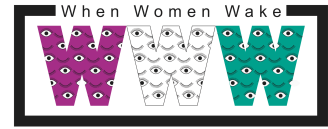


## #ACCELERATEACTION

March 2025 | Issue 1 | Volume 6 |



"#AccelerateAction" the theme for International Women's Day (IWD) 2025, emphasizes the urgency of making faster, more effective strides toward gender equality.



## EDITORIAL — *Marcia DCunha*



The early years of the last century saw women struggle for easier working conditions, better pay, shorter hours of work, voting rights... Over a hundred years later, where are we?

At the current rate of progress, it will take until 2158, which is roughly five generations from now, to reach full gender parity, according to data from the World Economic Forum. Can we collectively, Accelerate Action for gender equality? Can we speed up the rate of progress worldwide? Can we take swift and decisive steps to achieve gender equality? Here are a few thoughts.

**Dr Aruna Gnanadason**, former ICWM Convenor outlines the need to accelerate action within the church against entrenched patriarchy in both Catholic and Protestant traditions. She calls us to re-examine the role St Paul's epistles play in the life of church women all over the world.

**Shirley Jacob**, Kerala ICWM member and media person, discusses the long road to progress thus far, the road blocks, the areas to confront and her own efforts at Accelerating Change through her work in the world of Communications and the Church.

**Adv Flavia Agnes**, a well-known women's rights lawyer and pioneer of the women's movement in India, explores the critical concerns about inordinate delays in the Judicial System. Justice delayed is justice denied but justice that's fair is as important as justice that's speedy.

**Raynah Marise**, National ICWM Convenor recounts her journey through an oppressive relationship, emerging from the wreckage battered, broken but unbowed.

**Seena Abraham** stumbled out of an abusive marriage, into another dangerously deceptive one. Like the Phoenix rising out of the ashes, she stands tall today as a loving mother and a successful Woman Entrepreneur in the IT space.

**Amelia Andrews** accelerates action in the corporate space, pictorially!

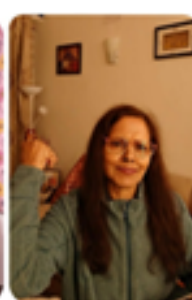
**ICWM News** Reports from ICWM Kerala, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Delhi and Bangalore keep us updated about their activities.

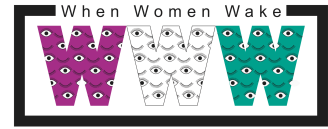
**WWW** our Masthead, shouts out loud, **When Women Wake** ... mountains move! Let's not allow ourselves to be hit upon by family, by society, even our church – the church of Christ! Let's wake up. Let's wise up. Let's build a WorldWideWeb of support, for women, for children, for the voiceless in our society. Happy Women's Day. Beginning today let's #AccelerateAction, in our church, community and society.





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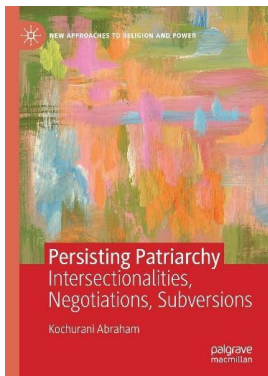
## JESUS: RESTLESS AGAINST INJUSTICE — *Dr Aruna Gnanadason*

A CALL TO ACCELERATE CHANGE



There are several instances in the life of Christ, as recorded in the gospels, when he seemed restless with the inaction of those around him who hid behind laws and procedures to allow injustice. I think of the woman with a flow of blood (Luke 8:43-48). She has been described as a radical risk-taker who went against the rules of her time to reach for her healing and blessing because she believed in Jesus's power, and she should act if change was to come. She persevered against a crowd that could have even crushed her to death. We learn that she acted, even if she was fearful and "trembling". She had to do it if she was to find healing. She was acting in very patriarchal times!

