



The newsletter  
of the

# Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada

## Inside this issue

Letter from the President	p.2
Coffee Party poster/flyer	p.4
Some Women Amazed Us	p.5
World Day of Prayer report	p.7
Stories from the FLC	p.8

Summer/Fall 2003

### Spring Council report

# WICC reorganizes program structure

The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada has been undergoing a structural review of its program committees. At the Spring Council meeting, which took place from May 30 to June 1, a decision was made to reorganize the program committees and re-group the work of WICC. Three committees were created to replace six.

The responsibility for providing resources for ecumenical liturgical gatherings, including the production of resources related to the World Day of Prayer annual service, the Fellowship of the Least Coin annual ingathering service, the Great Canadian Coffee Party, and the December 6th vigil, will now be under the umbrella of one committee chaired by Carla Pattinson of North Battleford, Saskatchewan. Carla, an appointee to Council from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, has chaired the World Day of Prayer Committee for the past three years.

The responsibilities of the Social Justice Committee, the Solidarity Network Committee, and the Grants and Benevolences Task Group were also

gathered under one umbrella with a mandate to inform and educate church women about women's justice issues – including the Council's current priorities on the issues of violence against women, poverty and racism – to respond to national issues affecting and effecting women, link together women across denominational lines to take action together for peace and justice, and to review and recommend distribution of grants and benevolences. Megumi Matsuo Saunders of Victoria, British Columbia, will chair this committee. Megumi is an elected member of the Council, and a member of the United Church of Canada. She has chaired the Social Justice Committee and the Solidarity Network Committee during the past year.

The Communications Task Group has been expanded to committee status with a mandate to embrace, care for and work with the various WICC networks in its outreach to the wider community, to strengthen and support existing groups, and to reach out to new constituents in

*continued on page 2*



Nangula Kathindi displays a maple leaf towel souvenir she received as part of WICC's welcome at Spring Council.

## News of Namibia

Nangula Kathindi, an ordained Anglican priest and General Secretary of the Council of Churches in Namibia, was a special guest at WICC's Spring Council. Nangula spoke about her experiences growing up and living in southern Africa, and her struggle as one of the first ordained women in Namibia. Her country is currently facing many challenges, including HIV/AIDS, an estimated 82,000 orphans, land issues, domestic violence, corruption, racism, and unemployment.

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## WICC NEWS

*is brought to you by*

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## Letter from the President

# On vision & values

**G**reetings in the name of the Prince of Peace! The last time I wrote to you, war was on the horizon. The war is now over, and it looks like there is again a chance for peace in the Middle East. Thank you for praying for peace and continuing to support the work of the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada.

People across Canada who attended the World Day of Prayer (WDP) this spring were especially aware of the need for peace which called us into communal prayer; WDP chair Carla Pattinson writes about the event on page 7. As you read the articles, I hope you realize how important you are to the life and development of WICC.

As you may have already noted, WICC has re-organized its program committees. We are not making changes to the programs themselves, only to the way the work is done, and to ensure it reflects our mission and vision as expressed in the following values:

1. We trust in God and seek to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. We have faith in the power of women to transform the world.
3. We are strengthened and energized by diversity and mutual respect.
4. We share a hopeful vision of equality for all peoples and the integrity of the whole created earth.

Another important value for WICC is the use of inclusive language for all people. We use it in all our materials, resources, worship services; and we also encourage the reclaiming and upholding those parts of scripture which affirm women and, conversely, encourage analyzing those parts which do not affirm women.

We do value the many ways in which you work alongside the elected and appointed Council members to expand our vision and help WICC to explore new opportunities for ministry. We also value your continued generosity in financially supporting our work. Many of you will have received a direct mail request for funds for WICC. As we continue to do the important work that we see as our responsibility, it is necessary to have the required funds to operate. The staff of WICC carry out their tasks in the spirit of stewardship. We ask you to respond to our request with a generous heart!

*Claire Heron*

## Social Justice report

# New resources underway

**U**nder the new mandate for the combined Social Justice, Solidarity Network and Grants and Benevolences committees, members of the yet-to-be-named committee have identified three ongoing tasks as priorities.

