

# Pearl Willows

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*Pearl Willows while serving at West Point Grey United Church 1950-55.*

Pearl Willows was a gracious, dedicated, humble yet feisty woman. Her ministry took her into the elegant parlours of some of Vancouver's most well-heeled and to the bed side of some of the city's most down and out. She was equally as comfortable in both settings. She lived out her commitment to the gospel principles of acceptance and love while she emulated Jesus' call to liberation and justice.

Pearl Agnes Willows was born on December 2, 1910 in New Liskeard, a small community in Northern Ontario. Her parents were Rachel Elizabeth (Bessie) Jackson and John Sherman Willows who were both born in Carleton Place, Ontario<sup>i</sup>. Pearl was the middle of three children<sup>ii</sup>. When she was a child her family relocated to Alberta where her father became a very successful farmer and agricultural businessman. Pearl had a privileged upbringing, something she struggled with, especially when she was involved in work with some of Canada's poorest people<sup>iii</sup>. She went to high school in Calgary, attending Wesley United Church there. She obtained her B.A. and Diploma of Social Work at the University of British Columbia in 1935. Pearl was also very musical and earned an A.T.C.M.

In May of 1938 she graduated from the United Church Training School in Toronto, having completed one year of the two year program, as was the norm for women who held a University degree. That fall she entered Normal School in Calgary, graduating in the spring of 1939, although she never worked officially as a teacher, although she undertook a lot of educational ministry. Upon completion, Pearl was commissioned by the Woman's Missionary Society and appointed for the year 1939-40 to missionary work in Calgary.<sup>iv</sup>

In the summer of 1940, she was appointed to another WMS mission field, the Chinese Mission of the United Church in Vancouver where she worked for one year. At the Chinese Mission she ministered to local women and worked with children at a five day a week kindergarten. Here she provided supervision for two paid staff. Her other work with children included teaching Sunday school and offering mid-week groups. Pearl's long time friend Barbara Howard remembered that Pearl had a particular interest in working with women and a passion for advocating for their needs.<sup>v</sup>

In 1941 Pearl was moved by the WMS to Victoria to serve at the Oriental Home and School, first opened in 1886. It was originally known as the Chinese Girls' Rescue Home but the name was changed in 1909. The original purpose of the home was to serve as a safe haven for Chinese women and girls who had been forced into prostitution or were unwed mothers. Pearl joined the Superintendent, Elda Daniels (later Struthers) and Deaconess Helen Struthers on staff.

Prior to working in the Oriental Home, Helen had a long career, from 1919 to 1936 in the Toronto office of the South China Mission. She left that position for two years of travel in China, returning to Canada and to the appointment to the Oriental Home in 1939. Elda had been forced to return in 1940 from

(North) Korea, where she had served with the WMS since 1936, because of the growing unrest in Asia. Korea at that time was occupied by Japan, and Elda had acquired some Japanese language. When Pearl arrived there were 26 girls and one small boy in the home, some were Japanese Canadian and some Chinese Canadian.<sup>vi</sup> In the 1930s there had been as many as 45 children, however, the number of children in orphanages was in decline in general in this era as foster care was replacing institutionalization, for younger children at least. The orphanage and school were the Home's primary purpose, but there were still a few women in shelter. Pearl was in charge of ministering to the residents and managing the kindergarten. The Chinese and Japanese United Churches worked closely with the Home staff, who also provided a modest number of services for immigrant women, many of whom had little opportunity to get outside of their homes to learn English.

Support for the Home, however, came to an abrupt end in 1941 with the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the rapid rise of overt racism. Starting in 1942, Japanese Canadians living on the west coast were forcibly moved west of the mountains, losing all their property. The Japanese orphans in the Home were also required to leave. Elda Daniels wrote, "When the Japanese Canadians were evacuated from the "Defence Area", I moved nineteen of [the orphans] to Assiniboia, Saskatchewan where there was a Girl's Residence under the Woman's Missionary Society. There they continued their schooling".<sup>vii</sup> Pearl stayed on to care for the six Chinese girls but by the end of the year her position was eliminated. The home was closed in 1947. The direct experience of the injustice done to Japanese Canadians further intensified Pearl's commitment to a theology of justice, and a faith that required action. She became an ardent follower of Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman, an influential black American teacher and civil rights organizer, and after 1945 she was involved in the International Fellowship for Reconciliation. Pearl's friend Barbara recalls how she would quietly distribute pamphlets on Dr. Thurman and the Fellowship. "Pearl had a strong sense of righteousness, of right and wrong and she was very honest. She wouldn't cover things up, she would want to work them out, to get to the bottom of whatever the problem was. She wasn't pushy but she was strong, certainly about this kind of thing. She really tried to live her faith."<sup>viii</sup>

