

Fellowship of the Least Coin



Messages & Reports
2019

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 *Message from the
Chairperson*

Dear Sisters,

How are you?

Often, that question is actually a greeting like "Hi! or "Hello!" Some of us say it to others as we walk by them. We usually expect answers like "fine" or "good" and can keep walking to wherever we're headed next. But today, I'm asking you, "How are you? How are you *really*?"

The answer to this question might surprise us. It might be "Terrible" or "Not good." Maybe something has just happened to you that affects your health, family, home, church, or work. Maybe you've been dealing with something for a while now. Maybe you're disappointed by your church.

However you're feeling at this moment and whatever may be happening in your life, ministry, or community, this scripture may be God's Word for you today.

*"Go up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news!
Lift up your voice in strength, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news!
Lift up your voice, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah,
'Behold your God!' (Isaiah 40:9)*

Through scripture, God is reminding us to get a new perspective, go to higher ground, and see a new way forward, together. A future where abundant life is available to all of God's children and all of Creation is not yet here. But it is possible. Young people are lifting up their voices in support of clean air and water. Indigenous peoples and allies are lifting up their

voices to protect their communities and lands. Women and allies are lifting up their voices to end rape and violence, and saying #MeToo and #TimesUp. People of colour and their allies are fighting racism and discrimination. People of faith are lifting up their voices to stand by one another and fight anti-semitism and Islamophobia. Members of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies are lifting up their voices to welcome and affirm all of God's children. In every corner of our beautiful and fragmented world, people are lifting up their voices to protect and support one another.

Sisters, today is a new day. Let's go to higher ground and be bearers of good news! Let's ask others how they are *really* doing and then lift up our voices to support them. I hope you see God and goodness around you as you work towards that future.

With love,

Awit Marcelino
MS. AWIT MARCELINO
Chairperson, ICFLC



Introduction

I was told this thrice when I was with the Presbyterian Women Tri-ennial Church Wide Gathering in 2018 in Louisville: “We are faithfully doing the FLC prayers and giving our FLC Offerings every year but we have no idea where the FLC Offerings go.”

This yearly publication of the FLC Messages and Reports (M&R) will tell us these:

- ▶ Who acts as Steward of the FLC as a spiritual practice and concept, and of the FLC funds?
- ▶ Who partners with the FLC by receiving a Project Grant, or a Scholarship Award for Young Women (SAYW), or an Emergency Grant in times of calamities and disasters; and, how are the FLC funds budgeted for the whole fiscal year?
- ▶ How to be a part of the Fellowship of the Least Coin, a global, ecumenical movement of prayer for justice, peace and reconciliation?
- ▶ To whom should one connect in case of interest in joining the FLC?

The FLC M&R is a way of showing that the International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin (ICFLC) is seriously taking its task as a sacred trust. As a trusted steward of the FLC idea as a prayer movement as well as its resources, funds and all, it is important to show our commitment to the vision of the FLC. The M&R is our way of upholding the integrity of the FLC through transparency and honest sharing. This report is also about accountability to each other, our faith in the eternal generosity of God, and our joy in giving, receiving and praying together through the FLC.

May the Divine Spirit inspire and lead you to journey closer with us - for justice, peace and reconciliation – wherever you are!

DR. LIZA B. LAMIS

Executive Secretary, ICFLC



*Report of the
Executive Secretary*

INTRODUCTION

Nine months into the work, and happy that I am not lost. With all the support from Corazon Tabing-Reyes, Pat Allinson, and Lalaine Toledo who is now part-time Office Assistant, and with the collective way of doing the FLC work, I am confident I am doing well. Thank you for welcoming me to be your colleague and co-worker in the ecumenical movement!

I see my work divided into two main parts, namely: Communicating the FLC, and administering its day-to-day work. This report is thus divided into two major parts, with some overlap.

I. COMMUNICATING THE FLC (liaison and promotion work, in cooperation with the ICFLC, Publications)

I now know more about the FLC network locally, and have felt its pulse in some specific places.

Locally, I have shared about the FLC in various groups in the Philippines:

- 1) Ecumenical CWU Philippines gatherings (Executive Committee, 11 January; 02 February, the Induction of the newly elected Officers; 12 May, Planning Meeting)
- 2) UMC Women's Society for Christian Service, March 22-23. I facilitated a workshop for all Area Conference Presidents.
- 3) United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), and its Christian Women Association, May 18-20. I brought greetings and shared about FLC, and gave greetings to the UCCP General Assembly on May 24-25.
- 4) Local Churches (UMC Las Piñas City, Feb. 25, UCCP United Metropolis Conference, Sept. 22. I shared about the FLC within the In-Gathering Worship Service.

Internationally, the FLC was made more visible through:

- 1) The WCC World Mission Conference, March 5-12, 2018, Arusha, Tanzania. At the Women's Pre-Conference on March 6-7, I shared about the FLC in a panel presentation, in which I was also asked to moderate. I was also part of the listening and drafting group of the **Women's Message** which was presented to the WMC plenary at the first day. At the **Women's Sokoni** (*Marketplace* in Swahili) on March 10 I shared about the FLC through a poem, including resources (CoP, M&R, brochure, coin boxes, Shanti Means Peace) in a booth assigned to FLC.



Very clear.



ICFLC Booth with Conference Stewards and Rev. Paulette Brown



The FLC, A Poem

Since I was already in Tanzania, I visited the Angaza Women Centre of the Lutheran Church in Tanzania, a PG partner in 2018. The Rev. Joyceline Kisanga, director of the center for 9 years, together with the 49 kids (2 boys, the rest are all girls) welcomed me, to their 15 has. of farm land and few buildings. Rev. Joyceline could not thank FLC enough for the support (the Centre's third from FLC according to her).

Girls and Boys at Wangaza



Rev. Joyceline



Kids Care at the Center



Altar at Morning Worship

- 2) The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), July 02-05 in Kigali, Rwanda. I gave a 20-minute presentation on the FLC, and brought materials for the women participants to the one-day Pre-AACC Assembly Women's Conference.

