

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
PRESBYTERY OF SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY



The Caller



Jo Ann Gray, Moderator

Spring 2013

JoAnne Aymar, Editor



QUIET CORNER

Ahhhhh . . . Spring! Who does not like spring? In spring we celebrate Easter, a time of resurrection, hope, promise and renewal of ourselves and of our earth. In March I attended a special Presbytery meeting in Bainbridge. One of the pastors mentioned that churches in our area were connective congregations. What does it mean to connect? We connect with friends, family, co workers, and so many other areas in our lives. When I think of connect, the word share comes to mind. We share our lives. Christ shared his life and still does in the lives of Christians. So we connect and share the gifts we are given.

Planting a garden is one way of connecting and sharing. My daughter has taught my 5 year granddaughter how to plant and care for a garden. They have connected with the soil of the earth, preparing it by turning over the soil and adding nutrients to it before planting the flower and vegetable seeds. Over spring and summer, they will water and weed their garden. Once the vegetables are ripe, they will harvest them and will often share the fruits of their labor with friends and family.

As Presbyterian Women we connect on so many levels. We share who we are in Mission. We donate our time, talents and treasure in so many Mission projects and programs. In the process we are able to transform the lives of so many people in our community and throughout the world. We provide not only tangible items that people may not have the resources for, but equip them to live fruitful lives. In the process they are transformed, knowing others care for their situation and are there to help. They also learn about Christian love and our faith.

Our Spring Gathering, which will be held May 4th this year, will focus on Mission. When I think of Mission I cannot help but think of Jesus and The Last Supper. He was connecting for the very last time with his disciples whom he spent so much time with. They had "broke bread" together countless times, sharing who they were and now these same men would have to go out into the world without their leader whom they had come to love. These men would become the founders of Christianity. Christ died for us, imperfect as we are. Unlike us Jesus knew his time on earth was coming to an end. We don't know when we will be called home. I recall telling many a person that time of itself is not important, rather it is what we do with our time that is important. Christ at the Last Supper demonstrates what we should do with our time. We are called to cherish our time with family and friends and we gather together. But just like his disciples we are called to change the world by turning unjust actions and behaviors into just ones. We are called to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for needy, and those who are ill, or those who need a helping hand or need encouragement.

Come and spend time at our Spring Gathering. Share what your church is doing to support Mission. We have a wonderful program prepared that will inspire, refresh and renew our commitment to mission. Just like the Last Supper, we will all break bread together and share a delicious lunch.



TOGETHER IN MISSION - By Judy Wildenstein - Co-ord. Team

Most of us remember the days of Mission meaning a person who devoted years of service in a life lived far away. Thankfully, there are still some people who do just that! However, for most of us Mission means a small project that we can do from our home or in a group at church.

Walton UP Church continues to support mission projects. During February and March we completed 89 kimonos and 59 receiving blankets which were sent to Church World Services. Kits (including fabric and instructions) for these items will be available at the Spring Gathering. This mission is being funded by your PWP. It is hoped that you will be interested in this mission and expand it to your own church women. Any questions about this project will be answered at the Gathering. If you cannot attend and would like kits or have questions you can reach me at 607 865 6617 or by e-mail [at judymomw@hotmail.com](mailto:judymomw@hotmail.com).



Called to Community!

Happy Spring! I read a devotional recently that pointed out the Genesis 2:9 passage that says: "The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground - trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food..." The phrase "trees that were pleasing to the eye" jumped out for the writer. She pointed out that if the purpose of the trees was to provide food, God could have created little black boxes that contained fruit for people's use. Instead God chose to design them as pleasing to the eye. And not only did God form one beautiful, intricate, attractive shape, but God also made a variety. (*Guideposts*, Sharon Hinck)

Not only did God do this with trees. Look around you and see the variety of people God made. What a gift from God!

Those of us using the Horizons Bible Study (and I highly recommend these studies) this year, are discovering how God calls women and men to live as sisters and brothers, serving one another in truthfulness and love as valued members of God's household. This is a powerful message from the General Epistles. The concept of community is a strong theme throughout this study. What a challenge this is for us especially with the variety of people God puts in our lives.

What are some of the ways in which your worshiping community demonstrates love for its brothers and sisters? Could we be doing more?

May the truths of our mouths reflect the truths of our hearts that they may be united in love!

