

CDC Mennonite Women

Hello, Central District Conference Women.

We had a wonderful Women's Retreat at Camp Friedenswald this year with our inspiring speaker Sibonokuhle Ncube, an AMBS student from Zimbabwe who attends Eighth Street Mennonite Church. The next Women's Retreat offered by Camp Friedenswald will be September 16-18, 2022. Mark your calendars!



At the retreat, the officers of Central District's Mennonite Women organization asked attendees if there was a perceived need for Mennonite Women to continue at the area conference level. At this point, the only task being done by the officers is to plan and lead a banquet for women at the Annual Meeting and distribute contributions sent in by congregational groups. We recognize that the shape of women's organizations has changed dramatically, that many congregations no longer have women's groups, and the extra level of a conference structure no longer serves the original purpose of empowering women. Many other area conferences have already disbanded their Mennonite Women structure.

Attendees at Women's Retreat agreed that Central District should disband its Mennonite Women group at the conference level. We have communicated that decision to the CDC office and Mennonite Women USA and have received their support.

Both Emma Hartman of Central District Conference and Cyneatha Millsaps of Mennonite Women USA have assured us that we are following proper guidelines for this decision. Cyneatha assures us that our decision is 'in line with many other groups across the church' and that 'MC USA has another structure for keeping women connected. 'She invites us each to consider being 'ambassadors' in that structure. See these sites for more information:

<https://mennonitewomenusa.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/mwusa>

Cyneatha asks us to remember that we are 'not done, just shifting.' That is a blessed reminder.

We encourage those CDC congregations who still have women's groups to continue their wonderful work. Please see recent reports of CDC Women in the Annual Meeting minutes to read about the variety of ways these groups are engaging in mission and fellowship. We also encourage these groups (and individuals) to continue to post their activities and reflections on the Central District Conference Mennonite Women Facebook group.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1384467135142745>

There will no longer be a women's banquet at the annual conference sessions, unless a local hosting group wants to plan one.

Now that the CDC Mennonite Women is dissolving, congregational women's groups may give contributions to causes of their choice. We encourage you to continue support to Mennonite Women USA, Camp Friedenswald, and scholarships for women students at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary—the primary recipients of our recent giving.

The CDC Women's officers will allocate the remaining conference funds to groups such as those above and those suggested by Doug Luginbill:

- Emerging Communities of Faith Fund: Provides financial support to new and emerging communities of faith for training, program support, etc. This is a new fund.
- Missional Activities Fund: financial support to congregations that are working toward racial, ethnic and religious reconciliation.
- Leadership Development Fund: Provides financial resources to credentialed leaders for continuing education, especially around intercultural competency and anti-racism training.

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact one of the recent officers.

Thank you.

Greta Holt, current president (gholt1@me.com)

Janeen Bertsche Johnson, past president (jbjohnson@ambs.edu)

Barbara Gant, board member (gantbarbra@gmail.com)