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White Ribbon Bulletin

World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union

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Blessed Christmas





The word Advent means arrival, and it refers to the arrival of Jesus Christ into the world. The “Advent season” usually starts four weeks before Christmas and concludes with the celebration of Christ’s birth. Some churches emphasize the Advent season more than others, but all Christians look forward to celebrating Christ’s birth during this season of the year.

Why was Jesus’ birth so important? The reason is because slightly over 2,000 years ago, God stooped down from Heaven and became a human being: Jesus Christ. As the Bible says, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (John 1:14).

Think of it: God became a man! He did it because He loves us—and that’s what we should celebrate as Christmas approaches. Take time between now and Christmas to reflect on this great truth.

Read Isaiah 9:6—In this Scripture we find the message and meaning of Christmas. Isaiah the prophet gave five awe-inspiring names of our Lord that encourage us, thrill us and fill us with hope at this Christmas season.

1. Wonderful. When He did His many miracles, the Scripture says, “The people wondered.” (Luke 11:14)
2. Counselor. The officers said, “No one ever spoke like this man!” (John 7:46)
3. The Mighty God. He is the God-Man. He said that He and the Father are one. (John 10:30)
4. The Everlasting Father. It was by Him, the living Word, that all things were created. He is the designer of the whole universe. (John 1:3; Hebrews 11:3)
5. The Prince of Peace. There will never be lasting peace on earth until He comes again to reign in righteousness. But He is also the Prince of Peace in other ways. None can have peace with God apart from Him and the peace that He made through the blood of His cross. (Colossians 1:20)

The full meaning of these words from Isaiah should give us enough strength, hope, and joy to face any crisis, endure any sorrow and meet any temptation. How has Jesus shown you recently that He is “Wonderful, Counselor ... the Prince of Peace”?

Do you need God’s love in your life?



Dear all,

I recently heard a wonderful answer to the question "Why do you do the temperance work? We do this work because we are grateful for salvation and because we are part of the work for God's kingdom"

We know the dollars and cents cost of addiction is mind boggling. At least twice as many people die from alcoholism every year as die from motor vehicle accidents. We know that the toll on family life is immeasurable. We know that today's children are our leaders of tomorrow and must be protected. We encourage everyone to love them, nurture them and teach them well!

By making children aware of the impact of drinking on their bodies, we are helping to give them the confidence to make more informed and healthy choices about alcohol as they get older. And we ask adults to make holidays an alcohol-free zone for all children. Especially during Christmas.

We do live in terrible times and it is only by faith that we are sustained. Jesus was born in a stall, not a fancy hotel. He grew up as an ordinary person and his weapon against all his attackers was LOVE. Even unto the cross, he showed love. Perhaps the best gift we can give is on this list:

Christmas gift suggestions:

- To your enemy, forgiveness.
- To an opponent, tolerance.
- To a friend, your heart.
- To a customer, service.
- To all, charity.
- To every child, a good example.
- To yourself, respect



God has always done miracles. We have just got too busy to get into that sweet place of prayer with our heavenly Father. There can never be enough prayer.

When babies are targets in man's war - God help us all! Keep up the temperance work in your part of the world and God will bless all your endeavours. Isaiah 41:31.

Wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

Love and prayers,
Margaret



*Margaret Ostenstad
World President*



*Sarah Oh (Korea)
Education Director*

Reasons Why the WWCTU is Transforming the World

On August 1 2017, I attended the **Intergenerational Dialogues on the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals)** as United Nations youth representative of the World Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. More than 1000 representatives from NGOs all around the world attended the event.

The event’s purpose was to bring about intergenerational dialogue between youth and the elderly regarding the United Nation’s 17 sustainable development goals. More specifically, the six SDGs related to poverty, gender equality, employment, the environment, intergenerational innovation, and healthy living were discussed in depth.

