



Give
joy & justice



About the theme

“Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.” Isaiah 1:17

We have focused on water, essential to human life and food that sustains life. This year we come to justice which speaks of the way we live together and with creation. Great joy can follow when people are treated with respect and their dignity respected. Justice can be individual but it is always collective. It is something we seek rather than something we have. Faith is about our relationship with God and our neighbour.

Christmas is always a balancing act between those who want to be comforted by familiar traditions centred around family and the very radical nature of what happened at the time of Jesus’s birth. It can be even harder to think about what is happening in the wider world and build the global into our celebration.

Shanti (not her real name) featured on this year’s poster is a Dalit woman from Tamil Nadu in India. She is used to carrying heavy loads. She works hard as an agricultural labourer to care for her family. A Dalit (formerly known as

Untouchables), she knows poverty and discrimination first hand. She is one of hundreds of millions of people who are facing hardship and hunger on most days of the year.

Living as we do in the world that God loves, we can open our hearts to their stories and pray for the change that must happen. Faith tells us that the world can change and that we can be part of the change. The Bible speaks often of justice – not in the legal sense of our court system – but in a profound way about the ordering of creation. Isaiah is written for people who want the world to be different – who care that all people are treated fairly and their dignity respected. The mandate speaks to us today and encourages discontent. The measure of justice is the efforts we take to rescue the oppressed, and care for the orphan and widow.

Jesus took the vision to another level by speaking always of love. Sometimes Bible verses become too familiar. We

forget that “God so loved the world...” not half the world, or the people we like. This is a profound challenge to us today when climate change, Covid, violence and conflict create sometimes overwhelming tensions.

In this year’s resources, CWS has chosen five aspects of justice, drawing on stories from our partners who are committed to making change happen. By reading how Muneeswari stood up for her right to be respected as a human being of value, you can see what happens. Always the challenge is to seek justice and the women’s sangam or association in her village is doing that for her community – every day.

Each Sunday we invite you to reflect on each aspect of justice and pray for the people who are seeking to make it come true. Your support for the Christmas Appeal involves you in their story. Together we can remake the world.

Please pray for our partners and give thanks for the work they do to find the joy that comes with justice. We think especially of the people who live in the Holy Land and pray that they will find justice and peace.

In Numbers

- 720 -811 million were hungry last year.
- 2.2 billion people lack access to safely managed water.
- 255 million people lost their jobs during the pandemic.
- Only 5.55% of people in low-income countries have received at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.
- 200 million people of India’s 1.3 billion population are Dalit.

Image: The wall that almost surrounds the whole of Bethlehem. Photos: WCC/Albin Hillert