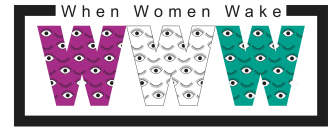
"Persisting patriarchy" is the main title of the powerful book Kochurani Abraham wrote recently. Right in the preface she describes a dilemma we have to address if we would, in India, Accelerate Action so as to achieve gender equality. In Kochurani's words, "Often I have been baffled by the situations where women find themselves beneficiaries of the many products that come with the 'development' package, yet they continue to be restrained by the heavy baggage of traditions; where women's higher education serves mainly to give them a higher profile in the marriage market without translating into employment opportunities; and where region continues to be a strongly gendered phenomenon that counter-positions men as 'givers' and women as 'takers, and men defining and mediating doctrines and women remaining the greatest consumers of religious products.'" (Kochurani Abraham, "Persistent Patriarchy: Intersectionalities, Negotiations, Subversions." Palgrave Macmillan 2020. v111).



Kochurani's experience emerges out of her life and interactions with the Catholic Syrian Community in India. My own emerges out of the Protestant heritage in India, and particularly from the ecumenical movement in India as well as from the World Council of Churches (in which the Orthodox Churches are also a part.) Ironically, her understanding and mine are very much the same. Our analysis of the role patriarchy has played in our churches, religious institutions, families, and the impact this has on our being as women is much the same though we are still each operating within our own church spheres.

The World Council of Churches, since its inception in 1948 and through the decades of its existence, has paid particular attention to the voices of women. Time and resources have been set aside to embolden women to act in liberating themselves and all women in their churches, their families and societies. Among the significant programmes organised, what stands out at this time is an Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998). It was always intended to be a decade of the



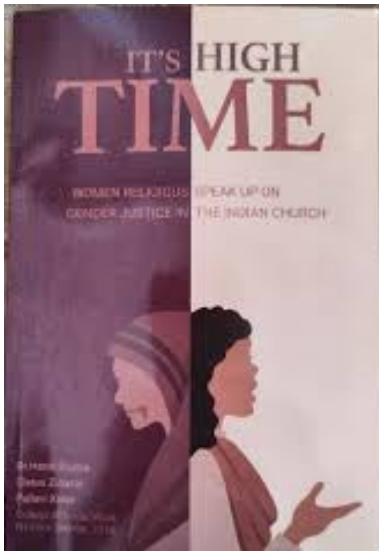
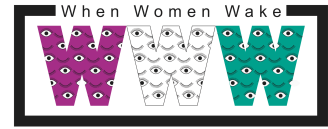


churches and not a decade of women in solidarity with women. It had been inspired by the UN's Women's Decade (1976-1985), which had been addressed to member countries to provide them a framework to act on the many issues women are demanding action on. The Churches Decade was to provide the churches an opportunity to probe the many ways patriarchy has penetrated into their lives and

the stumbling blocks this places on the path of women and of the churches. Differently put, it was intended to accelerate changes initiated by the churches, both within the churches themselves but also in the world, for greater justice for women. There were significant policy changes in some churches. The issue of the ordination of women to priesthood was dealt with by many Protestant churches. But the ordination of women to priesthood cannot be an end in itself. Giving a space for feminist theological voices and forms of leadership has been harder as patriarchal control has stepped in the way.

Among the many theological questions women face, what became starkly exposed, in WCC's work, particularly from women theologians, is the role St Paul's epistles play in the life of church women all over the world. Till today, almost everywhere, the biblical teachings tempered by patriarchal interpretations, on the place of women in their church and their relationship to men, continues to be a centre of concern. Recognising that this has to be addressed, the WCC commissioned Dr. Wesley Ariarajah, a male liberation theologian from Sri Lanka, (who was Deputy General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), at that time) to help contextualise St Paul for today. He wrote a small book entitled "Did I Betray the Gospel: the Letters of Paul and the Place of Women". (Risk Book Series, WCC Publications 1996). In this book he explores how Christians who "begin with the belief that the Bible, as it is written, is the Word of God, they have considerable difficulty in knowing what to do with the statements by Paul such as "Women should keep silence in the Church"; "Women were made for men", "Wives obey your husbands". Most of these people are aware of the radical changes that have been going on in the understanding of the place of women, they just cannot relate this with what appears to be the clear teaching of St Paul. To them the question simply becomes: "Are we to say that the Bible is wrong in this matter? If so, then how are we to believe that the Bible is the word of God?" (Ariarajah, p.x1).

