



# Fellowship of the Least Coin

## PRAYER CONCERNS 2012

These prayer concerns are provided for participants in the Fellowship of the Least Coin. Each time they pray for justice, peace and reconciliation, they set aside one "least coin" as a tangible token toward their prayers being answered. We invite you to pray with us and put your least coins to work with those from around the world. For more information, visit our FLC pages at <http://www.wicc.org/programsevents/Fellowship/index.html>.

### JANUARY: Ecumenism

The word ecumenism is derived from the Greek word *oikoumene*, meaning the coming together of God's whole creation.

In order to grasp the full meaning of the term ecumenism, we must know and understand what Christian believers from different denominations have in common. It is also necessary to recognize those doctrines, rituals, symbols and church polities that separate us.

We must also look seriously at our

own denominational doctrines, rituals, symbols and church polity. In doing so, we may find that some of them are not really so different. We could even consider the differences rather minor.

The next step would be thoughtfully reflecting on how we as Christians should celebrate our common Christian faith.

Scripture give us an imperative to unity as we read in Ephesians 5:3. The writer urges the believers to

make "every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." May our Creator God hear our prayers for Christian unity and co-operation as we take on this important task in our own and global community.

Amen.

*Dineke Kraay is a WICC Council member.  
She lives in Saskatoon, SK.*

### FEBRUARY: World Day of Prayer - Malaysia

The theme of this year's World Day of Prayer is "*Let Justice Prevail*". The worship service was written by the WDP committee of Malaysia. Malaysia is a nation of diverse cultures, people and religions. Malaysia lies north of the equator and is located in South East Asia. You will find idyllic resorts, historic cities, expansive rainforest, rice paddy fields, rubber plantation, oil palm estates and much more. A truly multi-racial country, with a rich cultural heritage of friendly, hospitable and warm-hearted people, the colourful, multifaceted culture is seen in

almost everything- the festivals, dances, costumes, arts and crafts, games, musical instruments, exotic cuisine, pastimes and lifestyles. God calls us to be righteous citizens of our country. We do have a role to play by speaking out against all forms of injustice. A clear, honest and caring attitude in matters that concern all of society is part of the witness we owe one another. Jesus encourages us to seek out and live out God's justice. Let us pray: God, we pray for the people of

Malaysia that they will know they are held in your hands. We pray that you will strengthen us to work for justice for all people. Grant us the boldness and wisdom to reach out to the community in a holistic manner. Let justice prevail for all. Amen.

*Amy Hill is WICC's Program Coordinator.  
She lives in Mississauga, ON.*

### MARCH: Chile

*How many loaves have you?* is a question we need to continue to reflect upon when we think of our sisters and brothers in Chile. Chile is a country of contrasts, not only in its diverse geography but also in the socio/political realm. Natural disasters, multi-national business

interests, the global economic downturn and the internal unrest of its citizens and indigenous peoples continue to create tensions. We pray for the people of Chile: that their leaders will have wisdom and foresight. We pray that those in power will be just in their actions. We pray that those affected by nat-

ural disasters will receive all the help they require to rebuild their communities; and we pray that there will be enough loaves for all. Amen

*Norma Wrightly is the United Church  
Appointee to WICC.  
She lives in Smiths Falls, ON.*

## APRIL: The Homeless

For those of us who wake up each day in a place we call home, we could not comprehend the sadness of being homeless.

What would cause us to be without a home? Being unemployed, a mental illness or a drug/alcohol addiction? Maybe it's a choice we made when we didn't feel the love of our family.

Whatever the reason, those who live on the streets, in shelters or elsewhere who are foraging a life need our compassion and care.



With horror and sadness, I watch news bulletins of men, women and children, fleeing war-torn or storm-ravaged homelands and crowding into tent cities with little shelter or food - not knowing where their next "home" will be. What faith and hope must abound in the human spirit to face each tomorrow!

Let us pray: Creator of us all, instill

in us who have the daily comforts of home, a thankfulness for your blessings.

Let us endeavour to be your help-mates, giving care and comfort to those in need - reaching out until all your children have a place to call home. Amen.

*Inez Penney is WICC's ICFLC Representative.  
She lives in Moreton's Harbour, NL.*

## MAY: Families

Dear God, Creator of heaven and earth, we boldly come before You through the shed blood of Your Son, Jesus, asking that You bless the families of Canada and the world. Some have enjoyed the wonderful blessings through the fellowship of kind and loving families however, some have known pain and sorrow perpetrated within or by their own families.

