

## **Report to the Synod of 2014**

### **Provincial Women's Board, South**

**Mission, Purpose and Values** – The purpose of the Provincial Women's Board (PWB) is to unite all women of the Moravian Church in a Christian fellowship, to make Christ known throughout the world and to develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the church. The duties of the PWB as recorded in the Book of Order are:

- To promote the acquaintance and fellowship of the women of the Province and seek to encourage their growth in Christian character and service.
- To formulate and present a program for the united effort of the Women's Fellowships of the congregations and to enlist their cooperation in carrying it out.
- To lend their assistance to the Provincial Elder's Conference or other boards of the Province, whenever called upon, towards the accomplishment of the work assigned to them.
- To further the cause of Christ and the Kingdom among the women of our Southern Province.

**Responsibilities** - Resolution #7 Provincial Women's Board Membership from the 2010 Synod states "the PWB will be made up of seventeen members, plus one paid non-voting Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper. Ten members will continue to be elected by Synod and six to be appointed by the Provincial Women's Board. The seventeenth member of the board will be a female clergy member appointed by the board to serve a two-year term with the option to be re-appointed for another two-year term". All members serve on various PWB committees. Each member is the liaison between the PWB and assigned congregations/fellowships. Committee reports and congregation/fellowship updates are communicated regularly at each PWB meeting. The board desires a diverse and inclusive membership and advocates for increased representation among our Women's Fellowships, rather than multiple members from the same congregation. The PWB recommends only one candidate per church rather than two or more candidates from the same congregation.

Members of the Interprovincial Women's Board (IPWB) are the President, Spiritual Life chair, World Mission chair, and the Administrative Assistant from the Southern and Northern Provinces. The IPWB meets annually to plan events pertaining to both provinces: Women's Conference, Bible study, and mission books, and the many other ministries of our women.

**Summary of Activities** – The PWB is not a line item in the budget of the Southern Province. We sustain our budget from pledges of the Women's Fellowships. From these pledges the PWB supports the Board of World Mission, the Board of Cooperative Ministries, and the Laurel Ridge Summer Program. We contribute to the Minister's Emergency Fund and pay an honorarium to the author of our Bible study book. In addition, the PWB superintends the Seminary Student Emergency Fund, the Salemtowne Endowment Fund, the Pfohl Ministerial Fund, and the

Elizabeth Miller Scholarship Fund. With the PEC we contributed half of the travel expenses for Ginny Tobiassen to attend a women's conference in the Cuba Unity Mission Area. Portable communion sets were given by the PWB at the ordinations of Betty Helms, Jeff Jones, Ginny Tobiassen, Andrew Heil and Zack Dease. Members of the PWB personally contributed a total of \$400.00 to the Unity Women's Desk to honor the work of all the female clergy in the Southern Province.

Three opportunities designed to provide growth for women through prayer, study, worship and witness are sponsored by the PWB. During the autumn season all women are encouraged to attend the Fall Celebration. Meeting at one of the local churches, ladies participate in worship, adopt the PWB budget, and examine the Bible study and mission books for the upcoming year. Over lunch, women share ideas and possible new strategies to increase interest of all women in the work of their congregations. The PWB sponsors the Days of Prayer during the Lenten season. In the spring, women across the province are invited to attend the Spiritual Life Retreat at Laurel Ridge. This intergenerational gathering is designed as a relaxing, renewing time celebrating our sisterhood in Christ and providing spiritual growth experiences.

The PWB is a member of the local, state and national Church Women United. A PWB representative is a member of the Women's Conference Committee. Also, a representative to the Unity Women's Desk is on the PWB. The chair of the World Mission Committee represents the PWB on the Mission Society. The PWB encourages the participation of special projects endorsed by the BWM and Mission Society. Prior to the minister's move in to the parsonage at Hope Moravian Church, the PWB stocked the Mission Residence with food and basic staples for missionaries on furlough. For decades the Women's Fellowships of area churches have supplied cakes for the Yokefellow program at the Forsyth Correctional Center, and the PWB assigns and oversees the schedule and delivery of these cakes. Members on the PWB regularly volunteer at Sunnyside Ministry and serve on its board. In addition to financial support, the PWB seeks to promote Laurel Ridge by our annual retreat and other events at this location. The PWB representative meets with Kaye Brookshire, the Director of Volunteer/Special Events at Salemtowne to assess the volunteer needs at this facility. We provide assistance and publicize any special projects. For the first time, the PWB will host a Valentine Tea for all residents in February 2014.

An emphasis of the PWB is to support the female clergy of the Southern Province. In doing so, the board appoints a female minister for a two year term on the PWB. Female clergy are facilitators at the Spiritual Life Retreat and those pastors attending the retreat receive a monetary discount, clergy for the Women's Conference receive a reduced registration fee, ministers are encouraged to continue their educations with the assistance of the Pfohl Ministerial Fund, each female minister is paired with a PWB member as a "Secret Sister" to honor her throughout the year with special occasion cards and prayer, and the female clergy are invited as our guests to the PWB Holiday luncheon.

Our seminary students receive affirmation with endeavors by the PWB's monetary assistance for unexpected financial needs through the Seminary Student Emergency Fund, a gift of Moravian cookies along with \$100.00 at Christmas, and cards for special occasions throughout the year.

A primary objective of the current PWB is to be more visible and accessible to the women of the Southern Province. The PWB office moved from the Kremer Building to the Boys School, resulting in a more approachable location with better publicity. The office continues to be open on Monday and Thursday. Our Administrative Assistant edits a quarterly newsletter titled “Serving and Sharing” which publicizes special provincial projects and needs of the PWB and IPWB. This publication is sent to all presidents of the Women’s Fellowships or contact persons of women’s groups, all the female ministers, and to any interested person who requests an e-mail or hard copy. A FACEBOOK page and BLOG were created and are maintained to target the middle to younger age women. In the age of social media, the PWB provides a connection with women throughout the world-wide Moravian unity. Also, the PWB had a booth exhibited at the Moravian Festival, which provided an opportunity to give away previous Bible study and mission books and other information about our women’s work. It is intentional for members on the PWB to maintain communication with Women’s Fellowships. A concerted effort is being made to attend their functions throughout the province.

**Future Direction and Opportunities** – Developing relationships and nurturing friendships among our Moravian sisters is the hope for our future. The PWB seeks imaginative and inspiring possibilities to build interest and to involve women of all ages in women’s work. We are striving for improved communication among Women’s Fellowships. Members of the PWB inquire and ascertain how we can be more effective with women’s groups in our churches. The PWB recognizes and values the varieties of gifts offered for the vision and mission uniting Moravian sisters in love around the world.

Submitted by Tamra Thomas, President  
Provincial Women’s Board, South