

Synodical of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda

Women's Missionary Society

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

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Dear Presbyterian Presidents and WMS Groups:

I wanted to share with your presbyterial and groups some decisions following our Annual Synodical meeting in April and WMS Council in May 2015. Some of these decisions are the results of your sharing with us after I sent the letter to you in March.

CNOB Synodical at St. Andrew's Scarborough on April 17-18 was a great success. Our theme was "**Abundant Living- Abundance for All.**" Our speaker, the Rev. Kristine O'Brien, challenged us in our approach to mission outreach today, especially in our own backyard. The emphasis was that we need to go out to the people and not expect them to come to us. She shared many examples with us – a summer BBQ in a low-income area; sharing produce with others in need; involving all ages and all groups.

Our times of worship and singing – joy and laughter – sharing and caring- were very uplifting. As we remembered the many faithful servants in WMS that passed away this past year we are thankful for the legacy they have left us. We installed the members of our Synodical Executive.

The discussion in our business sections was very open and appreciated. We will take many of your suggestions and ideas back to our executive to discuss further in order to improve our communication and effectiveness in the future. Our synodical representatives took your other suggestions to council to assist them in making the final decision in some of these important matters.

WMS Council met at Crieff Hills May 1-3 and had a wonderful time enjoying God's beauty, the sunshine and the peace and serenity of a place set apart. Our theme was "**Seize the Hope**". The speakers were very thought provoking and shared many of the concerns we have as women and as WMS for the various concerns in our world and right here in Canada.

Rev. Dr. Pam McCarroll spoke on her book on hope and working with people in palliative care. **Biblical Hope**- in Hebrew words connect hope and waiting: Hoping – waiting experience. Hoping waiting is related to looking closely, paying close attention and inspecting. Hoping-waiting emphasized patience, and perseverance. Hoping –waiting longs for fulfillment.

Here again the Rev. Kristine O'Brien was the Bible Study Leader on Hebrews 6:13-20. She related what she had been asked recently "Why women like her did not come to WMS?" We were asked to think "What is your biggest anxiety in the church or specifically the WMS?" We have oral and written traditions. God promises to multiply. One question...where could you look for "blessings and multiplying?" We are being called to let go of our traditions in order that God can bless us two hands full.

We had other speakers -Guy Smagghe and Jennifer Ramkissoon from PWS&D regarding the Mayan People in Guatemala and also about the tour to Guatemala in the coming months.

June Campbell spoke about “**human trafficking**” and some of the activities recently and how she continues to be involved in this ministry. Also, she updated us on Bill C-36 passed in government last year. Joy Smith, MP, has established a foundation that supports rescue work on human trafficking.

Rev. Deb Rapport, Director of the Arise Ministry, spoke and shared her ministry and stories related to working with individuals in the sex trade. Out of that comes the Arise Ministry which reaches out and offers support to those in the sex trade. There is a lot of violence in the sex trade, sexual assaults, etc. They offer a self - defense class; case management which is done one-to-one. This is a ministry of hope.

Our **business sessions** involved many important decisions for our WMS.

Results of the Recommendations to Council:

1. At this time **we will not pursue the PCW as an umbrella organization**
2. That we remain the **WMS with the PCW as an outreach ministry of the WMS** implementing the new ideas that were developed for the PCW
3. That the Women’s Gathering become an ongoing ministry of the WMS, to be held every three years.
4. The international project for “**Together We Can “ project for 2015-2017** be the **Mayan People of Guatemala** through PWS&D
5. That the Canadian project for “**Together We Can” project for 2015-2017 be the Arise Ministry of East Toronto Presbytery.**
6. That the following be the **representation on Council Executive:**
B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario – one representative each
Quebec and Eastern Ontario - 1 (plus synodical president)
CNOB 3 (plus synodical president)
SWO 4 (plus synodical president)
Total: 15 on Council Executive (includes members without portfolio and synodical presidents)
7. That the following be the **representation to Council:**
BC - one presbyterial- one for closed presbyterials = two delegates
Alberta – two presbyterials = two delegates
Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario – one for closed presbyterials = one delegate
Quebec and Eastern Ontario – three presbyterials + one for closed presbyterials = four delegates
CNOB – eight presbyterials + one for closed presbyterials = nine delegates
SWO – nine presbyterials = nine delegates
8. That the WMS change its name from” Women’s Missionary Society” to “Women’s Mission Society” **was defeated. There will be NO NAME CHANGE!**

I am sure there will be more interesting articles forthcoming in our Glad Tidings but just wanted to reassure you of the decisions made at WMS Council.

If you have any further questions or suggestions and want to be in touch and share those with us please forward them to your presbyterial president and myself. We will bring them to our Synodical

Executive meeting taking place on Monday June 22nd. You are always welcome to join us. May God continue to bless each person and members of your group and presbyterial.

May we continue to carry out our WMS purpose in ways most appropriate and helpful to you, your church and your community.

Yours in faith and love,

Joy M Randall,
President CNOB