

Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th - 9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

WORSHIP and DEVOTIONAL SESSIONS

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|--|---|
| TUESDAY | 2 p.m. | OPENING WORSHIP & ADDRESS | "Able for All Things" - Ours is an Omnipotent God. |
| | 9 p.m. | EVENING MEDITATION & PRAYER | "Our God Made Flesh" - the source of inspiration, power, strength, peace, hope and love. |
| WEDNESDAY | 7.15 a.m. | MORNING SONG | "God gives His people love". |
| | 9 p.m. | EVENING MEDITATION & PRAYER | "God gives His people love" for reconciliation. |
| THURSDAY | 7.15 a.m. | MORNING SONG | "God gives His people hope". |
| | 9 p.m. | EVENING MEDITATION & PRAYER | "God gives His people hope" to be shared. |
| FRIDAY | 7.15 a.m. | MORNING SONG | "God gives His people strength" |
| | 3 p.m. | CLOSING SESSION - THANKSGIVING, COMMITMENT, DEDICATION, WORSHIP. | "God gives His people strength" for the on-going tasks - "My God shall supply all your need". |

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8th - 9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

OPENING WORSHIP and ADDRESS

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TUESDAY,

6th February - 2.00 p.m.

Theme Meditation: "You shall receive power

when the Holy Spirit comes upon you;

and you will bear witness for me in Jerusalem,

and all over Judaea and Samaria, and away to the ends of the earth". - Acts 1:8.

"For the Spirit that God gave us

is no craven Spirit but one to inspire strength,

love and self-discipline."

- 2 Tim. 1:7.

"For the same God who said,

'Out of darkness let light shine'

has caused his light to shine within us,

to give the light of revelation - the revelation of the glory of God

in the face of Jesus Christ.

We are no better than pots of earthenware

to contain this treasure, and this proves

that such transcendent power does not come from us,

but is God's alone."

- 2 Cor. 4:6 & 7.

There is an insistence in the very complexities of the times in which we live, that Christian women frequently remind themselves, not only of the quality of the faith we hold, but of the nature of the One in whom we have placed that faith.

"I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day", is an affirmation that cannot be made too often, even to one's self, in the bewildering context of today's changing attitudes and deviations from long-held principles and truths. We need to remind ourselves that no one cuts our God down to size. He is still the "I AM" of yesterday, today and forever, the Creator - Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent. He is indeed

"ABLE FOR ALL THINGS"

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PRESIDENT: Ours is an 'enabling' God.

Being Himself omnipotent, He is indeed 'able for all things'.

The amazing wonder of His grace is that He has declared His benign intention towards all who put their trust in Him,

to fill with the power of His Spirit all who in faith and love take to themselves the marvellous gift of redemption through His Son, Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Today's 'women in transition', taking maybe their first tentative steps towards full personhood in the membership of Christ's Church, may claim His promised power no less confidently than their sisters who have always stepped out boldly adventuring for Him.

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OPENING WORSHIP and ADDRESS

2.

PRESIDENT: Let us then be glad -

The Source of Inspiration is also the Fountain of Strength and Power.

OUR GOD IS ABLE!

WITH HIM ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!

"This is the Spirit that we have received from God, so that we may know all that God of His own grace has given us."

"He gives His people STRENGTH!"

"He gives His people HOPE!"

"He gives His people LOVE!"

THEREFORE LET US PRAISE HIM!

OPENING PRAISE: (All Standing)

"LET ALL THE WORLD IN EVERY CORNER SING"

"My God and King!"

The heavens are not too high,

His praise may thither fly;

The earth is not too low,

His praises there may grow.

Let all the world in every corner sing,

"My God and King!"

Let all the world in every corner sing,

"My God and King!"

The Church with psalms must shout,

No door can keep them out;

But, above all, the heart

Must bear the longest part.

Let all the world in every corner sing,

"My God and King!"

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS (Selected) -

PRESIDENT: "Happy the people who have learnt to acclaim Thee

Who walk, O Lord, in the light of thy presence!

In thy name they shall rejoice all day long:

thy righteousness shall lift them up.

Thou art thyself the strength in which they glory."

RESPONSE: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?

The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?"

1st VOICE: "Let all the peoples praise thee, O God.

Let all peoples praise thee:

For the Lord, high as He is, cares for the lowly."

RESPONSE: "May my meditation please the Lord

as I show my joy in Him."

2nd VOICE: "The Lord will give strength to His people:

the Lord will bless His people with peace."

SUNG

RESPONSE: "Let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice,

Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice!

Let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice,

Let them ever shout for joy!"

3rd VOICE: "Happy are they whose trust is in God!

Praise the name of the Lord,

Praise Him, you servants of the Lord,

Who stand in the house of the Lord, in the temple courts of your God.

Praise the Lord."

SUNG: "Let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice,

RESPONSE: Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice!

Let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice,

Let them ever shout for joy!"

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4th VOICE: "The Lord is a great God, a great king over all gods;
the farthest places of the earth are in his hands,
and the folds of the hills are his; the sea is his, he made it;
the dry land fashioned by his hands is his.
Come! Let us throw ourselves at his feet in homage,
let us kneel before the Lord who made us; for he is our God,
we are his people, we the flock he shepherds.
You shall know his power today if you will listen to his voice."

PRESIDENT: Let us all kneel in humility and homage before the God of our salvation.

ALL: Accept, we humbly pray, our offering of thanksgiving and praise, O God.
(Kneeling) Help us so to express our love for You in the quality of our daily living,
that it, too, shall be a worthy and fragrant offering.

PRESIDENT: Hear in mercy our confessions, O God -
of faithlessness and betrayal of selfishness and pride
of envy and greed of indifference and intolerance
Forgive us and cleanse us, we pray.
Prepare us to receive afresh the measure of your Spirit which shall empower us
to be 'able for all things'.

ALL: Grant us awareness of your Presence within and about us throughout the days
of our meeting together.

PRESIDENT: Direct our thoughts, plans and decisions to the end that your will and purpose
for Australian Church Women shall be truly served.

ALL: Here in the calm and quiet of this hour and this sanctuary,
we would be still and know You indeed to be God.
We claim again the promised power
to bear that witness which shall indeed reach out and away to the ends of the earth
in a faithful interpretation of the One in whose name we pray -
"Our Father which art in heaven "

PRESIDENT: Let us again be seated and give attention to the Reading from scripture.

READING: (N.E.B.) John 4:6 --
"It was about noon, and Jesus, tired after his journey, sat down by the well.
The disciples had gone away to the town to buy food. Meanwhile a Samaritan woman
came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'.
The Samaritan woman said, 'What? You, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a Samaritan woman?'
(Jews and Samaritans, it should be noted, do not use vessels in common.) Jesus answered her,
'IF ONLY YOU KNEW WHAT GOD GIVES, AND WHO IT IS THAT IS ASKING YOU FOR A DRINK,
YOU WOULD HAVE ASKED HIM AND HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU LIVING WATER'.
'Sir', the woman said, 'You have no bucket and this well is deep. How can you give me
"living water"? Are you a greater man than Jacob our ancestor, who gave us the well,
and drank from it himself, he and his sons, and his cattle too?' Jesus said,
'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that
I shall give him will never suffer thirst any more. The water that I shall give him
will be an inner spring always welling up for eternal life'. 'Sir', said the woman,
'give me that water, and then I shall not be thirsty, nor have to all this way to draw.'
.. .. Jesus said, 'The time approaches, indeed it is already here, when those
who are real worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Such are the
worshippers whom the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship
in spirit and in truth!' The woman answered, 'I know that Messiah (that is Christ)
is coming. When he comes he will tell us everything'.
Jesus said, 'I AM HE, I WHO AM SPEAKING TO YOU NOW.'

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OPENING WORSHIP and ADDRESS

READING (Contd.)

At that moment his disciples returned, and were astonished to find him talking with a woman; but none of them said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" The woman put down her water-jar and went away to the town, where she said to the people, "Come and see a man who has told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?"

ADDRESS Guest Speaker - who will conclude the session with prayer.