Love Divine, all loves excelling, Joy of Heaven, to earth come down.

Blessings on the journey, Jo Ann Gray

* The Coordinating Team of the Presbyterian Women of The Presbytery hope that you will join us at our gatherings. We usually have one in the Spring and one in the Fall. It is good to worship and study together. You will most likely receive this newsletter the week of our Spring Gathering. If you get this after the RSVP date of if you are able to attend - PLEASE still RSVP and come join the fellowship and mission sharing.

* We are grateful to hear from our sisters at the Gilbertsville Presbyterian Church. They write to us sharing their passion for mission, especially the Grace and Peace Mission to Orissa.

* Mission has always been important to Presbyterian Women. (In fact, I remember as a child my mother going to Missionary Society meetings - which were the PW's of that time). It is exciting to hear about the women of our Presbytery getting excited about mission and participating in various ways in mission.



The Lighthouse is a publication from the Presbyterian Women of the Synod of the Northeast. It is printed bi- annually just like our newsletter. Those who like reading articles on their computer can find the

Lighthouse on the website www.pwsne.org. Here is part of an article titled **A United Effort of Mission and Goodwill** written by Joanna Diamon which is found in the Feb. 2013 newsletter.

The Presbytery of Northern New England (PNNE) has strong ties with churches in south Africa. As part of the ongoing fellowship in August 2011 PNNE sponsored a four and one half day leadership conference for women from the PNNE, Boston Presbytery, plus six women from the Amatola Presbytery, Eastern Cape, South Africa. The conference "Women's Leadership in a Multicultural World - Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers" was all that and more. Twenty-three women gathered to study issues that impact women's leadership skills. The sessions were interactive, lively and informative. The women looked at Multiculturalism and how it impacts communication, power acquisition, and interactions among people and groups.

Following the conference, guests from South Africa were home-housed. It was a golden opportunity of sharing for both hosts and visitors. Vi Jekawa and Elsabe Leeuw delighted everyone they met. Singing is a beautiful part of who the South African women are. They exemplified the joy, the peace and the power of the Holy Spirit that is felt through lively, heartfelt and exuberant singing. Since that time, our moderator of Session and moderator of Deacons begin each meeting in song.

In May a reunion via Skype was held with the participants of the conference to South Africa. Like magic we all were visually connect. It was a wonderful reunion. Mid August Elaine Brown of Mid-Coast Presbyterian, Beverly Hoover of Bedford Presbyterian, and Barbara Cooper of Kearsarge Community Presbyterian went to South Africa to begin to plan with our Amatola sisters a reciprocal exchange to take place in 2014. These ladies had opportunities to meet and get to know many more of the women of the Amoatola churches and of their satellite/outstation churches. While there they attend a seminar "Womenhood 2012". The Amatola women were motivated by speakers to help them on their journey of empowerment within the presbytery with topics such as *The Importance of Activating the Power Within* and *Understanding Your Uniqueness as Strength*. All three of those visiting South Africa attended church where they were invited to participate in worship service. In addition they went to various outreach projects such as orphanages and homes for the elderly.

The women brought gift to their hosts which included towels and tote bags which had been hand stenciled with colorful motifs of flowers, pine trees and underwater scenes, many of them representative of the Northeast. This effort was begun at the Spring Retreat of the PW of PNNE held this past May at the Alton Bay Christian Conference Center in New Hampshire. The bags were completed by the PW of Mid-Coast Presbyterian at a special workshop held in July.

The three ladies who traveled to South Africa will present a program to share their experience at the annual PWNNE Spring Retreat to be held in Vermont Friday and Saturday May 11-12th this year.

* Editors note: Reading this article we learn how important mission is. We have so much freedom as American women. Yet, there is a long road ahead for women living in Africa and many other places throughout the world. They struggle to identify themselves and to realize their full value as equals among men. Let us take time to pray for them. We are most grateful for those who take measures to learn other cultures. The work they do is most appreciated. At our Spring Gathering you will have the opportunity to learn about our support in our Ethiopian Partnership and the Grace and Peace Mission to Orissa, India. Our offering will benefit these two mission programs. We can do all things in Christ.



