

Stories



Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world,
what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Mark 14:9

Apology to Women Denied Access to Ministry Because they Married

Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario
Annual Meeting
Saturday, May 24, 2014

At the time of Church union, the United Church inherited two vibrant Deaconess Orders from the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. The Committee making decisions about policies to govern the new Order had no difficulty deciding the rule that a Deaconess could not continue to work or maintain membership in the Order when she married should be included in the new Constitution. This practice was so self-evident in both former Orders, where it was unfailingly practiced, that 1925 was the first time it was written into the rules. The regulation required all Deaconesses to resign from their positions and from the Order, by letter, previous to, or on the day that they were married. They were to return their Deaconess pins, dispose of their uniforms, and refrain from identifying themselves as Deaconesses. The procedure was called "disjoining".

Created years earlier the Deaconess Orders had been modeled on the organizational principles of European sisterhoods, which included communal living arrangements. The disjoining rule proved incredibly difficult to displace, even though society was changing and Deaconesses in the new United Church Order had more independence and were expected to provide for themselves. The rule remained a part of the Manual and Constitution of the Deaconess Order until 1960.

When ordination became a possibility for women the same expectation¹ was applied to Ordained women, even though the 1934 remit from the General Council only asked for agreement that, "The ministry shall be open to both men and women." The qualifier of "single" was so assumed it wasn't even included. In 1957, when Elinor Leard was about to become the

first married woman to be ordained, the Moderator sent an impassioned telegram in an attempt to stop "the proposed ordination of ... a married woman with three children." Elinor's "unnatural ordination" sparked a General Council Commission, which upheld the rule when it reported! It was only in 1964 that the Church changed the policy.

The lingering persistence of the practices for *at least* a decade beyond the official recall verifies that the motivation was not only a relic of the past.

The theological belief that a woman's primary vocation was that of wife and mother, coupled with



1911 Methodist Deaconesses in Winnipeg

the understanding that women could only manage one vocation at a time, were handy camouflage for the misogynistic belief that woman could not be ministers because they were not fully in the image of God. Deaconesses were explicitly and emphatically described as NOT in ministry. While the United Church opened ministry to single women in 1936, virtually no congregations would consider calling a woman.

The stories that follow, with two exceptions, are about Deaconesses. Research on the disjoining of Deaconesses, and on the lives of the nearly 700 women who served as Deaconesses between 1894 and 1977² has been conducted in the last decade. Between 1936 and 1957 only 27 women were ordained by the United Church. Very little has been done to document the story of how women called to ordination were affected by the rule. Perhaps someone will take up this work in light of the apology.

Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, and particularly Winnipeg, was a significant centre of Deaconess activity. Manitoba College (initially Presbyterian) established a Deaconess program in 1920.³ The missions in Winnipeg’s north end employed many women, working with immigrant and later Aboriginal populations. Ours is a rich history. All of these stories are of women affected by disjoining, although some are of women who gave a life time of service to the church. The historic manifestation of systemic sexism continues to influence attitudes about women in ministry. The just reformation of our theology and practice is not yet complete. The apology, first made by the General Council in 2006, and repeated in 2014 by the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario mark steps on the journey of discovery and change.

Longer versions of the stories are available on the website UCCDeaconessHistory.ca as well as other documentation about the lives of United Church Deaconesses. Diakonia of the United Church’s website, DUCC.ca, is another valuable source of



information about the contemporary diaconate, in Canada and around the world.

1. *Ordained women were denied the right to practice, as the United Church has no way of revoking ordination.*
2. *In 1977 the nomenclature and understanding of diaconal ministry in the United Church begins to change, in 1984 the Church recognized Diaconal Ministers as full members of the Order of Ministry.*
3. *For a history of the Deaconess Program at Manitoba College see Training Deaconesses the Manitoba Way, by Sherri McConnell, UCCDeaconessHistory.ca*

Some material drawn from General Council 2006 documentation by Mary Anne McFarlane.



Iris (Daly) Milton was a “clergy wife”, one of the hundreds of women educated for ministry at the United Church Training School who subsequently became trained volunteers, as the church got “two for the price of one”. This sentiment was verbalized, with no shame, by pastoral charges, happy to be the recipients of such largess. Amazing as it might seem in our century, those were the exact words on the vocational



materials produced by the United Church: two for the price of one.

