

The Lighthouse



September 2026 Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast



Dear PWSNE Sisters (and Brothers),
Paraphrasing Ecclesiastes - there is time to begin and end: *"a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away."*
It is getting closer to the end of my term as your Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast Moderator. It has been a great joy and privilege to have taken on this amazing role. There have been lots of folks that have helped and struggled to keep PW moving forward. I have heard your joys and concerns. Prayers for you all. We rejoiced with folks that have welcomed new family members, and we have grieved as others lost family members.

PWSNE has a legacy of wonderful former moderators, and I am humbled to join their ranks. My first introduction to Synod PW was in 2003, when Jane MacDonald was moderator, followed by Anne Reynolds, Sandy Grillo, Charlotte Hasselbarth, Maxine Hunter, Lisa Gray and Bisi Shofu. Joanne Schnaudt served before Jane. These women have been a source of support and encouragement to me, and I thank each of them.

We have had great Coordinating Teams of worker bees. Keep up the great job, ladies. You all can and do make a huge difference. And to our PWP Moderators and Coordinating Teams, you are valuable to keeping PW going in your "neck of the woods." May God guide you all in your ups and downs. There have been wonderful stories out there both shared and waiting to be told.

There are a few others that I need to mention that have been my biggest role models along the way (23 years): the late Lois Carter, the late Rita Oestreich, Lois DeWitt, JoAnne Burrell, Donna

Table of Contents

Moderator's Report

PW Reports Due

Triennial Gathering Still time to Register

Do You Remember?

Save Date for Churchwide

Women of Grace

Women of SNJ

PWP of Geneva

From Lisa Grey

Thank Offering

+++++ Next issue due March 1

Send info to Susan
Silliman Smith at
august13sss@gmail.com
by that date.

Photos, poems, etc

Rahmann, Jyung In (Jenny) Lee, and Unzu Lee. Thank You all for your kind words of encouragement and suggestions.

I hope to see you all in a couple of weeks in New Hampshire for the 2026 PWSNE Triennial Gathering and Annual Meeting. If you have not registered, please do so. It is shaping up to be a memorable event in a gorgeous setting. Thank you to the Design Team and Presbytery of Northern New England.

I want to thank all that have kept PWSNE and myself in your prayers. God Bless you all.

*Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds Is like to that above.
Before our Maker's throne We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, Our comforts and our cares.
We share our mutual woes, Our mutual burdens bear.
And often for each other flows The sympathizing tear.
From sorrow, toil, and pains, And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign Through all eternity.*

Do Everything in Love,

Virginia Champlin, PWSNE Moderator 2023-2026

To all our **PWP Moderators and PWSNE Coordinating Team Members**,

1. You are to submit an annual report to our Secretary Alpha Brown. She would like to have them all by September 10. The Annual Report is the following Questions –

- What have you done in this position this year
- What has happened in your position/committee (or PWP) area this year
- If you are leaving your position, what helpful hints do you have for your successor
- If you are returning, what are your goals for the next year
- Could anyone help you to accomplish your goals and how

2. Each PWP is to send one voting representative to the Business meeting. Please let Alpha know who is attending from your PWP. And the Coordinating Team members are to let Alpha know that you are coming. Alpha needs to know to have accurate minutes. If your PWP is not sending anyone, please let Alpha know that, too. However, we would love it if everyone came.

3. If anyone on the CT has any item that needs to be discussed and/or items for action at the Business and/or Annual Meeting, please let me know by September 10.

