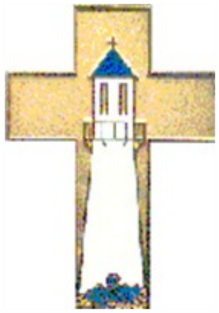

The Lighthouse

March 2026 **Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the North Northeast**

Moderator's Message

Greetings Sisters (and Brothers) Servant Leaders ~~

"To everything, there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1, KJV)

Living in the Synod of the Northeast, we are all fortunate to experience all the seasons—highs and lows—complete with God's paint brush to highlight the beauty.

Winter:

Several days this winter, our thermometer read -0. (Tell me the difference between -0 and +O).

We have had our fair share of snow and, with the bright red cardinals, it's easy to see; identifying other birds is easier like red-headed woodpeckers.

Now we are hearing some birds singing. I've been told this is the beginning of their mating calls, which means spring is around the corner.

Spring:

With spring on the way, I am sure that many Presbytery PW Spring Gatherings are being planned. Plan to attend, if possible. A lot of work goes into the planning of each.

Spring brings flowers and leaves on the trees.

Every March is the UN Commission on the Status of Women held in NYC. At least 6 PWSNE members are attending this year. It is not too late to register to attend virtual events from your own home. If you have further questions, please contact Magdalene Lewis.

The Justice & Peace "Caring and Sharing" will be held March 8 via Zoom. See details elsewhere in "The Lighthouse."

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email articles with **PW Lighthouse** in subject line to august13sss@gmail.com

Please Note:
Lighthouse Deadlines:

March 1 and September 1
This will help to better promote Spring and Fall news better.

Summer:

Next we have summer when the daylight is longer and the temperature will be in the 80s.

I am looking forward to my husband's garden and all the fresh produce to eat and can.

My calming time is enjoying watching the finch and hummingbirds.

Fall:

I am really looking forward to the Fall when we have our Triennial Gathering in New Hampshire.

It is such a historic treat to have the kind invitation from the PW/Northern New England.

Just imagine the fall colors in such a peaceful environment with wonderful hospitality. I hope you put this on your calendar and plan to attend.

Our Design Team has many great plans for a meaningful event.

Triennial details:

The Triennial will include our annual business meeting, election of officers, and passing the budget.

If you have any ideas of someone who would be a great nominee for positions that are going to be needed to be filled, contact Rita Hooper or any member of the Nomination Committee.

Due to health concerns, Lori Evans needed to step down as Justice & Peace Coordinator. That position is vacant right now.

I am hoping to see many of you via Zoom meetings or in person. And "Do Everything in Love,"

In Christ's Service,
Virginia Champlin, PWSNE Moderator 2023-2026

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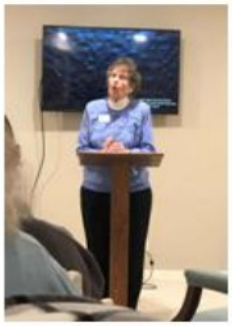
This month is celebrating all women in history in various areas. PW groups across the country may chose ways they would like to celebrate. Please go to Presbyterian Women Inc. for an article to assist you in ideas. Look for the article Women's History Month.

Empowering Women. Making Hope Out of Clay.

Our Haddonfield PW and the Haddon Heights PW co-hosted a women's Fall Gathering in our Parlor. In a family atmosphere we enjoyed meeting women from surrounding churches. Virginia Ritchie greeted our guests and introduced the "Mud Girls" founder, Dorrie Papademetriou, has been passionate about two things: art and social change.

Mud Girls Studio has empowered disadvantaged women through training and employment and helps women transition onto a pathway towards self-sufficiency. They are in Atlantic City.



From Church of the Master PW

Church of the Master will be celebrating Women Month of March, with speakers each Sunday. Church of the Master is located at 82 Morningside Avenue @ 122nd street in Harlem, New York 10027. All are invited ,and especially the third Sunday March 15th this will be our Women Day service. All services starts at 11:a.m.

