Dear Friends in Central Conference,

Sometimes a three year term sounds like such a long time! Although it's been a very busy part of my life, filled with hours at my keyboard and sorting papers, these three years as President of Women Ministries of our Conference have flown by! It has been a time of rich connections with women of faith throughout our five-state area. I'm deeply grateful to God for His call on me to lead, but even more, for his provision of vision, wonderful sessions of brainstorming and even sometimes the very words to speak or write. The encouragement of women across the Conference has been a wonderful gift to me over this period. It has been my great privilege to serve you in this leadership role.

One of the ways I have been encouraged is through the financial support offered by our Executive Board of the Central Conference and Superintendent, Rev. Jerome Nelson. They have provided some funding towards our Operations and Meeting Expenses and we are deeply grateful. This is a valuable testimony to their recognition that Women Ministries does “strengthen churches” and benefit the Conference.

As I turn over the role of President to Thelma Lawson, I hope to be able to continue to serve in a manner to strengthen our web of connection. Loving to travel and connect with women, I seek opportunities to gather women for sharing and conversation. When women connect in transformational relationships, they can impact the world for God. May God grant that women will come to see the value of this role.

In loving gratitude for the opportunity to serve you, it's been a joy,

Ann Richards, out-going president

Meet Incoming President, Thelma Lawson

As out-going president, it is my privilege to introduce Thelma Lawson, our president-elect for the past year. Thelma, installed as President of WMCC on Saturday, March 17, 2012, says, “I am so excited and yet in wonder of what God is doing in the life of Women Ministries by choosing me for such a special place to help encourage women. My favorite saying is ‘Look at God,’ because He is constantly manifesting His goodness in my life and the lives of those I encounter. This is an example of God working in my life.” She said that it was through her pastor that God called her to lead women.

Next she took some Leadership classes for women and there met Ruth Hill, who opened her heart and eyes to Women ministries.

I am very excited to have Thelma come into this position and think God has real ministry excitement in store for Central Conference during the next three years! I’ll use Thelma's own words in closing here. She says, “I bring to you a heart and passion for Women Ministries, though I must admit that I am still a bit awed by this wonderful opportunity to serve. Look at God!”
WMC Project 2012, Just Women, continues the powerful impact of both Advocacy for Victims of Abuse (AVA) and Break the Chains. Lydia, mentioned in Acts 16, is a effective role model for the church: responsible to the gospel, evangelistic, gifted, persuasive, just, and generous. She also exemplifies the core values of contemporary ministry to and through women.

Just Women strives to strengthen women (Lydias) in the local church, and we like the play on the word “just,” using it as an adverb, “only”; and as an adjective, “righteous.”

Your gifts will help make this happen. Donations to WMC Project 2012 will:

- bring the needed healing component to the AVA ministry via partnership with Mending the Soul
- launch the new Covenant-developed resource to help local churches recognize and prevent human trafficking in their area
- create the Just Women resources and opportunities for the year
- More importantly, donations will offset the financial challenges the Department of Women Ministries has experienced. Funds will poise Women Ministries for its next chapter of God’s assignments, furthering the legacy of advancing God’s kingdom through women.

Break the Chains presents ... Protect*, A Resource for the Local Church

“Because the poor are plundered and the needy groan, I will now arise,” says the Lord. “I will protect them from those who malign them.” Psalm 12:5 Over the past year, the Human Trafficking Task Force of the Evangelical Covenant Church, inspired by God through the above passage in Psalms, has being meeting to pull together A STRATEGY TO PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN OUR COMMUNITIES. This small guide book is divided into chapters that can become tools for education and lead to action. The chapters are based on the acronym:

- Power of Prosecution
- Responsible Consumerism
- Orientation to Healthy Relationships
- Training to Identify and Report Human Trafficking
- Education to Protect the Most Vulnerable
- Community Response
- Training to Support At-Risk Youth

*This guidebook and other resources will soon be available through the Covenant Bookstore

Thank you for your support of Annual Project 2011

Youth Family Community Renewal, in Gary, Indiana, was the beneficiary of our WMCC Annual Project 2011. YFCR offers child care, after-school programs, a summer program including Covenant Camps, and for almost 20 years, a special support program offering education to youth suspended from school. They now also operate a food bank for the state of Indiana, which brings families into their building and into their ministry. It is for this they sought our help to purchase freezers. “We thank women of the Central Conference for providing this financial help, backed by your prayers. Philippians 4:18, 19 reads, I have all and abound. I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God.” ... Thank you for your love, your gifts and your prayers.” – from Pastor Bennie & Willa Simmons

Your Pillowcase Dresses Made A Huge Contribution

Thank you for all your efforts and donations!

Last year’s project of our Compassion, Mercy and Justice Ministry, led by Evangelist Renee Shepherd on our Women Ministries Leadership Team, began at Spring Celebration 2011 in Lafayette, Indiana. The CMJ team made a wonderful display of dress samples, led a breakout session on how to create them and challenged the sew 500 of them by hearts were touched and by the fall, late September, you had sewn far beyond all expectations! For the final report on this successful “hands-on” project, CLICK here if you are reading this on-line. If not, go to www.wmcc2gether and to the OUR MINISTRIES tab to find CMJ and more information about this outreach ministry.
Shin Nian Kwai Li or “Happy Chinese New Year.” According to the Chinese this year is the auspicious “Year of The Dragon.”