BENEDICTION -

ALL: "God be gracious to us and bless us,
 God make his face shine upon us
 that his ways may be known on earth
 and his saving power among all the nations. Amen.

A D D R E S S

delivered by

MRS. DOROTHY McMAHON

at the

OPENING WORSHIP SESSION

of the

NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING

of

A U S T R A L I A N C H U R C H W O M E N

held at

DEACONESS HOUSE, SYDNEY, N.S.W., 6th - 9th FEBRUARY, 1973

" O U R G O D I S A B L E "

You and I sing and pray and state that we believe in a God who is able for all things. The world will not believe in that God unless the people of God, who claim his power, show themselves to be enabled. Let us ask ourselves what this really means in terms of your life and mine.

Because I believe that the most powerful way of communicating is to bear witness, I am going to share with you, in a personal way, why I believe that our God is able for all things.

Around 22 years ago, when I was 16, a preacher said to me, "Give your life to God and He will enable you to overcome sin. Come forward today and witness to your salvation." He omitted to say that God also enables us to be forgiven when we fail and because I was too afraid to go forward, the guilt of that failure remained, crippling my spiritual life for 10 years. I clung to the thought that God would save me from my sin and miserably struggled to be the sort of person who could claim salvation.

Then another preacher read the passage in which Christ said, "I am come that you may have life and have it more abundantly". Quite suddenly it was as though the pieces of my soul rolled into place. Down the years of my life I heard people saying things that were meaningless at the time, thoughts of forgiveness and grace and my own mother saying, "But Dorothy, Christianity is a thing of joy! You are so unhappy that something must be wrong." I looked out the clear glass

windows of the church and, quite literally, the sky looked bluer and the grass greener. I saw that I could start afresh every minute of my life and live with an enabling God - that He would participate in my struggle.

But the same fear which stopped me going forward all those years ago was with me still, paralysing my ability to communicate. I was so self-conscious that I avoided all responsibility which would involve speaking with others. I even chose a career teaching pre-school children because I thought that at least they wouldn't know if I made a fool of myself. Then one day, I was confronted in a Bible study group with the thought that self-consciousness is really consciousness of self and closely related to selfishness. This began my biggest battle and it needed a great deal of loving support from my friends and faith in God to fight through - nothing instant and miraculous, a step by step struggle.

These were two of my "woman at the well" experiences. Here was Christ saying to me as he did to that woman, "I know you (five husbands and all, and to me selfishness and fearfulness and all) and I offer you the water of life!"

I think that anyone who has found new freedom and power goes on, in mounting excitement. I like very much Teilhard de Chardin's concept of "groping" - the thought that humanity is groping upwards in an ascending spiral towards God. Sometimes our groping ends in a dead-end, other times, if we are prepared to be among the "gropers", you and I may actually become part of the upward spiral. I also love the thought that I received from the Rev. Norman Webb that we are all part of "the Way" for each other - Christ, the most complete expression of the Way and each of us offering to each other a small part. I am sure that we all can remember times when our minds leap out to grasp a new Truth from another person - we have recognised part of The Way.

After my first feeble gropings, my life gained a new momentum and I could hardly wait to try all sorts of new experiences and accept new responsibilities. Then I found that, lo and behold, as with the woman at the well, the male disciples of Christ are still astonished to find Him talking with a woman! Of course, in our day, it depends what the woman says Christ is saying to her. If she says that He is telling her to offer her services to the Church in the form of sick visiting, Sunday School teaching and money raising then none is surprised. If, on the other hand, she says "Christ says that I am now grown up in the Faith and ready to share the decision-making of the Church, to accept the responsibility of power", then often they question whether it is Christ speaking to her at all.

Last year I had a very special "well" experience. I was invited by the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace to attend an international Conference of women in Cyprus, to discuss a woman's role in peace education. The response was interesting, when I tried to raise my fare. One man said "But she can't go, she has children!" This raised some interesting thoughts in my mind, e.g. apparently I am responsible enough to be a mother of four children but not mature enough to decide when I can safely leave them for two weeks, and also - I didn't notice any gentlemen protesting "But she can't go, she has children" when I went to hospital to have my last child!

Then the Connexional Secretary of my own Methodist Church in N.S.W. was approached. He said "The Church has no machinery to support things like that". At the same time the Church was paying the full expenses for a world trip for its Property Secretary to look at Church buildings. Now, if this really reflects Church priorities, it is high time that women took a hand in deciding them.

Any way, I went to Cyprus because a handful of women thought it was important and I find it hard to express what happened to me. I went, reasonably informed about world affairs and very concerned for peace - I had always believed that the role of the Church is not only to ask men to come to Christ, but to take Christ to men and women in the form of love and justice. I believed that I was presenting my witness here in a very costly way - risking my precious reputation every time I spoke of peace. In Cyprus I was confronted by the lives of women who were prepared to lay their very lives and liberty down in the cause of love and justice. For a week we talked together and loved each other, sharing the realities of humanity and trying to find, each one in her own situation, a beginning point to work for the Kingdom of God on earth. I can only give you a few thoughts from the women who moved me most.

There were the two Lutheran ministers from East Germany and Hungary and from them we saw a picture of a Church reacting to adversity. As I listened, I couldn't help thinking that a touch of adversity would be good for us all. When Christianity becomes costly, the Church is reduced to Christians who are prepared to pay a price for their faith. I was impressed too by the way they had translated the best sharing features of socialism into their church finances - not for them the great wealthy churches, wallowing in carpets, heaters and expensive publications, alongside a struggling cause in a difficult impoverished area.

There was the gentle, quiet Japanese delegate who was particularly interested in education. She related how the Japanese people, after their terrible experiences at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are

totally opposed to war and armaments. The Japanese government would like to rearm, so, in order to bring up a new generation which is not so strongly opposed to war, it has altered the school text books to play down Hiroshima. We thought about this and compared notes to find that every country in the world is guilty of biasing its history in favour of itself and its friends. This meant that every new generation is prevented from dealing with life in the light of reality. Women could well read their children's text books.

The two women from South America, Uruguay and Argentina presented a very challenging witness. Even their life at the conference was a challenge because the woman from Argentina (they were complete strangers to each other) gave up her whole conference to translate for the Uruguian woman who could only speak Spanish - this severely limited her chance to talk with the rest of us who all spoke either French or English. They came with well-documented evidence of the physical and mental torture which could lie before them if they challenged the injustices in their own countries - many of their friends had completely disappeared and their own chances were quite unpredictable. Nevertheless they told us with great joy of the work they were planning.

The Israeli and Lebanese delegates could not agree on the truth of their situation and we were confronted with the difficulties that face us all when we differ as to our estimate of truth and move into the area of hurting each other. It is so much easier to close the subject and deal with each other on another level. We also realised that, if we do, there is little hope for us because the very things which it hurts us to deal with are the things which divide us - if we avoid them there is no hope of reconciliation and healing.

The whole conference closed around the three South African women in sorrow and love. They alone could see no way to begin working because their alternatives were so reduced by oppression. For the first time I realised that it was possible for human beings to so devalue another human being as to make it almost impossible for that person to feel valuable in the sight of God. There she was, a beautiful black Bantu woman, gentle, humble, educated and in every way worthy and yet she believed that she was a nothing. I said to her "Elizabeth, in the role play today, how about you play a superior black woman and I will play an inferior white woman?" She said "Dorothy, every minute of every day of my life I have been told I am inferior, everywhere I go it is impressed upon me that I am inferior. I couldn't even pretend to be superior to a white woman." Another time she said to me "When you go back, will you thank the Australian people for me? When they demonstrated against the Springboks they gave me my one moment of hope in five years. I thought that someone, somewhere, knows of my condition."

For us it was messy, divisive and disturbing - for her, her one moment of hope. Perhaps we don't all want to demonstrate, but, if we don't, we must find other ways of registering our opposition to oppression more loudly.

