leader:

It's important to know that we are loved, people care for us, and stand
 up for us. We need food to eat and safe places to work, sleep and lay.
 It's good to have places where we feel safe and comfortable,
 We enjoy the people we are with, family, and friends who love us.



**National Conference
 Australian Church Women
 Canberra ACT
 September 2009
 Devotions**

Leader:

In the beginning of creation,
 when God made heaven and earth,
 the earth was without form and void.
 Darkness was over the face of the deep,
 and a mighty wind swept over the waters.
 God said, 'Let there be light', and there
 was light.

All: God saw that the light was good,
 and God separated the light from
 darkness. (from: Genesis 1:1-4)*

Song: Christ be our Light

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.

Refrain:

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 pow'r to save us.
 Make us your living voice.

We pray for people around the world, who, like us,
 need to know that God loves them.
 We know that God brings light and love into the world. #

Intercession:

Into the dark places of our world, where people
 are frightened and hungry
Loving God, turn darkness into light

Into places where people are fighting and
 where people have no home
Loving God, turn darkness into light

Into places where we feel unsafe, and situations
 that hurt us and scare us
Loving God, turn darkness into light

Loving God, keep us safe in danger
Give us courage and keep us loving

Loving God, help us to speak the truth
To stand by those who need our help

Loving God give us friends who love us
Places and people that help us grow

Loving God send us on our way rejoicing
And welcome us safely home. #

Song: Pass it on

It only takes a spark to get a fire going,
 And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing.
 That's how it is with God's love: once you've experienced it,
 You spread his love to everyone, you want to pass it on.

What a wondrous time is spring, when all the trees are budding;
 The birds begin to sing, the flowers start their blooming.
 That's how it is with God's love: once you've experienced it,
 You want to sing, it's fresh like spring, you want to pass it on.

Loving God, unveil the brightness of your wisdom in our work, that the earth may be brought to fulfilment in your image. Shine through the darkness which separates us from each other, that the human family may rejoice in true freedom.

All: Christ, true light, hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer:

- (L) We are wayfarers, following roads to the ends of the earth, pilgrims on our way to the end of the age.
- (R) We travel lightly, travel together, and learn as we go. We are disciples on a mission that is urgent and the journey is long.
- (L) We travel with authority; fearful of no one; we are apostles, opponents of evil, heralds of hope.
- (R) We travel with humility, no task too menial; we are servants, the cross is our compass, love is our sign.

Blessing:

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

*Morning Prayer taken from 'Proclaim Praise'
Copyright 1995, Archdiocese of Chicago
Liturgy Training Publications*

- (L) You treat them like gods, dressing them in glory and splendour. You give them charge of the earth, laying all at their feet.
- (R) Kangaroo and Emu, sheep and cattle, birds of the sky, fish of the seas, every swimming creature.

All: Lord our God, the whole world tells the greatness of your name. Amen.

Hearing from our Hebrew tradition:

The prophet Micah was a man not afraid to speak out for God. His task was to show people that what God requires is that we give ourselves to the Lord.

Micah 6:8 'He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'

To act justly is to be honest and fair in all our actions; in business, in family life, towards our neighbours – to be people of integrity.

To love mercy is to be kind, compassionate, forgiving, understanding; to love our neighbours as ourselves.

To walk humbly with God is to let go of our own self-importance, to acknowledge we are part of God's creation, and dependent on Him; to rely upon God in every part of our lives.

Let us pray: Forgiving God, you are always there when we turn to you. Forgive us our sins, teach us to follow in your ways. Give us your grace that we may act justly in our lives. Loving God, in love you created us and through love you redeemed us.

We pray that we may love tenderly and show mercy in all our relationships. Grant that we may see Christ in others and love them as you love us. Help us to love you and to walk humbly in close relationship with you. Amen.



AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NATIONAL CONFERENCE CANBERRA SEPTEMBER 2009

DEVOTIONS

Prepared by the Western Australian Unit

Leader: We come, seeking to be fed by the Word of God, for Jesus, God's loved son, offers to us the bread of life, living bread for all.