I also visited the AEBR (Baptist Church of Rwanda), one of our PG recipients for 2017, and met their leaders and learned about their work with women.

- 3) The Presbyterian Women (PC USA) Church-Wide Gathering on Aug. 02-05, in Kentucky, USA. I brought greetings to the Executive Committee meeting, and joined the assembly activities where I met local church women who faithfully live out the FLC spirit. Some told me they are happy to see a face of the ICFLC!
- 4) The EFECW 10th General Assembly on Aug. 07-11 in Soko Grad, Serbia, Where I co-facilitated an FLC workshop with ICFLC Chairperson Martina Heinrichs.

Those engagements were my opportunities to know more about the FLC, its partners and networks, and how it is practiced in different places. It was also their opportunity to see their new partner in me.

Let me share about an amazing way to practice the FLC. At the United Metropolis Conference of the UCCP, it was a half-day worship service with all the men, women, youth and young adults participating. Their FLC Offerings came in colorful containers with different names. For the United Church Men, it was "The Biggest Coin". For the Youth group, it was the "Hope Coin". There was a Love Coin, and the Least Coin. All these go to the FLC Offerings remitted to the Ecumenical CWU Philippines or ECWUP. It was not just a church women project; it was a national church project that everyone takes seriously. Let this be your clue to a more inclusive way of living out the FLC spirit.

Publications and Promotion

The yearly Messages and Reports (2018 M&R, 1000 copies) and Quarterly Updates and ICFLC Updates for ACWC were faithfully produced. With the increasing costs for posting and printing materials, I wondered whether this is still a practical thing to do.

However, I learned from my conversations with our networks that many still need and would prefer hard copies.

The In-Gathering Worship Liturgy (in soft copy), was translated into French, Spanish, and Tagalog. All these materials are posted in our website. I am amazed that many women especially from the USA have emailed to ask me about the FLC materials. It just shows that people do use them regularly.

We keep our website updated, as well as the FB page.

II. ADMINISTRATION

Strengthening the FLC Membership and Network

Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC)

I have confirmation from Rev. Francois Pihaatae, General Secretary of the CCC that this 2018 there is no Pacific representative to the ICFLC. And that perhaps in 2019 there will be, as PCC by then will be able to fill the post of its Women's Program executive. If there won't be any by 2019, I will recommend to the PCC General Secretary to have a volunteer for PCC, just like what the MECC is doing right now. I have a potential and willing volunteer in my newly-found friend in Arusha in March, Ms. Tagolyn Kabekabe, Facilitator for the Pacific of the Anglican Alliance, and a WCC Central Committee member. She travels all around the Pacific and globally as well, and fairly knows the national women leaders around, including Ethel Suri, her former mentee. And, she has agreed to volunteer to promote the FLC on her own.

Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC)

I have asked the help of Nicole Ashwood, a friend I met also in Arusha, and she is thinking of reviving the FLC in the Caribbean in another way or through another network.

WCC

It will be next year that WCC will have its representative to the ICFLC. Meanwhile, Dr. Isabel Phiri, WCC Associate General Secretary, with the help of Doug Chial, is the one taking care of the FLC matters.

THE FLC GRANTS

Project Grants

All PGs were paid out successfully, except for Peru and Chile where we encountered payment problems. We are still making sure they are paid soon. The Honorary Treasurer and I are doing our best to solve this concern with them.

Scholarship Award for Young Women (SAYW)

Ena Kamila Guerrero from the Philippines finished her Masters in Sociology at the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary in 2018.

Fasika Faiesa from Ethiopia finished her B.Th. in June 2018, from the *Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus* Seminary. She is projected to be part of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, Women Department upon graduation.

The following Emergency Grants, following the prescribed process, were given this 2018:

- 1) Taiwan, earthquake, January
- 2) Guatemala, volcanic eruption, June
- 3) Laos floods, through the Dept. of Christian Women of the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) in July
- 4) Philippines through the NCC Philippines, October

Finances

We had an overshoot Office expenses against the approved annual budget due to, first, the necessary program-related travels that I had to do in my first year in work; and which I am not likely to do in another 5 or so years. Second, the CoP expenses amounted to 10,519.86, with the increase due to higher postage fees incurred despite the lower number of orders compared to last year.

III. SOME THINGS WE CAN DO

- 1) To step up our FLC promotion and campaign. I have invited some people to be part of the FLC, some friends I just met, and some old ones. I need your help to follow them up. Some of you were copied of the communications and

emails sent to them. As I now see it, we need more efforts in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, with perhaps a more imaginative one. I need to follow through with the Caribbean and the Pacific regions, so that by 2019 we will have their representatives to this Table.

- 2) To reduce the ACWC representation to the ICFLC from 3 to 2. This would not diminish the voice of Asia in the ICFLC nor would it negate our historical sisterhood. As the previous Executive Secretary recommended in her report in 2017, it would reduce costs for ACWC and ICFLC, consequently saving us some needed resources. This AM needs to decide on this matter. According to the ACWC Constitution, ICFLC reserves the right to decide the number of ACWC representatives to the ICFLC.
- 3) To increase the CoP budget from USD 8,000 to 11,000.

I hope to see the FLC movement thriving in all regions globally. To be embraced primarily as a prayer movement that seeks justice, peace reconciliation. To be consistently and generously supported because we believe in acting on our prayers.

Liza B. Lamis



*Report of the
Honorary Treasurer*

Dear Sisters,

Following the pattern set by our past Honorary Treasurer Pat Allinson, I have prepared a narrative report to supplement the financial reports included for your perusal. Because this is my first report as Honorary Treasurer, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for allowing me this opportunity to serve such a special movement. Because of my husband's health issues with Alzheimer's I am unable to be with you at this time and I appreciate all the prayers and support from everyone. He is doing fine but his neurologist said an overseas plane trip would be out of the question, and I felt having him stay in a facility for ten days would set him back. Even though our children offered to help, he needs the consistency of having one caregiver at this point. But I have been in almost daily contact with our dear Liza, and I feel we have managed to work well together to keep our finances in order.

