

Femailings



Womaen's Caucus Church of the Brethren

One Woman, All Women

March 2015

Womaen's Caucus Highlights

- Jennifer Scarr preaching at Beacon Heights **April 19th**
- Submit articles for the next issue to our email by **May 28th**
- New Steering Committee members (pg 3)
- Short survey (pg 3)

Womaen's Caucus
Steering Committee

Mary Kay Ogden, Convener
Sara Davis
Karen Duhai
Kathy Gingrich
Jennifer Scarr
Daisy Schmidt

2014 Mother of Caucus: Zandra Wagoner



We are proud to announce that the Mother of Caucus honoree for 2014 was Zandra Wagoner. She is the Interfaith Chaplain at the University of La Verne. She is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren and holds a Ph.D in Religious Studies. As Chaplain, she directs the multi-religious Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, and teaches for the Philosophy and Religion Department, including introductory

courses in religion and specialized courses in the areas of gender/sexuality, contemporary theology, interfaith cooperation, and the environment/animals in the study of religion. Denominationally, Zandra worked with Womaen's Caucus as the Caucus Administrator for 8 years, served on the BMC Board, and was the chaplain at McPherson College. Currently, she is actively involved in interfaith efforts locally and nationally. She shares her life with her partner of 14 years, and for fun, participates in dog agility sports with their two canine companions, an exercise in cross-species communication.

Zandra gave an incredible speech, that was inspiring, challenging and full of courageous people. Her speech is available to download from our website under the resources tab, it can also be printed on request and mailed to you by emailing or getting in touch with us by mail.

Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

This issue has been long in arriving to you, mostly due to changes in my personal life. I have closed some chapters and opened some new ones. However, during the brief hiatus, I had time to strategize and plan for a regular Femailings. We will now be producing four issues a year, March, June, September and December. The next issue will be focused around the statistics that we started compiling during the 2014 Annual Conference. These relate to women in ministry and representation. We will be soliciting for articles for each issue and these will be posted in the previous Femailing as well as online. If you have any questions or ideas of things you would like to see in an upcoming issue please email at womaenscaucuscob@gmail.com. The deadline for articles for the next issue is **Thursday May 28th**.

Thank you for your patience,
Jonathan Bay

Annual Conference Report

The meeting in Columbus brought many new things for the Progressives, as you may have heard. While it was business as usual the four groups decided to work together and create a space for ourselves at in the exhibit hall.



We each offered talks throughout the conference at a central booth space.

Much of the vision of this space was designed by Kay Guyer, the former Kaleidoscope volunteer for BMC. Womaen's Caucus offered talks on inclusive language, women and second calls, and vision. All of the talks were powerful, some moved us to tears, it was a space in which we were actively building community and continuing conversations that had long been silenced.

Caucus also began taking statistics, which will be compiled and put on the website, of how who talked at the microphone. Some of this will come out in our next issue of Femailings. This has lead to a bigger interest in ordination statistics and is something we will continue to work on. One of the most powerful things we did at conference was to have a prayer vigil for the women on the ballot before the voting. We will continue to do this practice in the coming years. Our luncheon and silent auction was an overwhelming success and we, with your help, raised \$1,536.00.



Note on 50 Shades of Grey

Social Media campaigns are encouraging people to donate \$50. to domestic violence prevention efforts instead of spending the money to see the recently released movie "50 Shades of Grey", based on the popular book by the same name. #50DollarsNot50Shades, "boycott50ShadesofGrey", and "sayNoTo50Shades" are also trending on Twitter. The movie was the number one film when it debuted on Valentine's Day weekend, earning \$94.4 million. While fans may include people who see the movie as harmless entertainment, for many women (and men) it parallels their story of a romantic relationship that spirals into intimate partner abuse. Imagine what efforts to educate and eliminate domestic violence could do with a sudden windfall of \$94.4 million! Womaen's Caucus encourages us to donate the cost of a movie ticket and refreshments to your local domestic violence shelter as a counter response to 50 Shades of Grey.

