



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

PRESBYTERY OF MISSISSIPPI

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Moderator's Moment – Myra Hester

This has been a busy year for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Mississippi. Last June, several of us went to Franklin, TN for PW Synod Training and Gathering. We met and were trained by among others, Catrelia Hunter, PW Churchwide Moderator; Mary Weber, Moderator of PW in the Synod of Living Waters; Bonnie Blair, Leadership Enhancement Committee, CCT; Gloria Moorman, Moderator of Mid-KY Presbytery PW, Trainer for the Justice and Peace Workshop.

In the fall, we put all that training to good use. At each Fall Cluster Gathering we held training sessions for all leaders in the congregations. Over 200 women attended these sessions. At the Cluster C Gathering in Jackson, Gloria Moorman was our guest speaker and so trained us all as a Workshop for Justice and Peace. Also at each of these gatherings, Bill dePrater, Executive Presbyter of Mississippi, spoke and gave us timely updates on what has been happening in our presbytery and in the larger church.

Last summer, Janice Catron gave us the overview of our Bible Study at the AL/MS Women's Conference held at Belhaven. In January, Dee Koza led us in "Finding God...Finding Home" at our annual Winter Spiritual Retreat at Chatawa. In February at Kaleidoscope, Norma Loposser taught a class on Mission in a Mish-Mash World. Presbyterian Women in Mississippi have had many opportunities for growth and leaning this year.

Our e-newsletters are being well received. I'm hearing back from a number of people that they like having their own copy to read and that it's nice to be able to keep up with what is going on throughout the presbytery (especially from someone who has moved, Nina Austin). Also by having this email capability, our entire newsletter is now on the PW Synod Website and on the Mississippi Presbytery Website and by following the links on the PC(USA) Website. We have also been able to include registration information and forms for our gatherings, making it easier to get the information you need without having to find that piece of paper somewhere on your desk. Keep giving us suggestions, we are still learning on this. This is a great way for us to communicate, something we Presbyterian Women do well!

The Casserole Caravan still rolls to the coast. It is amazing how many have been made, how many have been fed, and how many blessings have been received because of these.

This coming year promises to be exciting and busy as well. In June, I will be in San Jose, CA for General Assembly. This will be a real learning experience for me. And thanks to PW connections, I will have a roommate that I know from St. Andrews Presbytery, Phyllis Hicks from Southaven. We are both on the AL/MS Planning Team.

Which leads me to the AL/MS Women's Conference for this year. It will be held at South Highland Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, AL on July 22-25. Dee Koza will give the overview of the Bible Study, "Insiders/Outsiders A Study of the Gospel of Luke". All classes and meals will be at the church, housing will be in motels. They have rooms blocked off at Hampton Inn and a shuttle bus arranged if you don't feel comfortable driving. What could be easier. Sara Brown is the Director this year and can answer any questions you might have. It sounds wonderful.

In the Fall we will have Cluster Gatherings at First Presbyterian in Vicksburg, Pineview in Hattiesburg, JJ White in McComb and at Gautier Presbyterian.

In January, we will again meet at St. Mary of the Pines for our Winter Spiritual Retreat. Come if you can, it is a wonderful time in a beautiful setting.

Next summer, 2009, there will be the next PW Churchwide Gathering in Louisville, KY in July. The theme of this gathering is "**God will do wonders among you.**"

Isn't that a great thought for us. Let's do our part, with God's help. Amen.

Cluster A Report, Annie Ruth Thigpen, Outgoing Cluster A Leader

We continue to serve the Lord in our churches and communities as we move forward in recovering from the 2005 hurricane.

The retiring Cluster Leader has been in contact with moderators or contact persons of each church by telephone or mail. She attended two PW CT meeting and the Annual Gathering, but was unable to attend AL/MS Women's Conference or the Winter Retreat.

Cluster B Report – Linda Soons, Cluster B Leader

An information letter went to all the churches in Cluster B in March. The letter detailed the casserole information as it is our time again for April delivery. Jones Memorial will take all the casseroles from Meridian and pick up First Trinity's in Laurel and take all the casseroles to Westminster in Hattiesburg. Betty and Bill Arnold will take them to the coast on April 29. Keep up the good work as we always have 100 plus casseroles for the coast. It also encouraged everyone to come to the Annual Gathering at First Trinity on April 5. Plus it gave them some information about the AL/MS Conference on July 22-25 at South Highland Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama and the gift shop flyer.