O God, heal the broken hearted and give them the grace to forgive. And Lord, by Your Holy Spirit, reveal to

the perpetrator the sins committed that they will repent and turn from their wicked ways finding forgiveness in You. O God, for the individual who has never known real kinship, please send Your Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and envelop them now with Your unfailing love.

O God, create in us clean hearts that long for the absolutes clearly set forth in Your Holy Word. We praise and thank You for Your goodness, grace and mercy toward us. Lord, reveal Your will to the leaders

and decision makers of Canada and the world thus healing our lands. Shalom to the nations! Amen.



*Ruth Burke is a WICC Council member.  
She lives in Mount Pearl, NL.*

## JUNE: Water

In Canada, there are over two million lakes of all sizes covering 8.9% of the country. Water is fundamental to our life, and culture. But for some, it is contaminated and unsafe.

Only on July 28, 2010, the United Nations declare that "Safe and clean drinking water is a human right, essential to the full enjoyment of life and all other human rights." The UN asked its members and international organizations to help poorer countries provide clean, accessible and affordable drinking water for everyone.

Still, it is estimated that almost nine million people worldwide do not have access to clean water.

We applaud the efforts of Canadians Maude Barlow who lobbies against contaminated water, bottled water and the sale of Canadian waters; and David Suzuki who advocates against pollution of our environment and wasteful consumption of water. We are grateful for the work of these two Water Warriors and changes to legislation they have initiated. Lord, we ask your blessing upon them and others

who look after your creation. We are called to a personal commitment to become more environmentally aware. Bless us with the skills to answer this call to ensure that there is a supply of safe water for all your people and creatures. Amen.

*Glenda Klein is a WICC Council member.  
She lives in Lindsay, ON.*

## JULY: Victims of Crime

Statistics Canada has reported that nearly 8 million Canadians 15 years of age or older, have reported being the victim of violence. These are only the reported cases, yet the cries of the afflicted remain unheard.

According to the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime, an imbalance exists between the protection of rights afforded to those accused or convicted of crime in Canada and those people who are harmed by it, and the Canadian Charter of Rights

and Freedoms is silent about persons victimized by crime.

All life is sacred. As we enter into the Christian season of Advent, when the mother of our Lord prepared for the life of Jesus to begin, let us turn our hearts and minds to peace. To upholding each other in love, to finding comfort in the knowledge that we are more alike than we are different.

Oh God of peace and concord, let us pray that we as a society will find the strength to one day move

towards a place where words of love can replace acts of violence. Help us to place ourselves in the position of our sisters and brothers that our empathy will open our eyes to their suffering and influence our behaviour. We pray also for our political leaders that they may consider the human cost of the policies they implement.

Amen.

*Patricia Burton-Williams is the Editor of Riding the Waves and Communications Coordinator for WICC.*

*She lives in Toronto, ON.*

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## AUGUST: Natural Disasters

Oh God - our hearts break when we hear of lives destroyed by natural disasters. News of earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes, tsunamis, mudslides, floods, volcanic eruptions, typhoons and cyclones affects us all whether these disasters occur in our neighbourhood or on the other side of the world. We are deeply saddened when we see images of fellow human beings experiencing inconsolable despair as they face the loss of loved ones - our hearts go out to those who have lost their

homes and must live in temporary and often inadequate shelters for long periods of time - the faces of children orphaned and alone are almost more than we can bear. We shake our heads in disbelief as we learn of the magnitude of loss and suffering associated with such tragic events. We pray that You will be the God of all comfort and healing to our brothers and sisters who have been the victims of such tragedies. We pray for those who offer relief and support on our behalf. We pray that the aid we

offer, be it financial or practical, will somehow translate into an expression of love - our love reaching out across the miles and Your love reaching down from the heavens. Thank you for the knowledge that our suffering friends around the world are in Your hands, that You know all about their circumstances and that You care for each one of them.

Amen.

