

The Messenger

March 2022



Message from Moderator Sandra Wharton



Love is the key that opens the heart.

Hope is the dream that awakens the soul.

Peace is the light that guides the way.

Faith is the certainty that sees us through.

God is opening a new door in your life that no one can close. God's great gift of creation is all around you. Lift your heads! See what God has given you on this beautiful morning. Signs of glory, His wonder, His ability to make something beautiful out of your life. Lift your heads! You are not alone this journey. AMEN

After heavy holiday traveling, 2022 was welcomed in with a spike in Covid cases. It always amazes me how our healthcare providers rise to the cause and care for all people—many doctors, nurses and others working round the clock, seven days a week to help heal those stricken by Covid. And God, our Creator and the greatest “healer,” is with us ALWAYS, giving us love, hope, peace and faith!

Recap of 2022 PRP PW Annual Gathering

Attention ALL Presbyterian Women - Did you attend the **2022 PRP PW Annual Gathering on February 5, 2022 at Covenant Presbyterian Church?** If not, please mark your calendar for the 2023 Gathering to be held on February 4, 2023.

Approximately 60 ladies attended the 2022 Gathering. It was a wonderful day to join in worship and to embrace our PW Purpose. Following worship led by Rev. Courtney Ducharme, our PRP PW business meeting was held. Special guests included Rev. Melena Scruggs, PRP General Presbyter, who gave an update on Presbytery activities, and Shelagh Wirth, SOSA PW Moderator, who gave PW Synod update and installed our PRP PW officers. The 2022 PRP PW proposed budget was approved. A thorough review was performed and revisions recommended by the Bylaws Committee; accepted by the Coordinating Team; and approved by the PW membership.

At the 2021 Annual Gathering (held via Zoom), I challenged you to reach out and touch one other woman in your congregation, and invite them to participate in your PW activities. Many of you met that challenge as we strive to carry out our PW Purpose to build an inclusive, caring community of women. Now is a perfect time to count our blessings and to consider support of the people, missions and programs that bring light to our world. For this coming year, I'm offering you a "BOGO" - except I changed the spelling to be "BOGGO." This means "bring one, God gets one." "BOGGO" and bring light to our world!

The 2021 PRP PW Coordinating Team members were recognized and thanked for their work and support of PRP Presbyterian Women. Nominees for 2022 were presented and PW voted to elect the following:

- Moderator Elect - Open Position
- Historian - Janet Harris (2-year term)
- Cluster Leader - District 4 - Connie LoPresti (3-year term)
- Cluster Leader - District 5 - Meredith Holtz (3-year term)
- Cluster Leaders - Districts 1, 2 & 3 - Open Positions

Congratulations to Janet, Connie and Meredith. They were installed by Shelagh Wirth, SOSA PW Moderator.



2022 appointed leaders were presented as follows:

- Spiritual Life Leader - Patty Li
- Justice & Peace/Racial Equity Representative - Connie LoPresti
- Editor of “The Messenger” and Publicity Chair - Barbara Crann
- Mission Chair - Betty Mangos

Two of our leaders are each holding two positions - Connie LoPresti and Barbara Crann. Betty Mangos has been appointed to fill the newly-created appointed position of Mission Chair. Thank you all for stepping forward to support our PRP PW.

PW leadership is essential to fulfill the Purpose of Presbyterian women. I would encourage you to consider the open positions listed above and contact me to discuss serving PRP Presbyterian Women. Is God calling you to serve? Isaiah 42: 6 - “I am the Lord. I have called you for a righteous purpose, and I will hold you by your hand.” We are never alone on this journey.

2022 PRP PW Honorary Life Membership was presented to Betty Mangos. She is a member of First Presbyterian Church of Naples, and has served as a Deacon, Elder and Chairperson of its Mission Committee. Betty also serves on the Board of Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance, as well as the Mision Peniel Team for Peace River Presbytery. Betty is a Past Moderator of FP Presbyterian Women. Carolyn Smith Bennett (current Moderator) commented, “Betty is relied upon for many tasks within the PW organization including coordinating a lot of PW hospitality outreach, and is just the “go to” person for any assistance or information.” Betty has just completed two 3-year terms as PRP Cluster Leader for District 5, and will begin her work as PRP PW Mission Chair this year.



The following two missions were selected to receive the offering at the Gathering: “Gift of Hope” (Foster Care Advisory Services) and Mision Peniel. Through the generosity of our Presbyterian Women, \$600.00 was collected and will be divided equally and sent to these two missions.

Cypress Lake Presbyterian Women then presented the **Biblical Women’s Fashion Show**, including a solo by Amanda Johnson singing “Mary, Did You Know?”, followed by lunch and fellowship.