Ariarajah goes on, in this book, to write 4 letters to the Churches as if Paul is writing to the churches today. Using Paul's style – the same, argumentative and persuasive language, he reinterprets what Paul actually said. If he were talking to the churches today, here are some of the issues he would have addressed - some of the issues women today are concerned about: the abuse of power that marginalises women's leadership skills; the misinterpretation of laws relating to purity and pollution leading to women themselves feeling that they are unclean when menstruating; the abuse of traditions such as the covering of heads that is used as a tool to debase women; of women being made to feel that they are inferior to men; the misinterpretation and abuse of the laws of obedience among others. Ariarajah also lifts up St Paul's many attempts to teach about the primacy of love, that women did



In June 2021, the Conference of Religious of India (Women's Section), released a study mandated by them on Gender Justice in the Indian Church. It was about the Women Religious of India, speaking of the discriminations heaped on them.

participate in his ministry and that ultimately it is Christ who leads us, and it is his teachings and ministry that should inspire our actions. St Paul did acknowledge many times in his letters that he himself is born anew in Christ and that some of his old ways may have been offensive. By implication, Ariarajah reminds his readers that to be faithful to Christ, is to act! As Christian women we have to keep this message as the focus of our challenge to the churches.

Women, globally, have been demanding change for several decades now. It is a fact that in churches all over the world there have been significant signs of progress in our lives and in our right to live with justice and with no violence. Year after year, an International Women's Day (8 March, each year) is celebrated in big ways and small where women along with men in many places, take this as an opportunity to celebrate the lives of women; to assess changes that have taken place and to pledge to continue the fight. The demands for change have been global and women, of almost every country in the world, have demanded action in some form. The United Nations has been a strong force in mobilising the voices of women and in calling on governments to act.

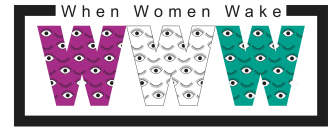
We have to do more if we are to accelerate change in our churches and country. As Kochurani Abraham concludes: "Given that patriarchy is well grounded in the Indian context particularly through the intersectionality

of caste and religion with gender, challenging it necessitates resolute political procedures and determined steps. This calls for a shift from a politics of survival to a politics of subversion. Only when women reclaim their power, their space, their body and their spirit and gain control over their lives can they loosen the grip of patriarchal ideologies that persist in having a say over their lives." (Kochurani Abraham. p.214).

Let us commit to accelerate changes, in ourselves, in our churches, in our countries and in the world!

**Dr Aruna Gnanadason** is Former Convenor of ICWM, and currently an Ex-Officio ICWM member, directed the programme on Women in Church and Society and the Justice, Peace and Creation work of the World Council of Churches, Geneva. She now lives in Chennai, India





## HARDER, FASTER...THE RACE TO EQUALITY — *Shirley Jacob*



The journey continues towards gender equality and parity began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The fact that I am able to express my views in such a forum speaks of the privilege of being an emancipated woman benefitting from the struggles of those who went before. Well, the journey continues with achievements to name a few like ... encouraging women to pursue careers in traditionally male-dominated fields, increasing women's participation in the workforce, encouraging female entrepreneurship and access to financial resources, promoting the inclusion of women in political and decision-making positions, enforcing and strengthening laws that protect women's rights, challenging societal norms that perpetuate discrimination, and engaging men and boys as allies in the fight for gender equality.

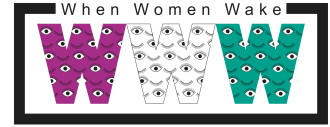
Of course, there are challenges to overcome. In recent times, the support for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies in the USA has seen a notable rollback of federal support programmes describing them as "public waste". While the proponents emphasize fairness, innovation, and engagement, the critics argue that DEI policies may lead to hiring or promoting individuals based on demographic characteristics rather than merit, potentially lowering performance standards. Some organizations may struggle with the financial and logistical challenges of creating and maintaining effective DEI programs. This has led to a re-evaluation of DEI initiatives in both public and private organizations.



