



Highland Highlights

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey

September 2024

RECIPIENT - PLEASE POST THE FLYERS AT THE END OF THIS NEWSLETTER ON BULLETIN BOARDS AND/OR WEB SITES, and INCLUDE IN YOUR OWN NEWSLETTER.

Please also forward to women in your church.

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

Do Everything in Love.....

At times, I find myself praying in the car on my way to errands, work or appointments. I pray that the errands don't take too long, that work is productive and the results of the appointments are positive. I pray when I hear a siren or see flashing lights – for those first responders and for those they are traveling to assist. In times of political unrest, I pray for peace. Many past pageant contestants prayed for 'world peace'.

The title above was the theme for the Presbyterian Women 2024 Churchwide Gathering, held this past August in St. Louis, Mo.

In the New Testament, specifically Luke 10:27, it is written. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." This is the Great Commandment.

As I wrote an article for the Synod of the Northeast's newsletter, the Lighthouse, I wrote that it was somewhat difficult to remember the 'Great Commandment' when you arrive from the airport and your luggage is missing for a few days; or you waited in a long line for a buffet style meal scheduled for 800 women for an interminable amount of time; or you asked for a vegetarian meal, only to receive a bowl of lettuce; or your flight home was changed to a later time! (The positives are that I had to purchase two new shirts, lost some weight due to less food ingested, and had a better plane on the way home.)

Although some things went wrong, they all worked out in the end and I am grateful, especially for those individuals who served me with love.

Part of my 'doing everything in love' is to pray – for those in need, for those who think they are not in need, but I think they are in need – for those who I may harbor some sort of resentment in my heart – I pray that that resentment would dissipate, and even if it didn't, I would pray for that individual. Didn't Christ say to love our enemies?

As I attended the Presbyterian Women 2024 Churchwide Gathering, at times I was able to contemplate – about everything. About those who were on the planning committee; those who provided the meals and served in so many capacities (the maids who cleaned our rooms; those who made the meals and then served the meals; the numerous polite, helpful airline employees, and hotel employees – even the UBER drivers!) – about, yes, even the business meeting and the voting issues, and especially the workshops and the fellowship.

Many of the issues to be voted upon were for cost reduction purposes, due in part to the reduction in contributions, and the loss of volunteers. Presbyterian Women Churchwide is the organization which brings wonderful ideas and programs which filter down through the Synod women, to the Presbytery women, and into our Churches and lives.

Yes, we adapt! And as we adapt, some times there is change.

During my tenure at a previous church, serving as Moderator for the Presbyterian Women, the coordinating team was planning a rummage sale. Someone new at one of the committee meetings brought forth a new idea, which to this day, to my knowledge, is still working at those rummage sales. "Somebody new brings something new," was how we coined it and what a blessing it was and is to this day.

What new things can you bring to Presbyterian Women?

Although Peter, a disciple of Christ, had betrayed Christ, he was the first apostle to go see Jesus' empty tomb. Peter, thereafter, took on a leadership role in the early church, after Jesus' ascension into heaven. So, even though he did something bad in his past, he became a new creature for the future of Christianity.

Again, what new things can you bring to Presbyterian Women?

We had a wonderful gathering at the Bible Study retreat this year. Rev. Anita Wright is a woman with a deep love for God. Rev. Wright currently serves as the pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Montclair, NJ. There her ministry demonstrates her passion for preaching and teaching to transform lives. She is committed to sharing the Word of God as God gives her opportunity through her service to the church and within the community.

Adapting means saying farewell to friends who have re-located out of state, or those who intend to re-locate. Thankfully, there are Churchwide events to attend so that we can embrace each other once again.

We said farewell to Nancy Lack who faithfully served as Treasurer, and Facebook administrator. We will be saying farewell to Sharon Guthrie, former Moderator, who also served as the Communicator, as well as drafting the Resource Book the past few years.

There are those of us who have served in many different positions on the Coordinating Team, with love throughout the years.

It is time for a change. PW is a loving, caring community of women.

Are you that new woman who can bring something new to the Coordinating Team, or know of someone who is interested in serving? If so, contact our Search Committee Chair, Doris Sabin at dorissabin@gmail.com. We embrace you.

In Jesus' name, I pray for new friendships in this community of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.

