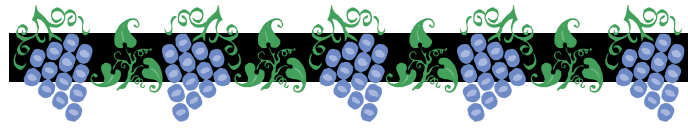




THE GRAPEVINE



A Newsletter for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Northern New England

<http://pwnne.wordpress.com/>

October 2012

It's all about Mission...

uBUNYE WOMEN'S EXCHANGE REPORT

AMATOLA PRESBYTERY

AUGUST 14 – AUGUST 26, 2012

Bedford Presbyterian Church Mission team of volunteers headed to West Virginia

March 2012

Where do our mission pledges go?

- Program Delivery/Development
- International/National Support
- Management/General Expenses
- For PCUSA Mission support
- For Leadership Training

Where do our mission pledges go?

OK, we've decided on the amount of our mission pledge and now send it quarterly to Fran Bader, treasurer, PWPNE. Of that, she keeps 10%, or the amount you've indicated, for PWPNE, and those who attend the Annual Meeting at the retreat receive a treasurer's report for the year. 3%, or the amount indicated on the pledge sheet, is sent to support the work of the Presbyterian Women of the Synod. The rest of the money goes to support the mission of the PCUSA worldwide and PW. It's this last amount we wonder about. Where does it go?

According to the pie chart in the 2013 Mission Pledge packet, Mission Pledge funds, combined with other revenue streams, support mission and ministry in this way:

- 33% for Program Delivery/Development
- 26% for International/National Support
- 21% for Management/General Expenses
- 18% for PCUSA Mission support
- 2% for Leadership Training

In case you missed it as I did the first time around, that's 44% for mission support. (26+18). The rest pays the rent and utilities and all those things that help us to be Presbyterian Women such as staff, Horizons Magazine, Bible Study and leadership expenses. Incidentally, the Thank Offering and Birthday Offering total 29% on the revenue side and all of these funds go directly to the chosen recipients.

Let me know if your church or PW Moderator has not received a 2013 Mission Pledge packet.

Blessings,
Bobbie Knickerbocker
Celebration Giving Representative, PWPNE
Bobbieknick2@juno.com, 603-579-0603

Spring Retreat

Save the date: May 10-11, 2012

We will be holding a Silent Auction at the Retreat.
Please consider donating an item!

The funds raised will be used to help women attend the next
National Gathering

Bedford Presbyterian Church Mission team of volunteers headed to West Virginia

March 2012

By Fran Bader
Bedford Presbyterian Church

I writing this to tell you of my experience on the mission trip to West Virginia. Oh, I was prepared for the long hard hours of physical work, of which there was plenty. We tried to prepare ourselves to see what generations of poverty can do to a town and it's residents. I was prepared to be sad, frustrated and even angry. After the first workday what I felt instead was something that words just can't describe. It was just a feeling of tightness around me.

During the week, I led a team of wonderful women -Team Chic- Our motto is: "We read and ask for directions". I led them in building a shed for Gracie to store things. Gracie is the owner of the house we worked on. She has an amazing story, which you will hear more about in the coming weeks. This shed came as a kit from Lowes. As we unpacked the bundle of lumber we came across a small block. I knew that this was the most important piece of wood in the kit. It would not be part of the shed floor, roof, door or walls. It was the ¾ inch gauge block that when put to use would help us keep the shed square. We named the block the Jesus Block for it was going to guide us. That shed is square and level. We signed that Jesus Block "to Amazing Gracie" and mounted it inside the shed. After spending the week building the shed, doing some demo work at another site, making another prayer shawl in record time that tightness I felt at the beginning of the week had dissipated and what was left was hope, courage, joy, and love.

I now get to thank all you for your support of the mission trips. Because of that support I got to be amazed at the strength of our youth, marvel at the tenacity of the group to finish the job, I got to listen to Pastor Karen giggle from her bed as she sent a text to Marcia Morgan who was just in the next room, and laugh until I had tears while playing Apples to Apples. I watched Mark Myers spread Geocaching fever and listened to Peter and Matt play the guitar. I was able to be a part of a group of 30 talented and wonderful people who descended on to a house and installed a roof, bathroom, kitchen, hot water heater, new electrics and so much more. I thank you because I got to see Olivia's painting mounted on Gracie's kitchen wall, and I received a new nickname- lead foot Frannie-; I got to sing the Amen at the end of the hymns on Sunday because they had the old hymnals.

And Thank you for allowing me to bear witness to the fact that the debilitating, depressing and overwhelming poverty, that that poverty, can't hold a candle to the strength and brilliance of Gracie's faith. It is truly humbling. Thank you.



