
Presbyterian Women's Communicator PW in Albany Presbytery

Jo-Ann Baccari, Moderator

September 2011

Helenmarie Sunkenberg, Editor



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

Moderator's Message ...

My year as Moderator will be underway as of our Sept. 12, 2011 meeting in Troy. At this time in addition to our regular business, Charlotte Hasselbarth, new Moderator of the PW Synod of the Northeast (PWSNE), will present a workshop on Vision Obstacles Direction. We will use this information to "Recharge Learning Circles." As for myself I will be "recharged" by attending the many learning workshops given by the PWSNE, to gain more knowledge as a Presbyterian leader. My first workshop, *2011 Leadership Enhancement Workshop (formerly Moderator Training)*, will be held at Stony Point Conference Center on Oct. 28th and 29th - see August Lighthouse 2011-. I hope to see you there. I encourage more of us to attend PWSNE events as it is stimulating to meet women from other parts of our Synod. We learn from them and they learn from us. I believe from knowledge, we will have more power to do Jesus' work.

Thank you to past Moderator Gloria Ghirarduzzi for her ministry to us. I am still communication coordinator and have chaired the Fall and Spring Gathering for PW Albany Presbytery. I was one of several members who helped organize our new bylaws last year.

I would like to visit as many churches in our Presbytery, and encourage more PW groups in the different congregations to see if there is anything Albany Presbytery can do to help start up a PW group. I want to spark the interest of others to join our Albany Presbyterian Coordinating group by having one or two meetings on a weekend instead of during the week when many work.

Jo-Ann Baccari - 518-792-0937

Impressions - Rise & Shine PWSNE Gathering, July 22-24, 2011

Corinne Wiley

The title Rise and Shine was quite appropriate as it was a Rise and Shine weekend for me. This Synod Gathering, my very first one, was empowering and exciting from beginning to end: to be with so many Presbyterian women- seeing old friends and meeting new ones.

At the learning circle "Rise, Shine, & Recharge", leaders Elaine Brown and Maxine Hunter talked of the constantly changing and fast pace of the world in which we live. **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reasoning and Timely) the letter language of goals and objectives has become too cumbersome for larger organizations. Leaders and

groups became fatigued without accomplishing their original visions. The new method: VOD (Vision Obstacles and Direction) is a more fluid strategy that allows for direction setting instead of goal setting because it changes as the information is presented. The overall direction stays the same.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday meditations left me with questions, and answers. The *Women of the Bible Alive* was great especially the Ruth presentation. Sunday morning concluded with meaningful worship and communion. The gathering started and ended with my first time meeting with the PW Synod Coordinators of the Northeast. I cannot say enough good things about this event, I liked everything.

Lois Morehouse

I have a better understanding of evangelism because of this Gathering. I always thought evangelism was something the Preacher did. Now I know that I or anyone else can be an evangelist. All we need is a speaker and a listener to discuss the Bible. The speaker and listener can be your family or friends or strangers. Because of my relationship with God I want everyone to have a relationship with God and always talk about it. I guess I was an evangelist without realizing it.

The Horizon Bible study on the beatitudes was a new learning for me. This study is interpreted differently from the study which I took in our church. I thought that "The Women of the Bible Alive" enactment was amazing!

Jo-Ann Baccari

This year was my first time attending the PWSNE Gathering at the Desmond. It was an uplifting experience, with many different learning circles to choose from. The learning circle I attended was *Rise, Shine and Recharge*, which focused on different ideas, strategies and planning tools that can be used to recharge a congregation and/or a Presbyterian Women's group. We then broke off into different groups and applied those methods to solve a problem. It gave me a new perspective on decision making.

Anne Reynolds spoke about *Sisters Stand and Walk Together*, which is a program PWSNE designed to acclimate new immigrant women from congregations within the SYNOD into Presbyterian Women, and to prepare these women through leadership and training where cultural differences are explored and shared. Diplomas were presented to all the women who graduated from this program.

