



# White Ribbon Bulletin

World Woman's Christian Temperance Union

Volume 120 • Number 2

April • May • June




## Fulfilling our Mission:

"A drug-free world"



**42<sup>nd</sup> World Convention**  
**Chicago – 19-23 August 2025**



**YOU ARE WORTHY/VALUABLE  
YOU ARE IMPORTANT HERE AND NOW!  
FOR YOUR OWN SAKE,  
ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE LOVED!**

**IF YOU ALLOW OTHER PEOPLE TO ERODE YOUR GOOD OPINION OF YOURSELF YOU ARE ALLOWING  
THEM TO DISEMPOWER YOU. The only opinion that matters is yours.**

## **GIVE MEANING TO LIFE:**

**When we see worth in life's small things, and it makes us feel happy.**

**Develop one's own capacity and resources.  
Make a decision to do something and do it. Join the WCTU!**

**New eyes - God's eyes**

**Freedom to be your self**

**MAX LUCADO**

**"A woman's heart should be so hidden in  
God that a man has to seek Him just to find her."**

**PROVERBS 31.25**

**She is clothed in STRENGTH and DIGNITY a  
nd she LAUGHS without FEAR OF THE FUTURE.**

# President's greeting

Dear all,

Greetings from Norway. I hope you enjoy reading the second digital edition of the World White Ribbon Bulletin in 2025. It contains articles on topics which our speakers will be addressing at the upcoming World Convention.

Please share this with your members and others. Appreciate prayer for the countries experiencing difficulties in obtaining visas to the United States. 14 countries will be represented. Program is on p. 12-13.



Margaret Østenstad  
WCTU World President

A reminder for countries with a visa waiver. Remember to get your ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization) <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> (click)

Chicago O'Hare Airport code is **ORD**. Final Payment for accommodation is due 18 July.

**IMPORTANT: Travel insurance.** WCTU is not responsible for any bills incurred during your stay.

## HOPE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Believe in God. Believe in the Inherent goodness of people.

Maya Angelou said: "When a person shows who they really are, believe them." We need to bring hope to the young generation. For in the midst of an evil world, there are three things that remain firm - FAITH, HOPE and LOVE. The greatest of these is LOVE. God is love.

Woman's Christian Temperance Union is the world's longest continuously existing women's organisation. It's 142 years old. It is fighting to create a safe zone - free from addictive drugs and alcohol in homes and in societies in 62 countries around the world. It is a founding member organization in the United Nations with - Special Consultative Status in UNESCO. We have a lot to be proud about.

## Isaiah 60:1-3

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Be blessed as you pray for the 42nd World Convention and for world peace. 🙏❤️

In White Ribbon bonds, Margaret Blessings, love and prayers,

*Margaret*

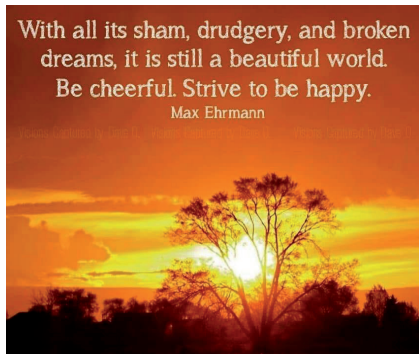


**Noontide prayer**

*Around the world, someone is always praying*

With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.  
Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

Max Ehrmann





**«Prevention:  
the shield against  
eroding drug policies»  
19. August 2025  
19:00**

**Highlights from her keynote speech on Cannabis at the Nordic Summit in Sept. 25th 2021. Cannabis. Written by <https://www.mcleanhospital.org/profile/bertha-madras> PhD (the honorable) Professor of psychobiology at Harvard Medical School.**

Introduction: we, the world are at a crossroads in drug policy

"I come here today, at the Nordic Summit, to focus on marijuana, but cannot in good conscience, dismiss changing drug views, policies, laws that are the root of current changing views on marijuana.

Most pundits agree on the need to treat drug addiction, that addiction can be viewed as a public health issue. But drug policy views are entering a new phase, a dispute between those advocating unrestricted drug use and others supporting restricted access/use.