Presbyterian Women of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Meridian, Mississippi for the past several years has been making about 350 cupcakes each month for our local Boys & Girls

Club. The children all look forward to this homemade treat. Accepting our Synod's Moderator's Challenge we looked for another project in our community to benefit women or children. Since we already have a connection with the Boys & Girls Club, it seemed like a perfect fit. We all know that school supplies are consumable; therefore, we felt this was more than just a one time need of the children. We decided to collect the basics: spiral notebooks, loose-leaf paper, crayons, markers, pencils, pens, and folders. Also we realized they often have other donations at the beginning of the school year. Therefore, it was decided to store the supplies at Trinity and deliver them during the year as needed.

Presbyterian Women offers women the chance to join together at the local, Presbytery, and Synod level. The women of Trinity have many opportunities for learning, fellowship and active participation in mission projects through their involvement in Presbyterian Women. PW has three circles: morning, afternoon and evening. These circles meet monthly for bible study, fellowship and routine business. Throughout the year we actively pursue various mission projects such as: making casseroles to feed volunteers helping in the Mississippi coast recovery effort, playing bingo with Nursing Home residents, baking cupcakes for the Boys & Girls Club, and cooking turkeys for Love's Kitchen. As a new project for this year we are collecting school supplies for the Boys & Girls Club. We encourage all women to be a part of PW.

Cluster C Report – Inez Dunlap, Cluster C Leader

March was Cluster C's time to take casseroles to the coast and 35 were delivered followed by about 20 more from St. Lukes. It will be our time again in June. I am told that this is still a vital and much appreciated mission.

P.W. is trying to break into the electronic age and utilize email for better (and cheaper) communication. If you send your name, email address and church affiliation to Myra Hester, she will send you the next Newsletter by email. Myra's address is mtjhester@comcast.net.

Fondren P.W. have launched two new projects. Toilet articles are being collected for Hope House which provides temporary lodging for patients who are undergoing extended treatment at St. Dominic's or their family. Also, P.W. is helping stock small casseroles and other frozen food for those times when the members may need a little "chicken soup for the soul". It's not new but 150 Easter "goodie bags" were delivered to University Hospital for placement on dinner trays.

Briarwood has an active prayer shawl ministry. The 12 or so members meet every Sunday. They have prayer, knit, inspire one another and discuss the next shawl recipients. The idea is to pray with every stitch so that the recipient will be surrounded by a loving prayer. They have accumulated over 25 shawls which were blessed on April 13, 2008 during the worship service. What a nice way to show love to someone who really needs it! An example of this love is in the following article by Anne Hodges, Prayer Shawl Ministry leader:

Last September Mrs. M., a new widow, smiled at me and gave me much more than I thought that I had given her. I had just presented her with the first prayer shawl from

Briarwood's fledgling prayer shawl ministry. I had put off visiting because I am a great procrastinator, but when she told me that her family was leaving that very morning to fly back to their own lives, I knew that I had not been in charge of timing, but that God had been.

Briarwood's prayer shawl ministry began almost three years ago when eight women met on the first Wednesday night in October. Three could knit and five had never picked up a pair of knitting needles in their lives. At the next meeting, a month later, all were knitting.

Since that first meeting, the group has grown. Since January, our group no longer meets on one Wednesday night a month; we meet every Sunday morning in the sanctuary. We average ten to 12 members every Sunday and have accumulated over 25 shawls. The group opens with prayer and we spend the next hour discussing the next recipient, our church and our own lives. A bonus is that we get to hear the choir practice for morning worship. Many of us have grown closer by sharing our craft; when a member is absent, she is missed.

Our shawls were blessed on April 13, 2008 during the worship service. At the end of the service a visitor from California (with tears in her eyes) approached me to say that, "This is the most wonderful thing. I must start a ministry like this at my church, even if it is only me." Once more, God had been in charge of timing. Anne Hodges



Briarwood's Prayer Shawl Ministry Group on Shawl Blessing Sunday
Front row from left: Debra Sikes; Nora Brunson; Anne Hodges; Nancy Bailey, Susan Sumrall, Myra Hester;
Nan Huey. Back row from left: Janine Davis; Sandy French, Courtney Hogue

Justice and Peace Report, Sarah Amos, Vice-Moderator for Justice and Peace.

At the present date, I have not received any information or comments from any groups or churches. We are working with the Abusive Shelter at Pineview and the Christian Service Group in Hattiesburg with collecting clothes and seasonal items for the group. Any and all information, comments, and aids will be gladly appreciated.