Gender parity in Christendom has been a complex and evolving issue. Christianity has been a gendered tradition, with sexual difference forming an organizing focus for its doctrines, practices, and institutions. However, the mid-20th century saw a significant intellectual challenge to traditional gender roles, influenced by feminism and the increasing number of women becoming academic theologians and biblical scholars.

Despite these advancements, much of what still passes for normative humanity in Christian texts and practices is male humanity. Pope Francis's recent appointments of women to key leadership positions in the Vatican have garnered mixed reactions from male priests and the broader church community. While some male priests and church leaders have expressed support for these appointments, others have shown resistance due to traditional views on gender roles within the church, especially the sacramental functions that can currently only be performed by men.

From a theological standpoint, gender equality within the church involves interpreting biblical texts and doctrines in a manner that promotes inclusivity and mutual respect. The church can work towards



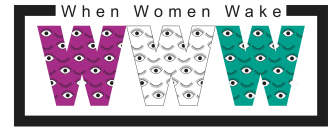
greater gender equality and inclusivity, fostering a community where both men and women can fully exercise their gifts and callings by considering key theological principles and perspectives.

- "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27
- Jesus' interactions with women were counter-cultural for his time. (Luke 10:38-42).
- "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)
- The early Christian community included women in various roles, such as prophets, deacons, and leaders of house churches. (Romans 16:1-2)
- Mutual submission in marriage, emphasizing that husbands and wives should submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21-33)

The theme of IWD-2025 "Accelerate Action" is a wake-up call to the church world-wide to have a comprehensive and intentional approach to challenge traditional theological approaches that have marginalized women and re-interpret scriptures from a gender-inclusive perspective.

**Shirley Jacob** [Email: [shirl.jacob@gmail.com](mailto:shirl.jacob@gmail.com)] Member, ICWM Kerala, Shirley Jacob, former Senior Producer, Akashvani, is currently Consultant with Prasar Bharati.





## REDUCING BACKLOG OF CASES IN COURTS — *Advocate Flavia Agnes*



The Indian legal system is overwhelmed with the tackling of pending cases. According to available data, 74.9% of cases in high courts and 63.1% of cases in lower courts are more than a year old.

The rising backlog of cases has become a critical concern for legal systems globally, calling for urgent and innovative solutions to ensure justice is served in a timely manner. Several strategies have been adopted. The use of technology such as electronic filing and virtual courtrooms has been pivotal. Tools like Zoom and YouTube have been instrumental in conducting legal proceedings. These digital platforms have not only helped in reducing the backlog but have also opened new avenues for court efficiency and accessibility.

However, addressing the backlog is not just about integrating technology into legal processes. It involves reevaluating and reforming traditional practices to enhance the overall efficiency of the justice system. We need to emphasize the importance of timely case resolution, not just for adhering to legal timelines but also for maintaining public trust in the justice system. Prolonged legal proceedings undermine the perceived legitimacy of courts and deter individuals from seeking legal recourse.

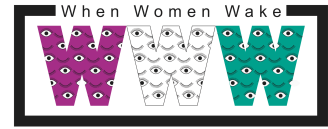
**India's oldest pending case!** In Jan 2023 a case was finally settled 72 years after it was filed in 1951.

Court management plays a crucial role in handling backlogs. Effective management involves prioritizing cases, streamlining procedures, and ensuring that each hearing is productive.

One significant challenge in reducing backlogs is balancing the need for speed with the need for fairness and thoroughness in legal proceedings. Hastily processed cases might lead to miscarriages of justice, whereas prolonged cases can lead to justice delayed. Therefore, the challenge is to find a middle ground that ensures both efficient and fair resolution of legal disputes.

