



Joyful Noise

News for Presbyterian Women of Western North Carolina

May 2013

Moderator Information

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Please pass this issue of Joyful Noise to the person responsible for distributing information to the Presbyterian Women in your church.

From the Moderator

“But you, beloved, build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.” (Jude 20-21).

These verses are key verses from our last lesson for this Bible study year: Dispatches from God’s Household. They provide a good basis for the things I’d like to share with you in this, my first message to you as your Moderator. I come into this position with a firm grasp on the reality of PW today. Our numbers have dwindled since I last worked actively in this presbytery. That means our finances have dwindled and we are not able to do as much program work as we did in the past. But the good news is that the dedication of those working in PW remains strong. We have been able to accomplish so much over the past 25 years since this Presbytery was born. And most importantly, we remain true to our purpose.

We are grounded in prayer and Bible study, which is the first of four

tenets in our purpose. While this year’s study is almost done, we have an exciting study based on Exodus and Deuteronomy to look forward to in 2013-2014. Janice Catron, the author,

grabbed our attention with her creative and thought provoking overview at our recent Spring Gathering held at Brevard-Davidson River Presbyterian Church on April 20. Janice quickly overcame our reluctance to think about these Old Testament books as she pointed out that Jesus’ teachings come so many times

from the Old Testament stories and prophecies. We were so fortunate to have Janice speak to us. In case you missed her presentation, she will be at the Women’s Connection Conference in Montreat May 28-31. On May 31 there is an opportunity to spend the day with Janice as she leads us through this study. She will also present at our Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Conference at Massanetta Springs, VA. June 13-16.

Many thanks to Ellie Mercer and the PW at Brevard-Davidson River for hosting our Spring Gathering. We

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Moderator:
Barbara McLean

From the Moderator (cont.)

were treated royally from start to finish. The day was beautiful and the program and meeting were meaningful and well-run.

Our gratitude also goes to Sue Barrett for her three years of service to Presbyterian Women as our Moderator from 2010-2013. Sue steadfastly remained true to the purpose of PW as she led us these past years. She has a heart and mind for mission and justice. Sue served us humbly and faithfully. Please join me in letting her know how much we appreciate her work on our behalf and “to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God’s Kingdom.”

In June of 2013, Presbyterian Women Churchwide is sending 27 women from across our denomination to East Tennessee and Western North Carolina for the USA Mission Experience for this triennium. These women will be looking at programs for women and children in our area. We have an orientation planned for June 19 at Warren Wilson College which will introduce them to the history and culture of our area. Later that afternoon we will do a poverty simulation exercise presented by “Just Economics”. During this session local women have the opportunity to join the group and help with the exercise. Please contact me if you are interested at

barbaram_2@charter.net. The group then goes to East Tennessee and will return to our area on Sunday, June 23 with a visit to Cherokee. June 24 and 25 will be spent in looking at challenges in this area for women and children to include medical, legal, and trafficking issues. The group will have an opportunity to visit Montreat and worship with the Worship and Music Conference. An optional trip is planned for June 26 to Valdese to hear about and see the Waldensian story in our Presbytery. This is an exciting time for us – we can share our concerns, what we’ve done about them so far, and the challenges that await us in the future.

This brings me back to Lesson Nine in our study for this year. The key idea is that “in God’s household, sisters and brothers in Christ must embrace one another in truth and love in order to overcome the pressures of living in a hostile world.” This is the end of one study, but a catalyst for the future for us. As we begin this year of PW, we are already working on making this key idea a reality for our work together.

Peace and Joy to every one of you.

Barbara McLean
Moderator, PW, Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

Spring Offering was \$1668.00

Faith Fund Award Recipient

The Calvary Presbyterian Women would like to thank the Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina for choosing us as the recipients of the annual Faith Fund Award. The fund will be used to start **G.I.R.L.S. of Faith**, a Bible based outreach program for **girls ages 8-18**, in our church and surrounding community. Our mission is defined in the group's name: **Goals, Inspiration, Relationships, Leadership and Stewardship**. It is the belief of Calvary Presbyterian Women in partnership with the Berry Temple United Methodist Women, mentors/tutors, Christian educators, Pastors, parents, social workers, other volunteers and a lot of faith our mission will be accomplished.