Iris left her home in Winnipeg to enter UCTS in 1944. Initially she was a WMS Worker (46-51) in a larger Presbytery ministry called Lake Head Mission (Thunder Bay). In 1954, she was designated as a Deaconess and “became National Supervisor of the Sunday School in the Home by Mail and Air. Her cheerful, “Hello, boys and girls, Sunday School in the Home brings you Tell Us A Story”, together with a well-researched bible drama, was welcomed in villages, farms, lighthouses and hospitals.” (from a tribute written by Nancy Edwards, picture above, 1956)

When Iris married Charles Milton in 1957, she wrote to the Deaconess Order asking for an exemption from the disjoining rule. Exemptions were being considered, beginning in 1953, but it was not openly

announced. Most women had no idea it was possible. Iris was granted one for the duration of the time she was in her current employment. She was disjoined in 1959.

Iris appears again in church records as a Deaconess in 1976: retained by Winnipeg Presbytery, without a ministry appointment. There is no record in Conference Proceedings of her reinstatement, she simply appears.* In 1980 she served in a team ministry at Deer Lodge with Charles and Deaconess Oriole (Vane) Veldhuis. Tragically she died in 1983 of cancer.

**An examination of Winnipeg Presbytery minutes might reveal more detail.*



Many Deaconesses were also trained teachers, using educational skills in a variety of ways. Oriole Vane Veldhuis taught at the Rama Reserve day school, 1961.

Oriole Vane Veldhuis was disjoined without even knowing it had happened. Word of the 1960 decision to end the practice seemed slow to disseminate. Oriole (Vane) Veldhuis and Rosalene (Bostwick) Sallmen both graduated from the Training School in 1961. Rosalene had an offer of a position and an offer of marriage and she was able to accept both: she became a married Deaconess. Oriole was also engaged, with plans to marry Art two years later. Designated by Manitoba Conference, she served for two years as a Deaconess-Teacher at Rama Reserve Day School. (Photo to the left) Returning to Winnipeg to marry in 1963, and to the position as CE Director at Fort Garry United, she only learned the following spring when the new Year Book was published that she had been removed from the Order because she left to marry. Oriole’s colleague, Don Ray, “went to bat” for her and her name was restored to the list. In 1964, Rosalene too was removed from the roll, without her knowledge. She was later reinstated.



were not considered to be “in ministry “ so there would have been no reason to perceive continuity from Marguertie’s Deaconess calling to her new vocation.

Her potential status may have increased, but so too was the level of discrimination she

had to face as a woman “in ministry”.



Olive Shaw with Sutherland Mission (Winnipeg) kindergarten children and their soap box derby race car in 1938. After a long career as a Woman Worker with the WMS, Olive became a Deaconess in 1962.



“It was AGREED that Margarite (sic) Miller be disjoined from the [Deaconess] Order since she was ordained by Manitoba Conference June, 1949.” **Marguerite Miller** was the only Deaconess officially disjoined for this reason. After graduation in 1939 from United College (Winnipeg) Deaconess Program and designation by the Conference, she served at the Residential Schools in Norway House and Brandon before her ordination.

The diaconate was a lay order and both officially and unofficially it had a lower status in the church’s hierarchy of valuation. At the time, Deaconesses

Raised in BC and a graduate of UBC, **Ruby Horton Berridge**, had a first career teaching Aboriginal children along the BC coast.

After graduation from The United Church Training School, Ruby was commissioned as a Woman’s Missionary Society (WMS) worker and from 1940 to 1944 she worked in Flin Flon, Manitoba where she was the WMS Missionary at Large to Northland Presbytery. It was a catch all kind of job, including CGIT work, summer camps, visiting outlying families, supporting WMS groups and taking services when



Popular because of her friendly nature and good educational skills, Ruby was kept busy throughout northern Manitoba from her base in Flin Flon, 1940-44.

needed. She was also called the Assistant to the Minister at Northminster United Church. He likely supervised her, as was often the case at the time. She may well have been expected to do his typing.

In 1944 she left Flin Flon to take up another WMS

position at First United Church in Vancouver. Her work there was focused on Girls Work. In 1948, for reasons unknown, Ruby decided to be Designated as a Deaconess, and she went next to Southminster United, Lethbridge (48 -52), then as the WMS Personnel Secretary (53) and Girls’ Work Secretary (54) in Toronto. On the coast again, she served St. Andrew’s Wesley (54 –60) in Vancouver and at Queen’s Ave, New Westminster (61-64).

