

JOYFUL NOISE

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

This edition of Joyful Noise was put together in the absence of Jane Lee Vondette, our newsletter editor. She is recovering from injuries from a fall and other health issues. Best wishes to Jane Lee for a speedy recovery. We miss you! Many thanks to Tina Joyner for her assistance in putting together this issue of Joyful Noise.

REPORT FROM THE MODERATOR

This will be my last communication with you through Joyful Noise as Moderator of Presbyterian Women in this Presbytery. The past three years have swiftly flown by and we have accomplished much as Presbyterian Women. We began in the national PW spotlight when we planned and hosted the 2013 USA Mission Experience for PW Churchwide. And now we end with a successful Cycle 1 of the Guatemalan Microloan Program, the development of a Facebook page on the project, and an article in HORIZONS magazine highlighting the project. There is much to rejoice about in the work being done by PW in our Presbytery.

Please see information within this newsletter that will tell you

what you need to know to register for and attend our 2016 Spring Gathering at 1st Presbyterian Church in downtown Asheville. This is always a highlight of our year as the 2016-2017 Bible Study will be introduced. Your new Moderator, Tina Joyner, along with other new leaders will be elected and installed.

The Synod Summer Gathering will take place June 9-12 at Massanetta Springs in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Registration forms will be available at the Spring Gathering and on line prior to that time. The Women's Connection at Montreat is August 12-14. Registration and information for this conference can be found on line at Montreat's website.

It has been my privilege to work among you for these

SPRING 2016

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.



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Moderator's Report (continued)

past few years. Your love for God undergirds your deep commitment to mission and justice and peace issues. I am so grateful for this time spent among you. You have inspired me and lifted my spirits more than you know. Thank you so much for your dedication to Presbyterian Women and for the many ways you make your faith evident.

Barbara McLean
Moderator

GUATEMALA MICROLOAN PROJECT UPDATE

Reflections from Mimi Michael. Cycle 2 of the Guatemala Microloan Project is underway with 70 participants and will run through April 2016. In January Ellen Dozier, Marilyn Baldrige and I were able to travel to Guatemala and meet with ADEHGUA, the group overseeing the project, and all four microloan groups. What a joy to see and hear reports of what the women are learning and the benefits they are receiving. My heart is full of gratitude to God for the way God has been at work, and to all of you who have embraced this project and embraced our Guatemalan sisters. Thank you! Here are just a few of the many comments shared:



Lidia (a leader of her church in San Felipe):
"Women are learning a lot about how to invest and administer money. Here there are rules. It is not easy, but step by step women are now part of a group and learning to work together."



Lety (a single mother from Santo Domingo, sells clothing, perfume, cheese door to door):
"I give thanks to God. I feel very comforted by God and by you brothers and sisters. God bless you wherever you go."

Aura (a new participant from San Felipe, sells products for the home):

"I give thanks to God for the microloans. This help has been very important in my life. We have seen the powerful hand of God because we have not been without food in my house, and my sales are increasing. I hope one day to have much more to be able to help many people, no matter their religion, race, or color because all of us are children of one powerful God. May our Lord God pour many and abundant blessings on all those that make this microloan business possible."

Mirna (a new participant from Coatepeque):

"First, I give thanks to God for the existence of this project that is a great help to us women. I also give thanks to everyone from North Carolina for supporting this project. May God bless you. This project has helped me a lot as through it I have been sending my children to school, and my business is growing."

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Reflections from Marilyn Baldrige. Marilyn Baldrige, PW moderator from Brevard-Davidson River, represented Presbyterian Women on the January trip to Guatemala and shared the following observations from her visits with the microloan groups:

- The joy of achievement: the "I can do this" moment and the pride of saving money
- Women saw the value of re-investing in themselves and their businesses
- Women were partnering and "Paying It Forward" to help other women
- The power of Guatemalan women working with Adehgua (Mildres & Julio) - Dina, who said this program is a change from the old cultural model of Guatemalans "holding out our hands for money, eating (using) the money and then coming back for another handout."
- The rise in confidence and self-esteem - money given in loans returns in many ways
- The increase in family well-being - enough money to feed and educate their family
- "Safety in Numbers" - together we can do this
- My experience has really made me aware of the need to strengthen our local church's sense of partnership with their Guatemalan neighbors, to expand this from being "just the mission of a few" to a way to make a meaningful contribution with the time God has given me here on earth; how I can use my resources to make a difference.

