

2020

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER JOURNAL

Volume XLVI—A Publication of the World Day of Prayer International Committee



Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk

WRITTEN BY WDP WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE



World Day of Prayer Writing Committee, Zimbabwe



Contents

FEATURES

- 03 From the Chairperson**
United by the Bond of Love
- 04 Worship Service Bible Text**
John 5:2-9a
- 05 From the Writer Country**
Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk
- 40 Leading Together**
- 44 From the Executive Director**
WDP Is About Building Relationships
- 49 WDP at a Glance**

WDP AROUND THE WORLD

- 07 Africa**
- 12 Asia**
- 16 Caribbean/North America**
- 19 Europe**
- 30 Latin America**
- 35 Middle East**
- 37 Pacific**

SOCIAL MEDIA



To access the Journal online visit
www.worlddayofprayer.net/journals.html



Like WDPIC on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/WDPIC



Follow WDPIC on Instagram at
www.instagram.com/worlddayof-prayerinternational

The Asia, Europe and Pacific Regions all have Facebook pages too!

- World Day of Prayer Asia
- WDP Europe
- World Day of Prayer PacificRegion



Visit the National Committee website by clicking on the link displayed after their report!

United by the Bond of Love

BY LAURENCE GANGLOFF

At the 2012 WDP International Meeting, Zimbabwe was selected to become the writer country of the worship service for the year 2020. How to involve Zimbabwean women in this unique experience? How to promote this World Day of Prayer program? To answer these two questions, the WDP Zimbabwe Committee launched a campaign to promote the theme and their responsibility towards the movement. They produced a fabric with the WDP logo and 2020 theme printed on it, and sold it in pieces to be made into dresses, head wraps, or table cloths. They proudly wore their dresses and head wraps to raise funds to carry out their projects while waiting to embark in the writing process of WDP materials.

When I was elected WDP International Committee Chairperson in 2017, the delegates of the Zimbabwe WDP committee gave me a sample of this famous cloth. It was with respect and gratitude that I received this gift. I wore it first as headband, and then as a stole. How proud I was to wear this little piece of cloth that symbolized the worldwide communion, in which we found ourselves during the preparations and celebration of our common prayer, on the first Friday of March - March 6th, 2020!

In my meditations on the theme "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk", I have often imagined this Zimbabwean cloth covering the sick person healed by Jesus. This anachronism did not make me back down on listening to the orders given by Jesus: "Rise... take... walk!" Those words



Laurence Gangloff

changed the life of this man, and then 2000 years later they changed my life as well. In the weaving of Jesus' words and Zimbabwean cloth I saw how much a word of life can bring hope. I believe that this encounter still brings a breath of life and hope for all.

Immediately after the celebration in March, my "normal" life was disrupted by the order of confinement to combat the spread of the Coronavirus in France. And as a historical fact, the whole world found itself exposed to the COVID-19. The health guidelines to deal with the pandemic, such as isolation, wearing

masks, and washing your hands, were not all implemented in the same way around the world; history will judge the political leader's actions on this global health crisis.

During this time of confinement at my home, I used the Zimbabwean fabric as a placemat for the three candles - Peace - Love - Reconciliation - lit by the girls in the celebration. These candles were a sign of hope for a better time and an invitation to apply - Peace - Love - Reconciliation to the daily life.

As the allowance to leave home was implemented in France, new rules were adopted, like wearing a face mask and keeping a social or physical distance from each other. I once again turned to the Zimbabwe cloth, now I used it to make a face mask. I don't think anyone had imagined that the cloth would have this use when it was made!

You will discover in the following pages of this Journal the testimonies of the worldwide sisters. Perhaps one day our children or grandchildren will read these testimonies with a historical hindsight or a gaze of a scientist. In the meantime, I invite you to discover each testimony and to carry it in your prayers, so that we may remain united by this bond of love. Let's Rise... Take...Walk and live out the hope offered by Jesus and share it with the world!

Thank you for your commitment to this beautiful World Day of Prayer movement!



Worship Service Bible Text

JOHN 5:2-9A



Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

*New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

"Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk"

BY WDP WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE

We really felt blessed and humbled to be the writer committee for the 2020 WDP worship service. The opportunities given by the collaborative writing process enriched us and let us grow in faith. One of the impacts of promoting the program as the focus country is that it united us. Women from different religious backgrounds, cultures and traditions came together under a common goal for the betterment of our country. It was a wonderful experience which required creativity.



In the beginning, we found the theme motivational and a reminder that Christ would give us strength. However, as the days went by, the theme became more relevant, especially because of the COVID-19 outbreak. The theme sounded like a mandate, a mantra and certainly a way of life as the Coronavirus pandemic hit the nations in 2020.

In Zimbabwe, the pandemic grouped together with the drought and the economic hardships made us feel that God was speaking directly unto our situation. Our people had to rely on Jesus Christ and His command to "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk" towards the love and peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, and the reconciliation with the Holy Spirit, who brings healing and restoration to us all.

Since the theme was defined in 2012, to the launch of the writing process through the Strengthening National Committee Workshop in 2016, and finally the moment of the celebration in 2020, the message has evolved. Really, God showed Himself to us. God is All Knowing. Our country and all others around the globe must indeed "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk."

Notwithstanding the disruption in our calendar due to the pandemic, the children and youths were able to undertake a drama which was aired at the Zimbabwe broadcasting studio; they assisted with advertising on social media, sang and danced in the services. They were also involved in projects making sanitary pads, sewing face masks, crafts



involving beadwork and donating food to those in need. Little girls from the Girl Guide movement also participated in the activities. These activities showed that all hope is not lost. The children acquired a good foundation as they learnt attitudes basic for their sense of humanity, which are caring for others and catering to their needs. This intergenerational exchange of skills also blessed us all.



During the full WDP process as a writer country, we were reminded that despite the dark times, Zimbabwe is still part of a global village. We learnt to appreciate all that God has entrusted us to look after. We learnt a lot about our own country and how to love and embrace people from other religions, cultures, traditions and who speak different languages. We are all God's creatures.

Recently, we also learnt new things such as how to use video conferencing applications (e.g. Zoom) and other technologies to stay connected despite the lockdown due to Coronavirus. More significantly, all nations around the world took it upon themselves to pray for our country. The responses we got from other countries have encouraged us to engage and support other writer countries, thus we are more motivated with

next year's program written by WDP women of Vanuatu.

There was an overall excitement that took charge of the atmosphere around the world throughout the preparations and services. We heard very positive comments from different churches and organizations. They told us to "keep up the good work." Others wished they were the ones leading the program. Some organizations indicated that they would like to join in the World Day of Prayer programs and projects. Every woman got involved, regardless of their tradition.

There was a great sacrifice by the committee members for the whole program to sail through. To put the materials together with participants from different parts of Zimbabwe and with no access to social media to facilitate our communications was our biggest challenge. Thus, we created a steering committee to coordinate the promotion of the activities and formed sub-committees to help with the fundraising. People were highly supportive of the World Day of Prayer, and gave very good suggestions for the promotion of the activities; we even got support from people in the government. Sacrifice, commitment and dedication are key!

Those who managed to attend the worship service before the government ordered a lockdown expressed their gratitude as they felt the service was heartwarming. They were encouraged to propel above injustice, hatred, violence and walk towards Love, Peace and Reconciliation.

We look forward to engaging with more community outreach events while we build up and improve on the prayer journey that has already began. Through our ecumenical relationships, we developed partnerships to support the mothers and care givers of Ramangwana Ravo Trust, the Mucheke Old People's Home and Omni Village Rehabilitation and Skills Development Center. Also, it helped birth relationships that empower women to share ideas on how to manage challenges in life and be self-sufficient.

This entire experience has reinforced how important it is to pray without ceasing for others and for ourselves. Without God we are unable to do anything. We depend on God for everything. God is God of the impossible. Is there anything too hard for God?

Africa



BOTSWANA

Women of different churches and cultures came together to pray, sing, and share a meal together in worship with our sisters of Zimbabwe. Many people attended the services and eagerly participated. Women from Zimbabwe residing in our country took part in the service and sang with us. The moments for prayer had the biggest impact. As a community, we lifted up in prayers those suffering from substance abuse, unemployment and gender-based violence. We prayed for the world as the COVID-19 pandemic spread and for the peace and stability of African countries. The theme was relevant to the situation of today and taught us that suffering can be an opportunity for growth in patience and faith. We do not know why there is always suffering in the world but as long as our trust and faith are with the Lord, we will grow stronger and resilient.



CAMEROON

Despite the anxiety and unrest in our country due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Anglophone separatist crisis (Cameroonian Civil War), nothing was taken away from the enthusiasm and commitment of our women, who braved many difficulties to honor WDP and be united in prayer with our sisters in Zimbabwe. There was a considerable slowdown in our activities but social media applications, like WhatsApp and Zoom, offered us the opportunity to stay in

touch and reflect while waiting for better days when we can, by the grace of God, hold physical meetings again. If we are to rise to the challenge of doing better than we have in the past and living in peace, then we must identify the obstacles that undermine our daily lives. We must begin living a humble life, be kind and compassionate, share with those in need and practice forgiveness as much as possible, "not seven times but up to seventy-seven times." (Matthew 18:22)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

We give thanks to God for allowing us to organize and celebrate the WDP service on the date planned before any lockdowns went into effect. All the preparation and rehearsal sessions were carried out successfully and the liturgy was translated into the local language and distributed in all of the provinces. It was great to be able to have one final meeting



GAMBIA

together in prayer for our sisters in Zimbabwe. As the virus continued to spread, our country began to restrict any physical gatherings. It has made it difficult for us to meet to plan future activities.

GABON

The program reminded us of Pope John Paul II's visit to our country. On February 17, 1982, Pope John Paul II passed through Gabon and chose John 5:2:9 as the Bible passage to encourage us to "stand up and walk". Now in February 2020, we returned to this text that brings us to action, love and total transformation to achieve healing and remove divisions. It was a rewarding experience to be united in prayer and have a renewed sense of motivation towards love, peace and sincere ecumenism. We have committed ourselves to strengthen the mobilization and awareness of women's issues by hosting semi-annual and annual activities. Although our efforts have been stalled by the COVID-19 health crisis, we are not discouraged!

GAMBIA

The women of Banjul, Kombo and the West Coast usually come together to



GHANA



KENYA

prepare one joint ecumenical service in celebration of WDP. Women, children and clergy members from various churches, and also our Muslim sisters, participate in the service. We rotate among churches of different denominations and this year we had planned to hold the WDP service at the Anglican Church. We distributed the materials to several women's groups for Bible study lessons and retreats. We sent invitations to churches and radio stations and the children's program to Sunday schools. We also crafted souvenir mats out of shopping bags to be distributed to participants. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to hold our service. However, we are not discouraged and we thank the women of Zimbabwe for putting together such a rich program. We look forward to 2021!

GHANA

The service was inspirational and we felt the spirit of our sisters around us. We had various symbols around the altar to represent the women of Zimbabwe. Our local songs were sung by a wonderful procession of young women and a youth choir. Given the circumstances of the world today the theme was timely. As we reflected on it, we realized how much hope resonates in the story and how the healing power of Christ can transform our lives. It also teaches us the lessons of patience, for when the time is right God will answer our prayers. Although many day to day activities have slowed due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, we continue to support the Gender and Women's program and the Trafficked Children's Project of the Christian Council of Ghana. It is important for us to not only pray for change but to actively work towards change.

KENYA

God bless the women of Zimbabwe. We thank them for such a wonderfully prepared worship service with a relevant theme that touched our hearts. We were happy to learn more about their country and find out that many aspects of their



MALAWI



MAURITIUS



NIGERIA

culture are similar to ours. Services across the country were well attended and the comments from the participants were very encouraging for our committee. Many were unaware of the hard work our committee does to distribute the worship service and expressed their desire to help and support. While reading some of the participant's commitments cards we were overcome with emotion. The theme had clearly impacted everyone and we realized it was time to "Rise! Take our Mat and Walk" for ourselves and for those in need.

