

Diakonos

News & Resources for BIC Women in Ministry & Leadership

Winter 2007

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Diakonos is published quarterly by the BIC Council for Women in Ministry & Leadership, an affinity group of the Brethren in Christ

BIC COUNCIL FOR
WOMEN IN MINISTRY & LEADERSHIP
VISION

ENCOURAGING DIVINELY GIFTED
WOMEN TO FULFILL THEIR CALL TO
MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

Two Important Invitations for YOU!

This issue of *Diakonos* includes two important invitations. The first is to join the Council as a voting member. Your support and involvement will help the vision and the objectives of the Council become reality as women faithfully answer the call to ministry and leadership.

The second invitation is to the biennial retreat *Women at the Well: Learning to Worship in Spirit and Truth*. We have an interesting, diverse, and educational selection of workshops. Most women wish they could attend more than two. We also have a diverse lineup of preachers for our worship services, all of whom will be speaking on the passage from John's gospel from which we take the title of our retreat. We anticipate good messages as the Spirit moves in each of our speakers to bring truth out of this passage.

Servant in Focus

A Prayer for Orphans: Serving & Learning Together

BY LOIS A. SAYLOR

When our daughter Andrea Saylor greeted us at the Cairo international airport, she handed us bottled water, for safe drinking, and a packet of tissues for use in public rest rooms. We carried both items most of our time in the desert city of Cairo and during our trip to Upper Egypt. We appreciated the good advice and the practical supplies.

As a member of the Mennonite Central Committee SALT program (Serving and Learning Together), Andrea served in Cairo at a girl's orphanage called Fowler House. She lived with 65 girls, one young adult woman from France (also on loan to the orphanage) and Sister Mary, the capable administrator and substitute mother of Fowler House. In her time of service, Andrea learned many other lessons besides drinking bottled water and carrying one's own supply of toilet paper.

Andrea reflected on these lessons and life experiences while in Egypt by writing a blog for the MCC website. The following *Prayer for Orphans* written at the end of her service time contains many of those lessons and offers a look into the lives of the girls at Fowler House, orphans everywhere, and, I think, our own lives as well.

From Andrea's blog:

...And as I find myself realizing again and again that what I miss about Egypt, what will remain in me most clearly, is the girls at the orphanage (my home), I will end this blog with a prayer for them.

A Prayer for Orphans

God, give them new families.
give them surrogate mothers, fathers, sisters,
brothers, aunts, grandparents, uncles.
Give them friends and neighbors who care.
Introduce them to people of passion
mercy and commitment.
Make them friends with artists, musicians, priests,
jugglers, doctors, and teachers.

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Women's Sabbath Retreats

Envisioned by a gathering of Anabaptist women in ministry, the Women's Sabbath retreat series welcomes women of all ages to rest, reflect, and remember Whose we are.

The Saturday retreats offer input, silence, personal nurture, and fellowship. A light lunch is provided. Janet Stauffer, a marital and family therapist, is the presenter for the 2006-2007 retreat series which meets

Saturdays 10AM—4PM
Forest Hills Mennonite Church
Leola, PA

Janet will offer the final two of her four retreats on the seasons of a woman's life. Although each retreat day relates to others in the series, women are welcome to attend a single event.

February 24—young adult (creating)

April 21—maturation (being)

For more information and registration forms, contact either:

Sharon Kraybill
sjkgraybill@paonline.com
717.293.9641

Mary Lou Weaver Houser
mlouweaverhouser@verizon.net
717.872.2848

Prayer continued from page 1

God, yes, thank you for food,
but thank you also for paintbrushes and footballs,
for ice cream cones and for sunsets,
for the freedom to laugh,
for the tiny moments that hold us together.
For hand-clap games.

And God please help us to change
the large forces that fight against us.
For my sisters the orphans, God,
may governments become their servants.
May education empower them.
May religion be their true advocate.
May war pass over them,
art not forget them,
history remember them.
May medicine be placed in their service
and economies include them equally.
May families of all kinds welcome them.

When they grow up, God, continue to give them hardships such as these:
the drudgery of house work and the kitchen,
that they may always have homes and food;
the boredom of quiet towns and uneventful cities,
that they may live in places of peace;
the knowledge of their husbands' faults,
that they may have long and intimate marriages;
the pain of childbirth
that they may become the mothers they never had.



