

MWF Standing Committee Annual Report 2024-2025

Between the 2024 and 2025 retreats, the MWF Standing Committee met four times via Zoom—June 4, October 8, January 6, and March 25—and once in person with two members joining via Zoom at the RP International Conference on June 25. Email facilitated further communication between meetings.

This was the first year of planning under the new bylaws and governing structure. We are still discovering what works best as far as facilitating meetings and dividing responsibilities.

In the June 4, 2024 meeting the following roles for the year were determined by consensus:

- Rita Lyon, chair
- Elizabeth Reed, treasurer
- Laura Wallace, registrar
- Sarah Parnell, secretary/note-taker. Due to a series of urgent needs within Sarah's family, Dorcas assumed this responsibility in subsequent meetings.
- Jill Mann and Julia Mann, program planners and host congregation liaisons
- Dorcas Jarod and Sarah Parnell, printing and program detail

We also began an ongoing discussion on how to incorporate traditional program segments (a.k.a. coordinator reports).

Over the course of the year we discussed general subjects and concerns such as how to maintain transparency with the women of the presbytery, how we might alleviate some of the burden of the host congregations, how to streamline registration, how to stabilize MWF finances, how we might mitigate major swings in retreat expenses, and what we could do to promote attendance.

We discussed pros and cons of live-streaming and decided we would not live-stream retreat presentations, but would attempt to make audio recordings available after events (depending on the capabilities of the host congregation).

We began compiling a list of potential speakers for upcoming retreats. We created a document listing responsibilities of the host congregation which can be easily shared.

In late June we began moving forward with specifics for the 2025 retreat. In July, Barb Mann graciously agreed to speak on a topic of her choice, *Walking with God*. Jill and Julia assumed all other program planning responsibilities.

In October, discussion began in earnest on securing a host congregation for 2026 while trying to maintain the 2023 decision to rotate retreat locations among three geographic areas. In January, the Clarinda congregation was approached and then accepted the

responsibility. Exact dates are yet to be announced, but they are looking at late March / early April.

As I (Rita) write this, my husband and I are in Scotland working in and encouraging the church in Stranraer. I am incredibly thankful for the very responsible women who serve with me on this committee and are working diligently in their roles such that I don't have to trouble-shoot long distance. Lord willing, the retreat will take place without hitch. I am very much looking forward to another weekend of spiritual growth and fellowship with the women of our presbytery.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Lyon for the Standing Committee (Dorcas Jarod, Rita Lyon, Jill Mann, Julia Mann, Sarah Parnell, Elizabeth Reed, and Laura Wallace)