At one end of spectrum, some in the harm reductionists community advocate for: destigmatizing drug use, legalization of all drugs, commercialization coupled with "harm reduction" and criminal justice reform, continued drug use during treatment, drug use as a benefit, a source of comfort, pleasure, self-medication. "Why doesn't research focus on the benefits of drug use?", they ask. They advocate for removing legal restrictions on drugs as unrealistic and doomed to failure, rejecting restrictive drug policies, blaming the "drug war" for addiction, the opioid over- dose crisis, mass incarceration, attributing drug use to social determinants - root causes of drug use are failed drug policies, families, stress, anxiety, trauma, homelessness, social injustices. This may be true in individuals, but many people suffer hardships at all levels and do not resort to drugs.

Over the last 20 years the U.S. underwent a vast change in perception of drugs, resulting in changes in policies and drug laws. Three changes reversed many decades of progress:

- a tenacious movement to legitimize any forms and any doses of
- marijuana as a medicine and as a legal recreational drug
- unrestricted prescribing of opioids for any forms of pain under a broad
- range of medical circumstance
- criminal justice reform at many levels of government, which translates
- into emboldening drug distributors.

# Highlights from the Nordic Summit

The consequences of these changes are evident: Since 1999, 841,000 people have died from a drug overdose - equal to 14% of the entire population of Denmark or Norway, or 8% of Sweden's population. In 2020, 95,000 deaths were recorded. Many deaths are among homeless people, or among people living alone in hotel rooms or other units provided by city governments as harm reduction measures. Dealers in open air fentanyl markets are not arrested by police who witness deals. Yet this movement claims society has not been liberal enough: "if only a user can buy pure drugs at fixed doses, addiction and overdose deaths would disappear". Arresting drug dealers evokes derision and designation as a "drug warrior", a "fossil of the past".

Some have good intentions. Political ideology and personal emotions or experiences with drugs are factors. Some believe they are the voice of ethics, of caring, fairness, liberty. Others have conflicts of interest rooted in personal and/or financial incentives: consultant fees, drug marketing, donations from billionaire activists or from drug distributors, or reimbursement as providers of addiction, housing, other services. They are not held accountable for the consequences of enabling a drug culture, a social experiment, that already has a track record of failure.

And they dismiss people who harbor an alternative view - to reject drug use and addiction as a lifestyle choice, and to impede drug supply. These views are also rooted in ethics, in values of health, security, safety, responsibility. They are rooted in valuing the potential of each human brain and each life - as I do.

With legalization and normalization, use will rise, especially among youth. What course will nations choose?

Increase in accidental marijuana use by young children. According to data from the National Poison Data System, accidental exposure to marijuana among children under 6 years old has been on the rise. As more adults use marijuana infused products such as baked goods, gummy candies, candy bars and "cannabis cola" are often indistinguishable from traditional products and attractive to children, placing them at significant risk of accidental use.

We must apply the precautionary principle in public health: the burden of proof for potentially harmful actions by industry or government rests on the assurance of safety and that when there are threats of serious damage, scientific uncertainty must be resolved in favor of prevention.

**"What are the most effective ways of promoting prevention?"**

**Strengthening families must be a priority!**

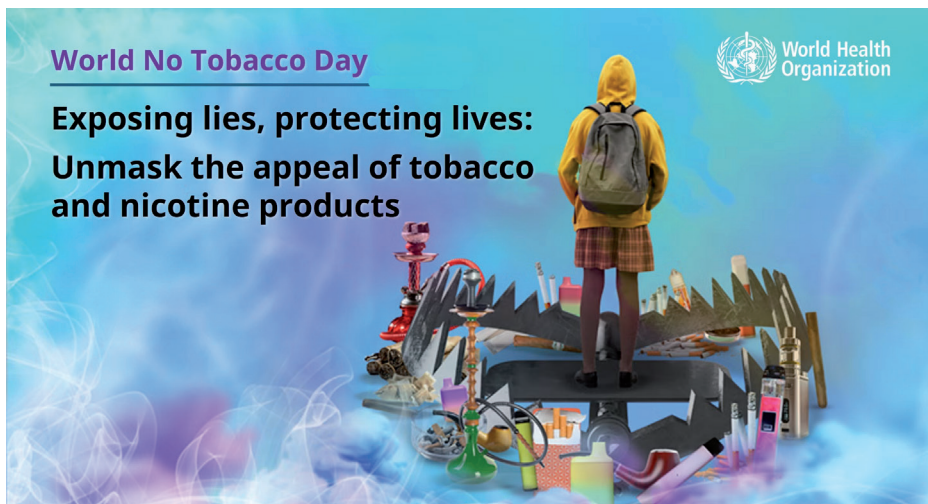
**20. August 2025, 10:30**



## World No Tobacco Day



### Exposing lies, protecting lives: Unmask the appeal of tobacco and nicotine products



## Bright products. Dark intentions – Unmasking the Appeal

Appealing flavours, but hidden dangers.