In an effort to prepare girls for life in times like these, the girls will be encouraged to establish educational, career, and life-long **goals**; **inspire** them through prayer and Bible study as well as stimulate creativity and ideas. Positive **relationships** with God, parents, family, friends, peers, adults, educators, and with themselves will be encouraged; **leadership skills** with workshops in public speaking, etiquette/social graces, computer literacy, writing/research, and the introduction of Franklin Covey's *7 Habits* will be provided; and **stewardship** will be nurtured and encouraged through participation in community service and other missions as well as the giving of time, money, gifts and talents.

The mentors and other adults will use various resources to attain our goals with the girls. Some of the resources include: the Dove Self-Esteem Program, *Growing Godly Women: A Christian Woman's Guide to Mentoring Teenage Girls*, and *For All Our Daughters: How Mentoring Helps Young Women and Girls Master the Art of Growing Up*.

During the first year, the girls will meet monthly. Each meeting will consist of Bible study and activities involving at least one category of the program. The number of activities will be based on the content of the chosen category. We will establish wikis for the girls to communicate and collaborate with each other during the month, to provide resources, and to conduct book studies. Last, but not least, the girls will participate in field trips, special events and other fun activities throughout the program.

It is our hope that **G.I.R.L.S. of Faith** will become a model for other churches to use to establish similar programs in their churches and communities. Your prayers for the success of this program are welcomed and greatly appreciated.

Tina Joyner, Moderator
Calvary Presbyterian Women

Guatemala Partnership

Ways Presbyterian Women can strengthen relationships with the women of Guatemala:

Any meaningful relationships happen as a result of contact over time. The same is true in our relationship with the women of Guatemala. While there are extra challenges involved because of distance and language, nonetheless we can grow in our relationship step by step. What have you and your women's group been doing to facilitate these relationships? Here are some suggestions:

Be informed: Learn as much as you can about Guatemala: read books, watch documentaries, or invite someone to speak to your group. See presbytery website for suggestions – www.presbyterywnc.org, click on “Mission Zone,” “Guatemala Partnership,” then “Learning about Guatemala.”

Pray: Make prayer for the women of Guatemala a regular part of your personal prayer. At your PW meetings, using the shared verse, prayer, and hymn that the women of our partner presbyteries are also using.

Correspond: If you have a sister church, correspond with their women's group at least once or twice a year. Give news about your work, exchange pictures, share prayer concerns, and ask to learn more about them. Resources are

available to help with translation. Send communication to the presbytery office so it can be delivered by the mission teams going to Guatemala, usually in June and November. Women are also encouraged to correspond one on one with a woman in their sister church.

For more information about these ideas contact Mimi Michael, PW Guatemala Partnership Facilitator at 828-234-0176 or mimimichael@charter.net. Also, please send information about what your PW group is doing to foster the Guatemalan partnership. Your feedback is valuable.

Communication from Guatemala

The Guatemalan women have been creative in their efforts to communicate with us and forge our relationship as well. If you are on Facebook, go to the “Western North Carolina/Sur Occidente/Suchitepequez Partnership (Companerismo)” page to see the many pictures posted in February of the Sur Occidente women's yearly convention.

Next Step: Mini-retreat in Guatemala

As a next step in our growing relationship with the Guatemalan women, we are hoping to hold a mini-retreat in November in Guatemala. Four or five representatives from each presbytery would gather for some extended time together and for additional planning for the

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future. Travel dates for this trip are Oct. 29th-Nov. 6th. Contact Mimi Michael if you are interested in learning more about this opportunity. Stay tuned for additional information, and please keep these plans in your prayers.

Horizons Article featuring our Guatemala Partnership

If you did not see the March/April Horizons article featuring the April 2012 visit of the Guatemalan Women to our presbytery, you can view it on our presbytery website. Go to www.presbyterywnc.org, click on "Mission Zone," "Guatemala Partnership," then "Visit by Guatemalan Women – April 2012."

