

# **The Messenger**

## **February 2021**

*Message from Moderator, Sandra Wharton*

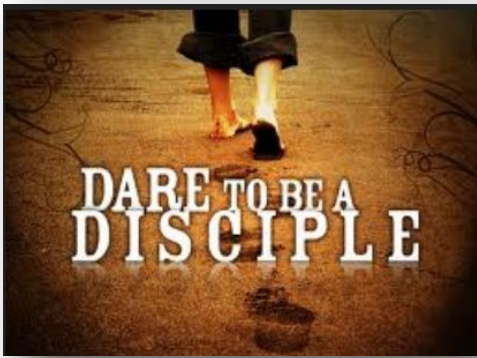
Two years ago when Kay Sanchez, Search Committee Chair, asked me to accept the nomination for Moderator-Elect, I was reluctant to give her an answer. I usually like to give decisions such as this considerable thought and prayer before giving a “yes” or “no” response; however, there was little time before our Gathering and so I said “yes”. *After all, who could say “no” to Kay Sanchez!* Nevertheless, I thought about it constantly and prayed continually each day before the Gathering. After the Gathering, I felt confident about my commitment to serve. What made me come to that conclusion? The hymn sung during our worship service, “Here I Am, Lord”. These words went over and over in my mind.

*Here I am, Lord  
Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night  
I will go, Lord  
If You lead me  
I will hold Your people in my heart*

I had to believe that God was sending a message that He would be with me on this journey. He will lead us and I will hold our Presbyterian Women in my heart.

The past year has been extremely difficult for ALL people but if there is one thing I know, Presbyterian Women have extreme courage and strength—our faith will carry us through this time.

Accepting our faith can sometimes seem difficult. Every day God gives us opportunities and sometimes, challenges! He has a plan—but participating in God’s plan involves us becoming daring disciples.



What is a “daring disciple”? It’s someone who follows Jesus in thought, word and deed! God is asking each of us to accept our own individual faith challenges...to make a commitment. As we approach the year ahead, I would ask each of you to step forward and become a daring disciple—don’t be afraid of stepping out of your comfort zone—LISTEN to what God is asking of you, allow the Holy Spirit to guide you and be a daring disciple.

The Spirit gives us the courage to do God’s work. AND, I want us ALL to have a relationship with, and to be a team with the Lord. So when called upon, I hope you will know that God is with us on our journey—a journey of doing God’s will for others.

***SO NOW...“LIFT YOUR HEARTS TO GOD AND BUILD YOUR FAITH”***

Build each other up and encourage other women—help women of all ages reach upward to a deeper relationship with Christ; reach inward to one another in love and fellowship; and reach outward to our community and world in service. Through prayer, Bible study and fellowship, we are nurtured and empowered to be His light as we serve our families, our church and our community.

I am reminded of a wonderful “red haired” lady that I first met in the mid-to-late 1970’s in my church (Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church). Ellen Williams was a feisty little lady and a faithful servant of our Lord. In 1983, she was our Presbytery PW Moderator. I was soaking up everything I could from Ellen to learn about our PW. She taught me so much— she “TOUCHED ME” and she will always have a special place in my heart.

*Think of that special lady in your church that has touched you.*

Today, I am asking you to **“REACH OUT AND TOUCH ONE OTHER WOMAN”** this year to join our PW. Look around your congregation, share Christ’s love and befriend someone— take her to your Bible study or a Gathering. **GO FORTH WITHOUT FEAR AND TRUST IN THE LORD.**



## ***Appreciation***

*From Out-Going Moderator, Barbara Borderieux*

Thank you so much for allowing me to serve as moderator these last two years. It would not have been possible to do the things we have done without your help and God's guidance. It has been a privilege to represent Peace River Presbytery PW on the South Atlantic Synod PW Coordinating Team. I look forward to continuing my involvement with Presbyterian women and to supporting the Peace River PW in the future.

Before I close, I want to extend a big thank you to Kay Sanchez and Nancy Shimandle for their many years of dedicated service as part of our Peace River Coordinating Team. Kay has served faithfully as cluster leader for District 2, and for awhile, for District 1 as well. In addition, she served as the Search Committee Chair.