Shameless manipulation of our children, for industry profit.

Every day, tobacco and nicotine industries use carefully engineered products and deceptive tactics to hook a new generation of users and keep existing ones.

Keep the industry out.

### Global event:

**Exposing lies, protecting lives: Unmask the appeal of tobacco and nicotine products**

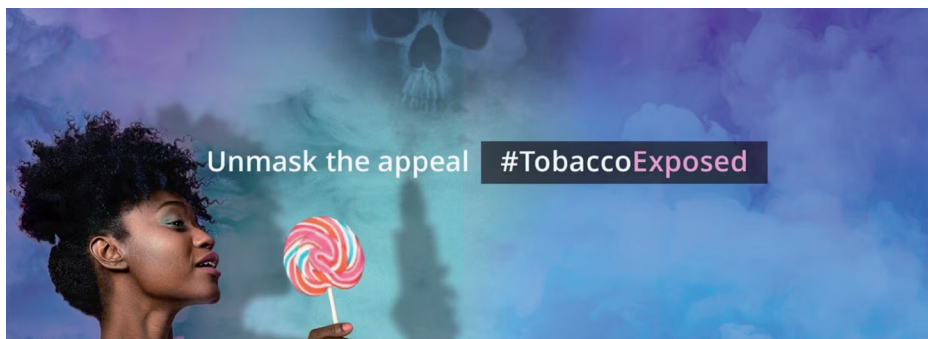
**13 May 2025**

**13:00 – 14:00 CET Online event**

An estimated 37 million children aged 13-15 years worldwide use tobacco.

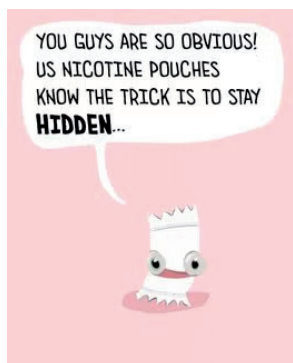
In many countries the rate of e-cigarette use of young people exceeds that of adults.

Marketing content promoting e-cigarettes, nicotine pouches and heated tobacco products has been viewed more than 3.4 billion times on social media platforms.



Flavours are found in many nicotine and tobacco products. There are about 16 000 unique flavours.

Flavours are often cited as the number one reason for initiation of nicotine and tobacco products use.



Tobacco and nicotine industries use insidious strategies to make their harmful products appealing, especially to young people.

Manipulative product designs, attractive flavours, and glamourized marketing create a false sense of security and evoke desirability. **We need to break the illusion.**

Nicotine and tobacco products are highly addictive and designed to sustain use, trapping users in a cycle of dependence. Additives mask the harshness of tobacco, making it easier to start and harder to quit. **No more 'candy coating'.**

Removing the appeal of these products through stricter regulations is essential to protecting current and future generations from harm. **Don't let the tobacco and nicotine industries trick people with their playbook.**

**Let's stand together and make it crystal clear: No more tricks, no more traps.**

Source: who.int

# News from around the world



Anne Bergen,  
WWCTU  
Organization  
Secretary



My nine years as Organization Secretary for World WCTU will come to an end at the Convention in Chicago in August. In recent years I have enjoyed being able to share the work of WWCTU in various countries through this part of the World Bulletin so, in what may be my last article, I am going to share some of the encouraging developments that are taking place in my home country, **Australia**, with thanks to our National President, Mrs Joy Butler.



Joy asked in our recent White Ribbon Signal, "Are you maintaining a strong emphasis on providing information and literature about the SAD (smoking alcohol drugs) poisons wherever you can? I sincerely hope so and we are endeavouring to provide you with easy material to use for this purpose.

These new brochures are now available to download and print from our website:  
<https://www.wctu.org.au>

The first one is entitled - WCTU Australia and gives an overview of our history and what we do. The Vaping brochure shows what it is and the dangers - it is attractive with good illustrations. The WCTU South Pacific Island brochure is useful for the Pacific Islands. A few hundred have already gone to Samoa and Papua New Guinea and some to Vanuatu and Tonga. A fourth brochure is prepared as we write this, entitled Alcohol and Family.