Singing hymns, making music with various instruments, and praising the Lord in unison was very spiritually uplifting, and being able to share that fellowship with all who attended was wonderful. The storytellers who portrayed the Women of the Bible Alive were moving, meaningful, and in an entertaining way they brought out the trials and tribulations of the women of the Bible. It made you think about the women of today still having similar struggles. The Liturgical Dancers interpreted words of a song by their dance which was very moving and meaningful for me. The racial-ethnic sisters impressed me by the way they presented the meal Blessings at each table in a very personal way. I thought the ice cream social was a great way as a tie up Saturday night.

Rev. Martha Carson gave us the interpretation of what Beatitude means, which is in the 2011-2012 Horizon Magazine, Confessing the Beatitudes, Bible studies process. The weekend certainly held true to its theme of Rise and Shine. I came home with a renewal of what Presbyterian Women stands for, and with uplifted spirits. The Gathering at the Desmond was well organized, the location, rooms, food and learning circles were great, and I had a lot of fun. I feel blessed that I was given the opportunity to attend this year's Gathering at the Desmond.

Helenmarie Sunkenberg

I was delighted to see so many of my acquaintances and most of all so many racial-ethnic sisters! Having served as Vice Moderator and Moderator of PW Synod I know the energy, creativity, and prayer that molded this Gathering. Thank you. I attended "Rise, Shine & Get Along" beautifully and gently facilitated by Joan Coop. We evaluated the styles of behavior in conflict: Turtle – withdrawing; Shark-forcing; Teddy Bear-smoothing; Fox-compromising; Owl-confronting. I think that I am a little of all but lean on the Owl. I kept asking myself to Rise and Shine... to do what? Pray for healing, increased community, and peace? I was looking for some particular issues less generic and more specific to our present world dilemma. I wanted to be encouraged to step over the edge, to be pushed and energized to take a stand for issues that matter to women because they are not realized in our society...and especially in the Synod of the Northeast.

While the blessings before meals were sincere and written with love I was disappointed in the prayer language pertaining to God. Women are made in the image of God who is not necessarily of the male gender. Our severe patriarchal culture of olden times made God male, but God is Spirit. I realize that to some the image of God as a loving Father is vital but perhaps we could expand the ropes of our tent to include those who need more...

*God is like a loving mother...,
Shelling peas, apron-covered knees
spread wide to catch
each pea, each pod.*

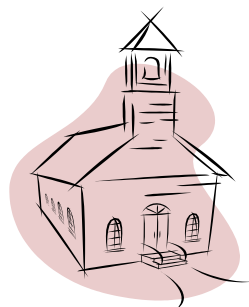
*I, shaky,
wandered near.*

*Her ancient swollen hands
pushed back the hair
that hid my face.*

*She set down the pan and,
patting her knee, said:*

*'Oh, child,
come on up here
and let me have a look at you,"*

*Her voice was safe and so was I
sitting, accepted, in the lap of God.*



CHURCH HAPPENINGS

The PW of **Mayfield Central Presbyterian Church** is hosting their tenth NetWorkers Dinner on Wednesday, October 5 at 6:00 p.m. They will be having it this year at the

Broadalbin Presbyterian Church since the Mayfield Church was struck by lightning and burned to the ground in April.

We have served a dinner from one of the countries taking part in the NetWorkers Safe Motherhood Project and Malaria Prevention Program and have entertainment from that area inviting other churches from the Albany Presbytery to come. Last year we decided to prepare a Haitian meal because of the earthquakes there and the free will offering was split between Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the NetWorkers program. This year we have chosen Japan and again the free will offering will again be split between Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the NetWorkers program.

All women of the Albany Presbytery (or any other Presbytery) are invited to attend, but reservations would be appreciated. Call Christine Dahl at 518-661-5800, Ann Mallin at 773-8198 or Mary Lou Bryan at 725-2041 for information, directions or reservations.

Since the fire we have been holding our services at the Mayfield High School and meetings and events are being held in homes and other churches and other buildings in the community. Our Food Pantry has been relocated to a nearby building and is again serving our community. Negotiations with our insurance company are almost complete and we will soon demolish what remains of our existing building. We are now beginning to think about plans for a new church.

From the Editor

The Mayfield Central Presbyterian Church was devastated by a fire after the sanctuary was hit by lightning last spring. Many of you have attended their wonderful NetWorkers Dinners which raise funds for various causes. The dinners feature food from a different country in the world each year. If you would like to contribute to their rebuilding fund, checks made out to Mayfield Central Presbyterian Church with "building fund" in the memo space. The address is P.O.Box 432 Mayfield, NY 12117.