Nancy Shimandle has served our CT as treasurer for the past five years with honor and dedication. God Bless Kay and Nancy for all their hard work, fellowship and support.



### ***Report on the Peace River Presbytery Annual Gathering***

The 31st Annual Gathering was held on Saturday, February 6, 2021 via Zoom. Thirty Presbyterian Women, representing eleven Peace River Presbytery churches were in attendance.

The Gathering began with the business meeting conducted by Moderator Barbara Borderieux. Barbara acknowledged the two special guests who joined us for the afternoon. Rev. Melana Scruggs, General Presbyter brought greetings from Peace River Presbytery, and Sandra Winslet, Moderator South Atlantic Synod PW would be installing our new officers.

After the budget was read and approved, Barbara presented Spiritual Life Leader, Patti Li with an Honorary Life Membership Award, which Patti graciously accepted "with virtual hugs."

Barbara reminded the group that the Spring Retreat will take place in person at DaySpring Conference Center on Monday, March 8 from 9:00 to 5:00. Registration is \$30 which includes lunch. Barbara reassured everyone that the center has adequate space to allow for social distancing. This year's theme is "Walking with Jesus". As we have in the past, churches are asked to donate a gift basket that will be raffled off at the Gathering. Tentative dates for Help Shop (October 16, 2021), and PRP 32nd Annual Gathering (February 5, 2022), were announced.

Mission Haven, a community owned by Presbyterian Women that affords living accommodations to missionaries and their families upon their return to the States, is celebrating its 70th anniversary with unique weekly fundraisers, reported Barbara.

Kay Sanchez, Cluster Leader District II and Search Committee Chairperson, reported the names of nominees for PRP CT officers for 2-year terms. Sandra Wharton was nominated for Moderator, Barbara Borderieux nominated for Treasurer, and Nancy Varner for Secretary. With no nominations from the floor, this slate was elected by acclamation.

Kay reminded everyone that Cluster Leaders are still needed for District II, III and IV.

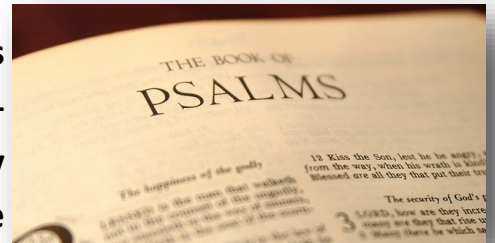
Sandra Winslet, South Atlantic Synod Moderator, installed the newly-elected officers with words of encouragement and support. Barbara thanked everyone for their support during her term as moderator especially in light of 2020's challenges. New moderator Sandra Wharton thanked Barbara for her leadership, support and friendship. She presented Barbara with a beautiful piece of artwork which stated, " My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness". Sandra introduced her Coordinating Team: Secretary, Nancy Varner, Treasurer Barbara Borderieux, Historian Janet Harris, Spiritual Life Leader Patti Li, Editor of *The Messenger* Barb Crann, Cluster Leader District I Elaine Waldron, and Cluster Leader District V Betty Mangos.

*Sandra Wharton addressed the attendees with an inspirational message, a copy of which follows this report.*

Sandra Winslet introduced the slate of officers for 3-year terms at the Synod level. She explained that officers at the Synod level rotate between the three states represented, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, this has been the formula for positions since the north and south Presbyterian churches reunited. (Sandra shared that Clede Lacey was the first Moderator for the newly-reunited synod. She is 95 years old and an inspiration to all Presbyterian Women.)

The slate of nominees for the coming 3-year term are from Florida and include Secretary/Historian Suzanne Hinman; Leadership Development Specialist, Rev. Julie Jensen-Higbee; Church-Employed Women Member-At-Large, Rev. Christina Greenawalt. The vote was unanimous to elect. Changes to the South Atlantic Synod PW bylaws were voted on and passed as well

Spiritual Life Leader Patti Li offered the closing prayer after which Moderator Sandra Wharton adjourned the business portion of the Gathering. Following a brief break, we resumed with the worship portion of the Gathering. Mary Webb played the piano live which really enhanced the worship experience. Rev. Melana Scruggs utilized Psalm 8 as the foundation for her sermon, which stressed the fact that we have the image of God within each of us. "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."



Sandra Wharton thanked all those who attended the Gathering and charged them with the task of seeking out other women to join our local PW groups.



