

PW Connection

Volume 1, Issue 10

Presbyterian Women of the Mid-South

February 2011

Moment with the Moderator



Don't Forget:

Saturday, March 5, 2011
PWPCT Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church,
Somerville, TN

Saturday, April 2, 2011
PWP Annual Gathering
9:00-9:30 a.m. Registration
First Presbyterian Church
Jackson, TN

Thursday, April 28, 2011
Come See Columbia Day
Columbia Theological Seminary
Decatur, GA

Saturday, May 7, 2011
PWPCT Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church
Memphis, TN

Tuesday, May 10, 2011
Presbytery of Mid-South
Stated Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
Location TBA

Wednesday, July 6, 2011
PW Connection Newsletter
Deadline

Oh how time flies! Two years have almost gone by already since I was installed as your Moderator. These two years have been awesome.

Since my last "Moment with the Moderator:"

- Bonnie Algee and her committee did an outstanding job with our Pinecrest Bible Study Conference on August 28, 2010 where our 2010-2011 Bible Study, *Journeys Through Revelation: Apocalyptic for Today* was reviewed by the Reverend Doctor Louise Lawson Johnson who is the author of "Suggestions for Leaders" in the 2010-2011 Bible Study book. She was excellent and if you were not there, you missed a treat. We all left with a better understanding of Revelation as well as materials, which, I am sure, have enhanced our local church groups monthly studies. The committee also was able to get Martha Kelly, who contributed the wonderful liturgical designs and landscapes to the 2010-2011 Bible Study book to discuss her work. She also had available some of her work for viewing and purchasing. We had a record-breaking attendance (190+).
- The PW of Balmoral Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN hosted our 2010 Fall Workshop Gathering. The theme of the Fall Workshop Gathering was *Celebrating God's Goodness.* The keynote speaker was The Reverend Norlita Kaul, Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Piggott, AR. The title of her Inspiring message was "Celebrate God through Spiritual Healing." The following workshops were Presented: Celebrate Leadership (for new Moderators); Celebrate Communication and Networking (Computer Training); Celebrate Service Together (Missions); Celebrate Storytelling; Celebrate Spiritual Healing (Labyrinth). Thanks to Eleanor Thomas and her committee for a wonderful day.
- Several churches have responded to the 2011 pledge request. Thanks to all the churches that made pledges to Churchwide, Synod and our Presbytery who could not function without your help. We do need more churches to participate!
- Many of you completed and returned the survey forms you received from me and expressed your needs and concerns. For help you may invite PWS Moderator, Jackie Riddle, and Synod PW Leadership Coordinator, Loretta Tetter, to your group meetings. They attended a Leadership Training Conference and have expressed that they would like to come and share what they learned. See page 22 in the Red Book for contact information.

This is always an exciting time of the year when we are looking forward to our Spring Gathering. It will be held on April 2, 2011 at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, TN. Bonnie Blair and the Annual Gathering Committee have been very busy getting it together and it promises to be outstanding. They have invited The Rev. Dr. Tracy Keenan, a renowned Minister and Song Leader as guest speaker. She presently serves as the senior pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio. Several of our PW were blessed to see her in action at the Churchwide Gathering in Louisville, KY in 2009 and can assure that you are in for a treat. Please spread the news and get as many as you can to attend. You will not be disappointed!

Since this is my last "Moment with the Moderator," let me take this moment to express my appreciation to you for affording me the opportunity to be your Moderator for the last two years. This has been a very productive, enjoyable and spiritual experience for me. Thank you for your invitations to come and visit your groups to install your leaders or just to speak. I appreciate all the churches that hosted our CT meetings and Gatherings. I am also grateful for a wonderful Coordinating Team. Our work could not have been accomplished without their help, and I appreciate their help in making this a beautiful journey that I have had the privilege of taking. The many kind and encouraging words that I have received from many of you have been very uplifting - more than you can imagine.

May God Bless You!



Vashti E. Crowder, Moderator

 **Report for USAME (USA Mission Experience)**
October 2010 

From September 9 through 16, 2010, I had the rare opportunity to be part of the USAME to South Dakota, representing the Synod of Living Waters. For your financial help and encouragement, I say a sincere "Pilamaya," which is "Thank you" in the Lakota language.