Give them forgiveness and generosity,
that they may overcome the selfishness that has wounded them.
Give them humor,
that they may have joy and pleasure in all circumstances.
Give them imagination,
that they may have resources and new beginnings at all times.
Give them confidence,
that they may overcome the lie the world tells about them.

And when they are delivered, give them memory,
that they may see the redemption in their story,
and know its importance.

God, I thank you for their courage,
and I pray that they would not become numb,
but that they would know, in the pain of their great loss,
a great love, both in giving and receiving.

Andrea Saylor is a 2005 Messiah College graduate who served under MCC in Cairo Egypt. She currently resides in Harrisburg, PA and attends the Harrisburg BIC church. Other entries from her blog are still available on MCC's website: www.mcc.org/eastcoast/andreasblog

Keep Dreaming: Our General Conference Luncheon

The BIC Council for Women in Ministry & Leadership marked several significant milestones this past summer as we hosted our biennial luncheon at General Conference 2006 in Miami. We hit a record attendance with over 100 women *and* men—it was the first time men attended the luncheon! Their response to our invitation was affirming and gratifying. We were also pleased to be able to present our new structure, our brief study on biblical foundations for women in ministry, to encourage membership in the Council (*see related article, page 4*), and to promote our upcoming retreat.



Mirta Colloca,
General Conference
luncheon speaker and
2007 Retreat speaker

Another first for the Council was our opportunity to hear and enjoy the wit and wisdom of Mirta Colloca who pastors with her husband at Vida Abundante BIC Church in Miami. At the luncheon Mirta challenged us to keep on dreaming. Here are some responses to her talk and the luncheon.

What probably made the largest impression on me was Mirta's spirit as she shared the devotional with us that day. Her passion for the Lord was so evident, and her enthusiasm for dreaming and working toward those dreams was contagious. The other thing that touched my heart in that session was watching Rachel Diaz quietly translating everything being said for one of our Hispanic sisters. I am so thankful to have been part of celebrating our oneness in Christ despite challenges we may have in communicating with one another.

PASTOR LYNDA GEPHART, HARRISBURG, PA

My dominant impression was one of great delight that we have among us (BIC) women the presence of Mirta with her gifts, ability to articulate, and passion.

CONNIE HOFFMAN, ELIZABETHTOWN, PA

In the busyness of life we forget the importance of dreaming. Most often, we feel guilty in even taking the time to dream. Mirta's enthusiastic approach to "dreaming" was contagious. It served to lift the heart and allowed us to step outside of the day-to-day to a place of joy in being able to partner with God in things beyond our own imagination.

PASTOR JEAN L. KELLER-THAU, DILLSBURG, PA

The luncheon was a delightful time of fellowship—a framework that provided the opportunity for women (and men!) to make connections with old friends and become acquainted with some new "faces." Lois Saylor brought us up-to-date on recent council developments, and keynote speaker Mirta challenged us to dream large; her lecture was passionate, filled with biblical examples, and was a personal highlight of my conference experience.

DONEEN DOURTE, MANHEIM, PA

In ministry and service to the Lord, there are so many times when things can be overwhelming which can lead to questions and doubts. Mirta was positive, informative, interesting, affirming and delightful as she challenged us to hold on to the dream, the call, the voice of God, to not give up and to stay focused on the kingdom of God.

PASTOR JANIS HEISER, CEDAR HEIGHTS, PA

Mirta Colloca travels throughout Latin America and the U.S. ministering especially to women and is one of our featured speakers at our March 2007 retreat. We invite you to join us for *Women at the Well* (right) to meet Mirta and hear her speak.

Register NOW for...

**Women
at the Well**



Learning to
Worship
in
**Spirit &
Truth**

March 12 -14, 2007

Sign-in begins MONDAY 3:00PM
First Session MONDAY 6:30PM
Concludes with lunch on WEDNESDAY

KENBROOK BIBLE CAMP

LEBANON, PA

The retreat will offer times of worship, workshops, prayer gatherings, fellowship, unstructured time for personal retreat, encouragement, a safe place to share and grow, and challenges to living a life that is worship.

