



## Message from the Moderator

Greetings from the team of Presbyterian Women in Southern New England! We, the team of PW, have been doing some head work this summer. We're trying to figure out where we're going. Many of us have served "the team" for 10 years or more. Is it time for new blood, we ask. We have discussed and debated and wondered why, what, who, when, and where God is leading us. Will you lend a hand?

**When Presbyterian Women are together for prayer, fellowship, service, and commitment – God will do wonders among us. Hey, that was the theme of the Churchwide Gathering in Louisville in July. Read about it in the Prism.**

Lois Conboy says, "it has been a privilege to be a part of PW". We are "connected" and that's a good thing. Another team member says, "we need to redefine ourselves and create a new vision". We, the team members, feel pulled in many directions and it's time we sat out! As Stephanie says, "we cannot continue to function in the same old way."

However, we feel committed, and so even though our terms are up in the spring of 2010, we will continue to serve one more year but with a few changes. We will be asking for your help. In 2011 we will probably have only one gathering and one retreat and may even ask one of you to be responsible for dealing with some details!

Some Thoughts from the Churchwide Gathering 2009

### **"God Will Do Wonders Among Us"**

Worship services both morning and evening-Bible study and interpretation-music-choral readings-prayer-fellowship. It was all there in Louisville. One speaker I particularly loved was Margaret Aymer, author of the 2011-2012 Bible study on the Beatitudes and faculty member of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary\*. She delighted and astonished the women with her theme of "meddlin". After her sermon one Sunday, a church member told her, "Preacher, you've left off preachin' and taken to meddlin' in the context of Mark 2: 1-12. Indeed that's what she's all about. She told us Jesus was a meddlin man. He did not stand for the present situation if he observed injustice and intolerance. He stood by the poor, the oppressed, the weak, the forgotten, the stranger, the lonely. He meddled and spoke out, condemning those who looked the other way when wrong was apparent.

Margaret suggests that ministry – which is all of us if we are disciples of Jesus Christ- is meddlin'. It means speaking and acting out under the love and guidance of Jesus Christ. After Margaret ended her talk there was a resounding YES heard among some 2400 women attending the Churchwide Gathering that night.

\*The Johnson C. Smith Seminary is the PC(USA)'s only historically African American seminary.

Other bits: the collection of \$20 Gift Cards to well known stores amounted to \$70,000. These will be given through PDA – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Our PWPSNE was thanked for increasing our Mission giving for 2009! (Your church will be receiving my letter and form for 2010 Mission Pledge.)

Our own Rev. Chris Caton was helping at the Peacekeeping table at the CWG. CWG is Churchwide Gathering. Molly Dean helped at the PW Historical display.

Blessings to you and your friends and family. Be sure to drive to Springfield for our fall gathering. Lillie Hickerson and Christ Church women are hosting us! See you Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> In the love of Jesus Christ, Dotsie Shaw, moderator PWPSNE



*Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Southern New England*  
ALL women in the Presbytery are invited to attend the

## Fall Gathering

Christ Presbyterian Church  
1597 Allen St.  
Springfield, MA 01118

### Saturday, October 24

Coffee and registration 9:30, worship, speaker, ending with lunch.

### “The Wonders of Prayer”

### Featured speaker, Rev. Eileen Epperson

Rev. Eileen Epperson has talents and experience in spiritual coaching and spiritual direction, forgiveness and communication coaching, meditation and prayer instruction, and bereavement counseling.

\*From the North: I-91 to exit #4 (marked "Route 83, East Longmeadow). At bottom of ramp there are two left turns in a row under I-91. Take the 2<sup>nd</sup> left and go straight through the first set of lights. Immediately take your next right onto Longhill St. and continue up the hill to a set of lights at the top. Turn left onto Sumner Ave. for 2.5 miles until it intersects with Harkness Rd. There Sumner Ave. becomes a one-way, two lane street and its name changes to Allen St. Follow Allen St for 1 mile then bear right staying on Allen St. The church is .4 miles on the left.

\*From the South: I-91 North from Hartford. Cross MA state line, take exit #2 (marked "Routes 21 and 83; East Longmeadow). You will exit up a hill. At the top of the hill follow traffic flow through one light. At the next light, turn right unto Sumner Ave. Stay on Sumner Ave. for 2.5 miles until it intersects with Harkness Rd. There Sumner Ave. becomes a one-way, two lane street and its name changes to Allen St. Follow Allen St for 1 mile then bear right staying on Allen St. The church is .4 miles on the left.

