

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH
WOMEN

World
Community
Day



OCTOBER 1976

ENCOUNTER

E N C O U N T E R

This PREAMBLE is meant to be read quietly by the worshippers while they await the beginning of the Service.

"A tree is born, a tress dies, the forest lives for ever". (This was a message from a political detainee in an infamous Asian Detention Camp).

"A grain of wheat remains a solitary grain unless it falls into the ground and dies; but if it dies, it bears a rich harvest." (John 12. 24.N.E.B.)

"To be a witness is to live your life in such a way that it would not make sense if God did not exist." (From an Asian witness).

Recently, thirty women gathered together in a storm-battered Retreat House on the fringe of an Asian city. A typhoon had just preceded the gathering, its skirts still lashing, tearing, devastating, drowning and destroying. The gathering consisted of women from some of the participating nations of the Asian Church Women's Conference. Women came from Malaysia Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand. From India, officers of the Conference; from Japan, the solitary male, one of the two resource persons present. Thus, in an unlit, powerless, waterless, unsewered, chilly building, began ENCOUNTER.

2.

For the Australians and New Zealanders, it was indeed an encounter with REALITY. They only of the group were those whose Christian commitment demanded little of them.

It was an encounter with people who dared, who risked, who loved. Each one, with the exception of five white faces, came from countries where the only right they possessed was the right to agree; where to be a Christian was to be prepared to stand up and be counted for Christ's sake, involving risk and the ever-present fear of arrest and detention as a subversive. It was an encounter with CONTRAST.

An encounter with nature's glorious beauty and with her vengeance and its aftermath; with luxuriant opulence, where those who have, gain more and more; with unimaginable poverty and want, where those who have little, lose even what they have. It was an encounter with SUPPRESSION, where freedom of speech, so contemptuously handled by Australians, is denied; where a decision to speak can mean loss of liberty, of loved ones, of life, too often preceded by interrogation and torture.

It was an encounter with incredible COURAGE
boundless HOPE and daring FAITH.

*An encounter at every turn with the
Crucified God!
An encounter with those who had
encountered HIM!*

THE LEADERS ENTER & GREET THE CONGREGATION.

Information about the Fellowship of the Least Coin Offering and the Community Day Project may be given. There will be no further announcements during the service.

A part or the whole of the Preamble may be read to the worshippers.

HYMN Stand up and bless the Lord,
 Ye people of His choice;
Stand up, and bless the Lord your God
 With heart, and soul, and voice.

Though high above all praise,
Above all blessing high,
Who would not fear His holy name,
And laud and magnify?

Oh, for the living flame
From His own altar brought,
To touch our lips, our mind inspire,
And wing to heav'n our thought.

God is our strength and song,
And His salvation ours;
Then be His love in Christ proclaim'd
With all our ransom'd powers.

Stand up, and bless the Lord,
The Lord your God adore;
Stand up, and bless His glorious Name
Henceforth for evermore.

4.

AN ACT OF PRAISE, the people standing.

LEADER : Praise and glory and wisdom,
thanksgiving and honour, power
and might be to our God for ever
and ever.

ALL : *Holy, holy holy is God the Sover-*
eign Lord of all, who was, and is,
and is to come!

LEADER : For freedom Christ has set us free.

ALL : *Alleluia! The Lord our God,*
Sovereign over all, has entered
on his reign!

LEADER : We are all one in Christ.

ALL : *Exult and shout for joy & do him*
homage!

LEADER : Justice & right are the pillars
of His throne.

ALL : *Alleluia! Victory and glory and*
power belong to our God, for true
and just are his judgements!

LEADER : Praise and glory and wisdom, thanks-
giving and honour, power and might,
be to our God for ever and ever!

ALL : *Holy, holy, holy is God, the Sover-*
eign Lord of all, who was, and is,
and is to come!

FIRST THOUGHTS.

LEADER : Together we meet.....
What does it mean to meet?
People meet by chance or on purpose;
with joy, with fear, with hope.
Though they meet, they may be so far
apart, neutral or hostile, that they
do not meet at all. Then there is
cause for sorrow. Sometimes, when
they meet, they discover each other,
so that the eyes are opened and the
hearts touched, and they bring dignity
and grace to each other.
What do we look for in our meeting?