In 1961, Ruby married Stanley Berridge, an Ordained minister. She was fortunate not to be disjoined for marriage; while the rule had been officially revoked in August 1960, in other cases, as late as 1967, disjoining occurred. (See Joan (Davies) Sandy’s biography at UCCDeaconessHistory.ca)

Very soon after her marriage Stanley became too ill to work and Ruby had to take over raising her step children. She needed a larger income than a Deaconess was given, so she returned to teaching, her first career. She also cared for her mother who lived to be 110. Ruby’s neice, Betty Nunez wrote, “I believe much of her longevity was due to [Ruby’s] loving care.”

Ruby died in Vancouver in September, 1995.



From 1932 when she graduated from United College (Manitoba) Deaconess program and was designated a Deaconess until 1964 when she retired, **Viola Daly** was in ministry with Aboriginal people. She taught in three Residential Schools, Brandon, Muncey (Southern Alberta) and Crosby (Port Simpson, BC), and in two day schools, Skidegate Mission, Haida Gwaii, and in Caughnawaga, Quebec, her first placement. Viola boarded with the Johnson family on the reserve, and she is pictured here wearing Mrs. Johnson’s regalia.

The single women who faithfully served the United Church were also affected by the disjoining rule. Low wages, poor pensions were two significant effects. It



was argued that the diaconate was only a temporary vocation, despite the reality that nearly half of the women who entered served a lifetime. Disjoining also contributed to a view that Deaconesses were immature and that their real life was yet to come. Those who never married had failed to achieve the higher calling of wife and mother.



In 1962, **Yvonne Clipperton (Vanslyke Wilke)** was disjoined from the Deaconess Order. She did not know in 1961, a year after the rule was revoked, so she assumed that she would have to resign once she married. Mentors advised her to become a Deaconess, even if only for one year, reasoning that down the road it might be possible for married women to work and it would be easier to be reinstated than to start from the beginning.

Yvonne took that advice and was designated. A year later, a month before her wedding, and a few weeks after resigning her Deaconess position, she received a letter from the Deaconess Order asking for her resignation and the return of the Deaconess pin. Like many other women, she never returned the pin, but she did forward her resignation.

Only in recent years has Yvonne come to know that she was technically disjoined because she was not working, not because she was getting married. Yvonne noted, “I don’t think we understood what was happening, that we made the distinction, and it

was just expected that the minister’s wife, in the small town where Jim was settled, would not work.”

In the theology of the Church, Deaconesses were not in ministry, they were lay employees and without a position there was no status. Those who did not want the door readily opened for women to be in ministry benefitted from the confusion that abounded about why women were being disjoined. Advocacy toward the diaconate being recognized as an equal calling to ordination was hampered. This effect of disjoining lingers today.

After Jim’s settlement to Waskada - Goodlands, in southwest Manitoba in 1962, Yvonne learned that the

Settlement Committee had been influenced to settle him there because the Pastoral Charge needed CE leadership; they just assumed Yvonne would provide that. While one arm of the Church was revoking her status and credentials, another was expecting her to act in a professional capacity, but without status or pay.



Congregations expected the “minister’s wife” to stay at home and help their husbands: professional training was a bonus.



Lily Yuriko Uyeda, was born in Vancouver in 1922, where her family had a successful silk business on Granville Street. Her parents, immigrants from Japan, decided that if they were to fit in to their new homeland they should adopt Christianity as their religion. They were prominent members of the Japanese Methodist, later United, Church.

At age 18 Lily began at the University of British Columbia, but she was unable to finish her BA at the time as the events of the world were about to shatter her young life. In 1942, after the war with Japan was declared, Lily and her family were ripped out of their home and evacuated from the Pacific coast to be interned in a prisoner-of-war like camp.

At the camp Lily taught children in a grade six class. The Canadian government was barely supporting primary education for the Japanese Canadian children, so even though Lily had no formal credentials to teach, in these circumstances she was approved.

After the war Lily took training for a business career but her interest in church work, first sparked with her SCM activity at UBC, was ignited. In 1950 she graduated from the United Church Training School in Toronto and was designated a Deaconess.

Her first appointment, working in Christian Education, was at Simcoe, Ontario, followed by Olivet United in Hamilton. According to a 1959 *United Church Observer* article, the ordained minister there was so enthusiastic about Lily he was known to treat her “just like an assistant minister”. This was intended to be a compliment. At the time Deaconesses were not considered to be “in ministry”. They were supervised

and often accountable to the ordained minister with whom they worked.