1. Violence: The revision of our "Hands to End Violence Against Women" resource will be available in the fall. This rich resource, designed for congregational use, addresses the issue of violence against women in church and society, and will include case studies, educational materials and denominational church policies.

2. Anti-Racism: We are currently preparing a draft WICC Policy Statement on Racial Justice and developing a new Anti-Racism Education and Action Kit. During our work on this resource, we have been in contact with other ecumenical groups in the areas of resources, workshops and consultation.

3. Poverty: We are also drafting a WICC Policy Statement on Poverty and gathering information in order to create a list of denominational resources on poverty.

The Grants and Benevolences group has completed its task for this year.

*Megumi Matsuo Saunders / Chair*

## WICC NEWS

is published and distributed by the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada. Established in 1918, WICC is a national council of representatives from 11 church partners.

*The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada is a national Christian women's council encouraging women to grow in ecumenism, to share their spirituality and prayer, to engage in dialogue about women's concerns, to respond to national and international issues affecting women, and to take action together for justice.*

### **Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada**

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### **Spring Council report**

*continued from page 1*

building a vital movement of Christian women across Canada, through the use of such mediums as publications and communications and the WICC website. Janet Campbell of Calgary, Alberta, will chair this committee. Janet is an elected member of the Council and a member of the Anglican Church of Canada. She is also president-elect, and has chaired the Communications Task Group during the past year.

Each committee will meet challenges within the recommendations, including addressing the committee's name, its working task groups, the participation of women on task groups from outside the Council, and communication of group work to the Chair who will be, by virtue of her office, a member of the WICC Board.

*Karen Hincke / Executive Director*

The  
WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL OF CANADA  
invites you to

Give your community a helping hand ~  
take part  
in the

# Great Canadian COFFEE Party

SUPPORT INITIATIVES TO OVERCOME VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Details:**

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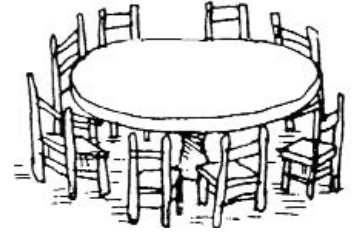


# Host a Great Canadian Coffee Party!

SUPPORT INITIATIVES TO OVERCOME VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

## When?

The weekend of October 4 & 5, 2003, or choose another fall date.  
Then decide on a time and place.



## What?

Invite your church group, book club, sewing circle, or faithful friends to meet together over a cup of coffee and talk about how you are affected by violence in your community, in Canada and around the world. Advertise this event by photocopying the poster on the other side of this sheet and filling in the details. By asking those who attend to make a donation of the price of a cup of coffee (or more!), you can use this event to raise money for a local women's shelter or national initiative against violence against women, or organize your own community non-violence activity.

You don't have to drink coffee to take part in this Canada-wide event. You could have a tea party, host a visitors' reception after church or get together for snacks after bowling. Feel free to come up with your own ideas to suit you and your community. You could raise \$2 or \$200 ~ it doesn't matter how much money you raise, but only that you find a way to make a difference.

And while you're gathered together, take the time to learn more about the issue of violence against women. You might like to invite someone from the group you're raising money for to talk about their organization, or spend some time researching possible choices and make a decision at your party. Most organizations working on issues of violence have brochures or information sheets for the public, or you can also find a wide range of information on the internet, from Canadian statistics on violence (such as those compiled by the FREDa Centre for Research on Violence against Women and Children at [www.harbour.sfu.ca/freda/articles/statsw.htm](http://www.harbour.sfu.ca/freda/articles/statsw.htm)) to an international perspective from organizations such as Amnesty International ([www.amnesty.ca/women](http://www.amnesty.ca/women)).

## Why?

One of the priorities for the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada is to work on issues of violence against women. One of the ways we do this is by supporting the efforts of church and community groups, creating resources and helping to connect people who are working on similar issues. The World Council of Churches has declared 2001 - 2010 the Decade to Overcome Violence; we encourage you to help overcome violence against women by taking part in the Great Canadian Coffee Party.