Financial reports attached include:

1. Scotia Bank Account Report, July 2017 - February 2018
2. Rockland Trust Bank, January 2018 - August 2018
3. Auditor's Report
4. World Council of Churches Account Report
5. OIKO Credit Account
6. Proposed Budget for July 2018 - June 2019

As we discussed at last year's meeting, Pat Allinson waited until February to completely close her Scotia Bank account in Canada. I was able to open an account at Rockland Trust with \$50 of my own money on January 2, 2018. It is under Church Women United of Cape Cod using our 501 c(3) number since ICFLC does not have one. The name of the account is Church Women United Fellowship of the Least Coin. It is a free business

account with 250 free checks to start (which is probably more than we will need!). Olivia Masih White is a co-signer on the account. She is a CWU Board member, originally from India and a strong advocate for FLC. She had planned to attend in my place, until her husband was diagnosed with prostate cancer. So thankfully, Awit has stepped up to fill the gap.

Corinna Harbig had wired the remainder of funds from the 37th Annual Meeting as well as all the receipts. Pat Allinson wired the remainder of her account as well. I also received \$100 in a personal check from Shirley Maginley representing a donation from the UK.

I have requested funds from the WCC account to cover Liza's salary and Emergency Grants. With the approval of the Executive Committee we wired an Emergency Grant to Taiwan (\$1000), Guatemala (\$2000), and Laos, c/o Church of Christ in Thailand (\$3000) for a total of \$6000. Liza's salary is paid in April, July, October, and January. Unfortunately we had a delay with the July payment due to an issue in receiving the wire transfer from WCC, but we have everything under control now.

Liza sent the grant requests in three batches beginning in March and at this point all except two to Peru and Chile have been received. We had originally asked the WCC to send the grant to Moldova and it was returned due to incorrect information. We then sent one from my account, which eventually was received but the one from WCC was eventually received as well. The decision to send it from the USA account was based on the urgency and appeal of the partner in Moldova, especially on long delay of project implementation. We have sent a request to the bank in Moldova and the funds will be returned to us.

As discussed last year, we withdrew US \$50,000 from our OIKO Credit Account/Investment to help pay for the grants.

Yasmina Visinand who had been our financial person at WCC has retired and Liza sent a beautiful prayer tribute for her memory book. Our new person in-charge of FLC finance is Lydie Fleurimont who has been extremely helpful. As I write this report, Lydie had requested prayers for her three year-old son Tyler who is very ill in the hospital.

Elaine Dykes, the Finance Manager at WCC has been helpful with all my questions. As you note in the 2017 Messages and Reports Cora's report included a great deal of information from Elaine Dykes concerning the difficulty in managing our account. We had begun inquiries with Susan Jackson Dowd of Presbyterian Women USA about having them take over our account. We have been waiting for Elaine to give us more information about what they could do for us in the future, with WCC having a new finance management system. I was able to finally speak to her on the phone and unfortunately she is not able to get anything in writing to us before our meeting. However what she proposes is to have our account as part of the WCC and thus be able to use the WCC financial reporting mechanism rather than having to have a separate account prepared as an Excel document. At the present time we have gotten only two reports, one in April and one in September. That would change with the new system so that they could easily access information for us.

I have some suggestions for next year:

1. I propose that we request that the North American members (CWU, PC-USA and WICC) send their donations directly to the Rockland Trust Account by check, thus saving the wire transfer fees and allowing the money to be available for immediate use for the Executive Secretary's salary and Emergency Grants.
2. We continue to keep the Project Grants at \$4500 rather than \$5000.
3. We wait to hear from WCC before making any moves to change our fiscal agent.

I especially want to thank Liza for all her help and spirit. I look forward to her late night and sometimes early morning emails. She is a special gift!

Marilyn Lariviere

Updates from Ecumenical Organizations



ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES (AACC)

The Theology, Family, Life and Gender Justice Department, working under new assembly mandate and departmental strategic focus areas for 2019 to 2023, collaborated with UN women on engaging regional inter-religious leaders in promoting gender responsive peace building, and conducting regional sensitization forums for women on entrepreneurial culture for self-sustainability.

AACC also engaged the African Union (AU) Gender Programme to create a platform for female religious leaders and youth to claim space at the African Union to input gender justice and GBV related policy processes.

IN 2018 the FLC was promoted at the AACC 11th General Assembly in Rwanda, at the International Conference on Family Planning also in Rwanda, through AACC meetings and through FLC Project Grants recipients who were requested to act as FLC ambassadors in the continent. **The 2017** block grant enabled AACC to facilitate International Women's Day Celebrations, to participate in the 4th African Union (AU) High Level Panel on Gender Equality And Women's Empowerment, to attend the 37th ICFLC AM in October 2017, and to follow up FLC PGs And SAYW Awardee, Emma AHOLOU – YEYI.



ASIAN CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (ACWC)

ACWC had its 16th ACWC Assembly marking its 60th founding anniversary on the theme, "Now, Choose Life, Change Your Ways and Actions" in October 2018. Some ACWC members still take the FLC as a fundraising activity for ACWC instead of a prayer movement. Newly-organized ACWC-Mongolia women leaders committed to be part of the FLC movement.

At the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Korea Church Women United (KCWU) the ACWC Executive Secretary shared again about the FLC and encouraged KCWU to exert more effort to promote the FLC movement as a way of building peace which is very urgent issue in the Korean peninsula in these days.

The FLC Block Grant for 2018 has covered the ACWC activities and airfares of the ACWC's representatives to the 2018 ICFLC AM. ACWC office was not so productive in promoting FLC in the year of 2018. Hopefully, ACWC women would be more encouraged to support the FLC after hearing greetings from FLC regional representatives, worshiping and enjoying cultural exchanges with the ICFLC members during the ACWC assembly in Bangkok. All ACWC Assembly speakers were given the FLC book, "Celebrating the Legacy, Visioning the Future, Living Jubilee" and "Shanti Means Peace" as a reminder to continue the legacy of the FLC movement in their respective countries.



CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE OF ASIA (CCA)

CCA celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2017 as the first regional ecumenical organization founded in 1957 at the Asian Church Leaders' Conference held in Parapat, Indonesia. It organized a national consultation on "Ecumenical Women's Action Against Violence" for women leaders of the Lao Evangelical Church (LEC), from November 27-28, 2017, a follow-up activity from the regional consultation held in July 2017.

CCA has been providing a common platform to church women in Asia with the agenda of promoting a culture of peace by preventing violence against women, and increasing women's participation and leadership in peace building initiatives in Asia. To achieve this goal, CCA organized and facilitated a national consultation on "Ecumenical Women Action against Violence, Post War Situation" as part of CCA's initiative of Ecumenical Women's Action against Violence (EWAAV), in collaboration with the National Christian Council in Sri Lanka (NCCSL) at the headquarters of the NCCSL in Colombo from 29 to 30 November, 2017. In 2017, the UNiTE Campaign marked the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based

Violence under the overarching theme, “Leave No One Behind: End Violence against Women and Girls”— reflecting the commitment to a world free from violence for all women and girls around the world.

The Ecumenical Women’s Fellowship in Pakistan organized a workshop on December 10, 2017. Introducing the UNiTE Campaign and 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence to the women fellowship of Presbyterian Church at FC College in Lahore. A National Conference on Women Doing Theology was held in Lahore, Pakistan from 21 to 23 February 2018, and was attended by thirty-three (33) women theologians from various churches, theological institutions and Christian organizations in Pakistan.

The Cambodian Church Leaders’ Consultation to Initiate Ecumenical Women Action Against Violence, held on 10-12 May 2018, paved the way for initiating networks and coalitions of women in church and society at the grassroots to overcome violence and build peace with justice.

CCA uses every opportunity to strengthen and promote the spirit of the FLC in its constituencies during visits, programs and communication through email and disseminating the FLC Circle of Prayer. During weekly devotion FLC offerings are set aside. CCA as a regional ecumenical organization and facilitator will continue to play its role to develop and strengthen the FLC movement by encouraging constituencies to involve in national level activities of FLC; and in popularizing the FLC movement at all levels such as Sunday schools, women and youth activities.



CHURCH WOMEN UNITED (CWU-USA)

The CWU USA Quadrennial Priorities for 2016-2020, with the theme, “Learning and Leading... Using the Principles of God’s Word” has the following priorities: Human Rights, with focus on Child Education Awareness; Hunger and Poverty, with focus on Childhood Hunger; Health and Wellness, with focus on Women’s Health – Heart Disease; Diversity and Inclusiveness, with focus on Racial, Ethnic Equality and Cultural Inclusion. CWU continues to develop new avenues to promote the FLC through its Actions/Global Concerns Committee.



ECUMENICAL FORUM OF EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN (EFECW)

A significant outcome of EFECW work over the years has been that women are equipped to work effectively in overcoming divisions and building community, with the support and encouragement of a European ecumenical family.



The year 2017 has been a positive year in living out our vision and in working fruitfully on our priorities and themes through Coordinating Committee meetings, the Jacqueline Sturty Legacy Fund, Neighbourhood Meetings, and external cooperation. As EFECW moves forward and approach its 10th General Assembly in August 2018, we are reminded of the strands that weave our way through our work on a European, national, local and personal levels – binding together women from diverse backgrounds.



مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط
The Middle East Council of Churches

THE MIDDLE EAST
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
(MECC)

MECC aims to deepen the spiritual fellowship among the churches of the Middle East, to unite them and to spread the Gospel of salvation and reconciliation of Jesus Christ through love, peace and justice. MECC facilitates dialogue among churches, strengthen the spirit of partnership and ecumenical awareness, provide a means for common study and research aimed at understanding the traditions and history of member churches.

MECC co-organized The Week of Prayer for Christian unity in Lebanon. In Syria it organized three capacity-building trainings for 84 staff from local organizations. It has filmed, produced and published the ***The Bridges to Bethlehem*** Christmas documentary series, and continue to maintain dialogue between Christians and Moslems. Additionally, MECC has education programs in Syria and Lebanon for Syrian refugees and children; livelihood projects to help prevent the spread of disease in the areas of Syrian refugees, provides medical consultations, meditation, nutrition and first aid sessions for the Syrian, Iraqi refugees and Lebanese vulnerable families.



LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (CLAI)

During 2017 and 2018, CLAI has continued strengthening its networks of cooperation and dialogue with the ICFLC. CLAI's participation and representation as CLAI in ICFLC is given in the context of a model of collaborative work between our representative, Rev. Yamina Apolaris and Cecilia Castillo Nanjarí, Member of the team of volunteer support to CLAI, with the support of the Executive Committee of CLAI.

As important basis for the work we highlight the dissemination of information and updated FLC forms for projects and scholarships for young women, with wide dissemination through our various networks of churches and civil society in 20 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean where CLAI has presence. Likewise we gave tracking to the request of funds and approval of projects, as well as accompaniment thereto, for the final reports, once the projects are completed.

Among the commitments made by CLAI, is the permanent promotion of the FLC movement, encouraging faith communities and beneficiaries to accompany, collaborate and disseminate this good practice, exercised by women throughout the world, and to set aside least coins.

We are grateful for the prayers, the confidence and the continued support we receive from the ICFLC, especially in situations of emergency and painful conditions as it was the murder of girls in Guatemala on March 8, as also the solidarity with our people for the tragedy caused by Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico last September, of which there are still difficult aftermaths.

We value immensely the networks and sororal work generated between CLAI and the FLC for long years, especially today when we confront critical contexts in the midst of faith communities in Latin America and the Caribbean; as well as the women's movements within our churches and its criminalization in the civil society. We are committed to continue reaffirming the concrete steps of collaboration that will ensure the strengthening of the Ecumenical networks in the region and the effective participation of women in the processes of life, decision-making and direction of the Latin American churches.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE (WDPIC)

This year the WDP theme focused on environmental care, with the program written by WDP Suriname, a small and unknown country for many had the chance to raise awareness on our ecological responsibility in the midst of climate change, consumerism, lack of basic sanitation, mining, deforestation, pollution and gender based violence.