### *Covenant Presbyterian, Fort Myers*

Our church opened the Sanctuary for Sunday socially-distanced worship in the fall, but around Thanksgiving, our Session only for worship. We still needed live-stream worship, so each of us was quiet. The first Sunday of that we could not do our usual activities including sharing a meal



voted to return to live-streaming-to decorate our Sanctuary for our our PW Circles sent one volunteer to decorate for Advent. It Advent was quiet, due to the fact multi-generational after worship in Fellowship Hall.

Our three Circles went back to study in January and February. We are patient. We are grateful for our church leadership helping to keep us safe as they find ways for our congregation, and PW to gather in the months ahead. Along with our Peace River Presbytery PW, we are lamenting along with our timely Bible study!

the Zoom room for our Bible

*Beverly Campbell, Co-Moderator*

## ***Moorings Presbyterian, Naples***

**We at MPW, have been moved by the world and national challenges during 2020. We also always look to scripture.**

***Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn, their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality. 2 Corinthians 8:13-14, NIV***

**One of our PW programs is Readers' Rendezvous, a book discussion group. One of the book we are reading for 2021 is *Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the***



***World* by Melinda Gates. Melinda said, "Lets break down the walls and walk through the doors together." All of these have led us to settle on our goal for this year of *Welcoming All Women*.**

**Because of challenges of the Search Chair to find replacements for expiring CT positions, both our Treasurer, who had already accepted other commitments for our CT meeting time, and I, as Moderator, are continuing for an additional year. I pulled our CT team together early fall through a Zoom meeting. Together we planned for this unusual year. I had mental predictions on what I expected.**

**My biggest surprise that pleased me immensely was the collective commitment to continuing our programs as much as possible. Most markedly, they wanted in-person, monthly luncheons to continue. We planned for meals that were simple, with fewer decorations, and requirements of masks and social distancing. We started with 24 attendees, a number with which we were pleased. Our January meeting had 30 attendees, again, an encouraging number with many regular attendees. The speakers and topics continue to be informative, interesting, and helpful.**

**We had already known that one Circle, that had been holding on for a few years despite members who were aging or moving away, would close down following the 2019-2020 year. They actually closed down a couple months early due to Covid-19. One Circle chose to hold off from meeting until it seems safe to meet comfortably in person. The other**

three Circles began to meet in hybrids of in-person and online, tweaking the details best for them. One Circle is having numbers higher than they have in years. The goals of *Fellowship, service* to each other and others, and *Bible study* continue to be successful.

Our Readers' Rendezvous and prayer chain continue. Our weekly Bible study leader has put the program on hold for now. The Readers' Rendezvous and CT also meet in-person and via Zoom. We have learned that Zoom connections can be a challenge in areas of our church building. However, hearing voices spoken in the in-person group can be a challenge by those on Zoom unless they are right by the microphone. Despite our challenges, it seems that our PW group has strengthened in their commitment to, and support of each other. May Christ be praised.

*Collene Van Noord, Moderator*



*Faith Presbyterian, Cape Coral*

Recently, my Co-Moderator Sharon Diersing, sent me this little poem that sums up many of the feelings we are all experiencing in this "new normal" world.

*Feeling Lost.....*

*As I sit each morning and wonder what to do today,  
I pray that things will soon change someday.  
After being busy with almost daily tasks  
I now daily wear my mask!  
I feel estranged from my church world now.  
Wondering, if I will make and how.  
Trying to get a vaccine appointment,  
Not the easiest and most times a disappointment.  
But I continue each day and pray to God  
Hoping he does not think it too odd.*

Faith's PW Coordinating Team had been meeting in-person (with the option to join via Zoom) until our campus was closed in early January. At that time we voted to suspend our Gatherings until next year. We also sent a note to each of the missions we support, reassuring them that we would continue to support them as best we can even though our fund raising opportunities are minimal.

Our cookbook, *Cooking with Faith*, has proven to be a life-saver regarding our financial well-being. The cookbook arrived in mid-November and we were able to sell over half our original print order before Christmas!

