



Connections

Mennonite Women Canada encourages women to:

- nurture their life in Christ
- acknowledge and share their gifts
- hear and support each other
- serve and minister across the street and around the world



As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. 1 Peter 4:10

Say Hello to our NEW President and Secretary/Treasurer

Meet Shirley Stauffer Redekop...

Shirley is a wife, mom, grandma, sister, aunt and a follower of Jesus. She lived in Floradale & Elmira, Ontario for 25 years, but grew up in Pennsylvania.

Shirley spent a year in Europe with the Internenno Program, where she met her future Canadian husband, Fred. Six weeks after they were married (1982), they left for Thailand to work with South East Asian Refugees under MCC where their first son was born.

Shirley has worked as a Youth Pastor, Director of Christian Services Ministries for MC Canada and has been working as a Family Outreach Worker for 14 years. In her 'spare time' she has been coordinator of WMCEC for 6 years. Since August 2016 she and her husband have been in a state of transition as his work as the Senior Pastor at Floradale Mennonite Church ended after 25 years of service.

The joy of Shirley's life is their 4 adult children (3 sons and 1 daughter). They also have a wonderful daughter-in-law and 2 super cute grandsons. Shirley enjoys reading, movies, travel, and riding her motorcvcle.



Meet Elsie Hannah Ruth Rempel...

Elsie has had thee careers so far. She was a homemaker with many volunteer activities until she was 37 years of age. Then she was a teacher for 13 years at Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary and Middle School.

At the age of 50, she started her Employment with Mennonite Church Canada in Faith Formation Ministries.

In November 2015, a budget shortfall initiated her move into early retirement. Now, at the age of 64, she finds varied ways of continuing to be involved in Faith Formation and community outreach. These include teaching conversational English to immigrants, teaching Sunday school, serving as caregiver in a MOM's group and writing for various Mennonite magazines.

Elsie is married to Peter H. Rempel since 1971 and they have 3 adult children who have blessed them with 4 grandchildren, between the ages of 6 and 17.

For more information please visit our website at:

<http://women.mennonitechurch.ca/>



Current Executive

Left to right...

Back row

Kate Janzen (AB); Waltrude Gortzen (BC)
Mel Harms (SK); Elsie Wiebe (MB)

Front row

Phyllis Ramer (ON)
Shirley Redekop (ON) – MW Canada President
Elsie Rempel (MB) – Secretary/Treasurer

Finding a New Way Forward – Welcomes & Farewells

Change will happen! It's how we process the change that makes the difference. Change happened last July, when **Liz Koop** stepped back from leading Mennonite Women Canada after 5 years as President. Liz has a passion for MW Canada, and a desire to see a new way forward for the women of our Mennonite Church.

When I took on the position as President, I was concerned I wouldn't be able to devote the time needed to lead this ministry. Liz was quick to offer full support, and update the paper and computer files. She even offered to fill in as treasurer if we could find a secretary. Liz has been an exceptional asset to the Executive. She went over and above to share her skills, especially making the beautiful quilt/banner for the Mennonite World Conference. I recognize Liz's hard (and fun) work for MW Canada, and give thanks for her spirit of service and care she shared with the Church. Thanks be to God!



God is journeying with us. I know this because as things change for MW Canada, new life grows. We have Women Reps from every area church coming to our annual Executive meetings. I think it's because they are so much fun. We have so many laughs as we connect doing our work.

I know this because we were able to find a Secretary/Treasurer who took on the position even though she had not been a part of any woman's group at her church. We gratefully welcome Elsie Rempel to the Executive. (Read her story in the March 13th edition of Canadian Mennonite). We also give a huge thank you to **Lois Mierau** who did an exceptional job with our finances, taking minutes and putting this all together in our Annual Report Book for 5 years. We are so appreciative of her dedication and commitment to this task.



I know this because we welcomed a young busy mom to our executive from Warman, Saskatchewan. She is passionate in her faith, her family, and the church. We welcome **Mel Harms** to our Executive.

