

JOYFUL NOISE

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF WNC

FROM THE MODERATOR

Greetings everyone! As our current Horizons Bible Study, *Who is Jesus? What a*



Difference a Lens Makes, comes to an end we begin to think about the 2017-2018 Bible study about Hebrews entitled, *Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews*, by Melissa Bane Sevier.

Lesson Six of our current Bible study entitled, *Who is Jesus according to Hebrews*, is a wonderful segue to our next Bible

study. The key idea for the lesson “encourages believers to hold fast to *your* faith in times of adversity, to remain firm in your commitment to Jesus who has run this race before us and now reigns in glory with God.”

The writer ends the lesson by stating, “...we are called to be strong in the faith, and through this lens [of lesson six] we are able to see the person and work

of Jesus, the one who makes that faith possible.”

This is truly a message for Presbyterian Women to take to heart as we continue to work the PW Purpose. It is not in our nature to give up or quit helping those in our communities here and around the world. We are blessed to have Melissa, the writer of the next Bible study,

with us to give us an overview of Hebrews at our Spring Gathering in April.

Last, but not least, Melissa will not be able to attend the Synod Summer Gathering in June because of

a schedule conflict, so we will be inviting our PW sisters in surrounding Presbyteries to give them a chance to be a part of meeting and receiving her overview of the study.

I look forward to seeing you at the gathering – we are in for a treat!

Tina Joyner, PW Moderator
Presbytery WNC

**...LET US RUN WITH
PERSEVERANCE THE
RACE THAT IS SET
BEFORE US, LOOKING TO
JESUS THE PIONEER AND
PERFECTOR OF OUR
FAITH....
HEBREWS 12:1-2**

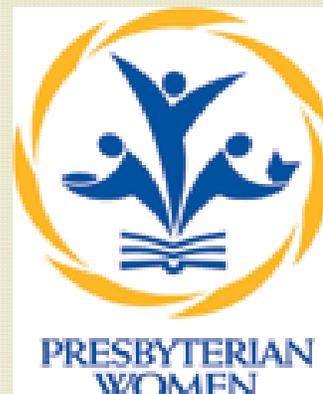
FEBRUARY 2017

**MODERATOR
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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 Children's Literacy and More

Presbyterian Women are continuing to focus on children's literacy after the new justice and peace initiative entitled, "Educate a Child" was launched in 2016. This initiative is part of the global/national campaign of PC(USA) to strengthen quality education for a million children by 2020. If you are wondering how you and your PW group can support this priority, the first way is by participating in Together in Action Days from May 1-7 which will focus on children's literacy. Here are some ideas listed in the Presbyterian Women Quarterly Newsletter for February–April 2017 and one specific to our presbytery:

- Host a Community Story Hour at your church and read aloud to children of the community.
- Form a group of Roving Readers who go to community centers, hospitals, and other sites to read aloud to children.
- Hold a community book drive for children who do not have books at home.
- Create a lending library for families in your community.

- Supply nutritious snacks at story hours, cushy chairs, warm hugs— things hungry children need.
- Volunteer to help children who are falling behind in your community's schools.
- To reach beyond the boundary of your local area, become involved with Libres Para Niños which sets up libraries in school and communities of our partner churches in Guatemala. Contact Ellen Dozier at ellendozier@hotmail.com for more information.

Is the current division of our nation a concern? Do you long to do more than pray and strive to live a life that embodies the PW purpose "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?" Then mark your calendar and plan to attend Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, D.C., April 21–24, 2017. The theme is "Confronting Chaos, Forging Community—Racism, Militarism, and Materialism."

Please also prayerfully remember the upcoming UN Commission on the Status of Women, March 13–24, 2017. See PW's Facebook page, unwomen.org and www.presbyterianwomen.org/justice. If you are in or near New York City during the Commission, you need not be a member of the delegation to attend NGO CSW events.

