

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
PRESBYTERY OF SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY



The Caller



Moderator: JoAnn Gray

Spring 2011

Editor: Jo Anne Aymar

QUIET CORNER



It is hard to think about spring when we still have single digit temperatures, snow covered lawns and harsh bitter cold winds that assault us as we step outdoors. Spring, though, will be here before we know it.

Ahhhhhhhhhh! Spring is wonderful. We can't wait to air out our homes, clean windows until they sparkle, spot the first robin or crocus, and put out our garden furniture.

Spring is a time of renewal. As the ground begins to thaw our spirits starts to soar. We begin planning and assess all we have to do. What would spring be without a garden? We gather all our garden tools, purchases seeds, plants, and fertilizers in preparation for our flower and vegetable plantings.

With spring Christians look forward to Lent and Easter and are thankful for our Lord Jesus Christ our Redeemer. During this season of hope and new beginnings we tend to draw closer to Christ and review and renew our faith. We often cannot forget how Christ suffered and died for us. We are aware that Christ left us with the gift of the Holy Spirit which we seek for council.

Christ also calls us to love one another. As you reflect on this commandment do you ask yourself how you can be more effective as one part of the "body of Christ"? Each of us has our own gifts that God has bestowed on us from birth. In Christ, and through Christ, collectively we can make a positive difference in the world.

As you read through this newsletter you will learn about many mission and outreach programs that different church organizations are participating in creative ways. Can you incorporate some of these in your Presbyterian Women circles? Each community has different issues that address the needs of the people in their community. How can you reach out and support the people in your area?

Let us not forget that spring is also the season that we begin our Presbyterian Women gatherings. Throughout the different Presbyteries women are eagerly looking forward to these gatherings.

I love the word “gathering”. Through the ages women have always been the gatherers. They gathered food, plants for healing, wood for building fires to keep warm, and collected different items in their surroundings for functional or decorative purposes. We gather up our children. We are great at gathering our friends and family for different celebrations. We reach out to one another in love when we gather together. Thus in the spirit of love, as Presbyterians we organize and attend spring and fall gatherings. We are compassionate, we listen, we learn, and exchange ideas and are inspired from these gatherings. We also build wonderful relationships and memories that will be with us through our lives – all which help to make us better Christians. Yes, gathering is a priceless and noble word.

This year the coordinating team from the Susquehanna Valley Presbytery will host its women’s spring gathering on April 9th at the Unadilla Presbyterian Church. What is better than a gathering that lasts for half a day? How about one that is for 2 days that is packed with good food, great speakers and fun workshops, lively worship and luxury accommodations where you will meet people from different areas? Get ready and mark the dates of July 22-24 for **“Rise & Shine”**. It is the Presbyterian Women of the Northeast Synod’s gathering. It will be held at the gracious Desmond Hotel in Albany, N.Y. and you don’t want to miss this fantastic event. Read the articles in this newsletter for further information.

There are many other enriching events going on this year. Find the time to fit one or more of them into your busy schedule. Whenever I attend one of them I return renewed, filled with different ideas and ready to roll up my sleeves and work with others with a soaring spirit, committed to work in outreach and mission knowing that together we, like a garden, will bear “good fruit” in helping people in our community and throughout the world. Continue, my dear sisters in Christ, to gather! I look forward to meeting you at one of these outstanding gatherings.



Rise and Shine!

There will be no time for sleeping in on July 22, as women throughout the Northeast are packing their cars, dashing for the bus or hopping the train, for the Triennial Gathering of Presbyterian Women of the Synod of the Northeast. The Gathering will be July 22-24 at the Desmond in Albany, N.Y.

If you have not received a registration brochure (one has been sent to the PW contact person at each church) please go on-line to www.PWSNE.org and download one for yourself and a friend. Once on-line go to the calendar, scroll down to July. The link for the registration brochure can be found here. An exciting program has been planned by the Design Team with a number of interesting Learning Circles, outstanding speakers and entertainment guaranteed to teach and make you laugh at the same time. There is so much to say, but space is limited so download the registration booklet and read all about it.