**Adv Flavia Agnes** Ashoka Fellow, Member ICWM, is a well-known women's rights lawyer and pioneer of the women's movement in India. She runs an NGO Majlis in Mumbai. Flavia Agnes, once a victim of domestic violence, is at once an idealist writer as well as a "woman" of action. She has helped hundreds of domestic violence victims.





## **WAS IT ABUSE? GUILT! ANGER! RECLAIMING MYSELF!—Raynah Marise**



I live a rather full life [seemingly]. Conduct online meetings, plan national conventions, write papers for presenting at national meetings, plan prayer services, conduct reflection sessions, do innumerable courses on healing, on faith, on gender, on citizenship, etc... And yet, I've spent the last week struggling to get out of bed. Breaking into tears at the drop of a hat. Panic attacks at the thought of making/taking a phone call. Terrifying dreams of the past. Frightened of what the future will unfold. And yet I push myself with strength I am unaware I possessed. I tell myself, 'This too shall pass' .... A cliché that has become a fact in my life.

I'm 62 today. Was married for 23 years, have 2 lovely children, 33 and 30. And we all struggle with scars of the 23 years, each in our own way! Was the journey worth it? I guess it was. Without it I would never have evolved to become the person I am today! If you knew me before I married, you would have known someone with a deep love for the Church and Christ, bold and confident, courageous, with a voice and a heart for those who suffered and struggled.

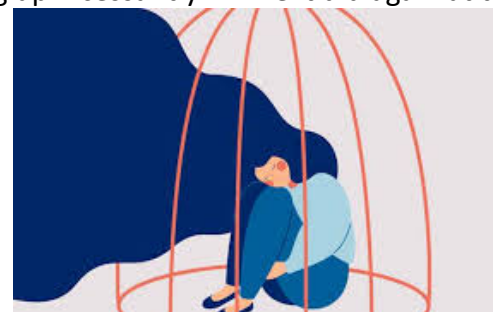
In my marriage, those very qualities were questioned, belittled, derided, disparaged. My motivations were questioned ... my love for the Church was because I slept with the priests ... I was fool standing for people who did not work hard and expected benefits, I was supposedly dumb, made use of by people, and did not know what was good for me. I was trying to make a difference in the world, not realising that money was the force that made the world go round, not good intentions and rights.

I ended up questioning myself, my choices.

The peanuts I earned as a social worker in Hong Kong or a teacher in Dubai were taken by my husband ... I could not expect to be fed and looked after for free, could I?

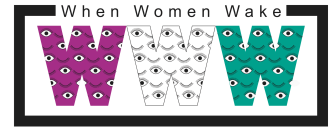
### **Was it worth the journey?**

It was painful ... more than I can describe... the memories still crush me, the pandora's box of complex financial, legal and other problems he left behind keep popping up incessantly ... like it did again at the beginning of last week ... at the end of last year...my children call him the gift that keeps giving! But when my children say they saw my strength and my resilience to rise up and not get battered down with every verbal and financial assault, I know it was worth it. When I find myself looking at others with problems, with empathy and understanding, able to listen and accompany them rather than give advice or wonder why they stay in difficult situations, I know it was worth it.



**Raynah Marise Braganza Passanah** is a faith and gender rights activist, involved in Catechesis of youth and adults and advocating for social justice. She was also involved with research, documentation, publication, and para legal counselling, for domestic workers in Hong Kong.





## FROM STRUGGLES TO STRENGTH — *Seena Abraham*



### MY JOURNEY AS A WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR

My Dreams Led Me Forward. Life taught me that anything is possible with confidence. Confidence was my only strength to stand firm in life.

Born in a small village in Kerala as the eldest daughter of three, with teacher parents, my journey to becoming a well-known entrepreneur was filled with struggles, neglect, and accusations.

Like everyone else, I stepped into marriage with great hopes and dreams. But soon, I faced betrayal from my husband, business failure, alcoholism, and both physical and mental abuse. I couldn't tell anyone due to societal pressures and concern for my two younger sisters' future.