Then the white South African woman, already under investigation before she left South Africa - running the only mixed-race restaurant in the whole of South Africa, voluntarily staffed and catered for by Christian women. For her too, a terrible hopelessness! For six months she had been campaigning to bring six people, imprisoned without trial, to trial. Finally the day came and they were tried. All were acquitted. The very next day all six were rearrested. Can you imagine what this does to people who are struggling to be witnesses to the love of Christ? For the first time I saw Australia in perspective - through the eyes of the world. I realised that the face we present is one of racism. Some things have changed with our new government - our support of Rhodesia and South Africa, and some of the discriminations against non-white migrants. The world is watching our treatment of our Aborigines and our non-English speaking migrants. There is much to be done.

The whole week was like a confessional of the sins and tragedy of the world. Yet from that conference arose a simply dynamic wave of hope. It came because we believed that our God is able through us to transform the world; it came because we love each other enough to produce new courage and strength and because we left prepared to give expression to our hope - to prove that we have hope by moving into the struggle of life. We believed our prayer that God's will really can be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The words of South America's Paulo Freire have come to mean a great deal to me

"As long as I fight, I am moved by hope.

And, if I fight with hope, then I can wait."

You and I, as women, can lead the Church into new patterns of risk and daring and adventure because we believe in the enabling God, because we are people of hope.

- - DOROTHY McMAHON.

Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th - 8th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

LONGUEVILLE, N.S.W.

WEDNESDAY, 7th February.

Introduction by A.C.W. President, Mrs. Jessie Dennis, of President-Elect, Mrs. Joy Smith who will conduct Opening Devotions -

CALL TO WORSHIP

PRAYER and LORD'S PRAYER

BIBLE READING: Romans 12: 6 - 10.

SINGING TALK

HYMN: "FILL THOU MY LIFE, O LORD MY GOD" (Tune: Beatitude)

1. Fill Thou my life, O Lord my God,
in every part with praise,
That my whole being may proclaim
Thy being and Thy ways
2. Not for the lip of praise alone,
Nor e'en the praising heart,
I ask, but for a life made up
Of praise in every part:
3. Praise in the common things of life,
Its goings out and in;
Praise in each duty and each deed,
However small and mean.

4. Fill every part of me with praise;
Let all my being speak
Of Thee and of Thy love, O Lord,
Poor though I be and weak.
5. So shalt Thou, Lord, from me, e'en me,
Receive the glory due;
And so shall I begin on earth
The song for ever new.
6. So shall no part of day or night
From sacredness be free;
But all my life, in every step,
Be fellowship with Thee.

PRAYER

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BUSINESS SESSION: Reports: FEDERAL ORGANISATIONS - Denominational Women's Groups and Girls' Brigade and Y.W.C.A.

UNITED CHURCHES (Mrs. Ruth Lane)

NEWSLETTER - "Women at Work" (Mrs. Eileen Dingle)

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN (Mrs. Ruby Hagh)

LUNCH (at approx. 12.30 p.m. allowing $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ hour)

AFTERNOON SESSION (50 - 60 mins.)

"DESIGNING A WORSHIP SESSION" conducted by the REV. DOROTHY BAKER

"LET'S DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS!" - Discussion of problems and issues raised in reports contained in N.C.W. Working Documents.

The President, Mrs. Jessie Dennis, will invite the following ladies to contribute as a "panel" to the discussion - (They are all A.C.W. National Ctee members.)

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| MISS DORIS MITCHELL | representing Anglican Women of Australia |
| MRS. GREN FAULKNER | President, Australian Christian Women's F'ship (C. of Christ) |
| MRS. JOYCE POPE | President-Elect, Congregational Women's F'ship of Australia. |
| MRS. EILEEN DINGLE | President, Australian Federation of Methodist Women. |
| MRS. JEAN STICPENICH | President, Presbyterian Women's Ass. of Australia. |
| MRS. OLIVE CARPENTER | representing Salvation Army Home Leagues of Australia. |
| MISS JAN CHRISTIE | General Secretary, Girls' Brigade of Australia. |
| MRS. HOPE McPHEE | representing the Y.W.C.A. of Australia. |

(Time permitting, following the afternoon session, there will be a brief historical tour, returning to Deaconess House at 4.00 - 4.30 p.m. approx.)

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN IS MOST APPRECIATIVE OF THE KINDLY HOSPITALITY OF THE "LADIES OF LONGUEVILLE" and THE N.I.C.C. of NEW SOUTH WALES WHOSE HEAVY CO-OPERATION MADE POSSIBLE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE!

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National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th-9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

EVENING MEDITATION and PRAYER

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TUESDAY, 6th February, 9.00 p.m.

OUR GOD MADE FLESH - The Source of Inspiration and the Fountain of Power, Strength, Peace, Hope and Love.

Meditation Music - "Be Thou My Vision".

For purposes of the meditation which will be read aloud, those seated on the left of the centre aisle (facing front) will read as GROUP 1, and those on the right of the aisle, as GROUP 2.

MEDITATION - "OUR GOD MADE FLESH" (Reader, 7 solo voices, 2 groups and All voices)

Reader: He was born in a village stable!

No birth could be lowlier.

Possessed of profound wisdom, He had but meagre education.

No wife, .. no child -

1st Voice: He showed each lonely heart its deepest need.

2nd Voice: For thirty years, near the village of His birth,
He grew and learned His simple trade,
shaping the native wood to serve the wants of home and craft ..

GROUP 2: Three years He wandered, teaching,
shaping the native hearts to service in truth and love.
He was never more than a hundred miles from His birthplace.

3rd Voice: He held no earthly rank or office ..

4th Voice: wrote no book ..

5th Voice: no song ..

6th Voice: painted no picture ..

7th Voice: builded no monument ..

GROUP 1: His native land was ruled by conquerors and foreign legions.
While still in the flush of youth, his own people turned against this man
who strangely taught that evil can only be overcome by good.

ALL VOICES: He was denied by His close friend,
deserted by most,
betrayed for thirty pieces of silver by one He had befriended.

GROUP 2: One dark hour He knelt in the garden, - His hour of decision.

1st Voice: He gave Himself over to His enemies, was tried and condemned in mockery, ..
spat upon and lashed, ... nailed to a cross between two thieves.

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- GROUP 1: He died asking forgiveness for His persecutors
while His executioners gambled for His only earthly possession - His robe.
- 2nd Voice: He was laid in a borrowed tomb.
- ALL VOICES: Nearly two thousand years have passed and none has reigned,
or wrought, .. or served, .. or dreamed, ..
who has so touched and moulded human life.
He is the ideal - the example who has inspired the noblest and the humblest lives, -
the great unalterable, wholesome, growing influence in a world of blood and tears.
- 1st Voice: He who was friendless would be friend to all.
- 2nd Voice: Homeless, He dwells in countless homes.
- 3rd Voice: Books on His life fill libraries.
- 4th Voice: His gospels cover the earth. Song and music in His praises fill the heavens.
- 5th Voice: Pictures, spires and monuments proclaim His influence.
Scholars, illiterates, rich men, beggars, rulers and slaves, - all are measured by His life.
- ALL VOICES: But this one solitary life surpasses all in power.
Its influence is the one remaining and sustaining hope of future years.
- 6th Voice: In a Roman court nearly twenty centuries ago,
Pontius Pilate asked of the multitude who demanded the death of this young Galilean:
- 7th Voice: "What shall I do with this man? - I find no evil in Him."
- READER: Today, each heart meets the challenge when the Pilate within asks:
"What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"
- ALL VOICES: Thus challenged, my heart in confidence replies -
"This will I do - I will claim His 'enabling'
My own life to empower! ...
Send me forth, Lord of Life,
In the strength of your Spirit within:
Take hold and control,
So that I shall indeed be
"Able for All Things" in your purpose for me.
- READER: The gospel of Luke records this particular incident from the life of Christ:
"Jesus, armed with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee;
and reports about him spread through the whole country-side.
He taught in their synagogues and all men sang his praises.
So he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and went to synagogue on the
Sabbath day as he regularly did. He stood up to read the lesson and was handed the scroll
of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the scroll and found the passage which says -
'The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me;
he has sent me to announce good news to the poor,
to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind;
to let the broken victims go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'
He began to speak: 'Today', He said, 'in your very hearing this text has come true.'
There was a general stir of admiration;
they were surprised that words of such grace should fall from his lips.
'Is not this Joseph's son?' they asked.