Without a missionary appointment, Pearl left the employ of the WMS and began work at First United Church in Victoria. Perhaps Pearl was influenced by Helen Struthers to enter the Deaconess Order, because in 1942 she made an application to the Deaconess Committee, which after a few months of review, was accepted.

The students at the United Church Training School faced several options for a career after graduation, including: designation to the Deaconess Order; work as a trained woman worker under the employ of a congregation, church office (for example, the General Council) or para-church organization (such as the YWCA); a non paid 'clergy wife'; or, a Woman's Missionary Society Woman Worker. Pearl initially chose this option. The WMS, the largest employer of women in the United Church, attracted many of the students. Perhaps Pearl had a goal to work specifically for the WMS when she entered the school or she may have been recruited into that interest by the WMS staff who frequented the school or by a WMS Missionary living in the residence while on furlough. Pearl may have gone to Normal School after graduation from UCTS in preparation for work overseas as a teacher, for example. With the political tensions and economic stresses of the late 1930s however, a goal to be appointed overseas may have been put off, never to be fulfilled. This is however speculation although additional research could shed light here.

For WMS workers being commissioned as a missionary was much akin to making a commitment like a Deaconess, particularly for the women serving in the foreign field, although it was also true for domestic missionaries. The larger the community of workers, such as in a United Church Hospital, and the more



DIRECTS EDUCATION WORK—Former Deaconess at First United Church, Victoria, Miss Pearl Willows, B.A., A.T.C.M., has been appointed to take charge of Christian Education work and women's organizations affiliated with Canadian Memorial Chapel, Sixteenth and Burrard.

remote the situation, for example in one of the fly in communities along the British Columbia coast, the stronger this identity was. WMS women's commitment was threefold: to God and Jesus; to the WMS and its sisterhood of other workers, along with the hundreds of thousands of local members throughout Canada who raised the funds and soaked up the education provided; and, as a smaller aspect of the trinity, to the United Church of Canada. Katharine Hockin, a missionary in China (and Deaconess) said of the WMS, "You never felt you were an employee. You felt you were all sisters. We were all basically servants of the Kingdom".<sup>ix</sup>

Some WMS workers were also Deaconesses, but most of the WMS women took their identity from the WMS and didn't feel the need for designation, so Pearl's decision to become a Deaconess after being a WMS Worker is interesting. Perhaps, she was feeling a call to work in congregational settings, which is what she did pursue, and it was among congregationally based workers that the identity as a Deaconess was most strongly manifest. On the mission field little distinction was made between Women Workers and Deaconesses. In congregations however, the title was prominent.

In March 1943, The Deaconess Committee, which had oversight of the Order, asked British Columbia Conference to designate her on behalf of Alberta Conference.<sup>x</sup> After her entry into the Order she continued working at First United, as their part-time secretary and their Christian Education Director. This combination of education and secretarial work was not unusual during this period, in fact it is documented beginning in the late 1920s into the 1950s.

Perhaps because of the extent of Pearl's training in social work and education, she relocated in 1945 to Vancouver into a position at Canadian Memorial Chapel (United Church) where she did Christian Education, Pastoral Care, and worked with the women's organizations, a position she held until 1948.

Some of the Christian Education activities Pearl organized at Canadian Memorial are strikingly similar to 21<sup>st</sup> century "welcoming church" strategies. A 1947 newspaper article about their CE programming<sup>xi</sup> describes the introduction of audio visuals to the curriculum for all ages with a brand new flip strip projector. "Visual Education is here to stay and church work can be improved by using all types of visual aids," the article foresees. Another noted innovation is the "Snack Counter",



*Technology in the 1950s was revolutionizing educational methodologies.*

popular with all ages, it is a place to have coffee and refreshments to encourage the development of community among church attenders. Social clubs for young adults and for teens were also organized, and the teens, aged 15 to 18, were responsible for planning their own activities. Finally, the description of the Beginners Department (for children 3 to 5) dispels the image of rigid rows and rote learning. The emphasis in the curriculum is on play so that children learn to feel accepted and “at home” in the church environment. Attention, the article emphasizes, has been paid to making the room child friendly, both in décor and with the various interest centres. Notably though, the large number of children in these post war programs is a significant difference from today. The 1947 Baby Band had 200 children! The progressive edge to this programming suggests that Pearl brought a spirit of openness and innovation to her work, or at the very least, was able to draw it out of the church members she worked along-side of.



