

# THE BRIDGER

**The Bridger is the Official Publication of the Presbyterian Women of the Missouri River Valley Presbytery**

**Moderator's Musings:** We are almost four months into "this COVID" thing and I understand that we are all tired of staying in, staying 6 feet from another person, wearing a mask. I get that. I am tired too. But, I remain healthy, COVID free – just got a negative results on my test and I, for one, plan to stay that way.

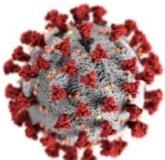
Hopefully, we have found other ways of being in touch with each other. I have learned to set a Google Meet gathering with some PWs at my church, just for conversation – no agenda. I have hosted a small group on Google Meet for our Book Club. I have attended meetings via Zoom. I can't touch these people, I can't hug them and I am a hugger!! But I can talk and laugh and cry with them.

Most of our churches in the Presbytery have an on-line presence and we can worship God – where two or three are gathered – it doesn't say that it has to be in a sanctuary, although that would be nice. It would also be nice to sing in the choir again – when will that happen again – after a vaccine, I suppose.

It is not all doom and gloom. It will end eventually and we will come out to a bright, new world. And we will HUG, and kiss, and love each other, as God loves us! So, be at peace. Have patience. Be well and for the love of God, wash your hands!!

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**For this Bridger I have asked the Coordinating Team to contribute articles:**



## Practicing Safety during COVID-19 by Dawn Goodsell, Cluster Leader

Well by this time, we should all be pro's at social distancing, but when is enough actually enough? Many churches have been conducting services by internet streaming during this pandemic crisis. We have truly learned how to adapt and as they say in boxing "Duck, Bob, and Weave".

Moving forward into the live environment is a big decision with a lot of details to look at. There are guidelines set forth by the CDC and the Commission of Ministry (COM). These guidelines have to be reviewed by churches before even considering how to proceed next on with normal in person services. Both, the CDC and the COM, state that the number of positive cases of COVID-19 have to decrease for 14 consecutive days before looking at face to face services for possible consideration.

There are so many things to think about including the wellbeing of our church families. The most important things to remember is keep social distancing to at LEAST 6 feet, wash your hands often, use hand sanitizer when you are in public and touching things, wear a mask as much as possible in public. It is safe not to wear a mask in open areas with no one else around and in your car if you are alone. Be safe, and carry hand sanitizer with you because you are never guaranteed that stores will provide it. Not all stores sanitize their carts after every use so bring your own. Pack a baggy with wipes with you just in case they are not furnished for you. Stay safe, be patient and understanding, this too shall pass.

## Getting Closer to God:

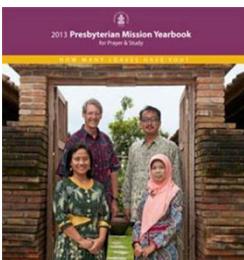
### DEVOTION by Sue Perry, Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study

Our devotional life is often very private. Mine varies through the year. I usually add something specific for Lent and Advent. I always use These Days which I obtain from my church. A few years ago I started purchasing and using Upper Room also.

With the advent of Covid 19—social distancing, closure of churches, etc.—our pastor started publishing the 2 Year Lectionary for the month in our church newsletter. I have added that to my devotional time which is first thing in the morning. There are morning and evening selections to read. I read the morning Psalm and choose one of the evening readings to read in the morning. The selections often take me to seldom read verses and new thoughts. You can obtain These Days by calling 1-800-624-2412, Upper Room by calling 1-800-972-0433 and the Lectionary readings can be obtained by googling “Presbyterian Church Lectionary”, then select “PMA Printable Lectionary lists” (2year lectionary lists) and choose the month you want.

If you have a particular meaningful devotional practice to share, you can forward them to Kathleen Keefer and she will include them in the next “Bridger”.

Stay safe and closer to God.



**MISSION YEARBOOK FOR PRAYER AND STUDY** by Kathleen Keefer: One of the sources I use in my daily prayer life is the *Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study*. Sometimes this is used as a source of devotion during Circle Meetings – remember them – Pre-COVID? But I use mine each morning to pray for the work that is mentioned in the daily entry, to pray for those faithful men and women who work for the PC(USA) and to remind me of the great work Presbyterians do in the world.

