

Fellowship of the Least Coin



**We lift our voices for the integrity
and Well-Being of God's Creation.**

*Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion,
herald of good tidings; lift up your voice
with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to
the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" Isaiah 40:9*

This text of Isaiah has been identified as a prophecy that represents God's calling. It calls us to look and act in anticipation of a future that is not yet here, but that we can certainly foresee. All of this is possible because we trust in a God that is with us, reversing and transforming our present reality and encouraging us to move towards that future that is yet to come.

....As women, bearers of good news, we lift up our voices with clarity, with boldness, with passion, with strength, with love, so that the world may know and experience the Glory of God, revealed to us in Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour. We lift up our voices in prayer, because we know God hears and answers!

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN (FLC)

When I joined the WDP Scottish Committee in 2018, I must admit (coming from England) I had never heard of the Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC). However, having read more I now understand the rich ministry and commitment of its members. 2021 will mark 65 years since the prayerful ministry of FLC began. What is now a global, ecumenical movement began with the vision of one woman, Shanti Solomon. Following war torn years, her vision was of women being called to pray for peace, justice and reconciliation; to pray for local, national and international issues and concerns. Since the Covid lockdown many women have been made more vulnerable and Fiona Buchanan reminds us of the situation in Scotland. Therefore, the need for this FLC commitment and ministry is as important

as ever in our World today, and God continues to call women to this ministry of prayer.

Is God calling you to this ministry?

Is God calling you to pray faithfully for justice, peace and reconciliation?

Ann Wren (Scottish Secretary)

FLC Prayer (*For prayer calendar see the link on our WDP website.*)

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, 'symbol of love'. Make us mindful of the miracles of these coins. Let us honour your creation with love, as shown through the life, death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Text: Numbers 27:1-11

Fiona Buchanan, Scotland.



No need to look far these days to uncover the reality that we still have a long way to go to achieve gender equality. Our lives are littered with stories and often dangerous experiences women face daily because of their gender throughout the world. Piece them together and they form a web of haunting experiences and voices declaring that violence against women is the greatest human rights

scandal of our time.

In Numbers 27.1-11 we read the story of Zelophehad's daughters, and the gender-based rights abuses that women commonly experienced at that time. This included an absence of inheritance rights, especially when a father died leaving only daughters. The result was a male relative inheriting his property instead of his daughters, a practice ratified by Mosaic Law. This repressive law was challenged by the daughters of Zelophehad, resulting in a significant change to the legal status of all Israelite women born into a family without a male heir. They identified an injustice and spoke out, challenging the patriarchal traditions of the time and forging a new path for women to have their rights recognised.

Many churches throughout the world have already clearly demonstrated their commitment to responding to gender inequality as a fundamental matter of faith. In Scotland, the Church of Scotland's Gender Justice Project seeks to assist ministers and congregations to support women in their midst. Many churches also engage with broader public campaigns on violence against women, including taking part in Thursdays in Black, and the 16 days of activism to end gender-based violence. The Scotland chapter of Side by Side, the faith movement for gender justice, shines a light on the challenges that faith communities face when working towards gender justice.

It is refreshing to see churches recognise that culturally-held gender norms and values have created a landscape in which expectations about men and women's respective places in society are damaging – for everyone. We see violence in the form of domestic abuse directed at women specifically because they are women and linked to society's expectations of women. It is up to all of us to make explicit and challenge these damaging gender constructions, and the structures and ideologies in the Church and in society that perpetuate gender inequality and lead to violence against women. We need women, and we need men, to be those challenging voices.

PRAYER

God, you taught us to speak out for what is right. We pray for an end to violence against women; that governments will protect the human rights of women; and for women and men to be partners for change, working together with mutual trust and respect. God of equity and justice, thank you for your vision of a world where gender justice will bring fullness of life. Amen.

Fiona Buchanan is the Campaigning and Advocacy Coordinator for Christian Aid Scotland.

Using the FLC prayer, we hold these intentions before God. After each prayer- time we put aside a coin of the least value, in our local currency. Funds raised are sent annually to the International Committee to be used for between 35 and 40 Project Grants Worldwide, with other Emergency Relief. Below are the European Projects funded in 2019:

European Project for Inter-religious Learning – Study Course V in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia & Herzegovina, The Netherlands, US\$ 3,600.

To educate and inform 10-15 EPIL female students from Bosnia and Herzegovina of various age and professional background, Christian and Muslim women, and strengthen their capacities in the field of open and

constructive interreligious dialogue and broaden the international network of Muslim and Christian women in interreligious dialogue in Europe.

Material assistance to homeless women seeking asylum, French courses, "family moments" and outings, France, US\$ 4,000. to provide material and psychological support to women seeking asylum and being suspended from State cover - i.e. social assistance and reliable accommodation during a part or the whole of the procedure.

Prevention of breast and cervical cancer in women in rural areas of Vojvodina, Serbia, US\$3,370. to provide breast and cervical examinations to help protect women's health and prevent breast cancer in Serbia.

You can access more devotional thoughts and prayers from

'The Circle of Prayer' Vol 25 using the FLC website.



Using this resource, I pray that you have an engaging and profoundly life-giving and life changing time.

Liza Lamis Executive Secretary

There have been changes in the FLC administration and contacts.

In Scotland, the ministry of FLC is administered through the Scottish Committee of the World Day of Prayer (WDP) Further information or resources can now be received from:

FLC Secretary

Ann Wren, 40, Park, Thornhill, Dumfries and Galloway DG3 5JP.

email: flcsecretary@wdpscotland.org.uk

Monies collected be sent to the

Treasurer:

Suzanne Foster, Delnapot, Blacksboat, Ballindalloch, Moray AB37 9BQ

email: treasurer@wdpscotland.org.uk