DOWNLOAD COMPLETE RETREAT BROCHURE

WWW.BIC-CHURCH.ORG/MINISTRIES/WOMEN.ASP

Scholarships available for those who would be otherwise unable to attend.
Please contact Lois A. Saylor at lawsaylor@comcast.net



2007 BIC COUNCIL FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY & LEADERSHIP RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____

 PHONE _____
 E-MAIL _____

SPECIAL _____
 NEEDS _____

 REQUESTED _____
 ROOMMATE(S) _____

CONGREGATION/ORGANIZATION _____
 IN WHICH I SERVE _____

I permit my name to be on a printed list of attendees to be distributed at the retreat

- Single rooms \$180
- Double rooms \$160
- Triple /quad rooms \$135
Accommodations include motel-style rooms, private bath, and all meals.
- Single day attendance \$65

Mail this form to Brethren in Christ Church, PO Box 290, Grantham PA 17027 with your non-refundable deposit of \$50 per person (remainder is due upon arrival at the retreat). Checks made payable to Brethren in Christ Church. **Deadline for registration is February 18, 2007**

Diakonos—ELECTRONIC ONLY

Please note that *Diakonos* is now available only in electronic form. Due to decreased interest, we will no longer be offering a print version for \$10.00.

We are happy to add anyone to the e-mail list to let you know when the latest issue is available. If someone you know would like to receive *Diakonos*, please contact Karen Ulery at karen@ulery-yoder.com.

EDITOR NEEDED

Diakonos is still in need of a “non-interim” editor. If you have writing and editing skills and a heart for supporting women in all kinds of leadership and ministry, prayerfully consider undertaking this volunteer position. We are open to a term as short as one year and would certainly welcome someone willing to take on two years.

Diakonos is a quarterly publication of the BIC Council for Women in Ministry & Leadership that focuses on women in ministry (Servant in Focus) and promoting and reporting events that support women in ministry.

As editor, you would also become an active member of the Leadership Team of the Council which meets periodically. We have several members who join us by speaker phone so location is not a hindrance to serving. Because the editor serves on the Leadership Team, the editor must be an active member in a Brethren in Christ church.

If interested, please contact Lois A. Saylor at lawsaylor@comcast.net.

WRITERS WANTED

We are also always looking for new writers. If you enjoy talking with or interviewing people and writing up an article, we would love to have your name. If you feel inspired to submit an article that would match our goal of promoting, encouraging, and inspiring women in ministry and leadership, please do so and we will be happy to review it for possible publication.

If interested, please contact Lois A. Saylor at lawsaylor@comcast.net.

Brethren in Christ

Council for Women in Ministry & Leadership

VISION STATEMENT

Encouraging divinely gifted women to fulfill their call to ministry and leadership.

OBJECTIVES

Proclaim biblical truth about the call to ministry and leadership in the body of Christ.

Provide support systems and opportunities for networking among women in ministry and leadership.

Promote education and resources related to women in ministry and leadership in the church.

Approved by the Council for Women in Ministry & Leadership 2005

Let Your Song Be Heard:

Become a Member of the Council for Women in Ministry and Leadership

Are you a woman in ministry, a professional woman who ministers to your coworkers, or a person who supports women called to do either of the above? If so, the Council for Women in Ministry and Leadership cordially invites you to show your interest and support and to share your ideas through membership in our organization. We are excited about our future as an organization dedicated to support women in their calling, and as a result we want to invite both men and women who share this same interest to join with us.

Membership in the Council is open to women and men who support the biblical view of women in ministry and leadership, and have read, understood, and affirm the core values of the Brethren in Christ.

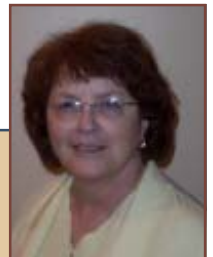
ARTICLE III, A.

To join the Council, dues of \$20 per biennium are collected which entitles the member to vote for leadership positions at the General Conference of the BIC and automatically receive *Diakonos* which will serve as our form of communication with our members. Dues also are an opportunity for the members to financially support the work of the Council including the newsletter, retreats, educational materials, and administrative costs. The Council is financed by gifts and dues. As an affinity group of the BIC, the Council is not a part of the BIC budget.

To join the Council from now until the next General Conference in 2008, send a check for \$20 payable to Brethren in Christ Church, and note it is for membership in the Council for Women in Ministry and Leadership. Mail the check to Brethren In Christ Church, PO Box 290, Grantham, PA 17027.

We hope you will join the Council and add your voice to the chorus.

*Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth. Psalms 96:1*



Many people in my life have encouraged me and supported me as I have

tried to follow God's call on my life and for that I am very grateful. In turn I have tried to encourage and support others in these same types of endeavors and the result has given me much joy. Join with us as we share in the joy of encouraging others in accomplishing God's plan for their lives.

REV. PAT OLDHAM, COUNCIL CHAIR