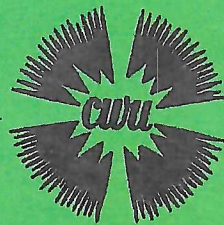


Church Women United

IN MADISON, WISCONSIN



Essays by Past CWU Presidents

1985

HISTORY OF CHURCH WOMEN UNITED
in MADISON, WISCONSIN

The Madison organization dates back to 1924 when representatives of 17 churches met together and elected Mrs. J.B. Ramsey of Christ Presbyterian Church the first president of Women's Church and Missionary Federation. In the first ten years, the presidency was held in turn by Mrs. H.B. Hughes, Mrs. G.H. Britton, First Baptist; Mrs. S.H. Messerschmidt, First Evangelical United Brethren; Mrs. Emerson Ela, First Congregational; Mrs. J.L. Gillen, First Baptist; Mrs. Clara Falk Murphy, Luther Memorial; Mrs. W.A. Hastings, Christ Presbyterian; Mrs. Louis Gardner, First Evangelical United Brethren; Mrs. Holmes Brockett, First Methodist; Mrs. J.F. Elder, Pilgrim Congregational.

Between 1934 and 1938, the group was known as the Madison Council of Federated Church Women, and the presidents were: Mrs. A.L. Stone, Mrs. George L. Caine, First Methodist; and Mrs. Harry Jerome, Christ Presbyterian.

Another change was made in 1938 when the group became the Madison Council of Church Women. Mrs. Howard Schneider, First Baptist, was the first president of this group. She was followed by: Mrs. J.L. Lambright, Trousdale Methodist; Mrs. George Britton, First Baptist; Mrs. Loran B. Cockrell, and Mrs. R.L. Blodgett, Christ Presbyterian; and Mrs. Leon Pettersen, First Methodist.

The name United Church Women was adopted in 1950 by its 26 member groups. Presidents were: Mrs. Charles E. Heminway, First Congregational; Mrs. A.R. Jennings, Glenwood Moravian; Mrs. Richard V. Campbell, Westminster Presbyterian; Mrs. H. Forest Iler, Parkside Presbyterian; Mrs. Frederick E. Browne, Grace Episcopal; Mrs. F.T. Brewster, First Methodist; Mrs. F. Earl Dye, First Congregational; Mrs. Stanley Nerdrum, Grace Episcopal; Mrs. William Roehm, Westminster Presbyterian; and Mrs. Robert Munger, Bethany Methodist.

In 1968 with 51 member groups, the name United Church Women was changed to Church Women United in Madison, Wisconsin, Inc. The following women have served as president: Fran Bright, June Forsyth, Isabel Beck, Margaret Roberts Teller, Alice Schacht, Muriel Lawrence, Donna Eaton; and at this writing, Donna Turner is president of the 43 member groups of Church Women United.

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STATEMENT OF MISSION
CHURCH WOMEN UNITED IN THE USA

PURPOSE: The purpose of Church Women United is to encourage women to come together in a visible community to witness to their faith in Jesus Christ and, enabled by the Holy Spirit, to go out into every neighborhood and nation as instruments of reconciling love.

NATURE: Church Women United is a national movement through which Protestant, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and other Christian women may express the ecumenical dimensions of their faith and work. Units in states and local communities are organized around their own by-laws, it being understood that such by-laws may not be in conflict with those of the national movement.

PARTICIPATION: Church Women United is open to all Christian women who wish to manifest their unit by building a covenantal community through worship, study, and cooperative action. Other women may participate provided they understand the purpose of the movement and intend to cooperate in advancing its program.

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The following pages are statements contributed by several past Church Women United Presidents. It is our prayer that this booklet will serve as a resource item to enrich your understanding of the past, present, and future endeavors of Church Women United in Madison.

MILDRED CAMPBELL

President 1954-1955

My term as president followed that of Pearl Jennings. She was a fine person, a very sincere, dedicated leader. We enjoyed many periods of spiritual inspiration. She and many of the loyal, spiritual leaders I worked with have gone to be with our Lord. What happy memories I have. There are no finer people to work with than Christian women.