In 1977 Lily, ready for an adventure, accepted a position as Associate Minister at Knox United Church in Brandon. The sense of excitement over her arrival is demonstrated by a series of advertisements in the Brandon Sun. Each week of July and August the broader community was invited to “come and meet our new deaconess”, “come for a cup of tea and shake hands with Lily Uyeda”. In team with an ordained colleague, she focused on CE and Outreach. She also had regular responsibilities to share in worship leadership. Her commitment to social justice shaped the congregation significantly and her 5 years of ministry in Brandon were well regarded. After retirement in 1983 she moved to Hamilton. Sadly, she died 4 years later of a reoccurrence of breast cancer.

In May 2012, UBC conferred honorary degrees on the 61 Japanese Canadian students affected by the racist policies enacted under the War Measures Act. Lily and her sister Mariko were two of those recognized. Lily’s neice, noted composer and musician Leslie Uyeda, was present to represent the



families. She describes the experience in this way: "When I walked out on stage to receive the two degrees and the two hoods on behalf of my beloved aunts, I could feel the presence of my entire Japanese Canadian family there with me - coming home; ... I felt the warm energy of healing."

"Return: a commemorative yearbook" documents the lives of the students honoured by UBC. It is available at http://issuu.com/ubyssey/docs/2_returns_yearbook_abc. (Lily's biography is on page 69.)



Laura Sharpe Long served at Brandon Indian Residential School (36-39), in Winnipeg's north end and at Lethbridge, but her most enduring ministry was that of Secretary of Birtle Presbytery. Disjoined in 1942, the Presbytery reinstated her in 1971. (at Brandon, child unknown)



Margaret Lambie Drummond, born at Creelford, Manitoba in 1885, was a missionary for over 43 years in India. She wrote, "I was teaching in the little town of Minnedosa, when it was announced in church, that a missionary from India was coming to tell us about her work, ... and told us about the great need of teachers. I decided to offer my services, and entered the Presbyterian Training School in Toronto, where I was sent by the Women's Missionary Society. Having finished the two year course of studies, I was appointed to India. I left Canada in 1911 [as one of the first Canadian Presbyterian Deaconesses] and in due time the ship docked at Bombay, and there we spent a few days getting necessary things we would need in central India. I spent two years in language study then in school work, it being better than evangelistic work, for the young missionaries.

The object of TEACHING is to enable those taught to get along without a teacher.
KNOWLEDGE is a treasure,
but practice is the key to it.



Margaret Drummond
1885 - 1977

Evangelistic work went hand in hand with education, Kharua, India.

The VoxWeslyan, Manitoba College Yearbook, 1928: "The story of **Dorothy Kushner [Wiznuk]** is full of interest and romance. She was born near Kolomya, in the Ukraine, and came when a baby with her parents and three brothers to this new land of promise. Dorothy's parents made their home at Steinbach, Manitoba. ... Sickness in the home made further attendance at day school impossible, but grade 10 standing was secured by night school work, and financial help given to the home by her day time work. Illness brought the family to Winnipeg in 1921.

Continued sickness made it impossible for Dorothy to carry out her cherished plan, but, whenever possible she added to her savings fund to enable her someday to attend college. The death of her father in the spring of 1925 eased the financial burden, and the autumn of that year saw the realization of Dorothy's

dream and she enrolled as a student in Manitoba College. Her graduation as a Deaconess this year [1928] was a red-letter day with the Ukrainian people, for she is the first Ukrainian Deaconess in Canada and the occasion was fittingly marked by a presentation of books from her people.

Since coming to Winnipeg Dorothy has attended the

Ukrainian Mission in North Winnipeg and her first practical deaconess work was done amongst her own people. Later, in order to gain wider experience, her work has been at the Point Douglas Church. Miss Kushner's charming personality, Christian experience, and cultural training ... combine to make her a character ready for much useful service in the work of the Master to whom her life is dedicated."



In 1935 Dorothy was serving All People's Mission in Sault Ste Marie when she married Joseph Wiznuk, an ordained United Church minister. She was disjoined and her official "service" ended. Dorothy continued to serve in her new role and was a source of strength and inspiration for Joe throughout their ministry together.



Muriel Jones Cross was born in 1923, the eldest child of J. Fredrick and Lillian Jones. Growing up in the Christian faith, she followed in her parents' footsteps, singing in the choir and teaching Sunday School. As a young adult, Muriel became active in YPU (Young People's Union) in Regina, showing real leadership skills and a maturing passion for the church. Here, she says, "the faith became mine...and not an extension of my parents' faith." She felt called

to the ministry. However, her family's financial situation did not allow her to go immediately to St. Andrew's College to follow this calling. She took a business course and then worked as a bookkeeper for the British American Oil Company. Muriel earned enough money to help her parents buy a modest house in Regina. Accepted as a candidate for the ordained ministry by Regina Presbytery, she enrolled at St. Andrew's College in the fall of 1948.