During this time, my father passed away in an accident. After that, the abuse worsened, and I had no one to question or support me. When my family found out the truth, they stood by me to leave that relationship forever.

Later, I remarried an NRI from America with the hope of a better future. But it turned out to be another deception—he already had a family in the U.S. and had only married me for his personal convenience while visiting India. When I confronted him, he tried to kill both me and my child. By God's grace, we escaped.

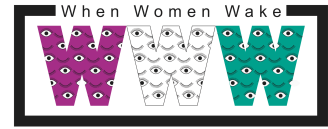


He even attempted to sell my house and land without my knowledge. I filed a case against him, which went up to the Supreme Court. Justice was served in my favour, and I was finally free.

I completed my B.Sc. in Computer Science from Madras University and began my professional journey. With experience from Chennai and Dubai, I decided to start my own business. I knew challenges would come, but I was determined to face them head-on.

I entered the IT field, providing services like website development, logos, brochures, and other essential projects for businesses. My clients were happy with my work, which led to more opportunities. Their satisfaction became the foundation of my growing business.

Website development is a field where very few women are involved. But it gives me great mental satisfaction. What keeps me going is the encouragement from my customers and the unwavering devotion of my son. The support from ICWM is also very valuable. Also, the support of Women Entrepreneurs Network and IWN of CII.



Women face many struggles in society and within their families. We need to break all barriers and find our own space. Only another woman can truly understand a woman's struggles. So, we must support each other and rise together.

**Seena Abraham** ICWM Member, Kerala, is an experienced Managing Director at Flyon Technologies, with a demonstrated history of working in the field of website development.



Kerala ICWM member Seena Abraham receiving a trophy of recognition from the Jacobite church leadership for the web designs she did for them.

## ACCELERATING ACTION IN THE CORPORATE SPHERE — **Amelia Andrews**

*"I am a woman phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, that's me"*  
**Maya Angelou**

### Dismantle barriers in hiring process

- Prevent hiring bias on basis of gender, race, caste, age or any other discriminatory factor.
- Allow women entry into the workforce.

### Provide equitable opportunities for growth

- Equitable growth opportunities at work
- View past gender stereotypes of 'men' as providers who need to be promoted and 'women' as s 'second' source of income and not the main breadwinner who are happy to have a stable job.

## ACCELERATING ACTION FOR GENDER EQUITY AT WORK PLACE

### Find allies, build community

Allies can help to support, mentor and be a champion for women's growth. They can advocate with and for women for inclusive policies and practices. They can help to overcome and even dismantle barriers.

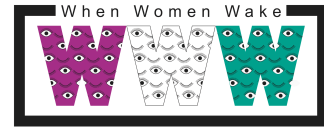
### Women can be women's best friends

- Smash patriarchy together
- Lift each other up
- Have each other's back!

*Developed by Amelia Andrews*

**Amelia Andrews** ICWM National Social Media Team Member and Communication Advisor, Asia at SOS Children's Villages International finds pictures talk louder than words. Here she attempts to show women how we can accelerate gender equity in the corporate space.





## ICWM NEWS

### KERALA — *Compiled by Shirley Jacob*

**Activities and Initiatives in 2024-25** The Indian Christian Women's Movement (ICWM) Kerala Unit has been actively engaged in various initiatives aimed at spiritual growth, empowerment, and community service. One of the notable events was the Foot-Washing Ceremony, held on March 26, 2024, at Snehakood in collaboration with the Archana Women Centre. This meaningful tradition, inspired by Jesus Christ's act during the Last Supper, involved washing the feet of 20 mothers from diverse religious backgrounds, symbolizing love and inclusive liberation.



The ICWM Kerala Unit also conducted a **Bible Study Series in 2024** themed "Woman, Find Yourself Through Gospel Women." This series consisted of monthly sessions starting from March 2024, led by theologically trained facilitators including Dr. Susan Thomas, Dr. Kochurani Abraham, Ms. Shanti Mathai, Ms. Santha George, and Ms. Jiji Johnson. The sessions explored the lives and experiences of women in the Bible, offering lessons on faith, courage, and resilience. There were 30 participants on an average in each session.