How hard we worked in the early days of United Church Women (as we were called then) to get the many denominations to be a part of the ecumenical movement. First, we visited the pastor of the church and explained our plan. Then we got a list of his women officers and continued our work through them. Through love and friendship they joined us and each year we grew.

Each meeting was an all-day meeting. We arrived at 9:30 AM for a roll and coffee. The meeting began at 10 o'clock. We were welcomed by the chairman of the women's group of the church in which we were meeting. We usually had a brief message and prayer by the pastor of the church. There was a presentation of the work the United Church Women were doing at home and around the world. A brief talk by each local officer on what she was doing at the present time to further the work.

Sometimes the church would serve lunch and sometimes we'd take a sandwich and the church would serve coffee and perhaps cookies. We met in the various denominational churches so we'd get better acquainted. We had so much information to present to the women that we'd even have maps and explanations during the lunch. In the afternoon there was a speaker, either local or national, or a panel discussion appropriate for the day as of World Community Day, World Fellowship Day, etc. On World Day of Prayer we met morning, afternoon and evening. The evening meeting was for women and men who were working during the day. I believe the working women met in the evening for the other special days also. Much emphasis was placed on "The Least Coin" which was beginning about that time.

Our only son lost his life in the Korean War.
My husband and I spent the next year in Baton Rouge,
Louisiana. Loretta Iller followed me as president
and I left the group in capable hands.

4

NEALEEN ROEHM

President 1965-1966

I was first introduced to CWU by my Mother when Eva Brewster, a former Methodist missionary to China, was president. The exact year escapes me. It was during her tenure that I got the idea that we should have a newsletter. I went to her and told her, and her response was "Oh NO, not that!" She didn't want to find the people who would do the work, so, I said I would do it. It took the form it has today. Being frugal, the 8½ by 14 size meant less handling and more space. We learned how to cut stencils; I found a used mimeograph machine and away we went. Eva's articles in the form of the president's message for the month was a source of inspiration to all the readers and we got to know her and love her through them. What is amazing to me-is that-it is still following approximately the same format.

We started a Bible Study group after attending one of the state conferences. As the membership of that group was mostly chief and few indians, we agreed on a particular book and were all to come prepared. I took it very seriously, and started studying many hours in preparation. It wasn't long and they asked me to lead it. For 13 years I continued in that role and grew with the experience. Eventually, I put the lessons on the frugal 8½ x 14 sheets and many saved them. I recently heard that Betty Kurtenacker used one of the collections of lessons for a study group at Grace Episcopal. Margaret Cockrell took over when I had to return to work and could no longer do the lessons. The fellowship and love shared by that group carries on to this day with periodic reunions as life and ability permits.

Another highlight of those years were the meetings during the summer at Laura Jackson's at Skyview, in her beautiful garden overlooking the city. We gathered to study and pray together. They were truly experiences of ecumenical fellowship and growth in unity.

Another highlight was when Dr. Frank Laubach came to Madison to speak for World Day of Prayer. At 83 years of

age, we scheduled 6 speaking engagements in one day. He stayed with my Mother and as I stayed by his side through all of this, I can share several incidences which I will remember always. He was so scheduled that time for a haircut was out of the question--so my Mother offered my services. (At the time, I kept 12 heads cut as needed.) In the middle of the honor of cutting such a famous head of hair, he asked me where I had learned the art. Not being skilled in the art of deception, I blurted out the fact that I had learned how in a mental institution--Dunning in Chicago, of all places! He got very nervous and continuously asked, "Are you done yet?" When I finally responded in the affirmative, he bolted from the chair and ran to look in the mirror. His sigh of relief could be heard in the next room.

Bill Wineke, the Madison journalist, came to interview him and such was Dr. Laubach's influence that Bill went into the ministry.

Dr. Laubach was also experimenting with a small pyramid to keep his razor sharp. He bragged of extending the life of the blade from 12 to 27 times. He thought it worth the effort. He talked to me about starting a Literacy Council in Madison and agreed to come again and speak to get it started. This he did and the Madison Literacy Council had its beginning.