WDP and FLC share leadership locally and internationally, and few WDP national committees send their FLC offering together with WDP Annual Contribution. Last year we released to FLC the offering that has been accumulated over the years. This year, we enjoyed building a relationship with the new Executive Secretary – Liza Lamis – by participating at the same events together, like the Church wide National Gathering of Presbyterian Women of the USA.

WDP leaders hosted the ICFLC Annual Meeting in Slovenia in 2017, which introduced FLC to the focus country of the

WDP 2019 program. ICFLC members will be able to share their experience and perspective on the theme “Come, everything is ready” as an opportunity to open up the circle of prayer and expression of solidarity.



To strengthen this ecumenical sisterhood for peace and justice at the international level, we promoted FLC leadership over WDPIC social media. We affirmed the participation of WDP and ICFLC on Thursdays in Black by posting a photo on the WDPIC Facebook page.

FLC Block Grant is used to support the international coordination of WDPIC and participation at the ICFLC annual meetings. We used the grants to cover the expenses of the International Executive Committee Meeting in Brazil in 2017. And we will use the 2018 Grant for the next Executive Committee Meeting to be held in 2019.

The context of women's human rights today is different from when WDP was created, but the backlash against women's leadership and rights are still prevalent. We hope that together with ICFLC, ecumenical partners, and church women's organizations we can continue to affirm the journey for peace and justice.



WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL OF CANADA (WICC)

WICC is the only national ecumenical women's organization in Canada founded in 1918, and its council is made up of representatives from 10 church partners: Canadian Baptist Ministries, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Anglican Church of Canada, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada, Presbyterian Church in Canada, Evangelical

Lutheran Church in Canada, United Church of Canada, Society of Friends (Quakers), Mennonite Central Committee, and the Salvation Army. WICC's vision is to restore hope to women touched by injustice. Its mission is to empower Christian women to pursue justice, peace, and reconciliation by standing together in prayer and in action. WICC's main activities are to promote the work of World Day of Prayer and the Fellowship of the Least Coin and to partner with local and national Christian organizations pursuing peace and justice in Canada and abroad.

This year, WICC turned 100 years old! We had celebrations all over the country, hosted by local WIC chapters. We invited recipients of grants (WDP and FLC) to give presentations about their work with women, girls, and communities at our WICC Toronto celebration.



WICC continues to support the FLC by promoting the FLC, its ministries, and resources to Christian women and churches throughout Canada. Council members take part and lead in multiple FLC In-gathering services in their areas across Canada. Members are usually connected with local WIC chapters that coordinate services or they are asked to present the story of the FLC, and read parts of *Shanti Means Peace* to children and have them available for sale after the service. Throughout the year, council members preach or give presentations about the FLC to groups who have always participated (but not remember the story and the vision) and to new churches and groups.

Every year, council members write about 12 women's issues and include a prayers for each month of the year. These prayers are shared with all of our sisters on FLC's website, on WICC's website, and they are included in an issue of our national newsletter, *Riding the Waves*.



WICC website was updated last year with the FLC promoted on its home page beside the World Day of Prayer. The website includes the story of Shanti and her vision, the current year's Ingathering Service booklet, monthly prayers, project grant recipients, items for sale (FLC pin, books, and links to FLC's website for grants information and stories).

FLC supporters are aging in Canada. Reaching new women (young and old) are always top of mind. WICC ICFLC representative has focused on endorsing projects for Indigenous women in Canada, youth and children's education, girls and women's education, and prioritized projects for gender justice and climate action.



**World Council
of Churches**

**WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
- JUST COMMUNITY OF WOMEN
AND MEN (JCWM)**

The WCC Gender Advisory Group (GAG) presented a report and recommendations to the WCC central committee in June 2016. In response, the central committee recommended the WCC "executive committee, commissions, reference groups and the general secretary to study the relevant recommendations and to report back to the central committee in 2018 on actions taken." (GEN PRO 047, CC Meeting in Trondheim, 2016).

In 2017, the JCWM, in collaboration with the members of the GAG, implemented direct consultation with the Commission

on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) in January, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) in February, the Commission on Faith and Order in June and the Education and Ecumenical Formation Commission (EEF) in October, as well as the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (PJP) Reference Group in February and WCC executive committee in June. It reported findings to the WCC executive committee in November and the central committee in June 2018.

This reflects a methodology of direct engagement to promote a JCWM with over 350 church representatives responsible for providing direction to the work of the WCC. The methodology is based on the assumption that building an ecumenical culture to promote gender justice requires engaging a wider circle of advocates. It aims to build momentum towards achieving a gender justice policy for adoption by the WCC central committee in 2020.

Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) – The Thursdays in Black campaign for a “world without rape and violence”, continues to be adopted by more and more churches and ecumenical partners. It has become a highly visible campaign with countless ambassadors. Specific outcomes in 2017 are highlighted in the narrative report on the JCWM activities in 2017. The campaign has become so popular that a “relaunch” was planned in 2017 to coincide with the WCC central committee in 2018.



Just Community of Women and Men in Church and Society – Planning began in 2017 for a global consultation to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women, taking place from 1 to 5 October 2018 in Kingston, Jamaica.

Transition in executive leadership. In early 2018 Professor Dr. Fulata Mbanja Moyo completed 10 years of service as the JCWM programme executive. A new executive was identified through a global interview process. Rev. Nicole Ashwood of the Uniting

Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands was appointed and will begin work at the end of 2018. In the meantime, leadership for the work of the JCWM is provided by Professor Dr. Isabel Apawo Phiri, deputy general secretary.

