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OCTOBER 2019
LOUISE VAN POLL
EDITOR

From the Moderator

By Mary Jenner

Thirty-five Presbyterian Women groups are active in the South Dakota Presbytery, always keeping in mind the 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 (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

These groups carry out this creed from the April Spring Gathering through the following April Gathering. The **2020 Spring Gathering** will be **April 25**, at **Emmanuel Presbyterian Church in Marion**. The theme will be: "Who's My Neighbor?"

The current Mission project, the Pathfinder Center in central South Da-

kota, is a focus until next April. So far, about \$1000 has been received. Funds will be sent to the designated mission quarterly so the funds are readily available and can be used as needed.

The PW Coordinating Team was glad to learn of a mission in South Dakota, but needs to consider a mission for 2020-21. Please give ideas to anyone on the coordinating team.

A year from now, **Sept. 25-26, 2020**, PW has scheduled a **Faithful Women Fall Retreat**. It will be held at the **Crossroads Hotel & Convention Center in Huron**. Registration will be from 2 to 3 p.m. Friday afternoon. A meal and evening session will complete the day. After a continental breakfast, the morning session and noon meal follows. After a closing session, guests will head home, about 2 or 3 p.m. More details will be given to PW's later.

PW operates on a three-year cycle. One year(2018) a Churchwide Gathering is held. The next year (2019) there is a Synod Gathering (this past summer in Ames, Iowa, where 11 from SD Presbytery attended). The third year (2020) there is a fall retreat in each Presbytery. (See previous paragraph.)

*Remember to send all address changes and other Prairie Wind communication to Louise Van Poll, editor, at:
pwsdpw@outlook.com.*



Mary Jenner, moderator, prepares for a plenary session.

"And what city might be next? It sounds like many have the same failing infrastructure and budget shortfalls that pushed Flint to disaster "

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Out of the Believer's Heart

By Louise Van Poll, Editor

I was excited to be part of the Synod Gathering in Ames, Iowa, in June. Out of the believer's heart shall flow streams of living water.

The plenary sessions, worship leaders and keynotes speakers were all excellent, as were the variety of resource tables and the hands-on mission project. New at this Gathering was Bejeweled, a chance for all of us to bring a scarf or jewelry item and take another for a donation. We raised a lot of money and proved the adage that one person's junk is another's treasure.

I attended six workshops and all of them were well presented and informative. Most of the workshops were hard-hitting, delve-deep topics that required a lot of thought and processing.

One of those was on immigration and the appalling conditions of the detention centers scattered throughout the country. Almost every state has at least one of these 500 for-profit centers that do not care about the welfare of the detainees, only about the bottom line and showing a profit. Many of these detainees have no legal representation or access to the outside world as they await their hearings. Some have been locked up for years although they have never been accused or convicted of any crime.

Our own Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Web site has resources available for any church or individual who wants to research this further. Three of the videos produced by the PDA are "A Tradition of Welcome," "Locked in a Box,"



Gateway Inn lobby

and "Breathe Free." All are excellent. As Presbyterians, we choose to welcome the stranger, just as Jesus did. Just as Jesus commands us. The Web site also includes information on 10 ways your church can become involved.

I also had the opportunity to preview another Presbyterian film about the water crisis in Flint, Mich. To see how a few bad decisions could lead to such pain, death and devastation was shocking. Although I had followed this breaking story in the news, watching real people describe their health issues and suffering put a face to the calamity. I wonder if this documentary will ever be aired or if it will be suppressed and buried.

I want to check on my city's water quality and my own tap water. And what city might be next? It sounds like many

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Louise Van Poll at Reiman Gardens in Ames, Iowa.

Focus on Mission

From Margaret Ellefson, Mission-Justice-Peace

On Thursday evening, Oct. 17, on SD Public Broadcasting, **Dakota Focus** is on at 8 p.m. Central time. The subject of this particular program is Human Trafficking and should be of interest to all of us.

As we focus on this year's Mission project, the Pathfinder center, we are supporting a program that helps trafficked women find their way back to life.

Here are references to use for more information:

*On facebook - Wiconi Wawokiya, INC (Helping Families)

<https://www.pathfindercenter.org/>

*This is the original Argus Leader article that made our Oahe Presbyterian PW aware of a need in South Dakota: <https://www.argusleader.com/story/news/business-journal/2018/11/16/south-dakota-pheasant-hunting-season-sex-trafficking-strip-clubs-frank-days/1947984002/>

*This gives more information about the Pathfinder Center: <https://www.argusleader.com/story/news/2016/11/13/pathfinder-center-new-home-human-trafficking-victims/93656122/>

Heart from Page 2

have the same failing infrastructure and budget shortfalls that pushed Flint to disaster. And one of the enduring, sad realities is that the poor and the minorities are still stuck and suffering because they do not have the resources to leave.