It was great to travel and share ideas and experiences with 20 outstanding Presbyterian Women from Synods throughout the country, a diverse group in age and cultural backgrounds.

We met with Native American Presbyterians in locations from Sioux Falls in eastern South Dakota to Rapid City on the western border. Our purpose was to listen, learn, show solidarity, and come back to tell our Presbyterian friends in our home areas the stories and concerns of those we met.

We had a wide variety of experiences on several reservations: eating lunch at a nutrition center for the elderly; hearing the tribal chief of Pine Ridge speak; and singing *Sweet Hour of Prayer* and other hymns in the Dakota language.

We visited many small churches, but the remaining members are active and steadfast. At several locations we were served fine meals by the church members, many in isolated places where a grocery store would be miles away. One very touching episode occurred when, after dinner and singing at the Ascension Presbyterian Church Fellowship Building (the church itself does not have electricity), we were each presented with a personalized hard-bound Dakota Hymnal. The women had conducted several fundraisers to be able to raise the money for their gift to us. This is only one example of the generous spirit we encountered. At First Presbyterian, the oldest continually-operating church in South Dakota, 90-year-old Reverend Sid Bird spoke to us of history and culture. The early church sent out their own Native American missionaries to churches farther west, including his grandparents, who went by wagon across the state to the Porcupine Community in Pine Ridge Reservation.

We were privileged to visit the new Indian Cultural Center at South Dakota State where Presbyterian minister Ron is the director. Indian students will now have an opportunity to have a meeting place to support one another. The drop-out rate in the past has been great, as the Indian students have felt isolated and unaccepted.

We heard the term "historical grief" used to describe the way Indians feel about the loss of their sacred lands, the breaking of treaties, the loss of their entire way of life with no way to earn a living on land no one else wanted (until gold or oil were discovered). We saw a "raw cut" of a documentary on the hanging of 32 Indians at Mankato, MN, who went to their deaths singing a Dakota hymn.

At a retreat center run by the Lutheran church in the town of Pine Ridge, we heard from strong Native American women who run land offices, health centers, suicide prevention centers, and the tribal government.

We learned of the problems of alcohol abuse and violence toward women and visited a domestic violence center. We also learned of the lack of activities for young people. Higher education is a strong focus, and we visited Oglala Lakota College, saw their Native American historical center, and heard from Thomas Short Bull, the President. The college is training teachers, nurses, social workers, and others who are finding work in their own communities. Prior to the college presence on the reservation, over 90 % of the community professionals were non-Native. Now over 60% are Native American. Visiting the Lakota Fund offices, we learned of loans they are making to small businesses in the community. A Subway and a taco restaurant are "firsts" in the area.

This is but a small sampling of the rich experiences and relationships we encountered. We are discovering ways in which we can continue these relationships and find the best ways to be of service to our Native American Presbyterian friends in South Dakota. They asked us for nothing but prayers for their churches and their people. This, all of us can do.

We were very impressed with the devotion of the Presbyterians we met to their faith, their churches, their history, culture, and their people.

If it can be arranged and you have an interest, I would be glad to come and share experiences with your group.

Carolyn Diener, 1824 Knollwood Road Louisville, KY 40207 (502) 893-8436

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Carolyn Diener

 **Presbyterian Women, Balmoral Presbyterian Church** 

In October it was our pleasure to host the Fall Gathering Workshops for the PW of the Presbytery at Balmoral. The workshops were varied and informative, and everyone enjoyed the day. We had a wonderful time at Christmas at the women's annual Christmas Party. The same generous woman has hosted this party for many years. This past May we honored her by presenting her with a rose during the Sunday morning worship. In February we will make our second trip to the Church Health Center. On this visit we will attend the *Food for the Body and Spirit Class*, and enjoy a wonderful lunch together. We also have plans to share time together to knit and continue that tradition. We continue to strive to be an inclusive caring community of women that will strengthen Balmoral Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and to be witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