The WCTU Tea Rooms in Adelaide are providing an excellent and attractive space for meeting, for visitors to enjoy a cuppa with scones and for special events. Membership grows by this means. Karen Edwards, the President of South Australia WCTU, works closely with Sharon Bird in the Northern Territory and reports that Sharon has been travelling to remote Roadhouses where most have agreed to accept WCTU literature. At Aileron, 130 km north of Alice Springs, new owners will no longer be serving alcohol and cigarettes.

# Guatemala

In **Guatemala**, Dr. Dora and Emy de Barrientos, World Youth Department Director, are still working very hard addressing serious issues like violence and addiction. They are doing wonderful work among the poor and disadvantaged people through Fundacion Debora. ❤️ Here are photos of some of this work...



# Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

## Overview

Fetal alcohol syndrome is a condition in a child that results from alcohol exposure during the mother's pregnancy. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause the child to have disabilities related to behavior, learning and thinking, and physical development. The symptoms of fetal alcohol syndrome vary from child to child but are lifelong.

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Fetal alcohol syndrome is on the severe end of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). FASD is a range of conditions in the child caused by the mother drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

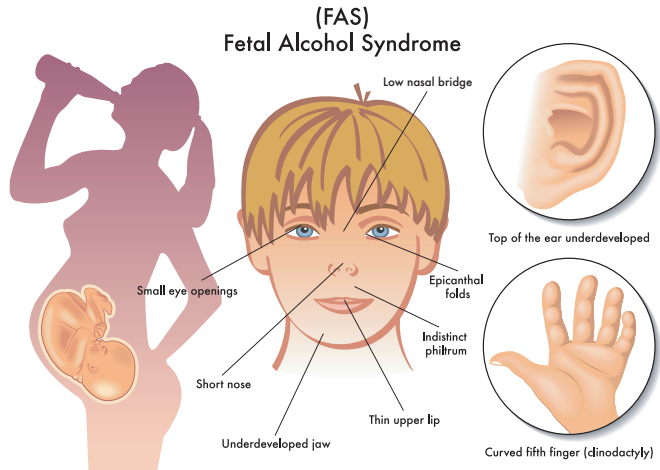
There is no amount of alcohol that's known to be safe to drink during pregnancy. If you drink during pregnancy, you place your baby at risk of fetal alcohol syndrome.

If you suspect your child has fetal alcohol syndrome, talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional as soon as possible. Early diagnosis and treatment may help lessen some issues.

## Symptoms

The severity of fetal alcohol syndrome symptoms varies. Some children have far greater problems than others do. Symptoms of fetal alcohol syndrome may include any mix of issues with how the body develops; thinking, learning and behavior; and functioning and coping in daily life.

**Prepare for Prof. Sarah Oh's  
speech at the World Convention  
"Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Dis-  
orders: The Most Preventable  
Birth Defect in the World"**



## Physical development issues

How the body develops may include:

- Facial features that are typical of fetal alcohol syndrome. These may include small eyes, a very thin upper lip, a flat nose bridge, and a smooth skin surface between the nose and upper lip.
- Slow physical growth before and after birth.
- Delayed development, including taking longer to reach milestones, such as sitting, talking and walking.
- Vision or hearing problems.
- Smaller than average head and brain size.
- Changes with how the heart, kidneys and bones develop.
- Poor coordination or balance.
- Being jittery or hyperactive.

## Learning and thinking issues

Learning and thinking may include:

- Intellectual disability and learning disorders, including trouble with memory, learning new things, focusing and thinking.
- Not understanding the results of choices made.
- Poor judgment skills, such as having a hard time thinking through issues, problem-solving, reasoning and making decisions that affect everyday life.
- Short attention span that affects staying with a task and finishing.
- Poor concept of time, that impacts following schedules, knowing what time to leave in order to arrive on time and understanding how long a task will take.
- Trouble with organizing and planning or working toward a goal, including trouble understanding and following directions.

## Social and behavioral issues

Functioning in everyday life, coping and interacting with others may include:

Challenges in school with attendance, learning, behavior and interacting with others.

Trouble getting along with others, including struggling with communication and social skills.