As the representative of the World Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, I participated in Dialogue 1 (Breaking the Intergenerational Cycle of Poverty) and Dialogue 6 (Healthy Living – Physical and Mental Wellness) as the World Woman’s Christian Temperance Union specializes in damage caused by alcohol and drug use.

Although currently, we have a focus on international temperance and sobriety, it is undeniable that our historic interests in women’s rights, labor rights, prison reform, and the protection and education of children are closely associated with multiple sustainable development goals (especially goal 1: no poverty, 2: zero hunger, 3: good health and well-being, 4: quality education, 5: gender equality, 8: decent work and economic growth, 10: reduced inequalities, 16: peace, justice and strong institutions, and 17: partnerships for the goals.)

As I learnt from my participation in the dialogues, the third SDG i.e. “Good Health and Well-being” attempts to ensure “healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all at all ages” (Intergenerational Dialogue, 2017). More importantly, its targets include the following work that our organization does in helping transform our world to achieve many of these targets. If we examine each of these targets in depth, we can see how much of a connection the projects we work on are associated with them:

- **By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.**



Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) kill 40 million people each year, equivalent 70% of all deaths globally. One of the speakers, dentist David C. Alexander, stated that “oral disease affects 3.5 billion people – an increase of 1 billion people since 1990. We can place the indirect cost of oral diseases to the 10th leading cause of death. The 10th! And all this for a preventable disease– that toothpaste and removal of sugar from the diet can prevent. This made me think about the number of people affected by diseases from alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. It also made me realize that if oral disease can be placed as the 10th leading cause of indirect death, alcohol is probably a lot higher on that list. This leads to the next target to:

- **Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.**

In 2012, 3.3 million deaths, or 5.9 percent of all global deaths (7.6 percent for men and 4 percent for women), were attributable to alcohol consumption. In 2014, the World Health Organization reported that alcohol contributed to more than 200 diseases and injury-related health conditions, most notably alcohol dependence, liver cirrhosis, cancers, and injuries. In 2012, 5.1 percent of the burden of disease and injury worldwide (139 million disability-adjusted life-years) was attributable to alcohol consumption. Globally, alcohol misuse is the fifth leading risk factor for premature death and disability; among people between the ages of 15 and 49, it is the first. In the age group 20–39 years, approximately 25 percent of the total deaths are alcohol attributable (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism).

Our fight to encourage sobriety and temperance, eliminate damage caused by alcohol or drug use, implement preventive measures and effective drug policies... our fight is one of the most important, pressing issues in the world.

- **Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate.**

Tobacco accounts for 7.2 million deaths every year (including from the effects of exposure to second- hand smoke), and is projected to increase markedly over the coming years.

- **By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal**



mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.

Alcohol is responsible for violence against children, which numerous unfortunate times results in preventable deaths, especially of newborns and children under 5 years of age. In Europe at least 9 million children are growing up in families with an alcohol abuse problem. Around 16 per cent of cases dealing with abuse or neglect of children involve alcohol. In the United States there are about 26 million children with parents who are alcohol and drug addicts. In addition to these figures, we should mention that it takes more than 25 liters of water to produce one liter of beer. Without a doubt the global alcohol industry with their manufacturing, distribution and sales is having a negative impact on the world's water and food situation (WWCTU Nobel Prize nomination letter, 2017).

• By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents

Driving under the influence of alcohol and any psychoactive substance or drug increases the risk of a crash that results in death or serious injuries. In the case of drink-driving, the risk of a road traffic crash starts at low levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC) and increases significantly when the driver's BAC is ≥ 0.04 g/dl. In the case of drug-driving, the risk of incurring a road traffic crash is increased to differing degrees depending on the psychoactive drug used. For example, the risk of a fatal crash occurring among those who have used amphetamines is about 5 times the risk of someone who hasn't.

Regarding drink driving, multiple NGOs, including ours, have played a major role in road casualty reduction.