As president of CWU and Social Action Chairman, I was asked to sit on many boards and participate in many community efforts. At the time, we represented 52 churches, and attendance at our special observances ran from 300 to 500 people. Our influence and outreach exceed the Madison Council of Churches.

One such group was one initiated by Juvenile Court Judge Erwin Brunner, who was concerned about the jail facilities and philosophy used for our youth. There was room for 6 girls and 12 boys and the girls were put in the adult jail at night. It was far from ideal. Through their efforts, the juvenile jail was expanded and Briarpatch came into being. Dane County Citizens for Children and Youth was also formed and CWU served on its board.

As president of CWU, I was invited to lunch with the woman vice president of Chili. She told us how active the women were in determining legislation. The legislature was always filled with women verbally expressing their approval or disapproval with gusto. She stated they demanded family planning services. Connie Treinon was there and we began to discuss services available to women in Wisconsin. I was horrified to learn that one had to resort to an underground search for help for women with unwanted or inadvisable pregnancies. The subject of birth control was taboo and could not be initiated by social workers as contraceptives were listed as 'indecent articles' by state legislation. Fran Bright, then social action chairman, was called and within 24 hours we had an enthusiastic group together dedicated to establishing a family planning clinic for the women of Dane County. But first we needed to address state legislation. Wisconsin Citizens for Family Planning was formed out of this group and now legislation is changed and a clinic is available here. That puts in a paragraph what took years of work to accomplish.

CWU played a vital role in the establishment of the Community Action Commission, Headstart and Welfare Rights Organization during that period.

One of the things needed to help things run smoothly was a current list of the participating churches, their Key Women, pastors and important dates of days and other key people involved. This resulted in our starting a directory, which I understand is compiled regularly today.

Rev. James Love's wife, Mildred, and I had been visiting a nursing home on a weekly basis for several years. The one we had chosen was run by an alcoholic and the care of the residents left us stunned. We began writing letters, demanding inspections, etc. It wasn't long and it was improved. But I began wondering about other homes in Dane County. I got a list from the state and made a survey. One of the questions put to the directors of the then 16 homes was, "Do you have anyone who has no visitors and would benefit from being adopted on a one to one basis by someone trained to visit regularly and would you

give us a list of names?" The response led us to recruit 152 women who were interested. A training course was held and people were assigned with the understanding that they could change clients by calling the coordinator. It resulted in helping the visitor as much as the person visited. One nursing home director stated, "The atmosphere around here has completely changed."

Rathie Salveratnum came to Madison during this time and we became friends. We corresponded for years. She was president of the Women of East Asia. At her request, I submitted one lesson for the Fellowship of the Least Coin and was honored by its selection.

These are the outstanding things that come to mind-but-the experience of knowing and working with and growing in faith with such outstanding women as Mildred Campbell, Erma Jenkins, Myra Dye, Eve Brester, Laura Jackson, Annette Bliede, Olive Steinhauer, Louvia Roberts, Jenny Jennings, Jean Halversen, Fran Bright, Mrs. John Bordner, Grace Hauge, Clara Skott, and many others have given my life a fullness and richness that it would not have had without them. I am truly blessed and grateful.

In reading over the preceding information, I realize that I did not mention a dream of Alice Schacht's of starting a free health clinic on the east side of Madison. Outstanding conveners: that she is, a number of people were drawn together and as I remember, I served on that first board. Property was purchased, procedures established and the Near Eastside Community Health Center came into being. For all but 4 years of existence, I have served on its board until recently when I had to give it up. It now is providing direct health services under contract for medicare clients of the area with a physician and two nurses on staff.

AUDREY MUNGER

President 1967-1968

I am pleased that others have emphasized the many activities of CWU as these have continued to be on-going projects. I would like to take a somewhat different approach and emphasize instead what CWU did for me personally, since my involvement has been a great influence on my entire life.

