



The Sower

*Newsletter for the Presbyterian Women in
the Synod of Lakes & Prairies*

January 2015

Editor: Karen Bartel

SPECIAL ATTENTION PROJECT!!!

The Red Hand Project – Karen Bradway – East Iowa

On January 11th, I went to a mini-conference on human trafficking on a Sunday afternoon in Davenport, and the first speaker was Rev Mark Koenig, who is the Director of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations - an office I had no idea existed but is a member of the Human Trafficking Roundtable. His office is chiefly concerned with ending child soldiering at the international level.

After his talk, I went to his table to pick some informational materials. I found an info sheet on the Red Hand Project. On Feb 12, 2002, the UN passed an international treaty dealing with protection of children and including a ban on the use of children as child soldiers (defined as taking children involuntarily from their homes to support an armed force in any capacity (cook, soldier, messenger, sex slave, etc.). More than 50 nations have not yet ratified the treaty. The Red Hand Project in an international effort to persuade those nations to sign the treaty.

To participate in the Red Hand Project, a person simply draws/paints/colors a red hand on paper, writes a message as to why children should not be soldiers, and sends the paper to the Presbyterian Ministry at the UN. On February 12 (anniversary of passing the treaty) the office will deliver all the red hands to the reps of the nations that have not signed the treaty.

Editor's note: Since there's so little time to February 12th, gather and send your Red Hands directly to: Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, 777 UN Plaza 7th Floor, New York, NY 10017

Correction!!!

Please remember the due dates for all PWP Annual Reports: Mission,
Historian & Social Justice

All are due to the PWS contacts on the report forms by
March 31, 2015

The PWC Reports are due to PWP contacts by January 31.
It's time to get your Pledges in as well.

Presbytery Highlights

from Homestead Presbytery Joie Taylor

I walked into the First Presbyterian Church in Wahoo, Nebraska, for our Fall Gathering, and was met by Rev. Jane Ellefson who said, "I have a surprise for you. Seth is here." I was ecstatic. I had asked Jane to talk about some of her missionary experiences in Ghana and to include the Shepherd Centres (Ghana uses the British spelling) which The Rev. Dr. Seth Agidi developed as his Doctoral thesis. The women of Homestead Presbytery were enthusiastic in hearing his experiences in setting up over 100 centres in Ghana.

The key to success, Seth felt, was the fact he and his team talk with the people in the community to find out what they need and want rather than imposing one format on everyone. These Centres fill a need created because many of the younger generation are leaving home to work rather than taking care of the grandparents. With the Shepherd Centres the elderly now have a place to gather, fellowship, dance, have a meal, do art work, and worship.

Presbytery of Northern Plain Bdecan Ministry Team and Northern Plains PWP's partnership with Bdecan Presbyterian Church, Tokio, ND Donna Preston

For 4 ½ years the Presbytery of Northern Plains' Bdecan Ministry Team has been in partnership with the Bdecan Presbyterian Church at Tokio, ND (Bdecan is part of the Dakota Presbytery) doing ministry on the Spirit Lake Reservation. Since many members of the Ministry Team are also very active PW members both in their local churches and at Presbytery level, PWP has also played a major role in the ministry too. Both groups support the Youth and Outreach position at Bdecan financially. In 2013, Joe Obermeyer was hired for this position. His main responsibilities consist of running both children and youth ministry programs, supervising the Food Pantry and Clothing Closet at Bdecan, oversees mission teams who volunteer at Bdecan, maintains Bdecan's website, <http://www.bdecanpresbyterianchurch.org/>, and writes a monthly newsletter.

About 2/3's of the salary of the Youth and Outreach Coordinator's position is paid by Westminster Presbyterian Church of Alexandria, VA; who has had a long standing relationship with Bdecan and wanted to help grow the ministry on Spirit Lake Reservation. The Ministry Team has had to raise the other 1/3 of the salary. PWP and local PW's have really stepped up to the plate to help with this effort. This past summer, Hunter, ND PW challenged all PW's, individuals, and congregations within Northern Plains to meet their donation of \$1000 in order to maintain the salary for the Youth and Outreach Coordinator's position, and if they couldn't give that much to remember the Least Coin that many small amounts would equal a large amount. Their challenge was fashioned around the Ice Bucket challenge without the ice. Many PWs, churches, and individuals have stepped forward and are giving generously.

In the past year, many PW's have been making shirts and shorts for the children at Spirit Lake which was started by elder PW member from the Wilton, ND congregation. These have clothed many children. Both last winter and this winter, people have donated winter wear and have clothed about 100 children from the Woodlake District (1 of the 4 districts of the Reservation and this district is where Bdecan is located) with coats, boots, snowpants, hats, gloves, and scarves. Backpacks have also been collected in late summer for the children to have to be able to go to school. Gently used clothing for children and adults are donated regularly for the clothing closet located in the Food Pantry next to the Bdecan Church. The Food Pantry and Clothing Closet are open 1 Thursday a month, usually the 3rd Thursday to help families have food for the remainder of the month.