All: Let us worship God who has provided so richly for us.

Opening Hymn: *We bless you Father*

We bless you, Father, Lord of Life, to whom all living beings tend, the source of holiness and grace, our first beginning and our end.

We give you thanks, redeeming Christ, Who bore our weight of sin and shame; In dark defeat, you conquered sin, and death, by dying, you overcame.

Come Holy Spirit, searching fire; whose flame all evil burns away, with light and love come down to us in silence and in peace to stay.

A reading based on Psalm 8:

- (R) Lord our God, the whole world tells the greatness of your name. Your glory reaches beyond the stars.
- (L) Even the babble of infants declares your strength, your power to halt the enemy and avenger.
- (R) We see your handiwork in the heavens; the moon and the stars you set in place.

Affirmation of Faith:

- (L) We **believe** in God who cares for all, especially the vulnerable and the powerless.
- (R) We **affirm** the right of all people to decent living conditions, housing, health services, education, food and clothing, fun and leisure.
- (L) We **assert** that God is with us in all that life brings us; that God loves us as we are at any moment in our life – in our anger and rage, in our pain and grief, our complaints and despair, our joy and delight.
- (R) We **hope** for the day that will come when God's justice and mercy, love and peace will be realities in this world.

All: We commit ourselves to show what we believe by the way we take care of God's creation and live together in community.

We pray for ourselves and others:

Christ, the sun of justice, dawns upon this new day, We welcome with praise our unfailing light. We pray that the hearts of all who preach your word may be set afire.

All: Christ, true light, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, show your splendour in the lives of the afflicted, that the nations may hope in your promise. Dawn with new radiance in the hearts of your disciples, that we may be one with you in mind and heart.

All: Christ, true light, hear our prayer.

THE MISSION OF IRENE'S PLACE

Jesus summoned his followers to build communities characterised by wholeness, truth telling, peacemaking and respect for the dignity of all.

In response to Christ's call Irene's Place seeks to challenge the ready recourse to violence and conflict at all levels of human activity; from interpersonal and family relations to local, national and international interactions. In an effort to be proactive about peace, Irene's Place will teach and model peaceful actions.

Irene's Place will be a centre of learning and welcome where committed young adults are encouraged to explore peaceful resolutions to conflict in its many facets.



IRENE'S PLACE

A house of discipleship, service and peace.

Want to learn
more about
faith, service
and peace?

Spend a year
at Irene's Place!

WHO IS IRENE?

Irene comes from the Greek word for peace.

Irene's Place means that we are making a space for peace in our ordinary lives.

WHERE?

The community house is in Forrest, an inner suburb of Canberra, Australia.

The house is on the site of the Wesley Uniting Church, a short walk from Canberra Baptist Church.

WHO?

Participants are:

- ★ Young adult Christians;
- ★ Between the ages of 18-25; and
- ★ A mix of internationals and Australians.

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

The basics are: 6 months – 1 year commitment living in community with other young adults. Exploring discipleship, and practising our faith together through prayer, volunteering in the local community, Bible study and discussion, learning about the complexities of peace and how we can be people of God's wholeness. Living simply, without a job or classes to attend.

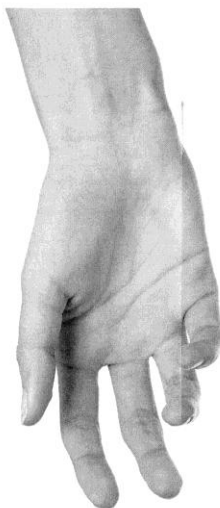
Irene's place is supported by:



Bringing young
adults together.

Promoting the
teachings of peace
and non violence.

Living in community
and practicing
everyday faith.



HOUSE RUNNING COSTS

Each participant will be required to pay an amount at the beginning of each year to cover living expenses. This contribution to house running costs will vary from year to year. Participants are encouraged to raise some of their support from their local congregation. This is a volunteer placement so participants will not be able to have jobs or attend University while taking part in the program.

DATES

Participants enter the program in September and February.

Applications should be received 3 months before starting date for Australians and 4 months before for internationals.