Amanda Craft, PC (USA) Mission Co-worker in Guatemala

After her time of itineration, Amanda returned to Guatemala in January and is back at work as Facilitator of Women's Programming. Here are ways you and your Presbyterian Women group can support her and her work:

Pray regularly for her, her family, and the women among whom she works.

Follow Amanda's blog, "Walking with

Guatemalan Sisters of Faith," to gain a better understanding of the challenges and efforts of Presbyterian women in Guatemala related to their daily lives, raising families, and serving their churches and communities:

<http://amandacraft.wordpress.com>

Read Amanda's letters on the PCUSA website:

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/craft-amanda/>

Send greeting cards at special times (ex. birthdays, Christmas, Easter) or to share what is happening in the life of your church or PW group.

Email her at: amanda.craft@pcusa.org or amanda.craft06@gmail.com

Select someone from your group with a special interest in missions to keep abreast of Amanda's work and to share news with your circle and congregation.

Provide financial support. Mail checks to: Becky Lineberger, PW WNC Treasurer, 1738 Charles Raper Jonas Hwy, Mt. Holly, NC 28120. Note that the donation is for Amanda Craft support.

To view or download a flyer on Amanda Craft and the Guatemala partnership, Go to www.presbyterywnc.org, click on "Mission Zone," "Guatemala Partnership," then "Amanda Craft flyer."

Women's Connection at Montreat

Dates: May 28—May 31, 2013

Topic: "**Women and the Economy of Sharing**"

Critical to debates about the unequal distribution of wealth, patterns of consumption, contemporary methods of wealth creation, and ecological devastation is the perspective of women, who bear the heaviest burden of poverty. The creative ways in which they provide for their families, address

wealth inequalities, and model sharing offer hope for transformation. Gain a theologically rich and biblically informed understanding of the ways in which women, here and around the world, model an economy of shared partnership, mutuality, reciprocity, love, and justice.

Registration: www.montreat.org

A Letter From Amanda Craft

Sunday, March 17, 2013, was a historic day in the life of the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala (IENPG). Another woman was ordained and installed as a pastor of Word and Sacrament—this makes four women currently serving as pastors. This day was significant because this woman is the first for her presbytery, Centro, and because the service was moderated by a woman, Elder Ester Polo de Sanchez. This is the first time in the history of the church a woman moderator has had the privilege to do so. We must celebrate!

Miriam Azucena (Susy) Rosal Sagastume de Miranda is a daughter, a sister, a mother, a wife, a pediatrician, and now a pastor. She has been ready and seeking a call for some time and has worked closely with the presbytery's women's organization as their advisor. She first thanked the women of the presbytery for encouraging her to seek ordination as a pastor. Leaders from the Unión Sinódica Femenil (the national women's organization) were also unwavering supporters of her call. It was evident by the groups of supporters she named that women were instrumental in this process. There were even three women presbytery members serving on the ordination/installation committee.

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NRSV) tells us, "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" as a reminder that we are all called in different ways to build up the body of Christ. There should be celebration when the church becomes that space where members come together giving voice to our calls and accompanying one another to try to make those calls a reality. The National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala was that kind of place on March 17. It was an honor and privilege to be present to share in such an important occasion.

The congregation that called Susy is small and has struggled to find its way the past few years. However, those present for the installation showed signs of excitement. Although there is much work to be done, I believe many in this particular church are ready to dive in and work with Pastor Susy.

My prayers:

1. That the energy felt on this momentous day continue throughout the next weeks, months, and years to help carry this congregation into the next phase of its journey.
2. That God's presence be felt as this congregation moves

forward under new leadership. May members and pastor listen to one another, share grace with one another, and understand the gifts and talents they bring. May they learn to live in mutual respect working to glorify God's world.



3. I also pray for the day when there is no longer "Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female," and that the church becomes a place in which we all belong equally and can all serve as we feel called. AMEN.