MALAWI

Our main WDP celebration was held outdoors on March 6th in the city of Blantyre to a crowd of thousands. Our guest of honor was the former first lady of our country, her Excellency Madam Gertrude Mutharika. During the event,

several activities took place apart from preaching the Word of God, such as gospel choirs, poetry readings and dramatizations. The event was spiritually lively. Women wore their traditional dresses from each of their regions which made for a colorful and special experience. The first few cases of the Coronavirus appeared right after the days of our service. Even though we had planned to attend the prayer services in Zimbabwe, we had to cancel our trip. The virus became rife on a global scale! Despite these challenges, we thank God Almighty for our good fortune and the opportunity to pray for ourselves and others. May the Lord receive all honor, glory and praise!

MAURITIUS

In a time when it seems increasingly difficult to bring people together, we are

blessed to have the WDP service. The more we think about it the more the world seems like one big village. There are similarities and differences among us, but the solidarity of women from several countries preparing to celebrate the same worship service, unites us as one under God. We were fortunate to have native Zimbabweans join us for our celebration this year. One of them spoke of the time they spent in their homeland and another sang the national anthem of Zimbabwe. It was a beautiful cultural exchange. We enjoyed reflecting on this particular Bible story. We found that in times when we may feel paralyzed, the word of God keeps us upright and moves us forward in faith to spread the good news of health and salvation.

NIGERIA

As in the word of God, "for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) We were delighted to come under one tranquil atmosphere to worship with our Zimbabwean sisters. We held our service before any lockdowns were put in place, so attendance was highly impressive. Thousands of women of different denominations from all over the country came together. With one voice, we prayed for our country and for the state of the world. It was a feeling



REPUBLIC OF CONGO



SIERRA LEONE



SEYCHELLES

like no other! The theme strengthened our faith, revealing that, with God, all things are possible. We give thanks and pray that our Lord never stops equipping us with the divine mercy and grace to continue working tirelessly in Jesus' name.

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The women of Zimbabwe's invitation to praise the Holy Spirit with them brought us great joy, and we felt connected through our shared experiences. Through the program, we learned about the power and compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The theme was impactful given the environment we all find ourselves in now. The pandemic and many socio-political wars have caused tension

but we must remember to always have faith in God's love for us, and that God will bring healing. We made a commitment to come to the aid of those who are suffering. We also made a commitment to bring WDP to towns and villages across our country for the multiple social and spiritual benefits. We have plans to carry out a major awareness campaign so that various Christian women can experience the love and healing power of being united together in prayer.

SEYCHELLES

In spite of the Coronavirus, we were able to celebrate as planned. All preparations went smoothly and we enjoyed discussing the culture of Zimbabwe as compared to

ours. This program came at the right time for us as it touched on similar historical and political situations. Our country also set up a committee to investigate what our people went through following the coup d'état in 1977. The sufferings and killings of this time gave rise to the need for prayers for both the victims and the perpetrators of violence. The Zimbabwe women based their service on love and reconciliation, which should guide the work of the Committee for Truth and Reconciliation to bring our country to a healing place. Our nation is called to prayer while we are reminded of the impact of God's healing love. Now that COVID-19 has taken over globally, we thank God that Seychelles has not been as affected as other countries.

SIERRA LEONE

It is always a joy to see women from all walks of life, different denominations and cultures praise God together. We always look forward to the WDP celebration as the stories are always inspirational. We were able to hold a local service but no children's services, conventions or Bible study lessons due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the past, these had the most impact on our services; however, we are thankful for the



ZAMBIA

One of the most interesting aspects of the World Day of Prayer is learning the rich history and cultural background of each writer country. Zimbabwe is our neighboring country, and so we are familiar with their story of political struggles, and the transitional period from pre-colonial rule. Those struggles are somehow similar to other African countries. The message behind the theme, to never lose hope in any situation,

time spent together to worship. The theme itself was a call to be united in prayer which helped us lift up our voices in worship and praise. Women who never thought of their complacency or guilt reflected on the Bible text and were able to see themselves in a new light. They recognized their challenges and felt determined to move forward not just as individuals but as a collective in society.

SOUTH AFRICA

Around the world, and Africa in particular, people face huge problems regarding health, poverty and corruption. Zimbabwe is our neighbor and many of our people know someone from there.

The prayers the Zimbabwean women lifted up were a wake-up call to everybody. The theme motivated us not to be passive, but to put our faith in our Lord and Savior and to get up and make a difference. Just after the prayer day, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. In our country, women took action to feed the needy, old and vulnerable. Thousands of masks were handmade and distributed freely to old age homes and schools, as well as in the community. WDP will always be one of the most powerful and touching experiences for Christian women all over the world.

Website: <https://www.wwdp.co.za/>

was very uplifting, especially considering the current situation the world is facing. Our main ecumenical worship service was well attended by four church groups, members of the diplomatic core, and our guest of honor, the Minister of Religious Affairs and National Guidance. A sketch of the Bible story was performed by Sunday school children. The responsive prayers were very touching because they spoke about the reality of our actions, like how we overlook others. Through these prayers we could confess and recommit ourselves to acts of good.

The prayers the Zimbabwean women lifted up were a wake-up call to everybody. The theme motivated us not to be passive, but to put our faith in our Lord and Savior and to get up and make a difference. Just after the prayer day, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. In our country, women took action to feed the needy, old and vulnerable.

Asia



HONG KONG

In January, we had a rehearsal of our worship service where we ran through a translated liturgy and introduced Zimbabwe to our committee members. We prayed together for the situation in our country and the needs of the people in Zimbabwe. The Bible story, hymns and voices of the Zimbabwe women reminded us that God is our eternal healer. We also ordered some handmade mats from the Kunzwana Women's Association which benefits their ministry and we thanked them for their passion and persistence. We are happy to have had this time together because, due to COVID-19, all WDP celebrations were cancelled. The social unrest surrounding the virus made many people feel depressed and isolated. We had planned to have a healing service after the sermon to help people 'take up their mat and walk' but restrictions did not allow us to gather. We pray to the Lord that we may resume our worship life soon.

Website:

<https://www.hkcc.org.hk/acms/?site=hkcnew>



INDIA

The National Council of Churches in India is hosting a Quadrennial Assembly with a theme very similar to the 2020 World Day of Prayer, "The Hour Has Come; Let's Get Going". In the Gethsemane account (Matthew 26:36-46), Jesus asks his disciples to be ready and take the cause further into action just like he asked the sick man to take up his mat and walk. The theme required us to see beyond our own interests and to realize how becoming whole is more important than superficial healing. This message was very meaningful to us. Women in different areas around India felt connected in praise and worship with the stories of the Zimbabwean women. We were able to analyze the received reports and found that women, who were homemakers, felt their self-worth increase, thus confident in their ability to uphold their family. For younger women, the experience of being



present in spirit with sisters across our borders was the highlight.

INDONESIA

The WDP services were carried out in various churches and regions across our country, although, due to the COVID-19 pandemic there were less services than last year. After the worship service in a church in Jakarta, the leaders organized an educational event where medical personnel demonstrated the precautionary measures to slow the spread of the COVID-19 for children and adults. The service itself was enjoyable and brought to light the struggles that women and children around the world still face in today's society. The Letter from our Zimbabwe sisters was powerful and it



JAPAN



MALAYSIA

served as the foundation for our meditation on the Word of God. We find that the extraordinary impact of WDP is the strong alliance created by the unity of prayer among different countries and churches for the common good.

JAPAN

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many services had to be cancelled. Usually, there are over 200 venues that celebrate the worship service but that number was reduced to 34. Under the severe circumstances, people still tried to be innovative with smaller gatherings, shorter services and no tea time afterwards. We are very grateful for the efforts to send the offerings. Considering the current situation, many people had a strong will to continue to support those in need. Some of the local churches even sent the WDP Japanese branch thank you notes which touched our hearts. Although globally we are suffering and may be feeling helpless, our hearts are big and we will not lose our faith.

Website: <http://cloister171.blog.fc2.com/>
and www.ncc-j.org
Facebook: @nccinJapan

MALAYSIA

We had a very meaningful worship service which was conducted joyfully and in multiple languages. We praised God through song and prayer while highlighting Zimbabwean women's stories. It was a beautiful moment to be united with our sisters all over the world. We prayed for religious, social and political disputes to be resolved, for the eradication of poverty, for broken homes to be reconciled, for peace among humanity and for women and children to live without fear of abuse. While meditating on the significance of the theme, we learned that it is important for us to rise above our comfort zone and accomplish the tasks entrusted to us by the Lord with what we have at hand. Only then can we truly realize the power that resides within us to transform ourselves and help the more vulnerable.

NEPAL

First of all, we would like to thank the Almighty God, and our Zimbabwean sisters for sharing with us their prayers. For Asian Church Women's Conference (ACWC) Nepal, March is a blessed month because of the World Day of Prayer celebration. We were a small group of people from different churches and faiths and we had a great time together. There were two services on different days. They each started with a hymn about God's creation and we took the time to remember our sisters, children and families around the world. A prayer was also said for the people suffering from the Coronavirus (COVID-19). ACWC National Representative, Draupati Rokya, briefly shared the history and significance of WDP and read the Gospel of John 5:1-9a. There was a moment of sharing and discussion about Jesus, and his miracles. After the program we had high tea together.

We praised God through song and prayer while highlighting Zimbabwean women's stories. It was a beautiful moment to be united with our sisters all over the world.



PAKISTAN

World Day of Prayer enhances solidarity among people of different denominations, building inclusive communities of faith. The Women's Desk of the Lahore Diocese Church of Pakistan has made an effort to conduct the service with the participation of women from the Salvation Army and Catholic Church. We aim to strengthen this partnership by including women from other denominations for next year's program. Coupled with the theme of this year's program, we've realized that more work needs to be done in building inclusiveness by dismantling the binaries of hate and love, fear and domination, right and wrong. The Bible text was thought provoking. It enabled us to dwell upon the challenges in our contextual realities as we relate to the situations of the women in Zimbabwe. It encourages women to develop the willingness to carry their burdens and express their desires to be healed in the light of Jesus.

SINGAPORE

Due to COVID-19 and measures restricting physical contact and gatherings, we



were forced to cancel our WDP event planned for March 6th. Though we were physically apart, we were united in spirit and in prayers for the women of Zimbabwe. Being united in prayer shows oneness in Christ and it is what makes WDP so special. The Zimbabwean women highlighted love, peace and reconciliation in the family, church, and community. It was something we very much agreed with during our preparatory meetings. We had also planned to support the Hiding Place, which is a halfway house for those suffering from drug addictions. We wanted to invite a staff member to our service to share the work they do so that others could understand their ministry. We hope to revisit this plan in the future and continue reaching out to the communities in need.

SOUTH KOREA

We had planned to hold the worship service on March 6th in unison with our WDP sisters but, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to postpone several times. Ultimately, we decided to share

the service electronically. Our committee created a video clip of the program and shared it in April with 70 local churches and individuals who wished to worship at home. Due to social distancing guidelines, participation at churches was very minimal, but we are happy to have been able to find a creative alternative to worship. In that way, we were united in spirit with the women of Zimbabwe. This year was very challenging and, although we were able to find a solution, we hope to be able to celebrate next year's WDP in our churches.

Website: <http://kcwu.org/>

SRI LANKA

Women in our country face many challenges from domestic abuse to poverty and unsupportive families, thus it is always encouraging to see one of us rise up and emerge victorious despite those conditions. That is why the theme of this year's worship service resonated so deeply with us. It was also uplifting to be reminded that no matter where we come from in this world, we all



experience the same challenges and we are not alone. Although 2020 has been chaotic, the ecumenical unity experienced within this movement truly makes a difference in our lives and that of others whom we are privileged to help. Our country is still under restrictions due to the Coronavirus but we are looking towards the future. We hope to expand our reach next year and conduct WDP services in other areas of the country.