Since this is my last article while serving as Facilitator for Justice and Peace for PW in our presbytery, I leave you with one challenge posed by the PW Quarterly Newsletter: "Hold the faith community accountable to the conversations that need to happen and the work that needs to get done (because part of privilege is being able to choose to think about other things)." May we all continue to work together for justice and peace in our communities and beyond as we remember the words of Micah 6:8—"And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Working with You for Justice and Peace,

Michele Simmons
ztapenguin@gmail.com

Justice and Peace Calendar

February ~ Black History Month Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

- 1 National Freedom Day
- 5 Souper Bowl of Caring
- 12 International Day Against the Use of Child Soldiers (Red Hand Day)
- 14 One Billion Rising for Justice
- 17 National Random Acts of Kindness Day
- 25 Orange Day (Wear orange to support the end of violence against women)

March ~ Women's History Month

- 3 World Day of Prayer
- 5 Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday
- 8 International Women's Day
- 13-24 UN Commission on Status of Women
- 25 Orange Day (Wear orange to support the end of violence against women)

April ~ Sexual Assault Awareness Month

- 2 Self-Development of People Sunday
- 7 World Health Day
- 8 International Day of the Roma
- 16 Easter
- 21-24 Ecumenical Advocacy Days
- 22 Earth Day
- 24 American Genocide Remembrance Day
- 25 Orange Day (Wear orange to support the end of violence against women)



PW SPRING GATHERING

Who? All Presbyterian Women in Presbytery of WNC—and beyond!

What? Gathering for Bible Study, Supporting Mission, and Working for Justice and Peace

Where? First Presbyterian Church of Newton, 701 N. Main Avenue, Newton, NC 28658

When? Saturday, April 8, 2017, 9 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Why? To Build an Inclusive, Caring Community of Women Witnessing to the Promise of God's Kingdom

How? Mail Registration Form with Check to
Michele Simmons
539 Bluebird Ridge
Asheville, NC 28804
ztapenguin@gmail.com
(910) 476-6172

Cut Below Here

Registration Information

NAME _____

Phone# _____

Church _____

Email address _____

Please send registration with check for \$10.00 made out to:
PW PWNC

*****Registration deadline March 31, 2017*****

Melissa Bane
Sevier Presenting
2017-18 Horizons
Bible Study: *Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews*

Registration, Food, and Fellowship
9:00-9:45

Lunch at 12:30

Registration: \$10 (Includes Lunch)

Installation of New PW Leaders for Presbytery of WNC



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Directions to 2017 Spring Gathering

First Presbyterian Church of Newton, NC

Coming from Asheville

- ⇒ Take I-40 E to Fairgrove Church Rd SE (Exit 128) in Hickory
- ⇒ Turn right onto Fairgrove Church Rd SE (signs for Newton)
- ⇒ Use the middle lane to turn left onto US-321 BUS S/US-70 E/Conover Blvd W
- ⇒ Turn right onto St Pauls Church Rd
- ⇒ Turn left onto W 7th St
- ⇒ Turn right onto N Main Ave and First Presbyterian Church will be on the left

Coming from Gastonia

- ⇒ Follow US-321 N to Startown Rd (Exit 33) in Maiden
- ⇒ Turn right onto Startown Rd
- ⇒ Turn right onto W Maiden Rd
- ⇒ Turn left onto Sigmon Dairy Rd
- ⇒ Keep right to continue on Rome Jones Rd
- ⇒ Turn left onto US-321 BUS N
- ⇒ Turn right onto S College Ave
- ⇒ Continue straight onto E 5th St
- ⇒ Turn right onto N Main Ave and First Presbyterian Church will be on the right

Coming from Banner Elk

- ⇒ Take your route of choice to I-40 E and follow directions as coming from Asheville

If you have any problems, please contact Michele Simmons at (910) 476-6172

Guatemala Microloan Project Update: February 2017

Summary of Cycle 3, Concluded in December 2016:

Participants: This project has grown from 32 participants in April 2015 to 67 participants in Cycle 3, which concluded with every loan in good standing!

- Santo Domingo - 15 women, 3 who were new
- San Felipe - 11 women, 1 new
- Coatepeque - 16 women, 2 new
- Las Animas - 25 women, 4 new

Loans: New participants received a 1,000Q/\$133 loan. Those who had completed previous cycles and desired a larger loan were eligible, with group approval, to receive up to 1,800Q/\$240.

Meet Some of the Participants!

