

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN IN THE SYNOD OF THE COVENANT

Nurture faith, support mission, work for justice & peace, & build community



...Message from our Moderator, Patsy Gaines

Upcoming Gatherings & Other Info

I do hope that you all had a wonderful and blessed Holiday Season filled with love of family and friends. As this New Year begins may we be renewed with the love and grace of our Lord as we fulfill our calling to God's service.

Please plan to attend the Synod Gatherings being planned by a most capable committee under the leadership of Carol Winkler. There will be two Gatherings, which will give you the opportunity to attend whichever one fits your schedule. The format is to have a shorter meeting in a very comfortable setting. Encourage other PW to attend with you for an enriching Spiritual Experience. You have received registration forms, which need to be returned very soon. New officers will be elected and installed. Register today! Don't delay!

During the summer the Leadership Enhancement Committee of CCT contacted us asking for the names of churches in each of our Presbyteries without a PW organization. Some of you did not response while others did. So far, the feed-back has resulted in two churches from our Synod wanting more information about forming a PW group. One is at Pickerington, Ohio and the other at Holly, Michigan. National has mailed a packet of material to help them get started and already one of the churches has requested a speaker for a March meeting. Those who did not send names of their churches without PW groups have missed a great opportunity to minister to your sisters and to also receive new members and able workers in your Presbytery. National has spent a lot of time and money trying to help local PWs. If we had all responded, I wonder what the results would have been? However, we do rejoice over the two interested groups and pray that their efforts will come to fruition.

The Mother's Day Project..."MOSQUITO NETS FOR AFRICA" is an opportunity for Presbyterians to help protect women and children in Africa from malaria, while we honor our own mothers. Each year in sub-Saharan Africa, malaria causes more than one

million deaths, most of them children under five and pregnant women. Malaria is the number one killer of children under age five in Africa, claiming 3,000 young lives every day. Women are four times as likely to contract malaria during pregnancy and twice as likely to die from it. Using insecticide-treated mosquito nets, coupled with malaria prevention education, has been shown to significantly reduce these tragic statistics. Let us again support this special project by offering these cards, available in February, to your church members. A suggested donation of \$10 provides malaria prevention educational materials and at least one mosquito net. Nets are purchased in Africa, to reduce overseas shipping expense.

Plans are underway for the 2009 Churchwide Gathering in Louisville. Please save the date for July 11-15, 2009. The registration fee for the Gathering will be \$380 for early birds and \$430 for late registration. This fee covers all meals (including breakfasts) and all the things you love about the event; plenary, workshops, tote bags, exhibits, etc.

The logo for the Gathering has also been selected and is available for download from the PW web site so you can use it in your communications. You will need to scroll down a ways before you find it at www.pcusa.org/pw/about/logo-and-graphics.htm#usage. The business meeting will be held during the Gathering, not prior to it as it was in 2006.

I enjoy receiving your newsletter and reading about the exciting work being accomplished in the name of Presbyterian Women. If I can be of help please contact me as I am always willing to travel, visit and speak.

See you at the Synod Gatherings

Patsy Gaines

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Presbyterian Women Synod Gathering Opportunities

....**Get your registration in TODAY!**

*Empowering
Presbyterian Women
In 24 Hours*



=Training leaders

=Experiencing spiritual renewal

=Building Community

Registration Form available at www.pwsoc.org/gathering

Event Cost: \$55.00 plus hotel

Location Information for each PWS Gathering:

OHIO-April 5-6, 2008

Crowne Plaza Hotel-Columbus North
6500 Doubletree Avenue
Columbus, OH 43229
800-996-8916 or 614-885-1885

To receive special rate of \$99/double
Ask for "Presbyterian Women" rate
Book by March 1, 2008

MICHIGAN - May 17-18, 2008

Doherty Hotel & Conference Center
604 North McEwan
Clare, MI 48617
877-236-4378

To receive special rate of \$77/double
Ask for "Presbyterian Women" rate
Book by April 15, 2008

Send your registration TODAY!
Make your hotel reservations TODAY!
(PW will NOT make hotel reservations)

Any questions????
Ask your Presbytery Moderator OR
Contact: Carol Winkler
Gathering Coordinator
859-781-7662

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...from Vice Moderator for Studies & Spiritual Development, Christel Hilgarth

The Foundation of Discipleship is in Devotion and Prayer

Recently, I had a conversation with a friend that left me speechless. I was leading a devotional prayer group at SSU campus ministry. My friend is aware that it is a call and ministry of mine to bring ancient prayer practices to as many people as I can. The conversation began when I related to him what a life changing impact the practice has had personally on me many years ago, when I was taught by learned practitioners of ancient Christian practices, and of how these practices have made Bible stories become more accessible and more alive. I wistfully added that I had wished that I had known these practices years earlier, and wondered out loud why these practices were not taught in Sunday school.

