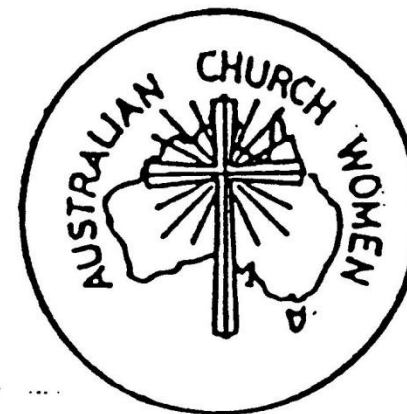
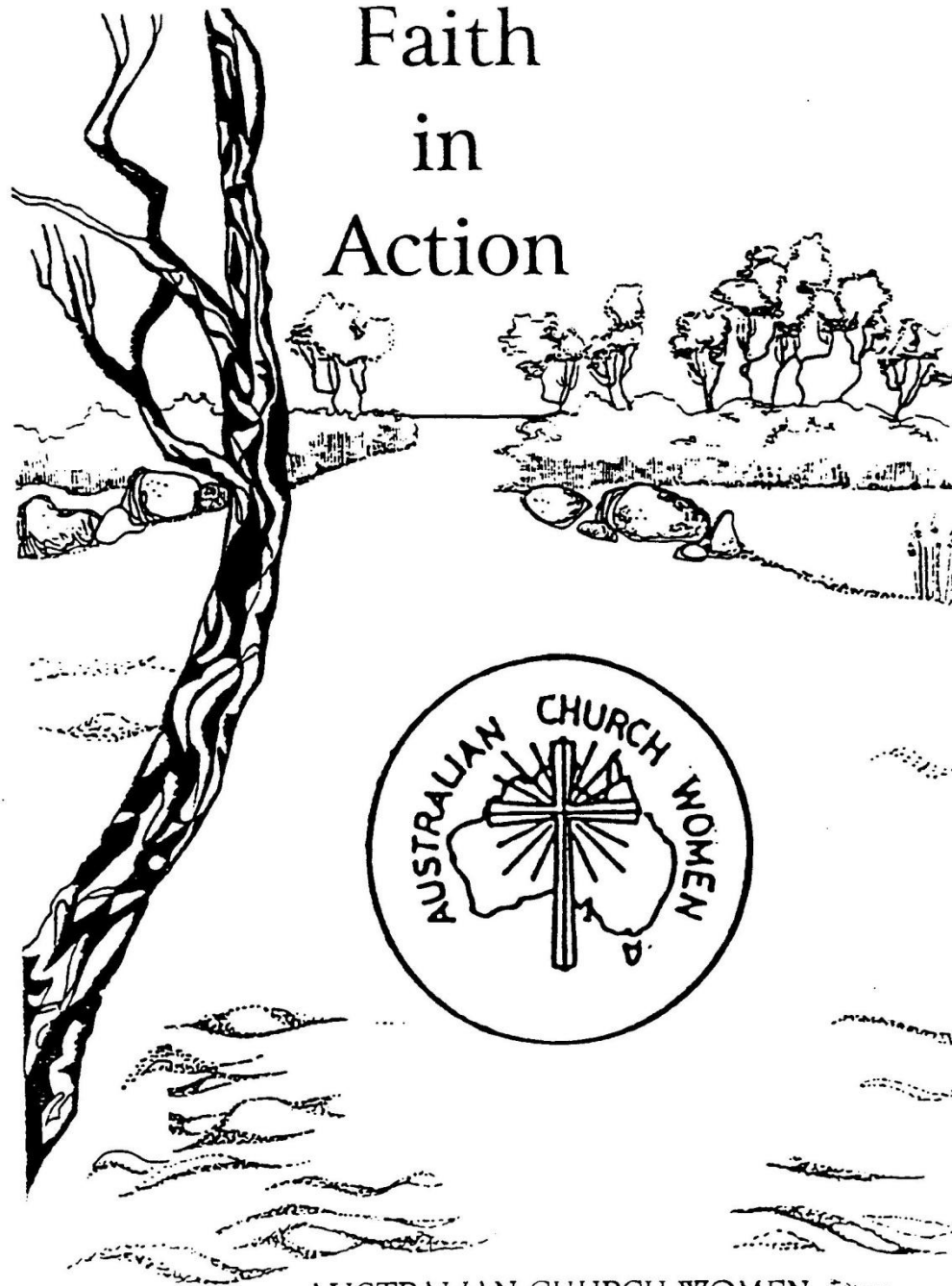


STATE/TERRITORY UNIT NEWS

Faith in Action



AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN
WORLD COMMUNITY DAY, 1999

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 1999 Special Community Day Project -

The Exodus Foundation, at the Ashfield Uniting Church. The Rev Bill Crews and a band of dedicated helpers and volunteers run the Exodus Foundation. Approx. 300 meals are provided each day. A Special School has been set up to assist 11-13 year olds (years 6-7) at school, especially with numeracy and literacy skills. This is run with help from Macquarie University Special Education teachers and students.

Today's Order of Service was prepared by the Victorian Unit of Australian Church Women.

The Cover design is by Gemma Schooneveldt.

PLEASE NOTE: This Order of Service is copyright and may not be rewritten or otherwise altered, except for the substitution of hymns that are considered to be more suitable and available in the local situation.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN WORLD COMMUNITY DAY

Theme: "Faith in Action"

WELCOME AND GREETING

World Community Day is the day Australian Church Women have set aside to celebrate our unity in Christ, a day on which we remember and pray for our sisters around the world.