Did you know that the *Mission Yearbook* began with Presbyterian Women?? In 1892, the Presbyterian Women published a simple calendar of prayer to help women pray for missionaries on designated days. It quickly developed into a book filled with wonderful pictures of mission work being done in the US and in distant lands. It has the longest history of any denominational mission and prayer book in the United States.

Unfortunately, due to the high cost of publishing a book such as this each year, the very difficult decision to go digital was made in 2016. But going digital has a few pluses. The stories are much longer and more complete as they no longer have to fit a single page and the stories are more current as they are captured as they happen and not at the end of one year, to be placed in print for the following. The publication's esteemed history is reflected in the online version of the *Mission Yearbook* by connecting Presbyterians to the greater church and energizing them for mission.

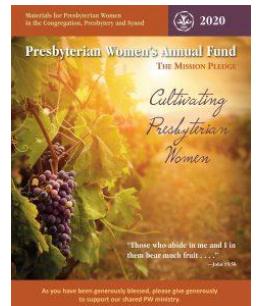
So now you can read the *Presbyterian Mission Yearbook* on your computer, iPad, tablet or smart phone where ever you are. Remember the great history of Presbyterian Wo men.

The online edition of the *Presbyterian Mission Yearbook* is available at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/yearbook>

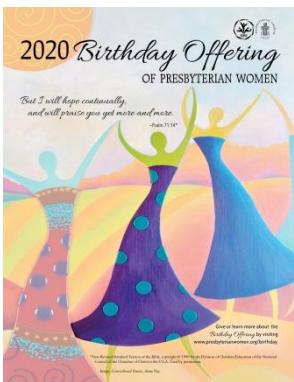


## **“CULTIVATING PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN” PW’S ANNUAL FUND, THE MISSION PLEDGE**

“Cultivating Presbyterian Women” is the theme of the 2020 PW’s Annual Fund, the Mission Pledge. This fund supports in full or in part just about every PW ministry, *Horizons* magazine and Bible studies, and Fellowship of the Least Coin, World Day of Prayer, to name a few. During 2020 to date, the PW groups in the local churches pledged a total of \$4,065 to the PW Annual Fund (\$3,131 to PW Churchwide Mission, \$178 to PW in Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and \$755 to PW in Presbytery of Missouri River Valley). It’s not too late to donate or pledge. Checks should be payable to PW in the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley (indicate specific purpose on “memo line”) and given to your church’s PW Treasurer or mailed to me.



### **BIRTHDAY OFFERING**



The annual Birthday Offering is one of two Presbyterian Women grant programs. It was launched in 1922 to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women’s Auxiliary in the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The Birthday Offering has become an annual tradition and has funded more than 200 mission projects touching the lives of women and children. Information about this year’s recipients may be found on the PW website. Donations may be made through your church’s PW group; by mailing a check payable to PW in the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley to Lois Feddersen, Treasurer; or online at [www.presbyterianwomen.org/give](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/give).

### **THANK OFFERING**

The Thank Offering is the second offering and is received annually in the fall. It gives women a tangible way to express their gratitude for the special blessings in their lives. Thank Offering grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. At least 40% of the offering funds health ministries. The Creative Ministries Offering Committee meets each February to discuss grant applications and select the recipients. Information is usually available in August regarding those selected. The donation procedure is same.



We have attached the forms you can use to submit donations at the end of this newsletter.



Please share this flyer with your PWs. It just came in yesterday from PW Churchwide.



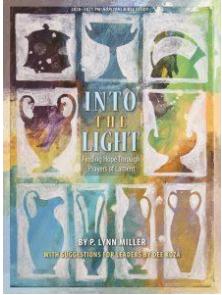
## *You're invited to celebrate . . .* **PW Gives Day—July 31**

July 31 will be celebrated as PW Gives Day—a day to celebrate the many ways that Presbyterian Women give to witness to the promise of God's realm.

- Watch for (and share your!) stories about how, where and why PW gives on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- Send your #PWGives story and photos to [carissa.herold@pcusa.org](mailto:carissa.herold@pcusa.org).
- If you are not already on PW's email list, email [pw\\_pcusa@pcusa.org](mailto:pw_pcusa@pcusa.org) to be added to the list and receive information about this day (and other PW programs)!
- Pray for PW as we bring the light of God's love to a world in need of care and hope.