Years later, reflecting on this time in her life, she described this vocational training as "a great experience – and I even passed my 'Greek exams'. In those days, Greek and Hebrew were required studies for ministry! ... During this time, I met my husband-to-be. This was where the hard part came in! (Not meeting Bill), but the church did not ordain 'married' women back then and so I had to make a choice. As one of my advisors said, 'Marriage is a career, too!' As you can guess, I chose Bill over Ministry. Little did I know that it wasn't really a choice...it was both/and!!"

In the years to follow, Muriel devoted herself to her family and ministry as an unofficial member of the team. Together, Muriel and Bill Cross served six pastoral charges from 1949 to 1990 when they retired. From their family's perspective and that of the pastoral charges they served, there was never any doubt that they were in team ministry together but this was due to the strength of their relationship. There were frustrations as Muriel sometimes felt that she had been born at the wrong time. However, she did not become bitter, looking rather for opportunities to serve the church she loved. It was during their last pastorate that the wider church was



Muriel and Bill in an officially recognized team, Snow Lake Ecumenical Ministry, 2001.

ready to receive some of Muriel's unique gifts of leadership and accounting skills.

In what Muriel would deem an amazing example of the grace of God, the retirement years provided opportunities for Bill and Muriel to serve numerous pastoral charges, together as an official team. The beginning of this "calling forth" came through the insightful invitation of Joan McConnell (then Conference Personnel Minister) and for this, there is a feeling of profound gratitude! As Bill would say in a letter to the family, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if Muriel and I could do formally and officially what we've done informally and unofficially for 41 years!" That time was a joy for both of them.

It was fitting and so appreciated, that on May 9, 2003, Muriel and Bill were each awarded the honorary degree, Doctor of Divinity from St. Andrew's College where they met and began their life and ministry together.

Muriel Emma (Jones) Cross died on February 14, 2012 after a month's stay in the hospital. She continued her ministry to the end of life, even there reaching out to family, friends and caregivers.



Emily Martin Garrett graduated from the two year Manitoba College Deaconess Program in 1927. Manitoba College, formerly Presbyterian, began the Deaconess program in 1920, the only training program of its kind west of Toronto. She was designated a Deaconess in June 10, 1928 by Manitoba Conference after a year of probation at St. Andrew's Elgin Avenue. She worked her entire ministry career, from 1927 to 1939, at St. Andrew's, in one of Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods. The year she married Jack Garrett, she was officially disjoined from the Order.

Emily spoke of working with immigrant people in the area, mostly Scottish immigrants at that time. It was the Great Depression and it was demanding work being with people who experienced poverty and all the challenges of being in a new land. The church was the centre of activity with a full schedule of Sunday services, Sunday school, Mission Band, Mother's Club, CGIT, and in the summer, Fresh Air camp.



She spoke of pastoral situations that moved her; of funerals for folks who were so isolated that only she and the attending minister were present, of personally helping to pay for needed medical treatments in the days before universal Medicare. Emily had a strong passion for the social gospel.

Although generally quiet and reserved, she was quick to speak out against stereotyped biases about people and poverty. In a 1989 interview she commented on her disjoining, describing the actions and attitudes of the day as “very bad.”

Deaconesses Who Served in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

This list is as comprehensive as current research allows. There could be women from MNWO who became Deaconesses but did not serve in the area, and women who may have done only their field work here.

The dates help to provide perspective on the length of service. For the sake of simplicity the column “Left” is used to indicate when women retired, not the date of death, even though status was retained after retirement. It is possible that many of the “unknown” women were disjoined. *denotes Ordained

Your assistance in improving the accuracy of this list is welcome.

NAME	JOINED	LEFT	REASON
Alice Baglole	1920	1924	Unknown
Maud Barlow	1909	1912	Unknown
Susanna Barnes	1907	1921	Unknown
Frances (Grogan) Barnett	1913	1926	Disjoined: Marriage
Mary (McIlwraith) Bell	1923	1926	Disjoined: Marriage
Ruby (Horton) Berridge	1948	1973	Retired
Agnes (Snyder) Blokland	1977	2000	Retired
Lazelle Boake	1917	1938	Disjoined: Not Church Work
Anna (Keith) Bollinger	1918	1934	Disjoined: Marriage
Florence Bradley	1909	1920	Unknown
Bertha Bradley	1921	1927	Unknown
Olive Brand	1962	1967	Retired
Lauretta Bratt	1921	1958	Retired
Aidleen Brown	1967	1988	Retired
Barbara Ann Bryant Anstie	1970	2004	Retired
Emma (Cuntz) Brydon	1913	1919	Disjoined: Marriage
Isabel (Rourke) Buhr	1963	2010	Retired
Margaret (Cameron) ??	1911	1918	Disjoined: Marriage

The Deaconess pin was to be returned when women were disjoined.