Pause

ALL : *Oh God, we begin to see how often we
have refused to meet people, refused
to trust ourselves to them. We have
been insensitive and thoughtless. We
have been proud or afraid. We ask you
through them to forgive us.*

Pause

LEADER : Together we meet before God.....
As people of faith, we recognise
another dimension to our meeting. When
we gather in the name of God, He is
among us in His holiness and power.
How shall we understand this meeting?

Pause

6.

ALL : *Open our eyes, O God, to your
glory, that we may worship in spirit
and in truth, and offer you the
praise of glad and thankful hearts.*

Pause

LEADER : Together we meet before God to hear
His voice.....
As Moses and the children of Israel
came to the tent of meeting before
the Lord, and knew His promise that
He would speak with them and sanctify
the meeting with His glory, so we
stand in His presence and await His
word. What will be the word of the
Lord? Shall we hear it or shall we
refuse to hear it?

Pause

ALL : *We begin to see how we have refused
to meet you, O Lord. We have been
afraid to let your word enter our
hearts. We have been afraid that
you would ask of us more than we
wanted to give. Lord, we are sorry.
We ask you to forgive us.*

Pause

LEADER : We ask that in this meeting God will
help us to hear and to understand,
to see and to perceive.

Pause

ALL : Meet and speak with us, O God,
and teach us to desire what you
desire for us and for all whom we
meet. Give us wisdom and courage,
and let us not be weary in doing
your will, through Jesus Christ,
your Son, our Lord.

THE GREETING OF PEACE.

LEADER : As a token of our resolve to go out
of ourselves to meet with those
around us, we offer our hand in
fellowship and exchange a greeting
of peace, saying, "Peace to you".

THE READINGS.

LEADER : We open our minds to hear the
Word of the Lord.

FIRST READING : ISAIAH 6 : 1-8

SECOND READING : MATTHEW 25 : 31-46

HYMN : When I needed a neighbour, were
you there, were you there?
When I needed a neighbour, were
you there?
And the creed and the colour and
and the name won't matter,
Were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were
you there, were you there?
I was hungry and thirsty, were
you there?
And the creed.....

8.

I was cold, I was naked, were you
there, were you there?
I was cold, I was naked, were you there?
And the creed.....

When I needed a shelter, were you there,
were you there?
When I needed a shelter, were you there?
And the creed.....

When I needed a healer, were you there,
were you there?
When I needed a healer, were you there?
And the creed.....

Where'ver you travel, I'll be there,
I'll be there.
Where'ver you travel, I'll be there
And the creed and the colour and the
name won't matter.
I'LL BE THERE.

T H E A D D R E S S

INTERCESSIONS

LEADER ::: Lord, you made the world and every-
thing in it; you created the human
race and gave us the earth for our
possession.

ALL : *Break down the walls that separate us
and unite us, Lord.*

LEADER : Lord, we have been divisive in our
thinking, in our speech, in our
actions; we have classified and im-
prisoned one another; we have fenced
each other out by hatred and prejudice.

- ALL : *Break down the walls that separate us and unite us, Lord.*
- LEADER : Lord, you mean us to be a single people, ruled by peace, feasting in freedom, freed from injustice, truly human, people responsible and responsive in the life we lead, the love we share, the relationships we create.
- ALL : *Break down the walls that separate us and unite us, Lord.*
- LEADER : Lord, we shall need ever-new insights into the truth, awareness of your will for all humanity, courage to do what is right even when it is not allowed, persistence in undermining unjust structures until they crumble into dust, grace to exercise a ministry of reconciliation.
- ALL : *Break down the walls that separate us and unite us, Lord.*
- LEADER : Lord, share out among us the tongues of your Spirit, that we may burn with compassion for all who hunger for freedom and humanness; that we may be doers of the Word and so speak with credibility about the wonderful things you have done.

10.

ALL : Lord, direct us in ways we do not
yet understand, and equip us for
the service of reconciliation and
liberation in your world.

LEADER : Let us now dedicate the offerings
of the Fellowship of the Least Coin,
to be used in serving your world.