I encourage you to take a look at the website and newsletter (link is on the website) to see how God is working in marvelous ways at Bdecan Presbyterian Church.

Updates from Churchwide Coordinating Team (CW CT) Kay Olson, Synod Rep to CW CT

As a member on the Leadership Enhancement Committee (LEC), we have a couple of projects I would like your input on.

1. LEC wants to develop a leadership link on the web called "Have You Tried This?" If your PW has had success with a local mission effort, would you share with me and maybe it will get posted on the web. Write a brief overview of your successful efforts and send it to me. (dkolson@sio.midco.net or 3901 Spencer Blvd, Sioux Falls, SD 57103)

Don't worry how well your story is written because Churchwide has staff that can put the best spin on it. We just need the basic story and contact information if there are questions.

LEC wants to use social media to share suggestions from one PW group that can be used by other PW groups.

2. Revise 2013 PW Manual.

If you have referred to portions of the 2013 PW Manual, do you have comments to share on any of the sections? Any changes you would suggest? I would appreciate hearing any suggestions you have.

The PW Manual is meant to be a "guideline". Some view it as a policy manual and all PW groups must follow the manual. This is not how it is intended. A revision is planned after the 2015 Churchwide Gathering to update and modernize the manual.

USA Mission Experience 2016 will visit Bay Area. Interested in representing our Synod? Be watching for more information so you can apply!

All aboard the PW BUS!!



To ANYONE interested in spending a fun-filled, spirit-reviving, yummy and friend-making few days:

Homestead Presbyterian Women is 'filling the bus' to Churchwide Gathering in Minneapolis June 18-21, 2015. ALL are welcome to board!

Churchwide Gathering theme is: One Body, One Spirit
Registration opens: January 25, 2015 at
homesteadpres.org **{Registration is now open!!!}**

Maggie Horak has joined Minnie the Moose (the Gathering's official moose-cot) to gather us together & make a multitude of Minneapolis memories.

Costs:

\$169 (plus tax) Room for up to 4 people/per room/per night

\$395 Full Conference Registration/

\$120 Bus Transportation from Good Shepherd Parking lot to Conference door!

Invitations have been sent to Central Nebraska Presbytery and Missouri River Presbytery (with a pick up site at Church of the Master, Omaha, NE)

There's only 56 seats available. Make plans to get your registration early!

If you have any questions, give Maggie Horak a call (402-489-5781, 5 - 8 p.m.) or email mmhlin@msn.com

Book Reviews from Helen McMasters

“A Week from Next Tuesday: Joy Keeps Showing Up“ (Because Christ Keeps Showing Up)
by Matthew Rich, Thomas W Currie III

Do you know what will happen a week from next Tuesday? It may turn out to be an ordinary day – or – something extraordinary may happen to surprise you. This book invites you to receive the gift of JOTY as you begin to recognize Christ’s presence in the ordinary, tragic, and surprising moments of your life. A good book for personal reflection or for group discussion.

“Year of Plenty” by Craig L Goodwin

Faced with the realization that they had been caught the typical American frenzy of the Christmas season, the pastor, his wife and two young girls embarked on a year of making all consumer use a conscious decision, consuming only what was local, used, homegrown, or homemade. This is not the typical family choosing to recycle or just simplify their lives. Just as Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty interpreted Paul’s Second letter to the Corinthian as a guide to better stewardship of creation, so to Goodwin intertwines their stewardship as an interpretation of the message of the Scriptures. Theirs was not a casual observance of stewardship but one made of in-depth care of the environment.

Triennial Global Exchange - Denise England

November 4 – 19, 2014, twenty-five Presbyterian Women from all over the United States and several Caribbean Islands participated in our Triennial Global Exchange. We all travelled separately to Jamaica, where we spent several days getting acquainted, learning about Caribbean history and cultures, and orienting to our expectations and plans for the journey. CANACOM (Caribbean North America Council for Mission) hosted the Global Exchange. After our brief time in Jamaica, we split into three smaller groups for travel to the Dominican Republic, Curacao, or Guyana.



Our purpose was to learn about domestic abuse and human trafficking issues in the Caribbean and see how organizations and churches were working against these issues. Each group spent six days visiting local communities within their host country. Friendships and admiration of the work being done was quick to develop. Our last three days were spent as one large group in Jamaica sharing stories, processing what we saw and heard, and organizing our journey so we could share it with Presbyterian Women in our home Synods. Contact Denise England to schedule a presentation. E-mail address is deniseengland@mchsi.com or phone 515/802-1173.

OPPORTUNITY!!!!