Under the leadership of Fulata Moyo the following activities were implemented in 2017 – a complete report is available upon request: Centering the experience of women in the WCC (T301); Women's experience of home, church, and community (T302); Sexual and Gender Based Violence (T303); Theological education and empowerment (T304); New ways of being church and the ministry of women (UM1HT3)

Strengthening the personal contact with the FLC staff and ICFLC members will be a priority for the new WCC programme executive for the JCWM once in office. Also, to maintain programmatic collaboration to strengthen policy development for gender justice, through an exchange of best practice and collaboration on advocacy training; strengthen collaboration among women's prayer and peace movements to combat racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination in all its forms and particularly against women and migrants; harvest from and promote the experiences of women living in post-conflict or post-disaster situations to promote trauma healing and transformation, i.e. in South Sudan, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, etc.

The block grant provided by the FLC, along with its project grant support, helps to achieve the overall work of the JCWM.

The WCC and the JCWM is grateful for the leadership the ICFLC and vision of the FLC, particularly for its commitment to gender justice and its support of women's peace building movements. Though much progress has been made toward gender justice, it is important to continue developing a holistic vision and approach to building intergenerational just communities of women and men among: (a) church leaders, (b) church groups, (c) theological networks (d) ecumenical leaders and (e) women and youth on the margins of the church and society and (f) from churches which are on the margins.

2019 FLC PROJECT GRANTS

AFRICA

1. **Renting Materials for Parties for Promotion of widow, women and street Girls, *Burundi*, US\$4,500.00**

The project aims to promote the economic empowerment of widows and street girls for a better quality life, girls' education and promotion of sisterhood.

2. **Action on Gender-Based Violence (AGBV), *Burundi*, US\$4,500**

This project seeks to educate women and some male church leaders on both trauma and gender-based violence so that they can play an active role in fighting against GBV.

ASIA

1. **Kapatiran, *Tokyo, Japan*, US\$4,500**

The project aims to provide practical support to Japanese-Filipino young people towards living harmoniously in Japanese society and enjoying the same human rights with the rest.

2. **Shekinah Home Nursing Care, *Malaysia*, US\$4,500**

The project will provide nursing care to needy or neglected elderly women.

3. **Sewing Project and Dry Food, *Thailand*, US\$1,600**

This project will support Park 8 churchwomen make a living without leaving their villages.

4. **Seminar on “Renewing Ways, Fulfilling Ecumenical Calling”, *East Timor*, US\$4,500**

The seminar aims to help strengthen the leadership capacity towards the revitalization of the Asian church women's ecumenical movement and to promote ACWC in a prospect ACWC member.

5. **Seminar on Health Issues and Conditions Affecting Women's Well-being, *Philippines*, US\$4,500**

The seminar aims to train deaconesses on basic ways to promote and maintain women's well-being while doing their ministries.

6. **Church Women's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace**, *South Korea*, US\$4,500

The pilgrimage will Korean Church women develop skills in peacebuilding, create networks of women peacebuilders, and experience a prayer pilgrimage for peace and unification of the Korean peninsula.

7. **In God's Image (IGI), the journal of Asian Women's Resource Centre for Culture and Theology (AWRC)**, *Pan-Asia*, US\$2,500

Produced twice a year, the journal is aimed at promoting Asian feminist theologies, and encouraging Asian women to write, reflect and articulate their stories and faith.

8. **Sub-Regional (South Asia) Training on Young Women Leadership Development: Young Women Agents of Transformation and Change, October 10-14, 2019**, *Colombo, Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka*, S\$4,500

The training aims to help develop and strengthen young women's leadership in church and society; to enhance the involvement and participation of young women, and to ensure full use of their abilities in the decision making levels of the ecumenical movement in South Asia.

EUROPE

1. **Athens, My City**, *Greece*, US\$2,000.00

The project aims to raise awareness and break stereotypes about refugees through a photo-exhibition of the outputs of photo-workshop with Greek youth and young refugees (Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, etc.)

2. **Groundswell – Changing Perspective**, *Croatia*, US\$2,500.00

The project is aimed at educational and awareness-raising of 15 religious and secular women engaged in grassroots social change and women's rights activism.

3. **Women Without Boundaries**, *The Netherlands*, US\$2,500.00

This project is aimed at empowering refugee women mostly coming from Arabic (and/or predominant Islamic) countries, who are at the start of building a new life in the Netherlands.

4. **2019 ESWTR Louvain Meeting**, *Belgium*, US\$4,500.00

The meeting aims to support the Spanish and Portuguese women to be able to attend the 2019 Louvain ESWTR meeting in Belgium.

5. **Strengthening Our Human and Economic Rights in the Framework of the Gender Violence Recovery: Case of Forced Sterilizations to Rural Women in Huancabamba - Piura - Peru**, *Huancabamba, Piura, Peru*, US\$4,500

The project is aimed to strengthen the process of capacity development and empowerment of rural women affected by forced sterilization in Huancabamba (Region Piura); for the defense of their human, political and economic rights.

6. **Learning in Gender Key (Perspective) for the Equitable Development of Women and Men in the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba**, *Cuba*, US\$4,500

The project aims to raise awareness and contribute to training in gender as a basis for the exercise of leadership in the different ministries and its correlates in the churches.

7. **El movimiento de las Mujeres Universitarias y la Teología Feminista: *The University Women's Movement and Feminist Theology***, *Chile*, US\$2,500

The project supports the university feminist movement by giving them materials and an on-line workshop on Latin American feminist theology.

MIDDLE EAST

8. **“RISEN” Sunday School Easter Project 2019**, *Al-Hassakeh-Syria*, US\$4,500

The project aims to train Sunday School teachers in to teach in an ecumenical ministry.

9. **Emergency Relief Aid for Children of Syrian Refugees**, *Lebanon*, US\$4,500

The project addresses the needs of the most vulnerable Syrian girls in order to prevent and protect them against violence, exploitation and delinquency and ensure their education.

10. **Women Conference, Erbil -Iraq, US\$4,500**

The conference will strengthen the ecumenical fellowship of church women by providing them the support to participate.

11. **Empowerment through the Roots, Lebanon, US\$4,500.00**

Aimed to empower women in Lebanon through a visit to their homeland Armenia, of which they have been prevented to visit because of the Armenian Genocide.