Casserole Caravan, Inez Dunlap, Coordinator

Presbyterian Women's casseroles are still rolling to the coast to feed the volunteers who continue come to help with repairs and rebuilding. Some of the most recent are the Amish, who build cottages in Pennsylvania, take them apart for shipping and then the

Amish in Mississippi rebuild them. Check with your Cluster Leader to find where you are in the schedule.

Schedule:

May	Cluster B
June	Cluster C
July	Cluster D

Please note that July will be our last month for the PW Mississippi Casserole Caravan ministry.



Inez Dunlap with Casseroles for the Coast

New PW Roster Reminder:

All church PWs need to get Dorothy Daniel a listing of the new leaders, their addresses, phone numbers and emails for the new rosters that will be given out at the Fall Cluster gatherings. Dorothy's address is 521 Witsell Road, Jackson, MS 39206 or email at dorotdanie6@aol.com.

Kaleidoscope '09

Kaleidoscope '09 planning is well underway. The event is a Presbytery wide gathering for education and fellowship among the churches of the Presbytery of "Living Waters" held the second weekend in February at First-Trinity Presbyterian Church in Laurel. The Friday night opening events include Keynote speaker Joan Gray - now acting head of the General Assembly, dinner in the Lauren Rogers Museum and a concert.

On Saturday, classes will include topics on: 'Spiritual Leadership', 'Book of Order and the up coming FOG Report', 'Adults Teaching Children', 'Clean Water U', 'Sessions Role in Transformational Congregations', and 'Parenting In the Pew' - for those raising young children in the faith.

We invite you to spend the day with your fellow Presbyterians in worship, fellowship and education February 13 - 14, 2009.

PW Annual Gathering

On April 5, over 50 Presbyterian Women and guests were welcomed by Margaret Rice, PW Moderator of First-Trinity Presbyterian Church in Laurel, for their 20th Annual Gathering. Yes, this was the weekend of tornados and really bad weather in the Jackson area and on the coast, so several reservations had to be cancelled because cleaning up took precedence over the Gathering. Thankfully there were no injuries, but a good bit of clean up and some damage was done to homes and churches in our presbytery.

Rev. Jim Truesdell, pastor of First-Trinity led us in prayers; Rev. Bill dePrater, Presbytery Executive brought us up to date on matters in the Presbytery and the larger church denomination; and George Bates, Moderator of Presbytery Mission Committee gave us up to date information on our sister churches and the Linda Bates Preschool in Brazil. Wil Howie, founder of Living Waters for the World, gave each of us copies of the most recent "Presbyterians Today" with Living Waters as the cover story. He then told us of the exciting growth of this ministry and Clean Water U, the training facility now established at Camp Hopewell near Oxford. The offering was donated to Clean Water U.

New leaders Pam McDonald, Moderator-Elect; Dorothy Daniel, Secretary; Robin Knapp, Cluster A Leader; and Joyce Borum, Cluster D Leader were elected and installed by Rev. Mickey dePrater. Be sure to put on your calendars Mar 14, 2009, when we are invited to Westminster Presbyterian in Gulfport for our 21st Annual Gathering.

After lunch, we were invited to shop the garage sale prepared by First-Trinity to raise money for their team to travel to install a water treatment system for Living Waters for the World.

Annual Gathering Photos 2008



PW Coordinating Team 2008-2009

Moderator-Elect Pam McDonald



Rev. Truesdale and Sara Brown



Linda Bates and Renee Belote



Wil Howie and Ann Catron



George Bates

AL/MS Women's Conference 2008

Be sure to check out the upcoming AL/MS Women's Conference. The entire brochure including all the classes, teachers, and registration information is on the PW Synod website: <http://pwsliningwaters.org>. This year's conference will be held at South Highland Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, AL from July 22 – 25. Dee Koze will give the overview of next year's Bible study, "Insiders/Outsiders a Study of the Gospel of Luke."

Instructors include Anne Hodges: Prayer Shawl Ministry; Lynn Bledsoe and Mary Porter: Harp Ministry, Ruth and Naomi; Lisa Stenner: Where Have all the Young Women Gone?; Rev. Terry Newland: Issues in Today's Church; Anghaarad Teague: Poetry of Ann Weems; Rev. Tom Evans: The Reformation for Arm Chair Theologians; Rev. Margaret Northen: Bible Study – Passover/Communion; Rev. Michelle Freeman Owen: Morning Newsbreak; Jo Hankins and Grace Finkel: Handcrafted Beaded Bookmarks; and Mary

Weber and Gloria Moorman: Prebyterian Women and Mission, Peace and Justice. The only difficult part will be making choices among all these outstanding presenters.