Our sincere thanks to Covenant, Cypress Lake and Faith PW for serving as the Annual Gathering Planning Committee, and a very “SPECIAL THANK YOU” to Covenant PC for hosting this event.

Upcoming Events

2022 PRP PW Spring Retreat “Hearts and Hands for Jesus” - Monday, March 28, 2022 (one-day event) will be held at Day Spring Episcopal Conference Center, Ellenton, FL. Attached to this newsletter are two documents: Retreat flyer and Retreat registration form. **MODERATORS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR PW AND ENCOURAGE ALL TO ATTEND. ALL CHURCHES ARE ASKED TO DONATE A GIFT BASKET. Questions: contact Barbara Borderieux at bborderieux@tampabay.rr.com or Nancy Varner at nancyv30@verizon.net.**

2022 SOSA 12TH TRIENNIAL RETREAT “Plug in & Recharge” - October 21-23, 2022 will be held at Epworth by the Sea, St. Simons Island, GA. This is a wonderful 3-day retreat on a beautiful island—a great opportunity to network with PW from GA, SC and FL. Contact: Diana Hamrick, Synod Gathering Chair, 864-941-6330 or sdwhamrick@gmail.com.

Report from Venice PC, Moderator Niki Steitz

Our January 18, 2022, PW Gathering was a Good One! Our program was Bob Sloboda (Public Relations Manager and Friday Route Director for Venice Area Meals on Wheels) speaking on Venice MOW. It is all volunteer, and many of the ladies learned about the organization which receives no government funding. Approximately 30% of the meals are free, as some of the clients are unable to afford the meals. The Devotion (A Thankful Heart) was given by



one of our very own, Chris Dowden. The ladies brought a sack lunch and their bottled water for the first time since the onset of the pandemic. After the program, Moderator Niki Steitz told the short quip, "Are You God's Wife?"

On Tuesday, February 15, 2022, PW in Venice will have Chris Dowden, truly a *professional*, portray a new Woman of the Bible. The Birthday Offering will be given, and Niki Steitz will give the Devotion where a 5th grade teacher asked her class to look at TV commercials and see if they could use them in 20 ways to communicate ideas about God. God is like Chevrolet - the heartbeat of America. FUN! The ladies will bring a sack lunch, dessert and beverage will be provided.



Tuesday, April 19, 2022 will be our closing program for the season. The program will be Niki Steitz's four grandchildren reading about their Great Uncle Major George Quamo, who was a highly-decorated Green Beret in the Army. He received the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest military honor, for leading the rescue operation saving the lives of 14 Special Forces soldiers trapped in a bunker by the

Viet Cong while being heavily fired upon. All 14 of Major Quamo's men were rescued and returned safely to base. More to come in the April Messenger.

**Please share The Messenger with your
PW CT and membership!**

Peace, Justice, Equity by Connie LoPresti

Marian Wright Edelman, Founder of the Christians Defense Fund says, *“If you just look at the need and ask what you can do, you’ll never lack for something meaningful and purposeful in your life. All I’ve done is follow the need.”*

Lagniappe is an old Creole word that means “something extra”. I believe we are the hands and feet of grace. The something extra we do creates places, spaces, encounters, connections, and moments where kindness, compassion, and gentleness begin to take root. Clarissa Pinkolas Estes says, *“Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach.”*

What PW activities come to your mind that help with a little something extra?



I am reminded of the Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC). As I looked into more of this act of sharing this is what I found out. In 1956, when Shanti Solomon envisioned this prayer movement, she saw it as global and ecumenical, rooted in pursuit of wholeness for all people. I found an article written by Liza B. Lamis, secretary for the International Committee of Fellowship of the Least Coin in Horizons Magazine, Nov/Dec 2021.

With March 4 being World Day of Prayer, I think the three main points Liza makes are simple yet significant.

1. FLC brings Christian women together in a fellowship of prayer *without discrimination of race, nationality, culture or denomination*. Christian women demonstrate solidarity with each other through their common concern and love for humankind and creation. They are bound together in both giving and receiving.
2. The offering is unique because all (regardless of income, education, nationality or home) give only the smallest coin of their currency. All are within the same discipline and share the common concerns of women around the world.
3. It is stewardship, both of the ideas and of funds. The least coins, when put together, become a large amount in the same way individual prayers offered by many members throughout the world become a strong force in bringing about reconciliation, peace and justice.

I invite you and your Presbyterian Women to join me in participating in the Fellowship of the Least Coin, and in praying together for peace, justice and reconciliation in our home city, our country, and in the world.