#### Topics of study

1. The bent woman
2. The bleeding woman
3. The Samaritan woman
4. The anointing woman
5. The women followers of Jesus
6. The woman and the lost coin
7. The woman caught in adultery
8. The Canaanite woman
9. The women in birth narratives
10. The woman entrusted to proclaim



**Woman, Find yourself Through the Gospel Women**

This programme envisions to help us discover ourselves further through a feminist theological reading of the life stories of Gospel women and the transformation they experienced in their encounter with Jesus Christ.

Revisiting the Gospel women would give us tools which could facilitate our own personal and collective liberation.

The forty five minutes inputs will be followed by vibrant discussions on how the Gospel relates to our lives in the socio-political and religious context of our society today.

**Women's Bible Study**

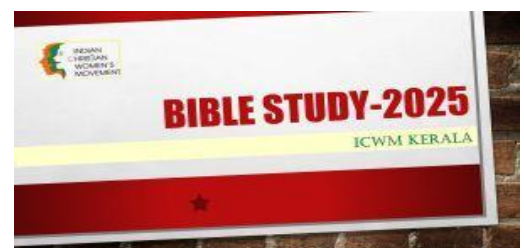
**ICWM-KERALA**  
Online Bible Study Programme

**March - December 2024**  
On ALL 3rd Sundays  
8.00 - 9.30 pm

Certificates will be given to those who attend all the ten sessions  
+919447989097

Building on the success of the previous series, **the ICWM Kerala Unit is launching a Foundational Bible Study Course in 2025.** Commencing on March 7, 2025, this course will cover topics such as the formation and canonization of the Bible and various interpretation methods. The course is open to participants for a nominal fee of Rs 100.

ICWM Kerala Region is collaborating with YWCA, Kottayam, to celebrate **International Women's Day 2025 on March 15th.** The event, themed "Making Headway for Change," will feature a skit, group discussions, reflections, and an open discussion, providing a platform for collective action and empowerment.



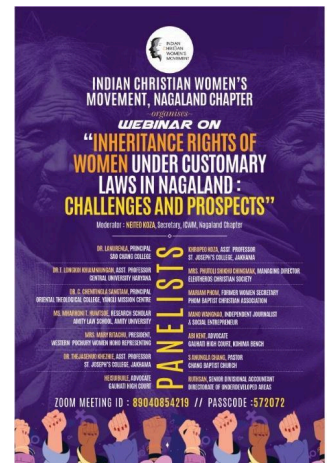
## NAGALAND — Compiled by Adv. Neiteo Koza



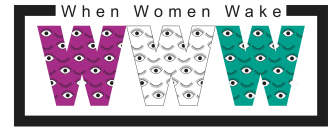
Accelerating Action in Nagaland, Indian Christian Women's Movement (ICWM), Nagaland Unit was launched on April 6, 2024. A half day seminar on "Empowering Women Voters: Role Awareness & Political Engagement for "Effective Governance" was held at Phom Baptist church, Chumoukedima. Dr. RENCHUM Kikon Kuotsu, Asst. Professor, Department of Political Science, Patkai Christian College (Autonomous) was the resource person for the Seminar.

### ICWM Nagaland Unit's Visit to Relief Camps in Manipur:

On December 23, 2024, a team from the ICWM Nagaland unit visited two relief camps in Kangpokpi district, Manipur, to show solidarity with our sisters affected by the ongoing violence. The camps house displaced families with no stable income. Living conditions are dire, with 3–4 families sharing a single room. To support their livelihood, 30 women are undergoing tailoring training, initiated by some good samaritans, but a lack of sewing machines hinders their progress. In response, we distributed three sewing machines, cloth materials, and other essentials, though more are needed. We urge those willing to help to contribute, especially with sewing machines, to support these women's self-sufficiency.







