



NEWSLETTER FOR THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH - PRESBYTERY OF DES MOINES - JAN. 2020

Moderator's Musings: HAPPY NEW YEAR, PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN!



Sharon Falck
PW Moderator

You may be thinking, "I'm not a Presbyterian Woman because we no longer have a formal PW group in my church." I have GOOD NEWS FOR YOU-as long as you are a member of a Presbyterian Church you are a Presbyterian Woman!

No, you may not have a formal PW organization but I do know that many of you meet and do follow exactly what is defined by 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.***

As you read the purpose you are probably thinking of what you have done in the past to live up to the Purpose. I challenge you to look at the Purpose with new eyes and determine one or two things you may do to expand the love of Christ in your church, community, state and the world.

So get your thinking caps on and get to work right now!

For instance you may want to begin the Horizons Bible Study "Love Carved in Stone: A new look at the Ten Commandments" by Eugenia Gamble. It can be ordered by calling 800-533-4371 or going to www.presbyterianwomen.org/shop. You can also subscribe to Horizons, our award winning bi-monthly magazine. If you don't have a prayer chain at your church maybe now would be the time to organize one. Praying with and for others is a powerful connection to the love of God for his children.

To support the mission of the church worldwide please consider donating to the Birthday Offering in the Spring and the Thank Offering in the Fall. The funds are used to help women and children here in the United States and around the world. If you have not been participating in the Fellowship of the Least Coin, a worldwide ecumenical movement for prayer and justice, peace and reconciliation that might be a place to start. This was founded by Shanti Solomon, a Presbyterian woman, who believed if the women of the world would contribute the least coin of their country whenever they prayed, together they could provide funds to help women and children around the world.

Presbyterian women love color! We invite you to show your support for women who are victims of domestic abuse by wearing ORANGE on the 25th day of each month. When you wear BLACK on Thursday you are showing awareness and support for all women, children and youth who are victims of sex trafficking and abuse. To show support for

our Native American sisters wear RED to show you care about those who are missing, kidnapped and quite often murdered.

If there is a new woman in your community invite her to church and your women's group. Learn all you can about the homeless and immigrants in your community and seek ways you can help them.

These are some ideas that may start you thinking of some of your own. We will be anxious to hear what you are doing in 2020 to further the Purpose of PW in your church. To spread the word please take some pictures, write a brief description of your activities and send them to the editor of the Grapevine, Juanita Ott jott396116@aol.com so she can include them in the next Grapevine.

OUR PW BUDGET

Please note that beginning with this issue, the Grapevine will only be sent by email. Every group works hard for the money that is contributed to the Presbytery and it is up to the Coordinating Team to decide how that money can be best used to further the purpose and mission of the church. Since most people with computers have access to printers, you are being asked to use local resources to print whatever hard copies you need for your church. This may be a little inconvenient, but the money saved will be better used for distributing our resources to those who are most in need.

PW FALL GATHERING – INDIANOLA TRINITY UNITED

Love Carved in Stone

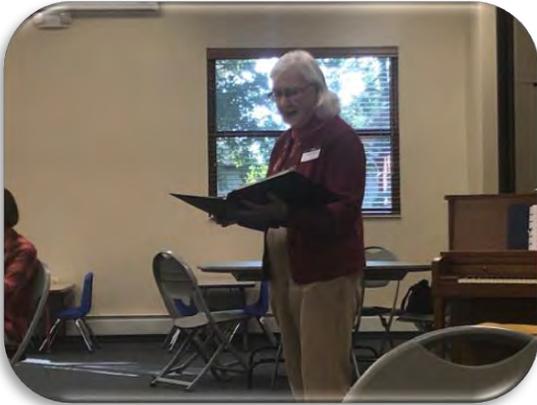


We were very fortunate to have Eugenia Anne Gamble, the author of *Love Carved in Stone*, as our speaker at the October 12 PW Gathering.

