

## UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

This has been a challenging year for all as we moved from nine Presbyterials to four. We have adapted to new ways of running meetings, and best of all, we have made new friends and renewed former acquaintances. We are also in the midst of revising our by-laws and further discussion will take place over the next year. Our annual meeting will be held May 4-5, 2010 at Collier Street United Church in Barrie. The Reverend Dr. Karen Hamilton will be our theme speaker and Bible study leader.

As President of Toronto Conference UCW I traveled from the West coast to the East in just over a month. I had the privilege of attending the GC40 meeting in Kelowna last August. As we were about to land at Kelowna Airport, we saw a helicopter flying with a container of water for the fires burning on nearby hills. The smell of smoke was evident as we disembarked from the plane. As this was my first GC meeting, I found it to be a great learning experience and the location was breathtaking. Pat Edmonds prepared a display about the UCW which was enthusiastically received by the Commissioners. Many spoke to her about how the UCW had helped them.

In September I attended the annual meeting of the National UCW Presidents and President-Elects at Burry Heights Retreat Centre in Newfoundland. The beautiful surroundings around the retreat centre made for a relaxing time amid our busy sessions. At this meeting we agreed to write to our members of parliament protesting the lack of action with regard to race-based violence against Aboriginal women.

In October, Brian Stewart, former Senior Correspondent for the CBC, was guest speaker at our annual Togetherness Day event at Caledon East. Some 300 women from across the Conference attended the meeting.

In January, Toronto Conference UCW donated \$1,000 to the Massey Centre Bowling for Babies event. Our sponsorship is very important as we continue to support Massey Centre.

At present the capital of the Toronto Conference UCW 40th Anniversary Award fund at Emmanuel College is \$63,855.85. Our goal is still to support two students. Additional donations are gratefully received. This year's recipient was Ian Kellogg, the first male to receive this award.

In February, I attended the National UCW Presidents meeting at Church House. As our meeting happened to coincide with the Olympics, we began our first day with the singing of "O Canada" and "From Bonavista to Vancouver Island." Among our discussions was how to deal with a situation that arises when a Presbyterial wants to close. Mary Collins, retired overseas person, spoke to us about her work with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea. Plans are underway for the Toronto Conference UCW to host the National UCW meeting this coming September. Some members of the National Alumni will join us for some sessions.

Our UCW members continue to faithfully serve our churches with wisdom and love, passion and compassion. As we continue our journey together as United Church Women, we remember to make room for others, if they wish to join or work along side.

All are welcome.

Eleanor Nicol  
President