The following statement by Rev. Joan Stewart reflects the true meaning of mission:

...So many people have left their footprints in West Virginia. Their gifts have changed lives. And I suspect that in their own lives their feet carry them to more places where their foot prints mean shared hope. So many families are looking forward to having their homes made warm, safe and dry. I think about the woman who asked for help to make her porch safe. She told me that as much as she needed the assistance, what meant even more to her was to show her son what "real Christians look like." She said that his experience in the church was not a good one, but she said "real Christians" are people who live out their faith in kindness. She wanted him to see that for himself. This is how the Kingdom is built!!! I pray that her son will see what grace truly looks like, and that through Christ we can do amazing things.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion "Your God reigns""

The Reverend Joan Stewart,
Executive Director Spring 2011
Letter to Friends and Supporters of WVMAW.

uBUNYE WOMEN'S EXCHANGE - AMATOLA PRESBYTERY

August 14 – 26, 2012

By Elaine Brown
Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church

Molweni. . . Greetings!

It was only just over a year ago that we addressed the presbytery requesting your support for the 2011 uBunye women's exchange. We had received a letter from the then uBunye chair, Jaques Murphy, stating "the time is right for women in the Amatola Presbytery". Now I stand before you with such exciting news...the time was right, and we have been privileged to observe the growth and development of women in the Amatola Presbytery, and the strength and leadership that our last year's six guests have extended to their South African sisters in Christ.

Our two weeks in South Africa, a country of extremes, began with an overnight stop in Johannesburg. The excitement started when we saw the program that the Amatola women had planned for us. On the evening of our arrival at the Nohle Makwabe Centre at Auld Memorial Presbyterian Church in Mdantsane, we were greeted with joyous songs and we received Xhosa names. (Each of us says our Xhosa name).

I am Nobubele Elaine I am. I am.

On Friday we started off gangbusters and visited 6 different sites ranging from learning-disabled schools, HIV/AIDS clinics, to several outstations. We quickly realized that distances were vast and the roads were very poor. However, the churches' dedication to supporting the schools and clinics was remarkable.



We were welcomed at the Amatola Presbytery Meeting held at St. Nicholas United Church in East London on Saturday. After the installation of the Rev. Alan Nyoni, as moderator, we were given a few minutes to extend our greetings from the Northern New England Presbytery, and presented a beautiful, Maine pottery communion chalice with paten to Amatola Presbytery. With grateful appreciation to the Rev. Woody Shook who created two beautiful cross necklaces, we presented these necklaces to the two newly elected Amatola Presbytery women chairs, Vi Jekwa, Chair of the Administration and Ecumenical



Division, and Babes Majokweni, Chair of the Church Growth Committee. Both of these women were part of the group who visited the PNNE last summer. Many members present strongly support the initiatives begun by the women in the Amatola Presbytery.

together in the community of Princeton, New Jersey provided enthusiasm for congregation members who are hopeful that new projects will begin within Amatola churches.

Sunday we worshipped together at Auld Memorial where Barbara shared the congregational message to a packed congregation. Her personal participation of encouraging two neighboring black and white congregations to work



Then after a wonderful meal and joyous singing we were on our way to the featured event. We joined over 80 women from Amatola Presbytery at Mngqesha Great Place for a two-day seminar. The theme of the seminar was “Womanhood 2012”. Speakers addressed cultural and social dimensions of activities and roles important for women as active participants in their churches and communities – taking responsibility and assuming leadership.

Our travels continued and we visited outstations, churches and missions. Pastors, and the United Presbyterian Women’s Fellowships always welcomed us.

Sunday, we visited separate churches. I offered the message at the Queenstown Township church while Barb and Bev participated in the early service at St. Andrews, Kings Williams



Town and then moved on to two other churches participating in their worship services. Bev to St. Philips and Barb to Semple Mission. Yes, it was a day of prayer and praise. The folks at each place were so appreciative of our participation.



The time passed so quickly and before we realized it was time to debrief and plan for a future exchange and projects for uBunye to consider. We will be sharing more of these suggestions with you in future months, but suggestions included – endeavoring common projects, planning for the reciprocal women’s exchange for 2014, and continually uplifting our churches in prayers.

Churches repeatedly requested partnership opportunities. Plans are proceeding by Amatola’s Administration and Ecumenical Division to give more definite structure in establishing partnerships and effort for procedures and accountabilities.

Although we recognized that congregational needs were great, the enthusiasm of sharing with sisters in Christ face-to-face, and holding hands in prayer is hard to replace with technology like Skype and emails. We extend our gratitude for your prayers and support for this opportunity of representing the uBunye Committee. Our visit was a heart filled recognition...that “We are one in Christ”.

A little laugh for you☺

Opting Out

There are 566 members in our church, but 100 are frail and elderly, so that leaves 466 to do all the work, but 80 are young people at college, so that leaves 386 to do all the work, but 150 are tired businessmen when they get home at the end of the day, so that leaves 236 to do all the work, but there are 150 busy housewives with children, so that leaves 86 to do all the work. A further 46 have most important outside interests that really need to be attended to, so that leaves 40 to do all the work, but 15 live too far away to come regularly, so that leaves 25 to do all the work, but 23 say they have already done their bit for the church. So that leaves you and me and I’m exhausted so good luck to you!