## What next?

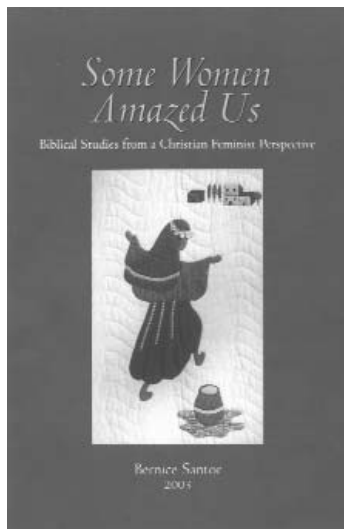
We are not asking for any money ~ all we are asking is that you let us know what step you took to help overcome violence against women. Last year, groups from across Canada raised nearly \$1,200 which they donated to local women's shelters and other organizations. Let us know how much money you raised and what local/national/international group(s) or initiatives you supported. Then call our office at 416-929-5184 or visit our website at [www.wicc.org](http://www.wicc.org) to report your successes. That's it.

**Thank you for participating in our campaign to end violence against women!**



The **Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada** is a national council of representatives from 11 partner churches, focusing on four main concerns of social justice, women's issues, ecumenism, and the growth of women's spirituality. Our work includes coordination of the World Day of Prayer and Fellowship of the Least Coin movements in Canada. For more information: Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada, 394 Bloor Street West, Suite 201, Toronto, ON M5S 1X4 Tel: 416-929-5184 Fax: 416-929-4064 E-mail: [wicc@wicc.org](mailto:wicc@wicc.org) Website: [www.wicc.org](http://www.wicc.org)

# Bernice Santor launches study of Biblical women



Bernice Santor was on hand at St. Joseph's College in Toronto for a launch of ***Some Women Amazed Us*** on May 31. Her display of quilts and accompanying talk was one of the highlights of the evening.

In ***Some Women Amazed Us***, Bernice Santor focuses on 12 sessions with named and unnamed Biblical women: Eve, Huldah, Esther, Abigail, Ruth, Isaiah II, Mary the Mother of Jesus, Anna, Martha, Mary Magdalene, the Woman at the Well, and Prisca. Each session features: an introduction; an exegesis through literary form, word study and historical context; questions for the interpretation of the text; application for today; creative activities; and a closing ritual.

The book also includes coloured

prints of five quilts of Biblical women and accompanying monologues, and a bibliography for further reading.

Bernice is an experienced Bible study leader, quilter, social activist and grandmother who lives in Grand Bend, Ontario. She holds a Master of Theological Studies degree from Huron University College at the University of Western Ontario in London.

All profits from the sale of ***Some Women Amazed Us*** will be donated to the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada. The cost is \$22.95 plus

postage and packaging. If you would like to order the book or help promote it in your area, please contact Bernice Santor at <santor@hay.net>.

You may also order the book through the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada. Contact the office at 394 Bloor St. W., Suite 201 Toronto, ON M5S 1X4 Tel: 416-929-5184; Fax: 416-929-4064 E-mail: <wicc@wicc.org>.

For more information, and an up-to-date listing of places where the book is available, please visit our website at [www.wicc.org](http://www.wicc.org).

## Nominations invited for Council

The national Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada strives to be a diverse group of women which not only represents our 11 church partners, but also the geographical, cultural and ethnic diversity of Canada. WICC's national Council is comprised of women appointed by our church partners, along with women nominated by our constituency and elected by Council.

The Membership and Nominating Committee invites nominations for membership from our constituency to

help us maintain wide representation. It is helpful to this committee to have a list of names of interested and committed women to consider for membership as we prepare each year for nominations to the Council.

Anyone who is interested in being a member must be willing to attend two weekend Council meetings (in late May and early November), and actively engage in one of the Council's program committees: (1) preparing resources for our liturgical events; (2) working for

social justice for women through study and preparation of educational resources related to women's poverty, violence against women, and racism; or (3) networking and communications.

