



NEWSLETTER

RE-IMAGININGS

Changes are taking place outside my window as I prepare this Newsletter. Bright sunlight and a shower have erased the dreags of winter's last days. There is a smell of earth warming, buds on trees are swelling, and bird songs are in abundance. Each year I am surprised by this re-creation and the re-imagination of life in nature. Yet, through these changes we also have confidence that God is at work.

In like fashion, Canadian Women in Mission (CWM) is also experiencing changes. Two recent events prompt my words. Mennonite Women USA (MWUSA) has asked to be released from our joint publication, *Timbrel*. British Columbia Mennonite Women in Mission (BCMWM) decided to end their provincial organization. These events remind one of winter. But, they prepare the way for spring to re-create and re-imagine new forms with confidence in God's constancy.

RE-IMAGINING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

The decision by BCMWM to end their organization was not taken lightly. But, when they found it difficult to replace provincial leadership, it seemed that the current structure of CWM was not working for them. BC women will continue to organize their well-attended Retreats, care for one another on many levels, support scholarships for women, and participate in many ways in support of the mission of the Church.

Will a new form of organization emerge out of this? We don't know, but we do know this is an opportunity to re-create and re-imagine how we work/ worship together as women across Canada.



CWM Executive: (l-r) Erna Neufeldt, Evelyn Buhr, Ruth Jantzi, Betty-Anne Hildebrand, Audrey Mierau Bechtel, Veronica Thiessen, Shirley Redekop

RE-IMAGINING HOW WE GET THE MESSAGE OUT

Last fall MWUSA asked if they could be released from their agreement with us for publishing the magazine *Timbrel*. It has been difficult for the editor to produce 23% Canadian content for every issue, and Canadian subscriptions have been lower than expected. MW USA is looking at an opportunity to expand the magazine to target the US population. As an Executive, we agreed to their request and bless their venture.

This change gives an opportunity to re-imagine how we communicate our message and what our members do in pursuing our collective vision.

At our invitation MC Canada staff Dan Dyck, Communications Director, and Al Rempel, Resource Development, joined us for a discussion on communication at Executive meetings in March.

An important piece in the discussion was reviewing CWM's Mission Statement. It says "that we nurture our lives in Christ, study the Bible, utilize our gifts, hear each other, and engage in transforming through mission and service". This statement is our constancy, for it is based on the life and teachings of Jesus.
by Erna Neufeldt

SURPRISE FIND

Ruth Jantzi, Canadian Women in Mission Secretary/Treasurer, delivered a special package to the Mennonite Heritage Centre while in Winnipeg to attend Mennonite Church Canada Leadership Assembly (see picture, right).

While helping her mother prepare to move from the parental home, the family came upon a pair of leather boots worn by her father, the late Elmon Lichti, when he was in Conscientious Objector (CO) Camp in the 1940's. Conrad Stoesz, archivist at the Heritage Centre was thrilled to get the boots, since they have few artifacts related to the experience of COs. If there are artifacts in your family, Conrad would be interested in these rare items.



Please keep Anne Garber Kompaore and Cheryl Woelk in your prayers.

LOOKING AHEAD:

- **April 14:** Saskatchewan Women in Mission Enrichment Day. Please check with Audrey Mierau Bechtel for details.
- **May 5:** Manitoba Women in Mission Enrichment Day. Please check with Betty-Anne Hildebrand for details.
- **May 6:** British Columbia Mennonite Women in Mission Inspiration Day. Please check with Veronica Thiessen for details.
- **April 21:** Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada Enrichment Day. Please check with Shirley Redekop for details.
- **May 4-5:** Alberta Women in Mission Enrichment Days. Please check with Evelyn Buhr for details.
- **July 4:** CWM Annual Tea and Meeting, Abbotsford BC. Remember to register for this event through MC Canada Assembly Registration.

NEWS:

- Kira Friesen, Canadian Mennonite University student recently completed a practicum in Botswana. CWM supported Kira through the Service/Internship Assistance Program.
- Lois Siemens was installed as pastor of Superb Mennonite Church, Kerrobert, SK on Jan. 14. CWM supported Lois through Spiritual Growth Assistance Fund.
- We were able to donate \$4000 to assist with travel expenses for pastors to attend the International Mennonite Pastors Coming Together event May 25 – June 06 in Alberta.
- Native Ministries and Christian Education staff at MC Canada are collaborating to develop *Reaching Up – to God our Creator*, a 4-6 session curriculum for older children and adults. This project highlights the common ground between Aboriginal Spirituality and the Bible. Each session honours Christ as the fulfillment of Aboriginal “Scriptures” (sacred teachings), as well as Hebrew Scriptures. CWM was able to donate \$4000 to this project.
- The 2007 Bible Study Guide “Freely you have received, freely give – Women and the Stewardship of Gifts” by Susan Classen is in print. Every Women in Mission group will receive 1 free copy. Additional copies available at Faith & Life Press, Kitchener, ON.