In 1950, Pearl moved to West Point Grey United Church, serving this affluent Vancouver neighbourhood bordering the University Endowment Lands. Again her position was as Deaconess and Church Secretary. The West Point Grey History book makes note of her because of her distinction as one of the first women attending, and *eventually*, being given voting privileges in the Session (Church Board). In November 1950, just a few months after Pearl had arrived as the Director of Christian Education, the Session minutes record that, “Miss Willows was ‘privileged to sit in’ at the meeting. Some question, however, arose about her eligibility to attend Session meetings and she was asked to retire while the matter was discussed. On her return she was told that she was ‘invited to sit in with the Session, without voting powers’ ”.<sup>xii</sup>

Pearl was a humble woman. Her friend Barbara describes her as, “somewhat shy, but when she had to be, she could be outgoing and charming, and fun, she was always gracious”. She dressed simply and tried to live simply. She didn’t want gifts, “and she gave away so much,” Barbara noted. But she had a strong mind, and

she wasn’t easily pushed aside. In her quiet way she would advocate for justice, especially for others, and she often did it by story telling.<sup>xiii</sup> Pearl worked along with the women in the congregation achieving important changes toward the full inclusion of women. As a result four years later in 1954, the slate of nominations for Session members included four women, and Pearl was one of them. “The full slate of nominations was accepted at the Annual Meeting of the congregation and the women ‘were in’ ”.<sup>xiv</sup> To put this into context, it wasn’t until 1978, that Timothy Eaton United Church in Toronto gave women Elders the privilege of serving communion!<sup>xv</sup>

At this time, Deaconesses were not members of Presbytery and rarely were they members of Session, as the West Point story illustrates attending Session was not always common. Even the General Council Committee with responsibility for the Deaconess Order had only 2 Deaconesses out of its 30 members<sup>xvi</sup>. This lack of opportunity to participate in the decision making that affected their lives had long been a concern of the Deaconesses, with formal protests recorded early in the development of the Order in both its Presbyterian and Methodist roots. In both denominations, the women organized themselves in associations to have a collective voice.

Lydia Gruchy, the Executive Secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, brought to her work a concern about the absence of women from positions of leadership and decision making. She wrote:



What we find is that women are active in the work of the Church but not to any appreciable extent in the formulating of its policies. Sunday Schools are staffed preponderantly by women. Yet while women are on the committees dealing particularly with Children's and Women's Work, the general boards which consider the principles governing Christian Education are composed mainly of men. The same is true of community work. Churches have deaconesses or social workers, and women are of necessity on the committees that direct the actual work as it affects the homes of the underprivileged and oppressed members of society. But we do not find them conspicuous in the committees or assemblies that give direction to the thinking of the Church constituency concerning the basic changes needed in our economic life in order to remedy the ills they are trying to alleviate.<sup>xvii</sup>

Deaconesses were lay women, they were *never* considered to be in ministry. In fact, the responsibilities of the Order were defined as, "all aspects of church work except for ministry." Ministry was essentially the work of men, even after the United Church began to ordain single women in 1936.<sup>xviii</sup> Unlike ordained ministers, who were members automatically of Presbytery and Conference and ex-officio of church Sessions, Deaconesses had no guaranteed membership in any of these decision-making groups. . Other United Church Committees demonstrated an unwillingness to learn about or appreciate the unique work of Deaconesses and the difficulties that they faced systemically. It is a credit to the tenacity of the women that despite their structural limits to power they made their concerns known.