She inspired the group with many ideas and thoughts:

- “We live in an idol-rich time. We give them power that only belongs to God.”
- “Language shapes reality – cursing diminishes the value of your relationship with God. We too quickly assume that what we want is what God wants.”
- “Sabbath means to stop long enough to learn what it feels like to be created and not the creator.”
- “Honor means to give a place of priority to those who brought us to life and to those who lift us up.”
- “Murder includes destroying or damaging something that cannot be recreated or repaired. Ancient people talked about this as robbing God”
- “Do not take from a person that which makes a life of dignity possible. Think about who you are hurting to get what you want.”
- “Be safe to be all that God intended you be. Wake up to the kind of life God envisioned for us.”

Worship



Rev. Barbara Tooker Todd
Clergy representative to Presbyterian Women of
Presbytery of Des Moines led the worship and
singing.

*(PW purpose: we commit ourselves
to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible
study.)*



Of course the food was delicious. Especially:

Kathy Betterton's Corn Salad Recipe

4 cans whole kernel corn (drained)
1 8-oz package shredded cheddar cheese
1 onion, diced
1 green pepper, diced
1 small jar of original Miracle Whip

Combine all ingredients and refrigerate
overnight. When time to serve, breakup 1 bag
of Frito Chili Cheese-flavored corn chips and
mix into the salad.

*(PW purpose: we commit ourselves to build an inclusive caring community of women that
strengthens the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.)*



Christmas cards were made
for inmates at Mitchellville to
use to send to their children.

*(PW purpose: we commit
ourselves to work for justice
and peace)*



Supplies were collected
for the Warren County
Necessity Pantry, which
helps provide basic
necessities to families
and elderly in the
county.



*(PW purpose: we commit
ourselves to support the
mission of the church)*

PW SPRING GATHERING – PRESBYTERY OF DES MOINES

You have something to look forward to!

Yes, that phrase ended with a preposition but it still gets the point across. Last fall we had a great time in Indianola at our semi-annual gathering. Plan to join the fun, conversation and worship at our next Gathering on April 25th. Along with

everything else we will be presenting the PW Purpose awards. Nominate an incredible Presbyterian Woman who deserves this honor and join us on April 25th. Watch for more information in February.

WHATCHA UP TO?

Newton, First – A group is sewing “Days for Girls” supplies. Several other churches in the area have joined.

Oskaloosa, First – Quilts are being made for seniors in the area.

Des Moines, Park Avenue – Mittens, hats, receiving blankets, etc. are being collected for Bidwell

Indianola, Trinity United – Martha Circle is in charge of a sewing group that makes comforters for those who need them and in the spring they serve a “Gratitude Luncheon”. The women of Ana Circle host the Wonder Woman Dinner when the men of the church cook and serve dinner to all women to raise money for scholarships for Middle and High School students in Trinity’s Salvadoran two communities.

Show and Tell: The Grapevine provides the opportunity to share activities and projects of the women of your church! You might get some ideas to for your local church.

Send information and pictures to jott396116@aol.com and you can be featured in the next newsletter.

HONOR THE DEDICATED WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

Juanita Ott

Juanita Ott (Indianola, Trinity United) was presented with an Honorary PW Life Membership at the Presbytery Gathering on October 12 for her work as editor of “The Grapevine”. Our Presbytery has been blessed with many devoted and dedicated women whom we regard with respect and we value each opportunity to honor them.



Purpose Awards

The Presbyterian Women (PW) of the Presbytery of Des Moines establishes the PW Purpose Awards. The PW Coordinating Team recognizes there are women deserving of these awards throughout all the churches of the Presbytery; and are requesting nominations.

The awards will honor women of the Presbytery who have distinguished themselves in one of four categories taken from the PW Purpose statement. All women who are nominated will be honored.



PW Purpose Awards
 Presbyterian Women
 of the Presbytery of Des Moines
 2020 Nomination Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Church _____ City _____

PW Moderator _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Please choose one of the following categories for which you are making your nomination:

- Demonstrates faithfulness to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study.
- Demonstrates support for the mission of the church worldwide.
- Demonstrates working for justice and peace.
- Demonstrates steps to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the PC(USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

In one page or less, please elaborate 1) the reasons you feel this woman is deserving of the award, and 2) the answers to the following questions.