TAIWAN

World Day of Prayer has been observed in Taiwan for 85 years. This ecumenical prayer movement has become a routine and an important event for our women. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, many churches and organizations were faced with the difficult decision to either cancel or postpone the services until June. Under the Zimbabwe program, various denominations and

institutions came together to think about how our collective power can make women whole in terms of their physical and mental health, and spiritual and social life. In that way, women will be ready to enable our society to achieve peace, mutual respect and equality. Though the women of Zimbabwe have struggled for years, they still value family relations and continue to prayer for their country and church. We are reminded of Taiwanese Christian elders, who are constantly praying and seeking reconciliation for Taiwan. We see the grace of God among the women of Zimbabwe, and we also see the resilience and perseverance of all women around the world.

Website:

<http://www.women.pct.org.tw/ministry.aspx> and <http://www.ywca.org.tw/>
Facebook: @WDPTaiwan and @YW-CATaiwan/

THAILAND

The COVID-19 pandemic prevented many services from being held. However, we took the opportunity to learn about Zimbabwe and pray for the love, reconciliation and peace they desire within their country. The program provided an in-depth exploration of the theological significance of Jesus' encounter with the sick man at the healing pool. We should not be afraid to follow God's word, especially when we are offered the steps for personal and social transformation. We have been empowered to take up our mats, embrace others with love and care, and to open our arms in joy as the time to rise has come. Prayer and action are what link us together around the world. Giving and sharing are acts of hope which can heal a suffering world. Although challenging, we want to make a difference in our community by supporting projects that offer relief during the financial crisis caused by COVID-19.

Due to social distancing guidelines, participation at churches was very minimal, but we are happy to have been able to find a creative alternative to worship. In that way, we were united in spirit with the women of Zimbabwe.

Caribbean and North America



BAHAMAS

This year we commemorated the 70th anniversary of our committee. At our main service in Nassau we celebrated all women leaders from all islands in the Bahamas and our sister organizations that assist us annually to make WDP a reality. We lit 70 candles in memoriam of committee members, and to honor our friends from the Young Women Christian Association and Fellowship of the Least Coin. It was a blessing to have Zimbabwe women participating in the service by reading and singing in their native language. Our fellowship with them added to our feelings of unity. Hearing their stories, learning their songs, and sampling their foods gave us a sense of 'oneness' - one in spirit, in culture and in life. Our reflections on the Bible study led to personal discussions about procrastination and the excuses we make when it comes



to our own development. Through determination we can commit to rise and walk whenever the opportunity is available.

BARBADOS

The WDP celebration allows us to take our minds off of our own issues, challenges, or any fears that we may have. We are allowed a moment of peace by being united in prayer with our sisters and brothers around the world. It brings us joy to know that our small

contribution, be it monetary or prayer, can make an impact on the lives of others, especially our sisters in Zimbabwe. The theme challenged us to push past our fears of the unknown, rejection, uncertainty and remember that God is never far away from us. We reflected on all the opportunities that have always been available to us but can now be reached by rising, taking up our mats and walking! We aspire to start a mentorship program for young women and men who are challenged, to help them reach their potential. This service helped us put the Word of God into action.

CANADA

Across our country, thousands of services were held days before the global pandemic was declared and churches were closed. Joyfully, people from different denominations participated in this



meaningful service gifted to us by our Zimbabwean sisters. We thank them for sharing such a personal message about their struggles and challenges with us. While traditional services continue to be the most common way of gathering, there were also creative WDP events such as potluck lunches, a paint café featuring the flame lily, Zimbabwe's national flower, and a physical exercise and prayer session. This year we expanded our country partnership and recruited a member of WDP USA to narrate our country video on Zimbabwe. Our goal moving forward is to have most of our resources online, given the uncertainty of holding in-person events in 2021. Motivated by the WDP message of "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk," may we keep the momentum and purpose of WDP alive throughout the year.

Website: www.wicc.org
Facebook: @WICCanada
Twitter: WICC_CA

GRENADA

Our Zimbabwean sisters enabled us to come together under the Holy Spirit to pray for the struggles that oftentimes seem universal. It felt good to be united in prayer and focused on a relevant theme. Some of the issues that were

reflected on during meditation were selfishness, the inability to forgive, dishonesty and not caring for others. We need to take up these mats and rise up to change. Only with change can we have a better society. Inspired by the worship service, we hope to organize community outreach programs to educate people about parenting, sexual abuse and domestic violence, and to teach them how to properly garden. We also want to raise funds to help the most vulnerable in our communities.

GUYANA

There is usually a big WDP service held at a central location in the capital city of our country. However, due to the unrest over the current pandemic and our post elections situation, the main service could not be executed. Nevertheless, a few local services were held outside the capital city and participants were glad to have been able to worship together. Through our preparatory workshops and retreats, we realized that the voices of our sisters in Zimbabwe were intertwined with ours. The theme was very influential as it brought alive a message of love, peace and reconciliation. We were empowered to go out and act in love and peace, especially during these difficult times. We recognize that God is

offering us the tools for personal and social transformation. We need to choose to be agents of change and to offer a prayer and help to those in need.

JAMAICA

The selected Bible text and theme had a huge impact on us. We felt they were a call to action and delivered a relatable message. Jesus asked the sick man, "Do you want to be made well?" The man responded with excuses such as that there was no one to help him. However, everyone is welcomed to be healed by the master's hand if they are open to it. This story shows us that we should take responsibility for ourselves and that we have the power to bring about change in our lives, even if it will be difficult. We joined our Zimbabwe sisters in prayer for the protection of our natural resources and the respect for human life. Prayer and action are inseparable and through WDP we shed light on political and social issues that need to be addressed such as anti-immigrant sentiments, government's abuse of power and the increase of violence in the communities.



MONTSERRAT

The service was inspiring and challenging to worshippers. A dramatization of the chosen passage of scripture was presented so the visual aspect of the story could be understood more clearly. Studying and meditating on the story brought to life the realities that are hampering the spiritual and social aspects of our lives and communities. Self-reflection is necessary to release the baggage that has been weighing us down and hindering our growth in Christ. The speaker at our service requested that we take a moment to reflect and let go of the obstacles holding us back and ask for God's intervention. Our confidence in God can allow us to accomplish amazing things. The man by the pool, although stripped of his energy and feeling neglected, was patient and had a strong determination to be well. He did not waver in his faith but rather knew in his heart that God saw him.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

We express our gratitude to the WDP Zimbabwe committee for their preparation of the 2020 program. Thankfully, we were able to hold the services before being affected by the global pandemic. There was heightened interest, zeal and involvement as we engaged in praise

We acknowledged that Jesus empowers us to take control of our situation. Our prayers and thoughts continue for our sisters of Zimbabwe who have shared some of the challenges facing them and their country, like poverty, hunger, unemployment and domestic violence.

together. WDP activities were held in many schools and churches. The songs, prayers and messages delivered by the speakers contributed to the spirit filled services and joyful experiences of the congregations. The theme called us to challenge ourselves and pay heed to opportunities given. We acknowledged that Jesus empowers us to take control of our situation. Our prayers and thoughts continue for our sisters of Zimbabwe who have shared some of the challenges facing them and their country, like poverty, hunger, unemployment and domestic violence. We have been motivated to reach out to the community, to support the poor, the physically challenged and those who seek social and economic assistance.

USA

Being united in prayer is consistently one of the greatest pleasures of WDP for the

women across the USA. Knowing that they are praying and singing with women all over the world, following the same program and lifting up the struggles of the writer country gives them an incredible feeling. Being exposed to another culture is also one of the highlights. Having a small window into a world that is so different from theirs, and yet similar in many ways, is an important way of building awareness and a connection to the writer country. The Letter from Zimbabwe had the strongest impact on the worship service participants. Many groups printed it out and shared it amongst their congregation, separately from the worship service. It was eye opening for them to see what was really important to the women of Zimbabwe and to share their story.

Website: www.wdp-usa.org

Facebook: World Day of Prayer USA

Europe



ALBANIA

It is always a pleasure and a blessing to be united together in prayer with our sisters around the world, because we know it makes our prayers stronger. In the past, our country was very isolated and not many people knew anything about us. Now, the ability to be equal to others and come together in prayer is a very important and emotional moment. In God's eyes we are all the same. God gives us the power to overcome difficulties and the strength to heal physically or spiritually. As Christians, we know that God is our power, our joy, and our hope. God hears, understands and heals us. The worship service theme highlighted our trust in God and gave us the opportunity to lift up the current difficulties we are facing. Our country is currently dealing with a lot of political, economic and social problems, so we are challenged to contribute to reducing conflict and bring peace to the family, community, and church. We are committed to love, peace, and reconciliation!



ARMENIA

Directly after March 6th, our country went into lockdown to avoid the spread of COVID-19. We were able to hold our worship service but have not been able to gather after that for community activities. We are thankful that this year, the participation of churches in our WDP celebration has expanded across five cities and six denominations and organizations: Evangelical, Catholic, Apostolic, Greek Orthodox, Brotherhood Church of Syria, and Christian women's forum. The program written by the women of Zimbabwe taught us that with faith we can overcome all difficulties and learn to serve each other. As we listened to their

voices, we felt closer to them knowing we had shared difficulties. We enjoyed our time in joint prayer for love, peace and reconciliation.

AUSTRIA

For the first time in WDP Austria's history, we celebrated the worship service in St. Stephen's Cathedral, or Stephansdom. It is the mother church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vienna and the most important religious building in the capital. Over a thousand women, men and different church leaders worshipped together, some travelled from outside of Vienna to share this special moment with us. The service was described as powerful, vivid and optimistic. Our community enjoyed learning about Zimbabwe, a country in the midst of transformation. The theme was seen as a symbol of hope, a message to make us get up on our feet and fight for our rights for a better life. Especially now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the theme represents our fight against the virus and how we will overcome the



challenges that have arisen. The participants tried to take this ray of hope into their daily lives to have the strength to face their challenges.

Website: <http://weltgebetstag.at/>
Facebook: @weltgebetstagderfrauen

BELGIUM

It is empowering and gives us hope to see so many churches and groups come together and share ecumenical ideas. We are very grateful for the fellowship and the time spent together preparing the worship service. We invited native Zimbabwean people to join us at our service. They shared stories about their home country and answered our questions about the current situation in Zimbabwe. We learned about the difficulties being faced by their people and their determination to help and improve the situation of women and children. It was very nice to share in prayer with our sisters in Zimbabwe and our neighbors. Everyone participated in the service very enthusiastically which made for an enjoyable experience. After the service we were motivated to support projects in our local communities dedicated to helping those in dire need.



Website: <https://wgdijsmpbelgium.wixsite.com/nieuwdesign>
Facebook: @WereldgebedsdagBelgie

BULGARIA

Only a few local committees managed to organize WDP celebrations this year because the COVID-19 crisis was preceded by a flu epidemic we also experienced. To be united in prayer with Christian women around the world is a wonderful experience and a great privilege, so we tried our best to honor the program. We were deeply impressed by the vitality of the WDP movement in Zimbabwe and its impact on the life of the whole society. We can see parallels between the political situation in both our countries,

where peace, justice and true democracy are being achieved through a painful process. The Bible text was very inspiring, coupled with a motivating theme for the Bulgarian context. We also thoroughly enjoyed two aspects of the program: the country background information, which allowed us to learn about a new culture, and the space for spontaneous prayer for the problems faced in Zimbabwe and our own country.

CROATIA

Our WDP celebration brought together and empowered both committee members and participants. Our worship stimulated compassion and awareness that we are all responsible for achieving a better world. We felt the needs of the women of Zimbabwe and prayed for changes in their country. Influences at a global level are interwoven and whatever happens, somewhere as far as Africa, does not differ from the situations we face in our own communities. God is present everywhere. We must be more open and receptive to the guidance the Lord offers us in different ways and through many individuals. Prayer and action are powerful tools of change that will



lead to a society that accepts and loves all of God's children. The theme was so inspiring, especially during this global COVID-19 lockdown when people are feeling isolated, depressed and in need of motivation to rise and take up their burdens. We are not alone in carrying these burdens, as our Lord is always with us.