In 1942, General Council approved the "attendance" of Deaconesses at Presbytery meetings but they could not speak during debates unless the Presbytery passed a motion which made them corresponding members, giving them a voice, but still no vote. Deaconesses could vote only if they were appointed as lay delegates by their individual congregations, and this rarely happened. In 1948 a recommendation to the General Council from a Commission it had established, to make the Deaconess Order an order of ministry failed. As a concession, the General Council enabled Deaconesses serving congregations to be full members of Presbytery, but only when a Presbytery had an overall imbalance with too many ordained members compared to lay members. So instead of appointing more lay people from congregations, a Presbytery could appoint Deaconesses. This, as well as the option of filling the congregation's "laity" spot, was wholly unsatisfactory to the Deaconesses. First many were ineligible, such as those in institutional ministry, for example, as Pearl was in 1942. Of those who might qualify, many were reluctant to take positions that were intended for the laity, concerned it denied the true laity of the church representation in the structures. To pretend Deaconesses were non-ministerial staff was not helpful. Later in 1954, a General Council remit (a process to change Church policy) asking for full Presbytery membership for all Deaconesses failed. It was this same year that Pearl, and lay women, did gain voting status in the Session of West Point Grey. Slowly, the attitudes toward women in leadership were changing. But not without resistance.

In reviewing responses to proposal in 1954 to give women access to leadership the level of overtly expressed sexism is shocking, revealing the desire to "keep women in their place", as the Executive Secretary of the Deaconess Order described it in 1956. One Presbytery submitted the comment that, "The Church does not need women with high qualifications; Church Secretaries are all that are

required.”<sup>xxix</sup> The yoking of Christian education and secretarial work, as was the case for Pearl in her work at First United in Victoria and at West Point Grey, and later at St. Giles (where it became a point of great tension), helped to perpetuate this idea that women lacked the capacity to be ministry professionals<sup>xx</sup>. While it was argued that job descriptions like Pearl’s were a strategy to create a full time job, thus attracting, and supporting a trained worker, no congregation would have entertained a similar strategy for their minister. “Sacramental leader and church custodian” was never a want ad in the *Observer* classifieds of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century! In Pearl’s later career she proves a wider range of skill and ability than would have been unutilized in secretarial work. It was to the detriment of the church that women were so often constricted in their work.

Yet, there is at least one aspect of this situation that is redeeming. The women, those employed by the church and the volunteers, found tremendous community among themselves through their work together, either to overcome the limitations or in spite of them. Pearl used her secretarial skills effectively to support the ministry of others, demonstrating a basic tenet of modern diaconal ministry: enabling the ministry of others. In 1951, 4 young women wanted to start a new women’s group at West Point Grey, one that combined the interests of the two existing types of groups for women; the Woman’s Auxiliary (WA) with a mandate of fellowship and fundraising and the Woman’s Missionary Society (WMS) with a mandate of mission support through education and stewardship. Twenty years later the women remembered, “Right from the beginning we were fortunate in having the help and guidance of Miss Pearl Willows, the church deaconess. In fact Pearl took the minutes of the first three meetings while the first members were deciding which of them would get the job. ... [A few months later when we finally chose a secretary] we still leaned on Pearl for advice and guidance.”<sup>xxi</sup> The 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrants also noted with appreciation that “Pearl was the life of the party”, giving another glimpse into her personality and the regard with which she was held.<sup>xxii</sup> Barbara Howard remembers, “she was committed to doing a good job and could step forward when the job required it.”<sup>xxiii</sup> When the women’s group had their reunion, in recapping their first 4 years, there is no mention of Pearl’s departure in 1955. Pearl moved to a position in the suburban congregation of West Burnaby, where she served until 1960.

It must have been a busy time in the midst of the baby boom in this growing community. West Burnaby built a church hall in 1956, as so many churches were doing to accommodate all the children in mid-week and Sunday programs. Many congregational records from this period are in the British Columbia Conference archives and further research could be done to learn more about Pearl’s work in this time.

In the summer of 1961, Pearl moved to St. Giles United Church (now Oakridges United Church), located in the rapidly expanding region of southern Vancouver, into what would seem to have been a congregation in a mess. The minister resigned effective January, 1962<sup>xxiv</sup>, and it took a year to secure a new one. The stress is apparent in the words of the Interim Moderator (Supervising Minister), “In spite of the excellent work that is being done by your deaconess, Miss Willows, this is a critical time for St. Giles.”<sup>xxv</sup> As Pearl outlined in her annual Report of the Deaconess,<sup>xxvi</sup> she was expected to staff the office 4 to 6 hours a day, with an ever growing amount of work keeping records and maintaining communication among the Committees in what is described as a growing congregation of over 630 members<sup>xxvii</sup>. On top of these hours she was also responsible for pastoral visiting and the Christian Education program. It is no surprise that she writes, “[Visiting] is very enriching. One only wishes that more visiting could be done.” Nowhere in her reports does Pearl praise the chance to do church record keeping! She was trying to attend to 50 shut ins, connect with numerous new families and coordinate the regular visiting ministry of the Elders, and the women’s and men’s groups (UCW and AOTS) and have oversight of the Fall Visitation (stewardship) program, all without the support of an ordained minister. As if this were not enough, her Christian Education duties included the Sunday School, offering of a