NAME	JOINED	LEFT	REASON
Charlotte (McLean) Caron*	1972	2006	Retired
Gertrude Cass	1916	1956	Retired
Ruth Churchill	1962	1968	Retired
Annie (Hicks) Cockburn	1916	1924	Disjoined: Marriage
Virginia Coleman	1975	2013	Retired
Essie Collins	1910	1921	Unknown
Elsbeth Colwell	1957	1958	Unknown
Joyce Combe	1963	1978	Withdrew Voluntarily
Mary (Bremner) Conly	1934	1934	Disjoined: Marriage
Mary (Bremner) Conly	1977	1977	Reinstated, Retired
Elinor Cox	1958	1991	Retired
Bessie Craig	1914	1926	Withdrew Voluntarily
Viola Daly	1933	1966	Retired
Mabel Dedrick	1912	1914	Unknown
Margaret Dempsey	1957	1986	Retired
Louise (Mollenhauer) Dickson	1928	1940	Disjoined: Marriage
Margaret Drummond	1911	1955	Retired
Margaret Edmonds	1914	1938	Retired
Nancy Edwards	1948	1980	Retired
Margaret (Martin) Elder	1954	1968	Disjoined: Not Church Work
Eva Elliott	1907	1932	Retired
Marion Ferguson	1932	1938	Retired
Nancy Fraser	1965	2004	Retired
Elaine (Harland) Frazer	1960	1961	Disjoined: Marriage
Elaine (Harland) Frazer	1975	1997	Reinstated, Retired
Bessie French	1931	1961	Retired
Catherine Frost	1948	1954	Withdrew Voluntarily
Letha Gardner	1905	1906	Unknown
Emily (Martin) Garrett	1928	1940	Disjoined: Marriage
Eleanor Geib*	1962	2000	Retired
Sadie (Dick) Gillespie	1913	1915	Disjoined: Marriage
Lillian Gilmore	1913	1919	Unknown
Thomasina (Fraser) Glenn	1913	1915	Disjoined: Marriage
Jessie Goddard	1911	1922	Unknown
Ferne Graham	1962	1981	Retired
Aileen Gunn	1962	1968	Retired
Margaret Hallam	1909	1913	Unknown
Winnifred Harris	1919	1922	Disjoined: Foreign Missionary
Wilberta Hart	1907	1910	Unknown
Martha Hartley	1907	1912	Unknown
Barbara Henderson	1924	1947	Unknown
Marvel (Neddo) Hesller	1975	1986	Retired
Marion Hodgins	1962	1968	Retired



Unknown Presbyterian Deaconess, circa 1911-1917.



United Church Uniform circa 1945.

NAME	JOINED LEFT		REASON
Mary Horn	1929	1952	Retired
Minnie Houston	1924	1956	Died
Lillie Howe	1907	1934	Retired
J. C. Howey	1925	1926	Unknown
Olive Hugo	1914	1915	Unknown
Annie Irwin	1902	1918	Unknown
Nettie Jackson	1921	1925	Unknown
Elinor (Armitage) Johns	1968	2011	Retired
Hattie King	1917	1949	Retired
Charlotte Lang	1900	1914	Unknown
Ruth Lanigan	1927	1960	Retired
Eva Large	1904	1933	Retired
Jean (Collier) Larstone	1964	1999	Died
Emily Latimer	1919	1946	Retired
Audrey Lawrence	1956	1960	Withdrew Voluntarily
Ruth Lazenby	1954	1961	Withdrew Voluntarily
Annie (Joynt) Lillico	1909	1911	Disjoined: Marriage
Mabel Lindsay	1924	1949	Retired
Janet Little	1916	1938	Retired
Mary Livesey	1916	1918	Unknown
Sarah Livingstone	1926	1927	Unknown
Laura (Sharpe) Long	1936	1943	Disjoined: Marriage
Laura (Sharpe) Long	1971	1992	Reinstated, Retired
Millicent Luke	1934	1948	Disjoined: Not Church Work
Maud (Lyon) Unknown	1916	1934	Disjoined: Marriage
Marie Lytle	1917	1938	Retired
Jessie MacKenzie	1916	1946	Retired
Joyce MacKie	1963	1977	Unknown
Helene Manning*	1959	1991	Died
Betty Marlin	1959	2000	Retired
Laura Marshall	1924	1956	Retired
Marjorie Maxwell	1925	1955	Retired
Betty McColgan	1957	1987	Retired
T.M. McGill	1910	1911	Withdrew Voluntarily
Verna (Crooks) McKay	1961	2001	Retired
Alice (King) McKelvey	1924	1925	Disjoined: Marriage
Rose McKenzie	1927	1938	Retired
Margaret McKinnon	1924	1936	Unknown
Gwen (Davis) McMurtry	1944	1945	Disjoined: Marriage
Gwen (Davis) McMurtry	1945	1947	Reinstated, Disjoined
Mary (Longley) Mercer	1931	1965	Retired
May Merriam	1961	1976	Retired
Edith Miller	1909	1924	Unknown
Rose Miller	1917	1929	Withdrew Voluntarily