There are still many ways that ALL can be involved in the Guatemala Microloan Project!

PRAY: for the Guatemalan women participants as well as for ADEHGUA. We need 38 new prayer partners so each new loan recipient will have someone praying specifically for them. *Contact Sue Barrett at suebar@comporium.net or 828-553-3621 to receive a name.* Prayer partners will receive info and photos of the person they are praying for as it becomes available. This is an important way for individuals, circles or PW groups to provide support.

STAY INFORMED: Like our Facebook page at "Guatemala Microloan Project" or email mimimichael17@gmail.com to receive periodic email updates.

GIVE: A benefit of this project is that repaid loans are recycled into other loans. However, ongoing administrative expenses and additional capital to involve more women is needed. Checks payable to PW PWNC and designated for Guatemala Microloan Fund can be sent to:

*Becky Lineberger, PW Treasurer
1738 Charles Raper Jonas Hwy
Mt Holly, NC 28120*

OFFER: the *Mother's Day Card Project* at your church. Invite your congregation to honor special women on Mother's Day by donating to the Guatemala Microloan Project. Each honoree will receive a card explaining how the donation empowers women to grow in self-esteem, hope and freedom. *For further information, instructions, and to order cards contact: Debby Vial at debby.vial@gmail.com or 502-407-7402.*

SHARE: Invite members of the Guatemala Microloan Task Force to speak to your group or church: *Marilyn Baldrige, Jamie Beasley, Patricia Clark, Ellen Dozier, Buzz Durham, Ben Hill, Margarette Kennerly, Susan Maveety, Barbara McLean, Mimi Michael, and Ginnie Stevens.*

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Women from microloan group in Coatepeque

*A special **thank you** to Barbara McLean who provided an article about the Guatemala Microloan Project that appeared in the Nov/Dec Horizons magazine!*

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Justice and Peace Issues: PW Educate Children Initiative as Connected with Libros Para Niños

Presbyterian Women will be focusing on a new justice and peace initiative for 2016 entitled, "Educate a Child." This initiative is part of the global/national campaign of PC(USA) to strengthen quality education for a million children by 2020. If you are wondering how you and your PW group can support this priority, the first way is by participating in Together in Action Days from May 2-8 which will focus on children's literacy. Because many peace and justice issues—poverty, discrimination, abuse, violence, exploitation, marginalization, imprisonment, unequal access to opportunity—are related to lack of education, each PW is urged to join the church's education effort and devote PW's next Together in Action Days to empowering children through literacy. These days coincide with Children's Book Week, the longest-running national literacy initiative in the country.

As we think of our purpose to witness to the promise of God's kingdom, what better way than to meet the needs of children as they are developing? When their needs for nutrition and nurture are not met, they don't learn as well. Furthermore, the development of adequate language is critical in allowing every child to reach their potential. Without education, they could end up at the margins of society and at a disadvantage in terms of competing for work that sustains self and family.

What is your charge? You are invited to plan a week of activities on May 2-8 designed to

stimulate children's literacy in your local community—and beyond. To reach beyond the boundary of your local area, you can become involved with Libres Para Niños which sets up libraries in school and communities of our partner churches in Guatemala. For more information on how to help with Libres Para Niños, please contact Ellen Dozier at ellendozier@hotmail.com.

Want to do something more locally? Help kids with homework or to improve their reading skills at an after-school program. Partner with another church's PW group to have a Community Story Hour where you read aloud to children of the community—possibly beginning an annual event. Form Roving Readers who volunteer to go to community centers, hospitals, and other sites where children are served to read aloud to them. Begin a community book drive for children who don't have books at home—including the children of Guatemala. Host an used book sale where books are sold at very reasonable prices for families who cannot usually afford books. Provide story Bible for children in need in your community and in Guatemala. The possibilities are endless. Please send your ideas to me so others will know of the great things you are planning to help educate children. As we focus on children's literacy, we are fulfilling our call to serve "the least of these" and witness to God's love.