READER (Contd.):

Then Jesus said, 'No doubt you will quote the proverb, 'Physician, heal your self!' and say 'We have heard of all your doings at Capernaum; do the same here in your own home town!' 'I tell you this' he went on, 'no prophet is recognized in his own country'
At these words the whole congregation were infuriated. They leapt up and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, meaning to hurl him over the edge.
But he walked straight through them all, and went away."

LEADER:

Let us quietly think about the reading from scripture, remembering again that it was written of the One who promised, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you", and that it is 'no craven spirit' which the Lord promised, but one to inspire strength.
It is this same Almighty God who bids us
ask, if we would receive,
knock, if we would enter,
come to Him with our weariness and burdens, if we would have peace and rest.

Let each then, in silence, hold her own communion with her Lord, bringing her own thanks for the blessings of the day, making her own requests both for herself and for family and friends, and for the issues and causes that claim her interests, her time and her special endeavours.

.....

Will you kneel with me now, as we repeat together this evening prayer -

ALL:

O God, there is nothing so precious as friendship, nothing so enriching as love.
Thank you for all the friends I have met today.
Thank you for the people with whom I travelled, with whom I talked and with whom I ate.
Thank you for the people with whom I listened, or watched;
Thank you for those whose hands served my needs and brought me comfort.
Thank you for any new thing I now know which I did not know this morning.
Amid all the changes of life, I thank you for Jesus who is the same yesterday,
today and forever.
Hear this my evening thanksgiving and help me as I daily strive to be more worthy.
Through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

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Closing music for silent meditation:

"BE THOU MY VISION
O Lord of my heart,
Nought be all else to me
Save that Thou art:
Thou my best thought, by day or by night -
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light."

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Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th - 9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

MORNING SONG - WEDNESDAY, 7th

WAKING THOUGHTS - For meditation ..

"GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE LOVE

If we but open wide our heart,

He's sure to do His part -

He's always the first to make a start:

God gives His people love." Sister Miriam Winter.

My Father, for another night
Of quiet sleep and rest,
For all the joy of morning light,
Thy holy name be blest.

"O, taste and see that the Lord is good.

Happy the one who trusts Him."

"Thy unfailing love, O Lord, reaches to heaven, thy faithfulness to the skies.

O Lord, who savest man and beast, how precious is thy unfailing love!"

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee -

I will call upon God; Evening and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud,
and He shall hear my voice." (Selected psalms).

"GOD SO LOVED the world that He gave His only Son, that everyone who has faith in Him
may not die but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

"Of all forces in human life that go to the making of dominant desire, none is more powerful than love. The more deep the love, the more natural is the definite entreaty for God's blessing on the loved one. The recorded prayers of Jesus are not many in number and are few in words. He prayed for children, for the sick, for His disciples, for His enemies - What a depth of love! - and for the community of His followers, for you and me. That the most unselfish life ever lived would be unselfish in prayer was to have been expected.

Habitual intercession for others has notable results in the intercessor for such prayer liberates! It brings to mind the names and needs of many, making the heart ready for service and the imagination apt to perceive ways of helping those else forgotten and neglected; it purges the spirit and awakens gracious impulses. God's love is boundless in extent and individual in application. Every dim and flickering desire our hearts have ever known for mankind's good has been lighted at the central fire of His eternal passion for the salvation of His children. As Whittier sang:

"All that I feel of pity Thou has known

Before I was; my best is all Thy own.

From Thy great heart of goodness mine but draws

Wishes and prayers; but Thou, O Lord, wilt do,

In Thine own time, by ways I cannot see,

All that I feel when I am nearest Thee!" (From 'The Meaning of Prayer' - Harry Emerson Fosdick)

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PRESIDENT: Let us unite in a Morning Song of Praise and Thanksgiving -

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. "NEW EVERY MORNING IS THE LOVE Our waking and uprising prove; Through sleep and darkness safely brought, Restored to life and power and thought.</p> <p>2. New mercies, each returning day, Hover around us while we pray; New perils past, new sins forgiven New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven</p> | <p>3. If on our daily course our mind Be set to hallow all we find, New treasures still, of countless price, God will provide for sacrifice.</p> <p>4. The trivial round, the common task, Will furnish all we need to ask, Room to deny ourselves, a road To bring us daily nearer God. - (John Keble) (Tune: Melcombe)</p> |
|--|--|

MEDITATION - "The Love of God for His People" (Jeremiah 31 & 32).

Reader: You shall be my people,
And I will be your God.

RESPONSE: These are the words of the Lord.

Reader: I have dearly loved you from of old,
And still I maintain my unfailing care for you.

RESPONSE: Break into shouts of joy,
Sing out your praises and say,
The Lord has saved His people.

Reader: Cease your weeping, shed no more tears,
for there shall be reward for your toil.

RESPONSE: Then shall the girl show her joy in the dance;
young men and old shall rejoice.

Reader: So shall you be my people,
And I will be your God.

RESPONSE: Thou, the Lord, art my God.

Reader: The Lord bless you,
the Lord, your true goal, your holy mountain.

RESPONSE: These are the words of the Lord.

UNISON PRAYER

ALL: Thank you, O Lord, for all the expressions of your love for me;
keep me constantly aware that I can only express my love for you by loving your other
children, inasmuch as whatever is done in love for them, is done for you.
Help me to see You in all human suffering and need, and so pour out through me this day
a measure of your loving compassion.

For Your Name's sake - Amen.

Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

8th-9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

EVENING MEDITATION and PRAYER

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WEDNESDAY, 7th February, 9.00 p.m.

GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE LOVE - power for reconciliation!

Meditation Music - "Dear Lord, Forgive".

(Five Readers and Responses)

PRESIDENT: The Fellowship of the Least Coin is strongly supported by Australian Church Women and the visit of SHANTI SOLOMON to Australia in September, 1972, brought fresh awareness of its potential as an effective contribution towards WORLD PEACE. With its purpose in prayer for reconciliation at all levels, it has caught anew the imagination of Christian women. It has therefore been thought apt to centre our thoughts under the theme "ABLE FOR ALL THINGS" on this unique fellowship during this evening's period of Meditation and Prayer. The brief meditation is adapted from the service prepared for the visit of Shanti Solomon to Nambour, Queensland, on 28th September, 1972.

.. .. .

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Reader 1: May all peoples praise you, God: May all peoples praise you.

RESPONSE: Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, because you judge the people with justice and guide all nations.

Reader 1: The land has produced its harvest: God, our God, has blessed us.

RESPONSE: God has blessed us; May all people everywhere honour Him.

Reader 1: Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

RESPONSE: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be;
world without end. Amen.

Reader 2: "WE ARE 'ENABLED BY HIS SPIRIT TO BE INSTRUMENTS OF RECONCILIATION',
THUS SHARING IN GOD'S MISSION IN OUR OWN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND NATION.

We are unafraid of being fully a part of the secular world because we believe that
GOD IS IN OUR MIDST".

These sentences, from the 1968 Statement of the Nature and Purpose of Church Women United, affirm the conviction that the so-called secular world is in fact God's world, that to be a Christian is to be involved in the activities and aspirations of the 'secular world'. It is our calling as Christians to find our way through the maze of conflicting priorities and to do what we can toward creating a more just world, starting from where we are.

Reader 3: "THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN - OUR WITNESS"

Take any picture of the world you wish. It is our world, but it is first God's world. He has not abandoned it or abdicated. He sustains it, loves it, judges and redeems it. It is His plan that His LIGHT shall penetrate to the ends of the earth and to every depth in human life.

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Reader 3 (Contd.):

God has called into being a people to witness to His light in the world. The Church as the New Israel, has inherited this task from the people of God under the Old Covenant. It is to witness not only to God's mighty acts of redemption in the past, but also to His present work in the world, and to the Kingdom yet to come. This it does in its own congregational life and in the daily life and work of its members.

The Church bears witness through its very existence in worship, fellowship and service, in the personal and family life of its members, in the proclamation of the word and even in its silence.