Currently we are working on sponsoring our first ever Holiday Bazaar! It is scheduled for Saturday, November 13, 2021, and will be held in either our Faith Center auditorium or outside depending on COVID conditions at that time. We will feature hand-made items for holiday and special occasion gift giving, as well as hand-crafted art, jewelry, clothing and woodworking. We will utilize food trucks for refreshments, which takes the burden of food prep and regulated hygiene out of our hands. We are very excited about this new project and hope that it will prove to be an annual event. If any of you or your members would like to participate, please contact me at [barbcrannatpwf@gmail.com](mailto:barbcrannatpwf@gmail.com).



Blessings to all,

*Barb Crann, Co-Moderator*



*Buckingham Presbyterian, Fort Myers*

During the year 2020, even with no in-person church at Buckingham Presbyterian Church since March, we have been working diligently to continue our missions. With church services being on Zoom, we have developed inventive ways to sustain our multiple missions.

We support the Turks in Madagascar with monetary support through church donations but also many other worthy groups. Others include Mision Peniel with our continued 3 cents a meal offerings, as well as donated dry and canned goods our congregation drops off at the church. We also have a fun Souper Bowl Sunday collection which goes to Mision Peniel.

Tice Elementary School in Ft. Myers has been another outreach. We donate ingredients for



50 families to prepare Easter dinners, and distribute to the school. Since there was no in-person school last year, the items collected were donated to Mision Peniel, but this year will be going to the children of Tice. There are two other donations to Tice, school supplies



before the school year begins in August, and an Angel Tree giving 50 children clothing and toy Christmas gifts in December. In previous years, we have donated enough money to send 10 children from this school to Cedarkirk, but sadly not this year, so the money will go toward 2021 if Cedarkirk camp resumes.



Last fall we had our annual blanket collection, and between monetary and blanket donations we were able to give 80 blankets to the Salvation Army.

The large group of sewers and stuffers at our church, “Stitch ‘N Stuff”, were meeting weekly at church to make items for Hospice, but in March that also discontinued. But at the end of the year, with no meetings and only five people working from home, they were able to donate 8,700 items, with 650 of them being face masks.

With all the challenges 2020 gave, we have joyously and generously continued our mission work. *God is at work in and through Buckingham Presbyterian Church.*

*Beth Day, Co-Moderator*

*Cypress Lake Presbyterian, Ft. Myers*

Greetings from Cypress Lake! We want to wish everyone a happy and blessed New Year. Our modified schedule of spring events and activities are as follows:

- ◆ Several members attended the Zoom Peace River Annual Meeting on February 6. Thanks go to the organizers and speakers.
- ◆ The “Into the Light” Bible study has been meeting monthly, and will finish in April. The December 12th craft bazaar was very successful. The spring craft bazaar will be held March 13th, and the annual meeting on April 17th, probably by Zoom.
- ◆ Our coordinating team will be meeting the next couple of months by Zoom, and the lasagna take-out dinner will be rescheduled.

The Rev. Edward Bellis IV has accepted the pastor call at Cypress Lake, and will begin his ministry on February 21st. Thanks go the Rev. Andy Casto-Waters for guiding the church through the interim period and search process. We will continue to pray for our churches and this country. Stay safe and God bless.

*Audrey Renn, Moderator*

*Venice Presbyterian, Venice*

On Tuesday, January 19th, our PW met in our Chapel, wearing masks and sitting socially distanced, to hear Kate Holmes of The Sarasota Historical Society speak along with slides on The Centennial Celebration of Sarasota County! She portrayed Lizzie Guptell at 12 years old living then in the wilderness, and then again in her late 60's in 1921 when the wilderness became Sarasota County. Joanne Francks, our PW secretary, gave the Opening Prayer, Chris Dowden (our very own) gave the Devotion from Psalm 63, and new treasurer Gail Haynes bid farewell to outgoing treasurer Hope Gordon who is moving to Pennsylvania to be closer to her two daughters and their families. We went down Memory Lane with Hope as she had been treasurer for six years. Gail presented Hope with cards and a check. The ladies loved the program as well as the entire Gathering!

There were 22 or 23 ladies who ventured out to the Gathering and each one received a Valentine treat bag with homemade goodies as they left. The ladies were asked to bring their own bottled water. We met at 2:00 pm rather than at noon because we did not serve our usual potluck luncheon.