**CELEBRATING MISSION
ETHIOPIAN PARTNERSHIP
GRACE AND PEACE MISSION TO ORISSA, INDIA
MISSION SHOW AND TELL
SPRING GATHERING
Presbyterian Women (and men) of
Susquehanna Valley Presbytery
Saturday, May 4, 2013, 9:30 - 1:30
Nineveh Presbyterian Church**

Speakers

Ethiopian Partnership Grace and Peace

The offering to benefit these two mission projects

Show and Tell

Each church is invited to bring samples/stories of their mission projects

COME CELEBRATE MISSION AND GET NEW IDEAS!

Lunch (\$5.00) RSVP by Monday April 29 Contact Sharon Jaindl, jsjaindl@gmail.com

Home 607 693 2915, cell 607 760 0064. (indicate any special needs and child care needs)



Bible Study Opportunity

*Article from Lighthouse Newsletter

This year's **Horizon** Bible Study Workshop will be held Tuesday, May 14, 2013 - Thursday May 16, 2013 at Stony Point Conference Center, Stony Point, New York. It will focus on migration themes from Exodus and Deuteronomy. The delightful, interesting and knowledgeable Rev. Janice Catron will lead the workshop.

Bible Study is one of the strongest and most vital programs of Presbyterian Women here in the Northeast. The survey conducted last year concerning women in the congregations, but the one constant in all surveys was Bible Study. Of course we don't all use the **Horizons** Study, but that does not make a Horizons Bible study workshop off limits. All Bible studies have value. We all know that we can always find some interesting thread in studies that we don't particularly use in depth or in our own group.

Promoting Bible Study to Presbyterian Women is sort of like promoting ice cream to children. We like Bible study. We want Bible study. We do Bible study. However, the Coordinating Team of the Presbyterian Women of the Senate of the Northeast, decided to do just that: promote - not ice cream - but the Horizons Bible Study Workshop at Stony Point by establishing five scholarships for this event.

For more information download the information and registration form from the website www.pwsne.org. The Bible study is open to all. Hopefully, women throughout our Synod will consider taking part.



GATHERING - WHITE EAGLE

Greetings from Oneida and welcome Spring!

Your CT from Utica has been very busy these last few months as we are very involved in planning our Summer PPG (Fab 5) Gathering this [July 27, 2013](#) at the White Eagle Conference Center in Hamilton, New York. This is our second gathering and includes 5 Presbytery's: Albany, Cayuga-Syracuse, Northern New York, Susquehanna and Utica. We meet on a Saturday and registration begins at [9:30 AM](#) and we are finished about [3:30 PM](#). Immigration and migration is the theme for the PC(USA) this year so we will be celebrating our rich heritage and culture effected by immigration. Anne Reynolds and Sandy Arnold will be our morning leaders with lunch at [1PM](#) followed by a Fashion Show and worship, communion and closing down by the lake. It should be a fun and spiritual day **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**.

Justice & Peace Notes



Dear Sisters,

As we watch buds forming on tree limbs and plants rising up from the ground, we find something awaking within ourselves as well. As the renewal of spring begins to fill our bodies, may we be bringers of new life through advocacy. To find out how you can participate in continuing advocacy to end gun violence, reform immigration laws, and promote food justice, just read on. And if you want to know how last month's March for rights, respect and fair food with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers turned out you can read a report on the PCUSA website.

The Gun Violence Prevention Debate is **NOT OVER!**

Our US Senate consideration of amendments to S.649 the Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act of 2013 failed. The Senate declined to take any action, either to strengthen or weaken the bill, in a stunning act of political cowardice.

Uninformed on the immigration debate? Now is the time to learn more!

Immigration reform has been in the news often this spring. Learn more about the issues through the resources available through the PC (U.S.A.) Office of Immigration issues, including a guide to the 2013 immigration reform debate. You can also read some stories from advocates working on immigration issues in the fields through Unbound recent issues, "Tracking the Immigration Debate."

Advocating for Food Justice for a Health World

There was a large contingent of Presbyterian Women among the over 800 participants in this year's Ecumenical Advocacy Days conference earlier this month, whose theme was "At God's Table: Food Justice for a Healthy World." Participants learned about food justice and met with representatives to advocate for a multi-year renewal of a healthy farm bill. For more information check out next month's issue of Justice and Peace Links.

Working with you for Justice and Peace

Presbyterian Women CCT Justice and Peace Committee