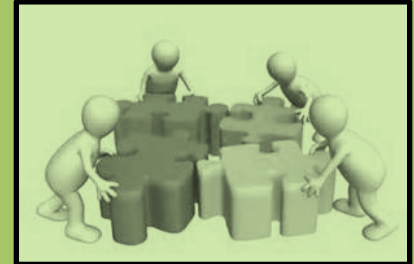




Connections

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

Greetings from the President

It's hard to believe I am into my 4th year as President. At our business meeting, which was held during Mennonite Church Canada's Assembly in Winnipeg on July 4, I was affirmed to continue as President for an additional 2-year term. Our Secretary-Treasurer, Lois Mierau, was also affirmed for another 2-year term. MW Canada's terms of office have changed from 3 years to 2 years since the delegate body of MC Canada now only meets biennially instead of annually. Your words of affirmation and encouragement continue to support all of us on the executive in our volunteer roles.

MW Canada's executive is made up of President, Secretary-Treasurer and a representative from each

of the 5 area churches: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Eastern Canada. We meet for 3 days in early March in Winnipeg during MC Canada's Spring Leadership Assembly and host an event during Assembly to which all women are invited.



This year's event used the Assembly theme "Wild Hope, faith for an unknown season" and was hosted by our Manitoba rep, Elsie Wiebe, and her group of local volunteers. While women enjoyed dessert and coffee, we held our short business meeting. This was followed by the highlight of our evening - the Faith and Life Women's Chorus and the sharing from three young women on the theme "Wild Hope". A detailed write-up about this event can be found on our blog. (...continued on next page)

2014-2015 Mennonite Women Canada Executive



Left to right: Elsie Wiebe (MB), Myrna Sawatzky (SK), Liz Koop (President), Lois Mierau (Secretary/Treasurer), Kate Janzen (AB), Phyllis Ramer (ON), Waltrude Gortzen (BC)

Greetings from the President (continued)

There are a number of ways that you can receive *Connections*. A printed version and/or an electronic version are sent to every Mennonite Church Canada congregation. Please ask your pastor or church administrator to make copies for the women in your congregation. You can also find it on our web page and blog. Please see our connecting links below.

In each issue of our newsletter we include an update of some of our projects as well as interviews or profiles of women from across Canada. This is one way for us to learn about what other women are involved in, to hear of their joys and challenges, and to broaden our own perspectives.

In this issue we have asked our executive members to share something about themselves and it is our hope that you will realize that we are just ordinary women who have a passion for women's ministry locally, provincially and nationally. Do you, or does someone you know, share this passion? Perhaps you are being nudged by the Spirit to become more involved in this area of ministry? We'd love to hear from you!

As Mennonite women across Canada let us encourage, hear, and support each other as we continue to serve and minister to those in our midst – across the street and around the world.

~Liz Koop~

Executive Profiles



Liz Koop, President of MW Canada, lives on a grape farm near St. Catharines, ON with her husband who is semi-retired. She has 2 adult married children and 6 grandchildren who all live in western Canada. Her involvement in women's ministry began in her home congregation (Vineland United Mennonite) spread to the provincial level in 2005 and finally to the national level in 2008. She says: *"I am amazed at the path that has brought me here and marvel at the blessings that I have experienced along the way. I treasure the new friendships and connections I have made across Canada through my work in women's ministry. Highlight of Assembly were..... "seeing how willingly women share their gifts and talents across the generations and work together to build God's kingdom"*.



Lois Mierau is MW Canada's Secretary-Treasurer and we value her organizational skills. She works closely with the administration staff of MC Canada and keeps the executive informed about our financial status. She and her husband, Gaylord, operate a farm near Langham, SK and she also works half time at the MCC SK office in Saskatoon as receptionist and doing data entry. She enjoys the outdoors---gardening, biking, going for walks, as well as reading and traveling. Her highlight from Assembly 2014*"the Faith and Life Women's Chorus concert and the three inspiring speakers, as well as the general Assembly worship sessions"*.



Phyllis Ramer, the newest addition to our executive, is the new Coordinator of Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (WMCEC) and lives in Zurich, ON. She is a wife, mother to 4, in-law to 2 and grandma to 7 who are currently in Grades 1,2,3,4,5,6, & 7. She has served in many areas of her home congregation, Zurich Mennonite Church, including women's ministry, worship leader and small group facilitator. She has also held positions in the areas of office administration, palliative care, retail and food services, as well as serving in various volunteer positions in the community. Her *"favourite part of Assembly was actually meeting the current executive, and the highlight was MW Canada Annual Meeting and the entertainment. Both the choir and the speakers/songwriter were truly inspirational...just what I needed."*

Executive Profiles



*"My name is **Kate Janzen** and I live on a ranch with my husband Bob. We attend Foothills Mennonite church in Calgary. I am a retired teacher and a "Grammy" to seven grandchildren. I am fortunate to be involved with the church on three levels. In my local congregation I help organize the women in an intergenerational group called WISK (Women Intergenerational Seniors to Kids). On the provincial level I help organize the Annual Spring Retreat at Sylvan Lake, AB for women across our province. Lastly on the national level I sit on Mennonite Church Canada's General Board and on the Mennonite Women Canada Executive."*



Myrna Sawatzky , a member of Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, is President of the Saskatchewan Women in Mission (SWM). She shares: *"I have two married children and five grandchildren 2-16 years of age. I took early retirement from my 20+ years as a palliative care nurse. However I was drawn back in to nursing again - this time very casually, in the long-term care facility where my mother lives. I have been very blessed and continue to be blessed through my nursing. I enjoy gardening, reading, travelling, and doing yoga and aqua motion. At Assembly 2014 I was most impressed by the plenary speakers. Their depth and insight at their young age moved me. I could see that the church is alive into the next generation. Thank you, God!"*