It is through WITNESS, SERVICE, and UNITY that the LIGHT of God in the face of Jesus Christ illuminates the world. It is Christ as the risen Lord who gives power to our WITNESS. His light illumines our SERVICE and enables us to reflect His light to the world. It is He who gives us the UNITY which we must manifest. WITNESS both leads to and requires UNITY and SERVICE. ("Light of the World" - New Delhi Assembly, W.C.C. '61).

It is still the light of God in the face of our risen Lord that illuminates the world, and participants in the Fellowship of the Least Coin from many countries around the world are giving expression to all three of these God-directed means of reflecting His light:

(3 women -
1 line each)

WITNESS by our very participation as members of the Fellowship,

SERVICE by our practical expression of concern for the needs of others in setting aside a coin,

UNITY by our fellowship across the barriers of race and culture, and the barriers of denominational difference.

Reader 3: Thus do we become part of His plan to penetrate the darkness with His marvellous LIGHT.

PRAYER

Reader 4: O God, we thank you for calling us, because our lives have received meaning from your call, and because you have given us a place to serve in your plan for the world.

ALL: We confess that we have not seen or understood what you are doing in the world, that we have not been eager to work with You.

Reader 4: As once you made yourself known to Moses and his people in the desert, let your voice be heard with new power, O God, in the deserts of human hearts.

ALL: Make us one in your truth. Increase our love, not only for other Christians but for all our neighbours. Help us as we seek for new social and international structures, using the insight and the courage that You have given us through the Good News about Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray this prayer -- "Our Father which art in Heaven"

Reader 5: It was Shanti Solomon herself, who underlined the fact that the time to act towards reconciliation is immediately a "break-down" in peaceable relations occurs, and that IMMEDIATE PRAYER for a forgiving spirit in the case of injury received and a repentant one on the occasion of injury done to another in whatever manner, is the only truly Christian course to follow in order to love a neighbour as one's own self. Let us then humbly kneel together and seek from our Father, God, the means to reconcile, to heal and to love. (ALL KNEELING)

Let each one now bring before Him the trouble spots in our world, praying that where there is hate, there will be someone to express love. Let that be a beginning

Seek also His wisdom and guidance where there is industrial unrest, where goodwill and harmonious relationships have broken down ... where in local communities, personalities frequently 'clash' and unhappiness results.

Remember at this moment, your own homes, families, your dearest ones - sometimes misunderstood, sometimes treated with impatience. May our Father cherish and guard each one this night.

Reader 5 (Contd.):

Search your own heart, offering now your own personal petition for a forgiving or a repentant spirit as you need.

As you remain kneeling in prayer, perhaps you will permit the music and the words of the verses which follow, to become part of your expression -

(Music)

If I have wounded any soul today,
If I have caused one foot to go astray,
If I have walked in my own wilful way,
Dear Lord, forgive!

If I have uttered idle words or vain,
If I have turned aside from want or pain,
Lest I offend some other through the strain,
Dear Lord, forgive!

If I have been perverse, or hard or cold,
If I have longed for shelter in Thy fold,
When Thou hast given me some fort to hold,
Dear Lord, forgive!

Forgive the sins I have confessed to Thee;
Forgive the secret sins I do not see;
O guide me, love me, and my keeper be,
.. .. Amen.

Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th-9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

MORNING SONG - THURSDAY, 8th

WAKING THOUGHTS - For meditation - "GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE HOPE
If we but trust in His word,
Our prayers are always heard -
He warmly welcomes anyone who's erred.
God gives His people Hope." - Sister Miriam Winter

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us new birth into a LIVING HOPE by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! The inheritance to which we are born is one that nothing can destroy or wither. It is kept for you in heaven, and you, because you put your faith in God, are under the protection of his power until salvation comes - the salvation which is even now in readiness and will be revealed at the end of time." (1 Peter 1).

"I wait for the Lord with all my soul,
I hope for the fulfilment of his word.
My soul waits for the Lord more eagerly than watchmen for the morning,
For in the Lord is love unfailing,
And great is his power to set men free." (Ps. 130).

"O God, thank you
for giving me another day and another gift of time -
for refreshing sleep and renewed vigour to live.
Help me to live all this day in the joy of HOPE -
not to put off until tomorrow that which I ought to do today -
to do each task,
to face each duty,
to shoulder each responsibility as it comes to me.

In spite of my many failures, keep me from discouragement, from lowering my ideals, from abandoning hope and from giving up. Help me to try still harder; to trust more and more in You, and less and less in myself. For your Love's sake. Amen. (Prayers of Wm. Barclay)

.....

This day, O Lord, there will be many who journey without hope, and I would pause at my day's beginning to remember them -
Bless those who have no work to do, the young ones for whom the empty hours will drag or be filled with temptation, the older ones who are anxious about what is to happen to homes and loved ones because they are unemployed.
Bless those who feel they don't matter to anyone, whose lot is cast in misery and hopelessness, those who are in disgrace and in great need of some one to encourage with a fresh hope for tomorrow, those who attempt to fill positions of great responsibility in their own strength, without the confident hope of a well-founded faith -

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Draw as near to them, I pray, as I ask you to be to me.
 Grant that I may not be unwilling should you choose me to be your messenger of hope to any such -
 Enable me with your Spirit for whatever You would have me to do this day.

Through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

President: Let us express our gratitude to our Maker in a Morning Song of Praise -

All praise to God the Father be,
 All praise eternal Son, to thee,
 Whom with the Spirit we adore
 For ever and for evermore.

Come, very Sun of truth and love,
 Come in thy radiance from above,
 And shed the Holy Spirit's ray
 On all we think or do today.

May hopeful be this livelong day,
 Our thoughts as pure as morning ray,
 Our faith like noonday's glowing light,
 Our souls undimmed by shades of night.

(Repeat verse 1).

Meditation:

President: Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord
 Whose hope the Lord is.

RESPONSE: He shall be like a tree planted by the waterside
 that stretches its roots along the stream.

President: When the heat comes, it has nothing to fear.

RESPONSE: Its spreading foliage stays green.

President: In a year of drought it feels no care;

RESPONSE: It does not cease to bear fruit.

President: God made the earth by His power;

RESPONSE: He fixed the world in place by His wisdom.

President: At the thunder of His voice the waters in heaven are amazed.

RESPONSE: He brings up the mist from the ends of the earth,
 He opens rifts for the rain and brings the wind out of His storehouses.

President: Great is the name of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Therefore we will trust in Him forever.

President: The goldsmith is discredited by his idols.

RESPONSE: For the figures he casts are a sham, there is no breath in them;

President: They are worth nothing, mere mockeries, which perish when their day of reckoning comes.

ALL: God, our Creator, is not like these, for He is the Maker of all.

Unison Prayer -

ALL: Send me out this day, O Lord, to rejoice in the hope I hold so confidently,
 that You can and will indeed perform all that You have declared.
 Grant that I may live out in helpful witness to others this affirmation which I now make -
 "for I know in Whom I have trusted and am confident of His power to keep what I have
 committed to Him until the great Day." Through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

** ** *

"Let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice;
 let them ever shout for joy!"

Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th-9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

EVENING MEDITATION and PRAYER

.....

THURSDAY, 8th February, 9.00 p.m.

GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE HOPE

Meditation Music: "God Gives His People Hope".

Meditation - "Christ in You, the Hope .." (Narrator and Role Readers)

Narrator: The resurrection, the most tremendous event in man's history, was the justification of all the hopes that could be built on words which the crucified, entombed, and risen Jesus of Nazareth had spoken during His physical life. Listen to this -

"If Christ was NOT raised, then our gospel is null and void, and so is your faith! BUT THE TRUTH IS Christ WAS raised to life!"

These are words written by Paul many years ago to Christians of his own time. He is saying, in effect, that if those words of Christ - that He would die, and be raised to life again - could not be believed then NOTHING He said could be believed! BUT IF THEY WERE TRUE and He was alive, then EVERYTHING He said was true, and hopes built on the word of One who could indeed perform what He had declared, were certain to be fulfilled. In that case,

"Come unto Me all who are weary and I will give you rest", was hope of a haven of refuge for the escapists from the harsh realities of life - and there were plenty of those in the days of the Roman occupation.