Deaconesses Who Served in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, continued

NAME	JOINED	LEFT	REASON	NAME	JOINED	LEFT	REASON
Marguerite Miller	1939	1949	Disjoined:	Martha Smith	1912	1925	Unknown
			Ordained	Evelyn Sprigley	1909	1912	Unknown
Clara Miller	1913	1924	Unknown	Gertu Staples	1924	1963	Retired
Lillian Milliken	1910	1915	Unknown	Elizabeth Stephen	1924	1964	Retired
Iris (Daly) Milton	1954	1957	Disjoined:	Zaidee Stoddard	1925	1964	Retired
			Marriage	Millicent Stone	1902	1911	Unknown
Iris (Daly) Milton	1976	1983	Reinstated	Adelaide Sutherland	1909	1937	Retired
			Died	Ruth Tillman	1948	1978	Died
Esther Moffitt	1917	1941	Retired	Myrtle (McArthur) Timmins	1924	1943	Disjoined:
Hattie Moore	1914	1919	Unknown				Marriage
Mabel Myers	1910	1911	Unknown	Grace Tonkin	1904	1917	Withdrew
Margaret (Bea) Nelson	1960	2009	Retired				Voluntarily
Eliza Palmer	1917	1919	Unknown	Lily Uyeda	1952	1983	Retired
Marion Pardy*	1968	2003	Retired	Oriole (Vane) Veldhuis	1961	2000	Retired
Edna Pearson	1921	1953	Retired	Alice Walker	1925	1927	Died
Louise Pirch	1919	1949	Unknown	Jennie (Mills) Walkinshaw	1919	1924	Disjoined:
Ida Pitt	1922	1963	Died				Marriage
Doreen Pitt	1964	1974	Retired	Edith (Robinson) Wallace	1908	1911	Disjoined:
Muriel Richardson	1934	1968	Retired				Marriage
Daisy Rickard*	1959	1990	Retired	Irene Weir	1916	1918	Unknown
Alice Ridgeway	1924	1943	Unknown	Mabel (Gunn) White	1910	1924	Disjoined:
Jean D. Roy	1919	1926	Unknown				Marriage
Dorothy Schaufler	1937	1952	Died	Ruth (Bewell) Wilkins	1956	1966	Disjoined:
Ruth Scoular	1954	1989	Retired				Marriage
Kate Seaman	1913	1926	Unknown	Pearl Wilson	1951	1981	Retired
Charlotte (Collinson) Sharp	1913	1926	Disjoined:	Dorothy (Kushner) Wiznuk	1929	1936	Disjoined:
			Marriage				Marriage
Olive Shaw	1962	1972	Retired	Betty (Carkeek) Wing	1952	1953	Disjoined:
Edith Sherwin	1923	1944	Retired				Marriage
Amy Sherwood	1904	1928	Retired	Leone Winter	1912	1940	Retired
Gwennith (Grieve) Shynkar	1958	1959	Disjoined:	Louisa Young	1904	1918	Unknown
			Marriage	Mary J. Young	1914	1961	Retired
Vera Simons	1918	1946	Retired				
Martha May Sleeth	1916	1938	Retired	* also ordained			

Stats: Of 153 women	27 Marriage (18%)	1 Disjoined to be Ordained
67 Retired (44%)	8 Withdrew Voluntarily	1 Disjoined to be Foreign
39 Unknown (many likely disjoined) (25%)	7 Died while serving	Missionary (a Methodist practice)
	3 Disjoined because left church work	



A UNIFORM FOR WOMEN WORKERS

Women at the school resented the view that they were only there for the "MRS" degree, yet they participated in playing out church and cultural expectations. (from Yearbook 1955)

The Toronto Star's portrayal of the roles of women and men reflects common views. Deaconesses were, to many, at best "helpers."