Aura is beginning her 3rd loan cycle. Previously she sold clothing and items for the



home door to door, but has switched to health products. This change was motivated because as a teacher she noticed that the children's health problems made it difficult for them to learn. The products she sells includes vitamins and medicine for parasites and skin problems. She has used the products for her own family and knows they work. Aura says the

project has been a blessing. She has learned much from the experiences of others in the group and senses their support. They buy products from each other to support each other's businesses. When something goes well, they share with the group so all benefit.

Marcia is in her 4th loan cycle and has taken full advantage of the project. The store she has in her home has grown significantly and her family participates in the business with her. As a result of being in the project, ADEHGUA notes that Marcia has grown in self-esteem and is more tranquil. She was able to use her profits to pay for school inscription fees and school supplies for the new school year for all 4 of her children! Also, her 13 year old daughter, who had been working to help meet family needs, no longer has to work.

(Note: In a prior update Marcia had noted that it was one of her goals that her 13 year old daughter would not have to work so she could



concentrate on her studies. It is exciting to see this goal has been accomplished!

Juana currently serves as moderator of the Sur Occidente presbytery women's group. She is one of the women who participated in the November 2013 women's retreat where the microloan project was first conceived, and is beginning her 4th cycle of participation.

Two Exciting New Aspects Being Implemented in Cycles 4-6!

1. Women will receive additional training to strengthen them individually as well as in their roles in the family, community, and society in general. Topics covered will include *Women and Social and Productive Development* (ex: self-esteem, business development), *Preventive Health, Women's Health, and Women and the Environment*.
2. ADEHGUA is fostering greater independence of the groups so they will be fully prepared to continue operating independently at the end of 6 cycles. Currently they are training the leaders of the microloan groups in the loan verification process. The leaders are visiting each woman to verify that the microloan money has been spent as planned, to look for any risk, and to see if the family is participating. They are also evaluating the women's savings, participation and leadership in the group. The leaders express confidence in doing the verification visits because of the training they received from ADEHGUA.

(Continued from page 6)

Juana is enthusiastic about the benefits of the microloan



project, and shares how she has taken what she has learned and is now teaching a daughter-in-law and a granddaughter how to start their own businesses. (She embodies Learn, Do, and Teach!) She is very happy with ADEHGUA's work, and gives thanks to God for the project.

There are many ways YOU can be involved in the Guatemala Microloan Project!

PRAY: This is an important way for individuals, circles or PW groups to provide support. To pray for a specific individual, *contact Sue Barrett at suebar@comporium.net or 828-553-3621.* Prayer

partners will receive information and photos of the person they are praying for as it becomes available.

STAY INFORMED: Email mimimichael17@gmail.com or like our Facebook page at "Guatemala Microloan Project" to receive regular updates.

GIVE: A benefit of this project is that repaid loans are recycled into other loans. However, ongoing administrative expenses and additional capital to involve more women is needed. Checks payable to PW PWNC and designated for the Guatemala Microloan Fund can be sent to: *Sharon Meares, PW Treasurer, 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, Patricia Clark, Ellen Dozier, Ben Hill, Tina Joyner, Margarette Kennerly, Bethany Mannon, Susan Maveety, and Mimi Michael.

OFFER: The *Mother's Day Card Project* at your church. Invite others to honor special women on Mother's Day by donating to the Guatemala Microloan Project. Each honoree will receive a card explaining how the donation empowers women to grow in self-esteem, hope and freedom. For further information, instructions & to order cards contact *Debby Vial at debby.vial@gmail.com or 502-407-7402.*

In the next issue of *Joyful Noise*, highlights, pictures and stories from the January 2017 Guatemalan Partnership trip to Guatemala will be shared. The partnership visited with the two microloan groups and the leadership of our two sister Presbyteries. **Request to churches with a sister church in Guatemala** – Please try to send a letter annually from your PW to the women of your sister church sharing information about your activities of the past year.

Mimi Michael
Guatemala Partnership

Dates to Remember

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Spring Gathering, FPC Newton | April 8, 2017 |
| Synod Summer Gathering, Harrisonburg, VA | June 15 – 18, 2017 |
| Fall Gathering – East | Date/Location TBA |
| Fall Gathering-West, Bryson City PC | September 23, 2017 |
| Churchwide Gathering, Louisville, KY | August 2 – 5, 2018 |

Rita Warren
Presbyterian Women of WNC
3203 St. Augustine Place
Asheville, NC 28805

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