Working with You for Justice and Peace,
Michele Simmons
ztapenguin@gmail.com

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Justice and Peace Calendar

February

Black History Month

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

1 National Freedom Day

7 Souper Bowl of Caring

14 One Billion Rising for Justice Day

17 National Random Acts of Kindness Day

25 Orange Day (Wear orange to support the end of violence against women)

28 Justice Advocacy Sunday

March

Women's History Month

22 Earth Day

24 American Genocide Remembrance Day

25 Orange Day (Wear orange to support the end of violence against women)

4 World Day of Prayer

6 Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday

8 International Women's Day

14-24 UN Commission on Status of Women

25 Orange Day (Wear orange to support the end of violence against women)

27 **Easter**

April

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

7 World Health Day

8 International Day of the Roma

16 Holocaust Remembrance Day

Presbyterian Women of the
Presbytery of Western North Carolina
SPRING GATHERING
April 16, 2016
First Presbyterian Church
Asheville, NC

REV. MARGARET LAMOTTE TORRENCE
2016-2017 BIBLE STUDY
“Who is Jesus? What a difference a lens makes”

Registration, Fellowship, and Exhibits 9:00 until 9:45 AM
Registration \$10.00 (Includes lunch)
Lunch at 12:30 PM
Adjournment after lunch
Registration deadline - April 7, 2016
(Directions to Church on next page)

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Mail registration form with check to:
Dot Descieux, 145 Governors View Road, Asheville, NC 28805
dotdes39@gmail.com 828-298-8852

NAME_____

Phone #_____

Church_____

Email address_____

Please send registration with check for \$10.00 made out to:

PW PWNC

Registration deadline April 7, 2016

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SPRING GATHERING IN ASHEVILLE

Spring Gathering is Saturday, April 16, at First Presbyterian Church in Asheville. The registration form and directions to the church are elsewhere in this Joyful Noise. Registration deadline is April 7.

The speaker for the Gathering is the Rev. Margaret LaMotte Torrence. Margaret is a graduate of Davidson College and Princeton Theological Seminary, where she was awarded the *Arthur Paul Rech Memorial Prize in Theology and Pastoral Ministry*. She has served churches in New Jersey, North Carolina, and Florida, and frequently leads worship in Montreat. She anticipates returning to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina in the fall, after concluding a brief season of interim ministry in Florida. Margaret and her husband, Lee, are the grateful parents of Nate (25) and Hanna (22), who were nurtured by the communities of Grace Covenant and First Presbyterian, Asheville. Margaret will be installing the newly elected Coordinating Team members, and introducing the Bible study for 2016-2017. It is entitled "Who is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes."

The study book was written by the Rev. Dr. Judy Siker, a Research Professor at the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Dr. Siker is from North Carolina and graduated from

UNC Chapel Hill. She currently lives in Los Angeles and is on Facebook if you would like to see more about her.

The Offering Objective for the Gathering is the Asheville Period Project, a ministry of Kenilworth Presbyterian Church in Asheville. Please look for a page in this newsletter describing this Project and plan to donate during the meeting. Checks should be written to PW PWNC with "Asheville Period Project" in the space at the bottom. If you have a few minutes, Google "history of menstruation" for a very enlightening read. We do not know how blessed we are in this time and place.

Find the Registration Form in this newsletter, notify everyone in your Circles, and plan to join us in Asheville. If you want to come on Friday and spend an evening here, there are lots of hotels downtown and all around the area. There will be lots of people in town and plenty of things to do. The church is just on the edge of downtown. Set your GPS to 40 Church Street in Asheville. Directions will also be found just after the Registration Form. We look forward to seeing you there.

Dot Descieux

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SUGGESTED DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN DOWNTOWN ASHEVILLE

If you use GPS, set it to "40 Church Street in Asheville." Church phone is 828-253-1431. The Church sits between Church Street and South Lexington Avenue. Aston Street is on the third side, running from Church to S. Lexington.

FROM THE EAST take Interstate 40 West to Biltmore Exit 50B. Exit right and merge into the right lane on Hendersonville Road. (Hendersonville Road will become Biltmore Ave.) Continue straight up Biltmore Ave., staying in the far right lane, for 2.6 miles, to Aston St. The Aloft Hotel will be on your left. Turn left onto Aston St. and you will see the church ahead on the right. Look for someone who will be directing you to the parking area.

FROM THE WEST take Interstate 40 East to Biltmore Exit 50. Go to the end of the ramp and turn Left at the light. Ease carefully into the far RIGHT lane and continue straight up Biltmore Ave. for 2.6 miles, to Aston St. The Aloft Hotel will be on your left. Turn left onto Aston St. and you will see the church ahead on the right. Look for someone who will be directing you to the parking area.

