

JOYFUL NOISE

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF WNC

FROM THE MODERATOR

Greetings PW!



The Presbyterian Women's (PW) purpose is our guide to "prayer and Bible study . . .

missions . . . justice and peace . . . and building an inclusive, caring community of women. According to overviewbible.com, gratitude (thankfulness) is *recognizing good things that have happened and acknowledging the people who made those good things happen*. As moderator of the PW for the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, I am extremely grateful for each of you for all that you have done and continue to do to fulfill the PW purpose and for answering the call to serve.

Beginning in January, moderators of 28 PW groups in our Presbytery sent reports of projects, activities and missions supported during 2017. I would like to share some highlights from the reports received using excerpts from the PW purpose.

Prayer and Bible Study. Most PW groups/circles participated in the Horizons

Bible studies, *Who is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes*, by Judy Yates Siker, and *Clouds of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews*, by Melissa Bane Sevier. Both studies included prayers, hymns of praise and the study of God's word.

Missions. Most groups/circles provided support to mission offerings, such as the Birthday and Thank Offerings, Least Coin, and the Guatemala Fund. In addition, weekend backpacks were prepared; food, clothing, and personal items for needy youth and families in the community were collected; and projects such as the Guatemala Microloan project, Malawi and various children's homes were supported.

Justice and Peace. Some groups/circles donated to shelters for abused women and youth in crisis; collected cell phones for battered women; collected toiletries and hygiene products for homeless women, and contributions were made to the women's prison ministries.

Building an inclusive caring community of women. Some groups/circles attended

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CHURCH.**



gatherings on the church, Presbytery and Synod levels. The gatherings gave PW the opportunity to fellowship with friends old and new, attend workshops, have praise and worship, an overview of the *Bible* studies and lots of good food. This year PW celebrates its 30th anniversary, and our celebration will be at the Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church which is where the first PW gathering was held 30 years ago. We hope to see all of you there!

Let us be reminded to *do everything in the name of Jesus out of a spirit of gratitude* (Col. 3:17) with hospitality, love and the spirit of giving in our hearts while giving thanks and praises to the Lord as we help those less fortunate than ourselves.

*Tina Joyner, PW Moderator
Presbytery of WNC*

Scholarship Update – We Did It!

One more student this year will begin a journey toward self-improvement, self-confidence, and developing talents to serve others because of your generous donations to the PW PWNC Scholarship Fund.

Donations totaling \$2,371 were received following a request last fall to fund a one-time scholarship for this year when present funds would have allowed only one new scholarship to be awarded. Wow! What an outpouring of love and faith to our young people who want to receive further education, and through that, respond to God’s call to serve. I thank you on behalf of the scholars whose lives are changed because of the new

direction of faith and learning these scholarships allow. It is heartwarming to read thank you notes from past recipients who realize that their lives have been changed because of the opportunities these scholarships offer. And, it is exciting to imagine the blessings bestowed on future scholarship recipients and their impact in the world.

Each year the Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina offers four scholarships of \$1,500 each, two new scholarships and two renewable scholarships, to students in WNC who will attend a four-year college or university. This year we have received five new scholarship applications. The two new

scholarship recipients will be announced at the Spring Gathering, April 14th.

A special thank you to those individuals and Circles who donated this year: anonymous donations, PW groups from Brevard-Davidson River, Franklin First, Gastonia First, Grace Covenant, Hickory First, Kenilworth, Mills River, Reems Creek-Beech, Sherrill’s Ford, and Newton First (Circle S); Joanne Mitchell of Southminster PC, Pat Bradshaw (COS) of Ironton PC, Marion First PC, and Southminster PC.

*Elizabeth Barbee
Scholarship Chair*

Justice and Peace

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves . . . to work for justice and peace. . . Last week,

the United States suffered once again at the hands of a gunman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High **School** in Parkland, Florida. Seventeen teachers and

students were killed, and fourteen others were injured. In addition to items listed in the calendar shown below, let us be reminded by the Justice and

(continued from page 2)

Peace committee join efforts on a local, state, national and international level to end gun violence (Sara Lisherness). The committee also encourages PW groups to hold conversations around the issues of all forms of violence against women and children, human trafficking, and the elimination of discrimination against women.