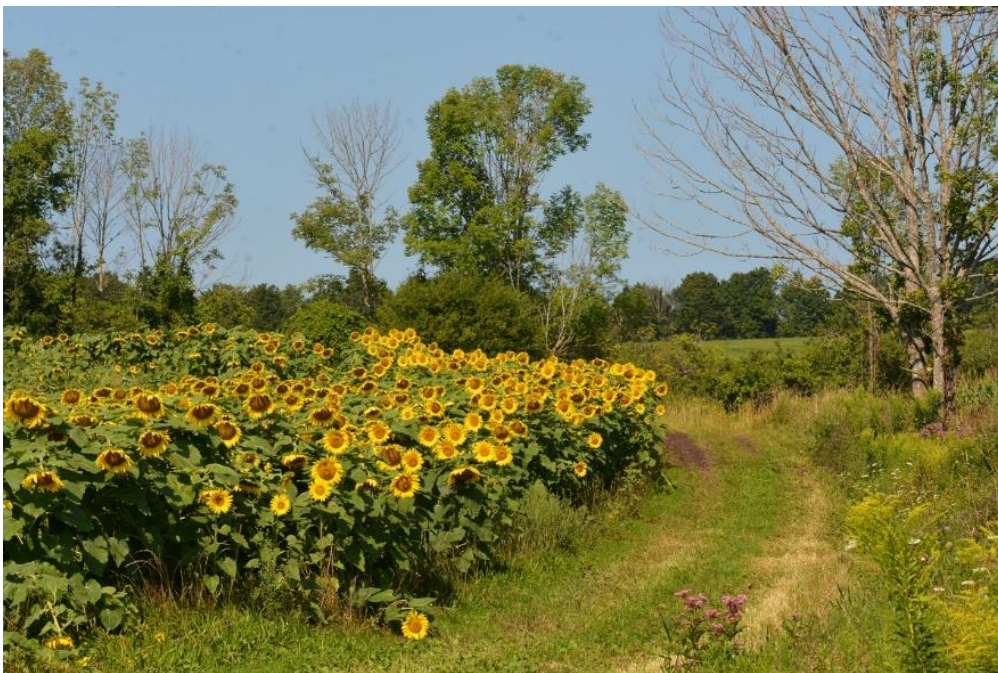


Photo by Nick Hunter

"Sunflower

Summer's End

Summer's end is a beautiful season.
Mornings awaken slowly.
Dew covered webs sparkle
in the golden light.
All around us the bright greens
of summer are fading.
Leaves show hints of yellow, red and orange.
Wild bouquets of Brown-eyed Susans,
Queen Ann's Lace, and purple asters
line the roadsides.
Regal sunflowers stand tall
nodding good-bye.
The amber glow of evening comes early.
In this mellow hour we pause.
A prayer fills our heart:
"Thank you God for this beautiful world and
the lovely season of summer's end."

~Maxine G. Hunter~

Let's Celebrate Presbyterian Women Sisterhood! Synod of the Northeast Triennial Gathering

Friday, October 2, 2026-Sunday noon, October 4.
Arrival – Friday 3:00 PM for Synod Coordinating Team Members,
5:00 PM for the rest of us
Singing Hills Christian Camp, 71 King Drive, Plainfield, NH

Theme: Growing in Love with Presbyterian Women, I Corinthians 16:13-14

Highlights:

- Zoom conversations and presentations by National Presbyterian Women Staff on ways to equip and sustain us as PW women
- Presentation ~ involvement of PW with the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
- Sharing of what individual PW groups are doing in various communities/presbyteries
- Exploring the theme, "Growing in Love with Presbyterian Women"
- Receive, vote, and install New Presbyterian Women Officers in the Synod of the Northeast
- Collection/ Presentation of Freewill Offering towards PWPNE Sponsored Program

Lodging Details:

- We have access to a lodge house with 4 conference rooms and beautiful grounds with assorted recreational opportunities;
- **There is no single room occupancy**, however Design Team has list of hotels in the area should you prefer to lodge without a roommate;
- There is a policy of "no alcoholic beverages" on site;
- Since all lodging is shared, you can choose a roommate or we will assign

Registration Information:

- Total cost of Registration for the event (10/2-10/4) is \$240, all inclusive Delegates and CT \$65
- Commuter Rate: including meals for the day you come:
 - Friday : \$65 Saturday: \$125 Sunday: \$100
 - If attending as a commuter for more than one day, kindly call / email Rhonda or Jane McDonald to confirm your registration fee before mailing it in;
 - Scholarships instructions and applications at pwsne.org
 - Call Rhond Sanchez at 348-498-6260 with any additional questions; email rhondasanchez@live.com)
- **Deadline for registration: September 26, 2026 (requires phone confirmation)**

Travel Instructions:

- By car: Singing Hills is close to I-91
- By bus: Dartmouth Coach from Manhattan to Lebanon, NH
- By train: Amtrak from Penn Station, NY to Windsor, NH.