Vacation Bible School and midweek Bible study programs, for women and youth. Pearl makes a point in her 1963 report to thank the congregation for allowing her to attend a 5 day workshop at Naramata Centre in the fall of 1962 (lead by two other Deaconesses, Jessie MacLeod and Olive Sparling) on the "New Curriculum".<sup>xxviii</sup> She must have arrived exhausted!

One wonders if the expected demeanor of a humble Deaconess was wearing thin, even for Pearl who is described by her friend as self-effacing. In 1963, she writes, "It is difficult to give an adequate report on the work done for it is hard to be objective and give an honest picture."<sup>xxix</sup> She goes on to describe her responsibilities, set on top of orienting a short term supply minister and then, in the spring of 1963 the new minister. She concludes, "it is possible that the equivalent of a full time secretary will soon be required, plus another person for Christian Education."<sup>xxx</sup>

It should have come as no surprise that Pearl resigned from the position a year later. A short tribute to her by Rev. J. Gardiner conveys the extent of her work. "When we lost Miss Pearl Willows in June [1964] we suffered a real loss in the very centre of what makes this Church function. She made a real contribution to St. Giles and we continue to find things that she undertook as part of her responsibility without anyone knowing, except the persons befriended."<sup>xxxi</sup>

Pearl is left without appointment for the church year 1964-65. The reason for this break in service is unknown, perhaps it was a combination of factors. Her mother died in May of 1965, maybe she nursed her. Possibly she was burnt out and took a rest (perhaps with resources from her family). It may be that she was unable to secure a position in the church and had secular employment.

During that year Pearl was in attendance at a meeting of Deaconesses and other Women Workers in Vancouver. It is a gathering that Pearl herself may have organized. She committed a lot of energy to connecting with other Deaconesses and Professional Church Workers and was often the one to call the group together for social time or business.<sup>xxxii</sup> Pearl was genuinely interested in people and she made good friends among the community of women workers. Her friend Barbara met many of the women working in the lower mainland through Pearl. "She always wanted to keep up with things, she read a lot and she wanted to help the other women to share, to make each other's work better."

When Pearl moved to work at First United Church in the infamous downtown eastside of Vancouver in 1965 she was on the first staff team working out of the newly constructed building. The old church at Gore and Hastings was not only inadequate to the programming being delivered out of it, some for the large population of single men, and other offerings for families, after the large earthquake in 1946 it had been slowly, but surely, falling apart. It wasn't however until 1965 that the doors opened on the new facility, occupying the same site.

NARAMATA -  
July 22 - 29 (Cont'd)

6. Scouting in the Church - Workshop  
Co-ordinator: Mr. Pete Collins, Haney, B.C.  
Staff: Jim Blain, Tom Bulman, John Miller, Percy Ross.

An opportunity to examine the "What" and the "Why" of Scouting in the Church; how through Scouting we grow spiritually; how to design worship in our Pack Troops. Open to Scouters, members of C. E. or Committees, Ministers.

c. Adult Discussion Group -- "Search for Meaning"  
Resource Leader: Miss Jessie MacLeod, Vancouver, B.C.

Open to wives or husbands of those participating in Music or Scout courses -- \$10.00, or rate of \$15.00 for husband and wife.

July 29 - August 5 -- ACCESSION ON EDUCATION

a. Observation Practise School  
Director: Miss Jessie MacLeod, Vancouver, B.C.

- For Church School Teachers - Nursery to Sr. I  
Observation & evaluation of class sessions.  
Theory re: the learning process.  
Option of practise teaching.
- For Leaders of Mid-Week Groups -- Explorer C.G.I.T.  
Observation of class sessions.  
Consideration of leadership and learning in specific groups.

b. Ferment in Education Today  
Resource: Mr. R.J. Carter, Vancouver, B.C.

Administration Asst., David Thompson Secondary School  
Summer workshops in Team-Teaching and Educational Changes.