Justice and Peace Calendar

February

National Black History Month; National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month

25 Orange Day (<http://endviolence.un.org>)

March

Women's History Month

2 World Day of Prayer

4 Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday ~ *Women Called to Lead with Love*

8 International Women's Day

12-23 UN Commission on the Status of Women

12-23 PW Together in Action for Women's Empowerment

25 Orange Day (<http://endviolence.un.org>)

April

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

8 Self-development of People Sunday

25 Orange Day (<http://endviolence.un.org>)

30-May 6 Children's Book Week

30-May 6 PW Together in Action Days for Children's Literacy

May

12 Stamp Out Hungry Drive

25 Orange Day (<http://endviolence.un.org>)

27 Disability Inclusion Sunday

27 Intercultural Church Sunday

Guatemala Microloan Project Update: February 2018

Microloan Assembly



The first ever Microloan Assembly took place on February 1 and 2, 2018 in San Felipe, Guatemala. Upon initiation of the project in April 2015, four microloan groups were formed in Suchitpequez and Sur Occidente presbyteries. Since the groups are far apart, ADEHGUA, the organization administering the project, planned this assembly to provide

an opportunity for representatives from the four groups to meet each other, share experiences, and plan for the future. Leaders from the Union Feminil, the presbyteries' women's groups, also attended, as did North Carolina representatives Ellen Dozier, Susan Maveety, and Mimi Michael. The assembly was a blessing and an enriching experience for all as stories were shared, achievements were celebrated, and closer ties were formed.

Group Focus: Las Animas

Good leadership has enabled the Las Animas group to be strong and well organized. The leaders of this group shared for the benefit of all how they carefully track participants' attendance and savings, make home visits in order to verify investments, and identify any problems or risks. New participants are evaluated in order to ensure both their trustworthiness and ability to repay loans, and membership expectations are clearly communicated.



REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING FROM LAS ANIMAS:
YOLANDA, LESVIA, ROSA, AND MERARI

Individual

Focus: Lety

From Santo Domingo, Lety is a single mother of 2 sons who are 8 and 13. Prior to her participation in the microloan project, Lety's health was poor because she did not have enough money to eat every day. But her nutrition, and therefore her health, has now improved. Julio, from ADEHGUA, says that they have seen big changes in Lety's personality. She has "awakened" with increased confidence and shows great potential.



Please like our "Guatemala Microloan Project" Facebook page to read more stories.

Worship at Assembly

Called to “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever,” we gathered to express gratitude to God. Using Paul’s words to the Philippians, “I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you” we remembered the groups and people who are a part of the microloan project, in and through whom God is at work.

- We gave thanks for **ADEHGUA staff** - Julio, Mildre, and Flor - who with compassion, knowledge, and experience plan, facilitate workshops, visit groups in their communities, send reports, share stories, manage finances, and show kindness in word and deed to the women in all aspects of their lives.
- We gave thanks for the **women in the microloan groups** who courageously joined this new project when no one knew how it would turn out. They have grown in their understanding of themselves as women of value and have learned to manage businesses, budget resources, and save an amazing amount of money!
- We gave thanks for the **women from the governing bodies of the Presbyterials** of Sur Occidente and Suchitepéquez whose support we need and depend upon.
- We gave thanks for the many different **people and groups from PWNC** who are part of the project: the Microloan Task Force, PW Coordinating Team, prayer partners, and those who have given financial support and offered words of encouragement.



Each group was represented by a different colored link in a paper chain made earlier in the day. At the end of worship, we held the chain, prayed, and sang the Doxology. In closing, all received a rock with the word "Gratitud" as a reminder of our gratitude for all that God has done!



Ways You Can Provide Support!