Design Team can arrange pickup from the station as requested (pls confirm plans by ASAP)

Presbyterian Women of the Synod of the Northeast
Triennial Gathering and Annual Business Meeting - Oct 2 – 4, 2026

REGISTRATION FORM

Name:	
Address:	
E-mail:	phone:
Church you attend/membership:	
Presbytery/Region:	
<i>Indicate with "x" if either apply:</i> <i>PWSNE Delegate</i> <i>Member of Coordinating Team</i>	
<i>Registration Calculation:</i>	
<i>Commuter Plan is per person</i> and is priced by component.	
Program Fee (all participants): \$65	
Registration for entire event (incl \$65 program fee) \$240	
Facility Fee for All Commuters Only: \$10	
Commuter Rate : Friday 10/2 \$65 (<i>pls remember to add facility fee</i>)	
Commuter Rate : Saturday 10/3 \$125 (<i>add facility fee</i>)	
Commuter Rate : Sunday 10/4 \$100 (<i>add facility fee</i>)	
<i>If you would like to attend more than one day as a commuter, kindly contact Jane McDonald or Rhonda Sanchez before mailing in registration</i>	
<i>If you have questions about event, pls contact Design Team Members: Charlotte Hasselbarth Rhonda Sanchez</i>	
Total Registration Fee	
Roommate assignment (pls. check one below)	
Name & Phone Number of Desired Roommate :	
I request you assign a roommate as you are able	

Please indicate here any food allergies, dietary requirements or restrictions:

Make out checks or money orders to Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast or PWSNE.

Mail registration form and payment to: Jane MacDonald, 35 Hillside Avenue, Newton, NJ 07860



Do you remember?

I seemed to have reached the season in life that so many sentences begin with those words

Melancholy and Reminiscence seem to be the best friends in every room

I guess I could even ask you these words, when I have misplaced something that refuses to be found;

And yet, as an interesting youth – I kind of prepared a strategy in advance:

Rather than remember, let's remake, redo, renew and stretch forward

For though recollection is often charming, it can indeed be faulty

And though God is in yesterday, he is also in tomorrow, and most importantly now

What can I do now, to take a Bing image to remind me to respond to Elder Sue Smith

Will it be prose, poetry, reflection?

There is a beaming light that always exists somewhere.

Lighthouses were once life-saves in treacherous seas

The work of the lighthouse keeper was unparalleled and many ships avoided shore(s), rocks, and being grounded to close to shore because of a lighthouse

Lighthouses have sometimes been seen as a beacon for the lost

What have you lost recently – keys, jewelry, favorite clothing, family or friend, a way to feel the pure and fluid joy of worship, companionship, fellowship, chance, opportunity, job

Weeelllll – as my culture will often say as a sentence. We, the Design Team of PWSNE have found you. We invite you to be found, uplifted and united. We ask that you come and be a part of the circle for fun, prayer, meditation, respite and nourishment.