\*From the East or West: MA Turnpike to Exit #7 (Ludlow). Turn left after toll booth onto Route 21 South. Follow this curving street through Ludlow and as it crosses a bridge into the Indian Orchard section of Springfield. Turn right at the end of the bridge and left at the next light. Keep straight on Route 21 (now Parker St.) through Boston Rd. intersection (Route 20). Follow approx. 1 3/4 miles to Wilbraham Rd. intersection. Continue straight (now Cooley St.). for another 1 1/2 miles to Allen St. Turn right and the church is down about 1/5 mile on the right.

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**REGISTRATION:** send \$12.00 check payable to PWPSNE to: our treasurer,  
Joyce Smedberg, 41 Planet Ave., Riverside, RI 02915. **Deadline:** October 9, 2009.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Project Report Forms for Presbyterian Women in the Congregations of Southern New England were sent out in the spring of 2009 to see what they are doing for mission projects. Five churches responded.

Sharing their mission projects are: Barrington reports that they helped with Tap-in (touch-a-person in need in) Barrington, RI, a soup kitchen at St. George Church in Providence, RI, quilts for children's hospital in Providence, RI (Linus Blanket Project), and made 24 ugly quilts for the homeless thru Crossroads Providence, RI. Crossroads reports that they will be mailing to New Windsor a total of 170 knitted/crocheted baby caps. They sold Mother's Day & Father's Day Cards and participated in the Blankets Program Birthday Offering and Thank Offering. Greenwood reports that they participate in Blanket Sunday, Interfaith Sewing & Service Group, School and Health Kits, Mosquito netting program, JWW Solar Cooker Project, Thank & Birthday offerings, Least coin, Hunger Offering and send \$\$ to RI Family Shelter, S. Providence Ministries, Ronald MacDonald House, House of Hope and the R.I. Food Bank. They sent \$\$ to First Pres. Church Iowa (flood), Heifer International, Doctors without borders, Menaul School, Haitian Health Ministries, Karanda Hospital, Zimbabwe, South Africa and our youth group for their mission project. They also do food & paper showers for 2 local shelters and special Christmas Projects. Several Women knit or crochet baby caps which we deliver to Women & Infants hospital. We also deliver pull tabs, knitted hats and toiletries to Ronald MacDonald house, diapers and toiletries to S. Providence Ministries and eye glasses to Insight. Monthly we purchase some cleaning supplies and deliver them to two local shelters. Starting this summer several women have started a new group called The Picasso Quilters making quilts for My Brother's Keeper Project. They have made 20 so far and plan to make several more. Valley reports that they are collecting box tops and labels for Menaul school in New Mexico and that they collect personal items for the Domestic violence safe house in Danbury for mothers and their children and send \$\$ to both. Their major project is sponsoring the Angel Sharing Tree for Christmas. They grant "angel wishes" for 6 or 7 families. Woodbury reports that they support a child through the Christian Children's Fund. They participate in the PW Thank Offering, Birthday Offering, Least Coin and the Church World Service - Crop Walk. They have made baby gowns and caps sent to New Windsor and Diapers for babies in Honduras. They also help out the RI Family Shelter, Foster Teens (Dept of Children & Their Families), Prison with paperback books and notepaper, Providence Rescue League - Ugly quilts - (sleeping bags for the homeless) and the church food pantry. Together in Service represents PW's determination to be responsive to changing needs around the world. Together in Service gives PW groups the opportunity to choose their own mission projects and answer needs in their own communities and the world. This ensures that PW's resources are used wisely, dollars are stretched and everyone has an opportunity to participate in the program. Whether your group chooses to work in a local homeless shelter or collect the Birthday Offering, you'll be Together in Service! Looking forward to our October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. If you have something you would like to display that you have made, please bring them along to show others.

Any new ideas or suggestions? God Bless you in your mission projects. Nancy Collins  
richnancy64@verizon.net

#### Mission Pledge

Presbyterian Women's Mission Pledge is an expression of passionate stewardship. It funds projects in all parts of the church, from a congregation's mission work to mission coworkers in every part of the world. For Presbyterian Women, the Mission Pledge is the basic source of funding for program and mission from the congregational to churchwide levels. PW is unique as a denominational ministry in that, through the Mission Pledge, it gives to Basic Mission Support of the General Assembly Council.

The Mission Pledge helps fund the publications you receive from Presbyterian Women. It funds leadership development opportunities for women of all ages and ethnicities, the churches evangelism and new church development. Also, education and justice work as well as national and international ministries to children, youth, and adult populations. It puts PW purpose into practice.