Which tied in with another workshop I attended on racism in America and how it is alive and thriving everywhere. It was a study on the book "Waking up White," and led for some very lively discussion. Most could see and understand how white privilege has helped them, but there were a few women who refused to see how people of color learn to live in our world. It was very eye-opening. Although I had a hard time relating to the author, I do recommend this book as a great way to see race from a different perspective.

Next I attended a workshop on leadership. As a church, we strive to grow in our spirituality, hospitality and mission and leadership is the glue that holds it all together. The first thing we were told is that we must lead ourselves before we can lead others. To do that, we must focus on three goals:

1. Model the behavior of a leader. This has to do with expectations and accountability.
2. Focus on what is most important: your values. Beliefs may change over time, but values do not.

3. Equip others for the task you are asking them to undertake. Mentor and teach them. It is not enough that you believe they are capable, they need to feel and think that they are equipped and ready.

I also attended a leader's guide for presenting next fall's PW Bible study, "Love Carved in Stone." Eugenia Gamble is quick to point out that these are never called commandments in the Old Testament, but instead are referred to as 'Words.' And each Word from God is meant to heal a wound in our life. For example, the first Word, "I am the Lord your God," will help us overcome the loneliness that comes from our separation from God.

We received some great tips and helpful advice along with some resources. We all left excited for fall to come and the opportunity to become acquainted once again with the 10 Words, carved in stone and given in love.

And my last workshop was strictly for me. How to take better photos with your cell phone. I was doing really well for several weeks, and then suddenly my phone settings changed and now I'm back to hit and miss again.

I hope each church will encourage Gathering participants to share their own experiences with their local PW groups, for out of the believer's heart shall flow streams of living water.

Who needs PW?

From Dianne Boatright, Spiritual Growth

Excerpts from an article titled "Who needs PW?" in Horizons July/August edition by Cheri Harper, PW Missions associate.

Why are women's groups important to you?

1. Women still need each other. It is in and through a women's organization that we can gain awareness of our sisters' struggles and join forces to improve lives.
2. Women's groups are where we work together to respond to issues that impact any member of the body of Christ from disaster response to racial equality, from supporting literacy to ending mass incarceration.

Embodied love – The personal connections within a women's organization are what we rely on to help us celebrate our life's joys and push through the struggles. We find ourselves fractured by work, family, and life's obligations, we need a circle that will draw us back together, help us forge tighter bonds of community and remind us of God's enduring love.

Finally, as children of God, women continue to need an organization that will speak to our unique relationship with our Creator. We need a place that helps us remember we belong to God and to one another. We need a place that reminds us of our gifts and helps us develop them for the good of all. We need a place that prioritizes community, and helps us walk in solidarity with those who are not as fortunate. All of this, and more, is what PW offers me and you.

As a personal note, I look forward to getting together with my PW sisters the 3rd Thursday each month and go to the gatherings we have during the year at First Presbyterian in Sioux Falls. Being retired with a winter home in Arkansas, I can look forward to meeting with my sisters in Christ at Faith Presbyterian, Horseshoe Bend, Arkansas the second Thursday of the month. There is so much good that comes from PW in its individual parts and as a whole. It's exciting! Thank God for putting women in a place of leadership. Let's keep the good that we do in the light that has been given through Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Dear Lord, be with us as we go home to lead our PW sisters to do good in this world. We think it isn't much but every little bit we do is making changes for the good. Give us safe travel until we meet again. Amen

"The personal connections within a women's organization are what we rely on to help us celebrate our life's joys and push through the struggles."

PofSD news



Louise Van Poll

The POSD recently hired me to fill the Communicator position. My name is Louise Van Poll and among other things, I will be the editor of the New Song.

I am a member of First Presbyterian in Hu-

ron, where I am active as an elder and am currently enrolled in CRE training.

I am active in PW, both in my local church and at the Presbytery level serving on the Coordinating Team.

I am a PDA certified Disaster Preparedness Trainer. I am available to visit your congregation to help you become better prepared to cope with a disaster.

I look forward to hearing news from around the state and sharing the good, the sad and the wonderful with all our members. I am thankful for this new opportunity to serve and I know I will enjoy this position.

Remember,
whenever you're in a position to help someone,
be glad and always do it,
because that's GOD answering someone else's prayer,
through you.

Synod Gathering



Presbytery of South Dakota delegation: Mary Jenner, Trudi Nelson, Pat Boelman, Linda Barnett, Lois Stanfield, Margaret Ellefson, Judy Rops, Diane Helin, Louise Van Poll, Vicky Wahl and Dianne Boatright.



Above: Judy assembles some kits.
Right: Dianne donates some sewing time.



Hands-on project

Days for Girls is a global movement that prepares and distributes sustainable menstrual health solutions to girls who would otherwise miss school during their monthly periods.

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