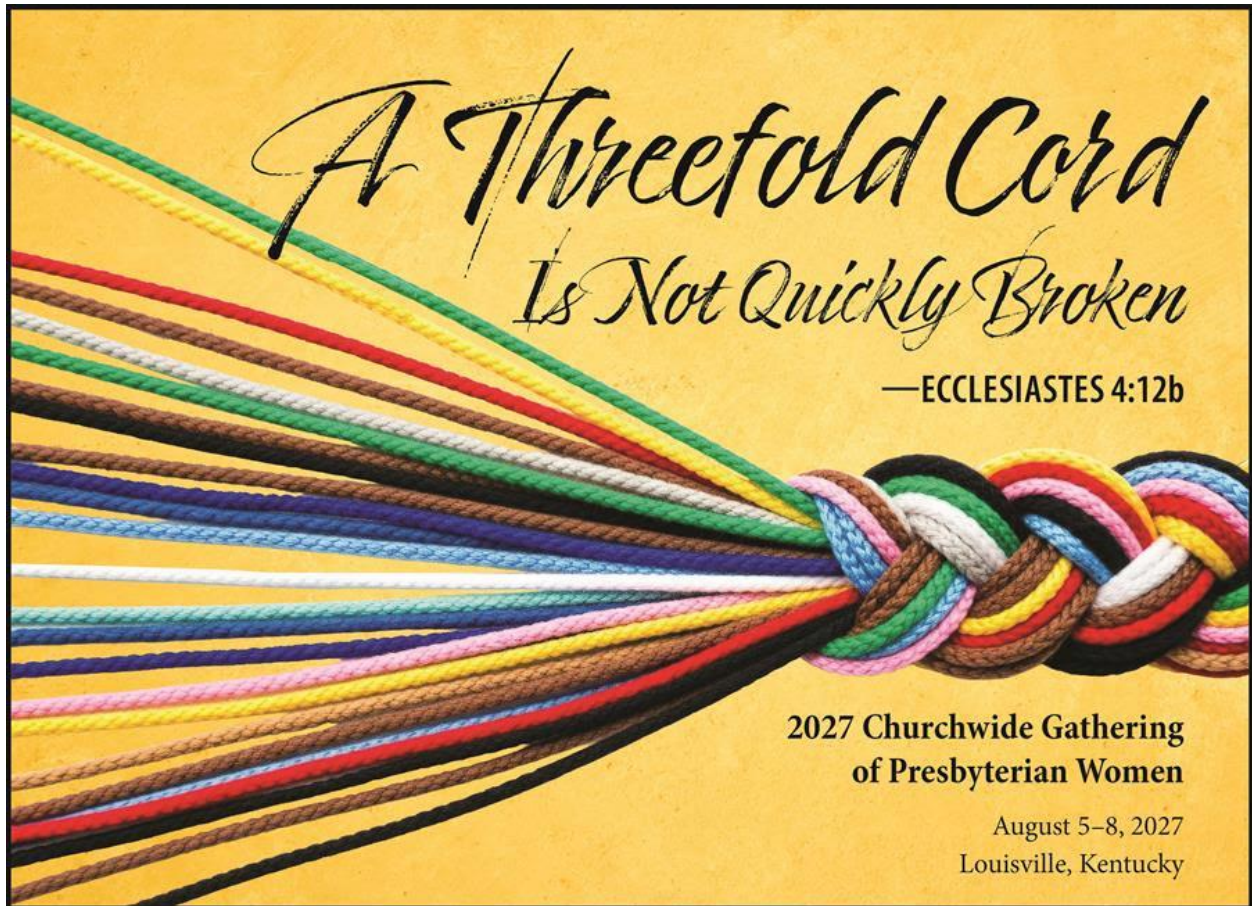
We ask that you trust us and have a whole new experience in place that is open and fertile and beautiful, where thousands of Christians have visited before us and possible millions will visit after us.

Let the beacon of the Lord and the beckoning of your PW sisters enable us to walk together to renew, remanage, reorganize, and get ready for a a new and revitalized PCUSA (after GA 227) and in prep for GA 228 in Borinquén. Yes the General Assembly will be meeting in Puerto Rico for the first time in the history of PCUSA.

In the meantime, we will be waiting to see you in New Hampshire at the Singing Hills Christian Camp. We are in hopeful anticipated excitement as we plan a new and different 3 days of togetherness. An opportunity in this time for this time. Please answer the call.

-Rhonda Sanchez, Vice-Moderator PWSNE (2024-2027)

**Save the Date for
2027 Churchwide Gathering**



View the Gathering Quest online at presbyterianwomen.org/gathering for continuing information and updates.

Women of Grace Widows Fund

Submitted by Margot Gorman

In July, 2 board members of the Women of Grace Widows Fund, returned to Malawi for a joyful reunion with the women we serve. The widows are now producing more than 800 washable menstrual kits a year in our sewing workshop. They earn an income for every kit produced, helping them support their families. Most widows report that they use the money to buy soap and extra food, and pay school fees for their children and grandchildren.

During the trip, Cindy Oster and Margot McGorman had the wonderful task of distributing 237 kits in Mzimba village. The girls and young women assembled on a grassy field to receive the kits and training in how to use them. They learned the best way to fold and insert the pads into the panties, and how to use the circular menstrual tracker that is sewn on to each kit. Smiles, singing, and dancing abounded all afternoon!

Women of Grace Widows Fund was established in 2009 by churches in northern NY to increase the health and security of the widow and her family by providing housing improvements, sewing training, and assistance with unexpected critical needs. For further information, please contact us at info@womenofgracewidows.org

Photos Below:

1. Girls assembled on the grass field
2. Cindy distributes kits
3. Margot helps with pad folding
4. Smiles of success



Photo 1

See the rest of photos on next page



Photo 2



Page 3

Page 4



Women of the Presbytery of Southern NJ

Submitted by Jenny Stark

Dear Friends,

As the new church season begins, the Women of the Presbytery for Southern New Jersey (PWP) are looking forward to connecting with the women in your church and community.

Our focus is mission and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Twice a year, we host an in-person program, and this fall we are pleased to offer remote participation as well.

