

**AUSTRALIAN CHURCH
WOMEN**

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**FELLOWSHIP
DAY**

JULY, 1976

THEME:

" CONFESSING CHRIST TOGETHER."

In November-December, 1975, almost 3,000 people gathered in Nairobi, Kenya for the 5th Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Elizabeth Appleby, who prepared this service, was one of them. She has brought together prayers and readings used at the Assembly - by Christians from all parts of the world, from many different backgrounds. As you read them and listen to them, you witness to your fellowship with all people everywhere who confess Christ. "All joy be yours" wherever you are today confessing Him together.

OPENING HYMN:

(Tune - Regent Square)

God of grace and God of glory,
on thy people pour thy power;
Now fulfil thy Church's story;
bring her bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour.

Lo, the hosts of evil round us
scorn thy Christ, assail his ways;
From the fears that long have bound us
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the living of these days.

Cure thy children's warring madness
bend our pride to thy control;
Shame our want on selfish gladness,
rich in goods and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
Lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

Set our feet on lofty places,
gird our lives that they may be
Armoured with all Christlike graces
in the fight to set men free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
that we fail not man nor thee.

LEADER:

*Almighty God and merciful Father,
pour out on your church
the spirit of your son Jesus
so that dreams may be dreamt
and visions seen;
opne our eyes for his work among people.
Holy Spirit of God
who brooded over the waters long before we
were born,*

who inspired the people of God to praise
and trust,
who lit the fire of the prophets
and sustained their faith among unbelief;
Holy Spirit of God
fill us with confidence and make us available
teach us to pray and to hear the moanings of men
help us to interpret the signs of the times
and prepare us for the kingdom of God
each day and forever Amen.

READING: 2 Corinthians 5: 14 - 6: 2.

ACT OF PENITENCE: Said by All.

Almighty God,
whom we can call Father because of the obedience
and sacrifice of Jesus - Messiah:
we come before you in silence, for we have failed;
failed to be the imprint of your image,
failed to be your stewards before people and over
nature,
failed to reflect your love and mercy,
failed to be servants of reconciliation.

And yet, Father, we pray to you
because we long to be trustworthy,
showing the impact of your love in our lives,
acting out justice as you will it.

Therefore, O God, do not take your Spirit from us,
but implant in us the image of your Son,
justify us with him
and lead us through this world towards your
kingdom. Amen.

RESPONSORY: (from Isaiah 6: 1 - 9)

LEADER: Alas, I am lost, I have seen the King,
but my lips and my people are unclean.

ALL: Holy, holy is our God;
the earth is full of his glory.

The sinner's hope let men deride,
For this we count the world
but loss.

Inscribed upon the Cross we see
In shining letters, "GOD is LOVE;"
He bears our sins upon the
Tree;
He brings us mercy from above.

The Cross! it takes our guilt
away;
It holds the fainting spirit up;
It cheers with hope the gloomy day,
And sweetens every bittercup.

TO CHRIST, Who won for sinners
grace
By bitter grief and anguish sore,
Be praise from all the ransom'd
race
For ever and for evermore.

INTERCESSIONS: (*Prayers included in the Message to the Churches
from the 5th Assembly of the World Council of
Churches*)

LEADER: *God of Hope, whose Spirit gives light and power
to your people, empower us to witness to your
name in all nations to struggle for your own
justice against all principalities and powers
and to persevere with faith and humour in the
tasks that you have given us.
Without you we are powerless. Therefore we say:*

ALL: *Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus.*

LEADER: *God of Love,
who through Jesus Christ shares our suffering,
forgives our sins and delivers from the
bondage of oppression, help us to desire and
nourish in ourselves sustaining community with
our brothers and sisters everywhere. Give us*

*courage to share suffering when it comes.
Restore to us the joy of resurrection, that
in the midst of situations we can hardly
bear we may sing out:*

ALL: *Hallelujah, Praise be to You, O Lord.*

ALL: *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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory
are yours
now and forever. Amen.*

SOLO/CHORAL ITEM/HYMN (own choice):

INFORMATION: *concerning the Winifred Kiek Scholarship,
and other announcements.*

ADDRESS:

THE OFFERING:

THE PEACE:

LEADER: *Jesus said:
How blest are the peacemakers.
God shall call them his children (Matthew 5:9)*

ALL: *Lord make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let us show love,
Where there is division, let us bind together.*

LEADER: *Peace is my parting gift to you,
my own peace, such as the world cannot give.*

*Set your troubled hearts at rest,
and banish all your fears (John 14:27)*

ALL: *Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is error, let us show truth.
Where there is doubt, let us bring belief.
Where there is despair, let us bring hope.
Where there is sorrow, let us spread joy.*