Trouble adapting to change or switching from one task to another.

Issues with behavior and with controlling emotions and actions.

Problems managing life skills, such as telling time, self care, managing money and staying safe.

Being easily influenced by others or taken advantage of.

Quickly changing moods.

When to see a doctor

If you are pregnant and can't stop drinking alcohol, ask your obstetrician, primary care doctor or other healthcare professional for help. You also may choose to talk to a mental health professional. A social worker can direct you to community programs that offer help, for example, Alcoholics Anonymous.

# 42. WORLD WCTU CONVENTION PROGRAM

VENUE: Downtown by Hilton Hotel, Stokie, Chicago, Il. USA  
THEME: ***"Fulfilling our Mission"*** Song: ***"You Raise Me Up"***  
TIME: 19-23 August, 2025

## Arrival 19 August:

Registration 14:00 (boxed lunch on arrival)  
Official Board meeting 16.00 and rehearsal with flags

## Meals every day:

Breakfast 07:00  
Lunch 12:00 - 14.00 (after noontide prayer)  
Dinner 17:30



## 19:00 World Convention Opening:

**Procession National Flags:** Music: ***"Land of hope and glory"***

**Announcer:** 2 Vice President presiding – Jung Joo Kim (Kor)

**Welcome:** Merry Lee Powell, National WCTU President, USA Pledge of Allegiance,  
National anthem "Star Spangled Banner"

**Response:** Marjut Ropo-Lyytikainen, National WCTU President, Finland

## CRUSADE PSALM 146:

Recording Secretary: Kathleen Johnson (USA) and 4 V.P. Sheela Lall (India)

**Crusade Hymn** "Give To The Winds" Words on Screen

**Greetings by dignitaries** Music: *Great is thy faithfulness*

**Keynote address:** Prof. Bertha K. Madras (USA)

**"One phrase I dread hearing and have heard all too often is "if only I had known.""**

**"Prevention: the shield against eroding drug policies"**

## "Amazing Grace":

1.English, 2.Korean 3.Norwegian and 4.Indian 5., 6. "Amen" and "Hallelujah"

**World President's speech,** Margaret Østenstad

**"Let your light shine to preserve the past and lighten the future"**

Music: Suzanne and Cleve Curry "

Aaronic Benediction Pastor Irja Eskerlinen (FIN)

**Reception hosted by NWCTU**

## Wednesday morning 20 August

08:30 Devotional thought for the day - PHILIPPINES

09:00 Roll Call, Minutes – Constitution, Code of Ethics

09:45 **State of the Organization Address:**

Karen Edwards for Anne Bergen, World Organization Secretary (Aus)

10:00 Country Report - Australia

10:15 Break

10:30 Prof. Bertha K. Madras (USA) **"What are the most effective ways of promoting prevention?" Strengthening families must be a priority!**

11:30 Fieldwork Report: Africa and Oceania – Joy Butler (NZ)

Fieldwork Report: Asia – Brenda Suh (NZ/Kor)

### Wednesday afternoon

- 14:00 Memorial Service  
14:30 Speaker: Joy Marie Butler, **"End the violence now!"**  
15:30 Break  
Fieldwork Report: Korean Missionaries,  
Dr. Jung Joo Kim (Kor) + KWCTU 100 year celebration

### Wednesday evening:

- 19:00 Speaker: Professor Sarah Oh:  
**"Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: The Most Preventable Birth Defect in the World"**  
20:00 Youth Department Report: Hanna Oh (KOR) and Emy de Barrientos (GUA)  
Children – Vandna Charan (India)

### Thursday morning: 21 August

- 08:30 Devotional thought for the day: KOREA  
09:00 Minutes  
09:15 World Department Directors v/Mentor Dr. Sheela Lall (India)  
• Home Protection Department – Mari Laine (Finland)  
• Social Department – Rhona Theodor (Aus)  
• Education Department – Sarah Oh (Korea)  
• Christian Outreach Department – Bhavana Arthur (India)  
10:15 Break:  
10:30 Country Reports - Philippines, Cambodia, Japan, Ghana,  
New Zealand

### Thursday afternoon

- 14:00 **Host country: Tour of NWCTU Evanston Campus**  
including **"Rest Cottage" - Frances Willard's beloved home**



