

**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN  
OF  
TRANSYLVANIA PRESBYTERY**

**Annual report 2008-2009**

**Linda Crawford, Moderator**

During this first year as Moderator of Presbyterian Women, I have learned so much about so many things, not the least of which is a huge emphasis on what I already knew - the incredible gift of Presbyterian Women to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Though I have not been nearly as involved over the years as my mother was, I was still very much aware of the work done by this outstanding group through the year. No matter whether we were a part of the southern or northern "stream," which had different names for the organization, it is clear that this group of dedicated women over many years have been vital to the lives of the congregations.

The first order of business I was to tackle was to moderate the meetings of the Presbytery Coordinating Team. I had previously staffed this group when I served on presbytery staff, but then I was just an on-looker. I soon realized I was with a hard-working, knowledgeable, and very supportive group of women as we met at Second Presbyterian Church. Whether it is looking at the finances, helping to plan a Gathering, talking about individual Cluster groups - whatever the conversation happened to be about, I am learning much about the workings of PW. These women have become a stronghold to me over these months, and I owe them my deepest appreciation.

Continuing to learn from those who are much more seasoned than I, I was delighted to be able to go with Mary Weber to the Synod Coordinating Team meeting in Huntsville, AL last June. In a short while, I was able to converse with many PW sisters, who were more than willing to take me in, and help me get oriented. With my background in mission work, I once again saw the benefit of being out beyond my own boundaries, as I could learn from, and eventually, contribute to the work that is to be done.

The Fall Gathering at Camp Burnamwood was such an exhilarating event! It was a gorgeous fall day. Our then "fairly new" General Presbyter, the Rev. Richard Smith, spoke on "Putting Women in Their Place," sharing of how he had seen PW work in churches, and how vital the group is, not only for women, but for the entire worshipping community. Karen May did a wonderful job, previewing the Bible Study for the year-*Jubilee! Luke's Gospel for the Poor*. And we warmly welcomed the Rev Paul Prather who is a pastor and also a regular columnist for the Religion section of the *Herald-Leader*, the newspaper in Lexington. Using his own life journey as an example, Paul spoke of personal faith, of God's love, and how vital those two factors are for us to live as Christians in today's world

Our Spring Gathering in April was held at the First Presbyterian Church in Lexington. We were privileged to have Bonnie Blair, who has been on both national and synod-level committees and Coordinating Teams. Her enthusiasm came through as she spoke of not only how significant PW has been and is, but also ways in which we need to look to see how we can maintain the vitality of PW, given the lifestyles we lead, and the challenges of working together amid differences within our denomination. A time of remembrance was also shared as we named those women who have joined the Eternal Circle over the past year. The Rev Diane Baldwin presided over the communion service.

And yes, the Churchwide Gathering was once again a part of the happenings in 2009! Nine women from our presbytery attended. What a joy and a gift it has been to have this event at "our back door" in Louisville. **"God Will Do Wonders Among You"** was the theme which was beautifully carried out in worship, in music, in workshops and certainly in the varied times of fellowship as 2500 women from around the world gathered for the five days. How wonderful to know that our sisters who come from different cultures, love the same God as you and I do, and follow the teachings of Jesus, just as you and I do. Since there was no General Assembly this summer, we were blessed to be able to witness the commissioning of missionaries who were preparing to go to all parts of the world, answering God's call.

Aside from these "official gatherings," the times that have meant so much to me as a new moderator have been those times I have been invited to come to the churches to lead a lesson of the Bible study, to share in a Pot Luck meal, to help install the new officers, or just to come and visit a circle. Thank you for making this experience for me such a meaningful one. My hope is, that, with God's leading, we will be able to increase the numbers of women in our congregations who also want to come to learn, to serve, and to join in one of the denomination's greatest secrets!

Blessings,

Linda Crawford