We hope this program will be a meaningful opportunity for fellowship, encouragement, and shared mission.

The program will take place on Monday, September 21, at 6:30 p.m. at FPC Moorestown. Details are included in the attached flyer and copied on [next page](#).

We would be grateful if you would share this invitation with others. If you are able to email it, post it on your website, or include it in your weekly bulletin, we would appreciate your help in spreading the word.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. Thank you for helping us share this opportunity with the women in your church and community.

With appreciation for your partnership in sharing this ministry,

Jenny Stark
Secretary PWP
609-680-6090



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

Join us for a Shared PW Fall Gathering!

PW Presbytery & FPC Moorestown

Monday, September 21
6:30 in Miller Commons

Our Guest Speaker

Madelyn Sutton, Executive Director, Christian Caring Center

You are invited to gather with Presbyterian women from congregations in Southern NJ at a joint Fall Gathering of the PW Presbytery and FPC-Moorestown on Monday, September 21 at 6:30 pm in Miller Commons, 101 Bridgeboro Road, Moorestown.

Come enjoy desserts and fellowship!

Following a brief business meeting, Madelyn Sutton, Executive Director, will be presenting an update on services at Christian Caring Center, including Eden Village (a tiny home community for the homeless).

Donations to be shared with clients of the Christian Caring Center are appreciated: white cotton socks, soap, body wipes, lotion, female hygiene products, shampoo and conditioner, antiperspirant deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrushes, disposable razors, first aid cream and bandages.

Come and bring a friend!

Sign Up for this Free Event on the FPC Moorestown Events Website:

[Sign Up Here](#)

Sign up at jennylowstark@gmail.com

NEWS FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF THE PRESBYTERY OF GENEVA, NEW YORK

Presbyterian women from Elmira First and Horseheads First in New York joined Pastora Evelyn Torres along with other Presbyterian women in Lares, Puerto Rico in early August. This rural community has been a partner church with Elmira First since 2018, following the devastation of Huracán María in 2017 and the 6.4 earthquake that hit in January 2020. Mission teams have been traveling to the island from First Presbyterian Church in Elmira, NY and other churches within the Presbytery of Geneva. This summer's mission focused on providing backpacks filled with school supplies, raincoats, umbrellas, and water bottles. At least 30 children in the congregation were gifted with the necessary resources to return to school on 6 August. Following the service, there was a community lunch hosted by the women. A PW trip is in the planning for February 2027.



On Friday, 13 November, the PW chapter of the Presbytery of Geneva, NY welcomes the Rev. Dr. Holly H. Thompson, the first Native American woman ordained as a Minister of Word and

Sacrament (Teaching Elder) in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This year marks the 40th year of her ordination. Holly will join PW from Geneva, Genesee Valley, and possibly more. The First Presbyterian Church of Shortsville, NY will host the event. Featured will be a full worship service with a morning message given by our guest, followed by a luncheon and mission activity. Details at this time are in the planning and more information will be available soon. Please consider joining us and make sure to bring a friend. This is an incredible opportunity for us!



Respectfully,
Elder Joanne Tunison Horseheads Presbyterian church, PW Moderator



The annual Strawberry Festival held by **PW of The Presbyterian Church in Geneva** was a resounding success this year. The weather was suburb as were the fresh strawberries. Held in the outside courtyard, festival goers enjoyed strawberries, homemade cake, and ice cream. Entertainment was provided, including Pastor Colin Pritchard performing his own compositions. The accompanying bake sale raised a record amount. The proceeds were given to Geneva Reads, a local organization that promotes reading to all ages in the community. One program is to provide a new book twice a month during the school year to every child in the community who is enrolled in Head Start.

Everyone helps prepare the strawberries.

From Lisa Grey

Bible Study:

We are very excited about the 2026-2027 PW bible Study! It's **United Through Christ, Bound to Each Other**, Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Why is this helpful & what can you learn? This was written to a church in conflict; our nation is in a time of conflict. There are controversial passages that we can get a better understanding of and share our own views. Did you realize the words of institution of communion come from this book of the bible? We'll see how Paul calls for Unity in the church, which may be helpful in today's political climate. And best, in my opinion, there are beautiful pieces of artwork in each chapter we can look at and evaluate.

This has everything to do with "peace & Justice" my upcoming assignment on the PWSNE Coordinating Team. A small group went to the Bible Study learning/retreat this past June. If you need some help leading this in your congregation, please invite any of us who attended to help. The "Workshop for Leaders" is very well done this year, and the introduction by the author is on You-Tube (don't have to purchase the DVD; PW You-tube channel).

