

# JOYFUL NOISE

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF WNC

## FROM THE MODERATOR

### Highlights of the Synod Summer Gathering ...



The 2017 Synod Summer Gathering was held the weekend of June 15-18,

at the Massanetta Springs Conference Center. There were 181 Presbyterian Women (PW) in attendance of which six were from western North Carolina in addition to two PW husbands.

The overview of the 2018 *Horizons* Bible study, *Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ is Hebrews*, was led by Rev. Lynn Miller of Jackson, Mississippi. Rev. Miller has authored previous *Horizons* Bible Studies and currently working on the 2020 Study of Lament. She also designed the PW Honorary Life Membership Pin.

The keynote speaker was Rev. Denise Anderson of National Capital Presbytery and Co-Moderator of the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the PC (USA). Rev. Anderson also led a powerful discussion of the book *Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debbie Irving.

The mission offering in the amount of \$2,361 was collected for the Presbyterian Children's

Home of the Highlands. An additional \$195 in gift cards was also collected. The money collected in the cents-ability cups, located on each table in the dining room, in the amount of \$199 was collected for the Staunton Augusta Church Relief Association (SACRA).

The PW Synod Coordinating team sponsored both live and silent auctions during the gathering. The proceeds from the auctions in the amount of \$2,538 will be used to supplement the gathering budget. A special thanks to Chris Gantt for donating lamps for our Presbytery.

Through the generosity of the PW in attendance at the Synod Summer Gathering, we nurtured our faith through prayer and Bible study, supported the mission of the church, worked for justice and peace, built a caring community of women, and strengthen the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [paraphrased] while in fellowship with each other and having fun. Overall, the gathering was packed with opportunities to shop, learn, fellowship with friends old and new, dancing, quilting, and much, much more!

*Tina Joyner, PW Moderator  
Presbytery WNC*

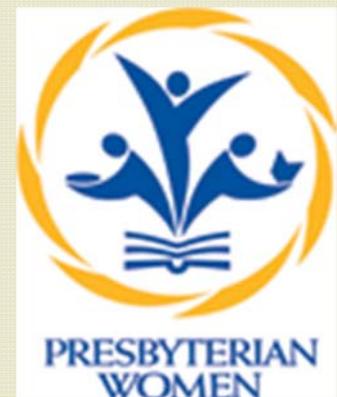
JULY 2017

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*PLEASE SHARE  
THIS ISSUE OF  
JOYFUL NOISE  
WITH THE  
PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN IN YOUR  
CHURCH.*



**Justice and Peace: PW Together in Action for Antiracism and More**

Though PW has not designated a day or week as a Together in Action day or week for antiracism, we can always take action on important issues and take inspiration for action from others.

**Trinity Presbyterian Church Oklahoma City** sponsored citywide Racist Anonymous meetings for 10 weeks this spring. The average attendance was 20. Rev. Ron Buford, African American pastor and founder of Racists Anonymous, says, "It's time to pull the cover off racism rather than blaming each other and trying to figure out which of us is the most racist. Can we rid the nation and perhaps the world of racism? Let's build an infectious

movement of people who will pledge their lives to being mindful of our own racism, being mindful of our powerlessness to rid ourselves of racism without each other, and consciously turning it over to a higher power." Share your stories of antiracism work; email [yonne.hileman@pcusa.org](mailto:yonne.hileman@pcusa.org).

**Commission on the Status of Women** - Twenty-One Presbyterian women, including 11 sponsored by the PC(USA)'s Office of Young Women's Leadership Development, attended the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March. Read reflections on PW's justice and

peace [blog, pwpcusa.typepad.com/jandp/](http://pwpcusa.typepad.com/jandp/).

**Looking Ahead to October** - October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month; Presbyterian Women urges PW groups and congregations to hold Courageous Conversations about all aspects of gender-based violence, not just violence in the home but in workplaces and public spaces, as well. Break the silence in congregations about VAWG (violence against women and girls) in all its forms: intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child abuse, human trafficking, date rape, harassment and more. Learn more at [www.presbyterianwomen.org/justice](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/justice).

**Justice and Peace Calendar**

**June**

- 11 Intercultural Church Sunday
- 18 Father's Day
- 25 Orange Day

**July**

- 2 Immigration Sunday
- 4 Independence Day
- 25 Orange Day

**August**

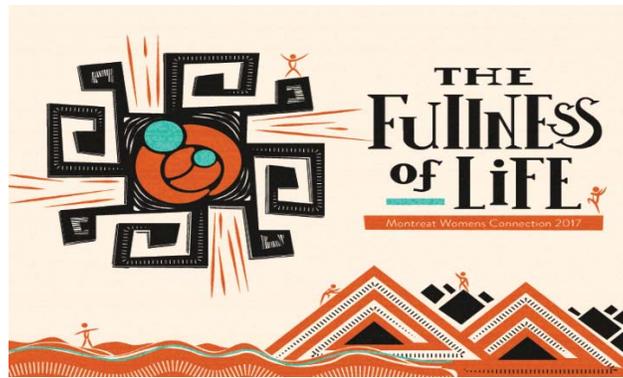
- 6 Hiroshima Day
- 19 World Humanitarian Day
- 25 Orange Day

