

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN



"New Beginnings
Bright Hope....."

WORLD COMMUNITY DAY - OCTOBER 2000

Australian Church Women – ACW came into being in 1965 when Women's Inter-Church Councils from all States and Territories came together to form Australian Church Women, fostering ecumenism and undertaking action on behalf of Church women. Australian Church Women forms a network of committed Christian women, dedicated to encourage fellowship and service across denominational, national and international boundaries.

Fellowship of the Least Coin – Monies which have been collected with prayer for peace and reconciliation during the past year are brought to World Community Day services by groups and individuals and are dedicated. These funds are then sent to State/Territory Treasurers who forward them to the National Treasurer.

General Offertory from this service is to be divided equally between Asian Church Women's Conference, with which Australian Church Women is affiliated and supports annually, and the 2000 Special Community Day Project –

Today's Order of Service was prepared by the New South Wales Unit of Australian Church Women.

The Cover Design is by Lucelle King.

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AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN WORLD COMMUNITY DAY Theme: "New Beginnings – Bright Hope"

WELCOME AND GREETINGS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: God has come to us and He is here! It is a time for celebration. We will praise Him in old songs and old ways, in large places and in small gatherings

In this Year of Jubilee

Response: *We, His gathered people, sing praises and renew our vows with joy.*

Leader: We will create new songs and new ways to help us proclaim the greatness and glory of God ...

In this Year of Jubilee

Response: *We, His gathered people, sing praises and renew our vows with joy.*

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

All: Heavenly Father, We come in quietness and confidence before you.
Cleanse our hearts and minds from all that keeps us from you – that we may worship you with reverence and sincerity.
Guide us throughout this service to a deeper understanding of the 'bright hope' that is ours through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, in whose Name we pray. Amen.

HYMN: 'Praise with joy the world's Creator' TIS 179 or
'Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness' AHB382

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LITANY OF PRAISE AND THANKS

Leader: Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise Him ...

All: For the word of the Lord is right and true; He is faithful in all He does.

Leader: The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of His unfailing love ...

All: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He chose for His inheritance ...

Leader: The eyes of the Lord are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love ...

All: We wait in hope for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.

Leader: In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name.

All: May Your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in You.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: We confess to you, our forgiving God, that the true meaning of Jubilee has not permeated our hearts. We have not perfectly reflected the Jubilee ideals of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation. In confessing, we pray for courage to move ahead, to go beyond our personal comfort area and to offer in all our relationships the true spirit of your love, joy and peace. Amen

READINGS FROM THE NEW TESTAMNT LETTERS

Romans 5 : 1-11

1 Peter 1 : 3-9

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SOLO (or Singers) 'The bright wind of heaven' TIS 263

THE GOSPEL

Luke 15 : 1-7

HYMN: 'Amazing Grace' AHB 56 or
'The King of love my shepherd is' AHB 81

ADDRESS 'NEW BEGINNINGS – BRIGHT HOPE'

HYMN: 'God gives us a future' TIS 687 or
'All my hope on God is founded' AHB 465

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN OFFERING AND PRAYER

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

All: O Loving Creator, we present ourselves in your
(Standing) Divine Presence to thank you for all the bountiful gifts of life. We are especially grateful for the Fellowship of the Least Coin which binds us together in love and forgiveness around the globe. Free us from all doubts and prejudices we pray. Inspire us to live in solidarity with humankind that we may know the joy of giving and receiving.
Dear God, accept this Least Coin 'Token of Love'. Make us mindful of the miracles of these coins. Let us honour your creation with love as shown through the life and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen

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INTERCESSIONS

Leader: Let us pray for those in need.
Loving God, we pray for those who have turned away from your love and care. Help us to show them how much you love them.

Response: *Grant your new beginning, bright with hope.*

Leader: In this year of Jubilee we pray for those who are burdened with heavy loads of debt and guilt. May they be released and set free. Help us to be forgiving.

Response: *Grant your new beginning, bright with hope.*

Leader: Bless, we pray, our sisters in Christ, the women of Pakistan, with whom we are partners in prayer. When they are persecuted give them courage and relieve their suffering. Encourage and strengthen their witness. Help us to be faithful in praying with them, and practical in our support.

Response: *Grant your new beginning, bright with hope.*

Leader: Gracious God, you have brought us together as Australian Church Women from different churches to worship and serve you together. Increase our love for one another and our unity in the faith. May all Australian Christians grow together in love and understanding.

Response: *Grant your new beginning, bright with hope.*

Leader: We pray for the Asian Church Womens Conference to which we belong and where we join with women of different cultures. Help us to learn from each other. In this millenium year help us to understand and appreciate our changing world and in it proclaim the good news about Jesus Christ.

Response: *Grant your new beginning, bright with hope.*

Leader: Into your care, O God, we commend all those in need and together with confidence we pray as Jesus taught us –

All: **‘Our Father in Heaven ...’**

GENERAL OFFERING AND DEDICATION

All: Our Heavenly Father, as we share your concern for those who are in poverty or need, we thank you for the privilege of sharing what we have to help some of your lost and wandering sheep. We pray for the work of Asian Church Women’s Conference, as it seeks to bring women together and lift up the down-trodden, that you will guide and forward their ministry. We pray also for the Year 2000 Special Project to support *(name and details of project, or leave space for leaders of local services to insert)*, that you will bless this work and encourage all those involved in it. We ask these things for the extension of your kingdom, in the name of Jesus our Saviour and Intercessor. Amen.

HYMN: ‘Great is thy faithfulness’ TIS 154 or
‘Praise to the Lord the Almighty’ AHB 28

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

Leader: May the God of 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.

(TIS – Together in Song – new Australian Hymn Book)