Website: <http://www.wdp-croatia.com/>

Facebook: Svjetski molitveni dan Hrvatska - World day of prayer Croatia

DENMARK

We often forget to praise God when we face difficult times, so it was very inspiring to witness the women of Zimbabwe praising God in the midst of all their troubles. We learned a lot from these women through the worship service and their courage to trust in the Lord above all else. Fear has a way of keeping us down, but we must welcome and trust in the Lord's guidance to get up and act in prayer. Knowing that we are bound together in Christ, by the Holy Spirit all over the world, is our greatest motivation. To hear a message from different women in various countries reminds us that, although the world is large, we are

FAROE ISLANDS



all neighbors. We were developing new initiatives to help others but due to the COVID-19 pandemic and society on lockdown, we had to slow down. Nevertheless, we are determined to help our community as best we can during these times.

Website: www.kvindebodedag.dk

ENGLAND, WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND

The opportunity to unite in praise with the whole world and contribute to a huge wave of prayer is one of the reasons being a part of this movement is so special. Our region is made up of about 3,000 individual and independent branches and each branch has their own way of celebrating the service. Many services were greatly enhanced by the

presence and contributions of Zimbabwean women and men, who brought artifacts to decorate the altars and took active parts in the worship service. One branch remarked that the theme of the service could not have been timelier. Having blessed and prayed over their commitments, they are now putting them into practice as they support the elderly and lonely in their

community during the COVID-19 lockdown. There was a strong sense that the women of Zimbabwe would be encouraged if they knew how much their service had encouraged us to reach out in faith and take up our mats and walk in our corner of England.

Website: www.wwdp.org.uk

Facebook: @WorldDayOfPrayerEWNl

Twitter: @WWDpforEWNl

FAROE ISLANDS

Our Inspiration Day was very special as this is when we take the time to have Bible lessons, sing, pray and share. In smaller groups there are more opportunities to ask questions and to get to know one another better. We were able to hold a local service within our community before any Coronavirus lockdowns were put

FRANCE



GERMANY



in place. Still, there was tension and participants had to keep their distance. We managed to have a lovely time together and enjoyed the program under such a powerful theme. We loved praying with our Zimbabwe sisters, learning about their culture and getting to see how they live through the pictures provided. There was a group of mothers and children who sang for us and every year we invite the WDP Denmark Chairperson to come and visit us!

FRANCE

We are grateful to the Lord that we were able to meet face to face for our WDP service in a time of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 health crisis. Despite the hardships and stress the global pandemic has brought to us, it has also proved to be an opportunity to display creativity in our ways of communicating. Our celebration was lively and the most impactful part of the service was the Letter from Zimbabwe. This new way of presenting the country and their issues was exciting and brought us closer to our sisters. One local group even felt inspired to send them back a letter with a prayer of hope. The depth of the women of Zimbabwe's faith and their resilience in

the face of adversity truly impressed us. We felt them passing along their strength and joy to us throughout the service. They rose, so we must also rise for healing comes to those who want it and trust in God.

Website: <https://journeemondialedepriere.fr/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/JourneeMondialeDePriereFrance>

GERMANY

There is always a special atmosphere among Christians on the first Friday in March. There is a unique feeling of worldwide togetherness in the bond of the WDP. We truly feel God's beloved blessing. We always try to find new and interesting ways of promoting WDP. This year, an art exhibition was organized to showcase the powerful paintings of Granete Ngirandi of Zimbabwe. We live streamed a WDP service to reach young people through social media. We also created a petition to ask Germany's federal government to offer partial debt relief to Zimbabwe by reinvesting the debt relief in health programs in Zimbabwe. Over 50,000 signatures

The depth of the women of Zimbabwe's faith and their resilience in the face of adversity truly impressed us. We felt them passing along their strength and joy to us throughout the service.

were collected. We want to thank our Zimbabwe sisters for a powerful and intensive program, for sharing their life with us via a letter, for their joyous songs, faith in God and encouragement to rise. With the women of Zimbabwe as our role models we will overcome our challenges, no matter how difficult they are.

Website: <https://weltgebetstag.de/en/>

Facebook: @weltgebetstag

Twitter: @weltgebetstagD

Instagram: @weltgebetstag



GREECE

We were fortunate enough to be able to celebrate our worship service, but due to the Coronavirus we were unable to celebrate as we usually do, and there was a decrease in attendance. However, the women who were able to come together helped each other stay safe. We prayed for the healing of all Coronavirus victims and their families in our service. We also prayed for the women of Zimbabwe and happily gave our support to them. A Zimbabwean woman joined us and spoke about her country and the suffering some of the people endure. The opportunity for praying for each other and helping those in need are the moments of WDP which have the greatest impact. The theme also connected with everyone on a personal level, because every person has been sick or injured once, and knows in their hearts that the Lord is a healer, now and forever.

Facebook: WWDP Greece - μ μ

HUNGARY

Every year we consider the experience of being united with the whole world under a common day of prayer as a great



miracle. Learning about an African country was very exciting, especially for the children who enjoyed the exotic animals, lively music and interesting culture. In the rural town of Dunaújváros, a drawing competition based on the biblical story was held during the children's program. Our people experienced 40 years of communism, so we really identified with the women of Zimbabwe and what it means to live in a dictatorship and within corruption. The perseverance, optimism and strong faith of these women was very encouraging and they have set an example for the rest of us. We were motivated to turn to the

vulnerable and those in need. We joined a pre-existing project to support a health camp organized by the Hungarian Lutheran Mission Society for those living in Africa.

Website:

<https://www.meot.hu/index.php/noi-m>

IRELAND

Despite growing concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic, only two worship services were postponed. Others were well attended, including our annual live broadcasted worship service. The service was led by President Major Gillian Dicker and our guest speaker was WDPIC Chairperson, Laurence Gangloff. It was an amazing experience. We thank everyone who supported us and worked hard for the success of this worship service, especially the women of WDP Zimbabwe. Many agreed that the service they wrote was spiritual, uplifting, relevant, and inspiring. The theme, letter, and Bible study all reflected love, peace, compassion and reconciliation, something all churches want to be a part of. It is a privilege to be a part of such a spirit filled movement.



Facebook: Women's World Day of Prayer Ireland

LITHUANIA

Each year, the WDP celebration creates a unique opportunity to be united in prayer and to get inspired for other activities. Participants are very interested in the worship service and make it their responsibility to contribute either by preparing materials, decorating, reading, acting and singing. Regarding the theme, one person reflected on how it would be easier to ignore the angry, sad and most vulnerable. It is easier to pray for them or offer money rather than to hear their cries and hold their hands. When Jesus spoke to the man at the pool, he extended out his hand and said "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk." Let these words of Jesus lead everybody to the pool of the healing love of Jesus. Let us extend our hands out to our neighbors so we may all bask in the Lord's glory.

LUXEMBOURG

This year's celebration was a bit particular. Although we were able to celebrate before any lockdowns, the usual warm atmosphere was missing. People were social distancing but still felt bound to

their sisters around the world. Everyone enjoyed the whole celebration especially the choir and music. Many were unaware of the situations being faced in Zimbabwe and that women still need to fight for their rights. The children enjoyed their service as well and almost did not want to leave! Our celebrations are growing every year with more locations and participants. It motivates us to continue our efforts and hopefully to pass on the committee's duties onto the younger generation. We also hope to begin celebrating in the Northern part of our country. There is much to do and many changes to oversee, especially as the pandemic crisis evolves.

Website:

<http://www.acfl.lu/de/weltgebetstag>

Facebook: @WDPLuxembourg

MACEDONIA

WDP is very important and special to us because without it we would never have heard or learned about some of the different countries around the world. It is good for us to be able to gather with women of other denominations to learn about these new countries and lift them up in prayer, especially

since this is usually our only chance to do so. It is also helpful and encouraging to learn about the circumstances of women from other countries and see that their experiences are similar to ours. This year, we were happy to have a celebration in Ohrid for the first time. It was not held by any congregation but by the lead organizer of a school for Roma children. They prepared the service together with the girls from school who invited their mothers and families to join. It was a joyous and unforgettable event for all of them.

NETHERLANDS

Several worship services were held across our country in churches and schools. It was very moving to gather together and praise the Holy Spirit with our sisters in Zimbabwe. There was a moment during the service where participants shared their thoughts, reflections on the theme and visions for the future which was thoroughly enjoyable for all. The WDP service is a special time for us, but over the years we have noticed a decrease in attendance and interest. It may be because of aging participants or too many other church events to attend. We have not given up hope and, like the theme of this years'



service, will rise and move forward with new ideas and plans. As of last year, we have started using digital methods of preparation and have taken actions to encourage younger women to participate. We hope and pray that this will prove successful.

Website: <https://www.wereldgebedsdag.nl/>

Facebook: Wereldgebedsdag Nederland

NORWAY

The COVID-19 pandemic caused all of Norway to shut down shortly after the worship service was held which led to the cancellation of some local activities and decreased our contact with local committees. However, we still managed to hold several worship services. It was a blessing to be united in prayer with our ecumenical sisters and the women from Zimbabwe. Most of our committee members belong to the Church of Norway but we also have members who are Pentecostal, Methodists, Baptists and more. Our main celebration was held in Oslo at the Free Church, where a member shared an interesting reflection on the theme and delivered an uplifting sermon. Although it is sometimes

difficult for us to acquire some of the items suggested in the program, we try to stick to the original outline as much as possible. It is important to us to stay connected to the originality and creativity of the writer committee.

Facebook: @kvinnernesinternasjonale-bonnedag

POLAND

Do you want to be made well? At first this seems like a strange question because it is known that every sick person wants to be healed. However, the outcome depends on our individual answers based on self-reflection. We must encourage ourselves and others to rise and become well.

Almost all of our services were scheduled for the first Friday and Sunday of March, so the pandemic did not prevent us from praying for the women of Zimbabwe. It is a great feeling to know that at one moment in time, women all over the world are praying for specific issues brought to light by the writer country. The prayers, the letter from Zimbabwe, the decorations and beautiful songs all provided for a thrilling service. Women took an active part in the program in



Warsaw with the musical elements really lighting up the entire service, as the choir made a real masterpiece out of each song.

Website: <https://ekumenia.pl/>

Facebook: @ekumenia

PORTUGAL

In the south, the celebration was initiated by the WDP Portugal Chairperson who presented the country of Zimbabwe and read the letter of the women. Meanwhile, several symbols of the country went into procession and were used to decorate the altar table. During several moments, a choir of African women of the Methodist Church sang the hymns in their native language. At the end of the service, tea was served so that the conviviality and sharing would continue. Unfortunately, the north was the first zone most affected by the COVID-19 virus so no WDP celebrations were held. During the months of March, April and May the churches have remained closed. We are grateful to God for our lives during this time of distress. Upon reflection, we understood that our eyes and ears should be wide open to listen to the words of wisdom that God has for us.



ROMANIA



SCOTLAND

Let's build a more just and pleasant world for all humanity.

REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

We were surprised to see that the theme for the service that focused on healing coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. This was an unexpected test that filled us with a lot of emotions but the Lord has always shown us protection and support. The WDP movement is so powerful, and it is inspiring to know that women of different countries are united by the unceasing common praise for our Creator. This experience makes us optimistic about the future. For the first time, we organized a family service for communities from two cities in addition to our main services. It was an unforgettable moment for all as we prayed together for Zimbabwe, sang hymns and reflected on the sermon. A children's service was held afterwards with quizzes, games, dancing and crafts. Our joint activities were truly a highlight and we plan to continue this initiative next year.

ROMANIA

We thank our sisters from Zimbabwe for such a relevant topic. Who would have thought that after the call to "Rise! Take



REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

Your Mat and Walk," the churches would have to be closed due to COVID-19? We have had to embrace online technologies in order to be closer to and support our communities and people worldwide as best as we can. Even though some congregations were unable to hold their services, we have noticed an increasing interest in the movement. People appreciated the service, enjoyed the songs and were impressed with the information about the consequences of climate change and the economic and socio-political situation of Zimbabwe. We had a conversation about at what point in life does the word

That is what makes WDP so special. The women like to get involved, participate in Bible studies and learn more about the lives of the women in the writer country.

of God speak to us. The stories of our sisters and the word of God were all great sources of encouragement during these times.