Progressive Gathering 2014 Report

by Kathy Gingrich

The 2014 Progressive Brethren Gathering was held Nov. 7-9. We were warmly welcomed and treated to gracious hospitality by our host Church, Stone Church of the Brethren, Huntingdon, PA, pastors, Chris and Dale Dowdy. Approximately 65 persons pre-registered, and additional folks registered during the event. Members of Stone Church as well as participants from the Juniata College community increased our gathering to well over 100 attendees.

Rev. Linda Mercadante, keynote speaker, is Professor of Theology, Straker Chair of Historical Theology at Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Linda's research and recently published book, Belief without Borders, Inside the Minds of the Spiritual but not Religious (SBNR) shaped her Friday evening and Saturday morning presentations.

Linda notes that a growing number of Americans identify as "none" when asked about their religious affiliation, yet identify deeply held beliefs about God, afterlife, community and sin. She identifies these persons as "Spiritual but not Religious" because of their strong spirituality, but reluctance to identify or participate in an organized religion. Some "SBRN's" are attending our churches, but are not looking to "do church" in the usual manner.

Saturday afternoon workshops were "Called to be an Ally" (Josiah Hostetler); "When is Leaving the Church the Right Thing to Do?" (Bob Miller); "Does that Privilege Come in a Christian Flavor?" (Rosalie Rodriguez); "COB History & Heroes", Jim Tuten; "Can Offering Charity Be Toxic?" (Dan Welliver); "Climate Change Conversations: A Chance to Ask Your Questions" (Sharon Yohn); "History of God" (Belle Tuten). Leadership changes due to personal needs included: Dr. Steve Schweitzer (Bethany Theological Seminary) preaching on the subject "The Book of Chronicles: Continuity and Innovation as We Seek God Faithfully"; and various Stone Church musicians substituting for Andy and Terry Murray who were to provide music leadership including a Saturday evening concert. The weekend included meaningful worship, times of connecting with old and new friends, play, rest, reflection, and lovingly prepared snacks and meals. Participants were encouraged to continue the conversation about ministry to and with SBNRs' in our congregations and communities.



New Steering Committee Members



We are delighted to announce that we have 3 new members! Kathy Gingrich joined us in March 2014. She is a chaplain at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital in Downers Grove, IL. She attends York Center Church of the Brethren and has enjoyed working with various congregational, district and denominational committees and teams.

Jennifer Scarr joined us in January 2014 and is a current seminary student at Bethany Theological Seminary where she is studying Peace and Conflict Transformation. As a newly licensed minister on the road to ordination in the Church of the Brethren she feels strongly about supporting the voices of those on the margins not only in the denomination, but also in the greater society.



Karen Duhai joined us after Annual Conference 2014. She is also a current seminary student at Bethany and seeking her Masters of Divinity from with an emphasis in Peace Studies. Having graduated from Elizabethtown

College with a double major in Professional Writing and Religion and a minor in Women and Gender Studies, Karen's passion lies in finding ways in which storytelling, movement, and ministry can provide healing and empowerment for women and children who have experienced oppression and violence. Her interest in storytelling grew through her time as a BVSer in Northern Ireland, where storytelling has been used to help heal divided communities. Currently, Karen is ministering as a program director with Girls Inc of Wayne County, Indiana, an after school program for girls in grades 1-8.



Are you passionate about women in the church?

We are always looking for new people to join our work. Email womaenscaucuscob@gmail.com for

We would like to know what you think!

In thinking about our current mission and after some planning with some of you, we have come up with these areas of focus. We would like to hear from you about what is most important to channel our energy first. If you would like to fill out the survey online please go here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3VY69BC> Feel free to cut this out and mail it to us. Please rank these in order of importance to you, 1 being the most important and 4 being the least. What do you think Womaens Caucus should focus our efforts on first? Please fill out and mail by June 1st.

- Continue to support women on the ballot at Annual Conference.
- Help to create support, advocacy, and relationship building for ordained women.
- Advocate for a name change for the denomination.
- Advocate for safe spaces and responses for sexual violence within the church.

Please let us know if there is something you would like to see Womaens Caucus do that is not listed above but that you would consider a priority.
