

HYMN: "Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim"

DISMISSAL:

"Grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory now and for all eternity."

(2 Peter 3: 18)

"Peace to you all who belong to Christ!"

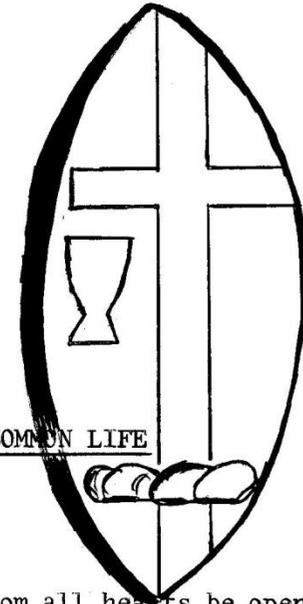
(1 Peter 5: 14)

RESPONSE: AMEN.

This Fellowship Day worship service has been prepared for AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN by the Rev. Clive Harcourt-Norton, NSW State Secretary of the Australian Council of Churches. The theme is associated with that of the Week of Prayer for the Unity of all Christians held between Ascension and Pentecost (May 7 - 17 1964).

511 Kent Street, Sydney

FELLOWSHIP DAY



SHARING THE COMMON LIFE

WORSHIP SERVICE:

Preparation.

Leader: ALMIGHTY GOD, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name; through Christ our Lord: AMEN.
Teach us, O God, to forget ourselves and to think first of Thee and of our fellow men; that, as we wait upon Thee for guidance, and serve our brethren in fellowship, we may know the joy of being Thy children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

SILENCE for three minutes while each prepares to take her full part in the common worship.

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STATEMENT on the significance of FELLOWSHIP DAY.

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Invocation said by leader:

IN the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN.

RESPONSIVE READING:

Leader: In my distress I cry to the Lord, that he may answer me:

Response: Deliver me, O Lord, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue. (Ps:120: 1-2)

Leader: I was glad when they said to me

Response: Let us go to the house of the Lord!

(Ps.122: 1)

Leader: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

Response: Who made heaven and earth. (Ps.124: 8)

Leader: They said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them"

Response: The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad. (Ps.126: 2-3.)

HYMN OF PRAISE: "O praise ye the Lord!
Praise Him in the height;"

THE LESSONS:

Isaiah 55: 3 - 11 (the calling of God's people and the power of His Word)

I Peter 2: 1-10 (N.E.B.) (a description of the Church).

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE:

Leader: Let us Confess
. our failure to seek the Lord at all times

Response: Forgive us Lord.

Leader: . our persistent clinging to our own ways

Response: Forgive us Lord.

Leader: . our crooked and prejudiced thoughts

Response: Forgive us Lord.

Leader: . our self-deceit to avoid unpleasant truth

Response: Forgive us Lord.

(Silence)

Together: O GOD, forgive what we have been:

Sanctify what we are:

Order what we shall be. Amen.

HYMN OF THANKSGIVING:

"Rejoice to day with one accord".

SPEAKER:

"Sharing the Common Life".

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

i. Extempore or written prayers arising out of the address.

ii. Concluding with a Litany of Unity:

Leader: May the Holy Spirit guide our prayer for unity towards Jesus and the Father:

Beyond the frontiers of language, race and nation

Response: Unite us, Lord Jesus

Leader: Beyond our ignorances, our prejudices and our instinctive enmities;

Response: Unite us, Lord Jesus

Leader: O God, for thy greater glory

Response: Gather together all separated Christians.

Leader: O God, that goodness and truth may prevail

Response: Gather together all separated Christians.

Leader: O God, that there may be only one flock and one Shepherd

Response: Gather together all separated Christians.

Leader: O God, that peace may at last reign on earth

Response: Gather together all separated Christians.

Leader: O God, for the greater joy of thy Son

Response: Gather together all separated Christians.

Together: The Lord's Prayer.

