

Keeping in Touch

January 2018

NEWS FOR
UCW GROUPS



The National United Church Women

Here I Am, Lord

Jesus Is the Light of the World

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's light; look unto me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright." I looked to Jesus, and I found in him my star, my sun; and in that light of life I'll walk till travelling days are done.
—"I Heard the Voice of Jesus" (VU 626 vs 3)

The season of **Epiphany** begins on January 6. Epiphany means "a showing forth" or "manifestation," and has long been associated with the coming of the magi to visit Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12).

2017 was a busy, exciting year for UCW. We celebrated our **55th anniversary** in grand style with our sisters from across Canada and the world. Many local UCWs had their own wonderful celebrations, and we enjoyed blue-and-white decorated cake over and over again. And now it's back to the business of Christian Witness, Study, Fellowship, and Service—the four pillars of our UCW Purpose.

The annual **National UCW executive meeting** was held September 25–29, 2017, at the Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga, ON, which is a beautiful park-like setting surrounded by multimillion-dollar homes. We each had our own rooms with bathrooms. Wonderful, delicious meals were provided by the centre each day.

All of our 13 Conference Presidents and Vice Presidents/Representatives met to sing, worship, plan, and discuss the business of National UCW. For some of these women, it was their first time at a National UCW Executive meeting. Music was led by Norene Anderson, Hamilton Conference, and Margery Wright, Alberta and Northwest Conference. Grace at each meal was led by Karen Hoshal of B.C. Conference. Mary Mohn of Saskatchewan Conference presented an exercise on Community Building—games of Bingo of names of the people present. Each Conference, in turn, was responsible for daily worship services and vespers. The lighting of the Christ candle started off each day.

Lively discussions evolved around Women's Inter-Church Council (World Day of Prayer) with Angela Schwartz, Toronto Conference; Dancing the Circle of Right Relations with Pam Hart; transgender

women in UCW with Jordan Sullivan, Gender Justice, General Council Office; Nora Sanders, General Secretary of General Council; Japanese mission work with David McIntosh, overseas personnel; Kenya/Morogoro pilgrimage presentation by Ruth Noble and Jill Bates; UCW within the new structures with David Allen, General Council Office; Child Poverty Initiative with Linda Woods and Laurel Kenney of London Conference; a Bible study by Amy Crawford, General Council Office;



Photo: Floyd Sutherland

National United Church Women, September 2017

Old Hay Bay Church



On August 27, 2017, Bay of Quinte Conference UCW was asked to lead Holy Communion at the annual **Pilgrimage Service of Old Hay Bay Church**, the cradle of Methodism in Upper Canada, which is a National Historic Site. This was the first time a UCW was invited to do this and the first time a communion service was held in this site. Old Hay Bay Church (2365 South Shore Road, Greater Napanee, ON) is owned and operated by Bay of Quinte Conference.

Photo: Floyd Sutherland

an address from the Rev. Michael Blair, Executive Minister, General Council Office, who also conducted Holy Communion on Friday morning.

Thursday was party night with snacks, skits, stories, and a presentation to the UCW Endowment Fund to honour Phyllis Buchner as she finished her term as National UCW President. Financial reports were presented by our newly elected Treasurer Carolle Dallas-Arbuckle of Montreal and Ottawa Conference. Beulah Hayley of Newfoundland and Labrador East District was elected President-Elect of NUCW.

General Council Executive met at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Toronto, November 18–20, 2017, with approximately 68 people present at 12 tables. It was a very busy agenda discussing the work past, present, and future of the church. We were led in daily meaningful worship services by Tim Reaburn, assisted by Catherine Christie, a retired overseas personnel, Bishop Reuel Marigza of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and the Rev. Janet Sigurdson, Aboriginal Minister.

In November, the **500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation** was celebrated. Martin Luther was a former Catholic monk who wrote the 95 Theses document and nailed it on the door of the Catholic Church of Wittenberg. Once this happened, many people throughout Germany began to react to his convictions, which influenced vast changes. It is interesting to note that Martin Luther's wife Katharine von Bora, a former nun who abandoned the convent and took refuge in Wittenberg, was a very powerful influence on her husband.

Here I Am, Lord!

—**Nancy Sutherland**, President,
National United Church Women

End Child Poverty in Canada

We are now in our fifth and final year of our **End Child Poverty in Canada** initiative. London Conference organized a visit to Parliament Hill in Ottawa, November 21, 2017, and 338 Hope Dolls were distributed to the members of Parliament. Our day began at 7 a.m. A hot breakfast was hosted by the All-Party Anti-poverty Caucus and a panel discussion on Child Poverty in Canada, chaired by Senator Art Eggleton, during which we received Campaign 2000's annual report on Child and Family Poverty; followed by a meeting with Ana Fajarczuk, Special Assistant–Ontario, Indigenous Services; and a meeting with MP Adam Vaughan, Parliamentary Secretary for Families, Children and Social Development. We attended Question Period in the House of Commons Visitors' Gallery to hear Kate Young, Parliamentary Secretary, read our Statement on Child Poverty in Canada. The day ended with a group photo with members and their dolls on the stairs of Parliament Hill. These dolls speak volumes!

Photo: House of Commons



Members of Parliament with Hope Dolls, November 2017

For all UCW matters, e-mail: ucw@united-church.ca.