### Thursday evening

- Host country Report - USA and  
**150 Years of "Organized Mother's Love" / Kathleen E. Johnson**  
Presented by Dr. Joni Johnson Gray and Kathleen E. Johnson  
**REFLECTIONS – WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY?**

### Friday morning, 22 August

- 08:30 Devotional thought for the day - INDIA  
09:00 Minutes  
09:30 Business session: VOTE RESOLUTIONS SPECIAL AWARDS ELECTION  
10:15 Break  
10:30 Country Reports - India, Guatemala, Finland, Canada, Norway

### Friday afternoon

- 14:00 Installation Service for World Officers and World Department Directors  
Break  
16:00 Post Convention Official Board meeting  
17:30 World Convention Banquet

### Friday evening

- 19:30 Prayer and praise meeting Greetings and goodbyes, reflections

### Saturday, 23 August CONVENTION: Closing remarks

Breakfast and departures

# World Convention – Domestic violence

Domestic violence is violence that occurs in a domestic setting, such as in a marriage or cohabitation. In a broader sense, abuse including nonphysical abuse in such settings is called domestic abuse. The term "domestic violence" is often used as a synonym for "intimate partner violence", which is committed by one of the people in an intimate relationship against the other, and can take place in relationships or between former spouses or partners. In a broader sense, the term can also refer to violence against one's family members; such as children, siblings or parents.



Forms of domestic abuse include physical, verbal, emotional, financial, religious, reproductive and sexual. It can range from subtle, coercive forms to marital rape and other violent physical abuse, such as choking, beating, female genital mutilation, and acid throwing that may result in disfigurement or death, and includes the use of technology to harass, control, monitor, stalk or hack. Domestic murder includes stoning, bride burning, honor killing, and dowry death, which sometimes involves non-cohabitating family members. In 2015, the United Kingdom's Home Office widened the definition of domestic violence to include coercive control.

**Convention speaker:**  
**Joy Marie Butler,**  
**«End the violence now!»**





Worldwide, the victims of domestic violence are overwhelmingly women, and women tend to experience more severe forms of violence. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates one in three of all women are subject to domestic violence at some point in their life. In some countries, domestic violence may be seen as justified or legally permitted, particularly in cases of actual or suspected infidelity on the part of the woman. Research has established that there exists a direct and significant correlation between a country's level of gender inequality and rates of domestic violence, where countries with less gender equality experience higher rates of domestic violence. Domestic violence is among the most underreported crimes worldwide for both men and women.

Domestic violence often occurs when the abuser believes that they are entitled to it, or that it is acceptable, justified, or unlikely to be reported. It may produce an intergenerational cycle of violence in children and other family members, who may feel that such violence is acceptable or condoned. Many people do not recognize themselves as abusers or victims, because they may consider their experiences as family conflicts that had gotten out of control. Awareness, perception, definition and documentation of domestic violence differs widely from country to country. Additionally, domestic violence often happens in the context of forced or child marriages.

In abusive relationships, there may be a cycle of abuse during which tensions rise and an act of violence is committed, followed by a period of reconciliation and calm. The victims may be trapped in domestically violent situations through isolation, power and control, traumatic bonding to the abuser, cultural acceptance, lack of financial resources, fear, and shame, or to protect children. As a result of abuse, victims may experience physical disabilities, dysregulated aggression, chronic health problems, mental illness, limited finances, and a poor ability to create healthy relationships. Victims may experience severe psychological disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Children who live in a household with violence often show psychological problems from an early age, such as avoidance, hyper vigilance to threats and dysregulated aggression, which may contribute to vicarious traumatization.

# ***USA Welcomes You!***

Members of the NWCTU in the USA are looking forward to entertaining our white ribbon sisters from around the world. We are praying for a wonderful time of looking back, understanding where we are presently and gaining a new vision of where we are going as the WWCTU.

We are in prayer for our dear sisters in India and asking our God to intervene on their behalf.

To alleviate as much confusion as possible in getting to the venue, on arrival at Chicago O'Hare (ORD) airport there are many taxis waiting outside Baggage Claim that will deliver you to the hotel. Simply have the name and address of the venue ready for the driver. The cost of taxis have been generally less expensive than Uber or Lyft. Be prepared to pay \$40-\$50 American dollars. Credit cards are acceptable.

**May God grant you safe travels!**



**Hope to see you in Chicago, IL – 19-23 August 2025**