I know this because when we met together as an Executive this March, we began with some lament but as the meetings progressed, a new way began opening for us. It's still a bit foggy, but we ask for your prayers as we connect with the Transitional Team and other leaders to find a way that we can continue meeting as an executive, continue to share our resources to women here in Canada, and those around the world, and work closely and support the area church and congregational women's groups. The need is great, and we have been blessed.

Women want to meet together. All of you are MW Canada because you are part of the Mennonite Church. I met a young Mennonite woman pastor recently. She heard I was now President, and said she thinks MW Canada is irrelevant because women's groups are outdated. As we continued our discussion she proceeded to tell me how important her group of young Mennonite Women Pastors was to her, and the connection they had with each other.

God is journeying with us, showing us a new way forward. JOURNEY ON!

Blessings... **Shirley Redekop**



Mennonite Women Canada ... where friends from opposite ends of the country can meet again! ☺

On the left: **Dorothy Hamm**
from Vineland, ON

On the right: **Eleonore Neufeld**
from Abbotsford, BC

A Place to Belong!
A Place to Connect!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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- **Spiritual Growth Assistance Fund (SGAF)**
- **Pennies and Prayer Legacy Fund (PPLF)**
- **International Ministries (Thailand)**
- **Short Term Ministries**
- **Publication and Communication**

NOTE: For full length articles and colour photos with captions please see our 'Stories' section on our website at <http://women.mennonitechurch.ca/stories> and on our blog at <http://mennowomencanada.blogspot.ca>

From Around the Country



As **Women of Mennonite Church EASTERN Canada** prepares for this year's Spring Enrichment Day I came across something I, *Phyllis Ramer*, had written in 2012 when I was chair of the WMCEC event hosting team at my home church, Zurich Mennonite Church, ON (ZMC). After having some renovating done at the church we experienced more than a little evidence of mice infesting our building.



One evening a couple months before our event I took my grandson to the church for his music lesson. As I watched and listened to their duet, I screamed, causing both teacher and student to stop playing with their hands mid air. I was horrified to see not one, but several mice running around their feet, and cavorting over their music book bags. *This can't be!* I've invited hundreds of women into this building! Gratefully, with a big push from fellow musophobics, the problem was eradicated.

The Church Mouse Report

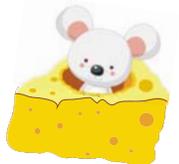
Humourist report on a serious situation.



Unbeknownst to the congregation and staff of ZMC, the South Western Ontario Mouse Association held their Annual Mouse Conference on the premises of ZMC. As a result of the warm hospitality and wonderful accommodations many of the attendees decided to defect and not only "go forth and multiply" but invited friends and family to immigrate also. The council of ZMC, at the urgent request of at least one musophobic member decided the "enough is MORE than enough" and it was time to "STOP cooking with cheese" or any other food stuff that was mouse attractive. Professional troupes were brought in to shore up the efforts of the battle weary custodians.

Ongoing surveillance was put in place and the congregation was asked to use due diligence in regard to food substances in the premises and any sightings should be reported to the maintenance committee ASAP!

Special thanks to the VBS supporters for taking on the clean up of the "convention centre" and to many others who helped in the mouse eviction. (🐭 Noun 1. **musophobia** – a morbid fear of mice)



Mennonite Women MANITOBA

Better together, across the street and around the world. **Mennonite Women MANITOBA Working Group**, consisting of 6 women, has been on a learning tour trying to discover how to develop a network that will support and connect women of all generations across the province. We started the year off by discerning direction and creating a roadmap with a timeline.

We are in the process of formulating an organizational structure that would ideally include women from across the province's five cluster groups, namely, Eastern, Central, Southern, Winnipeg and west/North. The members of this core group would develop communication networks within their cluster providing a communication route between the core group and congregations and congregations and core group. Our goal is to build relationships and networks of support, affirmations, discernment, witness, service and celebration.

With this report I will be completing my term as the Manitoba Rep. with Mennonite Women Canada.

Submitted by
Elsie Wiebe



In
Loving Memory
of

Marie Rehsler nee Ewert (Schmidt)

February 5, 1937 – February 10, 2017



Marie was always happiest with her house full of people and enjoyed serving in her church and surrounding community. She had a remarkable zest for life and a sincere interest in everyone she met.