CANADA

1. **Education to Change the Lives of Children in the Mukuru Slums, Canada, US\$4,500**

This project aims to improve the lives of girls in a few distinct ways: by giving girls the knowledge and practical means to manage their monthly period; by training girls to avoid and defend themselves from sexual aggression; and by teaching boys about respect, consent, and intervention, when needed. The overall aim is to increase girls' confidence, promote educational achievements, and improve their lives, which will work towards relieving poverty and suffering, and building safer, healthier communities.

USA

1. **Deportation Defense Program, United States, US\$4,500.00**

The purpose of Deportation Defense Program is to serve a greater number of low-income detained immigrants facing deportation. This project, which includes hiring a second attorney, will allow more of those low-income immigrants to access the legal counsel they desperately need.

**ICFLC APPROVED BUDGET
JULY 2018 TO JUNE 2019**

Block Grants	110,000
Salary & Pension, Executive Secretary	27,250
PH Office Administration	25,000
Hosting of Annual Meeting	18,000
Annual Meeting Travel	7,000
Young Women Scholarship Award	5,500
Honorary Treasurer's Honorarium	2,000
Auditor's Fee	200
Emergency Grants	15,000
Project Grants	94,600
<hr/>	
TOTAL	US\$ 304,550

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN (FLC)

WHAT IS THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN?

The Fellowship of the Least Coin is a global ecumenical movement of prayer for peace, justice and reconciliation. Through this movement women around the world seek fellowship with each other and are reminded to live a reconciled and forgiving life with others.

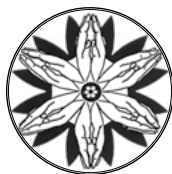
HOW AND WHEN IT BEGAN

The idea for the Fellowship of the Least Coin emerged as a vision from God to **Mrs. Shanti Solomon** of India. She was part of the Pacific Mission Team of seven women from different countries that traveled in Asian countries after World War II, in September 1956. It was organized by Dr. Margaret Shannon on behalf of the women of the Presbyterian Church of the USA. Shanti Solomon, who was refused a visa to Korea, went to Manila, Philippines while other members of the team proceeded to Korea. She reflected on the experiences of their travel in the war-torn countries of Asia and was inspired to promote reconciliation, justice and peace.

On the return of the team, she suggested that prayer could transcend every national boundary. She challenged the Christian women of Asia and the women from the Presbyterian Church USA to combine their efforts and resources and launch a project of justice, peace and reconciliation on an international level. It was to be a project of Christian prayer and positive action in which every Christian woman could participate, no matter what her economic position was. Every time a woman prayed she was to set aside a "least coin" of her currency. It was an encouragement to the women of the team to demonstrate their unity in Christian faith, regardless of their country or economic circumstances. They all accepted it as their sincere desire to express their solidarity with suffering humanity and with women of every nation.

In 1958, at its first Assembly held in Hong Kong, the Asian Church Women's Conference (ACWC) agreed to launch the Fellowship of the Least Coin. At its second Assembly in Thailand

in 1962, ACWC voted to make the promotion of the FLC a basic outreach programme of the ACWC. The East Asia Christian Conference (EACC), now known as the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) administered the FLC fund from 1958 to 1970. In 1970 Mrs. Shanti Solomon, the founder, was named the Executive Secretary of the FLC and of the ACWC. From then on ACWC took the responsibility to administer the FLC Fund.



THE FLC LOGO

The idea for the FLC logo came from the late Mrs. Rayann Ma from Hong Kong, the Chairperson of the first Assembly of the ACWC. The actual design was the gift of her brother-in-law, James Ma, a commercial artist. It is folded hands in prayer, encircling a small plum flower, and which form a lotus flower. Lotus plant grows in the muddy pond but its flower rises above the murky water and opens beautifully and without blemish, fit as offering to God. As the movement has grown global, the praying hands are now in different colors of the races.

CIRCLE OF PRAYER

Feeling the need to reaffirm prayer as the vital element of the FLC, the ACWC asked the women of Hong Kong to prepare a booklet of prayer: "Circle of Prayer" to be used as prayer is offered and the least coin is set aside. Since then, the "Circle of Prayer" has become an important part of the FLC. Twenty to twenty-four meditations and prayers are written by women around the world and published by the International Committee for the FLC (ICFLC) every two years.

IT'S GROWTH

The idea of the FLC quickly gained acceptance not only among the women of Asia to whom it was first presented, but among women of all the continents in the world. In 1966 when the FLC celebrated its 10th anniversary, women from 24 countries participated in the movement. By 1980, at the time of its Silver

Jubilee, women from 75 countries had already joined the FLC. In 1986, women from over 80 countries around the world celebrated the 40th anniversary of the FLC; and in 2006, its Jubilee Anniversary.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE FLC (ICFLC)

Because the FLC prayer movement became truly world-wide and the grants were made to the programmes and projects all over the world, an International Committee for the FLC (ICFLC) was formed in 1979 to administer the promotion, the interpretation of the movement and the allocation of the FLC grants. The International Committee comprises representatives of world-wide ecumenical women's organization and of regional ecumenical Conferences/Councils of the Churches. The ICFLC decides what programmes and projects are to be funded each year. Year after year the ICFLC learns to trust God more and more and to work in faith. The Committee meets every year to share the miraculous work of the FLC around the world and to decide on FLC grants for the following year. Application forms for project grants are received four months prior to the meeting. The members of the Committee study the application forms, pray about them, and discuss and decide on each project without knowing how much FLC funding will be available for the grants they wish to allocate for each year.

The least coins from around the world come in with prayers, quietly and gradually, to meet the needs for each year. Our gentle, loving and compassionate God never fails us. God does great work through the humble, the least, the marginalized and the poor. That's the strength, the promise, the beauty, and the surprise upholding the FLC prayer movement.

Every year ICFLC is invited by different regions to hold its meeting in their country. An exposure and a visitation programme is added to the regular business meeting in order for the representatives to know more about the region and to be aware of the issues and the concerns of the people there. The ICFLC considers linking its meeting every 4th year with the Quadrennial Assembly of the ACWC.