"Don't worry about what to eat and what to wear, Your Father KNOWS what you need" -

"Ask and you will receive, seek and you will find" - these words of His were the hope of security for the anxious ones and the worriers, whose burden of taxes was so heavy there was scarcely enough left for the necessities of life.

The joyous, abundant and victorious living He had promised, had its secret in all the HOPES that could spring from sure knowledge that He could indeed do what He had said. After the resurrection, His sayings could be recalled with exultation. You can imagine, with Dorothy Sayers, how words not really understood when He spoke them, would become full of wonderful meaning.

In one of her plays, in a scene from the upper room, Jesus is speaking -

(Role readers: Jesus, Thomas, Philip.)

Jesus: Don't let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God - believe in me too. There are many inns on the road to my Father's house. I am going ahead to prepare the lodgings for you. You will always find me there to welcome you, so that at each stage we shall be together. Don't worry. You know where I am going, and you know the way quite well.

Thomas: But we don't know where you are going, Master. So how can we know the way?

Jesus: I am the way, and the truth and the life. Nobody can come to God our Father, except by me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father too. Indeed, you do know Him now, because you have seen Him.

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- Philip:** Can any one see God and live? Master, if indeed you can show us the Father, then we shall be satisfied.
- Jesus:** Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and still you do not recognize me? The one who has seen me has seen God! If any one loves me and keeps my sayings, my Father and I will come to him and make our home in his heart. I tell you these things now, while I am still with you; when the Spirit, the Holy One, comes He will make you remember and understand. ...
And again I say, Love one another, as I have loved you. But bear in mind what I told you: the servant is not greater than his master. If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. You will have distress and sorrow - but be of good courage: I have overcome the world.
- Narrator:** This had truly been the Son of God speaking - "You have seen Me - therefore you have seen God". ... "I have overcome the world."
The resurrection gave the seal of authority to these statements.
But not all hearts at that time shared the joy of renewed hopes. Back in the High Priest's house, maybe the scene was very much as Dorothy Sayers portrayed it. -
Nicodemus and Caiaphas are together and Nicodemus is speaking -
(Role readers: Nicodemus and Caiaphas)
- Nicodemus:** Is your mind at ease about this matter, my Lord Caiaphas?
- Caiaphas:** Why not, Nicodemus?
- Nicodemus:** I will not argue with you about the person of Jesus. His attitude at his trial has shaken me. I was ready to believe him a great teacher, a great prophet, perhaps the Messiah. I can do so no longer. He has claimed to be the Son of God - not in a figure, but literally - the right hand of the power and equal partner in the glory. That is either an appalling blasphemy, or else a truth so terrible that it will not bear thinking about.
- Caiaphas:** Are you saying that it might be truth?
- Nicodemus:** I dare not. For in that case, what have we done? .. We have conspired in some unimaginable manner to judge and murder God!
- Narrator:** Those two had to wait with impatience for events to take their course.
In the sequence of the play, Caiaphas, hating inaction, hurried off to the Governor's palace and into the presence of Pilate himself, who asked abruptly -
(Role readers: Pilate and Caiaphas)
- Pilate:** Yes, Caiaphas. What is it now?
- Caiaphas:** Excellency, that lying charlatan Jesus of Nazareth -
- Pilate:** I want to hear nothing more about Jesus of Nazareth.
- Caiaphas:** Something has just come to our knowledge. During his lifetime, it seems, he boasted that if he were killed, he would rise again on the third day. It is surely advisable that the tomb should be carefully guarded. Otherwise, some of his followers may steal the body and give out that he has risen from the dead - thus starting a new superstition, infinitely more damaging than the first.
- Pilate:** Well?
- Caiaphas:** I suggest that you order sentries to be posted.
- Pilate:** It has nothing to do with me.
- Caiaphas:** The bodies of criminals are Roman property.
- Pilate:** A member of your Sanhedrim applied to me for the custody of this particular body. I was happy to oblige him. The thing has now become a Jewish affair. Rome is not concerned.
- Caiaphas:** Excellency --
- Pilate:** You have your own guards. Take whatever precautions you think fit. Slave! Show these gentlemen out.
- Narrator:** So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch.
And that's how it happened that hope DID temporarily die - temporarily, because until the resurrection provided it, there was no justification for hope. But once they had seen the empty tomb, heard His voice and seen Him face to face, hope was reborn in the heart

Narrator: (Contd.)

of every follower of Christ.

In the elation of THEIR experience, the two travellers who had just completed the seven-mile walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus, set out on the return journey without delay; the evidence of their own eyes supported the hope that had been reborn, and the renewed hope, in turn, invigorated tired bodies.

The Christian faith has not survived merely on the MEMORY of Christ: its strength has always been in the conviction of Christians of every age that He is with them day by day, in all their tasks, their joys and their sorrows, that He is indeed a living Christ.

The followers of Christ in His own time had to see Him and touch Him to know that the resurrection was indeed a fact. This was tremendously important, for on their witness was going to be based not only THEIR faith and hope, but OURS also, for their testimony has stood for centuries.

Despite all the developments of technology and the accumulation of scientific knowledge, no one has explained away the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Do you need proof that Jesus Christ is alive today?

Can you see Him in others? Do you search in vain for evidence of a life re-made as only it can be in Him - from within?

Are you aware of His Spirit within yourself?

Do you journey in hope?

And what of others in the world about us? WHERE is THEIR HOPE? ..

Our practical expressions of Christlike sympathy and concern ARE their hope. If Christ is not expressed or interpreted in us - if others don't glimpse Christ in you and me, - then there is NO hope, as we know it, held out to them.

It all comes back to "CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE .." - not only for you, but as you express it in joyous abundant living, for OTHERS, to whom it overflows in a measure of Christ's own self.

.. .. .

PRESIDENT: Let us bring our thoughts together in silence As we pray,
Let each one personally seek forgiveness and cleansing, so that even though we be but humble earthenware, we shall be fit to contain and give out the power our God waits to bestow.

Take time also to make your own personal thanksgiving, confession and intercession, committing those whom you hold dear to the care of a loving Father who is indeed able to do above and beyond all that you could ask or think.

Now let us kneel together and unite in our Evening Prayer -

UNISON
PRAYER:

Almighty God, Creator of all mankind,
We thank You for the amazing hopes which we can cherish in all good faith as Christians because they are based on the word of One who has proved that He is able to perform that which He declared He would accomplish.

Help me, O God, to be unashamed to wear this confident hope in my daily living -

as a joyous testimony to my faith -

Forgive me, I pray, for I have often selfishly kept my hope to myself: I have not treated others as I would wish to be treated. .. Forgive me and help me in the power of your Spirit within me to do better tomorrow. Through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his mercy gave us new birth into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

** **

Meditation Music: "Spirit of God in the clear, running water, Blowing to greatness the trees on the hill,
Spirit of God in the finger of evening, Fill the earth, bring it to birth and blow
where you will. .. Blow, blow, blow till I be but breath of the Spirit blowing in me!"

Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th-9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

MORNING SONG - FRIDAY, 9th

WAKING THOUGHTS - For meditation - "GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE STRENGTH

If we believe in His way,

He's swift to repay

All those who bear the burden of the day;

God gives His people strength." - Sister Miriam Winter

"My heart talked to thee, Seek ye my face; Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Psalm 27:9.

Wait a moment! Christ is looking in love on you. Look now into His face --

"O God, my Maker, help me today to live fully, to act kindly, to speak truly.

I want so much to be like Christ - Help me

to put duty before pleasure, others before self, and none before Thee."

- "Morning Prayers".

.....

From "I'VE GOT TO TALK TO SOMEBODY, GOD" by Marjorie Holmes.

Lying on some silent hillside after battle, or simply tending his flocks, the psalmist sang of his enemies and his agonies, his mistakes, his remorse, his shattered dreams; he pleaded desperately for solace and for aid. Sometimes he quarrelled with God, often he rejoiced and exalted him. And again he spoke of his burning thirst to find and know his maker.