To be eligible for nomination as a Council member, a candidate must be a woman of Christian faith, an active member of one of our partner churches, and committed to promoting the goals of WICC in her region. Each term is four years; Council members are eligible to be nominated for a second term.

# Grant recipients 2003

The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada is pleased to announce that offerings received during the World Day of Prayer in 2003 assisted with the following projects:

## INTERNATIONAL

**Self-Employment Training Project for Poor Women** (The Nellore District Welfare Society), Nellore District, India: \$2,000. Goal: to create and improve employment opportunities, income and status by buying sewing machines for rural women who have already been trained in tailoring.

**Women's Health Peer Educators Training** (Yayasan Peuli Sesami), Banaram and Singonegaran Villages, Indonesia: \$4,000. Goal: to increase women's knowledge of health issues, including awareness of HIV/AIDS and STDs, and set up a peer educator's group to educate other women in the vicinity.

**Outreach to the Arab Community Project** (Haifa Battered Women's Hotline), Haifa and the North of Israel: \$4,000. Goal: to provide information and raise community awareness around issues of violence against women, create support groups, open volunteer centres and train social workers, police and medical staff.

**Parenting Skills Workshop** (Jamaican Self-Help Organization), Kingston, Jamaica: \$1,500. Goal: to enhance parenting skills of marginalized Jamaican women and men living in inner-city and help their children in school through workshops and education.

**Maseno Health Clinic** (Vision Peoples in Mission), Maseno, Kenya: \$3,000. Goal: to provide preventative and curative health care by the purchase of medical equipment for the clinic and production of educational manuals and pamphlets.

**Scolarites Institut Technique Franco Libanais** (Association for the Advancement of Women), Beirut, Lebanon: \$3,000. Goal: to train young women from poor economic backgrounds for work in hotels or hospitals; providing room, board and education.

**Women's "Raising Awareness" Seminar** (World Student Christian Federation - Middle East Region), Beirut, Lebanon: \$3,000. Goal: to create a space where Arab women can speak openly and freely about issues related to the role of women within the church, the WSCF and the greater Arab society.

**Nepal Drinking Water Systems** (Tamakoshi Service Society and World Neighbours Canada Society), Ramechhap District, Nepal: \$3,000. Goal: to provide drinking water systems to people in six communities and reduce illness caused by water-borne diseases.

**Intervention Against Domestic Violence** (Protestant Association for Family Counselling), Managua, Nicaragua: \$3,000. Goal: to promote awareness in the churches about domestic violence, train church leaders to intervene, provide therapy sessions and make information available to the public.

**Together for a Life Without Violence** (St. Angela's Centre for Formation and Human Promotion), Chiclayo, Peru: \$3,000. Goal: to respond to a high incidence of family violence by training women who will serve as community promoters for "vigilance against family violence."

**Strengthening Community-based Women's Health Promotion** (Inter Pares), Philippines: \$3,000. Goal: to provide basic, interim or advance medical training to improve the skills of community health workers in three urban poor communities.

**Centre of Social Services for Disadvantaged Older Women** (Saint Stelian Association), Bucharest, Romania: \$3,000. Goal: to improve the health and quality of life for elderly women in need by providing counseling, material support and other assistance.

**Lawyers for Human Rights Development and Minga Peru** (Match International Centre), Sri Lanka and Peru: \$4,000. Goal: to help empower poor women and provide legal assistance to challenge abuses of human rights in Sri Lanka, and to create an income-generating program for poor Peruvian natives living along the Amazonian border.

## CANADA

**Women's Problem Gambling Recovery Program** (The Marguerite Centre), Halifax, Nova Scotia: \$3,000. Goal: to develop a guide to address the cause and effects of gambling and share this manual with other community organizations.

**Refugee Program** (Action Réfugiés Montréal), Montreal, Quebec: \$3,000. Goal: to educate refugee claimants about the refugee determination process, provide emotional support, and recruit, train and monitor volunteers.

**Bridge Funding for Settlement Services** (FCJ Hamilton House Refugee Project), Toronto, Ontario: \$3,000. Goal: to provide temporary shelter for refugee women and their children, help refugees adjust to Canadian society, and help them to establish themselves and become independent.