Donna Rahmann, Moderator - donnarahmann@comcast.net

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR FLYERS FOR:

- ❖ The Fall Gathering – October 5th - Theme "Do Everything In Love"
- ❖ The Retreat at St. Joseph's Shrine – November 16th 9am-4pm – Theme "Leaning into Advent" – Leader Karen Brostrom.

Both events are an opportunity for us to gather, learn something, do something – come out and meet some new sisters.



JUSTICE AND PEACE

The Justice and Peace Committee of National Presbyterian Women promotes a Book Discussion Group every other month, and a Justice and Peace Calendar to keep us aware of important dates. Pick up a copy of each one at the Gathering in April, or, if you are wanting to know sooner, go to the PW website and download:

Churchwide Book Group: <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2024-JP-Book-Discussion-Group-Flier-10-03-23.pdf>

Justice and Peace Calendar:

<https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2024-JP-Calendar-FA-rvsvd-2.pdf>

Peace and Justice

Every fall, the Presbyterian Church's Peacemaking Program extends an invitation to join with people of faith from around the country and the world for A Season of Peace, a month-long pilgrimage designed to deepen the pursuit of peace for congregations, small groups, families, and individuals. This season is a time of growth, encouragement, challenge, inspiration, and education which invites you to consider your own relationship to peacemaking and justice.

You can request a daily reflection to come into your email or download the whole devotional on PCUSA WEBSITE - type in season of peace.

Lisa Gray - PWP Peace & Justice Coordinator Lisa_A_Gray@outlook.com

STAYING CONNECTED

If you know of any women who are not getting this email, and would like to, send their name and e-mail to Sherry Guthrie, sharon.guthrie28@gmail.com, Communications. Or, if you are reading the hard copy of this and now have e-mail, please communicate with Sherry.

BOOK GROUP

The Book group is still meeting at 5:00pm at the Panera in Succasunna. Please e-mail Donna Rahmann at donnarahmann@comcast.net if you would like to be included. The book for September 27 is "Sandwich" by Catherine Newman.

TOGETHER IN SERVICE

What is your PW doing to serve your local community? To serve a national or international project?

We would enjoy learning about how your group serves others and sharing your ideas through future newsletters. It may serve as a nudge to another PW to adapt in their own setting or spark a fire under in a group to start something entirely new. We know that we PW women are capable of accomplishing whatever we set our minds to when carefully planned. Just need that little nudge from you.

Doris Sabin, Together in Service dorissabin@gmail.com



SEARCH COMMITTEE

Come join the leadership team of PW in the Highlands Presbytery - we have several opportunities for women of different skills.

Does leading a group and working with both presbytery and PW of the Synod challenge you? We are searching for a Moderator.

If program planning is your skill, the Vice-Moderator might match your skill set.

The Secretary/Historian keeps and distributes minutes of gatherings and the Coordinating Team as well as helping local PWs preserve their history.

The Communications leader is responsible for email distribution of the newsletter and other important information to the local PW representatives so they know what is happening and have the opportunity to participate.

The Search Committee does just that. Searches for women who are interested in being part of PW at another level. Always looking and learning from you.

I look forward to hearing from you so that we can continue to build a solid organization that will share the purpose of PW. I am available by email at dorissabin@gmail.com.

Doris Sabin, Search Committee

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TREASURER

As we reflect on God's bounty to us, we know that every day is "gives day" here in the Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ. Every day we celebrate the loving relationships and the life-changing ministries Presbyterian Women enable.

Cultivating Presbyterian Women means putting our hands and hearts to work through our PW Purpose. Whether planting seeds through our ecumenical partnerships, building healthy communities through our Thank and Birthday Offerings, honoring faithful servants with Honorary Life Memberships, or taking time to be in beloved community through study, service and fun, we each choose to live fully in God's bounty and grace.

Our gifts to the Mission Pledge especially are for:

- ❖ Award-winning PW/*Horizons* Bible studies and accompanying helps that nurture our faith and build community.
- ❖ Funds raised to support mission through our Thank and Birthday Offerings.
- ❖ Peace and justice issues that PW supports through prayer and advocacy.
- ❖ Building community, especially through PW Gatherings (whether synod or churchwide, in person or online) and our commitment to include all.
- ❖ Devoted staff, providing resources and leadership development to help build witnesses to God's promises.