- 1. What contribution has this woman made to the life and mission of your church?**
- 2. How does this woman bear witness to their faith in Jesus Christ?**
- 3. What gifts and talents are exhibited by her actions?**
- 4. What evidence affirms this person's impact beyond the community of faith?**

Date _____ Pastor's Signature _____

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.*

Entries are limited to one per church. All women who are nominated will be honored. Please include a photograph with your entry. All info may be emailed to bdyer@dmpresbytery.org or sent by mail to the Presbytery of Des Moines, 2400 86th Street, Suite 20, Urbandale, IA 50322-4306 Deadline: March 31, 2020.

GROWING OUR FAITH

Devotion for Spring 2020 Grapevine

Isaiah 55:10-11; Matthew 22:37-40

Rev. Barbara Tooker Todd

Clergy representative to Presbyterian Women of Presbytery of Des Moines

Isaiah 55:10-11 “My word is like the snow and the rain that come down from the sky to water the earth. They make the crops grow and provide seed for planting and food to eat. So also will be the word that I speak—it will not fail to do what I plan for it; it will do everything I send it to do.” Good News Bible

Matthew 22:37-40 “One of [the Pharisees], an expert in the law, tested [Jesus] with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’

“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’ NRSV

Sitting in the breakfast room of a hotel not long ago, I watched as someone stepped in front of a guest, blocking her view of the television. The person said, “Excuse me,” and the guest replied, “You never have to apologize for stepping between me and the bad news of the morning.” The one who had excused herself added, “I wish they could find some good news to report.”

Did you catch the significance of changing one word in that exchange?

According to the prophet Isaiah, God’s Word is spoken with a good purpose. Good is designed into everything. But, appearances can be deceiving. Looked at from the vantage point of the Egyptians, the plagues were a total disaster. But, looked at from the perspective of the Israelites, the plagues represented an avenue of escape to a new life. “Disaster” or “escape”? One word can shift the perspective drastically.

That’s why “Love Carved in Stone” (the current PW Bible study) is so important. We have spent literally thousands of years considering a list of “Thou Shalt Nots” as restrictions to behavior. This study is changing our perspective, so that we can now consider what God had in mind. God’s Word is spoken to bring about good.

Right from the start, Rev. Gamble, the Bible study’s author, says, “One way to consider the Ten Words is as a love letter from God to that community stuck in the wilderness.” Not only does she give us “word” in place of commandment,” but she goes on to tell us that the “Law” is actually a love letter! Talk about a shift in perspective!

What I find most interesting about this study is the way Rev. Gamble uses the lens of the New Testament to help us understand the heart of God by looking at the heart of Jesus. Jesus told a parable about a farmer who was sowing seed. When they were alone with him, the disciples asked him what he meant by all the details about seed falling on a path, in a briar patch, or in good soil. In response, Jesus said, “The farmer sows the word...” Jesus substituted “word” for “seed” and the meaning became clear to the disciples and to us. Perhaps that is the gift of Love Carved in Stone. If we consider what God said as a love letter, the meaning of the Ten Words changes from restrictions to guidance, and encouragement to live God’s way as Jesus showed us.

An expert in the Law asked Jesus, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’

The Ten Words. Jesus. Worlds apart? Or, two love letters written by the same author? How we think about things really matters. Thanks, Eugenia.

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This newsletter is being sent to all who have provided an address. Please share with the members of your PW and make copies of this Grapevine to give to those in and outside your group. Urge them to share with others. Don't keep it a secret! If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please contact Betty Dyer, Presbytery of Des Moines administrative assistant at bdyer@dmpresbytery.org or 515-276-4991.

News about Presbyterian Women:

Des Moines Presbytery - dmpresbytery.org

Synod of Lakes and Prairies - <http://www.lakesandprairies.org>

Presbyterian Women - <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org>

Presbyterian Women on Social Media

YouTube—<http://www.youtube.com/presbyterianwomen>

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Blogs—<http://www.pwpcusa.typepad.com>

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