### **How to Give**

- Give on line at [www.presbyterianwomen.org/give](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/give). Then select **PW Gives Day** and your gift amount. Select a gift of \$10 or more (and add a bit extra for a transaction fee). Please scroll and type **PWGDAY20** in the comments box as well as your church and presbytery (or synod) information.
- Contact Carissa Herold by phone (844/PW-PCUSA, ext. 5322) or email [carissa.herold@pcusa.org](mailto:carissa.herold@pcusa.org).
- Mail your gift to Presbyterian Women Inc., PO Box 643652, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3652. Please indicate annual fund and **PWGDAY20** in the memo line of your check.



This year's Horizon Bible Study is:

**Into the light, Finding Hope through Prayers of Lament by Lynn Miller**  
**Here is an introduction by Lynn Miller to this year's Bible study:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwExYuUHAQ8>

It will be a very timely study of the Book of Lamentations. Kathleen will have on line study available in the fall, and will send out notices for that.

## Mission Project: What's in the Bag?

**Days for Girls** is an international organization that provides feminine hygiene kits (Bags) to girls who do not have access to menstrual supplies for their periods. The Bag contains reusable supplies that can last 2-3 or more years, which allows girls to attend school and play sports. Attending school during their period allows them to position themselves **to make higher wages and obtain better jobs and raise themselves out of poverty.**

**Each kit contains:**

**1 colorful carrying bag** for all their menstrual supplies and attached ribbons to be able to carry it like a backpack,

**2 pair of panties,**

**2 Shields** that snap onto their panties and contain a moisture barrier,

**8 liners** that fold into reusable pads made of very soft cotton, that fit into the shields,

**1 washcloth,**

**1 hotel size soap,**

**1 small chart** to record their periods.

For information about Days for Girls go to [daysforgirls.org](http://daysforgirls.org) or for other questions call Ruth Murray at 712-482-3298.

My team called "Sewers in His Name" are Kathleen Keefer, Lu Potter, Linda Harrill, and Eileen Adickes. We are currently working to provide 150 girls with bags in Uganda:)



## What's happening on your side of the Pond (Missouri River that is!)?

Responses to email request to share what your PW is doing during the Pandemic.

**WOW and THANK YOU to those of you who had the time to respond!**

Sue Perry from **Bethany Presbyterian in Council Bluffs** said their PW has made over 1000 masks at last count!!!

Kathy Brandon's PW is

Donating to the local food pantry.

Marie Browning for (Oakland Sharon Presbyterian and Carson Presbyterian churches in Iowa) **Riverside Presbyterian Parish** PW mentioned several projects that they are working on individually or together.

Baby afghans,

Plastic mats for the homeless.

Days for Girls project for Uganda,

Volunteering at the local food pantry in Oakland,

In addition, attending nightly prayer meetings with their pastor, online.

JoAn Ferguson/Carol Huffman, co -moderators from **Peace Presbyterian Church in Elkhorn, NE** reported on what their PW has been doing.

Made 500 masks and *still taking orders*,

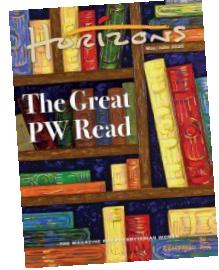
Initiated a cereal drive for Open Door Mission in Elkhorn and collected 208 boxes,

Provided bags of food to Channel 6 food drive to "Stuff the Bus" for St Vincent De Paul food pantry,

Quilters are making quilts for all graduating seniors in high school and college!

If you did not have the time to respond or did not receive my email request, please be sure to update your information with: **your name, moderator's name, contact information – email or snailmail address, name of your church, city and state and a subject line of "2020 PW information"** to help me make updates. Email me, Ruth Murray at [dave4ruth@futurelk.com](mailto:dave4ruth@futurelk.com). Ruth is serving on the coordinating team committees Together in Service/Justice and Peace. Thank you:)

**Horizons Magazine** is the one magazine I read from cover to cover. It is actually the only magazine that holds my interest from start to finish. With your subscription, you will get 6 issues, one every two months plus access to a digital copy – so easy to read on your reader, kindle, nook, smart phone!! You will also receive the Horizon Bible Study book for the year as part of your subscription, a \$10 value. Each edition has stories of faithful women, a short bible study on the theme of each issue, and ideas for mission and outreach. There are book reviews, and ways to help you develop a deeper relationship with God and others.