Blessings,

Elder Joyce Seebrooks
Church of the Master PW Moderator

News from Haddon Heights, NJ

Women's "Friendship Circle" News

KIVA LOANS

Since 2012, the Women's Friendship Circle of First Presbyterian Church Haddon Heights has provided $14,875 in Kiva loans to women in underserved communities throughout the world. These women are entrepreneurs who need a little help to expand or improve their businesses. The loan is usually $200. Although that appears to be a small amount, its impact can dramatically improve the recipient's business and life. Each recipient is expected to pay back the loan over time. In 13 years of providing Kiva loans, 98% of our recipients have paid back their loans in full. The Circle currently has four outstanding loans.

The photo on the next page shows our current loan recipients.

SUPPORTING THE MUDGIRLS

At the October 18 fall gathering of Presbyterian Women in Haddonfield, several members of the Friendship Circle enjoyed a presentation about MudGirls Studio, a non-profit organization located in Atlantic City. MudGirls Studio provides opportunities in art and entrepreneurship to economically disadvantaged and at-risk women by providing training in the creation of unique and beautiful ceramic pieces.

Members of the Circle voted to support MudGirls Studio in two ways: (1) Individual members opted to order ceramic pieces for their own use and as gifts, and (2) the group made a monetary donation to the organization in November. Additionally, our women's group encouraged interested members of the congregation to add to our group's monetary donation or order their own lovely ceramic pieces.

The photo on the next page shows three of our women bringing the congregational orders to MudGirls Studio in Atlantic City.

IN MEMORIAM DONATIONS

When a female member of our church passes away, we make a donation to any of a number of charitable organizations in her memory. This year we gave $100.00 to Inglesia Hispana Mission in South Jersey to assist migrant workers.

Submitted by,

Polly Mitchell

Photos From Haddon Heights Article

Jamila

Fatmata

Christine

Rosita

Lenie

Harimany

Lillian

Women from Haddon PW bringing the congregational orders to MudGirls Studio in Atlantic City.

The Women of Grace Widows Fund is still going strong!

Submitted by Margot Gorman

Since 2008, we have been sharing God's love with a group of widows in northern Malawi, Africa through the Women of Grace Widows Fund. Our aim is to increase the health and security of the widow and her family by providing:

*Housing improvements that are beyond the means of the widows

*Assistance with unexpected critical needs (hospital transport for medical care, fertilizer during a poor growing season, repair of storm damaged housing)

*Sewing training for a reliable opportunity to boost household income
The widows have learned to sew washable menstrual kits and are paid for every finished kit, providing a reliable income. Approximately 700 kits are distributed for free each year to local school girls to help them stay in school.

We will return to Malawi in May 2026 for 3 weeks to continue to listen to the widows, look at recent joys and challenges, and determine the next steps. Please pray for safe travels and God's continued blessing on this wonderful project.

The most recent newsletter from the Widows Fund can be found at

Women of Grace - 2025 Newsletter.pdf

Meet A Widow……Coliness Tembo

Coliness was born in Mzimba district in 1957. She started school in 1962 in Grade 1 but dropped out after Grade 6 due to lack of money for school fees. She married her husband, Lyson Nyangulu, at age 18. She says "I met my husband when he came by our village. He was desperately looking for a wife to marry and spotted me. He asked my parents to marry me and I agreed." Lyson worked in forestry at the Lusangazi Forest in Nkhata Bay district but died in 2006 after an operation for a tumor.

Coliness and Lyson had 2 daughters and 2 sons, all of whom have died. She was left bearing all the burdens of raising her grandchildren. In 2016, Coliness' inadequate house crumbled in the rainy season. "I would sleep out in the open with my grandchildren. We had no choice but to face the harsh seasons. I felt my life was meaningless. When Women of Grace Widows saw my situation, they built a house for me." "Every time our sewing products are sold, I am able to pay school fees for my grandchildren and able to afford some basic needs such as food, soap, and salt. Together we are able to help girls manage their menstrual hygiene which encourages them to go to school."

Women of grace cont.