First, one cannot work with people as dedicated as those in CWU without realizing that God is very much alive and at work through the love and care and willingness to serve exemplified by so many co-workers. With this comes also the realization that God is also working through me, and that I have a responsibility to be the messenger of Christ, and to be able to say, "Here am I, Lord. Take me, use me, direct my feet in the path you would have them go, and let my lips utter the words you would have me say."

Second, with the complete acceptance of Christ as the dominant figure in my own life, one need not worry about trivial details; if a thing is really right with Christ, it will succeed! Therefore, I can address myself to the larger goals with the knowledge that I am not alone. Indeed, any time that strictly personal goals supersede the desire to do the will of God, perhaps they deserve to fail.

Third, though illness has forced me to become less active physically, I have nevertheless carried this same philosophy throughout my own life: God lives in me, and I live for Him, so I must strive to live so that the love of Christ will flow through me to all with whom I come in contact.

My wish for all of you at this happiest of seasons is that you will find the joy of living in Christ, so that His love will radiate through you, not only at Christmas but at all times and in all places.

JUNE G. FORSYTH
President 1970-1971

In some ways those years of my CWU presidency seem like yesterday, but when I look at the list of CWU presidents who have followed me and also try to remember what happened between June of 1970 and June of 1972, it seems a long time ago.

Overriding every memory, however, is the work with VISTA which we began as I took over. I remember coming back from a June vacation to be told by Fran Bright, who was just finishing her presidency, and Nealeen Roehm that CWU had been approached to become the sponsoring agency for VISTA in Madison and they thought we ought to apply. They got us into it! My executive committee had to implement it. "It would be simple," they said. But it was a good thing that we didn't know how complicated it would be. We should have known that dealing with the government would be complicated. First, we found we had to become incorporated. Even the state unit wasn't incorporated! Two good friends, Trayton Lathrop, lawyer, and John White, CPA, helped us wade through that process-free of charge, of course. Then we had to have a supervisor. That was easy, for Fran volunteered which she continued to do for two years. Then we discovered the hardest hurdle of all-we had to have a fund of \$500 in the bank which VISTA's could borrow from in emergencies. Eventually we got a gift for that from the Southwest Association of the United Church of Christ.

We started with two projects, Freedom House and Children's House, and ended our sponsorship in 1976 having helped some 20 different community groups, most of which still continue. Others were the Welfare Rights Association, Near East Side Health Center, Senior Citizens, Home, Wintergreen School, Thurana School, First Congregational Satellite Day Care, Center for Conflict Resolution, Madison Tenant Union, Noah's Ark, Omega, People's Video, Rape Crisis Center, Young Pioneers' Day Care Center, Design Coalition, Bayview Foundation, Mifflin Community Health Center and the Adult Day Center at Bethel Lutheran Church.

This sponsorship was a terribly stimulating influence on CWU locally but at the same time it caused many to look at us skeptically. It wasn't exactly what religious groups were used to being involved with. Most of these groups were on the cutting edge of change and there was a difference of opinion frequently over whether or not we were undermining our social structures by promoting such radical things as day care centers, alternative schools, health centers, rape crisis centers, etc. You can remember, I know, how hard it was for such things to gather support. And I am afraid it caused us to lose members, which wasn't easy to face. Our executive committee believed there had to be changes if we were to preserve our way of life, and CWU national goals backed us up. There were still student demonstrations at that time and I remember the trauma when one of our VISTA's was arrested. Now, it seems strange that all this should have caused so much concern. In the 80's day care centers, alternative schools and health centers and rape crisis centers have become a way of life.

Another thing that I remember was when we were approached to become active in the fight against pornography and came home having seen more than I had ever seen in my life, and I knew how I hoped our board would react. They felt unanimously, if I recall correctly, after much discussion that unless persons in Madison chose to expose themselves to those things, they were not being bothered; in fact, they might not even know they existed. So we chose to devote our energies to things that would help the poor and alleviate the distressed. But it was hard for many to understand this position.