My friend's reply was, "Jesus only taught his disciples all he knew, the other people got the Sermon on the Mount." "So," I said, "are you telling me that only Ministers of Word and Sacrament and church professionals should be privy to ancient spiritual practices?" His answer was. "Yes."

After I recovered from the conversation, I began to wonder, aren't we all Christ Disciples? Each one of us? Should not each of us be privy to know how to grow spiritually, and how to mature as Christians? Isn't that what being a Christian is all about? Shouldn't each of us have the joy of connecting spiritually to the Word of God?

Luke records Jesus crying to the multitude, "Anyone who has ears for listening should listen! ... people with a noble and generous heart who have heard the word and take it to themselves ... yield a harvest" (Luke 8 4-15). Jesus is telling all who would hear and listen all of what he knows. And if this is what he did for those who were there with him, should it not be also so for us today, and isn't Christ speaking to us through the same Scripture as he spoke to his disciples?

I feel very blessed to be a Presbyterian Women whose Horizons Bible study has included lectio divina (holy reading) and other spiritual practices that are helping us to mature as Christians. Making these practices a daily routine will help us transform and mature knowing that we are a work in process. Practicing the ancient practices on a daily basis will have a spiritual growing effect on us – to become little Christs, the foundation of discipleship.

I've selected six texts of Jesus speaking to us from the Gospels for lectio and personal reflection for each week during Lent. If you need, the guidelines for lectio divina can be found under *Studies* on our web page (www.pwsoc.org/studies). The theme of the readings is, "What can we learn from Jesus?"

Week 1: John 7:14-18; Week 2: John 12:44-50;
Week 3: Luke 9:1-6; Week 4: John 15:14-17
Week 5: John 13:33-35; Week Matthew 5:13-16

I invite you to Lent!
Shalom, *Christel*



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News from Mackinac Presbytery

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Mackinac does not meet during the winter months. The distances required to travel and the unpredictable weather (this winter has been a "real" Michigan winter) make meeting difficult.

However, we are looking forward to our Spring Gathering, which will be held on April 19 at First Presbyterian Church in Newberry, which is in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. The theme of the Gathering is "Time Well Spent" Our Keynote Speaker, Marie Anderson will concentrate on how to spend time wisely and manage stress effectively. She will expand on the theme in an afternoon workshop. Other workshops will include Rev. Deborah Haffner Hubbard introducing the new Horizons Bible Study, and Roxie Miller sharing insights from the book *Too Busy Not to Pray*. We will also help the Newberry women celebrate the 125th anniversary of their church. The day will close with Communion being served by Rev. Nancy Barkat, pastor of the Newberry Church.

It seems as if a recurring theme with Presbyterian Women is how to attract younger women or women who have not been previously involved in PW. The Presbyterian Church of Traverse City PW group has had many discussions about this and last year planned two "craft fairs" - one in the spring and one in the fall. Activities such as scrap booking, card making, beading, knitting, quilting, cookie and bread making, were all offered in workshops. Women could choose 2 or 3 activities or just stay with the same activity. The day began at 9:00 a.m. and ended at noon with a pizza lunch. Although there was not a large attendance, each day attracted 15-20 women, most of whom had not participated in PW activities previously. If others could share successful program ideas or projects, maybe we can make some progress getting different women involved.

On a sad note, we report the death of Diana Walls, long time supporter and active member of Presbyterian Women. Diana had served in many capacities in PW in Mackinac Presbytery and we will miss her enthusiasm and thoughtful insights. Diana died on October 14 after suffering a massive stroke and funeral services were held on October 20 at the First Presbyterian Church in Petoskey, Michigan, where Deana was a very active member.

