

PWP Annual report to Presbytery

PW Purpose

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves:
To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
To support the mission of the Church worldwide,
To work for justice and peace, and
To build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's Kingdom.

Good evening—my name is Joan Hackett and I am the Missouri River Valley (MRV) PW Moderator. Each November Presbytery receives an annual report from PW. The following are some highlights from the past year.

This past summer, nine (9) women from MRV joined 2400 other women at the PW Churchwide Gathering in Louisville, KY. The theme of the 5-day event was “God Will Do Wonders Among You.” Through wise financial practices, MRV PW was able to pay our share of our voting representatives' expenses to this meeting as well as to provide six (6) \$200 scholarships for MRV PWs. Our vice-moderator, Marge Adey, and treasurer, Lois Fedderson, represented MRV PW as the voting reps to the Churchwide business meeting. One important piece that was favorably voted upon was the incorporation of PW Churchwide.

This fall MRV PW offered 2 Fall Meetings—one at Church of the Cross in Omaha and the other at Carson Presbyterian in Carson, Iowa. We reinstated workshop sessions and lunch after the meeting as a way to increase enthusiasm and fellowship. The change was well received. Ninety (90) women representing 22 churches attended.

We are currently planning our April meeting, which will include a program by the PW Synod representative who went on the recent PW Global Exchange to Eastern Europe.

MRV PW also has a representative on the PW Synod Team. Marge Adey, from MRV, and others on the team are putting the finishing touches on the PW Synod Gathering for June 16-19 at Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, Iowa. The theme is “The Promise of God's Wonders”. MRV PW will offer \$1500 in scholarship money. We are serious about supporting leadership and spiritual growth.

Using the PW purpose as our guide, we encourage Bible study, either using material from Churchwide—which this year is the study of Joshua, or using a study of the groups own choosing.

We “work for justice and peace” with many local outreach programs such as hats, mittens and socks for the Visiting Nurse Association, making over 3,000 Christmas stocking for HELP—Adult services prison outreach, making and filling shelter bags with personal care items, sewing lap robes for nursing homes, collecting sheets and donations for our Presbyterian Hospitals in Africa and much more.

Through our dollars and our leadership, we continue to “support the mission of the Church worldwide.” Last year, MRV PW gave \$15,220 in Churchwide Mission support.

Like any organization, we have a few problems, but, we are now setting goals, examining our jobs and ways of operating, looking ahead and reaching out to others. A positive attitude and trust in Jesus Christ can go a long way,

PW is good for the church—both locally and nationally.

For example, at one national event, PW Churchwide raised \$70,000 in \$20. gift cards for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Bellewood Children's Homes, \$51,00 in offering toward theological educational grants for women, and \$3,500 for 2-cents a meal hunger program—that's over \$124,000 at ONE event. On top of that, PW Churchwide is the largest contributor of undesignated funds to the PC(USA). Many of you may recall that the need for undesignated funds has been a "hot button issue". Through the Thank Offering in the fall and the Birthday Offering in the spring, PW supports additional projects in the synods and internationally. Unfortunately, there were no projects in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies this year.

A common misconception is that PW giving will siphon off funds from local stewardship. This is not true. PW giving is about additional above and beyond support for the mission of PC(USA). That's what makes it so noteworthy. An expression of thanksgiving is important part of PW—whether it is through monetary offerings or participation in mission, peace making, or social justice projects. PW is not all about the money.

Another misconception is that we are the "Kitchen Queens". We are not all "kitchen queens". Truth be told—warmth, hospitality and fellowship often start with food from the kitchen and spreads to the church and community as we break bread together in the name of Jesus Christ. In this fast paced world, many churches as well as PW are finding that time for fellowship needs to be included in our gatherings and meetings. MRV PW is working harder at "building an inclusive, caring community of women".

In conclusion, please take these things into consideration and ask yourselves—do you have PW in your church? Why wouldn't you want PW? If you don't know very much about PW in your church...please make time to find out more. What can you do to recognize PW's work in your church? How can your church help support PW? Please call me for ideas to start or revitalize a PW group.

PW can be a blessing for your church, the community, and the world. MRV PW is working hard to be a blessing to all.