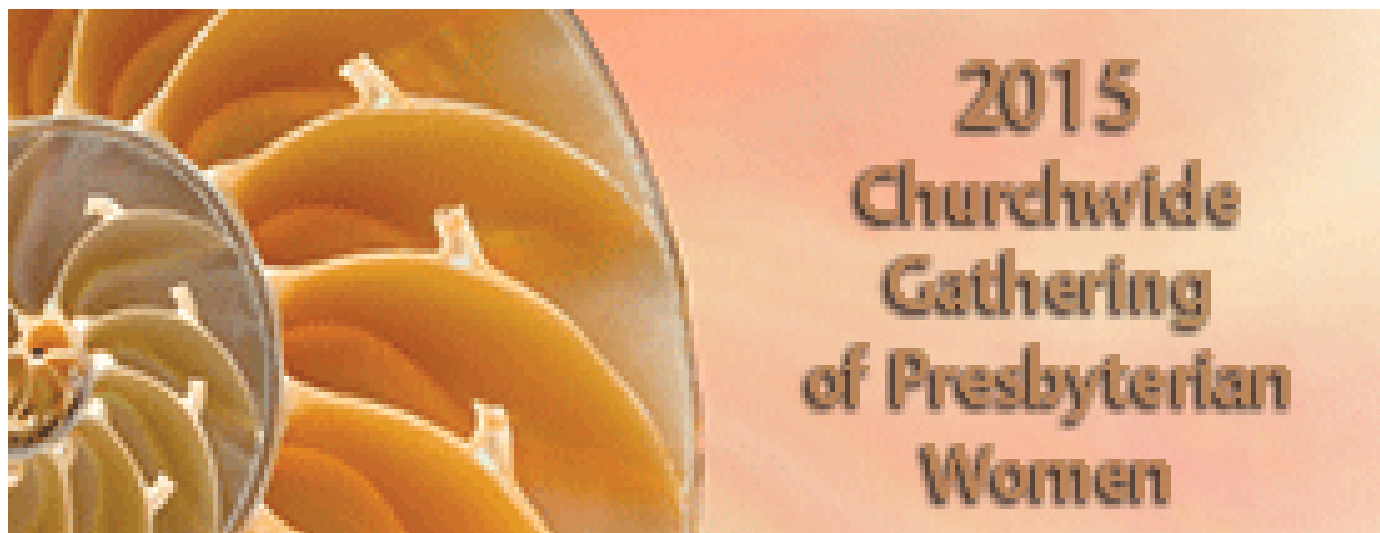
146 volunteers are needed for the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women June 18-21` in Minneapolis. There is now a website one can go to to see what the volunteer opportunities are and to sign up. It is pwsignup.com Please make this information available to women in your presbytery and encourage attendees to volunteer. If one has questions, contact Belinda Breit, volunteer coordinator, at belinda.breit@comcast.net

Food for Thought

Top Ten Reasons to Become Involved in Presbyterian Women PW Manual 2012

1. Use your time in meaningful ways
- 2 Meet new people and make new friends
3. Give direction to the future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
4. Learn marketable skills, gain valuable experiences and share these with others
5. Transfer your Christian belief into action
6. Discover new outlets for creative expression and feel a sense of accomplishment
7. Gain a sense of making a contribution to the lives of others
8. Enjoy the fellowship and fun of working with others for a common purpose
9. Grow and develop personally as a Christian woman and disciple of Christ
10. Be challenged by Christ's call to be servant leaders.

2015 Churchwide Gathering



Registration for the 2015 PW Churchwide Gathering is open!

(We are using the PC(USA) event registration system, so if you've registered online for national events—like the General Assembly, Big Tent, or the 2012 CWG—you already have an account username and password. Once logged in, there will be a list of your past conferences. You may need to return to this page to get a fresh link to the 2015 Churchwide Gathering sign-up. If this is your first event, all you need is an email address; then you'll pick a username and password and off you go!)

All roads lead to Minneapolis for the 2015 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women, June 18–21! Turn on your GPS, turn off your hectic schedule and follow Minnie the Moose (the 2015 CWG moose-cot) to the lovely Hyatt Regency Minneapolis for days of worship, fun, fellowship, connection and spiritual uplift! The theme of the Gathering is “One Body, One Spirit,” based on 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. Registration for the event is just \$395 (less than in 2012!), with hotel rooms at the Hyatt Regency at \$169 per night (up to four guests per room).

Don't forget to sign up for volunteering!!!! at belinda.breit@comcast.net

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2016 Synod Gathering

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**Note: “m” indicates PWP Moderator
“r” stands for PWS Presbytery Representative**

Learn about Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women (PW) is the national women’s organization of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). With more than 300,000 members and 25 years as an organization, PW is organized at all levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Learn more about PW and consider joining your local group. It’s a good read at our website. <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/pw/>

Here is a link to the Who-Ya-Gonna-Call? The Who’s Who at PW National

<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/pw-staff-who-ya-gonna-call/>

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies website,

<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/mid-councils/lakes-prairies/>

“Like” Presbyterian Women of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies on Facebook!!!

“The Sower” publishing dates are January, April, July & October. If you have an article or would like to have an article or information on any particular subject, please send the Editor your article or question by/before the first of each of the above cited months.

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