This current issue (May/June) is called, “The Great PW Read” and is jammed with book reviews, book club ideas and stories, a story about children’s literacy (May is Children’s Literacy Month) and a nice list of new children’s book. There is an article about how Zoom is transforming how we meet and engage with each other, the mission work of one congregation and the impact that one church has on the world.

Horizon is the magazine by and for Presbyterian Women. If you have not subscribed to Horizon’s Magazine, please think about it. It is a wonderful addition to your spiritual journey and your life as a PW.

#### Print Edition Terms

	United States	International
1 Year (6 issues)	\$24.95	\$34.952
Year (12 issues) You save 12%	\$44.00	\$64.00
3 Year (18 issues) You save 16%	\$63.00	\$93.00
Digital Edition Terms		
1 Year (6 issues) You save 40% (And trees- go green)	\$15.00	\$15.00

## MUST SEE MOVIES: JUST MERCY

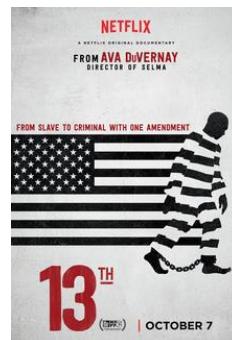


“Just Mercy”, a 2019 American legal drama film directed by Destin Daniel Cretton is based on the true story written by Bryan Stevenson, Just Mercy, A Story of Justice and Redemption. Bryan, portrayed in the movie by Michael B. Jordan is an idealistic young Harvard law graduate who travels to Alabama in 1989 hoping to fight for poor people who cannot afford proper legal representation. Teaming with Eva Ansley, he founds the Equal Justice Initiative and goes to the prison to visit the death row inmates there. The main focus of the movie is the case of Walter McMillian wonderfully played by Jaimie Foxx, a Black man convicted of the murder of a white woman. The evidence that convicted him was flimsy at best and we are able to see the deeply imbedded racism in the criminal justice system at work in Alabama. This is a MUST see if you are following the current protests and unrest in our country, to give you a better understanding of the plight of our Black brothers and sisters. It is free during June on Amazon Video.

## 13<sup>TH</sup>

13th was written by Ava DuVernay and Spencer Averick. The title refers to the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution. Section 1 of the amendment reads, “*Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States.*”

The Thirteenth Amendment was adopted in 1865 to abolish slavery (with that oh-so-significant qualifier) ‘except as a punishment for conviction of a crime...’ What’s wrong with that you ask? Well, for example, what if no one will hire you and it’s a crime to be unemployed? What if it’s a crime to smile at a white woman? What if it’s a crime to walk into a store or a school or sit down in the front of the bus? Bingo! Welcome back to the new free slave labor force.



DuVerney explores the history of racial inequality and the criminal justice system, focusing on our nation’s prisons which are disproportionately filled with African Americans. She makes an effective case that the racial injustice from the beginning and mass incarceration occurring now in the United States is and always has been an extension of slavery.

**Friday Film Review by Barb Bretz**

## **PW Synod sponsored, Racial Justice Challenge**

What can we do in response to the racism that exists across the U.S. and in our communities? There is a growing awareness among Presbyterians that racism is a crisis and must be addressed. The PC(USA) and PW in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies are strongly committed to the struggle for racial justice. PW in our Synod believes that it begins with education and dialog.

You are invited to begin to dismantle structural racism through your participation in the "*Racial Justice Challenge*". This "*Racial Justice Challenge*" will help raise awareness about the perniciousness of racism and encourage action in response to that awareness. Through discussions surrounding the PC(USA)'s anti-racism policy, scripture and a variety of other resources, participants may develop an increased understanding of how racism is systemic rather than simply personal.

This study is open to women and men across the synod. It will meet for six-sessions on Mondays, beginning June 29 and ending August 31. There are two sessions offered each time, 1:30-2:30 PM (Central Time) or 6:30-7:30 PM (Central Time). There is no cost involved, yet you must register to participate via Zoom.

To register, email your name, presbytery, email address, phone number and preference for afternoon or evening participation to Marilyn Stone at [mmstone52@att.net](mailto:mmstone52@att.net).

Please use the attached flyer to promote this study throughout your presbytery and in your congregations.