Now I look upon those years and the following four when I was VISTA chairman for CWU as years in which I met more wonderful people, and had my eyes opened more widely to the world and all its problems than in any other period of my life. I really had changed the way I thought. For that opportunity, I have been always grateful that I had said "Yes" when a nominating committee called me one day and I wondered if I could possibly survive two whole years. They flew by and I can hardly believe they are now so far in the past.

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ISABEL BECK

President 1972-1973

Immediately upon taking office, I was involved in hiring a VISTA supervisor. The job had become too big for a volunteer and VISTA agreed to pay for a supervisor. The area VISTA supervisor came to Madison and we interviewed candidates for the position. Following the hiring of Sandy as supervisor, she and I went to Chicago for a three-day training session for supervisors and sponsors.

Monthly meetings were held with the supervisor, a representative from each of the VISTA projects and representatives from CWU. June Forsyth served as the liaison between CWU and the VISTA's. These projects were a marvelous opportunity for church people to show their concern and support by helping with problem areas being served by the VISTA projects, i.e., the Near East-side Health Center, Welfare Rights, alternative schools, Tenants Union, home repairs for elderly people, day care, an architectural group willing to redesign homes for low-income people and other projects.

Our country was still involved in the Viet Nam War and the Forum voted to march in the Memorial Day Parade against the war.

At the suggestion of Nealeen Roehm, volunteer coordinator for Dane County Social Services, we formed a committee to help with the Dane County Free Clothing Center. We were able to obtain a grant from the Brittingham Foundation for a supervisor for the Center and we helped to move the clothing from above Ronlies on East Washington to its present location on Baldwin, no easy task. Church women not only brought clothing to the Center, but repaired the clothing, too.

An Interfaith Tea had been held for several years, but because teas were becoming "old hat", Liesl Blockstein, president of B'nai B'rith women, Dorothy Schmidt president of the Madison Deanery, and I along with representatives of the three organizations, met to try something different. That year the B'nai B'rith women presented their "Dolls for Democracy" at Temple Beth El

One May Fellowship Day became a huge gathering because the United States Committee of the World Council of Churches was meeting in Madison. Margaret Shannon, a past executive director of CWU was to be here for that meeting so she was our speaker. There were national and international guests, the VISTA's and other local guests in attendance. Audrey Munger served as chair for the Day.

Serving as president of Madison CWU was a challenge, exciting, never dull, and always rewarding. I am very thankful for the opportunity to work with women who want to work with all Christians and those of other faiths.

MARGARET ROBERTS TELLER

President 1974-1975

My two years as President of CWU in Madison was truly a time of spiritual growth and heightened awareness of the needs and hurts of so many in our society. It was a time of making lasting friendships with people in many sectors of society--and once these bridges are built, your life is never again the same.

Church Women United in Madison was the local sponsor for VISTAs at that period of many transistions. VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) was very committed to making social change and some of the local groups that we worked with were: Design Coalition (an architechtual group); Welfare Rights; Near Eastside Health Center; People's Video; Madison Free Radio; Tenants Union; alternative school for Native Americans; and cooperative grocery & day care center.

- Some other highlights of my term as President include:
- 1) Particiating in People's Video classes when three of us learned to operate video equipment, edit the film and present programs on Public Access TV. We encouraged other women to film their church events and we taped Church Women United forums, special days of celebration and during the Year of the Woman in 1985 we interviewed an outstanding woman in different fields each month (including our first female WI State Senator, Kathy Morrisson, a shoemaker and an aviatrix).
 - 2) Hunger vigils every week at the State Capitol to heigh-ten awareness of world hunger as well as hunger in our country and community.
 - 3) Meetings and cooperative efforts with other ograniza-tions, such as Bread for the World, Headstart, CROP, MUM, Dane County Free Clothing Center, UNICEF, and Fellowship of the Least Coin. Helping to move the Free Clothing Ctr. from the upstairs over Ronlie's Florist to an upstairs space at 55 S. Baldwin where for the first time Dane County paid the rent and helped coordinate the volunteers was a night-mare of hangars, stairs & sore backs, but we were all so excited about this much needed service and the dedication of the people who volunteer there.
 - 4) Marching with Welfare Rights mothers to convince Public Service Commission members to have evening hearings as well as daytime meetings and testifying at hearings previously attended mostly by paid executives.

