



Dear Ohio Mennonite Women,

July 29, 2017

The Ohio Mennonite Women have been meeting for many years, to accomplish its primary mission and vision: *“To minister to the women of Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church USA, by resourcing women’s groups and individual women, as we nurture our life in Christ, study the Bible, utilize our gifts, hear each other, and engage in mission and service.”*

The organization has touched many lives over the years by providing publications, resources for women’s groups, mission opportunities and special program opportunities - a denominational forum for connecting women in Ohio Conference. Women have prayed for and financially supported OMW, missionaries and various agencies over the years. We have served well! God has been present and directed the activities of the OMW. And this is good!

For the last several years, the organization’s members have aged, women’s lives, generations and roles have changed. The current Co-chairs and Executive Board members of OMW have spent countless hours in prayer and discernment as they have made many contacts, advertised through various methods, and spent hours exploring the possibilities of ongoing leadership. Over the years members on the Board have extended their terms, served in multiple roles to fulfill vacancies, and recently have tried without success, to find new leaders. Without leadership, our organization cannot continue. Other conference women’s groups are experiencing similar struggles.

So at this time, after much processing, prayer and discernment, it is with sadness that the OMW Executive Board has made the difficult decision to dissolve the organization of the Ohio Mennonite Women. Various alternate models were explored; counsel from the constituency on various occasions was sought, as well as counsel from the Director of the Mennonite Women USA and Conference pastors. We thank you for your support and ask for ongoing prayers as we discern and make decisions related to organizational dissolution, on your behalf. May God be honored throughout this process.

The Board will proceed with resolving expenses as follows: support scholarships for the attendees of the 2017 Girls’ Jamboree and Women’s Retreat; resolve all outstanding expenses and obligations, and disperse remaining funds to the missionaries and agencies currently supported by OMW. Future contributions can be made directly to these entities. Addresses and more information will be available in the final OMW Newsletter and on the Conference website.

We extend our sincere appreciation to ALL for your support over the years, and to ALL who have provided leadership to OMW. Thank you! We encourage each congregation to explore ways to empower local women’s activities. Ask yourself these and other questions: Are there activities you can plan locally? Can you partner with other congregations in your area to plan activities? Can more “mature” women mentor younger ones? Plan a women’s potluck. Go out for coffee. Plan a “comforter blitz.” Be creative!!!

As a way to honor our organization, Ohio Mennonite Women, we invite you to join in “*A time of Celebration*” at the Women’s Retreat at Camp Luz, Sept. 15-17, 2017. We encourage you to come, to share past stories, pictures and memories of the blessings you have received through OMW. Watch for more information on Facebook and the Ohio Conference website regarding this time for celebration.

In Christ,

Ohio Mennonite Women Executive Board

Co-Chairs, Acting Vice-co-chair, Acting Secretary:

Willie Stoltzfus: stoltzfus.willie@gmail.com

Roxanne Kauffman: roxykauff@gmail.com

Treasurer: Melanie Miller

Day of Inspiration Coordinators A & B: Myrna Ramseyer and Angela Steiner