FROM THE NORTH coming down 19/23 (future I-26), when the road splits, stay in the far left lane to take Patton Avenue into downtown. Stay in the left lane through the next six traffic lights. Coxe Avenue will be on your right and Patton becomes one way. Move straight ahead on Patton into the right

lane. The next light is at Haywood Road. Just after that light you will see Church St. to the right. Turn right onto Church Street. First Presbyterian will be on the left. Look for the people who are directing you to the parking area. (See note about parking meters on Church St.)

FROM THE SOUTH follow Route 25 North up Hendersonville Road into the Biltmore Village area where Hendersonville Road becomes Biltmore Ave. As you are approaching Arby's and Bank of America, stay in the far right lane. (You will no longer be on Route 25.) Continue up Biltmore Avenue for 2.6 miles, always in the far right lane until you reach Aston St. at the corner of the Aloft Hotel. Turn left onto Aston St. and you will see the church up ahead on the right. Look for the people who are directing you to the parking area.

PARKING – There will be a number of people in the church area directing you to parking places. There are two other churches in the immediate vicinity who are graciously allowing us to use their space. Please follow the directions of the people from the church who are helping us with

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Directions (continued)

parking. Avoid parking in private lots marked for Reserved Parking unless one of the church parking assistants directs you there and assures you that it is OK.

The Aloft Hotel has a parking deck for PAID parking. Entrances are on Biltmore Ave. and on South Lexington. The first hour at Aloft is free, and then it is \$1.25 per hour after that. If you use this deck, try to walk out the Aston St. exit, as it is the closest to the church. That exit will be on the lower level.

All parking in the church lots as directed by the parking assistants is free. If you elect to park at a meter it will cost you \$1.25/hour, and you can insert only enough coins to last for two hours.

CHURCH BUILDING ENTRANCES are available on three levels. The church is built on a sloped lot. The upper level is on Church St. and doors open onto the level where the

sanctuary is. Half-way down Aston St. is the entrance to First Pres. parking lot. If you are dropping off passengers before you go to park your car, you should enter this driveway, going straight up to the top and around the **circle** to the double doors. **This is the level of the Fellowship Hall and the Registration Area where everything begins.** If you are approaching the building from the lower level area (which is S. Lexington Ave.), you will want to enter the door in the covered parking area. Here you will find stairs and an elevator to the "Ground Level" (which is up one floor) where Registration is taking place. Inside the building you will find signs and people to help you find your destination. There are two elevators inside the building for handicapped persons to move between the Fellowship Hall area and the sanctuary. Ask someone where they are if you need to use one of them.

Asheville Period Project

The Asheville Period Project collects and distributes feminine hygiene products to homeless and low income women in Asheville. Feminine hygiene products are distributed for free and with no questions asked. Tampons, pads and sanitary wipes are expensive and cannot be purchased with SNAP (food stamp) benefits! These products are vital for seeking employment and attending school and often women are arrested for shoplifting these items.

We seek to meet the unique needs of women by providing "Period Kits" rather than individual tampons and pads. A kit has everything a homeless woman needs to manage her period for the month. The kit includes a mix of tampons, pads, feminine wipes and disposable bags.

The Asheville Period Project was started by the Red Tent Ministry of Kenilworth

Presbyterian Church PC(USA). The Red Tent Ministry realized that if they partnered with other faith and non-faith based agencies they would be able to serve more women. The Project now has 2 donation sites in Asheville collecting feminine hygiene products for distribution. Because of this partnership the Asheville Period Project has distributed over 2,000 tampons, 1,000 pads and 500 bladder control pads to date. The Period Project currently distributes feminine hygiene products to 2 homeless shelters, a domestic violence shelter and sets up public distribution sites in city parks. We also have "Road Warriors" who always have a period pack with them to distribute at a moment's notice. Please donate to the project so that we may serve the most vulnerable in our city.

Help us spread the word and "like" the **Asheville Period Project** on Facebook.

DIGNITY. ACCESS. PERIOD.



Dates to Remember

April 16, 2016 Spring Gathering – First Presbyterian, Asheville

**June 9-12, 2016 PW Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Summer Gathering
Massanetta Conference Center, Harrisonburg, VA**

**August 12-14, 2016 Women's Connection
Montreat Conference Center**