PARTNER

GROUPS

Irene's Place is supported by contributions from both the Canberra Baptist Church and the Mennonite Mission Network.

LEADERSHIP

Moriah Hurst is the community coordinator for young adults in the house. Moriah works with youth and young adults at Canberra Baptist Church and has recently completed studies in theology and youth ministry. She is trained in peace making and related disciplines.

A SNAPSHOT OF WEEKLY AND DAILY LIFE

Active participation in the life of the church including leadership opportunities in the youth programs and wider church.

Volunteering at community organisations or local schools and drop-in centres.

Sharing in the life of the house, worshipping, eating, playing, learning and reading the bible together.

Creating an individual peace project combining your passion for peace with community organising.

Apply now

for next year's
program!

AN OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR

Workshops, speakers, examining Australian culture and religion.

Training in the 'Alternatives to Violence Project'.

Exposure trips – Examining peace in regional areas.

Matching with host families and mentors.

Simply fill out the
form and return to:

att: Moriah Hurst,
Canberra Baptist Church
P.O. Box 4055
Kingston ACT
Australia 2604

Tel +61 02 6295 9470
Email: moriah@canbap.org

Visit our blog:
irenesplacecommunity.blogspot.com

- ☐ I want to hear more about Irene's Place
- ☐ Please send me an application for Irene's Place

First name:

Last name:

Sex:

D.O.B.

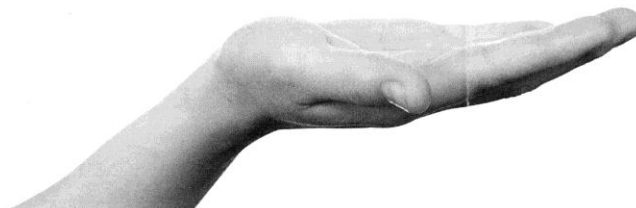
Address:

Phone number:

Email address:

Home church:

Leadership experience (attach extra sheets if required):





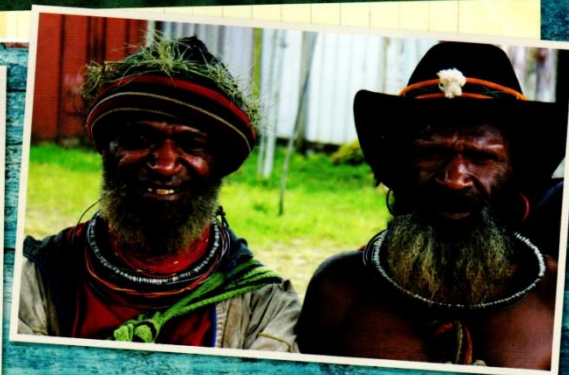
UnitingWorld
connecting communities for life



UnitingWorld is an agency of
the National Assembly of the
Uniting Church in Australia.

YAP news

JUNE
2009



Young Ambassadors for Peace

Young Ambassadors for Peace is a part of the Peacemaking programs of UnitingWorld. Since its inception in 2001 YAP has assisted many communities in need of conflict resolution to build a culture of peace.

Thanks to your support YAP has been able to empower people to create peace, resolve conflict and build friendships across barriers of conflict and violence. During the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009, Joy Balazo has travelled to Bougainville to conduct peace workshops for ministers, helped to create peace in the Philippines through the bringing together of Muslim and Christian groups and held the first all female peace workshop in the Solomon Islands.

All in all in 2008 YAP conducted seven workshops, two Gatherings of YAP and Closing the GAP members, one Peace Agreement Signing and three to four months of mediation sessions with warring tribal groups. Already in 2009 Joy has conducted three peace workshops, one gathering for YAP/GAP members and one training of the trainers. There are many more workshops, trainings and mediations to come in 2009 and we look forward to building on the incredible results already achieved with your support.

Young Ambassadors for Peace HIGHLIGHTS

PEACE FOR THE WAUWA AND HARO TRIBES	2
THE NEXT STEP AFTER WORKSHOP	3
RECONCILIATION IN THE PHILIPPINES	3
FROM THE FIELD	4

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UnitingWorld was previously
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