Housing will be in motels of your choice, they have blocked off 25 rooms at the Hampton Inn in Mountain Brook for \$109 plus tax. A shuttle will be available each morning if you prefer not to drive. Be sure in register by June 30 for the early bird price of \$80. All classes and meals will be at the church, very easily accessible to all. Proceeds from the gift shop will be donated to First Light, a center for homeless women and children in Birmingham.

Invitation from Polly Banks

There is now a printable .pdf file on the PWS website for the AL/MS Women's Conference on July 22-25. It is a 10-page document that contains program events, tentative schedule, class descriptions, driving/hotel instructions, and a registration form. We hope that you will be able to attend and that you will share this information with all PW in your area. Please note that Mary Weber and Gloria Moorman will be attending and teaching a class in addition to a number of other very gifted speakers/leaders.

www.pwslivingwaters.org

Go to Forms/Info/News and it will be the first selection.

So as we used to say in Alabama YA'LL COME! (Man, I hated that!)

Thanks and love to all.

Polly Banks

PW Coordinating Team Presbytery of Mississippi 2008-2009

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Search Cluster A Search Cluster B Search Cluster D	Robin Knapp Sara Brown Joyce Borum	

Calendar for 2008-2009

April 5	Annual Gathering	First-Trinity, Laurel
April 17	Come See Columbia Day	Decatur, GA
May 15	Presbytery Meeting	First Presbyterian, Vicksburg
June 13-14	PW Synod Meeting	Huntsville, AL
June 21-28	General Assembly	San Jose, CA
July	PWCT	Presbytery Office, Hattiesburg
July 22-25	AL/MS Women's Conference	South Highland Presbyterian Birmingham, AL

Aug 3-7	Montreat Women's Connection	
Sept 13	Cluster C Fall Gathering	First Presbyterian, Vicksburg
Sept 20	Cluster B Fall Gathering	Pineview, Hattiesburg
Sept 27	Cluster D Fall Gathering	JJ White, McComb
Oct 4	Cluster A Fall Gathering	Gautier
Oct 23	Presbytery Meeting	
Jan 23-24, 2009	Winter Spiritual Retreat	St. Mary of the Pines, Chatawa
Feb 13-14, 2009	Kaleidoscope	First-Trinity, Laurel
Mar 13, 2009	PWCT	Westminster, Gulfport
Mar 14, 2009	PW Annual Gathering	Westminster, Gulfport
July 11-15, 2009	PW Churchwide Gathering	Louisville, KY

Synod News

The talented ladies in Sheppards & Lapsley have been at it again. I'll let Dean (Vandegrift) explain the first one.

*Polly,
Lynn, our daughter, was in the hospital and then recuperated at our house for a week prior to the ASG. While here, I asked her if she would like to read the latest Horizons Magazine. Of course she did; she is an avid reader. Then I suggested she might help me out by writing a brief summary of each article on a 3 x 5 card. She loves to do stuff like that and readily agreed. It occurred to me you might like to pick and choose and put a few of the summaries on the WEB. Anyway, I am attaching.
Dean*

The second is a skit written by Sarah Fetcher from Grace PC in Bham. She wrote it for their Circle meeting and Mary Hammett urged her to share with all of us in case some of you might want to use it in a meeting.

Both can be accessed from the Presbytery News selection and then select Sheppards & Lapsley where you will find them listed. Also, Holston has sent a couple of pictures from their ASG. They, too, are through Presbytery News, then select Holston.

www.pwslivingwaters.org

Living Waters for the World

Dear Partners & Friends,

Living Waters for the World is the cover story of the April 2008 issue of **Presbyterians Today** magazine. This article, plus a spotlight Q&A with Wil Howie, is featured online at this link: <http://www.pcusa.org/today/>

This is significant national coverage for LWW and we are deeply grateful for it.

Please help us spread the good news about Living Waters for the World by forwarding this email to others who would like to know about this exciting mission opportunity.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and for helping to deliver the water of life!

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Last Print Newsletter

In order to be better stewards of our PW finances, this will be the last PW Mississippi newsletter sent out in print. Please send your email address to Myra Hester at mtjhester@comcast.net to receive future newsletters.