PW is a diverse group of women – we come in all shapes, sizes and colors and from parts near and far and we speak different languages, yet we all love and serve one Lord. If you are looking for an experience that will enrich your spirit and rejuvenate your ministry, circle the date and start saving your money now for this special event. Help us spread the word – bring a car load with you – room rates are cheaper with 4 in a room! Make it part of your vacation plans. I'm looking forward to seeing you there. Rise and Shine and give God the Glory! Questions? Please contact me, Jo Ann Gray. You can phone me or 607-687-5076 or send me an e-mail at joanngray@stny.rr.com.

Mission and Outreach

Presbyterian Women gives generously and supports many mission and outreach projects. These are some examples given to me when PWP met last spring in Marathon. You will recognize what your group of women does and maybe see something you want to consider for a next project. We are women who are “Together in Service”.

Here is a list of National and International Level Projects: Heifer International; CWS – infant nightgowns and receiving blankets, Adult blankets; Samaritan's Purse – Christmas Shoeboxes; Hygiene and School Kits; Quilts for Linus Project; Knit helmet liners for service persons; Mission trips to Kenya and India; Support for Sister Church; Habitat for Humanity at the Gulf Coast.

Check over the many programs that PW have supported through local projects: Food Bank (Pantry); CROP walk; Meals on Wheels; Items for Women's Shelters; Prayer Shawls; funds & good for animal shelter; Soup Kitchen with clothing give away; Deacons Pantry; Christmas gifts to children; Christmas Tree –hats, mittens, scarves; Homework helpers; Items for elementary schools – clothes, supplies, books; Welcome Blankets for WIC babies; Christmas Baskets for WIC families; Habitat for Humanity local builds; cancer society; Alzheimer's Assn, Domestic Violence; Juvenile Diabetes; M. S., Springbrook.

PW also support the Least Coin, The Birthday Offering and the Thank Offering.

Presbyterian Women are compassionate and continue to go the “extra mile” in their giving.

Thank you!

Co-ord. Team Member, Judy Wildenstein



Spring Spiritual Retreat
April 29 – May 1, 2011
Christ the King Retreat House – Syracuse, NY
**“Lifting Our HEARTS and HANDS to GOD
In Praise and Service”**

Come; join us for a relaxing spiritual retreat including meditation, praying with scripture, interest centers, nature walks and wonderful fellowship with other Presbyterian Women.

We gather on **Friday, April 29 at 4:00 PM** (registration starts at 3:00 PM) and continue through **Sunday, May 1** after worship at approximately 12 Noon. **Special needs** of participants include the need for a first floor room because of stairs and/or special dietary needs (diabetic, vegetarian, etc). Please include these requests on the registration form.

Christ the King Retreat House is minutes away from downtown Syracuse, nestled atop six acres of rolling hills. This secluded mansion provides a wonderful setting with comfortable rooms, delicious meals and an opportunity to pamper yourself.

Barbara Johnson, well-known Spiritual Retreat Leader for the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse and beyond, will again be our Retreat leader. She will guide us through activities that leave us renewed and refreshed.

Things to bring: Casual indoor/outdoor seasonal clothing, Bible, pen/pencil/notepad

Scholarships are available. Please contact Jane MacDonald, jkmac@nac.net or 973-383-4166.

Confirmation of reservation will be made if you have an e-mail address.

COST: \$215.00 – Registration deadline April 15, 2011

Early Registration Fee - \$195.00 if registered prior to April 8, 2011

[Registration fee includes two nights lodging (single room), all meals and program]

Directions: From **Thruway**, take Exit 34A to Rt. 481 to Exit 3W to E. Genesee St. (Rt. 92), continue west for 3.1 miles on E. Genesee St. (note Nottingham High School on left); at next stop light turn left onto **Brookford Road** and continue to end. From **Rt. 81** exit at Rt. 481 to Exit 3W and follow above directions. From **Rt. 690E** continue to Rt. 481S and follow directions above.