PW Churchwide Website:

Sadly, there is not a lot of new information on the website. You can get the Peace & Justice Calendar but I'm guessing due to downsizing staff they seem to find it difficult to keep up. Please consider donating to PW national. "PW Gives Day" is over but it's never too late to send donations to keep the ministry of PWC flourishing.

Monthly PWP Book Study:

We in Highlands Presbytery NJ are hoping to have a little fun with the DEVIL! Presbyterian Outlook has a great resource you can download. (I'm not sure if you need a subscription but I could forward it to you) When I typed in Devil on their website "The Devil You Say" comes right up. We're also looking at "What Presbyterians believe about Hell", (and Progressive Christianity) "When was the concept of the devil introduced?"

We had been meeting at Panera's in Ledgewood, Friday evenings 5-5:30 pm for dinner, 6:30 for discussion. I'm offering all of you this idea for your own PWP. It certainly can be altered to meet the needs of your women. Since it's not a whole book to read, we thought more of you might have the time for this. We'd love new people to use this idea or if you're close to us, join us!

Book

If you're looking for ideas for social justice **activities** in these trying times (besides getting out and protesting!) the book **Hope is Here! Spiritual Practices for Pursing Justice and Beloved Community** by Luther E Smith Jr. is great. AND Westminster John Know Press (where I got mine from) has a wonderful downloadable "congregational guide for leadership teams & groups", by Rev CeCe Armstrong. Each

chapter has the sections 'hear the words', 'offer the wisdom of scripture, pray with each other, and ENACT SPIRITUAL PRACTICES.

Lisa Gray Lisagray.pw@gmail.com; 973-476-4720



The Peace Church Working Group will host a series of Peace Conversations on Zoom this fall for Presbyterian peacemakers on how to effectively respond to conflict and violence. Join us for the first event on the International Day of Peace, Sept. 21, 7 pm ET (4 pm PT). Topic: "Speaking Against War with your Congregation, Community and Nation," led by Ben Daniel, author of the new book on nonviolence, *Grace Over Guns: Pursuing Peace in a Militarized World*, and by Harry Eberts, Interim Director, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. Sign up now at bit.ly/peaceconvo1

GA Peacemaking Actions Included:

Opposing Genocide in Gaza

With a near-unanimous vote, GA named Israel's war in Gaza, enabled by US weapons, as genocide. GA called for a US arms embargo on Israel, as well as a boycott of products from Israeli companies whose actions contribute to violations of international laws concerning genocide. GA backed this up by voting to divest PC(USA) stock from GE Aerospace and Palantir Technologies Inc. due to their business with governments, including Israel, that are involved in human rights abuses.

Thank Offering

2026 Thank Offering
OF PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

*"Little children, let us love not in word or speech
but in deed and truth."*
—1 John 3:18*

New Revised Standard
Version-Updated Edition
Copyright © 1971 National
Council of Churches
of Christ in the United
States of America
All rights reserved.
www.pcusa.org

QR Code: PWR20472

SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST
Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey
Good News House, Inc.
Reaching to His Church's Vulnerable People
Tea & Coffee, New Jersey
goodnewsforall.org
\$25,000

SYNOD OF THE PACIFIC
Presbytery of Boise
Agency for New Americans: Self-Sufficiency for Refugees
Boise, Idaho
asfself.org
\$25,780

SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST
Presbytery of Grand Canyon
Native American Faithfulness and Justice Association (NAFJA)
P.O. Box 1000
Flagstaff, Arizona
nafaithfulness.org
\$25,000

SYNOD OF THE SOUTHEAST
Presbytery of the Southeast
The Greater Miami City Agency of Hospitality
Miami City Agency of Hospitality
Miami City Agency of Hospitality
\$25,000

SYNOD OF THE SUN
Presbytery of Arkansas
Food Bank of Northwest Arkansas
Children and Youth Backpack Program for
Food Bank of Northwest Arkansas
Food Bank of Northwest Arkansas
\$25,000

Learn more about the Thank Offering of Presbyterian Women by visiting [presbyterianwomen.org/thank](https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/thank).

PWR20472

I copied this poster/placemat from the Presbyterian Women's site and you can get full information by clicking this https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/what_we_do/support-mission/thank-offering/