**Education 4 Skills Training Workshop** (Philippine Women Centre of Ontario), Toronto, Ontario: \$3,000. Goal: to provide education and training workshops to help Filipino women in Ontario identify and build upon their skills.

**Women's Support Group** (St. Thomas - Elgin Second Stage Housing), St. Thomas, Ontario: \$1,500. Goal: to provide emotional and practical support to abused women, and educate women about healthy relationships and resources available.

**Rumphi Education Aids-Awareness Project in Malawi** (International Health Overseas and Project Education), Winnipeg, Manitoba: \$2,000. Goal: to ship medical and surgical supplies to hospitals and medical contacts in Malawi.

**Community Garden Preserves** (St. Matthew's-Maryland Community Ministry), Winnipeg, Manitoba: \$2,000. Goal: to teach low-income women safe food handling, accounting and marketing skills, and help them develop small business techniques.

**Education in Everyday Living Skills** (Regina Home Economics for Living Project), Regina, Saskatchewan: \$3,000. Goal: to teach everyday living skills such as food preparation and basic money management to teenage mothers and minimum wage earning parents.

**Advocacy for Women in Crisis** (Visitation House), Regina, Saskatchewan: \$3,000. Goal: to assist women in crisis through counselling and support, create public awareness and advocate on behalf of those who live with poverty, abuse and other disadvantages.

**Child Apprehension Prevention** (Christian Task Force on Central America), Lower Mainland of British Columbia: \$2,000. Goal: to help prevent child apprehensions within the Latin American community and provide education about relevant laws and policies, available support services and self-education skills.

*Proceeds from the World Day of Prayer also support the international organization, cover the costs of printing and distributing WDP services and resources throughout Canada and support the ongoing work of WICC.*



Left and above: Children in Coaldale, Alberta, carried candles representing the Holy Spirit and signs recognizing participating churches at their World Day of Prayer service. Below: a small cedar tree, along with soil and water, decorated the front of Trinity Church in Ste. Foy, Quebec.



*World Day of Prayer*

# From Lebanon to Panama

**C**old: that was my experience of this year's World Day of Prayer service. In North Battleford, Saskatchewan, we woke that morning to -40°C with a wind! In spite of this, women and a few men gathered to join together in this annual day. No doubt other communities in Canada had an equally cold event – although I am sure that for some the weather was not so much of an issue. When one stops to think about it, it is truly amazing to know that, while we in Canada worshipped on a cold winter's day, people gathered around the world in many different climates and cultures – including adverse political climates – all using the same service, translated into their language and adapted to meet their local needs.

As ecumenical communities in Canada and around the world, we were invited to pray with the women of Lebanon, and invite the Holy Spirit to enter our lives and bring peace to an area of the world which suffers from the after-effects of war, and continues to live with unhappy and un-peaceful neighbouring countries which are engaged in their own struggles for peace and

justice. World Day of Prayer is a truly remarkable international event, held in hundreds of countries around the world, usually on the first Friday in March. As we gather, we experience the faith of women from countries far different than Canada. We enter into their understanding of God, learn about issues affecting their country and begin to understand the true universal nature of our faith.

Roma Paul, the international representative to the WDP, and I will travel to Swanwick, England, this summer to join with women from countries around the world to plan themes and writing countries for the years 2008 to 2011. We will also be taking care of the business of the international committee. I am truly thankful for this opportunity that has been afforded to me. I know that I will learn much and be greatly enriched by the experience, and pray that I will be able to make a helpful contribution to the discussion of issues.

World Day of Prayer is international and unique. I urge you to continue to promote and encourage attendance at the annual service. Thank you for your commitment to making the service



meaningful for those who attend in your communities. Truly the Holy Spirit is at work moving through Canada and around the world as we seek to better understand our Christian neighbours and all people in the world.

Grace and Peace.