This is the first ordination/installation service for a pastor I have attended during my time here in Guatemala. As I serve the Unión Sinódica Femenil, we have talked about how to support women leaders in the church. It is not always an easy path for women in this church as they often feel excluded, marginalized, or ignored. The Sinódica as an organization has struggled as well since not all women are in agreement over women's ordination. However, the Sinódica leadership has lived in this tension and fall on the side of mutual respect. When opportunities to accompany someone like Susy arise, the women rally and support her. The ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with Presbyterian women of Guatemala has been strong and profound. The relationship with female church leaders from the PC(USA) has significantly influenced women and men in the Guatemalan Presbyterian Church in positive ways. This particular mission co-worker position in which I currently serve has allowed for those relationships to widen and deepen. As I said at Susy's installation service, it is a privilege when I can represent the PC(USA) at such events, knowing that it is through God's will that we can celebrate this occasion together. Accompanying women leaders like Susy is an important ministry that feeds us all beyond measure. I extend my and the women's gratitude for your financial and spiritual support that allows this ministry to continue, and I hope you will continue to prayerfully, spiritually, and financially support this ministry.

Congratulations and blessings to Susy. The road ahead may not be easy and will probably have its ups and downs, but may she feel fulfilled and may the congregation feel inspired and motivated by their choice.

Amanda

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

“But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” Luke 14:12-24.

This was the scripture passage that was the focus of Ecumenical Advocacy Days April 5-8 in Washington, DC. Over 700 Christian advocates gathered to seek Food Justice for a Healthy World.

It was a critical time to raise faith voices in support of ending hunger, improving nutrition, creating more just and sustainable food systems - advocating for a “Faithful Federal Budget”.

Being with this group of like minded people, our PCUSA group being the largest with over 200 Presbyterians in attendance, was inspiring. We were trained to advocate for the Farm Bill which is currently expired and being discussed and debated in Congress. Visits to the North Carolina Senators offices were well received and our NC group was clear in our desire that the funds for those who receive SNAP funds (supplemental nutrition assistance program) not be cut. The aid for Senator Hagan especially thanked us for coming and told us that groups like ours speaking from the heart could make a difference in bringing Congress back to the “middle”. We even “caught” Congressman Meadows in his office and were able to speak of our passion that this bill pass with no cuts to SNAP funds.

The Farm Bill is where most of the funds to reduce hunger and improve nutrition are housed. These funds are the biggest part of the bill.

Our call as followers of Jesus who said “you give them something to eat” to his disciples and showed the importance of table fellowship with those who have the least cause us to advocate for

these who need their voices to be heard the most.

Call your Senators and Congress people and let your voice be heard. Now is an important time! Senator Burr - 202-224-3154, Senator Hagan - 202-2224-6342 and Congressman Meadows (11th District) - 202-225-6401

The Office of Public Witness of the PCUSA also held a training day before the EAD called Compassion, Peace and Justice Training Day. I was also privileged to attend this.

The Presbyterian Office of Public Witness is the public policy information and advocacy office of the General Assembly of PCUSA. Its task is to advocate, and help the church to advocate, the social witness perspectives and policies of the Presbyterian General Assembly. The church has a long history of applying these biblically and theologically based insights to issues that affect the public - maintaining a public policy ministry in Washington, DC since 1946.

This office had a training day before EAD and I was privileged to attend.

Our denomination can help us be advocates. Find them on-line at www.pcusa.org/washington.

Personal note from Margarett Kennerly your Peace and Justice Facilitator

I am charged with helping you be aware of peace and justice issues. I need your help in doing this for I myself find it easy to become complacent and think our voices do not make a difference. It is far easier to remain quiet and hope others speak out. Let us encourage one another to be the voice for the poor and those with no voices in these challenging times.

If you would like to encourage and join me in thinking of ways to challenge one another call me at 828-884-2162 or email me at mfkennerly@yahoo.com.

Together we can make a difference!

Dates To Remember

May 28-31, 2013	Women's Connection at Montreat: (A day with Janice Catron – May 31)
June 13-16	Synod of Mid-Atlantic Conference: at Massanetta Springs, VA.
June 18-26, 2013	USA Mission Experience:
Fall Gatherings:	
September 7	Western Gathering: at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Asheville
October 5	Eastern Gathering: at Sherrill's Ford Presbyterian Church
April 5, 2014	Spring Gathering, 2014: in Cherryville, NC

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