



WOMEN IN  
CHURCH AND  
SOCIETY  
THE LUTHERAN  
WORLD FEDERATION

From the LWF Institutional Memory

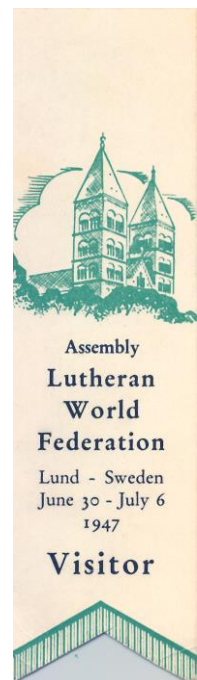
## Women on the Move – Her Story:



*Indian delegation to Lund, 1947; Ms John on the right. LWF Photo Archives*

**Name:** Hemalatha John  
**Country of origin:** India  
**Date of birth:** xxx  
**Date of death:** xxx  
**Church:** The Federation of the Lutheran Churches in India  
**Period of mandate:** first youth woman from India at the LWF first Assembly in Lund

**Short biography:** Ms John was sent as a visitor to the first LWF Assembly in Lund, after having attended a conference in Oslo where she was a delegate. In June 1947, she left Bombay by boat together with other Indian delegates to arrive in Sweden, July 1947. On the Lund' Young People's meeting agenda, which took place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July 1947, led by pastor Ingemar Lindstam from Sweden, the list of the speakers states: Miss Vivian Wickey, Lutheran Student work, USA; Pastor Lic. Hans W. Gensichen, Church of Hanover, Germany; Pastor Bela Lesko, Hungary; Pastor Aubrey Bowen, Ev. Lutheran Church, British Guiana, Pastor Dr Hans Herbert Kramm, England, Pastor Svend Borregaard, Denmark and Miss Hemlatha John, Professor of Biology, The Andhra Christian College, Guntur, India. She is then reported in American newspaper to have addressed the Saint Paul Lutheran seminary, travelling by boat to the USA.



How did it felt to be the first youth woman visitor from India to the first Lund LWF Assembly? We do not have much information about Ms John in the records of the Lund LWF Assembly but one picture bear witness of her very attentive presence on the first row of Section Two of the Lund Assembly which theme was: *Performing Her mission in a Devasted World*.

Did the prophetic presence of a young Indian woman in 1947 paved the way to the election of an Indian woman as LWF vice-president, a couple of decades later? In 1957, at the Minneapolis LWF Assembly, Miss John was followed by another Indian woman, this time not a visitor but a delegate: Miss Teli Rajeswari appointed by the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church. At that time in history there were 7 member churches in India and 12 spaces for the Assembly which is one reason why women could be appointed as delegate.



*Page 12 of Proceedings of the Lutheran World Federation Assembly, Lund Sweden, 30 June – 6 July 1947, Ms John in the middle, on her right Dr P'eng Fu from China.*