Report from Burnt Store PW by Barb Lohff, Moderator

The BSPC PW is off to a great start for 2022! Our annual sock collection drive had an all-time record number of socks - 914 pairs of children's, women's and men's socks! The



campaign starts when the church is decorated for Christmas with our miniature Christmas tree decked out with toddler socks of every color. In early January, we distribute our bounty to three organizations: Hope Academy at Crossroads, Jesus Loves You Ministry, and Charlotte County Homeless Coalition. Joyce Sluzewski has taken

this project to heart, and does a wonderful job initiating, overseeing, and distributing our contributions.

January and February found our Circles actively engaged in Christian fellowship and bible study. We are so grateful to be able to once again enjoy in-person meetings. As this goes to press, we are looking forward to our annual fund raiser, "Give 'Em Hell Harry", a live portrayal of Harry Truman presented by professional actor, Jack Rabito. A dessert reception will follow the performance.



February began our worship with our called pastor, Pastor Jaco Bester, beaming in for our worship services from Johannesburg, South Africa. We are hopeful that his Religious Visa will be expediated and he and his family will soon be with us in person. We are fortunate to have Pastor Lou Zuck, and Pastor Alan Adams as our Parish Associates during this transition time. Both men are retired clergy in our congregation.

March and May will find us returning to Stewart Hall for a salad luncheon followed by a program. In March, local author Libby McDonald Schaefer will review several of her books. In May, our speaker will be Christine Carey from Valerie's House. March will also find us enjoying the Spring Retreat in Ellenton with our PRP PW sisters.

April will be our final Circle meeting before our hiatus for the summer. This spring will be an exciting and busy time for all of us as we settle into a new path for BSPC. Blessings and good health wishes to all our PRP PW sisters in Christ.

Report from Mission Chair, Betty Mangos

As Presbyterian Women our work is in missions - helping others. This has always been the case for over 200 years. As a covenant partner with the PC USA, we follow the tripartite system and support missions at our **local** level, at the **Peace River Presbytery level**, at the **South Atlantic Synod level**. We also participate in the national Birthday Offering and Thank Offering.



I have taken on the position of Mission Chairman for Peace River PW and have spent the last few weeks emailing our PW groups to ask what missions they support. This gives us great insight into what is important to PRPW. The results did not surprise me. We heavily support food pantries, Mision Peniel, ECHO, housing and programs for low-income families, Salvation Army, early childhood education in impoverished areas, and health-related clinics and organizations. Every individual PW group decides which missions they choose to support on their local level. But I encourage you to also set aside a mission gift for the missions of Peace River PW and Synod PW in your yearly budget. These gifts should come to our treasurer, Barbara Borderieux at PO Box 495249, Port Charlotte, FL 33949 (this is the new address for the Peace River Presbytery office). This collection is then sent as our gift to Synod for missions from PRPW.

My job is to be of help regarding your mission giving. It is important to give to agencies that you know do the most good with your funds. Vet them frequently. Doing this makes all of us more comfortable in our giving. We want to know that the gifts we give are managed carefully, sent to the right place, and help those who really need it.

Here are the missions presently supported by Peace River PW:

Columbia Friendship Circle

Professors wives, and eventually PW support scholarships to students with families and outstanding students. Adjacent to Columbus Seminary with their mission to teach pastors, CFC provides financial aid and support to a diverse range of students.

The Duvall Home

Located in DeLand, FL, Duvall Home provides residency and services to disabled adults. With a goal to promote independent living, residents learn life skills like cooking, shopping and personal care.

Mission Haven

Located next to Columbus Seminary, Mission Haven provides a respite for our missionaries while they are furloughed. Run by volunteers, the Clothes Closet provides clothing and shoes that they may take with them to their next assignment. Buildings were built by the donation of the PW Birthday Offering. MH is supported by PW in seven states.

Thornwell Home

Begun as an orphanage, today Thornwell Home is dedicated to family help and health. Therapy is provided as well as parenting training, foster care, and after-school tutoring. Supported by PCUSA and Trinity Presbytery.

Mision Peniel

When Beth-El Ministries could no longer financially support an extension of services in Immokalee, Mision Peniel became a covenant partner with Peace River Presbytery. Presbyterian Pastor Miquel Estrada and his volunteers provide food, clothing, advocacy, fellowship and emergency support. Immokalee farmworkers have suffered great injustices from abuse, both physical and sexual in the fields, stolen wages, and exploitation to pay higher prices for food and rent. A community garden behind Mision Peniel provides tons of food per year. Miquel's wife runs the Pan de Vita program (Meals on Wheels). Every Friday, volunteers serve food, give out clothing and diapers. A music program has been started. The Soccer Academy meets in our building for after-school tutoring by Ava Maria students. Miquel preaches evening services and reaches out through his radio show each week.