HE'S FIRST MALE GRADUATE

Donald Reid of Schubencadie, N.S., is ribbed by fellow graduates Deanna Steadman, Toronto; Donna Allen, Larchmont, N.Y., and Nora Neilson of Vancouver. He was only male among 17 graduates of Covenant College, formerly United Church training school.

Proving domestic etiquette was an explicit aspect of Deaconess training, not only in the 1940's but through until the late 1960s. Just employment practices were not a priority for women expected to be married homemakers, even though nearly 50% of women stayed in the order all their lives.

(Gwen McMurtry far left)



The stories of the following 5 women, along with Muriel Cross (featured earlier), will be told in the Service of Apology to women affected by the United Church's marriage bars, at the Conference of MNWO Annual meeting, 2014.



Agnes (Snyder) Blokland (front standing) worked with young Aboriginal girls attending high school and living at the Teulon Residence in the early 1960s. She was criticized by some because she gave the girls "too much independence."



*Transportation around the charge in rural Saskatchewan for **Gwen (Davis) McMurtry**, serving during the war when there was a shortage of men. Gwen's sister, **Winnie (Davis) Henderson** (above right) was also a Deaconess. Their other sister, **Irene (Davis) Inglis**, on the cusp of being designated, chose to marry.*



Between 1936 and 1957 only 27 women were ordained by the United Church, but others, like **Lois (Freeman) Wilson** had all the requirements to be ordained, except that of being single. Throughout her long ministry career, before and after ordination, Lois lead people to put their faith into action.

In 2006 United Church women in ministry were still paid less than their male counterparts.

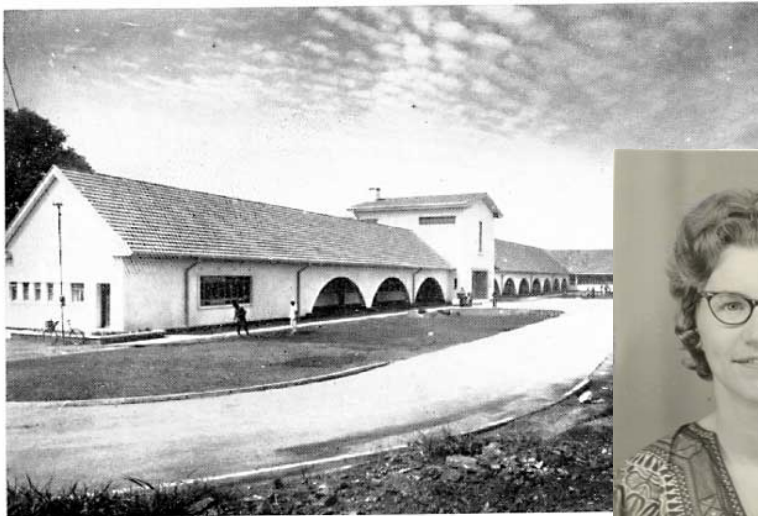
(Left, 1980, first woman Moderator).

See the biography, *Feisty and Fearless*, for more on Lois' story.



Canadian Deaconesses served as missionaries in Africa. The story is complex: bearers of colonialism but supporters through independence.

Elaine (Harland) Frazer worked with disadvantaged youth as Northern Rhodesia became Zambia in the 1960s.



The Jean Rennie School for Girls.



Fresh Air Camps were a vital activity supported by North End Winnipeg Deaconesses. **Ina (Farrow) Cavers**, Manitoba College graduate 1929, had practical summer experience at Robertson Camp.



All the materials prepared for the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Apology to Women Affected by the United Church marriage bars, including this booklet, are available at UCCDeaconessHistory.ca and may be used for worship and educational purposes except where copyrighted.

This booklet was prepared by Caryn Douglas as a project of the United Church of Canada Archives Winnipeg. 2nd Edition

Photo Credits:

Centre for Christian Studies, Mary Beth Clark, Crescent Fort Rouge UC, Caryn Douglas, Jackie Garrett, Doug Heath, Betty Nunez, Bev Simpson, The Observer, Florence Poole, Marjorie Powles, UCC Archives: General Council, Toronto, UCC Archives: ANCC/MNWO Winnipeg, University of Winnipeg Archives, Oriole Veldhuis, Yvonne Wilkie, Helen Wilson, Lois Wilson