- 5) Participating in a conference at St. Benedict Center on "Money, Power and the Human Spirit", with other community leaders and 5 international philosophers as resource people. An intensive three days of discussion and fellowship led to a march to the capitol to advocate for oppressed people and a tape for WHA Radio and much personal enrichment.
- 6) Working with the members of the Board to develop programs for Forums and Days of Celebration. Our biggest frustration always seemed to be trying to keep well informed on legislative issues and local concerns.
- 7) Working with Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Jewish women to plan Interfaith Days and attending some of their special events, as their guest. How exciting to look at similarities and forget differences!
- 8) Going to Gresham as a neutral observer during and after the National Guard was at the Alexian Brothers Monestary and meeting national representatives of several denominations. Video taping an exclusive interview with Brother David, Alexian leader who had much compassion and respect for Native Americans in their quest for self determination.
- 9) Meeting women from every state and many countries and sharing concerns and problem solving with them at a National Convention of Church Women United.

What an inspiration and challenge we as dedicated church women have experienced! And sharing this inspiration and challenge has helped us touch so many other lives while enriching our own!

ALICE SCHACHT

President 1976-1977

Here are some of the highlights of important events and activities during my presidency:

1. Madison Area Community of Churches went out of existence, and CWU requested and was given their cash assets and donated headquarters (suite of 7 rooms up over Home Savings) to see if it could run an ecumenical center of some kind - all volunteer help.
2. Brainstorming with community human service people. MUM people facilitating, and interested church people re what such a center should do and how it should be governed. From that our present Board.
3. VISTA's - under June Forsyth's supervision with Sandy Brown paid coordinator.
4. Conferences re status of VISTA as National policies and monies changed.
5. Madison Literacy Council requested housing to establish public image, and to enable it to then mobilize needed resources for independent quarters. Granted. We were most congenial office-mates. Ray Wagner was then (as Dir. of Madison Literacy Council) a regular MEC Board member. Once when I was out of the country for 6 weeks, he even took over temporarily as president of CWU (as far as the MEC office was concerned)-a story he had fun telling people. He subdued and taught us how to operate some stubborn office machines, even.
6. CWU and MEC and MUM together sponsored the first Human Services Dialogues for church and agency human service people, gathering the most clergy together that had been assembled for years at the first one-over 100.
7. We were maintaining close relationships with the Free Clothing Center, and had a representative at each of their meetings.
8. We were asked to have a regular rep on the Community Action Commission-Laura Munson did invaluable service there.

9. We wrestled with updating the religious community information and finally got out a new directory with lots of help from Joyce Long, Isabelle Beck, and Jeannette Harries, I believe. Am not sure of the year for the first directory.

10. We helped with hospitality and food at the reception center for foreign students at the University. Joyce Long was the one who first got me in on that. Meeting with University people and writing letters, we got a bigger room in which to offer them food that CWU donated, which fed 100's of weary newcomers. More letters about the situation to Deans and Graduate offices about the difficulties of the situation for foreign guests led to new headquarters for them at Union South, easy access to restaurants, rooms, etc. Very successful advocacy as well as service project eliminating the need.

11. Learning the ropes possible only because of wonderful sisters. Then I went to the Quadrennial Assembly in Purdue and got my first taste of the international scene. Marvelous!!!

Important people whom I loved being with so it was attractive to be in the movement, personally:
Fran Bright, June Forsyth, Joyce Ecklund, Mae Hara,
Mary Jean Bartholomew, Muriel Lawrence, Isabel Beck,
Marge Christianson, Mary Friederick, Mary Jane Esser,
Mary Page, and Rita Honnold.

MURIEL LAWRENCE

President 1978-1980

This was a period of less initiation and doing than the previous decade. The VISTA's were phased out and the projects begun with them were now "on their own." Our area of continued support was the Dane County Clothing Center. We received a grant from the Brittingham Foundation which was paid to Tina Huber monthly to reimburse her, at least symbolically, for her time and effort and to pay for some things not covered by Dane County Social Services such as lunch for the volunteers when they put in long hours.