Submitted by Joyce Smedburg, treasurer

## CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL REPORTS

TO: The Women's Association Leaders, PW Moderators and Secretaries/Historians in the churches of our Southern New England Presbytery.

FROM: Your PWPSNE Historian, Molly Dean, 33 Brill Avenue, Waterford, CT 06385  
Email: gordondean@snet.net

Please send me by mail or email a copy of your ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009 BY FEBRUARY 1, 2010. Once I receive this information, I will compile a summary report for our presbytery and send this report to our PW Synod Historian, Jo Ann Braun. Suggested items to include: A list of your current Officers/Leaders with their addresses and phone numbers; local & churchwide mission projects; Bible study participation; special honors given to your women like the Honorary Life Memberships; retreats and gatherings attended by your group. Please include your yearly Treasurer's Report for 2009. (Several women's groups have found it convenient just to send me copies of the reports they do for their Session.)

This data from your congregational life will help keep our historical files up to date at the various levels of our denomination.

Thank you for complying to this requested information. With best regards, Molly Dean

## THE PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S CHURCHWIDE BUSINESS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

On July 12, 2009, a day before the official opening of the eighth triennial business meeting of the Churchwide Presbyterian Women's Gathering in Louisville, Kentucky, voting representatives were invited to attend an orientation session to prepare them for the discussion, debate, and vote on items of business to be presented. Highlighting business to be dealt with on the 12th and 13th was the issue of incorporation of PW as a separate entity related to Presbyterian Church USA with its own accounting practices, assuring PW's ability to pursue its mission with a greater degree of flexibility and improved stewardship of PW funds. This incorporation as an "integrated auxiliary" of a church is in line with many other mainline denomination's women's organizations that have incorporated. For the past three years the Churchwide Coordinating Team has been laying the groundwork for this action. Under the proposed incorporation, the CCT (35 members) will serve as the Board of Directors, and that board will have the responsibility of reporting to the appropriate committees and agencies of PCUSA.

On Monday, the 12th, the business meeting was opened officially by Moderator Catreliia Hunter with introductions of the 2006 - 2009 Coordinating Team and of the Vice Moderators and the Parliamentarian who assisted in conduct of business. Of the Global Parters present and introduced where Mary Kirba and Jane Kamatu, members of the Kenyan delegation who now are in Springfield, Massachusetts. Dotsie Shaw and Molly Dean were voting representatives from the Presbytery of Southern New England.

During the two days of the meeting, representatives were addressed by several ecumenical and denominational leaders, including the Modertor of General Assembly, the Stated Clerk, and the Executive Director of the Mission Council, each of whom expressed appreciation for and recognition of the importance of PW's efforts in mission leadership and working for peace and justice in the world.

The vote for incorporation was passed with a large majority, as were associated corporate bylaws and necessary changes in PW bylaws. The proposed budget for 2010 - 2012 also was passed. "Formal" incorporation is pending necessary filing with the Secretary of State of Delaware and issuance of a "Certificate of Incorporation." Details of the incorporation, the budget, and other business of the meeting are available at the PW web site [www.pcusa.org/pw](http://www.pcusa.org/pw). PW's "official" name is now Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (USA), Inc. Before conclusion of the meeting, the Coordinating Team for 2009 - 2012 was elected and introduced. The new Churchwide Moderator is Marta Rodriguez of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Submitted by Molly Dean, Voting Representative and PWP Historian

## THE HORIZONS 2009-10 BIBLE STUDY ON JOSHUA: A JOURNEY OF FAITH

Here is some information about the Joshua Bible Study. If your women's group is considering doing this study or if you have already started the lessons, you may find this useful. On the internet, go to "[www.pcusa.org/horizons/bible](http://www.pcusa.org/horizons/bible)" and look at the right side of the screen where it mentions "About the Authors and More about Mary." Click on these and you will find background information including 13 video interviews with Mary Mikhael, the author of this study. The interviews present a good understanding of why Mary decided to do the Joshua study and how she compiled it from her Middle East perspective. There are other items that can be downloaded from this web site..

Now there is an "ecumenical edition" of the PW Horizons Bible study that other denominations, such as the United Church of Christ, the Reformed Church in America, Disciples of Christ and the American Baptist churches have used since 2008. Now, in 2009, the Disciples of Christ will have it in their women's magazine. This was worked on during the 2006-2009 CCT meetings and approved.

Hope you and your Bible study group find this information helpful in order to have a better understanding of the living word of God for us today.