If you are born in a dragon year or married or do anything important this is the year that will give you the most luck.

Thankfully, no matter when we have been born, we have much more than dragon luck, we have God’s love and watchful care and blessings every day. So as we write this note we pray God will richly bless each one of you in the New Year.

We just came through a busy month with Christmas but it was wonderful to have our daughters Megan and Olivia back in Taiwan. We hosted our traditional Christmas party for the Filipino factory workers and as usual there were lots of games, laughter and good food.

We got back to Taiwan in July to find the Filipino church doing well with Pastor Jhun Bonganay having done a wonderful job.

The Chinese Feng Yuan church greatly helped him settle in as he served the Filipino church while we were gone. He also started a Bible study at the dormitory where a group of our girls are so when he left I took that over. Since the factory girls get off at 7:00am they have Bible study from 9:00am to 10:30am before they head off to sleep. I already have been leading a Wednesday Asian moms Bible/book study group for the last six years in our home so now on Wednesday she has two groups of women to minister to. I have even come to church. Pray for these studies and especially the ladies that don’t know the Lord yet.

The Lord has really been blessing the Bible study in the factory dormitory and often gals that don’t go to church will come to the study and many keep coming back. A few have even come to church. Pray for these studies and especially the ladies that don’t know the Lord yet. We are currently going through the book of Acts with the Filipino ladies. So thank you for your prayers as I prepare each week. I still teach two periods of Health in the mission high school so I am plenty busy. Thank you so much for all of your prayers and support. We do appreciate all of you. God bless you all. — Lillian Dwight

NEW WMCC EMAIL AND WEB ADDRESSES beginning March 17th

With the new vision of the Evangelical Covenant Church, "In it Together," we have a fresh opportunity to update and consolidate our addresses. "In it Together" means that in our denomination none of us stands alone, but we work together, pray together and worship together — even when separate — to the Glory of God in Jesus Christ. Women Ministries of the Central Conference (WMCC) also ties to unite women across the conference and we also are "In it Together." Taking advantage of this moment with an incoming president, Thelma Lawson, it seems a good time to make such changes.

Beginning on March 17, 2012, our web address will be www.wmcc2gether.com and our email address will be WMCC2gether@gmail.com

It is our hope that with these addresses being parallel and in line with the denomination’s vision it might be easier for everyone to remember and will stay in place for many years to come.

Please note these changes on your contact list and favorites so we don’t lose track of each other.

Triennial XIV ~ August 15-18, 2013

“Rooted!” Colossians 2:6-7

Triennial XIV will be held in beautiful San Diego, California, just 527 days from Spring Celebration 2012. It will be held at the warm and charming, flower garden filled, Town & Country Resort and Convention Center. www.towncountry.com. If we estimate the plane fare at $360 and guess Triennial could cost $850 including a bit of spending money — and we set aside $2.30 in our "special savings jar" every day, we’d have what it takes in time to fully enjoy our trip.

Early registration will begin shortly after CHIC ~ 2012, so watch carefully & save. Let’s take a trip together! $Start Saving today!
DID YOU KNOW...?
Did you know that since its inception in 1906, Women Ministries of the Covenant has been self-funded? Most people are not aware of this fact but it is very significant. Over those years, since the few women of the Ladies Missionary Aid Society collected their coins to build Caroline Hall so women would have housing at North Park College, women of the Covenant have raised funds for an annual project. These projects raised what amounts in today’s dollars to more than a million dollars! All of this funding came from collections of coins and dollars from the women of our denomination and those in their sphere of influence.
The questions today, are: “Will the women of 2012 be willing to sacrifice to continue the legacy of Women Ministries into 2013 and beyond? Can we influence those around us to offer support, too? Women of Central Conference, your help is needed to support Women Ministries of the Covenant. Please go to the JUST WOMEN page of the www.covchurch.org website to make your contribution.

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED

FALL FELLOWSHIP 2012

Special Features...

- Walk 4 Clean Water: Raise awareness and funds for Congo with a 3 or 5-mile walk on Saturday afternoon. www.covchurch.org/covenantkidscongo
- Suggested Summer Reading: The Worn Out Woman: When your Life is Full and Your Spirit is Empty, by Dr. Steve Stephens & Alice Gray.
- Explore Apologetics: Brenda Olson,
- Holiday Partytime: Deb Lampert, Executive Chef at Covenant Harbor.
- Nobody’s Greater: Evangelist Renee Shepherd.

DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

LADY P’S SPA RETREAT & PRAYER BREAKFAST 2012

Save The Date
Aug 11th Spa Retreat & Prayer Breakfast 2012
Women’s Conference Weekend
October 28th-29th 2012
Dynamic Speakers/ AWESOME Worship Experience/ Life-Changing Workshops/ Zumba Fitness Party/ Power Games and Much More!

Register on website @ www.newiser.org click on pampering party or spa retreat

MOMS & DAUGHTER RETREAT COVENANT HARBOR BIBLE CAMP
MAY 4~6 2012
For details go to:
www.covenantharbor.org/Moms_and_Daughters