The work that our field workers are doing around the world to educate young children and students about the harms of alcohol abuse, tobacco use, and drug use are helping them form lifestyle decisions in their formative years that will impact them for the rest of their lives. What we must do is encourage such educational movements especially in disadvantaged countries.

I believe that our organization is a great example of interaction between members of all ages and we must work together to achieve the SDGs so that every generation is able to shape our societies and together to change the world. Furthermore, as an organization that consists mostly of women members, I feel that our organization is a great example of female strength and empowerment.



Our organization has a strong history of fighting for the protection of women at home and work; we have fought for women's suffrage rights, shelters for abused women, women police officers. We have even fought for stiffer penalties for sexual crimes against girls and women. What our organization has always done, and is continuing to do, is empower and protect women around the world. Our alcohol and drug policies, as well as our policies to protect domestic violence against women and children, is a great example of our organization's drive to love and protect our neighbors for God, for Home, and every Land.



Sarah Oh's report is based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pictured above. In order to keep our status as a Non-Government Organization with the UN, WWCTU has to report our work as it fits with these SDGs.

The first 6 of these SDGs are particularly relevant to WCTU:

- **SDGs 1, 2, and 6, No Poverty, Zero Hunger, and Clean Water and Sanitation** can relate to **Social Service and Christian Outreach**. Our support for providing water wells in Africa and for Fundacion Deborah in Guatemala are examples.

- **SDGs 3, Good Health and Well-Being and 4, Quality Education**, involve all our **education** work regarding alcohol and other drugs and includes, **Children, Youth and Home Protection**.

- **SDG 5, Gender Equality**, has always been a part of WCTU work.

More information about implementing these goals can be found at the following website: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>



Anne Bergen
Organization Secretary

It is always exciting to learn of the work being done by WCTU in a country which we seldom hear from. In this Bulletin I will share some pictures about outreach events in Myanmar.

Daw Chit Maw Lwin, Vice President of WCTU Myanmar sent photos of MWCTU's donation mission to POC (Prisoners of Christ) at Pearl Myo Thit, Mingalardon township on 17th July 2017.



Clockwise from top left: Members of MWCTU, Preaching by Sayarma Daw Doris, MWCTU and members of POC.

Left: Ex-President Than Than New sent a photo of the MWCTU'S FAS banner at their service to celebrate FASD Day.



WCTU is probably the oldest continuing women's organization in the world and two recent events in Australia remind us of our long history.

On 8th September the Victorian State WCTU celebrated its 130th Anniversary with a function entitled "Women in the 21st Century" which was attended by about 70 people from various women's groups. Those attending received a special bag with some of our information leaflets and a membership card. It was pleasing that three women asked to become members. The Keynote Speaker, Melinda Tankard Reist, campaigns against advertising and the media which promotes the early sexualization and exploitation of girls. She reminded us of the importance of speaking out against things that are harmful.



Melinda

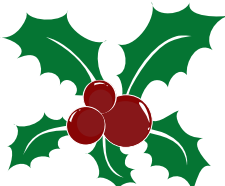


On 19th September, as President of WCTU Australia, I attended the **125th Birth-day Celebration of Bundaberg WCTU in the State of Queensland.** There, a small but dedicated group of members do good work in promoting the temperance message to school students and their community. I spoke briefly, promoting our FASD leaflets, sticky notes and bandaid packs, then the guest speaker told why he was a total abstainer and reminded members that their example is the best advertisement for WCTU's work.

This well planned luncheon event was also attended by about 70 people.

If you have not sent in a report of your country's activities this year, please do so next year. The photos on these pages look best in color so you could check out the Bulletin on the internet: www.wwctu.org

Have a very blessed Christmas and a productive and happy 2018.



Anne Bergen



Cutting the 125th Birthday Cake



Being Nominated is...



Nobel Peace Prize
Nominees for 2017

Nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017

The undersigned parliamentarians hereby nominate **THE INTERNATIONAL SOBRIETY AND TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT** represented by the movement's largest international organizations:

- IOGT International iogt.org
- International Blue Cross (IBC) www.ifbc.info
- The World Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WWCTU) www.wctu.org

for the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017.