"To me, the widows' group is a place of turning people's lives around. I am grateful for the tremendous help I receive from our supporters in America and I pray they will continue. God should bless our supporters, keep them from any attack from Satan, and keep their families safe and blessed"

Lighthouse Pitch

Time flies! And before too long phones will begin ringing, asking some of you ladies if you would accept a position on the PW Synod team. We will have vacancies for the following offices:

* Mod-elect - this position would start immediately
* Synod rep to CCT Bd.
SEARCH rep.for NJ,
Seminarian
*2 yr term for treasurer
* Diversity Co-ordinator

* at this time these are the most urgent or difficult positions to fill!

If one of these offices sounds interesting to you or if you know someone who would do a good job for PW, please contact one of the SEARCH Committee members:

Rita Hooper, chair twohoops2@gmail.com,
Marlene McGee, representing NYC & NE, Marlene.mcgee1960@gmail.com
Andrea Ralph upstate NY, aralph20@hotmail.com
and Lorraine Cuffie, NJ ,lcuffie@vewrixzon.net
The PW Synod Manual has a job description for each of these positions.

Ladies you know what to do - start thinking, start praying and start making our SEARCH phones ring! Spring is in the Air!

From Bisi Shofu, Re Churchwide

Recommendations for positions on Churchwide are needed for the following: Korean American Rep, Asian American Rep and two young women Reps.

Any suggestions email Bisi Shofu at bisi.shofu@gmail.com

Spring Time Around Us—Spring Time Within Us

A chipmunk peeking from its
winter barrow.
A robin sitting in a snowy field.
A red squirrel trying to see over a snow bank.
All with a questioning
look because of the ice and snow.
Spring is arriving but the
the first spring day
is nowhere to be found.

But hope comes with the small
purple flower pushing up
through the snow.
May we too be filled with
hope is we traverse
The snowy wilderness.
Spring will come.
Our hearts will blossom.
Easter's love awaits.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalm 24:1

~Maxine G. Hunter~

***Photos by Nick Hunter**

Racial Equaility Dialogue (RED) Update

Draw the circle, draw the circle wide. Let this be our song: No one stands alone.
We'll stand side by side
Draw the circle, draw the circle wide

The lyrics of this much beloved song reflect the goals of **Presbyterian Women's Racial Equity Dialogue (RED) Team**. We strive to bring all women together to promote communication, understanding, compassion, and inspiration so that no woman stands alone.

Our Synod of the NorthEast's RED representatives are Magdalene Lewis of the Presbytery of New York City and Donna Vize Wasik of the Presbytery for Southern New Jersey. And, from March 6-20,2026, they will join 33 other Presbyterian Women to serve as delegates to the 70th Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations.

It would be great if Magdalene and Donna could join with you in planning spring gatherings or retreats for women in your Presbytery or Congregation! They are available (for free!!!) as speakers/facilitators for both in-person & zoom meetings. Collaborating with your team, they can provide insights and empowerment as well as resources, conversations, and interactive activities. **Reach out to them NOW to keep the circle drawing wider and wider!**

Magdalene Lewis, Presbytery for New York City magdalenelewis08@gmail.com
Donna Vize Wasik, Presbytery for Southern New Jersey dvwasik@gmail.com

Draw the circle, draw it wider still. Let this be our song, no one stands alone
Standing side by side
Draw the circle, draw the circle wide

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

Did You Hear the Bell Ring?

Many of us have watched the 1946 Christmas movie “It’s a Wonderful Life.”
Remember the bell rings when an angel earns their wings. The bell rang for a very special Presbyterian Woman when Barbara Epley Shuck, brook the bonds of this world and joined the angel choir on Jan. 31.

Barbara was a learner, educator, journalist, photographer, newsletter editor, den leader, Sunday school teacher, bookclubber, and adventurer. She fought for justice, love and kindness and most assuredly walked humbly with her God. She shared her many talents with the YWCA, where she had a part in establishing services for domestic abuse and rape crisis. She was a vp and board member of League of Women Voters and Pres. of the American Association of University Women. In her local church she started their Community Thanksgiving Dinners, Food Pantry and other community services. She was Moderator of Presbyterian Women in her church and Presbytery, and the Moderator of Synod of the Northeast 1999-2001. She was a participant in the Global Exchange to the Middle East and traveled throughout the Synod sharing her experiences. She became a Commissioned Lay Pastor in 1990 and did substitute work in churches for 30 years. She shared her skills as President of NY Church Women United and served on their national board representing the Northeast.