Offering: Organ or vocal solo.

Presentation of offering:

PRAYER OF DEDICATION:

Leader: Let thy Spirit direct our going out and our coming in:

Let the promises, the pursuit, the praise of thy glory rule the desires of our hearts:

Let thy light illuminate, thy truth occupy, thy wonder fill the chambers of our minds:

Let thy love flood all our springs of motive and will:

Do thou work in and through us as thou will please, and stifle every whisper of merit or self-seeking. AMEN.

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AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN
511 Kent Street
Sydney

FELLOWSHIP DAY

SHARING THE COMMON LIFE

STUDY MATERIAL: I John:1:1 - 10.

This study has been prepared for use on FELLOWSHIP DAY. It is suggested that the study be used in groups of 8 - 10 with a leader who has had the opportunity of preparation by having had the material prior to the day.

A short commentary on the passage.

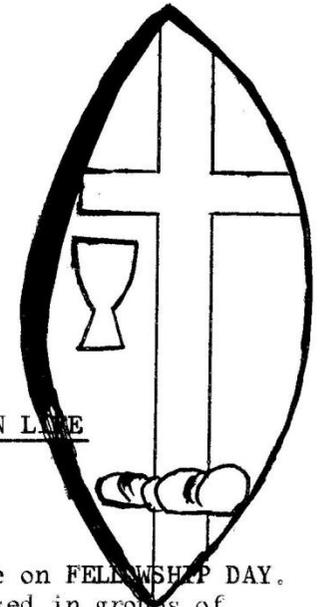
The 'key' to life is in God's hands - and always has been. In the fullness of time Jesus Christ came to demonstrate the meaning of eternal life. He did this by living in the world.

Those who experience this 'life' must declare it so that others may share this 'greatest good'.

The heart of this good news is that God is Light. There is no darkness in Him. Christians are those who walk in the steps of Christ - in the Light. Therefore if we claim to be living His life and continue to walk in darkness, our lives are a contradiction. But if we walk in the light then we share His life and His cleansing power will make us clean.

As we walk side by side, we share together a common life, a life inspired and illuminated by God, but also beset by failure and sin.

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TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- (A)
1. Evangelism and missionary work are often thought of as inviting others to join in the activities of a certain group (e.g. the congregation on Sunday, women's guild, youth group or a 'fellowship'). Is this because we cannot or dare not speak from our own experience?
 2. "Christians are very ordinary people making extraordinary claims" - D.T. Niles. I John I: 1 - 4 suggests that evangelism consists of declaring not inviting.
What difference ought this to make to -
 - i. your conversation in the street
 - ii. your church magazine
 - iii. the leadership of the worship of the congregation
 - iv. the possibility of a united campaign of Christian evangelism in your district?
- (B)
- The Church should be a training ground for saints - i.e. for people who more and more desire to share the divine life. But congregational services and programmes often seem to be geared to maintaining existing levels of spiritual life.
- i. Why have so many congregations and ministers become content with a low average standard of Christian conduct and devotion?
 - ii. What can be done to encourage an understanding of the need to "progress" in Christian faith?

- (C)
- "Jesus Christ has reconciled us to God. Yet we do not live together as his one flock. We all invoke the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are his people, a single people and yet still unable to glorify and praise him in unity"
- from introduction to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity leaflet 1964.
- Yet many still affirm that our denominationalism is not sinful.
1. What must we do in the light of I John I: 8 - 10 ?
 2. Would you agree with this quotation from "The Hard Facts of Unity" by John Lawrence (SCM Press 1961);
"There can be little further progress towards unity until hundreds of thousands of men, women and children in the pews of our churches begin to see some things which they do not at all want to see."

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Each member of the group is asked to read the Bible passage and commentary in quiet meditation. As the questions are studied allow time for individual members to read them and then share their discoveries with their neighbour sitting next to them. Then ask the group to share their findings and their further questions.