In November 2015, 193 member states adopted the UN's new sustainability goals. These are benchmarks for success in global development towards 2030. In achieving sustainability we believe the world community will also find easier solutions towards world peace. Damage caused by alcohol or drug use adversely affect many of the sustainability goals. Putting in place preventive measures and effective drug policies globally will be important steps towards reaching these important goals.

The international sobriety and temperance movement has since the mid-1800s been one of the largest popular movements in a host of countries. IOGT and WCTU began in the US in 1851 and 1874 respectively, and the Blue Cross was founded in Switzerland in 1877. These organizations grew quickly and became international bodies in a relatively short period of time.

The movement points towards personal responsibility and towards the importance of a popular mobilization, while at the same time working politically for adoption of policies that will help to keep the consumption of alcohol and drugs at a low level. Research has shown what policies would effectively reduce consumption and thus damage. Such measures meet resistance, both because they allegedly restrict individual freedom and because there is a strong counterforce in the alcohol industry, an industry that has taken lessons from the mistakes of the tobacco industry and their lobbying against smoking regulations.

Without the political struggle of the temperance movement as advocates for children, women and the alcohol and drug addicted the use of regulatory tools would have been extremely difficult. We see this in the developing countries of our time where the alcohol industry is heavily into "fresh" markets, markets where a large portion of the population does not currently use much alcohol. WHO has on several occasions pointed to the importance of retaining the restrictive attitudes towards alcohol and drugs that we find in these countries if we are to ensure a continued positive global development.

Alcohol and drug use is a major risk factor for individual health and at the same time slows down sustainable development. WHO has estimated



that nearly 3.3 million deaths occur globally each year due to harmful use of alcohol. Alcohol is along with physical inactivity, tobacco and malnutrition one of the four main risk factors when it comes to non-communicable diseases.

We are in this case concerned with “market created epidemics” that does severe damage to many developing countries, especially to the male populations in these countries. However, it is often women and children who are most affected. Problems caused by alcohol and drug use can keep generations of vulnerable individuals in a negative spiral of poverty, and they threaten human development. Globally alcohol is the greatest risk factor towards ill health and premature death in the age group 25-59 years, the age group that is most active in the workplace. Productivity loss due to alcohol consumption is great. Harmful alcohol and drug use effects sustainable development on many levels.

Alcohol is not the only cause of violence, but is often the factor that ignites the violence. There is a clear link between alcohol and violence in the home and in public places. We can see this link in research done in several countries and continents.

In Europe 66 percent of victims of domestic violence are attacked by a person who has used alcohol. In Argentina the figure is 68 percent. Around 65 percent of women who are victims of partner violence in countries such as South Africa, India, Uganda, Vietnam and Zimbabwe report that the abuser has used alcohol.

Alcohol is a factor in violence against children. In Europe at least 9 million children are growing up in families with an alcohol abuse problem. Around 16 per cent of cases dealing with abuse or neglect of children involve alcohol. In the United States there are about 26 million children with parents who are alcohol and drug addicts.

In addition to these figures, we should mention that it takes more than 25 liters of water to produce one liter of beer. Without a doubt the global alcohol industry with their manufacturing, distribution and sales is having a negative impact on the world’s water and food situation.

As we have seen, use of alcohol and other drugs is a major threat to the world community’s sustainability goals and world peace. The work IOGT, IBC and WCTU is doing is probably the most important effort in combating this threat today. A vibrant and popular temperance movement has proved to be vital in the implementation of measures to protect populations from damage caused by alcohol and drug use. They are also in the forefront to minimize damage already caused, and to help in reaching sustainability goals. Strongly opposing them we find big global corporations with their economic interests.