Today there are few such silent hillsides. We are crowded in upon one another. We are assaulted on all sides by radio, television, the printed word. We are taught to verbalize from a tender age. We have made almost a fetish of "communication". Yet today there is so little genuine communication. The very push and pressure of living among so many people has driven us deeper inside ourselves. There, despite all the talk that swirls around us, we are locked in a lonely prison. It is a secret and special place, a place for our own protection, yet a place of anxieties and fears, where the loneliness can be intolerable, UNLESS WE FIND GOD THERE.

.....

Marjorie Holmes wrote of the way in which the psalmist found expression for his need to talk to somebody. Over fifty of the psalms speak directly of the power of God: scripture has innumerable references to His readiness to give of His strength to His people, like this one from Isaiah - the poem of Hezekiah, King of Judah, after recovery from his illness. --

"Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter:

I did mourn as a dove;

My eyes fail with looking upward.

O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.

What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it.

Jesus' words echo this same readiness of God to hear answer - "In truth, in very truth I tell, whoever has faith in me will do what I am doing indeed anything you ask in my name I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it."

HE GIVES HIS PEOPLE STRENGTH!

..... 2/

Thank you, Lord, for today -
 for the sights and sounds of the morning and for my ability to enjoy them.
 Out of the strength You have promised to supply
 Help me to live in such a way today
 that others may know I began it with You
 that I am walking with you,
 so that, however dimly, others may see You in me.
 Supply strength today to those who are dear to me, wherever they are.
 Bless all whom I shall, in quietness, remember before you now

PRESIDENT: We shall welcome this new day with a song of praise -

WHEN MORNING GILDS THE SKIES, My heart awaking cries: May Jesus Christ be praised;
 Alike at work or prayer To Jesus I repair: May Jesus Christ be praised.

Does sadness fill my mind, A solace here I find: May Jesus Christ be praised;
 Or fades my earthly bliss, My comfort still is this: May Jesus Christ be praised.

In heaven's eternal bliss The loveliest strain is this, May Jesus Christ be praised;
 The powers of darkness fear, When this sweet chant they hear: May Jesus Christ be praised.

Be this, while life is mine, My canticle divine, May Jesus Christ be praised;
 Be this th'eternal song, Through all the ages long: May Jesus Christ be praised.

MEDITATION - The might and strength of God.

President: Lift up your eyes to the heavens;
 consider who created it all.

What likeness will you find for God
 or what form to resemble His?

ALL: Is it an image which a craftsman sets up
 and a goldsmith covers with plate?

President: Do you not know, have you not heard?
 The Lord, the everlasting God, Creator of the wide world,
 Grows neither weary nor faint!

ALL: No man can fathom his understanding.

President: He gives vigour to the weary,
 new strength to the exhausted.

ALL: Young men may grow weary and faint,

President: Even in their prime they may stumble and fall.

ALL: But those who look to the Lord will win new strength,
 They will grow wings like eagles;
 they will run and not be weary,
 they will march on and never grow faint.

UNISON PRAYER:

Grant me now, O my God, such a renewal in strength of body and spirit,
 that I shall joy in achieving the goals You set before me,
 that I shall be ready, eager and perceptive
 wherever there is service to be given.

For Your Names sake. Amen.

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Australian Church Women

National Committee Meeting

Deaconess House, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

6th - 9th FEBRUARY, 1973.

"Able for all things"

CLOSING SESSION - FRIDAY, 9th February

3.00 p.m.

WORSHIP, THANKSGIVING, COMMITMENT, DEDICATION and PRAISE

"ABLE FOR ALL THINGS" - "MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED"

"Put Me to the proof, says the Lord of Hosts, and see if I do not open windows in Heaven and pour a blessing on you as long as there is need".

.. .. .

(During the organ prelude, the retiring President will light the central candle from her own candle which she will return, unlit, to its place, in symbol of her completed term of office. She will then lead the service.)

PRESIDENT: This closing service of the 1973 National Committee Meeting is of special significance. It brings to a conclusion this series of national meetings and another year in the onward march of Australian Church Women. It is therefore a THANKSGIVING service. It also marks at the one time, the end of the term in office of the Working Committee in Queensland and the official commencement in office, as the 1973 Working Committee of Australian Church Women, of the Office Bearers and Committee members located in South Australia, hence it is for COMMITMENT and DEDICATION. It provides us again with an opportunity for public WORSHIP of our God who, being ABLE FOR ALL THINGS, SUPPLIES EVERY NEED. Therefore let us PRAISE HIM!

HYMN: (All standing) -

(Tune: Millenium)

Thanksgiving

Let joy find voice in song
My Maker's name to praise:
His blessings the year long
Have numbered all its days.
In love each hour where'er He'd lead
His care supplied my ev'ry need.

Commitment

Committed to His will
Each talent I call mine:
In me may He fulfil
His purposes divine.
With no reserve, 'tis my intent
My life for Him henceforth be spent.

Dedication

Dear Lord, please sanctify
My life in ev'ry part:
Bid self within me die -
Come, dwell within my heart.
I would that all should daily see
Nought of myself but my Lord in me.

Praise to our God
Who is
"Able for All Things"

Omnipotent is He
Who grace and strength bestows;
No task may ever be
Beyond the pow'r that knows
No limit save His own wise law.
Praise be to Him for ever more!

PRAYER:

President:

O God, our Father, we praise and thank you
for the countless blessings of the year that has ended,
for your constant availability to us;
for these days of sharing in our National Committee Meeting, and
for the knowledge that we have acted at your direction.
We thank you that we are called here by a love which passes our understanding.
Open our hearts to receive your Holy Spirit.
Henceforth may both our lips and our lives praise you -
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Our Saviour and Redeemer.

ALL:

Amen (Resume seats).

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: (Psalms 65 & 68).

Reader: We owe thee praise, O God,
Thou hearest prayer, vows shall be paid to Thee.
RESPONSE: Praise the Lord, O my soul.
Reader: Thou art girded with strength
And by thy might dost fix mountains in their place.
RESPONSE: Praise the Lord, O my soul.
Reader: Thou makest morning and evening sing aloud in triumph:
Thou dost visit the earth and give it abundance,
Watering its furrows, levelling its ridges,
Softening it with showers and blessing its growth.
RESPONSE: Praise the Lord, O my soul.
Reader: Thou dost crown the year with thy good gifts -
the hills are wreathed in happiness
and the valleys are mantled in corn,
so that they shout, they break into song.
RESPONSE: Therefore we will sing the praises of God:
we will raise a psalm to his name:
we will be joyful and exult before Him.

First Reading: (from John, chapters 15, 16 & 17).

Reader: This is my commandment:
love one another, as I have loved you.
I shall not call you servants any more,
because a servant does not know his master's business:
I call you friends,
because I have made known to you
everything I have learnt from my Father.
You did not choose me,
no, I chose you;
and I commissioned you
to go out and to bear fruit,
fruit that will last;
and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name.
What I command you is to love one another
Be brave. I have defeated the world.
After these words Jesus looked up to heaven and said: 'Father, the hour has come:
give glory to your Son, that your Son may give glory to you.
You gave him authority over all men so that he might give eternal life to all those
you gave him.
But it is not for these alone I pray, but for those who through their words put their
faith in me; may they all be one; just as you are in me and I in you, may they be
one is us, so that the world will believe that you sent me.

ALL: Our God is love: everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.
Lord, we will love; help us to love one another.

INTERCESSION -

President: Let us in silent prayer make intercession -
- for families, friends, spiritual guides and helpers, and all who love us ...
- for those whom past conflicts have separated from us within the Christian family ...
- for the unity of Christians .. in faith .. in love .. in witness ...
- for all organisations endeavouring to bring Christians together in love - Church Women
United, the Asian Church Women's Conference, the Fellowship of the Least Coin,
Australian Church Women ...
- for messengers of reconciliation and relief in whatever way their work is being attempted ...
- for this whole world of people .. especially those who do not know the love of God or
the Christian faith, who misunderstand or are indifferent or antagonistic to it.

ALL: Lord, as you have loved us, help us to love one another.