Carol H. Odom, Moderator

Presbyterian Women, Parkway Gardens United Presbyterian Church

In April our PW journeyed to Huntsville, AL for our sixteenth annual women's retreat. Our theme was "N.A.S.A.: Need a Spiritual Awakening." Attendees engaged in numerous activities including a mixer where groups were astronauts facing different problems in space and Bible verse based presentations "Launching Your Rocket Into the Community," and "Orbiting the Wonders of God" by Carrie Harris and Fay Lee. Storyteller MaMa YeYe led the group in African culture based on "Healing Through Movement." The thirty-four attendees had an inspirational and enjoyable time.

The first joint circle meeting of the 2010-2011 Horizon's Bible Study "Journey Through Revelation" was held on September 26th. Pink Ribbon Sunday was held on October 24th. Annie Cousins Hollings delivered a moving "My Story" of her battle with breast cancer. At the following reception she was presented with a pink shawl. A special offering was collected. Half of the amount collected was donated to the American Cancer Society and half to Sister Networking, an organization for Black women with breast cancer.

The PW fall service project was in support of the YWCA Abused Women's Shelter. The congregation was asked to support this effort with donations of toys, household goods and personal items. Our church members responded with donations of approximately \$800.00 in items, which were delivered the first week in December.

In December the PW conducted its annual hosting of the Orleans Care Home Christmas Party in the church fellowship hall. The residents and members of the PW enjoyed singing, games and good food. We held a bake sale to raise money to help defray the cost of activities such as the retreat, joint circle meetings, Father's Day luncheon, etc.

Throughout the year our PW supported the Johnson Auxiliary with volunteers and donations of items such as soap, tooth paste and brushes, shampoo, magazines, soda can tabs, etc. In response to a request from Barbara Wicks, our PW started making 10-inch square pillows to be placed in care packets for postoperative mastectomy patients.

We have had an active and rewarding year.

Georgia Harris, Moderator

Presbyterian Women of Somerville Presbyterian Church

Our two Circles are enjoying our monthly meetings for our Bible study and the sharing of food. We have been busy caring for our shut-ins with meals, small gifts, telephone calls, and visits. We look forward to this New Year, and to the preparation of our Birthday Offering Pot Luck and to providing dessert for the John Knox Dinner Meeting for the men of the Church. We look forward to the Annual Gathering of all Presbyterian Women throughout the Presbytery and hope to see everyone in Jackson on April 2nd.

Margaret Beyer and Patsy Krech, co-moderators

Annual Spring Gathering for Presbyterian Women Bonnie Blair, Annual Gathering Chair

Presbyterian Women from the Presbytery of the Mid-South will gather together for an inspiring, uplifting, Holy Spirit filled meeting on **Saturday, April 2, 2011, at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, TN.**

We are fortunate to have as our guest speaker/song leader **The Rev. Dr. Tracy Keenan**. She is the senior pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Columbus, Ohio. She is a nationally known song writer/leader. Tracy was the **fantastic song leader** at the Churchwide Gathering in Louisville in 2009. Those of us that heard her were so uplifted and felt God's Holy Spirit as she led us in inspirational songs and prayers.

This is truly an awesome opportunity for PW of the Mid-South. Please tell all the women at your church to come and participate in this Annual Gathering. Not often do we have a song leader from the Churchwide Gathering to come here to be with us. Tracy will be selecting the hymns, leading the singing and preaching.

Let's have a great turn out. What better place to have this Gathering than in the beautiful First Presbyterian Church in Jackson. The PW are truly dedicated and loyal, and will make the hosting of this Gathering a real treat. Please plan now to join us on that date.


Presbyterian Women, Grace Presbyterian Church, Bartlett


Our PW officers are: Wendi Glenn, Moderator; Marilyn Wilson, Vice Moderator; Mary Korowin, Secretary/Historian; Paula Bishop, Treasure; Jane McGoldrick, Hostess

We have 4 active Circles with a total of 50 members. Circle leaders are: Frances Kitterman; Linda Foster,; Jan Evans, and Sara Lawson.