Facebook: Ziua Mondiala de Rugaciune - Romania

SCOTLAND

WDP is one of the few opportunities that churches get to work and socialize ecumenically. The friendships made last for years. People who attend the service year after year get to see friends they do not usually see every day. That is what makes WDP so special. The women like to



get involved, participate in Bible studies and learn more about the lives of the women in the writer country. They try to decorate the church as suggested and recreate recipes from the writer country. Children services are held in churches and schools. The children love arts and crafts, such as coloring the flag. They enjoy learning about a new country, and leading their own service. Their enthusiasm and energy are motivating. People are already excited for next years' service!

Website:

<http://www.wdpScotland.org.uk>

Facebook: World Day of Prayer Scotland

SERBIA

This WDP worship service will be remembered as a very precious gathering of Christian women in the northern part of Serbia. We were able to hold our service right before news of the COVID-19 outbreak shuttered the doors of our churches. We thank God for the opportunity to share our prayers for the women in Zimbabwe. For us the theme reflected a readiness for change. We need to recognize Jesus' invitation to be healed. The Holy Spirit confirms to us that Jesus' main task is to empower us to make changes.

Next year, WDP Serbia will celebrate its 70th anniversary and we would like to share our happiness with all our sisters around the world so that we may stay united in prayer, peace and justice.

Website:

www.ehons.org

SLOVAKIA

The WDP worship service was an exceptional one, given the difficult situation of the COVID-19 pandemic in nearly every country in the world. Our committee organized a service at the Evangelical Methodist church on March 6th and it was attended by many women, men and youths. We were very pleased that we did not experience low participation and were able to celebrate with each other before any lockdowns were put in place. We even had the pleasure of a young student from Zimbabwe, studying Lekarska fakulta (Medicine) in Slovakia, join us in prayer. The strong and pure faith in God the Christians of Zimbabwe



have is inspiring. They are humble and grateful for even the smallest thing that life gives them. They are an example for all of us.

Facebook: @sdmslovensko

SLOVENIA

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many were afraid to participate in the worship service but we were happy to see that many organizations still held their celebration. In Ljubljana, a historic moment took place when members of Serbian Orthodox church joined us in prayer. The context of the Bible story was still fresh in our minds as we held a Bible study session with Ulrike Bechmann in



Through the program we learned that Africa is a continent where people, despite difficult circumstances, praise the Lord with joyful enthusiasm. We were impressed by their history and the work the women do year-round to help women and children.



despite difficult circumstances, praise the Lord with joyful enthusiasm. We were impressed by their history and the work the women do year-round to help women and children. We felt a renewed commitment to WDP as we prayed for them and their country. Now, with the Black Lives Matter protests in our country, we are even more aware of the racial discrimination faced by our black sisters. We will continue to lift the women beyond WDP circles up in prayers.

January, so the question "Do you want to be made well?" echoed in our ears. Whether it is a virus or a wounded heart, Jesus can heal everything if we accept it. This is a call for action towards justice. We cannot sit idly by and wait for a miracle to happen; we must make our own miracles. One of the most appealing aspects of the WDP movement is the universality of Christianity. To be united in prayer with Christian women around the world feels glorious.

Website:
<https://smdslovenija.wixsite.com/smdslovenija>

Facebook: SMD (Svetovni molitveni dan - Slovenija)

SPAIN

The WDP service was the penultimate event in our churches before the COVID-19 related confinement. It was a blessing to be able to gather together, although strange not to be able to hug or kiss each other. Our services were colorful, featuring items of African artisanry. In Sabadell the women wore bright African clothes; and in Madrid there was a choir of Christians from Equatorial Guinea. Through the program we learned that Africa is a continent where people,

SWEDEN

We were grateful that the WDP service could be celebrated as planned across our country just before COVID-19 broke out and closed all opportunities for in person meetings. It was a day to remember with gratitude the valuable exchange between women in our world-wide churches including in Zimbabwe. Many were enthusiastic about the program and enjoyed collecting items representing Zimbabwe, like drums, fabrics and pots. The call to act in love, peace and reconciliation was very motivating. In several places, women who had been visiting or



working in Zimbabwe participated in the service which generated a special connection with the women who wrote the service and their situation. In spite of the difficulties we face today there was a feeling of hope and faith for the future. It was mentioned that we should not be afraid but to have faith in God.

Website: www.svekumeniskakvinnor.se
Facebook: @svekumeniskakvinnor

SWITZERLAND

Due to the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, many WDP celebrations were cancelled and those that were held had to adapt to the health restrictions outlined by the government. Our traditional invitation for a community meal together after the service was not possible this year. A local group that

was not permitted to host a large service, still wanted to participate and in a smaller, more private circle, read the worship service together. Many people were impressed with the service and were deeply impacted by the Letter from Zimbabwe. Two local groups decided to answer the letter and send words of greetings and encouragement to the WDP Zimbabwe committee. Through the service, many learned about the great effort it takes to move towards reconciliation, forgiveness and peace. It is sad that Zimbabwe's transformation has not yet been fulfilled; but it is inspiring to know they work towards it every day.

Website: www.wgt.ch

UKRAINE

Learning about other countries and their culture is the biggest highlight of the WDP program for us. It is always interesting to get informed about the situations and struggles of people from such distant countries. Despite the distance, we have many things in common. Being united in prayer makes us feel like we are an integral part of this movement. This year may have felt chaotic with the widespread fear and despair over the COVID-19 pandemic; but the theme proved to be acutely relevant and uplifting. It reminded us that Jesus is present in our lives to heal. We must be open to the Lord's guidance and be brave enough to change what needs to be changed. We must also acknowledge the people around us in need of our help and extend our hand out to them.

Latin America



ARGENTINA

We felt very blessed to be invited by the women of Zimbabwe to praise the Holy Spirit. It was frustrating not to be able to celebrate all of the planned services, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and mandatory isolation measures. Still, we were glad for the opportunities we did have to come together. The program was very enjoyable. We translated the songs into Spanish and decorated the altar with many candles. The most impactful part of the service for us was learning about the tireless struggle the women of Zimbabwe face. Our prayers are with them!

Website: <http://cedmo.blogspot.com/>
Facebook: DMO Argentina

BRAZIL

Over the years, the WDP themes have all been fantastic in provoking faith, unity, prayer and creativity. This year is no different. The theme challenged us to find the courage to be vulnerable and allowed us to be healed. It reminded us of the importance of walking collectively as a community to overcome our conditions. It was noted during the meditation that Jesus opens people's minds and guides them to live in peace. Jesus teaches us that we are the catalysts of our own journey and cannot expect our



The most impactful part of the service for us was learning about the tireless struggle the women of Zimbabwe face. Our prayers are with them!

circumstances to change without action. We have been stimulated to take responsibility for ourselves, to change our ways of life, and to pursue transformation and liberation. In that way, we will care for each other as God cares for us.

Website: <http://www.dmoracao.comunidades.net/>

CHILE

From the moment we receive the worship service materials, excitement begins to brew. Preparations begin, committee meetings are scheduled and invitations are sent to other ecumenical groups. Despite the pandemic, some



CHILE



COLOMBIA



COSTA RICA

congregations managed to get together and hold their service. Undoubtedly, this situation reduced attendance but those who met achieved their goal of praying for the women in Zimbabwe and our nation. Given the situation today and what is being experienced globally, it was good to have an opportunity to focus our prayers. We also felt that the Bible study complemented the worship very well. There were plans to have meetings and prayer chains but it was no longer possible due to the pandemic.

Website:
<https://diamundialdeoracion.wixsite.com/chile>

COLOMBIA

Given the public health situation, we were not able to advertise the services as much, but we enjoyed the ones we were able to hold. Everyone was very enthusiastic in the preparation of the altar. We welcomed the participants with small clay pots. During the worship service, we handed out three cards, each one with a different color and shape: a red heart, a white dove, and a yellow flower. The participants wrote down on each one their commitments towards love, peace and reconciliation. Many have always believed that we have to reflect on ourselves in order to heal, so they really identified with the theme. It is also

important to act on our prayers and help vulnerable communities. God gives us many opportunities but we must have the initiative to act on them. We are already thinking about how we will plan for next year, possibly visiting churches and forming our final ecumenical committee.

COSTA RICA

In February, our committee held a preparatory workshop to familiarize ourselves with the materials. For the first time, representatives from the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica managed to join the workshop, where we also discussed our organizational structure. We were glad for the opportunity to integrate them into our committee. "I feel blessed to be a part of something so important. I didn't know this prayer spiritually unites so many on a global level," commented one of them. It was a time of joy, support, reflection and communion that strengthened our bond. We are happy with the broad participation in the workshop, especially because the only group that could hold a service was the one from the Caribbean Coast. Because of the pandemic, the schools and churches were closed down. Nevertheless, the program



motivated us to move forward and achieve our goals in life. We should always have hope in the future.

CUBA

Before the socio-economic situation in Cuba worsened due to COVID-19, we were already in need of a theme that invited us to get up, take up our realities and walk towards change. In this sense, we value the program written by the women of Zimbabwe. It focuses on a theme that takes us to a faith transforming experience. The search for an encounter with God results in integral healing. Just as Jesus' healing phrase had the power to encourage a sick man to rise, so too should our words during this pandemic. God inspires us to rise and helps us encourage others. In some way, none of our countries will ever be the same. We have faced not only a disease, but the desperate cry of the collapse of creation, of systems and individualism. It is towards a life of peace, sharing and reconciliation which we must move.

GUATEMALA

COVID-19 related restrictions began in our country on March 15th, so before



that date some groups were able to hold their services. Nevertheless, being united in prayers for the women of Zimbabwe was a special event. We are also planning to host three workshops electronically in the upcoming months. We felt God's touch in our hearts as a call to prayer. On a national level, our country has faced struggles that have led to pain and suffering. Thus, the call for peace and reconciliation is a personal and social challenge. On one hand, we feel the need to seek justice for the faults committed against our communities; and on the other hand, we believe injustices should be met with forgiveness. In granting forgiveness, we have peace in our hearts.

Facebook: Dia Mundial de Oración - Guatemala

HONDURAS

Two weeks before our WDP celebration, we held a workshop and invited local churches to join us in getting to know the focus country. Several participants joined us and we shared refreshments based on Zimbabwean recipes. We work together every year to celebrate WDP in the Roatan circuit and the Utila North Coast group. We had planned three services for 2020, but due to the global pandemic we were only able to hold one. The moments we were able to share together were refreshing; and praying along with our Zimbabwean



sisters was invigorating. The program taught us that we must not sit around and wait for help, but to get up and push ourselves to follow the examples we find in the Bible's stories. We thank God we were able to hold at least one bilingual service - English and Spanish.

MEXICO

The WDP worship service program always provides us with the opportunity to learn about the situations that exist in other countries. With love and empathy, we joined together in prayer for the needs of each other. We prayed for the women of Zimbabwe, for the world and our churches. We reflected on the invitation of Jesus to be healed, to get up and overcome the obstacles or excuses that prevent us from accepting the guidance needed to transform our lives. We committed ourselves to spreading the Gospel so that people can know the power and greatness of Jesus' love and mercy. In that way, they can build a direct relationship with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.



NICARAGUA

Like every other country in the world, the Coronavirus pandemic slowed down our everyday life. We had everything prepared for the celebration, like the dramatizations, the souvenirs and the educational materials; but the pandemic stopped our plans. We wanted to double the number of celebrations but unfortunately it was not possible. However, through praises to the Holy Spirit we were able to feel God's presence among us. The theme challenged us to believe that we can achieve miracles. Jesus encourages us to find ways out of our limitations and difficult situations. As Jesus is there for us, we need to be

there for those who accept change in their lives. With confidence we can achieve anything we want.

PANAMA

The impact that the worship service has on women can be seen in the commitment and active participation of those organizing and attending the service. Despite the situation our country was going through at the time, celebrations were still held and well attended. We had a blessed time together joining our sisters around the world in prayer and praise. The reflections based on the theme were very powerful. We have to wake up and start to change things for the better as Jesus is our model of love, peace and reconciliation. We must actively fill our minds with new ideas; and depart from negative behaviors with faith and hope. God loves us all and implores us to live transformed lives. Some of our sisters felt the courage to make a difference. They decided to start a ministry in their community to help those in need by delivering food and medicine, and visiting the sick and the elderly.