For parents and adults interested in today's educational explosion. Changing theories of learning, effects of new technology, continuing education.  
Addresses and discussions.

Fee for 'a' or 'b' is \$10.00; \$15.00 rate for husband and wife.



Pete Collins



Jessie MacLeod



R. J. Carter

Pearl took her place with two other Deaconesses on staff, Muriel Richardson and Margaret Fulton. Pearl began working with “Indian girls” on skid row, teaming with Bob Sullivan.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

This work eventually led to the opening of Darby Lodge in 1967, staffed by Rev. William Robinson and “Mrs. William Robinson”.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> The Lodge offered temporary accommodation, mainly to “Native” individuals and families, from isolated communities who were seeking health care and education in Vancouver. Pearl’s team also continued to offer a nursery school for 18-20 children. The goal was to help children of different ethnic

backgrounds with integration into kindergarten. The East-Enders Society, a hostel for women, most of whom were Aboriginal, was another aspect of Pearl’s work. In 1967 a Day Centre at 342 E. Hasting Street was also opened, providing a drop in for women and their children 5 afternoons a week, staffed by volunteers. Considerable work was done with families and single women, interviewing and referring, visiting in hospital and trying to ease problems affecting the quality of life.



**Gathering of Professional Church Workers (including Deaconesses) in Vancouver, 1964.**



*First United in 1963 prior to demolition, inset 1939, the church today.*



In 1968 First United went through a transition with a major shift in staff. At the time Pearl worked with Ralph Jones and Owen MacPherson, as an “Inner-city team” which was responsible for the outreach ministry of First United Church in the downtown Strathcona area.

With the appointment of Bob Burrows and Glen Baker as Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent came a real emphasis on teaming, replacing the previous top lead model. By this time Muriel Richardson had retired, and Margaret Fulton had moved into seniors’ work in North Vancouver, but Pearl was joined on staff by another Deaconess, Elsie Rosenberg. The team met every Friday afternoon to review their work and provide support for one another, taking turns chairing the meeting. The commitment of the team was to programming which would lead to independence for those they served, rather than charity that perpetuated dependency, although it was never easy to accomplish that goal.



Alcoholics Anonymous and food preparation programs took priority over becoming a soup kitchen, for example.<sup>xxxv</sup>

Pearl retired in 1971 at the age of 61. She continued to live in Vancouver, attending Ryerson United Church. She died January 20, 2002 at 92 years of age. Pearl did not want a funeral, as a continuation of her sense of humility, she knew it would be a struggle for most of her friends to attend, and she didn't want to put them out. Barbara Howard commented, "she never demanded anything from her friends, she was proud of being a member of the United Church, she was a woman of great faith."

*This biography was written by Caryn Douglas, June 2013, drawing on primary research and writing done by Beth Walker, December 2012 for an assignment at the Centre for Christian Studies. For an electronic version of this biography visit [UCCDeaconessHistory.ca](http://UCCDeaconessHistory.ca)*

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<sup>i</sup> John Sherman Willows b. 23 Mar 1880, d. 1953, Rachel Elizabeth "Bessie" Jackson b: 9 Nov 1880, d. 1 May 1965; married 20 Nov 1907 in Lanark Methodist Church (Lanark) Ontario

<sup>ii</sup> Siblings Mary Amelia "Millie" Willows (Jones) b: 1909, d?; Hebert Jackson Willows, b. 1914, d. 1920 of scarlet fever, Calgary, Alberta

<sup>iii</sup> Personal conversation with Barbara Howard, Vancouver, BC., who was a good friend of Pearl's beginning in the 1940s. December 23, 2012.

<sup>iv</sup> The nature of this work could be determined by examining the WMS records. The Sixteenth Annual Report of The Woman's Missionary Society of the United Church of Canada, 1940-1941, The United Church Publishing House, Toronto, 1941.

<sup>v</sup> Barbara Howard, December 23, 2012.

<sup>vi</sup> Dulcie Ventham, editor, *The Newsletter*, Association of Professional Church Workers Anglican Church of Canada and United Church of Canada, 1988, p 175. <http://uccdeaconesshistory.ca/wp-content/uploads/biopics/The-Newsletter-Historical-Issue-Spring-1988.pdf>

<sup>vii</sup> The Newsletter, p 175.