Spring Spiritual Retreat

Registration Form

Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast

Fee: \$215.00 [registration deadline April 15, 2011]

Early registration fee: \$195.00 if registered prior to April 8, 2011

REMIT IN FULL with registration making checks payable to PWSNE

Send to: **GAIL BANKS, COORDINATOR**

817 Coughlin St., Syracuse, NY 13206

Name _____ **Special Needs: 1st Floor** _____
Address _____ **Dietary** _____
City, State, Zip _____ **In case of Emergency contact:**
Phone _____ **Name** _____
E-Mail _____ **Phone Number** _____
Presbytery _____



Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley

Where: First Presbyterian Church of Unadilla, 156 Main Street, Unadilla, N.Y.

When: Saturday, April 9, 2011 from 9:30 AM to 1:45 PM

The End of Poverty

A Workshop on the Book by Jeffrey Sachs

The Rev. Patricia Wolff, Workshop Leader

We will begin with worship and segue into a plenary lecture/discussion on the main assertions laid out in Sachs' book. Small group case studies will follow.

*Mark: 14:7 "For you always have the poor with you,
and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish;
but you will not always have me."*

In the gospel of Mark, Jesus reminds us that even though he would not always be with his disciples physically, the Holy Spirit would always be there encouraging his followers to bring hope to the poor and the needy. Learn how abject poverty spread as a result of the Industrial Revolution and what action Sachs believes is necessary to end it. Come be a part of this joyful gathering and through worship, music, and lively discussion, hear the good news about hope for the world's poor.

**Plan on bringing a carload from your church!
We look forward to seeing you there!**

LUNCH \$5.00

BABYSITTING AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

R.S.V.P. By Monday, April 4, 2011

Sharon Havens 607-610-4033 or

shavens002@stny.rr.com

Ramp and Elevator On Site For East Access



The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley

The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley lives to serve and encourage congregations as we together seek to be faithful to our calling in Jesus Christ!

Our Presbytery is located in the charming village of Bainbridge (Chenango Country). Its website is www.susvalpresby.org. If you have never gone on-line and read about your Presbytery, I would encourage you to start now. It is packed with information and each time I go to their website I am thankful for all the wonderful things that our Presbytery and churches are doing to bring the love of Christ to people, through mission and outreach, programs that teach Deacons and Elders to be more compassionate and effective leaders in their church, many other programs the nurture committees, plus keeping you informed of upcoming programs and workshops and so much more.

The Susquehanna Valley Presbytery is also on FACEBOOK. Churches can post their activities and mission projects on it so people throughout the world can see the work that dedicated Presbyterians are do.

Here is some important information that I gained from our Presbytery to share with you.

Upcoming Boundaries Awareness Workshop

Utica Presbytery is hosting the Boundaries Awareness Workshop this year. It will be in Rome on Thursday, May 12th. There is no charge for attending this workshop because it is funded by the Synod Fab Five Presbytery Partnership. Kindly check our Presbytery website as this date approaches for more information.

Wurffel-Sills Scholarship

The Synod is kicking off the Wurffel-Sills Scholarship/Interest-Free Student Loan Program. Please note that the synod now offers these forms on line. For more information on the scholarship please to our website: www.synodne.org

The application and essay are due in the Synod by April 1st and the supporting documents to the application are due on April 15th.

“Fab Five” Advocacy Day to End Hydro-Fracking

Presbyterians are called to care for God’s earth as part of our faith.

It has been proven in communities across our nation that the costs of fracturing include poisoned and water supplies for many miles in any direction from the drilling site. In accordance with policies set forth by the 219th General Assembly entitled “Call to Restore Creation,” the “Fab Five” Presbyteries will be sponsoring a day of advocacy in Albany to put an end to dangerous hydraulic fracturing for natural gas.