The organizations here nominated are represented in most countries and all three have built up solid international networks. They also participate in other networks and global processes together with organizations with similar goals. A Peace Prize for this work will focus world attention on the immense problems caused by alcohol and drugs and be an invaluable support for the idealistic opposition forces of the sobriety and temperance movement.



*Anna-Mari Laine
Social Service*

CHRISTMAS

"Now there were in the same country shepherds living in the fields keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid." (Luke 2; 8,9) Two different worlds, the Heavenly world full of brightness and the shepherds' world here on Earth met each other. It is difficult to imagine what kind of feelings these shepherds must have had when seeing this Holy light shining in the dark night.

I can remember one evening at Christmas for a long time ago. My husband and I were returning home from a church service. We stopped at the service station in order to fill up the gas tank. It was a very cold evening - a lot of snow. You would not like to be out of doors for a long time. When I was sitting in the car, somebody knocked at the side window. A miserable-looking drunken man was standing there and asked us to take him home, because it was freezing cold. We took him home. He asked us to come in and we entered the small, cold, dark cottage where he lived with another alcoholic and a cat. Everything was in a mess, full of bottles and broken furniture. At that moment I clearly knew two very different worlds were facing each other. The church building we had left was warm, light, and full of Christmas joy and hope. Now suddenly we were sitting in the dark, ugly room with completely different people. Both men were friendly, generous and sensitive and the cat was one of the smartest cats we have ever met. These two men are the same kind of human beings as my husband and I. Two different worlds, however, met each other.

But in fact that's why we are here to live for. We have a wonderful privilege to be children of light. We have learnt to know the Child of Light, Jesus Christ. We are children of light - by mercy. We are carrying this light into different worlds here in this world. The Heavenly touch and light changed the shepherds' hearts. It has changed many people's lives all over the world and it is still changing many people's lives. It can make alcoholics sober. One of these alcoholics, Raimo, has already passed away. The other alcoholic, Topi, does not use alcohol any more. He lives in a beautiful flat. Every Christmas we visit him. It is marvellous to carry this kind of super light that can penetrate into the darkest corners and lighten them by the light of mercy and new life.

Maybe during this Christmas time the Holy Spirit will show us someone or even many nearby that we can love in a special way, to be Heavenly messengers of Light. This is the most precious service and task a human being here on Earth can have. Let's praise and rejoice!

Anna-Mari Laine



O Holy Night

O holy night!
The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth!
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Till he appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

Fall on your knees
Oh hear the angel voices
Oh night divine
Oh night when Christ was born
Oh night divine
Oh night divine

Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming
Here come the wise men from Orient land
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger
In all our trials born to be our friend

Truly He taught us to love one another
His law is love and His gospel is peace
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother
And in His name all oppression shall cease
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy



Irja Eskelinen
3rd Vice President

It is time to invite you to enter into the Christian world of prayer and praise, and spend time daily with them.

Prayer Calendar for 2018

1 THESSALONIANS 1:2-3; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:28
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you .

WWCTU President, Margaret Ostenstad, members of the World Board, WCTU National Presidents, Field workers, Department Directors, members
May we all be an instrument of your love.

World political leaders all around the world.
May they serve God in truth.

Your country's Government – concern and action on alcohol/illegal drug issues.
Almighty God, guide with your Spirit governments of our world.

We pray the special needs of WCTU in regions.
We pray the special needs of the world.
We pray with those who mourn, be close to them.
We pray with those who are afraid, live in the middle of war and crises.
Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for more women to join WCTU around the world.
We pray for peace and love among WWCTU members. (1 Corinthians 8:1)

If I allow pride to dominate my heart, I become my own worst enemy.
Grant me the grace of a humble and contrite spirit that I may come into thy presence washed clean with tears of godly sorrow. (I JOHN 15:5)

Our Lord, teach our heart where and how to seek you, where and how to find you.
All that I am, all that I have, Shall be for ever Thine. (MARK 11:24)



Noontide prayer - Matthew 11:28
Prayer changes not only situations,
but also those who pray.

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And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2: 8-11