<sup>viii</sup> Barbara Howard, December 23, 2012.

<sup>ix</sup> Donna Sinclair, *Crossing Worlds The Story to the Woman's Missionary Society of The United Church of Canada*. The United Church Publishing House, Toronto, 1992, p12.

<sup>x</sup> Minutes of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, March 1943. United Church of Canada General Council Archives.

<sup>xi</sup> The United Church of Canada, British Columbia Conference Archives (BCCA). Canadian Memorial United Church (Vancouver, BC) fonds. Annual reports, 1945-1948, Box 2016, file 24, and, Scrap book (1943-1947), box 2002, volume 1.

<sup>xii</sup> West Point Grey United Church. Our Ministers, Associate Ministers and Deaconesses page 10 in a section entitled, "You've Come A Long Way". Also included a selection of historical pictures, 1911 to the Present.

<http://www.nmh.ca/15/images/stories/Historypdf/West%20Point%20Grey%20United%20ChurchFinal.pdf>

<sup>xiii</sup> Barbara Howard, December 23, 2012.

<sup>xiv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xv</sup> "Women Elders", *The United Church Observer*, March 1978, p 38.

<sup>xvi</sup> The Committee was constructed by representation, so it was theoretically possible that there could be more than two Deaconesses if, for example, the Board of Home Mission appointed a Deaconess as their representative. Examination of the membership over the decades however, reveals that the Committee is consistently dominated by Ordained men.

<sup>xvii</sup> Mary Anne MacFarlane, *A Tale of Handmaidens: Deaconesses in the United Church 1925 to 1964*, MA Thesis, University of Toronto, 1987, p 46 citing Lydia Gruchy, "Women and the Church", *YWCA Notes* 21, 9 December 1939 p 1.

<sup>xviii</sup> The Church only ordained 37 single women before 1957 when the first married woman, Elinor Leard was ordained by London Conference, against the adamant wishes of the Moderator not to perform such an unnatural act. Once the way was cleared for married women, officially in 1962, very few were ordained until the 1970s.

<sup>xix</sup> Mary Anne MacFarlane., *A Tale of Handmaidens*, p 120, citing a list of objections to the remit to give Deaconesses Presbytery membership collected by the Executive Secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers and shared with the members of the Fellowship of Deaconesses and Women Workers in July, 1956.

<sup>xx</sup> It also played a role in diminishing the value of education and an educational ministry.

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<sup>xxi</sup> Clara Telfer Women's Group, West Point Grey United Church, Vancouver, 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary March 17, 1971, p 1 and 2.  
<http://www.wpguc.com/History%20pdf/Clara%20Telfer%20Women%27s%20Group.pdf>

<sup>xxii</sup> Clara Telfer Women's Group, p 4.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Barbara Howard, December 23, 2012.

<sup>xxiv</sup> In this period it was extremely unusual for a minister to leave during the pastoral year, almost all changes happened in the summer. Without further research it is hard to know what caused his resignation, but if it were the result of conflict the problems in the congregation would have been even greater.

<sup>xxv</sup> St. Giles United Church, Vancouver Annual Report for 1962, p 2, British Columbia Conference of the United Church of Canada Archives, St. Giles United Church (Vancouver, BC) fonds. Annual reports (1962-1964), box 1099, files 8-9.

<sup>xxvi</sup> St. Giles United Church, Vancouver Annual Report for 1962. 1963 and 1964.

<sup>xxvii</sup> This is the figure for 1964, it would not have included children or youth. There were 62 weddings in 1964!

<sup>xxviii</sup> The New Curriculum was a major Christian Education project undertaken by the United Church.

<sup>xxix</sup> St. Giles United Church, Vancouver Annual Report for 1963, p 2.

<sup>xxx</sup> St. Giles United Church, Vancouver Annual Report for 1963, p 2.

<sup>xxxi</sup> St. Giles United Church, Vancouver Annual Report for 1964, p 1.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Barbara Howard, December 23, 2013.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Report of the Minister and Superintendent (Russell Ross) First United Church Vancouver (Institutional), in the Annual Report 1965, p 2.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Native Indian Work Report, submitted by P. Willows, W. Robinson and R. Sullivan, First United Church, Vancouver Annual Report, 1967, p 51.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Bob Burrows, Hope Lives Here, A History of Vancouver's First United Church, Harbour Publishing, Vancouver, 2010, p 101 ff.