The Community Chapel of West Glens Falls' Sunday school is held on Saturdays. Eight of the Saturday School Kids with the guidance of Miss Darlene and Miss Linda participated in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine. They spent the night at the Chapel with Miss Linda and participated at worship the next morning. The kids collected donations amounting to \$400 to help stop world hunger. On August 6th the Saturday School Kids held a Summer Family Carnival to help raise funds to support their Saturday School. Only \$17.50 was raised but the kids had fun.

Their annual Vacation Bible School was the week of August 15th. Now they look forward to the fall session of Saturday school. The Chapel still has a Food Pantry which helps feed three to four families each month. The Chapel donates yarn to the Warrensburg Church which helps them make hats for newborns.



Justice and Peace –Helenmarie Sunkenberg 518-499-1238

A long time ago I attended a retreat for Peace Making under the leadership of Daniel Berrigan, a Jesuit Priest with a firm dedication to

peace to the extent that he was imprisoned many times for his activism. At the retreat of about 90 people we were asked, "What we had done for the cause of peace?" I tried to shrink in my seat and after listening to all those who had led peace marches, been arrested or done phenomenal things toward peace. I weakly uttered that I worked on a peace quilt. Much to my surprise Berrigan said, "that was great!"

But really, was that so great? I am afraid to get arrested and as many times as I wanted to physically protest "The School of the Americas" or nuclear weapons I have never done so from fear.

What got me to thinking about this again was a July email I received through PPAN (a public action email group in the Synod of the NE) from Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson of our Washington D.C. Office of Public Witness stating that he was arrested in the Capitol Rotunda. The particular issue was not so important for me as much as his reasons why non-violent civil disobedience is at times a necessary action. His action was a challenge to break through the mess of political spin and sound bites that inflame the U.S. electorate without informing it. Church leaders cannot stand by idly by while our congregants lose their homes, withdraw their children from college because financial aid is cut, live in fear that their social security checks' will not be delivered, and search fruitlessly for jobs to support their families.

His letter was a long one but his prayer is concise: that others will take on leadership roles in their local communities to challenge the fallen structures of our day. "I wonder what would have happened if both Luther and Calvin had turned away from the pursuit of reforming the church at a time when her soul was dying. I wonder what would have happened if Lois Star, Lawrence Bottoms, Clinton Marsh, Thelma Adair, Fahed Abu-Akel, Rick Ufford-Chase, Bruce Reyes Chow, Cindy Bolbach and Linda Valentine had failed to challenge our denomination to grow toward accepting leaders of different genders, races, ethnic backgrounds, age categories and lay and clergy status in the PC (USA)" . I know that each one of us could name a Presbyterian Woman not mentioned by Nelson who worked for peace and justice. His is a call to work with the poor, dismantle the root causes of poverty and build up a new middle class. Our call as PW is to keep ourselves informed, to speak up when you hear injustice... and do not be afraid.



Churchwide Gathering - July 2012 - Gaylord Palms - Orlando, FL

**See pwsne.org and albanypresbytery.org for more information
See pwsne.org for August 2011 issue of "Lighthouse"**

The Mission Pledge – Generosity at Work

We know that when we give, we make possible incredible changes. Generosity truly is a ministry that moves the lives of all Presbyterian Women. The giving includes, but is not limited to, aid for PC(USA) mission efforts, PW's USA Mission Experience and Global Exchange trips, domestic and international mission partnerships, training to develop PW leaders, PW justice and peace work and support of your PW group.

Individuals who are not part of a circle or do not have a PW group in their church can give to the mission pledge. Make payable to PW (Mission Pledge and Presbytery on the memo line) and send to - PW Remittance Processing, PO Box 643652, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3652.

On line - www.presbyterianwomen.org/giving

The UN Commission on the Status of Women is a functional commission of the [United Nations Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/). It is the principal global policy-making body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. Every year, representatives of Member States gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide. If you think that you would like to be part of the PW delegation to the Commission on the status of Women at the United Nations the information can be found at www.pcusa.org/resource/invitation-and-application-56th-session-commission

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