*Major Pat Phinney is the Salvation Army appointee to WICC and Chair of Finance.*

*She lives in London, ON.*

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## SEPTEMBER: Human Trafficking

God hates injustice and "does not ignore the cry of the afflicted" (Psalm 9:12b, NIV). Human trafficking is a justice issue. It is defined by the Central Intelligence Agency World Fact book as "Modern day slavery involving victims who are forced, defrauded or coerced into labour or sexual exploitation" and describes perhaps as many as 4 million people around the world. This \$10 billion business is related to organized crime and pornography and is destroying the lives of individuals, families, communities and societies. Prayer is a powerful weapon



against evil! Pray for governments to establish strict laws against this crime and for the guilty to be brought to justice. Pray for local leaders and communities to recognize signs of trafficking taking place in their neighbourhoods. Pray for protection and courage of individuals and organizations that are fighting for the freedom of those trapped by trafficking. Pray especially for the rescue and restoration of the victims of trafficking who are mainly women and children. Do not forget to pray

for the perpetrators whose greatest need is to experience the forgiveness and transformation that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. "Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!" Amos 5:24

Amen.

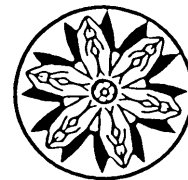
*Shirley DeMerchant is a WICC Council member.*  
*She lives in Dartmouth, NS.*

## OCTOBER: The Fellowship of the Least Coin

We should never tire of telling the story of Shanti Solomon and how an international ecumenical movement of prayer for peace, justice and reconciliation came into being. At the end of World War II there was much enmity between the nations who had fought on opposite sides. Some American Presbyterian women decided they must do something to reach across that division and try to bring about healing those relationships. They asked Shanti Solomon, from India, to accompany them as they visited

South-East Asian countries. Shanti was refused a visa to travel to Korea with the rest of the party because Korea had broken off all relations with India. She had to stay behind in Manila while the rest of the group moved on to Korea. She spent three days reflecting on what God was telling her. She began to imagine a whole movement of prayer among women of villages and towns across Asia and the world, all praying for peace and reconciliation. The least coin that even the poorest could contribute

would be given in order to give practical shape to the prayers. Each year WICC provides an Ingathering Service for the gathering of the least coins in their communities. This year's theme is **Pray and Act For Change**. As we pray for peace and reconciliation in the world, let us also be reminded to act for change, following the example that Shanti Solomon set for us over 50 years ago.



*Marilyn Fortin is the President of WICC. She lives in Belleville, ON.*

## NOVEMBER: Peace

War ravages in different parts of the world. Syria is told to "stop the carnage". Recently we were shaken by the news of the mass murder in Norway. A peaceful demonstration in an impoverished area of London, England ends with violence and destruction. The disorderly conduct is copycatted the following day.

What can we do? Personally my call to peace is the hymn that resonates in my mind: "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me". How can we be stronger



models of peace in this war-torn world? Peacekeepers show their presence in areas of need, but the challenge is to combat greed, drug lords and the overwhelming need for fairness and to avert famine and poverty. We can do our share by taking baby steps. We can decide to volunteer our time and money towards world aid. If neither time nor money is available to us, we can pray. And so we pray: Dear God, help

us to feed the world hungry, help us to be patient and understanding with family and friends; and even more so with people we do not particularly like or understand. Enable us to know Your will and to go into the quiet and reflect on how we, as individuals, can be peacemakers. "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." Amen.

*Eleanor Arless is the Roman Catholic appointee to WICC and Chair of Communications. She lives in Pointe Claire, QC.*

## DECEMBER: Violence Against Women

Lord, make me a channel of your peace; Where there is hatred let me sow love in countries around the world where there is political, religious and cultural upheaval, physical, mental and spiritual violence against women increases. Where there is injury pardon women are most often underpaid and undervalued in society and feel that there only option is to sell their bodies; their very souls, just to make it through the day. Where there is doubt, faith religion is often used to subjugate the role of women and to denigrate

their own view of themselves in the sight of God. Where there is despair hope in countries everywhere, including in our own, there are unheeded cries for help from women who are suffering from mental, physical, spiritual and sexual abuse and persecution. Where there is darkness light in every neighbourhood, in every community, in every town and city there are women who have been abandoned and forgotten, who see the world only through a pane of glass. Where there is sadness joy while the bearing of children is not



the definition of a woman, any woman who gives birth and loses a child due to miscarriage, violence, abduction or any other means bears an unspeakable sadness. O Divine Lord, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.

*Rev. Tara Livingston is a WICC Council member. She lives in Calgary, AB.*