LEADER: *May the God of peace
who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great shepherd of the sheep,
by the blood of the eternal covenant,
make you perfect in all goodness
so that you may do his will (Hebrews 13:20)*

ALL: *Lord make us instruments of your peace.
Help us not so much to be comforted as to
comfort,
not so much to be understood as to understand,
not so much to be loved as to love.
Lord, make us perfect in all goodness
so that we may do your will.*

LEADER: *The peace of God which is beyond our utmost
understanding will keep guard over your hearts
and your thoughts in Jesus Christ.
(Philippians 4:7)*

THE PEACE *is then passed from one to another . . . e.g. a
handshake, accompanied by the words: "The Peace
of God is yours this day."*

HYMN: *(Tune: Darvall)*

*Rejoice, the Lord is King,
YOUR LORD and King adore;
Mortals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph evermore:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.*

JESUS, the Saviour, reigns,
THE GOD of truth and love:
When He had purged our stains,
He took His seat above:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

His Kingdom cannot fail;
He rules o'er earth and Heav'n;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our JESUS given:
Lift up your heart, lift up
your voice:
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

He sits at GOD'S right hand
Till all His foes submit,
And bow to His command,
And fall beneath His feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your
voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

LEADER:

*GO FORTH in the name of the Father, The Son
and the Holy Spirit.*

AMEN.

LEADERS' GUIDE.

AS YOU MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR "CONFESSING CHRIST TOGETHER".

YOU MAY LIKE TO FOLLOW THE WORSHIP SERVICE

WITH

A DISCUSSION HOUR - using questions such as the following:

- e.g. (1) What are your hesitations about explicitly confessing your faith before others?
- (2) What indications do you see amongst Christians of a loss of confidence in the God we proclaim and in the power of the Gospel?
- (3) How do you experience the presence of the living Christ today in the various situations from which you come?
- (4) How do we arrive at a common affirmation of faith in Christ out of our different experiences of him in our particular life-situations?
- (5) How can a community confessing Christ become a ferment in society and a means for the saving power of God in human transformation?

OR

A PANEL/FORUM - with 3 or 4 people of different style or traditions as resource persons.

- e.g. (a) confessing what their faith is and ready to answer questions.
- (b) or available as group leaders for a time of discussion,
- (c) with an attempt by groups to clarify the "common" content of the Christian faith, expressed in many different ways.

OR

A BIBLE STUDY/PRAYER TIME - using the passages read during the service.

- e.g. a time for responding to the Word together.

OR

A STUDY HOUR - based on the W.C.C. Assembly Report on "Confessing Christ Today".

- e.g. with a leader going through the main points of the statement and groups looking at the recommendations which follow it.

And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.

Refrain: And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love.
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will walk with each other, We will walk hand in hand. (repeat)
And together we'll spread the news That God is in our land.

Refrain:

We will work with each other, We will work side by side, (repeat)
And we'll guard each man's dignity and save each man's pride.

Refrain:

All praise to the Father,
From whom all things come.
And all praise to Christ Jesus,
His only Son.
And all praise to the Spirit,
Who makes us one.

Refrain:

(This song is available on tape for groups to hire)

ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTION FOR No.4 Come, Holy Spirit, Come -tune Franconia by Joseph König.
The following is another hymn which can be used if and where it is felt to be appropriate. The music is that of Jacob's ladder. To be sung solemnly at first but with increasing tempo and joyfulness.

1. O Lord Jesus, cast our sin out.
Lord, have mercy: Christ, have mercy.
Take away our life of sin now.
Jesus, hear our prayer.
2. Fill our empty lives with your love.
Give our lives some great new purpose.
Send your Spirit to live in us.
Jesus, hear our prayer.
3. You, alone, Lord, can transform us.
You, alone, can we depend on.
You, alone, can give us power.
Jesus, hear our prayer.
4. Glory to God, peace to all men.
Let us praise him, let us bless him.
Let us give our lives to serve him,
Jesus, hear our prayer.

Solo or Choir section suggestions:

"Love is Some Again" - "Faith, Folk and Clarity" by Gilliard
"Christ is my Rock" - "Medical Mission Sisters"

Postlude - "His Peace He Gives to Us" - (this song is available on the same tape for hire)

Word of God for Us Today

It can be a sermon, dialogue, role play, testimony - what ever you feel expresses how we can open ourselves to adventuring with the Spirit. To be willing to put our pride at risk, to act as responsible stewards of God's Good World. How to allow the Holy Spirit to work in our personal relationships to bring ourselves and others to a deeper and more personal relationship with God.

WINIFRED KEIK SCHOLARSHIP - the Leader may mention at the start of the service or before the offering that the money collected during the service will be used to help the Winifred Keik Scholarship holders during their training in Australia.