In February, the PW began collecting for our *Christmas Everyday Fund*. Envelopes are provided to the congregation as a whole for their contributions on the second Sunday of each month. \$1,171 was collected during the year, enabling the PW to provide Christmas baskets and gifts to ten (10) families.

On August 21st, PW hosted a silent auction. A variety of handmade items were donated, including afghans, jewelry, wood-carved pens and crosses. Each circle also created a themed basket from donated items and one circle created two baskets for a total of five baskets. We raised \$819 of which \$223 came from the sale of raffle tickets for a chance to win one of the baskets.

On September 13th, we hosted our Fall Gathering, a time when all four Circles come together for study and fellowship. New board members were introduced and Jean Markham gave lesson number one from our Horizon's Bible Study on Revelation.

On October 19th, PW officers were installed during morning worship.

On October 2nd, several ladies attended the Fall Workshop Gathering at Balmoral Presbyterian Church, and our very own Bobby Vawter conducted a workshop on computer technology.

On November 21st, PW hosted an Advent Workshop and Potluck. The purpose of the workshop was to provide an opportunity for the whole church to come together during the Advent season. Families had an opportunity to make an Advent wreath and were given a book of poems that were written by our very own Suzanne Getman. Jari Dykstra of Advent designed designer the very attractive booklet. Although each family was given a book for their own use, many purchased additional copies for gifts. \$810 was collected and donated to Living Waters of the World.

On December 20th, PW hosted our Christmas Gathering. Suzanne Getman presented a devotion from her Advent book.

On December 4th, PW hosted breakfast with Santa. Breakfast was served, pictures with Santa were taken and crafts were made.


PW Farmington Presbyterian Women


We kicked off our year in August with a fun Salad Supper. In September we hosted the Church School's 'Welcome Parent's' Coffee Night. Our other activities have included a group going to the Memphis Family Shelter to organize the Shelter's linen closet and clothes donations. We also have an annual garage sale, organized by Barbara Kelly, with the proceeds going to the Shelter. At our December Circle meeting, we filled 16 large Christmas bags full of snacks, one for each family at the Shelter.

Throughout the year Jean Wiseman has led us in creating Holiday Tray Favors for MIFA's Meals on Wheels. Jean and Myrt Saxon made over 150 mask straps for the children of St Jude's. The PW also traditionally makes the palm crosses for Palm Sunday.

To help support our missions, every spring we have a bake sale, organized by Charlene Still and Janet McCrory. The PW also hosts a Wednesday Family Night dinner twice a year, with the proceeds going to help fund a group of our women who will attend the 2012 Annual Gathering of Presbyterian Women of the Synod in Orlando in June of that year.

A group of women faithfully go to the Church Health Center on the 4th Friday of each month to sort pills, and in the spring a group of our women toured the Health Center facilities and had a nutritious lunch in the kitchen there. Farmington PW supports the Health Center, along with the Family Shelter and First Presbyterian Soup Kitchen. Many of our PW ladies help serve at the Soup Kitchen with other volunteers on our allotted day.

In addition to our usual activities, we started a prayer shawl ministry last January, and at last count we have given out 11 prayer shawls. Some of our women are wonderfully skilled in the art of knitting and crocheting, and willingly donate their time and talent for this worthy cause.

We are currently studying Horizon's *Journeys Through Revelation, Apocalyptic Hope for Today*. Sara Millar is leading us in the study of this most challenging book of the Bible. Last August 14 Farmington women attended the Pinecrest Bible Study Conference in order to better understand the study.

And last but not least, we are proud of our own Bonnie Blair who was just installed as Moderator of the Mid-South Presbytery. Go Bonnie!

Nadine Oest, Moderator

Collierville Presbyterian Women

The Collierville Presbyterian Women have three general Gatherings each year. On the months that no Gathering is scheduled, the PW members gather in a home of one of the members or at the church for our Horizon Bible Study and lunch. We have enjoyed the study on the book of Revelation more than we first imagined, and have learned a lot from the last book of the Bible that we have not studied before as much as other books.