*Carla Pattinson, Chair,  
World Day of Prayer /  
Ecumenical Worship Committee*

The 2004 World Day of Prayer service has been written by the women of Panama on the theme "In Faith, Women Shape the Future". The Bible readings focus on the stories of the daughters of Zelophehad (Numbers 26:33, 27:1a, 2-11) and Mary Magdalene (John 20:1-18). Materials will be available at the end of October. Please contact the WICC office at 416-929-5184 for more information.

## Council news

Council welcomed a new member this spring: **Elaine MacInnis** is the new appointee from the Baptist Convention. Elaine is an ordained minister who works as a hospital chaplain in Toronto.



**Roma Paul**, our representative to the World Day of Prayer International Committee, will be attending the WDPIC Quadrennial meeting held in Swanwick, England, at the end

of the summer. WDP chair Carla Pattinson will also be attending this event. Look for their report in the winter issue of WICC NEWS.



WICC's Fall Council and Annual General Meeting will be held October 31 to November 2. Look for a report in the winter issue of WICC NEWS.



## Fellowship of the Least Coin

# Telling our stories

A small child holds a square cloth, slightly damp and tied with a short string, in her hot little hand. Inside the cloth are twenty-four pennies. "These are for you to give to other children," she whispers.

A women's group has met for 15 years and each month a small container is placed on the table. No one needs an explanation – everyone rummages through her purse and drops in a penny or two. At the conclusion of the meeting they say in unison, without needing the little cards, the appointed prayer. After these many years everyone knows the prayer and the routine. It is always a surprise when a new member asks for the meaning of this well-practiced custom.

A woman who lives by herself has a jar beside her bed and drops in a penny whenever she prays for peace in the world, reconciliation and justice. It is surprising how quickly the pennies collect. She quietly mails a cheque for the total, not telling many people about her contribution.

A men's choir sings at the ingathering service and members are impressed with the thought that the work of pennies can

help people in other parts of the world. One of the men writes a rather large cheque to be sent in with the offering. While this is not exactly the way things usually go, no one refuses the money and it is collected with all the other pennies.

A faithful administrator reads each of the many notes that accompany the contributions and replies personally to each note. There is a special joy in these letters. She says this is the best time of the year, this time when people send their notes and their collected offerings.

What do all of these stories have in common with each other?

These stories and many, many others can be told in countries all over the world. These stories are a part of the whole story of the Fellowship of the Least Coin. What they have in common is that people all over the world take the time to pray and place their least coin into a container to be gathered with many other least coins from all over the world.

Our collective prayers for world peace, reconciliation and justice which accompany these least coins can and do make a difference, one penny at a time.

*Viola Duff*

## Briefly

# WICC supports student conference

The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada has agreed to co-sponsor the 50th Canadian Theological Students' Conference, to be held in February 2004. In this initiative, it joins with co-sponsors the Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries, the Churches' Council on Theological Education and the Canadian Council of Churches and the Canadian Theological Students' Association.

The co-sponsors will participate by: working with the students in planning the conference theme, workshops, activities, and related events; raising awareness of the conference among their memberships; providing material support where

possible, whether through financial grants, the encouragement of grants and financial support from their memberships, or in-kind donations (of staff time, space, communication and promotion, and so on); assisting and supporting where possible and appropriate, including the sharing of fund-raising assistance and expertise; communicating and promoting the conference; and helping to organize and coordinate the February 2004 conference.

The Council is pleased to support the 50th Canadian Theological Students' Conference. For more information on this event, visit the website at [www.ccforum.ca/ctsa/confer\\_en.htm](http://www.ccforum.ca/ctsa/confer_en.htm).

## Calendar

◆ October 4 & 5 (or another fall date)

**The Great Canadian Coffee Party:** Invite your church group, book club, sewing circle, or faithful friends to meet over a cup of coffee and raise money for a local or national initiative against violence, or organize your own community non-violence activity. For more information, look for the poster inside this newsletter.

◆ December 6

**National Day of Remembrance and Action:** WICC produces an annual liturgy for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. For a copy (available free of charge), please contact our office at 416-929-5184, by e-mail at <[wicc@wicc.org](mailto:wicc@wicc.org)> or visit our website at [www.wicc.org](http://www.wicc.org).