Elsie Wiebe, our Manitoba Rep, is a member of Morden Mennonite Church in Morden, MB. She is married to Walter and they have three children and four grandchildren. A retired nurse, she keeps busy with volunteer work for MCC, in her congregation, and in her community. Her interests include hiking, reading (part of a book club), and deep theological discussions. She shared the following *"highlights from Assembly 2014.....the visuals that surrounded the stage in the main meeting room..... the participation and input from the younger generation.....meeting old friends and making new ones.....the round table discussions. A huge highlight was the MW Canada event Friday night. A big 'thank you' to Sandy Hung, Anne Heinrichs, Lora Braun and the Faith and Life Women's Chorus who addressed the theme, "Wild Hope: faith for an unknown season", so well."*



Waltrude Gortzen: *"I was born and raised in Brazil and came to Canada with my parents and siblings in 1968. I found a spiritual home at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver and was baptized and married there in 1973. Together with my husband we raised our 2 children in that community and served the church as best we could until December 2007 when we moved to Abbotsford, BC in order to be closer to our aging parents. My mother is now the only parent we still have. We love spending time with our family and the 5 fabulous grandchildren the Lord has blessed us with. In Abbotsford, Emmanuel Mennonite Church welcomed us and has become our new home. In the spring of 2008 I was asked to become the BC Rep for MW Canada's Task Force and since then I have been serving the women of BC and representing them on the Executive of MW Canada. I enjoy photography, genealogy, traveling, crafts, my computer, some occasional writing, cooking, baking and just recently have been introduced to quilting. ☺ The Lord has been good to me and my family and I am grateful."*

Please connect with us online.

Website www.mennonitechurch.ca/mwc/

Blog www.mennowomencanada.blogspot.ca

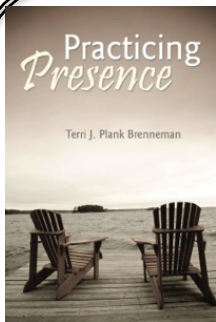
Facebook www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2009



Opportunities for Giving

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

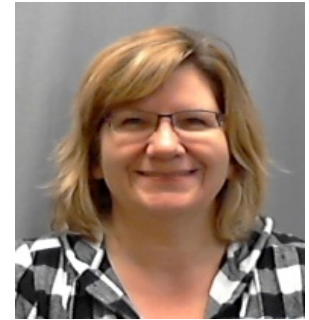
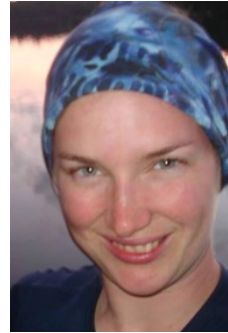
For more information please visit our donate pages:
<https://donate.mennonitechurch.ca/mennonite-women>



Practicing Presence 2014 Bible Study Guide

We send out a complementary copy to each church. Please contact us if you would like to be on the mailing list! To order additional copies contact Craig Anderson at 1-800-631-6535 or craiga@mennomedia.org. Online at www.mennomedia.org or www.resources.mennonitechurch.ca/

OUR 2014 SGAF RECIPIENTS



Jessica Reesor Rempel (left) from Kitchener, ON is studying at Emmanuel College/Toronto School of Theology. **Kirsten Schroeder** (right) from Winnipeg, MB is taking courses at Providence Theological Seminary, Otterbourne, MB.

Thank you for recent donations to PPLF!

- ~ **Saskatchewan Women in Mission**
- ~ **Alberta Women in Mission**
- ~ **Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada**
- ~ **MCBC Women's Ministry**
- ~ **In Honour of Gertrude Nickel** celebrating her 80th birthday, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, BC

PPLF RECIPIENTS



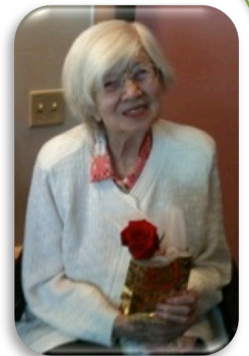
Darnell & Christina Barkman (Philippines)



Nathan & Taryn Dirks (Botswana)



~ **In Memory of Melita Friesen**, First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, AB. Melitta was a very gracious woman, whose love and joy during her whole life ran very deep. Her contributions to family, church, music and friends were precious. She was a dedicated member of Women in Mission in both Manitoba and Alberta for over 60 years. In memory of that long membership, the Women in Mission group of First Mennonite Church, Edmonton made a donation to the Pennies and Prayer Legacy Fund. We hope that the support for this fund will continue the story of Melitta's life. From a submission by the family. Please visit our blog to read the full memorial.



Area Events

- October 3,4 ~ Sister Care Seminar** sponsored by **WMCEC** in Cambridge Ontario. Facilitators: Rhoda Keener, Carolyn Heggen
- October 17,18 ~ SWM Annual Fall Women's Retreat.** Theme: Women's Voices from the Global Church
- October 17-19 ~ MCBC Women's Ministry Retreat.** Theme: Unwrap your Gifts! Speaker: April Yamasaki
- April 18 ~ WMCEC Spring Enrichment Day** at Listowel Mennonite Church
- May 22-24 ~ Alberta WM Spring Retreat**
- July 21-26 ~ Mennonite World Conference** in Harrisburg, PA

***Posters/links for these events can be found on our website and blog and write-ups will be posted on our blog.

CONTACT INFORMATION

President: Liz Koop
 905-562-5920
 Email: presmwcanada@mennonitechurch.ca

Secretary-Treasurer: Lois Mierau
 Phone: 306-283-4657
 Email: glmierau@yourlink.ca

Mennonite Church Canada
 600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
 Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4