## MEGHALAYA — *Compiled by Rev. Lalhmingthangi Marak*

1. ICWM, Tura unit was formed on 27th February, 2024. We have 25 members from different church backgrounds such as - CNI, Catholic, Baptist, and Pentecostal.
2. Expressed solidarity to the Catholic sister who faced harassment from some religious fanatics while travelling in Assam.
3. We attended an annual Conference of the Pentecostal church.
4. Organized a prayer on 28th February, 2025 for the persecuted Christians in Chhattisgarh.

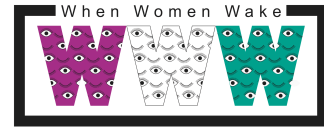


## DELHI — *Compiled by Mavis Russell*

Delhi has a strength of 45 members when we began. We are involved in various activities. Supporting and teaching the less fortunate. Stitching and beauty culture. Every six months we conduct exams and give them certificates. We visit the Shelter homes on various occasions and carry stuff for them. We take part and stand up for Women's Rights, showing our solidarity, we join up with Women Activists at Jantar Mantar. We have visited a few homes of people who suffer because of the hatred that has been passed down. We participated in the 'Mere Ghar Aake to Dekho' and many other such movements. Distances do not allow us to meet too often.







## BANGALORE — *Compiled by Adv Celin Thomas*

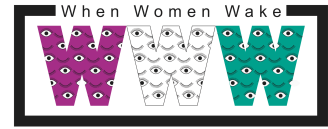
ICWM Bangalore Unit has active members on their own individual capacity and through their organizational affiliations have collaborated several times to assist and support women in distress. Besides, these ad hoc interventions, the unit has done some excellent work and those initiatives are given below.

**‘Teredide Mane O Baa Athithi’ hosted by ICWM Bangalore Unit** on 02.10.2023 between 4-7 PM. Anita Cheria, who is an active ICWM-Bangalore Unit member, has taken up the mandate to organize gatherings and meetings under the civil society movement ‘Mere Ghar Aake toh Dekho’ which is called ‘Teredide Mane O Baa Athithi’ in Karnataka. ICWM members in Bangalore have also hosted such meetings/gatherings in their homes by opening doors to members of different communities and gender as well as sexual minorities.

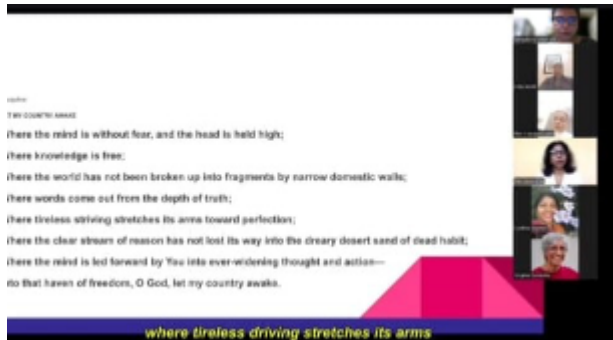


**Silent Gathering to protest the people of the persecuted church** all over India- 28.02.2025. A small but determined group of women from all walks of life gathered at Bangalore's Freedom Park on 28th February 2023 in a silent gathering to show solidarity with the people of the persecuted church all over India. The call, which was in response to highly incendiary threats to the women in three Adivasi villages in which only Christians reside, was given to women all over the country. The gathering was organized by Ms. Cynthia Stephen of ICWM – Bangalore, which saw participation of persons from different civil society organisations and socially conscious people showing solidarity with the cause.





**National Level Webinar on 'Participation of women in Electoral Politics in India' – 09.08.2024 between 6-8 PM over Zoom webinar platform.**



ICWM Units- Bangalore, Kerala, North East and Chennai co-organised this National Level Webinar with Bangalore Legal Aid on the topic of **'Participation of women in Electoral Politics in India'** held on 09.08.2024 between 6-8 PM over Zoom webinar platform. The webinar featured eminent speakers Cynthia Stephen, Ninglun Hangal, Lida retd. IAS, Ms. Koza and Merlyn D'sa. The webinar was ably moderated by

Ms. Virginia Saldanha and spearheaded by Ms. Celin Thomas of ICWM- Bangalore Unit.



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