27 Public Education Sunday

**September**

- 2-4 Labor Day Weekend in the Pulpit
- 4 Labor Day
- 21 International Day of Peace
- 21-27 Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence
- 23 Native American Day
- 25 Orange Day

*For a complete calendar, including links to resources, see [www.presbyterianwomen.org/justice](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/justice).*



**Women's Connection: The Fullness of Life  
August 11-13, 2017  
Montreat Conference Center**

We, as women, are made in the image of God, created as physical, emotional/relational, and spiritual beings. Women's Connection 2017 is a holy time for women to honor who God has created us to be. We hope to provide space for opportunities to nurture mind and body, to connect with community of old friends and new, and to re-center our communal lives and our individual selves in God's good news. Come as you are.

This year's conference, featuring author and blogger, Rachel Held Evans, will encourage participants to find grace and renewal through reflection, rest, and community. Conference activities will include worship, fellowship, recreation, rest, and workshops. There will also be a time set aside to study and discuss Rachel's book together as a conference community.

Learn more and register today at [www.montreat.org/women](http://www.montreat.org/women), or contact us at 828.419.9829.

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**Minute for Mission: Immigration Sunday  
July 2, 2017**

Keith Neill began his ministry in Portadown, Northern Ireland, playing in a Christian rock band and volunteering with the youth at his church. There he felt the call to youth ministry — first part time and then full time. All told, he guided the youth of Portadown and nearby Lisburn for 23 years.

In 2013, Keith and his wife, Jennifer, began to wonder if God was preparing them for a new challenge. He interviewed at other churches but did not

sense that they were the answer to the restlessness he



felt. Upon returning from one such interview in London, he read an online ad for a youth worker position in Hutchinson, Kansas.

It was uncanny, as Keith had been visiting Hutchinson for years, taking youth from Ireland to participate in a Christian peacemaking project there. In fact, on one such trip he took his daughter, who met and eventually married a man from Hutchinson. Could this be the answer to the restlessness he had been feeling?

Many calls, prayers and a successful immigration petition later, it became clear that Keith was being sent out

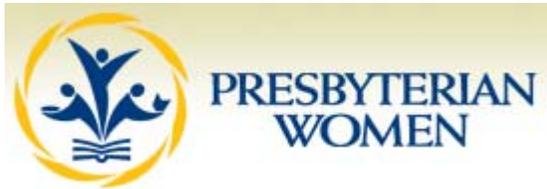
again —this time across the world to serve God as the director of youth, Christian education and mission at First Presbyterian Church in Hutchinson.

In a Gospel reading from Mark, Jesus sends out his

disciples to travel from village to village to teach and heal. How excited and anxious they must have felt to receive such a call. And how many lives were no doubt changed by their answering it.

Our church is blessed that people still answer this call today.

*Theresa Waggener, Coordinator, Immigration Issues, Office of the General Assembly*



# Save the Date



**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Gathering of PW in Presbytery of WNC  
April 14, 2018**

**More Details Coming Soon . . .**

**While Saving Dates, Remember:**



**Look for Registration for the 2018 Churchwide Gathering in the November/December 2017 Issue of *Horizons***

## PW 101 – Helps for New PW Leadership

If you are reading these words, you are probably a PW leader and know all things PW! But many of our faithful are unaware of some of the finer points of their amazing organization. That's why we began a "PW 101" series in the last newsletter. Each idea in the series is presented in such a way that newsletter editors and PW leaders can paste into their own documents/presentations. If you are so moved to share an idea or two that you think should be part of this series, please email [carissa.herold@pcusa.org](mailto:carissa.herold@pcusa.org).

**PW 101.1:** The PW Purpose The foundation for all that Presbyterian Women is and does is the PW Purpose, our mission statement. 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.  
*(February–April 2017 • Presbyterian Women Quarterly Newsletter)*

**PW 101.2:** PW Circles and their Leadership Presbyterian Women meet at the congregation level in "circles." No matter what the activities, as long as women meet to build community, support mission, nurture faith and/or work for justice and peace, those women are forming a "circle." No matter how many or how few activities a women's circle undertakes, if they do it on behalf of the PW Purpose (see last newsletter), they are a PW circle. Leadership in single-circle groups at the congregational level ideally consists of a moderator (to provide leadership to the circle and ensure communication among the members and with the congregation and session); a secretary/historian to record the work of the circle; and a treasurer to maintain the financial records of the circle. But PW is flexible! Circles don't have to be called circles and a team can have leaders who "wear more than one [leadership] hat."