On Monday May 2 we will gather in Albany for briefings from eco-justices activists from several New York activist organizations. We will then meet with our state Senators and Assembly Members to urge them to work for a permanent moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in our state. To register, and for further information, contact Brooke Newell, Advocacy Ministries Coordinator, at brooke@cjgreen.net or 518-793-3823. Bus transportation and lunch will be provided from the Syracuse and Binghamton areas for a cost of \$10 per person. Registration deadline is April 20.

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others (Philippians 2:4).

Tracking Turtles for Jesus High School Mission Trip

Take part in an amazing week of studying turtles, ecosystems, and helping with scientific research through the lens of your faith. The trip is being organized by Brad McFall, the Stewardship of Creation Enabler and Rev. Dr. Janet Adair Hensen former member of the steering committee for Presbyterians for Restoring Creation, D. Minn. In “Wilderness Spirituality”.

Dates: Wed. April 13th-Tues. April 19th. For more information call our Presbytery.

ECO-Stewards Program – Apply by March 15.

Are you, or do you know a young adult (20-30) who wants to grow in their faith, has a passion for earth care, and could benefit from a paid summer internship? Please consider participating in the Eco-Stewards Program.

Join us June 2-9, 2011 as we explore the connections between faith and environmental stewardship, along the banks of the Bighorn River in southeastern Montana. We will camp in tents and tepees at Greenwood Farm, a 40 acre organic farm on the Crow Reservation, just outside of Hardin, Mt.

Participants can choose a follow up paid summer internship at several other locations in the country. These Eco-Stewards Interns will put their skills into action through projects like planting organic gardens, building green structures, designing and implementing “greening” plans for camps, or creating an eco-stewardship curriculum for campers. Presbytery funds are available to help defray the costs of this program.

Contact Brad McFall at bsmcfall@hotmail.com Stewardship of Creation Enabler.

**Stony Point Center
Horizons Bible Study
May 13-15, 2011**

**Confessing
the Beatitudes**

Led by Margaret Aymer
Author of the Study



HORIZONS

**STONY
POINT**
an open space...

17 Cricketown Road
Stony Point, NY 10980
845-786-5674
www.stonypointcenter.org

Cost: \$250/Person

The full program, which offers additional resources, begins with dinner on Friday and ends with lunch on Sunday. Registration and check-in will start on Friday at 4:00 PM.

Or, register for a one-day Intensive Program, Saturday Only - 9 to 9 for \$75/Person.

Cost covers meals and a shared double room in one of our lodges. If requested at registration, a limited number of private rooms may be available at an additional cost. Call 845-786-5674 x107 with any questions.

For transportation information email our Transportation Coordinator, transportation@stonypointcenter.org or call 845-786-5674 x 123



Margaret Aymer is associate professor of New Testament and chair of Biblical Studies at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. She is an ordained minister of Word and

Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), serving within the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta. Margaret is the author of *First Pure, Then Peaceable: Frederick Douglass, Darkness and the Epistle of James* (New York: T&T, 2007), as well as various academic and liturgical articles and resources. She serves as the chair of the board of AIDS Alliance for Faith and Health, an Atlanta-based nonprofit helping those infected with and affected by HIV to thrive. Margaret is married to Laurent M. R. G. Oget of France, a software engineer.

**Conference Registration Form
Horizon Bible Study May 13-15, 2011**

Name: _____
Phone: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
E-mail: _____
Female Male Roommate Request

We will assign a roommate unless you provide a roommate request. Each person must fill out a separate registration form.

Special Dietary or Other Needs:

Double Occupancy \$250.00
Single Occupancy (if available) \$330.00
One-day Intensive (Saturday Only) \$ 75.00
Add'l Overtime Stay \$ 90.00
Dates: Early Arrival _____
Late Departure _____
Transportation \$ _____
Donation for Program \$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____

Check enclosed (payable to Stony Point Center)

Visa _____

MasterCard _____

Credit Card No. _____

Expiration Date _____

(SPC only uses your credit card to hold the space and charges it when you check in.)

Signature _____