2012 Presbyterian Women's National Gathering

By Bobbie Knickerbocker
Nashua Presbyterian Church

Before moving to Nashua 14 years ago, my husband and I lived in Dallas for nearly 20 years. I was active in Grace Presbytery and was Global Mission Coordinator for that presbytery for several years. Currently I serve on the board for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Northern New England as Celebration Giving Representative.

After I had decided to attend the Women's Gathering in Orlando I learned that much of the cost would be covered if I went as a voting representative. This would involve attending business meetings for two afternoons of the gathering. \$100 of that financial assistance came from PNNE and I am grateful for that. So, I stand here, with Diane Hoppe-Hugo, in my fair trade Gathering tee shirt.



Bobbie & Diane

With a past experience of going to Presbyterian events at Stony Point, Montreat, Mo Ranch in Texas, and Louisville, I was overwhelmed by the Gaylord Palms in Orlando. But as my daughter said, "Mom, you don't get around much." Still, the place was awesome. And, as my daughter-in-law (and roommate) pointed out, there were no lines for the restrooms!

So much was packed into the four days of the gathering – worship, speakers, workshops, forums, optional activities, and for Diane and me, the business meetings, that it was impossible to get to events on time –so I won't try to cover everything. Because I am the Celebration Giving Representative (isn't that a cool title!) for the PWPNE, I will focus on three mission speakers that impressed me greatly:

* **Noelle Damico**, associate for fair food for the Presbyterian Hunger Program and coordinator for the PCUSA campaign for fair food told us that those of us who are free have a moral obligation to our brothers and sisters who are enslaved to use our power wisely and well to end human trafficking. She pointed out that although we tend to think of human trafficking in terms of women and girls for sex, there is much trafficking of both genders for labor – primarily in agriculture, mining and fishing. Undocumented people are especially vulnerable because they have no one to turn to for help. It makes me wonder how much of the produce I eat in the winter time has been picked by slave labor.

* **Debbie Braaksma**, area coordinator for Africa for the PCUSA talked about reconciliation and education programs in South Sudan where two and a half million died in the 22-year civil war. She told us that the women have lived in a culture of violence, deprived of education. There are three times as many boys as girls in school and a teenage girl is more likely to be a wife than a student. 48% of the children live with hunger and ¼ of the children die before the age of five. *Birthday Offerings* have funded projects in the past and the \$35,555 offering taken at the Gathering will fund water wells in Akobo, an area of great inter-ethnic tension.

* In the materials we received before the Gathering we were encouraged to bring \$20 gift cards for the Beth-El Farm worker Ministry, which helps migrant farm workers in three Florida communities. It seemed only right to invite others to participate in this offering, and PW members at Nashua Presbyterian Church responded. Also, the Deacons happened to meet a week before I left and they donated \$40, for a total of \$120 in Wal-Mart gift cards. While I was enjoying a stimulating business meeting, my daughter-in-law went on the "field trip" to the Beth-El Ministry. She gave a glowing report of the work Beth-El does with the farm workers who are the poorest of the working poor, providing both spiritual and material assistance. The farm owners pay contractors to provide workers who are from Guatemala and Southern Mexico. They work for seven months, and their annual wage is \$8500. *Dave Moore*, who has been *Executive Director of Beth-El* for seven years, spoke to the Gathering on Saturday morning. He told us how a grant from the Birthday Offering in 2003 made it possible for them to double the size of their sanctuary. *He was presented with gift cards totaling \$39,250 from Presbyterian Women.* We know they'll be put to good use.

This was my second (my daughter-in-law's first) Gathering. I was extremely impressed with all of the presenters, with the format, and the spirit of the event. And it was inspiring to see how many women were there in spite of disabilities, waiting in line for the elevator in their wheel chairs.



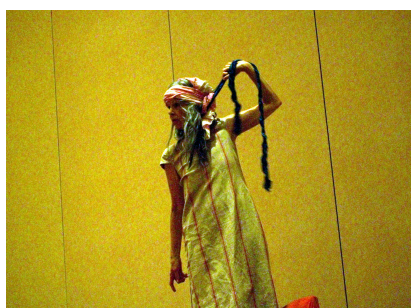
Communion River: after massive communion that used cups from all over the world, as well as diverse breads



The theme, "River of Hope" flowed through the Gathering, reminding us of the need for safe water in many parts of the world, questioning the wisdom of bottled water, and always offering the living water through Christ who sustains us.

Sunday morning included worship, communion, and bagpipes. The Gathering is over. Pick up your bag lunch and your luggage and go home, enriched by prayers, scripture, hymns, sermons, and the messages of the ministries of Presbyterian Women.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of the city: it shall not be moved:
God will help it when the morning dawns.
- Psalm 46:4-5, NRSV



Noah's wife has had it!



Herodias crafting



The Clothes Line Project
One of the many missions that PW are involved in.