PARAGUAY

For us, participating in this ecumenical movement has been and continues to be a blessing in our lives. We had the joy of having women from Brazil, Argentina and indigenous women from Chaco participating in our two-day retreat. Knowing that we are united under the mantle of God regardless of our denominations; we aim to pray for one another with confidence. While those of us who engage in these retreats and meetings can appreciate their value, there are still groups that fear ecumenism. This is one of the challenges we work towards overcoming. As we reflected on John's biblical passage to identify our

'mats', we focused our strength towards a new hope. We know that Jesus, despite knowing our weakness, loves us and approaches us with mercy and humility, asking us - "Do you want to be made well?"

VENEZUELA

The reality in which our people currently live in is very complicated. Leading up to the 2020 celebration we experienced a series of blackouts and lack of gasoline for transportation, which made our preparatory meetings difficult to hold. The protocols established to combat the Coronavirus pandemic also limited us in many ways. However, our women

persevered and in Caracas we met several times and eventually held our WDP celebration. In Maracaibo and Barquisimeto, services were held the first week in March. Despite the setbacks, we are encouraged to continue celebrating WDP. We are exploring virtual options for the 2021 program. The theme this year challenged us to not be stopped by adversity, but to learn from it and seek alternatives in order to move forward. We invite all to be attentive to their needs and the needs of others. We will "Rise! Take Our Mats and Walk!"

*As we reflected on John's biblical passage to identify our 'mats', we focused our strength towards a new hope. We know that Jesus, despite knowing our weakness, loves us and approaches us with mercy and humility, asking us—
"Do you want to be made well?"*

Middle East



EGYPT

We are thankful for the spiritual fellowship, unity and support we receive from the WDP worship service every year. Coming together to meet, pray and support each other spiritually has the biggest impact on all of us. In unity there is strength, so it always feels great to be united in prayer. Thank you to the women of Zimbabwe for a wonderful service. The theme of their program taught us that the 'mats' in our lives, the obstacles that sometimes hinder our ability to do God's work, must be left behind. The Bible story inspired hope in our hearts that, with patience and faith, God will heal us. We also felt motivated to extend our hand in support of Syrian widows who are living in Cairo.

LEBANON

In spite of this year's turbulent political revolution, the worst financial crisis our country has ever experienced and the



COVID-19 pandemic, we thank God we were able to hold our WDP worship service. We prayed for protection, comfort, and for the health of the world. The program tackled social and economic issues that we are familiar with and listening to what the women of Zimbabwe have endured made us feel connected to them. The challenge to stay strong and not lose hope is tremendous but as this year's speaker, Rev. Rima Nasrallah van Saane,

shared, "we will not be defeated by our burdens. We will not give up the fight for a good life. No matter how long or how heavy it all feels, we will listen to Christ's call, and we will rise up and carry these burdens as we walk to a life renewed by God's promises."

Facebook: World Day of Prayer National Committee of Lebanon

PALESTINE

Everyone was feeling very positive and excited for the services we had planned in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah, along with a service at the Armenian Apostolic Seminary with the participation of its choir. But unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the corresponding country lockdown, they were cancelled. We pray that the situation will be better for next year. Despite this, we felt drawn to the problems and concerns highlighted by the Zimbabwean



The Holy Spirit gives us strength and enables us to act in ways that better our lives. By being open to the Holy Spirit and listening to the needs of our society, we can make a change within ourselves and our world.

women. We held the theme very close to our hearts because the Gospel reading came directly from our environment. The pool of Bethesda still exists today in Jerusalem. It attests to the belief of the people who were healed, or hoped to be healed if the angel stirred the water. When asked - "Do you want to be made well?" - we respond with a "of course!" But even if we individually pick up our mats, we still need the massive efforts of good people who believe in human beings, who do the will of God, have global moral values and are supported by international law.

TUNISIA

We were very pleased to be able to hold the worship service despite the frantic

and tense environment the world is currently in. With the threat of the Coronavirus and political tensions rising, we felt that this time of prayer and unity was greatly needed. A number of young African men joined us for the worship service. It was a new experience for them and we were happy to be able to expose newcomers to WDP. They actively participated and enjoyed their time with us. We enjoyed learning about our sisters and brothers in Zimbabwe. The impact of the service was in the understanding of the situation in their country and lifting them up in prayer.

TURKEY

Throughout the service we felt the power of the Zimbabwean women, who

took the steps of righteousness, peace and reconciliation with spiritual transformation. The Holy Spirit gives us strength and enables us to act in ways that better our lives. By being open to the Holy Spirit and listening to the needs of our society, we can make a change within ourselves and our world. With this attitude we can bring true love to our neighbors. The word of God always has a big impact on us. The Bible teaches us how faith brings us healing: the faith in the healer (Matthew 9:27-29), the faith in the words of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:5).

Pacific



AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

We take turns hosting the interdenominational WDP worship service, and this year it was hosted by the women of the Free Constitutional Church of Tonga. There were other local services held as well with a lot of effort put into decorations, souvenirs and traditional Zimbabwean recipes. One group had the leaders wearing flower wreaths in their hair representing the colors of love, peace and reconciliation. The fellowship WDP generates with other denominations is a major part of the celebration. We are lucky to have such committed supporters of WDP services. We enjoyed the opportunity to learn about Zimbabwe and native Zimbabwean women joined our services. It was uplifting to pray with our sisters and we were encouraged to show the power of prayer to our communities.

Website:
<http://www.worlddayofprayer.co.nz/>



AUSTRALIA

The overall atmosphere was one of gratitude for being together to share the joys and hardships of our Zimbabwe sisters.

AUSTRALIA

While a few services were cancelled in order to abide by social isolation guidelines due to the Coronavirus, most of them were held before lockdown. The overall atmosphere was one of gratitude for being together to share the joys and hardships of our Zimbabwe sisters. In certain areas of Australia, there are many migrants and refugees from Zimbabwe, some were asked to speak at the services. They spoke longingly of their

beautiful country, the struggles they endured and the love for their families. This authentic voice gave great value to the services. The program challenged us to consider the 'mat' we need to lift up. For some people, the 'mat' is their apathy, judgmentalism, or consumerism. However, we are urged to advocate for the poor, to be generous, stand against injustice, uphold the dignity of each person and promote the equality of races.

Website: www.worlddayofprayeraustralia.org

COOK ISLANDS

Thanks to God, we were able to hold our worship services before any COVID-19 restrictions were put in place. On one island, each church was allocated an issue regarding Zimbabwe and was asked to compose a song, drama or prayer to be presented at the WDP service. This initiative helps us understand the context

COOK ISLANDS



Knowing that God loves us and that we are in the Lord's care, we sang and danced in praise to express our feelings of trusting God's protection.

and makes us feel closer to the writer country. "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk" is one of the most powerful themes we have reflected on so far. We were challenged to consider how we respond to God's call. Are we ready to stand for the Lord's will? Are we ready to encounter all those who are in need, to love them and walk hand in hand with our sisters searching for healing? We cannot depend on others and must do our part in building God's Kingdom. Our voices as women must be heard.

KIRIBATI

WDP is a time where we can share what we face and listen open heartedly to the issues of Christian women around the world. We make the space to listen to what our sisters in Christ have to say and respond with our prayers of solidarity. This annual event strengthens our faith in God and we feel the power of the Holy Spirit within us. The theme of the program was very helpful in reminding us to consider what it means to be a good Christian. What can we do to help others? What do we have to offer? This can often be very challenging to answer but it reminds us of how Jesus is constantly helping others. We believe that WDP is a movement not only for Christians but for

MARSHALL ISLANDS



everyone who could benefit from the love and wisdom of God.

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Our worship service took place on March 14th after a long discussion with the Ministry of Health and Human services to consider the risks. While there were no COVID-19 cases on the Marshall Islands at the time, we wanted to take every precautionary measure to keep our sisters safe. Our service took place at the International Convention Center and we were able bring over 1,000 sisters together to worship. The theme touched our hearts and was especially fitting for the situation we find ourselves in today. Knowing that God loves us and that we are in the Lord's care, we sang and danced in praise to express our feelings

of trusting God's protection. Our dances symbolized our commitment to pick up our mats and heal from the troubles in our hearts.

SAMOA

We are grateful to the women of Zimbabwe for inviting us to be globally engaged in prayer with them. Women participated in the service with joy and with inspirational feelings when invited as one in body and soul. The theme encourages change; and we are particularly interested in impacting the economy with the women's movements and developing cooperation in the nation peace-building process. Our country is in need of transformation as it faces social and political issues. It is time to be courageous enough to let our voices be



heard. Although the pandemic has caused hardships, we want to highlight the positives we have noticed. Our country has had no COVID-19 cases and families have been able to spend more time together. People who have never gone to church have been worshipping from home due to broadcasted services on the radio and television.

TUVALU

On the morning of our service, we emotionally listened to the struggles and suffering the women in Zimbabwe face and the hard road they had to walk towards love, peace and reconciliation. That reality differs from ours and we appreciate what we have; however, it brought us to a sense of love and responsibility, a responsibility to do more for women and children in need. The choice to be healed, to be made whole, is ours to make and understanding this empowers us as women. We are challenged to look beyond the difficulties before us and to rise up like the man by the pool, through Jesus Christ. He is our

assurance for a better tomorrow. To be united in prayer is astounding and inspiring. The WDP celebration is an important annual event and despite Tuvalu being a small island country, we recognize that unity in prayer for any nation can move mountains.

VANUATU



Leading Together

“I beg you... bear with one another in love”

BY ROSÂNGELA S. OLIVEIRA



Laurence Gangloff meeting with WDP Palestine Committee

Listening to women's voices from around the world is one of the many things that sustain the interest in WDP. This is quite visible at the International Meeting when the working group, to select the theme and writer committees, starts to reflect on the applications for the annual observance.

In 2019, the WDPIC office started the conversations to organize the writing process with the committees selected at the International Meeting in 2017, in Brazil. As the process starts way ahead of the year of the celebration, this was the time to reach out to two of the selected committees: Taiwan, WDP 2023 and Palestine, WDP 2024. Thus, in December of 2019, WDPIC Chairperson, Laurence

Gangloff went to Jerusalem and WDPIC Executive Director, Rosângela Oliveira to Taiwan.

To witness the faith of the Palestinian Christians who, inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, seek justice and peace; Laurence attended the Sabeel International Gathering in Bethlehem. There were about 75 people from 16 different countries representing several denominations at the Gathering. The speakers were Palestinian Christians and Muslims, Jews, and Israelis, who talked about their daily lives and the non-violent actions for a just peace.

Besides attending the Gathering, Laurence met the members of WDP

Palestine in Jerusalem. Among them are women with a long history in WDP, who can even tell the stories of the writing process for the 1994 worship service. The seven of them come from different denominations and communities, but were all excited to be united in prayers.

This meeting was the first step of a long process towards writing the worship service for WDP 2024. We had planned a Strengthening National Committee workshop to be held in 2020. However, with the COVID-19 global outbreak, we are all living under some version of a lockdown and severe restrictions for international travel. Thus, we started our conversation via web conferencing.



WDP Palestine Meeting



Sabeel International Gathering

In July, we took the second step. We met online for the first time. Seventeen women and young women participated in the conversation. We are starting the writing process of the worship service in the midst of a global health pandemic. What a challenge!

“It is not going to be easy to gather people to come to Jerusalem from Ramallah or Bethlehem because of the check-points and the pandemic” said one participant. But it will “be exciting because it is a process and a group effort,” said the other. We are aware of the many obstacles in the several phases of the process, but we are confident that there is an enormous support for our sisters and we will face the challenges together.

It is interesting to realize that in 1928, during the World Missionary Conference held in Jerusalem, few women gathered



Writer Committee Meeting

to talk about initiatives to unite women around the world; this conversation gave space for the future formation of an international committee for the World Day of Prayer. Almost 100 years later, now as an organized World Day of Prayer International Committee, we are back to Jerusalem, to the Holy Land

where the Christian faith started, with the theme “I beg you... bear with one another in love.” In love, we will hear the witness to God’s grace through Jesus Christ. It will be a witness for peace, an urgent need not only in the land of Jesus but also around the world.