Cedarkirk

A year-round camp, Cedarkirk is owned and operated by the Presbyteries of Tampa Bay and Peace River. It is a place for spiritual renewal and growth.

Beth El Farmworkers

In the beginning, it was the work of bringing farmworkers to Jesus Christ, but it was very obvious these workers had many needs. They were hungry, homeless, abused, illiterate, and feared deportation. Today Beth Ed provides a food pantry, weekly farm visits bringing supplies and food, and weekly lunches in the fields.

Mentoring, scholarship opportunities, backpack and school supplies. Clothes, shoes, bilingual hot-lines, and health care referrals and programs that treat the farmworker with dignity. There is no discrimination.

Your gift to PRPW supports all of these agencies. If you wish to participate in mission giving at the Synod level, we pass that total amount right up the ladder to them!

We also have specific projects that we support and these contributions are designated and sent on to where they need to go by our PRPW.

Our national offerings are the **Birthday Offering** and the **Thank Offering**. When collected, these should be sent to Barbara Borderieux (treasurer) so that we make our donation as an entire presbytery group. These funds are collected, designated, and paid out - **a pass-through our PRPW budget**. Same goes for Synod mission and Fellowship of the Least Coin. **The only money kept by PRPW is for our presbytery missions listed above.**

In supporting your local missions, I would love to hear of your interests and excitement about your giving. It is our honor as PW to do God's work, and I would love to hear from you. Please let me know about any concerns. Betty Mangos, 239-254-9883 or bman-gos710@gmail.com

Report from Faith Presbyterian by Co-Moderators Sharon Diersing & Barb Crann

It has been an unsettling couple of years at Faith Presbyterian. Aside from Covid woes, our pastor of 20+ years retired and unfortunately his replacement left at the end of 2021. In the interim, we lost many congregants, which greatly affected our PW. We shrank from four Circles to one Circle, but the ladies who do attend are bound and determined to keep PW alive and well at Faith.

When Covid hit and we were not able to have our traditional semi-annual bake sales, we came upon the idea of doing a Craft Fair to raise funds. We have an enthusiastic group of crafters, and we are going to dip our toes into the crafting pool by participating in the Cypress Lake PC Craft Fair on Saturday, March 12. We have lots of fun hand-made items and all proceeds will go to PW at Faith. We will keep you posted on how we did and I'm sure we will learn a lot from Mary G at Cypress Lake!

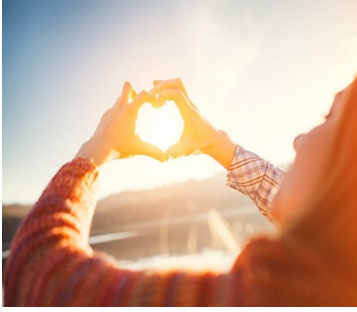


Pray for the people!

Pray for the children!

Pray for peace!

Pray for our world!



Peace River Presbyterian Women's Spring Retreat

Monday March 28, 2022

Day Spring Episcopal Conference Center Ellenton, Florida.

Hearts and Hands for Jesus

There will be Mini Workshops, Information about Bible study for 2023, Fellowship, Music, Worship, Service Project and most of all fun with other Christian Women.

Registration will start at 9:00 a.m. Workshops will start at 9:30 a.m.

(The room is large enough for social distancing)

Gift Baskets from each church are encouraged to help keep the retreat affordable to all. Drawing will be Monday afternoon – you do not need to be present to win.

Scholarships are available thru the Margaret Day Fund of Presbyterian Women.

If you have any questions please contact Barbara Borderieux 941-729-8036 cell 941-592-5103
bborderieux@tampabay.rr.com or Nancy Varner at 941-704-2053 or nancyv30@verizon.net



Peace River Presbytery

Presbyterian Women's Spring Retreat

"Hearts and Hands for Jesus"

9:00 a.m. Monday and end at 5 p.m. March 28, 2022

Day Spring Episcopal Conference Center Ellenton, Florida.

Each participant must have her own registration form, please print clearly **Deadline: Mar. 9, 2022**

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
E-Mail (for confirmation) _____ Church _____
Emergency Contact Name _____ Phone _____
Physical or Dietary Needs _____

\$30 Registration and Lunch

Please send check with registration form no later than Mar. 9, 2022. No refunds after Mar. 17, 2022.

Make check payable to: Presbyterian Women of Peace River Presbytery and mail to:

Barbara Borderieux
3915 38th Ave E, Palmetto, FL. 34221
email: bborderieux@tampabay.rr.com

Registrar # _____
Date Received _____ Check # _____
Confirm _____ Room _____

Scholarships are available thru the Margaret Day Fund of Peace River Presbyterian Women