

# Grapevine

## Loneliness in Community

by *Barb Voth, Central States Representative, Mennonite Women USA*

It was back in 1972. Jim had asked me to marry him but I had to think about that question as I knew that would mean that someday I would be a pastor's wife! Two days later I gave him the answer, "Yes."

In 1977 I attended my first church conference as a pastor's wife. An older lady came to my table and in our conversation mentioned that we would be leading lonely lives as a pastor and wife. Jim and I would not be able to have any friends in the church, etc.

Since that day, I have frequently pondered that statement. While Jim and I know many people and have had the privilege of serving them at the most important times in their lives, there is sometimes the sense of loneliness. Words like confidentiality and partiality come to mind.

But I am thankful that I have lived in communities where they took me in as family, invited me to their special family times like Christmas, Easter, Mothers Day, Community Days, and Thanksgiving.

So to sum it up, I have never regretted being a pastor's wife. When I feel loneliness coming on I try to live the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson: The only way to have a friend is to be one. 📖



*Barb Voth*

### *MW USA Mission and Vision:*

*Our mission at Mennonite Women USA is to empower women and women's groups as we: nurture our life in Christ, study the Bible, use our gifts, hear each other, and engage in mission and service.*

*Mennonite Women USA invites women across generations, cultures, and places to share and honor our stories, care for each other, and express our prophetic voice boldly as we seek to follow Christ.*