Marie also served as President of BC Women in Mission (1996-2000) with dedication and energy and found it extremely rewarding.

She faithfully attended all **MCBC Women's Ministry** events and leaves a big empty space in our midst. Rest in Peace, dear Friend!

With all our respect and love,
from all the women of
MCBC Women's Ministry.

Waltrude Gortzen



Opportunities for Giving

SPRITUAL GROWTH ASSISTANCE FUND



I am very grateful to Mennonite Women Canada and their support as I worked through my studies at Conrad Grebel. Your financial assistance allowed me to continue my various volunteer roles and showed me the excellent body of women that Mennonite Women Canada consists of. Thank You!

← **Danielle Fillion Raimbault** (CGUC)

I thank you for your financial support. I thank you for your moral and spiritual support. Thank you for doing all of the work you do, for showing up at the meetings because that is sometimes super hard. But at the meetings you are listening to each other and to the Passion of Christ, the Way. May God bless you as you seek to honour Christ in your ministry as Mennonite Women Canada! Thank You! **Marlene Wiebe** (CMU) →



Our PPLF Recipients



Darnell & Christina Barkman (Philippines)



Nathan & Taryn Dirks (Botswana)

PPLF Donations accepted with our thanks from the following groups:

- The Goodwill Club of Coaldale Mennonite Church, AB
- Helping Hands, Calgary, AB
- First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, AB
- Lethbridge Women's Fellowship, AB
- Springridge Mennonite Church, AB
- Koinonia Group, North Star, SK (Jan 2017)
- MC Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan WiM
- Tiefengrund WiM, SK
- Zion, WiM, SK
- Zoar Mission Circle, SK



Connect with our International Ministry Fund recipients, too!

Tom & Christine Poovong Long Term Workers in Thailand
Home Congregation:
 Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary, Alberta
 Tom and Christine's Prayer Letters are posted on our web page at <http://women.mennonitechurch.ca/poovong>

Please remember them in your prayers!



AREA EVENTS

April 22 - WMCEC Spring Enrichment Day at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, St. Jacobs, ON
 Speaker: **Carol Penner** - Theme: "WOMEN TALK - Body & Soul"

April 29 - Mennonite Women Manitoba Enrichment Day at Bethel Mennonite Church - Speaker: **Laura Funk**
 Theme: "Women Encountering Jesus"

May 6 - MCBC Women's Ministry Inspirational Day at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, BC
 Speaker: **Marlene Kropf** - Theme: "Who Am I Now? Trusting God in Life's Transitions" --- Lamentations 3:22-24

June 9 - 11 - MW Alberta Spring Retreat at Sunnyside Retreat Centre, Sylvan Lake, AB - Speaker: **Sara Wenger Shenk**
 Theme: "WISDOM 2017: Our Legacy"

October 13 - 15 - MCBC Women's Ministry Retreat Weekend at Camp Squeah, Hope, BC - Speaker: **Margo Hoffmann** and a Special Workshop with "Mennonite Girls Can Cook"
 Theme: "COURAGE - to boldly go" Philippians 4:13

November 3 - 5 - Saskatchewan Women's Ministry Retreat Weekend at Shekinah Retreat Centre in Waldheim, SK.
 More information to come soon!

2017 Bible Study Guide

"LIVE YOUR CALL"

by **Anna Liechty Sawatzky**

Is this what my life was meant to be?

Caught up in the everyday realities of life? Are you left wondering how you fit into God's larger mission? **Live Your Call** empowers and motivates women to name and share their gifts as they serve God. This twelve-session Bible study guides women toward the Spirit's gentle nudging or firm push on their lives so that they can clarify and participate in God's mission.

Author **Anna Liechty Sawatzky** draws deeply from stories in the Gospels, both to affirm and challenge women to live out their God-given calling and to empower them to share the good news with others.

- The Guide that gets everyone into their Bibles.
- Excellent for individual study, groups, and retreat settings.
- Sessions nurture faith in new and active ways.
- Commissioned by Mennonite Women Canada and Mennonite Women USA.
- Available 6/1/2017 - - - Cost: **\$10.00 per book** ... if ordered through your Provincial Women's Rep.