On Tuesday, February 16, our program will be The Lovely Chris Dowden giving a portrayal of a Bible Woman. We will have our Birthday Offering, a silent auction, and Moderator Niki Steitz will give the devotion on "A Woman".

On Tuesday, April 19, Carrie Miles will appraise items brought in by the ladies. The ladies can bring one to two items for appraisal. We will also announce our Honorary Life Membership (Woman of the Year) recipient.

Blessings, ladies and continue to Stay Well!

*Niki Steitz, Moderator*



*Wear your mask, wash your hands, social distance and*

**GET YOUR VACCINATION**

### ***First Presbyterian, Naples***

Presbyterian Women of First Presbyterian Church in Naples continue to meet for Circles on Zoom. We are hoping and looking forward to perhaps an in-person Gathering program in the sanctuary this spring.

We have sad news. Our Moderator, Barbara Heissner's husband Karl has become very ill. We pray for them both and if anyone knows them, or wants to send a card, their address is 409 Sympathy Way, Centerville, MD 21617.

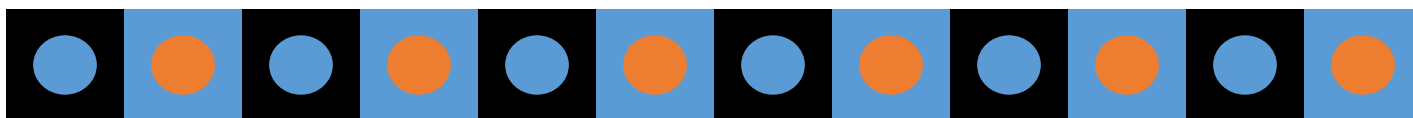
Our new directories are out and being distributed. This is the second year we have used the present format of directory/scrapbook. This has eliminated the need for a Historian except as a photographer and a space to store scrapbooks. It puts into our ladies' hand a snapshot of the year in pictures, events, and information.

In January we celebrated Blanket Sunday. Although most gifts were monetary to purchase blankets, some blankets were collected and all will be taken to Mision Peniel.

Our pledge letters have been mailed out to all ladies in our church. This is our only fund-raising activity.

We look forward to celebrating our newly-installed officers this spring. Carolyn Smith Bennett will be the next Moderator, and has already stepped up to assist Barbara with her duties. Carolyn can be reached at 255 Park Shore Dr., #341, Naples, FL 34103; her phone is 239-776-1644; her email is [cjosmith341@gmail.com](mailto:cjosmith341@gmail.com).

### ***Betty Mangos, Cluster Leader District V***



### ***Burnt Store Presbyterian, Punta Gorda***

Presbyterian Women of BSPC held on "off campus" Gathering at the Military Heritage Museum in Punta Gorda on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7th. Over 50 members and friends enjoyed learning about the newly-located museum and the private tours of the many interesting displays (some interactive), followed by box lunches on the open air patio. The spacious auditorium provided for the necessary spacing of our masked attendees.

Our March Gathering is planned for the 15th at 11:00 am. The program will be provided by Buddy Ferguson, Church Relations Manager at Thornwell Homes for Children, in

Clinton, South Carolina. We will meet in the sanctuary to provide the required spacing while wearing masks.

The May 3rd Gathering will feature Martha Bireda, PhD, Vice President and Historian at the Blanchard House Museum of African American History and Culture of Charlotte County, in Punta Gorda.

Regretfully, we have not been able to serve our usual salad luncheons for the past year.

Our Circles and CT are beginning to meet in person and by Zoom.



The December Sock Tree Project provided 579 pairs of new socks for people in need at the Homeless Coalition, Homeless Education Program, and the Jesus Loves You Ministry.

We are grateful to all who purchased fresh Georgia pecans, providing funds for our many missions, and to those who generously donated to our Thank Offering this past autumn.



We look forward to the day we can resume activities as we did in the past.

Blessings to all,

*Judy Cornell, Moderator*

#### **REMINDERS**

***Please update your records replacing Peace River Presbytery PW CT Treasurer Nancy Shimandle with NEW Treasurer Barbara Borderieux.***

***Please note that I have a new email address. It is [barbcrannatpwf@gmail.com](mailto:barbcrannatpwf@gmail.com). Thank you, Barb Crann, The Messenger Editor.***