We are aware of the many obstacles in the several phases of the process, but we are confident that there is an enormous support for our sisters and we will face the challenges together.

“I have heard about your faith”

BY RACHEL CHEN AND CARYS HUMPHREYS



The Strengthening National Committee Workshop took place from December 4 to 6, 2019 when more than 30 participants gathered at Our Lady of Providence Girls' High School, New Taipei City, Taiwan. Through various creative activities and dialogue, the three-day workshop aimed to strengthen fellowship, build relationships, and “brainstorm” concerning the worship service materials for WDP 2023.

Local participants included women and young women from the Catholic Church (Taiwan Catholic), Yu-Shan Theological College & Seminary, Women's Prayer Group, the Mustard Seed Mission, the Salvation Army, the Methodist Church (Taiwan), Chang Jung Christian University (CJCU) School of Theology, YMCA of Taiwan, YWCA of Taiwan, Taiwan Lutheran Church, Taiwan Theological College & Seminary, the Garden of Hope Foundation and the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (Presbyteries/Districts).

Rev. Rosângela briefed the participants on the historical roots of the World Day of Prayer and how the seed was planted. In the nineteenth century, Christian women in North America were moved to action when they saw the suffering of women around the world and in their own communities. They were active letter writers, and so they wrote letters and called for united prayer and action in solidarity with women across the globe.

About 100 years later in Taiwan, more than 30 participants from various denominations were challenged to write letters for the preparation of WDP 2023 under the theme “I have heard about your faith” (Ephesians 1:15). Following a Bible Study summarizing the background of the book of Ephesians, led by Rev. Dr. Wu Fu-Ya, former President of Tainan Theological College and Seminary, (Rev. Wu incidentally was the first female ever appointed as a principal of a theological institution in Taiwan!), the

participants were asked by Rev. Rosângela to think deeply about their reaction to the theme. “What is it that you have heard about her/his/their witness of faith and love?” In small groups, the participants wrote down their letters according to the structure of Ephesians 1:1, 15-16, and 17-18. Their letters touched various levels and showed their concerns about personal health conditions, the Pearl Family Garden, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT)'s mission, the 2019 Hong Kong protests, and so on.

Through this activity, the participants expanded their vision and identified specific categories: Women and Family, Women and Politics, Women and Health, Women and Environment, Women and Culture, and Women and Leadership. Based on the different categories, the participants began to think deeper about “What are the prayers and actions that women in Taiwan want to voice in 2023?”



During the discussion of Women and Environment, Vavauni Ljaljegean, a Paimwanese Evangelist from Mu-Lin church in Pingtung, Taiwan, told the participants a heartbreaking story. After Typhoon Morakot, a three-day rampage from August 6 to 9 in 2009, the elder Indigenous people who lost their homes and relocated in the plains took their own lives due to difficulties adjusting to an unfamiliar environment.

When it came to Women and Leadership, it was agreed that promoting equal representation of women in decision-making is important; however, the participation of women in leadership roles in Taiwan is still lacking and has a long way to go. Nancy Lin, former WCC Central Committee member (PCT), encouraged the participants to step up, lead and speak up.

All the insights and reflections produced during this workshop became the basis on which the organized ecumenical working groups are further developing



the worship service and resource materials. WDPIC had planned with WDP Taiwan a second workshop for April 2020, but it was canceled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. This minor setback has not halted the commitment and excitement felt by all participants of the initial process. After a web conference with the WDPIC Executive Director and the coordinators of each working group selected by WDP Taiwan, the writing process moved on to the next step. All working

groups have formed, the outline for each component has been designed, and the writing process has launched. The members of the working groups are still able to meet while practicing social distance and wearing face masks. The mobile chat communication among each group's members and with WDP Taiwan is intense. There is great enthusiasm!

May all the acts and efforts glorify God and let the voices of Taiwan be heard!

WDP International Committee Meeting 2022

You are invited!



2017 International Meeting, Brazil



WDPIC visiting Scotland, 2019

On behalf of WDPIC, we invite you to the International Committee Meeting to be held on **June 12-19, 2022**. We will be hosted by the WDP Scottish Committee, at the John McIntyre Conference Centre, in the University of Edinburgh, **Scotland**.

Participants to the International Meeting are delegates elected by their National Committee. The delegates are to represent and be sponsored by their committees, in return they commit to inform back about their experiences.

Have you recently visited the WDPIC Website? The website has been updated with a page dedicated to the 2022 International Meeting. All relevant information about the Meeting is posted on this page. We encourage you to share the

information and motivate the conversation that will inspire the movement to grow.

The Conference Registration Fee has been announced in the currency of the country: British Pound Sterling. The fees cover dinner and accommodation from June 12th to breakfast on June 19th.

However, take note that Saturday, June 18th, lunch is not included. It is a sightseeing day and everyone is responsible for their own lunch. Information about sightseeing options and the cost will be provided later. **The delegate registration is £ 50, and the fee for accommodation is £ 850 for single room or £ 700, per delegate, in a double room.**

Besides sponsoring their own delegates, the committees are invited to contribute

to the Fund for Tomorrow. This fund is designated to develop WDP leadership through participation at the International Meeting. Donations given to the travel fund are applied to diversify representation, including young women, who attend the Meeting and share their gifts and wisdom with WDP leadership.

We live in unprecedented times and are all working together to slow down the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in our communities. We are aware that many committees are not able to meet in person and that it is still unclear the impact of the current situation on the plans for the International Meeting in 2022. However, step-by-step we start the conversation and preparations, with our trust in God's goodness.

New Heart, New Mind Called to HOPE

EPHESIANS 1,18

June 12-19, 2022 · Edinburgh, Scotland
World Day of Prayer International Committee



“New Heart, New Mind, Called to Hope”

Based on the letter to Ephesians (1,18), we
are called to hope; therefore,

We invite you to experience the meeting
with a spirit of openness and tolerance,
and for that, the heart must be ready:

New Heart!



We invite you to discern together the chal-
lenges of our time and make wise, vision-
ary and courageous decisions:

New Mind!



Above all, we want to reaffirm that the
women of World Day of Prayer are carriers
and givers of hope:

Called to Hope!

Will you join us on the path of
“New Heart, New Mind. Called to Hope”?

WDP Is About Building Relationships

BY ROSÂNGELA S. OLIVEIRA

World Day of Prayer (WDP) is a global ecumenical movement led by women in their communities. It creates an opportunity for building relationships, a spirituality of listening to each other and to God, a prayer informed by the context of women's lives, and a prayerful action expressed by sharing resources with communities in need.

Motivated by a common prayer on the first Friday of March, women lead workshops to learn about the focus country and to study attentively the Bible and the worship service. Together they plan the program for children in schools or churches. The interpretation of the annual theme in the local context and the envisioning of responses are creatively crafted and intensively promoted across the globe. The projects and organizations to support are selected carefully. Most of what we do is based on in-person events where building relationships is the first step of a long journey.

However, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the services planned to be held on the annual day of prayer, March 6th, were held except for in a few countries in Asia and Europe, which were already exposed to the COVID-19 outbreak.



WDP 2020 Worship Service, Taiwan

WDP WORSHIP SERVICE: THE LAST IN-PERSON GATHERING

Governments around the world set in place measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, consequently churches and schools were closed for in-person events. Then, WDP activities planned for after March 6th were canceled or postponed, even in Zimbabwe. The committee still nurtures the expectation to hold the National Celebration at the Sports Center in Harare after the lockdown is over and it is safe to gather again, said Sylvia Marowa, "we really want to express our gratitude for the prayers for us from around the world."

In the Cook Islands, the worship service was held with restrictions, and the WDP celebration became the last gathering held in the Cook Islands before the lockdown. "We felt blessed to be able to come together as women of this country to give

our thanks to the Lord. The theme is relevant because we have to rise, take up our mats and spread the good news in whatever way we can during the lockdown," voiced Henrica Marona.

The England, Wales and Northern Ireland committee began the Y-Pray Conference in 2016 "to introduce a group of younger women to the movement. The Conference was canceled along with other events, such as Link Days," informed Elizabeth Burroughs. Also "canceled were the worship services planned to be held in Bethlehem, Ramallah and Jerusalem," informed Nora Carmi, from WDP Palestine. Manon Naidoo lamented the uncertainty of the well planned 90th Anniversary of WWDP in South Africa during the Africa Regional Conference, which was canceled in July.

Taiwan's experience with the SARS pandemic in 2003, led the government to take early precautions when made aware about the Coronavirus in China. Nancy Lin informed that "the government took over all mask productions and ensured that every single civilian had equal access to buying face masks. Wearing a mask is required in public transportation and in all indoor public areas such as churches and stores. With masks and keeping social distance, the writing working groups are meeting to develop the worship service program for 2023."



WDP Meeting in English



WDP Meeting in Spanish



WDP Meeting in French

LISTENING TO EACH OTHER IN A GLOBAL CONVERSATION

The WDP International Committee (WDPIC) invited several committees for a global conversation via video conferencing (Zoom) to reflect on the impact of this moment on WDP and the alternatives to move forward. We held four video conferences between May and June - one in Spanish, one in French and two in English. Thirty-nine committees and sixty-three participants from the seven regions joined the conversation, in addition to executive committee video conferences, which is all summarized in this article.

WDP committees are using a variety of tools to keep connected and present to the needs of the communities. They range from rethink the structure and practices to introduce new technologies in communication to reach out to members, friends and local groups.

WDP France is considering changing the committee's structure to reinforce the local connection, stated Christine Méar. "How have we decided to rise, take our mat and walk? We have to reengineer the way in which we do things and seize up

this opportunity of involving our regional correspondents, so they can be in contact with their constituents, and linked with the National Committee."

Catherine MacKeil explained that in Canada, they are sorting out WDP grant applications. "With COVID-19, we are unable to support any of the projects with group gatherings, which include a lot of training events. We are focusing on the organizations that are on the frontline of helping people, particularly women touched by violence or human trafficking, and hunger."

Elizabeth Clark, from Australia, pointed out that they do not currently accept direct donation on the website, but to deal with possible reductions in offerings, they may supply transfer details to those interested in contributing that way. Ingrid Mai Pinkes, WDP Argentina, expressed the concern with the currency devaluation on their Annual Contribution to WDPIC. Coromoto Jimenez de Salazar, WDP Venezuela, shared about their committee's plans to use the offering to provide food to the vulnerable communities in Caracas, although the service could not be held.

KEEPING THE CONNECTION IN TIMES OF SOCIAL ISOLATION

In Germany, the WDP committee planned to prepare the facilitators for the Vanuatu 2021 program via an online learning platform (Moodle), explained Irene Tokarski. "We are developing the online platform for our national workshops, which usually happen from June to July, with about 180 women multipliers. The digital workshop is a platform where you can do different tasks, for example, research, live chat with other participants, offline tasks like reading the Bible text, or watching a video clip."

In Bahamas, the committee asked the young participants for help. The response was so positive that they are planning to have them as the liaison and chairperson mentored by WDP retirees. "Journeying with young women has been a special blessing for us as they have become our teachers in using technology. This intergenerational dialogue has been powerful! Coming out of this crisis, we all realize that a new way forward is necessary. We cannot just 'make things up as we go along' and see what will happen. Change, rapid change, unexpected change, is

never easy, and not always welcome. But change is inevitable,” said Annette Poitier.

Even before the pandemic, WDP committees were using cell phones and instant messaging (WhatsApp, Line) to check on members and friends. Now, they are using instant messaging to send out prayers, remarked Susana Renner, WDP Brazil, or having committee meetings in group chats, shared Berthe Sindjui, WDP Cameroon and Sybille Martial, WDP Republic of Mauritius. As the months advance into the timeline of preparations for the 2021 WDP program, some committees, for the first time, had their regular meeting virtually (Zoom). WDPIC is having monthly video conferences (Zoom) with executive members to replace the canceled annual meeting.