- Individuals or groups can serve as a **Prayer Partner** to a microloan participant. Contact Sue Barrett at suebar@comporium.net or 828-553-3621 for more information.
- **Donations** to the Guatemala Microloan Project can be sent to PW Treasurer *Sharon Meares*, 1012 10th ST CT NW, Hickory, NC 28601. Make checks payable to PW PWNC and designate for the Guatemala Microloan Project.
- Purchase **Mother's Day Cards**. Alternative giving cards are available for Mother's Day for a minimum \$10 donation. To order cards for yourself or to make them available to your congregation, contact Debby Vial at debby.vial@gmail.com or [502-407-7402](tel:502-407-7402).

PW 101 – Helps for New PW Leadership

If you are reading these words, you are probably a PW leader and know all things PW! But many of our faithful are unaware of some of the finer points of their amazing organization. That's why we began a "PW 101" series. If you are so moved to share an idea or two that you think should be part of this series, please email carissa.herold@pcusa.org.

PW 101.5: The PW Circle Revisited PW.

101.2 introduced the idea that PW groups at the congregational level consist of circles. The circle is the foundation of all that PW does. PW 101.4 introduced the idea that PW is connectional and that the PW in the Congregation (PWC) is connected to PW at each level. To elaborate:

The PWC group informs and responds to the ministry of PW at all levels of the church: local, presbytery, synod and churchwide. The PWC has representation and contact with the PW in the Presbytery (PWP); the PWP connects to PW in the Synod (PWS); and the PWS connects to PW Churchwide. Information and programming moves in all directions throughout the structure, with local and regional work impacting national work, and national work informing regional and local work. There is good work happening in PW all of the time, from the mission of a local church in Boise to the fulfillment of a Thank Offering grant in Sudan!

In 1988, Christie Loney wrote: The circle can be a place that challenges us to stretch beyond our known limits. Within the confines of a loving, accepting community we can take risky steps, fail and not feel foolish. This enables us to move beyond the safe place, reach out to others and have our faith tested. In the circle, Christian leadership is born, nurtured and sent forth into ministry. Maybe you are a young woman, a woman in her mid-life crisis, a businesswoman, a working mother, a single parent, an elderly woman . . . each of you has a place in a circle . . . A local church may have a number of circles, each one unique and different. Yet a commonality . . . binds them together . . . (*Shape Your Circle with Love*, Horizons, July/August 1988, 16.)

Resources:

- ✚ February – April 2018 issue of the *Quarterly Newsletter for Presbyterian Women* - See page 5 for advice on starting a new PWC group. The newsletter can be accessed at https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/QM_1801_FA.sm.pdf
- ✚ PW Manual: A Guide for PW Groups at www.presbyterianwomen.org/shop (\$6; item PWR16120).

(Taken from February - April 2018•Presbyterian Women Quarterly Newsletter)

The Lord's Prayer is not allowed in most U.S. Public schools any more. A 15-year old kid in Minnesota, wrote the following which was used as our closing prayer at our recent Presbytery PWCT meeting:

New School Prayer

Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.

If scripture now the class recites,
It violates the Bill of Rights.
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.

Our hair can be purple, orange or green,
That's no offense; it's a freedom scene..
The law is specific, the law is precise.
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.

For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all..
In silence alone we must meditate,
God's name is prohibited by the State..

We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks...
They've outlawed guns, but FIRST the Bible.
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.

We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
And the 'unwed daddy,' our Senior King.
It's 'inappropriate' to teach right from wrong,
We're taught that such 'judgments' do not belong..

We can get our condoms and birth controls,
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles...
But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,
No word of God must reach this crowd.

It's scary here I must confess,
When chaos reigns the school's a mess..
So, Lord, this silent plea I make:
Should I be shot; My soul please take!

Amen.

Important Dates

Spring Gathering – Warren Wilson PC	April 14, 2018
Synod Summer Gathering – Massanetta Springs	June 7-10, 2018
Churchwide Gathering, Louisville, KY	August 2 – 5, 2018



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