Welcome to this service of worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Lord in our brokenness you have called us to be one, in our diversity you call us to be understanding and to love, in our plenty you call us to share the resources you give to the world.

As we worship today help us to understand the call, that a belief in you gives, a call that confronts us and brings us not only to worship but also to action. Let us worship God our Father, Christ our Lord and the Holy Spirit which empowers us.

(Please be seated)

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Let us pray as we sing "Father we adore you..."
Sing Alleluia 35. Tune Trinity.

(Prayer continues)

Leader: God, in this service of worship,
Help us to be one with you in our understanding,
in our looking and in our thinking.
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

HYMN AHB 85 "To God be the glory ..."
Tune to God be the Glory. 11 11 11 11 and refrain.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Let us now confess our sins and seek God's forgiveness.

We confess, O Lord, that we do not always take the time to be quiet and listen to you.

We do not always tell others of your love for them, which may leave some people feeling unsure, unloved and without hope.

We do not always respond to the needs of others, which may leave some feeling hungry, while our plates overflow, or some may be cold and wet while we are well clothed and live in warm shelters.

Response: *O Lord forgive us.*

Leader: In times of war or natural disaster we do not always respond, as well as we might, to share the resources which you have provided.

Response: *O Lord forgive us.*

Leader: We confess we do not always stretch out our hands in fellowship to those who are different from us. Peter and Paul learnt that your love is for all who call you Father.

For the times we walk by on the other side.

Response: *O Lord forgive us.*

Leader: For these and all our sins we seek forgiveness. You taught the disciples how to pray and we now pray in a like manner.

"Our Father in Heaven ..."

INTRODUCTION TO THEME

Leader: The theme of this service is "Faith in Action", and we want to look at what this means for us as individuals, and corporately as the Body of Christ within our communities. There are many areas and activities where we see faith being put into action, and needing our support ... let us take a few moments to look at some of these.

READER 1. "Trust in God and do good" (Ps 37:8). "Look after the widows and the orphans" (James 1:27). Volunteers are constantly required to enable such activities as Meals on Wheels, Drop-in Centres, Food Banks, Safety Houses, Counselling Centres, Opportunity Shops, etc., to function.

These are avenues in which we see Church members and others seeking to put faith into action. Government sponsored organisations for the support of Single Parents, Abused children, Drug and Alcohol dependency, Youth Support, Refugees for the Homeless, also seek volunteers.

Let us put our faith into action through prayer, financial and practical support of these and other like activities.

READER 2. "What good is it my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith, but do not have works?" James 2:14

In his life on earth Jesus brought love, reconciliation and justice for all men, women and children. He calls us to recognise the importance of a person's dignity and self esteem, living together in loving acceptance of our differences and a spirit of reconciliation. He calls us to work towards the provision of adequate food, clothing, shelter and employment for all, whilst also being good stewards of the environment.

We must take up the challenge ... to be like Jesus ... to speak and act for the well-being of all.

READER 3. "For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith". Gal 3:26

Rapid advances in transport, communication and media have shrunk national borders in our world ... brought our neighbours, our world family, very close. We hear their cries in times of natural disaster such as floods, famine, earthquakes etc. We see the human tragedy of conflict, massive debts and human greed. Jesus calls us to reach out and share the resources we have with our brothers and sisters, to help alleviate their distress.

The support of Asian Church Women's Conference provides an opportunity for us to help women in particular, in some less developed countries. As partners in A.C.W.C. let us take time to learn how we can work alongside our sisters.

READER 4. "But she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on." Mark 12:44

In giving the Least Coin of their currency, all people are able to contribute on the same level to the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

Our prayers and support are needed to ensure that these coins are used to provide assistance for many projects which benefit women and children in all countries of the world.

Now we have an opportunity to put our faith into action as we share in this special offering.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN - OFFERING AND PRAYER

ALL: O Loving Creator we present ourselves in your 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 miracle of these coins. Let us honour your creation with love, as shown through the life and resurrection of your Son, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

ITEM/SOLO Optional.

BIBLE READINGS

Hebrews 11: 1-3, 8-19.
Galations 5: 16,17, 22-26.

ADDRESS

HYMN AHB 551 "I sing a song to the saints of God.."
Tune Grand Isle - Irregular.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Leader: We pray for all members of Australian Church Women, and for all councils and ecumenical conferences throughout the world which give leadership and expression to Faith in Action.

RESPONSE: *May their vision grow.*

Leader: We pray for those who benefit from grants given by the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

RESPONSE: *May their work bear much fruit.*

Leader: We pray for suffering peoples of the world, those suffering the effects of earthquake, flood, famine, oppression, poverty or war.

RESPONSE: *Give us the courage to recognise our responsibility to support in prayer and action.*

Leader: We pray that peace and justice may prevail throughout the world, so that children may grow and that men and women live in dignity, without fear.

RESPONSE: *Creator God help us to be so moved by the power of your love that each day we may respond by loving all people as we are loved. Amen.*

OFFERING and DEDICATION

"Blessed are you, Lord God our Father;
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
And for the service of your kingdom. Amen".

SENDING FORTH

HYMN Sing Alleluia 14. "Brother, sister, let me serve you, ..."
Tune Servant Song 87.87.

WORD OF MISSION

Go out into the world to love and serve the Lord,
reflecting in your lives and action His Love and
concern for all.

BLESSING

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit go with us all. Amen.