It was a time of consultation. We held a series of sessions with MUM, Triangle Ministry, MEC, Jail Ministry and maybe others to discover ways we might work together, support one another rather than compete, and even to see if we could combine offices/newsletters or other areas. The outcome was a better understanding of each other's needs and goals.

Another type of consultation in which we participated was with a number of churches, MUM, and the Gay Community. It was a time for developing understanding. Two successive years we co-sponsored an all-day dialogue event with speakers, workshops and fellowship for area clergy which increased understanding on all sides. Unfortunately this project also cost us a few members who did not feel discussion in this area appropriate for church women.

It was during my tenure that MEC put out its first directory and that they had to start generating their own support from the churches.

DONNA EATON
President 1982 - 1983

What a privilege it was to be President of Church Women United for three years!

Memories glow - with the new involvement for the Key Women ... with the hard working members of the executive board those years ... with our special Celebrations and Forums ... with the visit of precious Sister Anna of Belfast ... with the beginning of the Peace Ribbon that culminated this year at the Pentagon ... with the National Assembly at Purdue ... with the recognition of Tina Huber and her staff at the Dane County Free Clothing Center ... with our contributions of time, talent and presence to help make the Week of Prayer events memorable ... with the Interfaith Day Celebrations, especially our last one with the music of our traditions blending, binding us in beautiful unity.

Thank you for the memories, friendship, the Christ presence you shared with me and the love. May our witness of peace and love be always so outspoken.

DONNA TURNER

President 1984-1985

Putting this booklet together has been a joy. The idea for this project was born following the Christmas CWU luncheon last year (1984) when young women present expressed their surprise at the history of the Madison unit of Church Women United. They lamented the lack of information within their own women's organizations regarding the many activities of church women working together in an ecumenical endeavor to bring about good within our community.

Though this endeavor continues today, it does not exhibit the energy and force with which the women of yester-year strode bravely ahead, sometimes 'into the lion's jaws' unafraid in their strength of unity and purpose.

The past presidents, including those not in this booklet, are to be admired for their leadership, inspiration and model for those of us who attempt to carry on the purpose of Church Women United. We have a long way to go to repeat their performance of commitment of faith through action.

It is true, times have changed, we have added responsibilities, and few are answering the call. But it is our prayer that somehow we will grab hold of that torch of the witness of past presidents before the flame flickers to barely an ember, that we will fan it brightly alive again with the help of the Spirit of our Lord and Savior.

This booklet is given to you as a gift to share with others. May God bless church women everywhere especially at this Holiday Season!

Some of the activities during my tenure have included: coordination of low-cost health survey (on behalf of Madison Community Health Center) by mail and then phone calls to 150 physicians to provide health care to unemployed persons on a sliding fee scale or on a free basis.

-We sponsored the first Hispanic World Day of Prayer in Madison. It was prepared and presented by the Hispanic community and will become an annual event.

-Our Unit has the project of cataloging the 1275 panels that make up the Wisconsin Peace Ribbon (part of the largest folk art in American history).

-Our focus and education in addition to peace and justice has been on women and health and our environment and legislative issues touching these concerns.

-We have deliberately sought to increase our spiritual awareness and enrichment every time we met and through Bible studies.

-Our ecumenical membership is treasured, and an ecumenical choir provides us with special music. We participate in the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

-We helped write the guidelines for the Interfaith Dialogue planning committee.

-We continue to promote UNICEF, Madison Friends of International Students, and the Free Clothing Center. SERRV self-help handcrafts are made available at our Celebrations; cookies are still donated with the help of Key Women to over 300 children in Headstart.

There now! you have probably learned a few more things that Church Women United of Madison has been involved in than you knew before you started reading this booklet. We've undoubtedly forgotten many, many things that were accomplished and are being accomplished. But this was not meant to be a long-drawn-out project.

HAPPY READING!

21