*(May–July 2017 • Presbyterian Women Quarterly Newsletter)*

## Guatemala Microloan Project Update: June 2017

### Microloan Project Quick Facts

- Project began in April 2015
- Following initial training, women are given \$130 loans to begin or expand businesses
- Women meet bimonthly or monthly for accountability and support
- Loans cycles last 6 months
- Women can qualify for slightly larger loans with each loan cycle
- Participants can remain in project for a total of 6 loan cycles (3 years)
- Project is administered in Guatemala by ADEHGUA, a NGO with years of experience in microloans
- There are 4 microloan Groups: Coatepeque has 21 participants; Las Animas, 22; San Felipe, 8; Santo Domingo, 15.
- Currently cycle 4 is ending and cycle 5 is beginning

## Training to Strengthen Women Has Begun in Response to Need

As the third cycle of the microloan project was ending, ADEHGUA staff indicated the women involved were ready for additional challenges and training. While the loans, repayments, and business activities continue, a second

phase was added in January to strengthen women's self-esteem, knowledge, and abilities. Topics to be covered include preventive and women's health, human rights, nutrition, and the environment. Hands on activities such as gardening, crafts, and cooking will be incorporated.

ADEHGUA staff noted,

"The Guatemalan woman must redefine and value herself as a human being with capabilities and talents, not only in her traditional role as wife and mother, but as a valued human being and one who can contribute to her community and world."

### Kick Off:



*Photo captions: Training event on nutrition in San Felipe, Kick off in Las Animas, Reading pairs from San Felipe. For one session, the women were divided up into reading pairs so they could share and support each other while reading topics of interest. Flor reported, "We are happy because the ladies show enthusiasm in learning new things and are growing intellectually and spiritually."*

### Initial Impact:

Mildre shared an example of how this new phase of the project is challenging and motivating women. "Zoila, who was going to retire from the project because she had accomplished what she set out to do with the loan, went home after receiving a pamphlet we shared in preparation for the second phase of the project, and decided not to leave. She told us not only because the workshops seemed important, but also because sharing with the other women brought her a sense of relaxation. Zoila shared the pamphlet, which included information on the importance of exercise and some ideas as to how to exercise, with a neighbor, and

the two have begun walking together."

### Adehgua Staff:

We are grateful to be working with excellent and effective partners in ADEHGUA. Mildre and Julio bring passion, wisdom, dedication, and over 15 years of experience in microloans to the team. Flor de Maria, who was hired in January to help with the additional training and activities, brings youth along with university training in the psychology of education.

generate funds as well as new learning and growth. We realize that the costs for such a project are high, and we think the difference in this project and the many other microloan projects we have administered over the years, is our continuing presence with the women through visits and meetings, the visits and concern of people from the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, and the prayer partners. We are all working in a holistic way – with body and mind, the heart and soul."

### Adehgua's Reflection on Microloan Project:

Mildre shared: "Perhaps the success of the microloan project is because it is not "handouts" or welfare, but a project in which the women themselves

## YOUR Support Is Key!

**PRAY:** Prayer is an important aspect of this project. To pray for a specific individual, Contact *Sue Barrett* at [suebar@comporium.net](mailto:suebar@comporium.net) or 828-

553-3621. You will receive information and photos as they become available.

**STAY INFORMED:** Like our Facebook page at "*Guatemala Microloan Project*" to receive regular updates.

**GIVE:** While repaid loans are constantly recycled into new loans, funding of administrative expenses is needed. Checks payable to PW PWNC and designated for the Guatemala Microloan Fund can be sent to our PW treasurer: *Sharon Meares, 1012 10th ST CT NW, Hickory, NC 28601.*

**SHARE:** Invite members of the Guatemala Microloan Task Force to speak to your group or church: *Marilyn Baldrige, Jamie Beasley, Ellen Dozier, Ben Hill, Tina Joyner, Bethany Mannon, Susan Maveety, Mimi Michael, and Sandra Teubner.*

## Other Guatemala Partnership News!

On their January 2017 trip to Guatemala, in addition to meeting with two microloan groups, Ellen Dozier, Susan Maveety and Mimi Michael also met with the women's leadership of our two sister presbyteries.



*On left:* On January 24th we met with the leadership of the women's work in Suchitepequez presbytery. Flor de Maria, one of the promising young leaders of this group, is holding a photo of the women's leadership team of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

*Above:* On January 28th, we met with the women's leadership of Sur Occidente presbytery. One item discussed was the desire for more interchange between women of our presbyteries.

If your church has a sister church in Guatemala, please try to send a letter annually from your PW to the women of your sister church sharing encouragement and information about your activities of the past year. This is a great way to use those histories you wrote! Contact Mimi Michael for more information on how to deliver your letter.

*Mimi Michael*  
*Guatemala Partnership*

# Important Dates

<b>Fall Gathering-West, Bryson City PC</b>	<b>September 23, 2017</b>
<b>Fall Gathering – East, Third Street PC</b>	<b>September 30, 2017</b>
<b>Women’s Connection, Montreat</b>	<b>August 11 -13, 2017</b>
<b>Spring Gathering – Location TBA</b>	<b>April 14, 2018</b>
<b>Churchwide Gathering, Louisville, KY</b>	<b>August 2 – 5, 2018</b>

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