President: Let us, as we kneel together, sum up all our prayers in the words our Lord Himself
taught us to pray - "Our Father which art in Heaven" (Resume seats)

Second Reading: (from the letter of Jeremiah to all the exiles in Babylon (ch. 29)

Reader: "These are the words of the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: 'To all the exiles whom
I have carried off from Jerusalem to Babylon - Build houses and live in them;
plant gardens and eat their produce. Marry and beget sons and daughters. .. Seek
the welfare of any city to which I have carried you, and pray to the Lord for it;
on its welfare your welfare will depend. These are the words of the Lord of Hosts."

President: Realising that, like God's children of long ago, we too are sojourners - here but for
a while - we heed the injunction to be concerned for the welfare of the community in
which we live.
It is our desire to express our concern in a vital Christian witness.
In an act of commitment, we now reaffirm the aims and purposes of Australian Church
Women --

ACT OF COMMITMENT (All Standing).

ALL: In accepting our calling to make visible our unity in Christ,
We commit ourselves in love to our aims -
To UNITE Australian church women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:
To PROMOTE co-operation of men and women in the church, family and society:
To HELP Christian women to take a more effective place in the total life and mission of
the church:
To PROVIDE opportunities for Christian women of different churches to WORSHIP, STUDY
and SERVE together, and
To ENCOURAGE FELLOWSHIP across all barriers -
May the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit He has given to us,
His power working in us to perform infinitely more than we ask or imagine.
Glory be to God for ever. Amen.

ACT OF DEDICATION (During the singing of the hymn, members of the retiring Working Committee will come forward and re-light their candles, in readiness to pass them on to members of the incoming Committee.)

HYMN: BREATHE ON ME, Breath of God, Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love, And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will, To do and to endure.

Breathe on me Breath of God, Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me Glows with Thy fire divine.

ALL: Hallow and bless these moments, O Lord,
with the seal of your Presence among us. (Resume seats - retiring Working Committee remaining standing)

Retiring Working Committee: It is but two brief years since we received from the hands of others, in token and symbol, these very lights which we now pass on: -
not, O Lord, because the task is done, or even our part in it complete, but because it is an ongoing task which others, in turn, take up.
Refine the service we have rendered, we humbly pray, removing the dross so that only what is worthy remains.
And now, for those who are assuming the responsibilities of office and who will, on behalf of Australian Church Women, undertake to keep alive the light of witness in unity and service,
we seek a special outpouring of your Spirit in power and blessing.
ENABLE them through the use of the talents and abilities which You have given, and which are now dedicated in sacred service to You,
to experience together the joy and richness of fellowship which this service affords.
Grant to them always, the constant supply of Your promised power.
You are 'able for all things', O Lord: supply, we pray, all their needs.

ALL: (Each handing her candle to an incoming committee member).
Retiring Committee: Receive this lighted candle in token and symbol of your acceptance of responsibility as a member of the Working Committee, to ensure, by the fullest use of your abilities and talents, and your willingness to serve, that the light continues to shine with ever increasing brilliance to the glory of Almighty God, whose creatures we are.

1973 Working Committee: I receive this symbol as an expression of my acceptance of responsibility as a member of the Working Committee of Australian Church Women. Recognizing that I have a special charge to keep, I offer to the Lord of All, the best that I can bring in willing service for the fulfilment of His purposes.

ALL: Consecrate to your service, O Lord, these offerings of personality, character, talent and ability, that the lives so dedicated may be channels through which Australian Church Women shall be used to bring blessing to others.

President '73: Conscious of the significance of the office to which I have been called, I pledge myself, in sincere endeavour, to serve well the Lord on whose power and strength I shall daily rely.

'73 Committee: Support us, we pray, from day to day, that we may all work together in harmonious co-operation to the end that we shall glorify our Maker and Redeemer. However Your glory may best be served, O Lord, grant to me, your servant, in that way to serve.

ALL: Pour out your Spirit in full measure on each one, O God, that wisdom, strength and direction shall be theirs as they need.

FINAL BENEDICTION -

Retiring President: Now to the 'One who is able' to keep you from falling and set you in the presence of His Glory, jubilant and above reproach,
to the only God our Saviour,
be glory and majesty, might and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
before all time, now, and for evermore. ALL: Amen.

(The 1973 Working Committee, with lighted candles, will retire first, others remaining for a moment, then filing out past the new committee, taking opportunity to offer assurances of loving, prayerful support.)

Australian Church Women

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"Able for all things"

At the request of the 1972 A.C.W. Working Committee in Queensland, the Rev. Dorothy Wacker has very kindly supplied the following outline of the special session which she conducted at Longueville on Wednesday, 7/2/73, for distribution to National Committee members.

"DESIGNING A WORSHIP SESSION"

1. CONSIDER YOUR OWN WORSHIP EXPERIENCES and REACTIONS.

- (a) ~~What~~ are your expectations?
- (b) What do you consider are problems for anyone preparing a worship service - and why?
- (c) What have been some of your disappointments concerning worship?
- (d) What have been some memorable worship occasions for you?

2. CONSIDER THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU.

- (a) The people participating! YOU and THE CONGREGATION.
- (b) The gifts of the past:- the Bible heritage, liturgies, understandings re worship, etc.
- (c) Ideas of the present:- New translations, meditations, modern secular writings, etc.
- (d) Different methods:- Art forms, posters, movement, etc.

N.B. Your own personal wisdom and resources.

3. GRAPPLE AGAIN WITH THE MEANING OF WORSHIP.

See the possibilities in and the reason for different interpretations or emphases re worship.
Think of it as:-

- (a) An opportunity to witness to the "worth-ship" of God;
- (b) A celebration of the faith;
- (c) A drama - involving people with God;
- (d) A rehearsal - of the story of life.
etc. etc.

N.B. It is most important to grasp a deep understanding of the possibilities and significance of worship for yourself.

4. DESIGN YOUR SERVICE OR WORSHIP SESSION.

- (a) Decide what is to be its emphasis or style.
 - e.g. a celebration, a reflective time, etc.
 - a theme truth, etc.
- (b) Note all the "elements" to be included for a full and significant worship experience.
 - e.g. Praise, confession, petition, thanksgiving, dedication, intercession: OR
 - The context of our lives, the word of God, Our response to that word; OR
 - Prepare, give praise, confess failure, begin again, listen to the word, say "yes" to the task, prepare for action, go with God; etc.
- (c) Consider the service as a WHOLE: i.e. How will it "move"? How will the "mood" be maintained? etc.
- (d) Work out the details from beginning to end.
 - N.B. The Benediction is as important as the Call to Worship!
- (e) Prepare leaders and congregation in whatever way possible.
- (f) Prepare your worship setting - with any decor that is helpful. i.e. Be aware of the importance of surroundings and symbolism.

5. WORDHIP! and TO GOD be the GLORY!

Dorothy I. Wacker.

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INFORMATION PAGE

YOU NEED TO KNOW !!!

WHERE AND HOW TO

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

- The nearest letter-box is on the corner of Little Queen St. near the newsagency. (Little Queen St. runs at the side of Deaconess House.)

MAKE A 'PHONE CALL

- Public Telephones are on the bridge between the main house and Archdall Wing; another is in the room next to the Dining Room. Telephone number for receiving calls is 51 1058.

CALL A TAXI

- If taxis are required, give address as opposite Sydney Women's University College.

LOOK AFTER YOUR VALUABLES

- PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE VALUABLES IN YOUR ROOM!

MEAL "KNOW-HOW"

- BREAKFAST and LUNCH - Collect meal at servery window.
Tables to be cleared and dishes returned to servery window at end of meal.

EVENING MEAL will be served at tables.

MORNING and AFTERNOON TEA - cups and saucers to be returned to servery window.

CONCERNING "MORNING SONG"

- This is not a formal session. If you would like to share, come to the chapel each morning (7.15 - 7.45 a.m.) You may come and go as you wish during that time so long as quiet is maintained; provision has been made in each session for shared praise and prayer.

LITTLE CONSIDERATIONS !!!

- PLEASE close bedroom windows if you are to be out for any length of time.
PLEASE see Deaconess Andrews or the Secretary about keys, if you have to be out late in the evening; PLEASE lock main door at night.
PLEASE do not smoke in bedrooms or dining rooms !!!

JUST IN CASE! Should you require it, the LAUNDRY is situated on the roof!