

Central District Conference Mennonite Women 2017

As women of Central District Conference, we choose to encourage all women on their spiritual journey towards wholeness and joy in Jesus Christ. Together as sisters it is our hope to support and collaborate as one voice expressing boldly of love for each other and those around us. In the year 2017, we have chosen to support and donate funds to the following organizations:

- Women's Scholarship of AMBS
- Camp Friedenswald (location of annual Women's Retreat)
- Women in Leadership Project
<http://mennoniteusa.org/what-we-do/peacebuilding/women-in-leadership-project/>
- *Timbrel* magazine <https://mennonitewomenusa.org/timbrel/>
- Dove's Nest <http://dovesnest.net/>
- Our Stories Untold <http://www.ourstoriesuntold.com/>

We are encouraged by the work of Dove's Nest which advocates for women and children who suffer from abuse, whether sexual or emotional. Dove's Nest also provides curriculum for churches to teach about abuse, how to recognize it and what to do. The curriculum spans from kindergarten to adult and you are encouraged to take advantage of these excellent materials via their website.

Timbrel magazine is a Mennonite Women's magazine that is printed monthly, covering topics which are specifically focused from women's points of view, such as humor, health, depression, clothes, hair, racism, parenting, hospitality, etc.

The Women in Leadership Project is an initiative to promote Mennonite women in leadership positions within the Mennonite Church USA. This project recognizes the majority of leadership roles within the organized church are held predominately by white males, and seeks a more inclusive representation.

Our Stories Untold is an important resource and safe space for individuals and their loved ones - many of whom are or have been connected to the Mennonite Church -- who have experienced sexual violence. A space to tell their stories, be heard, respected, and supported. Breaking the silence of sexualized violence is an important part of prevention, healing, and integrity within the church, and we support and applaud their efforts to tell these untold stories and expose sexual abuse within our churches and communities. On a related note, if you have not heard of SNAP I encourage you to look it up at <http://www.snapnetwork.org/mennonite>. SNAP stands for Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests. SNAP was started to expose Catholic priests, however, abuse happens within all denominations, including Mennonite. Therefore a Mennonite chapter of SNAP exists to provide resources to survivors, and provides a list of pastors and church workers accused of misconduct.

Changing the status quo and learning how to face sinful abusive behaviors within our churches is difficult and frightening. As President of Central District Conference Mennonite Women, my hope is for each of us to refuse complacency and speak out as Jesus did for those who are abused and intimidated. We as women need to listen to, care for, and surround our sisters with comfort when they have suffered much.

You are welcome to join the CDC Mennonite Women facebook page in order to share resources and events, while supporting one another with love and care.

In His Peace,

President, Deb Sprunger Martens: Vice President, Janet Liechty: Secretary, Phoebe Graber: Treasurer, Rosalie Graber: Past President, Wendy Chappell-Dick.