Of course everyone can go to the presbyterianwomen.org/give website to make a gift. If you do, there are choices for which ministry is supported, i.e. the Mission Pledge, the Birthday or Thank Offering or one of the Endowments. PW in the Presbytery prefers that gifts be made through us, so that the Presbytery is credited, and bank fees minimized. The remittance form is on page 5, and write-ins are acceptable.

Also, new forms for scholarship applications, Honorary Life Memberships, etc. are available – just drop me an e-mail to treaspwhigh@gmail.com

Jane MacDonald, Treasurer

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN, PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS OF NJ
REMITTANCE FORM

Local Association Treasurers: Please use this form for making remittances. Your canceled check is your receipt. Please make checks payable to: PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN, HIGHLANDS PRESBYTERY. Thank you.

Name of Sender: _____ Telephone _____

Sender's E-Mail Address: _____

Church / Association: _____ Date _____

Payment of:	Amount
Mission Pledge - Churchwide	
Mission Pledge - Synod	
PW Presbytery Operating Support	
Birthday Offering	
Thank Offering	
Least Coin	
Other - Specify	
Total of Check	

All money should be sent to the Treasurer:

Jane MacDonald
 35 Hillside Ave
 Newton, NJ 07860

Reminder: Quarterly payments for mission pledges are due by the 10th of March, June, September and December.

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HORIZONS MAGAZINE

Horizons Magazine is a resource for exploring faith and life and how they intertwine. The magazine provides stories of women living their faith through mission, and justice and peace work. Horizons is a resource for bible study and to quote the website "Horizons is just for you because Horizons is about you and your sisters in faith, amazing Presbyterian women."

So, consider ordering a subscription and learn how Presbyterian Women are taking part in the world today. Subscribe at presbyterianwomen.org/horizons. If you subscribe before January, you will receive the Horizons Bible Study next spring – working title "Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our identity in Jesus Christ."



Doris Christians

BIBLE STUDY 2024-2025

Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation

By Patricia K. Tull

Suggestions for Leaders by Rebecca Barnes

Patricia Tull, author of the 2024–2025 PW/Horizons Bible study *Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation*, describes her call for creation justice in this way: "When I first learned of the climate crisis, I wondered how a biblical scholar with few practical skills could help and found my purpose in learning about ecology and teaching people of faith what I could. Such is not everyone's skillset or desire, but each of us has something to do with all our hearts."

We are called to care for neighbors and God's creation with all our hearts, with particular care for society's least powerful members who are disproportionately impacted by unjust systems. In God's first instructions to the nation of Israel we hear "you shall not pervert the justice due to the poor" (Exodus 23:6); in Moses' final speech at the promised land's border, he reiterated, "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20); and from Amos, the earliest recorded prophet, "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream" (Amos 5:24). Scripture reminds us that we are called to speak out to urge our society to act for just transitions in this fast-changing world.

Here's just **one example** of a piece of God's creation that needs to be preserved – from Creation Justice Ministries.



Were it only for the rich biodiversity that it supports, the Blake Plateau would be worth protecting. If it was simply just the home of the world's largest deep sea coral province, it would be enough to make every possible effort possible at conservation. If it was merely the home to some of the most vulnerable of endangered species in our oceans, it would justify every voice calling for strong and

durable safeguards of the area. The Blake Plateau's significance to the balance of the non-human community cannot be overstated.

But there is a deeply human reason to preserve this area as well. The Gullah/Geechee, a blend of African and Indigenous tribes, stretching from North Carolina to Florida and dating back to early 19th century, recognize the site as an ancestral burial ground for the enslaved brought across the Atlantic. It is, as Queen Quet, the Chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee nation states "the ancestral resting place where the blood and bones of Gullah/Geechee ancestors have contributed to the growth of this tremendous ecological area. This watery refuge has cloaked these spiritual treasures until such a time as this".

It is not uncommon in the Hebrew scriptures to see stories where markers are placed to indicate the spot where an ancestor was buried or the place where a significant encounter with God occurred. The Blake Plateau is both. It gives witness to the lives lost in through the tragedy of the Middle Passage while also giving witness to the possibilities of new life coming from that tragedy. It is a reminder that we cannot not afford to lose.