Submitted by Molly Dean

### LEADERSHIP NETWORK COORDINATOR REPORT SEPTEMBER, 2009

#### THE CHURCHWIDE GATHERING:

Be sure to check the September/October issue of Horizons and also visit [www.pcusa.org/pwgathering](http://www.pcusa.org/pwgathering) for highlights, interviews, stories, photo galleries, video clips of Gathering plenary presentations and Horizons skits. Also, skits and PowerPoint presentations will be available to download. There's was so much to see and do that it cannot be reported properly in limited space! Come to the fall gathering and hear about some of it.

THE "OFFERINGS". The last totals are: \$70,355.00 in gift cards!! (divided between Bellewood Presbyterian Children's Home and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), \$3,541.87 from the 2 cents a meal boxes (given to the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP), and \$51,000.00 to start a fund that will give grants to women, particularly women of color, who pursue theological education in a PCUSA related seminary.

#### CCT QUARTERLY MAILING:

It has arrived and contains a lot of valuable information. If you did not receive one, you may download it at: [www.pcusa.org/pw](http://www.pcusa.org/pw). Then Select "About Us". Then Select "Quarterly Newsletter". This is our communication network.

#### 2010 TRAINING:

The CCT quarterly says that PW at its best, provides spiritual growth, mission opportunities, fellowship with other women, chances to work for justice and peace, and new and different ways to work for the PCUSA and God's Kingdom. This new training is intended to work on bringing new women to experience the joy of becoming part of PW and sharing their gifts. The training is planned to happen immediately preceding the August '10 Churchwide Coordinating Team Meeting.

#### MINI-GLOBAL MARKETPLACE:

At our fall gathering, there will be opportunities to purchase items that help women from Pakistan (Girls at Risk), Thailand (women/mothers who made the CWG bags and thus are supporting their families and providing education for their children), Africa bags from Malawi (which also is promoting elimination of and Africa crafts as well as the Church World Service programs including "Wells for Malawi". A perfect time to start your holiday, birthday, anniversary, etc. shopping and also help others have a better life.

Edward Everett Hale said "I am only one, But still I am one. I cannot do everything, But still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

Need ideas, resources, etc., please contact me. Also send me your rosters!

Judy Cunningham  
[danjudithc@aol.com](mailto:danjudithc@aol.com) – 203.744.6793  
40 Old Lantern Rd., Danbury, CT. 06810

## Miscellaneous News

### **Gathering Registration Fee Increase**

For more than 10 years the \$10 fee has been what we ask to cover the speaker, program, and meal for our gatherings. We find that is not quite enough to cover everything! From now on we will be charging \$12 with \$7 going to the host church to cover their expenses for the day. Thanks for understanding this change.

Please visit the Global Market place, led by Judy Cunningham. There are some wonderful items you just may want as Christmas gifts for friends and family.

While attending **the business meeting** at the Churchwide Gathering in July, our PW in the Presbytery of Southern New England received accolades for the increase in our mission giving! It's incredibly wonderful how these monies are used for others in our world. You'd be amazed at the Wonders of God among us!

**EMAILS!!** The next Prism – Spring – will be mailed electronically. So, please send me your email address. I have about 80 but there are many more I need. Please help us by emailing me now with yours:

Send to: [Dotsieshaw@fullchannel.net](mailto:Dotsieshaw@fullchannel.net) today!

### **PW Retreats**

As I write this for our newsletter, I begin to really think about our retreats. They are almost always in the winter which is a time of austere beauty in our landscape and sometimes bone chilling cold. I have often thought that I just didn't want to face the cold and grayness and would like to stay snug in my warm house. But, if for no other reason, I have paid for the retreat, so off I go!

As I ruminate, I realize that the real beauty of the retreat is the warm connections with other Presbyterian women, women who share the same concerns that I do and who, while interested in their individual pursuits, come to the retreat for the same reasons I do, one being the important connectedness with other women.

Retreats get even better because our leaders are always Presbyterian pastors, so far women, but sometime might be a man. And those women are able to share their perspectives about our common faith journey. We sing, we laugh, we pray, we eat, we sleep, we share, we take walks, we practice yoga if we wish, we read, we talk, we cry, and sometimes we practice silence. It is a weekend of all kinds of activities and feelings.

But finally, when all is said and done, we come away felling fortunate that there are others with whom we can connect and we value what we have learned. Most of all we are refreshed in the presence of God and other women. I highly recommend our retreats. You will never regret it.

Stephanie Brackett, United Presbyterian Church, Milford, Ct./PW Representative to the PSNE  
The retreat is January 29-30 in Putnam, CT. Friday afternoon with dinner until Saturday, 2:30 PM