FLC GRANTS

Each year about 35 to 50 projects are given **Project Grants**. Regional ecumenical organizations women's programme, the World Council of Churches - Just Community of Women and Men and the World Day of Prayer International Committee (WDPIC) are given **Block Grants** to enhance their work and to strengthen ecumenical solidarity. **Emergency Grants** for disaster relief and rehabilitation are given to show loving concern. And the latest is **FLC Scholarship Award for Young Women**. For guidelines for these grants and reports, see www.flc.net.ph.

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE FLC

The FLC Prayer Movement is simple, yet significant and unique.

- 1) It brings Christian women together in a fellowship of prayer without any discrimination of race, nationality, culture or denomination. The Christian women of the world have solidarity with each other through their common concern and love for humankind and creation. Women throughout the world are bound together in both giving and receiving.
- 2) The offering is unique because all, whether rich or poor, educated or illiterate, urban or rural women, give only the smallest coin of their currency. All are within the same discipline and share the common concerns of women around the world.
- 3) It is stewardship, both of the idea as well as of the Fund. These least coins, when put together, become a large amount in the same way individual prayers offered by many members throughout the world become a strong force in bringing about reconciliation, peace and justice.

The uniqueness of the Fellowship in prayer, which binds us together in both giving and receiving, teaches us to appreciate differences; to understand and forgive one another; to live and work together inter-dependently as equal partners. The Least Coin teaches us to be humble, to value the least and to trust

that nothing is impossible for God who can do great things from out of the least and the unexpected.

Our concern and yearning for peace in the wounded and broken world, which moves us to spontaneously pray and give, becomes a powerful healing source for our own pain as well as for the pain of those whose lives have been touched by our prayers and gifts.

The inclusiveness of the Fellowship, which embraces us in a simple, yet profound act of prayer accompanied by a gift of love - “least coin”, encourages wider participation and provides resources for making peace and restoring broken relationships.

The God who promises to be with us always provides for our needs and never fails to love, to guide and protect us.



YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE
with Christian Women, Men, Youth and Children
of every continent in the

FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN

THE BASES OF BELONGING
are concern for justice, peace and reconciliation; and
intercession for those in special need of God's grace.

THE TOKEN OF PARTICIPATION

is a **"Least Coin"**

set aside whenever Prayer is offered
and contributed annually to a common Fund
which is given in the name of Christian women
without identification of its original source.

This fund is used as **"gifts of love"**
for ministries of mercy on every continent;
for experience which creates Christian community
among those of different national, racial, cultural,
economic and denominational backgrounds.

The least coins are tangible token of our prayers
offered individually and collectively .

Those contributions — "Gifts of Love"
however small or large, may be sent
in the name of Fellowship of the Least Coin to
World Council of Churches

Send your FLC Offerings to FLC Fund c/o WCC:

Name of Bank: **UBS SA**

Address: **1211 GENEVA 2, SWITZERLAND**

Account Name: **World Council of Churches**

Address: **150 route de Ferney, Box 2100, CH-1211 GENEVE 2**

Account No.: **For USD:** 240-695149.60X; **For CHF:** 240-695149.00A

IBAN USD: CH85 0024 0240 6951 4960 X;

IBAN CHF: CH37 0024 0240 6951 4900 A

BIC SWIFT CODE: UBSWCHZH 80A

Note:

*Email or reference text with the transfer should include the words
"Fellowship of the Least Coin" or "FLC" to easily identify in-coming funds.*

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PRAYER

of the *Fellowship of the Least Coin*

O loving Creator,
we present ourselves in your divine presence
to thank you for all the bountiful gifts of life.

We are especially grateful for the
Fellowship of the Least Coin
which binds us together in love
and forgiveness around the globe.

Free us from all doubts and prejudices, we pray.

Inspire us to live in solidarity with humankind
that we may know the
joy of giving and receiving.

Dear God, accept this least coin "token of love."

Make us mindful of the miracles of these coins.

Let us honor your creation with love,
as shown through the life, death and resurrection
of your Son, Jesus the Christ.

Amen.



A Little Bird Told Me



Verse 1.

As I was walking down the street,
I saw a penny at my feet;
I picked it up, but could not see
How it was any use to me.

Chorus

(repeat between each verse)

**Round and round your Least Coin goes;
Love and prayer for all it shows!**

Verse 2.

"Don't be so sure!" a small voice said—
A bird was sitting on my head—
"What Shanti started long ago
Has never stopped to grow and grow."

Verse 3.

"On every continent today,
Whenever Christian women pray,
They always give their pennies, too,
The way that Shanti said to do."

Verse 4.

As, one by one, the pennies mount,
What they achieve can really count!
"In Thailand, you should really know it,
Kids eat fresh food and help mom grow it!"



Shanti Solomon

Verse 5.

"In Togo, ladies manage money
To sell their handmade pots, or honey,
They celebrate with dance and song—
They never fear they'll count change wrong!"

Verse 6.

In Guatemala, I've been told
Shy Mayan women now are bold
To teach and preach and spread God's
word—
Or that's the story I have heard!"

Verse 7.

"So when you love and when you pray
For needy families far away,
Your Least Coin gift shows how you care,
And brings a smile both here and there!"

Verse 8.

The bird flew off and home I ran;
To save my pennies is my plan
But, even more, to work and pray
To build a peaceful world today.

- By Anna Hanson Bedford

A Song to Celebrate **FLC's 60th Anniversary** (1956-2016)



(Front row, L-R) Lydia Mwaniki, Dorothy Castro, Sirirat Pusurinkham, Esther Kilaghbian, Moon Sook Lee, Mercededs Matos (guest), Lalaine Toledo (Office Staff), Yamina Apolarinis, Liza B Lamis

(Back row, L-R) Martina Heinrichs, Patti Sterling Polk, Carolyn Boyd, Grace Moon, Mary Thomas, Laurence Gangloff, Awit Marcelino

From:

ICFLC OFFICE
c/o Union Theological Seminary
Palapala, City of Dasmariñas
Cavite, Philippines 4114



To:

airmail

printed