WDP is increasing its online presence by creating websites where the resource materials or activity information are available. Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) is used to share about the local celebrations, inform about the focus country, campaign for Thursdays In Black, and pray for the world. Every Friday, WDPIC posts a prayer with the hashtag #WDPUnitedInPrayer.

Growing out of the uncertainties of in-person worship services for March 2021 and the current experience with Sunday virtual worship services, many committees are nurturing the possibility of an online service for Vanuatu 2021. Bianka Paz, WDP Guatemala, mentioned their recent conversation about a workshop online with video clips to introduce the materials for the 2021 Vanuatu program. Margarita Cuzco, WDP Paraguay, mentioned their initial conversation about distributing the different moments of the worship service



into the communities and finding a virtual space to come together.

THE CONTEXT OF WOMEN IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC

The vulnerable situation of women during the pandemic was noticed. Families are separated by the lockdown, curfews and closed borders. Unemployment, hunger, and domestic violence against women have all increased. There is shortage of medications and treatments in overflowed public hospitals with COVID-19 patients. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, USA and Brazil, the denial of the health crisis is exposing the population to the uncontrolled virus transmission. In DR Congo, Rose Biasima Lala, commented on their use of local radio to raise awareness about Coronavirus prevention.

Jyothi Singh, WDP India, talked about “the concern with the rural communities who do not have easy access to internet to engage in online initiatives.” Also, in Costa Rica, Rebeca Cascante commented on how the priority is being given to family members who work from home to use the internet rather than women who want to connect with their community activities.

WDP has a word of hope to offer.

It was really inspiring to listen to the efforts made in the midst of so much disruption. WDP leaders are committed to carrying on the message and being present during this difficult moment. We lift up in prayers WDP families and communities who are mourning. We are to walk together in prayer and action. We are to be creative and oriented by the WDP Guiding Principles. WDP has a word of hope to offer. It is time to share it!

The process of developing WDP worship services continues in the midst of the pandemic. The 2021 Vanuatu and the 2022 England, Wales and Northern Ireland worship service materials are ready and have been electronically distributed. The writing process with WDP Taiwan for the 2023 service was launched, and we are in conversation with WDP Palestine for the 2024 program. Aware of the uncertainties, but full of hope, we are looking forward to the International Meeting in 2022, in Scotland, under the theme - “New Heart. New Mind. Called to Hope.” Visit our website for more information and follow our newsletter!

The WDP worship service is a tool for listening to each other and God in order to engage in prayer and action with sisters and communities around the world. Together we “Rise! Take Our Mat and Walk,” an action-oriented message that takes us away from the fear inflicted by the pandemic. The 2021 program, written by WDP Vanuatu, affirms God’s love and Jesus’ walk on the path of justice as the source of our strength to move forward. Together, we “Build on a Strong Foundation”.

WDP at a Glance



World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome all to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. The common day of observance is the first Friday of March, but local WDP activities are held all year long.

The 2020 Journal is based on the 93 reports out of the 146 countries that received the WDP worship service materials. The COVID-19 outbreak followed by the precautionary measures to slow the spread of the Coronavirus closed churches and schools globally. Every country reported the impact of the outbreak in their well-planned WDP activities. Even though, many worship services were cancelled or had lower than usual attendance, the appropriateness of the 2020 theme was emphasized.

WDP Guiding Principles acknowledge that all people have something to give and to receive. The local groups receive the worship service and respond with giving. "Through the WDP offering women share their resources with women and children around the world (WDP Guiding Principle). The exchange of stories and gifts illustrates the WDP motto of "Informed prayer. Prayerful action."

HOW WILL WDP OFFERING MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ZIMBABWE AND AROUND THE WORLD?

The committee has organized an outreach program to be aware of the needs of the communities and help as they are able. They have selected a few projects to support in response to any offering received from WDP Committees. They aim to impact the lives of the children with special needs and their mothers or caregivers; the elderly; and the street children and young people. They want to contribute to their education, shelter, wellness and job training.

The National/Regional Committees reported that this year's offering will be given to their local community and abroad for the following purposes:



Support women, youth and children through education, mentoring, shelter, food programs, clean water, orphanage assistance and prison visitations;



Provide assistance for people who are displaced, refugee or migrant, care for the ones living with HIV and AIDS, the families affected by COVID-19, and empower the victims of domestic violence and human trafficking;



Promote Christian education for children and youth, grant scholarship for women's theological formation and sponsor ecumenical initiatives;



Organize WDP locally and nationally, contribute to the regional and international WDP coordination, and tell WDP leadership stories by donating to the Fund for Tomorrow.



The WDPIC Timeline poster showcases 99 years of World Day of Prayer history. From 1927 to 2026, the poster displays the themes and writer countries which have motivated our prayers and actions.

Hanging this poster on your wall to promote WDP is a great way to start traveling around the world. The poster is an educational tool to talk about the issues that we have raised awareness and advocated for over generations. It also demonstrates where in the world women are leading this ecumenical movement.

Besides that, we incorporated expressions of WDP within the seven regions we are organized: Africa, Asia, Caribbean and North America, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, and Pacific. You can invite the children and youth to match the photos with the theme and the region.

There are two ways that you can order the poster. You can order a printed copy from the WDPIC office (email—admin@worlddayof-prayer.net) or you can order the art design and print the poster in your country.

The prices are:

1 to 10 printed posters = \$ 6.50 each poster plus shipping;

11 to 99 printed posters = \$ 5.50 each poster plus shipping;

Over 100 printed posters = \$ 4.50 each poster plus shipping;

Digital Art Design = \$100

EDITORIAL TEAM

Executive Committee Members

The WDP Journal is an annual publication of the World Day of Prayer International Committee (WDPIC). It is based on the Annual Reports written by the WDP National/Regional Committees. It offers an overview of the global movement from its local context, and includes expressions of prayer and action based on the annual theme. WDPIC promotes the sharing of information, therefore the Journal can be freely downloaded from the WDPIC website, and it can be reproduced provided acknowledgment is given to the source of information. All photos were originally sent from WDP Committees with the understanding that they might be published.

Editorial

Rosângela S. Oliveira (Staff)

Samantha Figueroa (Staff)

Photos

WDP Committees and WDPIC

Design

Laura Lee (Consultant)

Cover Artwork

Nonhlanhla Mathe (WDP Zimbabwe Committee)

World Day of Prayer International Executive Committee

Laurence Gangloff, France (Chairperson)

Susan Jackson-Dowd, USA (Treasurer)

Africa:

Henriette Mbatchou, Cameroon

Joyce Larko Steiner, Ghana

Asia:

Vino Schubert, Sri Lanka

Moumita Biswas, India

Caribbean and North America:

Ruth V.E. Phillips, Barbados

Lauren Wilks, Canada

Europe:

Senka Sestak Peterlin, Croatia

Emmanuelle Bauer, Luxembourg

Latin America:

Rebeca Cascante Gómez, Costa Rica

Esther Susana Renner, Brazil

Middle East:

Maral Barzkian-Haidostian, Lebanon (EAG Member)

Nora Carmi, Palestine

Pacific:

Vicki Marney, Australia (Vice President)

Henrica Nio Marona, Cook Islands



Let us Meet Again in 2022!

Come ready to:

- Listen to the Word of God and to one another in sharing prayers and actions of hope
- Build community among WDP leaders in your region and around the world
- Participate in elections for the Executive Committee, future themes and writer countries
- Launch the 100 years of uninterrupted prayers celebration – 1927 – 2027

To prepare for the WDP International Committee Meeting:

- Save the date
- Raise funds for your committee's participation
- Involve young women to represent your committee
- Be in communication with the WDPIC office and your regional representative.

Venga preparada para:

- Escuchar la Palabra de Dios y una a las otras compartiendo oraciones y acciones de esperanza
- Construir una comunidad entre líderes del DMO en su región y con el mundo todo
- Participar de las elecciones para el Comité Ejecutivo, los futuros temas y países escritores
- Promover la celebración de los 100 años ininterrumpidos de oraciones—1927–2027

Para prepararse para la Reunión del Comité Internacional del Día Mundial de Oración:

- Guarde la fecha en su calendario
- Recalde fondos para la participación de su comité
- Incluya a mujeres jóvenes que puedan ser seleccionadas para representar su comité
- Mantenga contacto con la oficina de CIDMO y con su representante regional.

Préparez-vous à:

- Écouter la Parole de Dieu et s'écouter les unes les autres en partageant des prières et des actions d'espérance.
- Rencontrer et vivre des temps forts avec les responsables de la JMP de votre région et du monde entier.
- Participer aux élections du Comité exécutif, aux choix des futurs thèmes et pays rédacteurs
- Inaugurer le lancement de la célébration des 100 ans de prières ininterrompues : 1927–2027

Pour préparer la rencontre internationale de la Journée Mondiale de Prière:

- Enregistrez la date dans vos agendas
- Collectez des fonds pour la participation des délégués de votre comité
- Impliquez des jeunes femmes pour représenter votre comité
- Entrez en relation avec le bureau de la JMP Internationale et votre déléguée régionale.

VANUATU

*“Build on a Strong Foundation”
March 5th, 2021*

One of the first things we learn with Vanuatu women is that “Land to a Ni-Vanuatu is what a mother is to a baby.” The relationship with land is at the foundation of the Ni-Vanuatu identity and spiritual strength. The photo chosen to illustrate the program reflects the Vanuatu’s women connection with land, culture and faith.

We listen to their voices through the worship service, which invites us to focus on the Bible story in Matthew 7:24-27. Jesus tells a story about the kingdom of heaven using the image of a house and the land on which the house is built. Choosing the land on which to build the house is an important decision for people in Vanuatu. The combination of considering the terrain and the climate is crucial in a tropical archipelago located in the South Pacific Ocean prone to earthquakes, cyclones, volcanic eruptions and rising sea levels.

In Jesus’ story, the wisdom of the builder of the house comes from hearing and acting on the word of God, which is a word of love. This is the foundation on which our sisters call us to build our homes, our nations and the world. A call of faith to be earnestly considered when responding to the prayer of commitment: “What is the house that you would build?”

The Vanuatu sisters praise God for fertile land, the sweet melody of the birds and for the sound of children. All of them together reflect their way of life and their everyday struggles with production of food, care for the environment and the education of children. Those challenges are reasons to praise God for being the source of their strength while they pursue opportunities in education, keep children away from malnutrition and provide alternatives to young people. In receiving their voice as a gift of wisdom, we share their hope and creatively engage our communities in “Informed Prayer. Prayerful Action.”



ENGLAND, WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND

*“I Know the Plans I Have for You”
March 4th, 2022*

In the midst of all the uncertainties we are living under this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the WDP 2022 theme emerges like a balm of confidence. It is an invitation to place our trust in God in times of suffering.

The program is based on the letter that the prophet Jeremiah wrote to the exiles in Babylonia (Jeremiah 29:1-14). The exiles were in a context of suffering, uncertainty, and opposing views on how to respond to the moment. Today, we come together to hear the stories of women who feel excluded, listen to the fear of a child refugee and learn to see the context of a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-faith society in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNI).

For Jeremiah, God’s plan was clear, and we share this assurance by singing it. What is your WDP hope? Let the children and the youth guide your response. Then, come to celebrate hope by lighting a candle on behalf of the seven regions of the world, knowing that our prayerful action can bring to life the promises of God who, like a Mother and Father, cares for us all.

We are given a seed of hope to ponder where it needs to be planted in our lives and in our communities. Take this opportunity, to raise awareness on the needs of your community and offer the gifts of prayers and commitment. A seed, nourished by prayers of intercession and actions of love, bind us together around the world.

May God, who plans no harm, sustain the world in love and hope.



For more information about World Day of Prayer please write to:

World Day of Prayer International Committee

475 Riverside Drive Suite 729

New York, NY 10115 USA

Tel: 1-212-870-3049

Email: admin@worlddayofprayer.net

Facebook: World Day of Prayer—International Committee

Instagram: [worlddayofprayerinternational](https://www.instagram.com/worlddayofprayerinternational)

To download the Journal, visit our website:

www.worlddayofprayer.net