Submitted by *Marilyn Kelley*, Moderator

New Leadership is sought

The Search Committee is open to suggestions for women to fill the following positions on the Synod PW Coordinating Team beginning in October of 2008:

Moderator

Vice-Moderator for Mission Interpretation

Synod Representative to the Churchwide
Coordinating Team

Gathering Coordinator

Member-at-Large for Church Women
United in Michigan

Member-at-Large for Church Women
United in Ohio

If you would like to suggest qualified leaders for any of these positions please contact Jan Hart know via email (dudsmom1@aol.com), phone (440-871-9056), or even in writing to 400 Parkside Drive, Bay Village, Ohio 44140.

We are looking for some exceptional women to carry on the wonderful work of Presbyterian Women in and around our Synod.

2008 Birthday Offering

Recipients will be

1. The Presbyterian Church of Congo and The Presbyterian Church of Kinshasa
2. Lakeview Presbyterian Church in New Orleans, Louisiana

Learn more in the January/February 2008 issue of Horizons. Promotional materials are available to order from Presbyterian Distribution Service (PDS), 800-524-2612.

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News from the North (Lake Michigan Presbytery)!

Although cold and snowy in the Lake Michigan Presbytery we continue to move forward with projects that warm our hearts and provide warmth and comfort to others. As a Presbytery CT we have made it our focus to use the newly named Together in Service as our mainspring for connecting women. We will be sending out our spring mailer highlighting the Birthday Offering, Least Coin and Mother's Day Net workers cards. By sending a sample of the birthday offering envelope and Mother's day cards as well as all information needed to order we hope to provide a connection between PWs as well as educate regarding the many opportunities for second mile giving and the numerous resources PW has to offer. Our two mailers per year as well as newsletter will hopefully generate a connection and interest in the many wonderful opportunities that are available.

Through our bi-annual newsletter and access to the Presbytery website we are able to highlight events that individual PWs are involved in. For example, one PW, as a fall project made 25 School kits for the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program. Another PW held their second annual Mid- Winter Day of Dedication putting together Health Kits, Baby Kits, School Kits and a special Valentine's Day Bag filled with personal care items and new undergarments for 240 women in transitional housing. Sharing of these ideas and events serve to connect and invigorate the desire to be "Together in Service". Sometimes it just takes trying a couple of ideas to make a difference in not only lives of people of God's world but also in the lives of those participating in the project.

Historically, Presbyterian Women have been the most generous second mile givers. As our group dynamics change and evolve we continue to underscore the importance of our mission to "work for justice and peace and build an inclusive and caring community." We need to continue to search for simple and effective ways to widen the circle of God's Love. Yes, we can!

Blessings and Peace,

Mary Bennett, Co-moderator

Kathryn Wylie, Co-Moderator

**Mark your calendars and
start saving money to attend
the next Churchwide
Gathering!**

**July 11-15, 2009
Louisville, Kentucky**



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How Will You Celebrate?

CELEBRATE WHAT?

Why the twentieth birthday of the 1988 union of the United Presbyterian Women and the Women of the Church! Grab your September/October issue of the Horizon magazine and turn to page 20.

Check out # 4 with this change-

#4. Bring 20 women from your congregation or Presbytery to one of the 2008 Synod of the Covenant Gatherings!

OR

#7. Create a display highlighting 20 years of your PW's mission projects and bring to one of the Synod Gatherings!

#13. Locally Celebrate 20 important women in your congregation (past or present) in an article for your newsletter or church newsletter.

#15. List 20 reasons why you love PW and send them to PW's national staff to share with PW nationwide (email them to sharon.gillies@pcusa.org)

After you consider the above and decide to try to do one of these (or anyone of the list of 20 in *Horizons*) look at

#20 – Create a bulletin board display

for your church (presbytery) about PW for the month of July 2008.

I would also like to mention that if you as a PWP or PWC do not have a Historian to collect and keep a record of important events, missions, gatherings and of course people of your Presbyterian Women groups, now is the time to elect one. Presbyterian Distribution Service, 800/524-2612 has order forms and materials to help you in every area you might have a need.

For instants:

- PW History Exhibit Kit PWR-07-137 (includes 200 Years of Presbyterian Women video, posters on CD and more) for the price of \$19.95.
- PW Scrapbook Kit PWR-06-130 for \$6.50.
- Create History Bookmark FREE -PWR-07-136

The Synod has two gatherings planned for this spring; pick the one you will be attending and try for #4. Let's make both of these gatherings a success this year!!!! We are promoting the one closest to us at my church and hope to have our whole PW membership there. Have a great spring and God Bless!

Sarah Abbotts, PWSC Historian