(Members of the Fellowship will bring forward
their offerings)

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.

HYMN. (During the singing of this hymn the
offering for this year's project
may be received.)

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing

Contd:

Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns
 Let men their songs employ;
 While fields and floods, rocks, hills
 and plains
 Repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow,
 Nor thorns infest the ground;
 He comes to make His blessings flow
 Far as the curse if found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
 And makes the nations prove
 The glories of His righteousness
 And wonders of His love.

RESPONSE

LEADER : What we have discovered in our meeting
 may so easily be lost, overlaid by
 the ordinary demands of each coming day.
 It is more comfortable to fall back
 into step with the 'rhythmic drumbeat
 of the status quo'. Let us resolve
 to seek the grace to persevere.
 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.*

LEADER : Let His words come to you:
 Your guilt is taken away;
 Your sin is forgiven.

ALL : *Holy, holy is our God.*

LEADER : Whom shall I send, and who will
 go for us?

12.

ALL : Here am I, send me.

LEADER : Holy, holy is our God.

ALL :: The earth is full of His Glory.

ALL :: With all our heart we offer ourselves again to your service.
Strengthen our resolve and give us grace to persevere, in the love and power of Jesus Christ our Lord.

HYMN Forth in Thy Name, O Lord, I go,
My daily labour to pursue;
Thee, only Thee, resolved to know,
In all I think, or speak, or do.

The task Thy wisdom hath assign'd
O let me cheerfully fulfil;
In all my works Thy presence find,
And prove Thy good and perfect Will.

Thee may I set at my right hand,
Whose eyes my inmost substance see,
And labour on at Thy command,
And offer all my works to Thee.

Give me to bear Thy easy yoke,
And every moment watch and pray,
And still to things eternal look,
And hasten to Thy glorious day.

For Thee delightfully employ
Whate'er Thy bounteous grace hath given
And run my course with even joy
And closely walk with Thee to Heav'n.

THE DISMISSAL.

LEADER : May the blessing of the Lord rest
upon us all and upon His people,
in every land, of every tongue,
now and evermore.

ALL : A M E N.

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This World Community Day Service has been prepared for Australian Churchwomen by Rachel Cocks, A.C.W. National Representative to the Asian Churchwomen's Conference, who attended the A.C.W.C. Seminar in the Philippines in June. Assistance was given by the Rev. John May of Hobart.

Should a discussion group instead of an address be preferred, the following questions are submitted as suggestions for optional use.

Or, there could be group discussion during or after the lunch hour.

1. Do you feel awkward about meeting people? Why?
2. What would make you regard a person of another race superior to yourself?
3. Other things being equal, how would you feel about a son or daughter of yours, marrying a person of another race or faith, e.g. a Moslem or a Buddhist?

14.

Questions (Cont:)

4. Are we our brother's keeper?
If we are, how can we show it?
Have we any responsibility towards
people in detention camps?

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YOUR WORLD COMMUNITY DAY OFFERING
FOR 1976

A I D S

Indonesia's Transmigration Programme

It helps to give pre-departure training in Agricultural skills to trans-migrants, to enable them to meet the challenge of their new environment.

During 1975, with funds available through the World Council of Churches, 165 families (540 persons) were transmigrated.

The Churches' participation in transmigration has stimulated the government to place emphasis on the importance of pre-departure preparation and training, and could be considered as an attempt to take part in the Government's effort to achieve an even distribution of population to all islands in Indonesia.

Experience with these programs, which were started in 1972, has shown that people in poor areas are willing and interested in transmigration. After living for 3 to 5 years in the new areas, the transmigrants enjoy a higher standard of living than previously in Java.

Of the homeless and jobless who had moved to Jakarta from Central and East Java, in search of a better life, the Municipal government decided to transmigrate 70 families. Prior to departure, these families were given a 2½ month training in basic agriculture, animal husbandry, carpentry, and basic skills. 20 families were settled in Bengkulu (South Sumatera) and 50 in Kendari (South East Sulawesi).

Plans are being made to carry out follow-up care after the families have settled in the new areas.

The World Council of Churches involvement in this project is giving new hope for the future to these people.

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