Collierville Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering and Potluck was held on September 11, 2010 at the church. Vashti Crowder, our PWP Moderator, attended the Gathering and graciously installed our officers for the coming year. Vashti also spoke to us about upcoming PWP events. Doris Smith was installed as our Moderator for the coming year.

We held our Christmas Gathering and Potluck on December 11, 2010 at the church. Our special guest was one of our high school students, Amelia Sutherland, who entertained the group with a dramatic Christmas presentation. Amelia has been active in local community theater productions and we thought this would be a good way to showcase the talent of one of our own – we call Amelia our resident actress. White elephant gifts were exchanged by participants -- always a fun activity with some things showing up from previous white elephant exchanges. Doty Coulson, a church member and high school art teacher led us in a Christmas craft project. The project consisted of beautiful Christmas ornaments that were made from recycled cardboard cores of kitchen towel holders. We learned how to cut the towel holders and fasten them together to make a snow flake design. It was amazing to see the ladies turn the paper towel holders that would normally be thrown away into such attractive ornaments after dipping them into several colors of glitter for take home ornaments. Outgoing Moderator, Mary Ann Harris, surprised Mary Ann Epperson with an Honorary Life Membership Pin at this Gathering, as a show of appreciation for her leadership in PW. Pictured below are some of the ladies that attended our Christmas Gathering.



Christmas Gathering 2010

Two ladies have continued to make handmade necklaces for the benefit of *Living Waters of the World (LWW)*. On Sunday, January 9, 2011, Rev. Wil Howie, the LWW founder and director delivered the Sunday worship message at our church. Our treasurer, Karen Wimpee, presented a check to Rev. Howie in the amount of \$2000. The ladies who made the necklaces, Ruth Lewis and Ann Cross, held up an oversized check to show to the congregation. With a \$5 price tag for each necklace, Ruth and Ann outdid themselves by making hundreds of necklaces for this project. This was indeed a labor of love!

Presbyterian Women of Woodland United Presbyterian Church

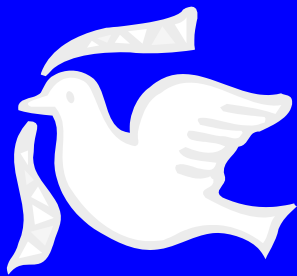
The three Circles of Woodland PW met jointly on December 14, 2010 at 10:30 a.m. for their Christmas Gathering. Jan Thompson, Joyce Henry and Mary Blanche Scott gave a very meaningful devotional. Our special guest of honor was Ginger Quarry, our member and our PWP liaison. Ginger was awarded a copy of the Woodland Cookbook. Dot Payne and Anita Jefferies were awarded Honorary Life Memberships. Both of these ladies have made meaningful contributions in many ways to the life of Woodland for many years. Offering collected on that day was given to the Memphis Food Bank.

Jan Thompson led the 4th study in the Horizon's Bible Study that helped in the understanding of the book of Revelations. A delicious potluck luncheon was enjoyed by all after the Bible Study lesson.



Carolyn Ivy, Moderator

Presbyterian
Women of the
Mid-South



 Janet Nix of Idlewild Presbyterian Church Honored 



With great pride and joy it is announced that Janet Nix has been awarded the *Valiant Woman Award* from Church Women United.

Janet was selected for this honor in light of her never ending and faithful volunteer service through the organization of Church Women United and many other arenas throughout the City of Memphis. She has been active in Church Women United in Memphis and Shelby County for ten (10) years, serving on occasion as Vice-President, Treasurer, and Yearbook Editor.

She has served Presbyterian Women as a Circle Leader on the local church level, as Treasurer for PW of the Presbytery, and as a member and as Treasurer of the Committee on Women's Concerns in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on the PW Churchwide level.

A timely Honor, well deserved, and we applaud you Janet!!

 PWP Search Committee *Hard at Work* 



PWP Search Committee *Hard at Work* (meeting held in home of chair, Gay Beaumont).
Florine Edwards, Jean Markham, Gay Beaumont, Dot Payne, Bonnie Blair,
and Jean Starnes (not pictured)

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