Kathleen Keefer and Marilyn Stone

NOW MORE THAN EVER...

PW in the Synod of the Lakes & Prairies presents:

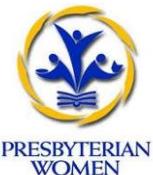
Beginning to Dismantle Structural Racism

Through the...



# Racial Justice Challenge

"Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings, for it says that some are less than others. It is also a lie about God, for it falsely claims that God favors parts of creation over the entirety of creation. " PC(USA) anti-racism policy



The study is free to all men and women who wish to participate via ZOOM. We will be meeting on the following days: June 29, July 13, July 27, August 3, August 24, and August 31.



Sessions are offered at either a 1:30 – 2:30 PM (Central Time) or a 6:30-7:30 PM (Central Time) timeframe.

You don't need to be present at all sessions. Check your calendars and send an email to: Marilyn Stone at: [mmstone52@att.net](mailto:mmstone52@att.net) Include in your email: your name, presbytery, email address and cell phone number (so we can text you information if needed) You must be registered to receive the ZOOM invitation.

Co-facilitators: Kathleen Keefer and Marilyn Stone



**Along the same lines, if you haven't watched these short videos on YouTube they are must see. Emmanuel Acho having "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" There are three of them so far each about 10 minutes long. They really helped me see where I stand, I hope they help you too!!**

Episode 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8jUA7JBkF4&t=344s>

Episode 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwiY4i8xWIc>

Episode 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfo1XJDJKSU>

## The Book Shelf:

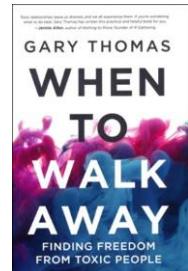
### Living in a World that's Toxic by Dawn Goodsell

We can all agree that there is a lot of negativity in the World right now. As Christians, we are taught that we are supposed to show grace and mercy to others, but just how far do we have to go? Many times in the Bible, Jesus chose to walk away from nonbeliever who were toxic in order to spend more time with the people who were in need of help.

Toxic people come in many types. A person who is a bully or strong willed can be a toxic person. A person who undermines others to get their way could be a toxic person. Many times we tend to turn the other cheek when people treat us or others with disrespect. We sometimes forget that we have choices as to whether to put up with the person or situation or to simply walk away. God wants us to be happy and take care of ourselves. In times of negativity and turmoil, simply remember that Jesus too had to walk away. (Reading: Matthew 9: 24-25)

Things to Remember:

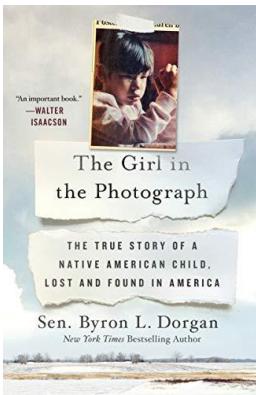
- Toxic people can stir the pot and then walk away
- Toxic people have strong opinions and are not willing to listen to others point of view
- Toxic people can be controlling and can stop you from reaching your full potential
- Toxic people can put you down in order to make themselves feel better.
- For more information on how to deal with toxic people, check out the following book and study guide:



(Thomas, 2019)

Thomas, G. (2019). *When to Walk Away*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Stay tuned for more insight into dealing with toxic people.

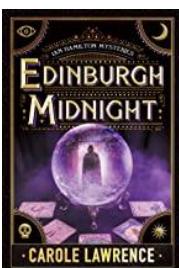
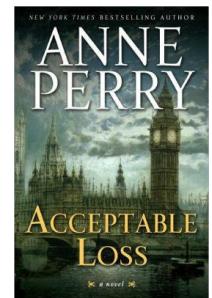


The Synod of the Lakes and Prairies Native American Concerns Committee hosted a book study on this book. It is an eye-opening story of the treatment of Native American people in a land that was once theirs.

**Through the story of Tamara, an abused Native American child, North Dakota Senator Byron Dorgan describes the plight of many children living on reservations—and offers hope for the future.** This book is her story, from childhood to the present, but it's also the story of a people and a nation. More than one in three American Indian/Alaskan Native children live in poverty. AI/AN children are disproportionately in foster care and awaiting adoption. Suicide among AI/AN youth ages 15 to 24 is 2.5 times the national rate. How has America allowed this to happen?