The Blake Plateau is an extraordinary undersea plateau that lies roughly 80 to 200 miles off the coasts of the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. It supports the largest deep-sea coral habitat on earth and is home to an incredible array of ocean life, including whales, elusive seabirds, sea turtles, and swordfish. The deeper areas of the plateau will provide crucial refuge for deep-sea, reef-building corals as ocean temperatures rise. Relatively undisturbed for millennia, the Blake Plateau faces a range of potential industrial threats—from oil development and deep-sea mining to expanding commercial fisheries—that have harmed other oceanic regions. It needs long-lasting safeguards to secure its treasures for current and future generations. Taking steps now to safeguard special areas of the plateau from harmful extractive activities will help to secure the bounty of the Blake Plateau so that its important ecosystems can persist, long into the future.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Want to know about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion? These words are getting a bad rap today, mostly because people do not know what the terms mean. But PW does! We are and continually strive to be an inclusive community! If it helps, think of it in terms of shoes.



High Top Sneaker – **EQUALITY** is everyone getting a pair of shoes.

High Heels - **DIVERSITY** is everyone getting a different type of shoe.

Athletic Shoe – **EQUITY** is everyone getting a pair of shoes that fits.

High Top Work Boot – **ACCEPTANCE** is understanding we all wear different kinds of shoes.

Plastic Sandal – **BELONGING** (another word for Inclusion) is wearing the shoes you want without fear of judgement.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Now may be the perfect time to think about honoring one or more women in your church with an Honorary Life Membership.

In these times of rush, too much to do, demands of job, family, organizations, let's not forget the women who have been our mentors, friends, leaders in the church and PW. More than a thousand women (and a few men) receive this honor each year. With this recognition, your honoree will receive a certificate and either a 10K gold pin (\$250) or a silver pin (\$95).

Funds derived from Honorary Life Memberships support the PW Leadership Development Grant Program. Grants from this program enable individuals to engage in leadership development opportunities such as the Churchwide Gathering, Ecumenical Advocacy Days and the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

The form to request an Honorary Life Membership is on the PW website, or e-mail me at jkmac3536@gmail.com Jane MacDonald, Treasurer

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery are looking for stories or examples of women building community – with each other or with others. Some examples:

- ❖ A book group – PW in the Presbytery has one – see page 3
- ❖ A quilt group – we know there are some out there
- ❖ Bible Studies – Horizon's or not
- ❖ A craft group
- ❖ Habitat for Humanity
- ❖ Gardening group
- ❖ And, dare we think it – a group to discuss politics!

During the pandemic, we got isolated from each other, and may still be. Being engaged with others in an activity that interests you, is one way of dispelling that isolation, and reconnecting with your sisters. TRY IT, AND TELL US ABOUT IT.

In an article in the Presbytery newsletter not too long ago about the role of Elders, it was expressed that they are to be engaged in their community. The quote is:

"While these expectations align with common Christian beliefs, Presbyterians extend their understanding of responsibility further. As leaders, we must encourage church members to view their lives as encompassing active participation in their communities. This includes considering voting as a reflection of beliefs, advocating for justice, and engaging in dialogue about public policies just as we read Scripture and pray."

The Presbyterian Church (USA) does not endorse candidates. We are asked to engage and to VOTE.

FALL GATHERING

October 5, 2024

Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon

(253 Old Turnpike Rd)

"Do Everything in Love"

The Churchwide Gathering Brought Home



*In word and video, we'll
provide a taste of what it is
like when 800 women gather!*

*Registration at 9:30am, program from 10-2 (including a
short business meeting)*

Lunch provided

*Please let Jane MacDonald know you are coming either by
e-mailing her at jkmac3536@gmail.com or by sending a
check for \$5.00 (which goes to the church for the lunch) to
her at 35 Hillside Ave, Newton, NJ 07860*

*Please bring information and/or display of a PW mission
project your church does/supports*



LEANING INTO ADVENT

A TIME OF REFLECTION
ON WAITING, HOPE AND GOD 'S LOVE

at

Shrine of St Joseph

1050 Long Hill Road

Stirling, NJ

Saturday, November 16th 9am-4pm

Led by the Rev. Karen Brostrom

Please bring a Bible

Coffee, lunch provided

Please RSVP to Jane MacDonald jkmac3536@gmail.com or 973-383-4166 by
November 2nd

Cost: \$45 – Send a (non-refundable) check–payable PW in the Presbytery of
the Highlands to:

Jane MacDonald

35 Hillside Ave, Newton NJ 07860

Scholarships are available upon request – send to jkmac3536@gmail.com for
form.