As distressing a situation as it is, this is also a story of hope and resilience. Dorgan, who founded the Center for Native American Youth (CNAY) at the Aspen Institute, has worked tirelessly to bring Native youth voices to the forefront of policy discussions, engage Native youth in leadership and advocacy, and secure and share resources for Native youth. You will fall in love with this heartbreakingly beautiful story, but end the book knowing what can be done and what you can do. (From Amazon.com)

**What's on your nightstand?** We all have those favorite authors or favorite genres. I seem to go through waves of reading mysteries or fantasies. My favorite mystery writers are Anne Perry and Carole Lawrence. Anne Perry is an English author who is currently residing in the US. Her books are just so engaging and charming! William Monk is a detective, sometimes working with a police department and sometimes as a private investigator, who lives in London in the mid-1850's. The stories are full of British history that I have not been familiar with that I have looked at more deeply, such as the Crimean War and the Opium War. (These do not shed a very positive light on the British!) The second series, which she writes concurrently, is the Thomas and Charlotte Pitt series, 35 books in all! Thomas, with help of his wife Charlotte (and some other adorable relatives) solve many crimes in London at the turn of the century. Through the series, Thomas is promoted (and demoted) and finally becomes the head of "Special Branch" and is charge of the security of the entire country during those turbulent times in mainland Europe. She has a few other series, a World War 1 series, Daniel Pitt series (he is the son of Thomas and Charlotte) and a brand new series featuring a woman detective, Elena Standish. I have not read any of these.



Carole Lawrence is an American author, playwright and musician who has a series featuring a young Scot, Ian Hamilton. Hamilton is a detective on the Edinburgh police force in the late 1800's and he runs into some very interesting historical characters in his work. Most noted was a young medical student by the name of Arthur Doyle, who is very taken with Ian's keen sense of observation. Hmmmm...

If you are looking for a good mystery set in historical Great Britain, give these a try. Next issue, tell me **what's on your nightstand?**

For our next issue, we would like to hear from you. What mission projects are you involved in? What are you finding meaningful during this time of "physical distancing?" What are you looking forward to? What's on your nightstand? Are you meeting with other PWs? Need someone to talk to? We are all here for you!! We are "better together."

Kathleen Keefer, Moderator of PWP. [klkeefer@mail.com](mailto:klkeefer@mail.com) Lois Feddersen, Treasurer [lefeddersen@cox.net](mailto:lefeddersen@cox.net) Sue Perry, Mission Yearbook, [mikeandsue13cb@hotmail.com](mailto:mikeandsue13cb@hotmail.com) Dawn Goodsell, [dmgoodsell1@mccneb.edu](mailto:dmgoodsell1@mccneb.edu)



**Presbyterian Women's Mission Pledge (PW's Annual Fund)**  
**PW in the Congregation Pledge Form**  
**January 1, 2020- December 31, 2020**

*As Presbyterian Women, we make the following pledge to support the mission of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery, Presbyterian Women in the Synod, and Presbyterian Women at the churchwide level, as well as the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*

## **Amount of Mission Pledge, PW's Annual Fund**

Please indicate below the amount pledged to PW at each level.

- To support the mission of **Presbyterian** Women 75% \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - To support the work of Presbyterian Women in the Synod 5% \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - To support the work of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery 20% \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Mission Pledge from PW in the Congregation 100% \$6

Name of Congregation

Signature of the moderator of Presbyterian Women \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

### **Deadlines:**

This Mission Pledge form should be completed and sent to the treasurer of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery no later than \_\_\_\_\_ . Send all quarterly payments of this pledge to the **treasurer of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery by March 10, June 10, September 10, and December 10, 2020.**

## **Instructions:**

- Instructions:**

  1. Enter the pledge amount for support of Presbyterian Women at the churchwide level (including support of the mission of the church worldwide).
  2. Enter the amount of support for Presbyterian Women at each level, as requested by your PW in the Presbytery and PW in the Synod.
  3. Keep a copy of this form for your records and send the original to the person indicated below.

**Send completed form to:**

**Lois E. Feddersen, Treasurer  
11635 Douglas Street  
Omaha, NE 68154-3128**

lefeddersen@cox.net  
Home (402) 333-6452  
Cell: (402) 250-6485