The ringing bell symbolizes the lesson that ‘no person is a failure who has friends’ and
Barbara will best be remembered as friend to all who knew her. Barbara leaves three sons, eight grandchildren two great grandchildren and a sister.

A Memorial Service will be held March 21 at First Presbyterian Church, 1 Elm Street. Whitesboro, NY at 11 am with reception following. Whitesboro is near Utica and not far from the NYS Thruway.

Memorial donations would be appreciated for the Whitesboro Church, Abraham House which offers free end of life care, the Utica YWCA and the Heifer Project.

Caring and Sharing March 8, 2026

"Caring and Sharing" – Justice and Peace month

Sunday, March 8th 7- 8 PM via Zoom

"Have You Heard Our Cries?" 2025 Presbyterian Peace Network for Korea (PPNK).

Event Highlights

- **Theme:** "Have You Heard Our Cries?"

- **Presenter: Linda Russell**, Elder from the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse and Co-convener of the PPNK.

- **The Journey:** A 10-day peace mission to South Korea that took place from **October 21–30, 2025**. Linda will give you an overview of the Peace efforts going on in South Korea and share some of the sites along the way. This was an incredible Peace Journey. You won't want to miss all that Linda will share. She just might be joined by others who were on this trip, too

- **New Time:** Please note the meeting now starts at **7:00 PM** (by popular request).

Zoom Instructions:

Topic: Caring and Sharing

Time: March 8, 2026 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87343966536?pwd=E76yzRFjq7DlGWg7CDTf9Q6VDgx5vk.1

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From Virginia——-Notes from the January meeting of Moderators across Churchwide.

Susan Jackson Dowd will coordinate an Action without Meeting in February for the voting representatives to the 2027 Business Meeting and will send a blurb to the synod mods to advertise this upcoming action.

This is to aim to address voting representatives for the Churchwide Business Meeting. She proposed amending the quorum requirement in the national bylaws to a simple majority, reflecting changes in church demographics. Susan assured participants that a formal recommendation would be sent out, allowing for email participation

JOIN THE PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF THE GENEVA PRESBYTERY FOR ITS SPRING GATHERING

She arrived alone and afraid. The two-day bus trip gave her ample time to relive the trauma of the daily abuse. It also gave her time to imagine her future. She was ready for change, prepared to find hope and to heal. We watched her spend her last dollar at McDonald's, and then we drove her to the Potter's Hands Foundation safe home. Here, she learned she was loved. She learned that she had value. She learned that she had her own bed, she made friends who believed in her. She ate and reflected and grew – as a free woman with an independent mind and dreams.

Twelve months later, a newly confident young woman drove herself to her graduation party where she was greeted by dozens of friends and mentors. During her time with Potter's Hands, she earned her high school equivalency diploma, a driver's license, nursing assistant certification and full-time employment. Equally important, she embarked on a healing journey from trauma, addiction and abuse, and she found the conviction to lead other survivors of trafficking toward healing, wholeness and independence.

PW of the Geneva Presbytery will hold its spring gathering May 8,2026, at the Geneva Presbyterian Church in Geneva, NY. Featured guests will be the Potter's Hands Foundation, is a faith-based, non-profit 501c3 organization committed to serving survivors of sexual exploitation and sex trafficking as they work through the process of restoration and healing. They dedicate themselves to providing a safe, secure environment in which female victims of severe childhood sexual abuse, human trafficking, and victims of human sex trafficking will receive physical, emotional, and spiritual healing, and learn the skills necessary for self-reliance and reintegration to society. We will also assist these individuals in building a support network of healthy relationships with family, friends, and community. Their overall goal is to support these women through the restoration process enabling them to become healthy and productive members of their communities.

For more information, please contact Juana (Joanne) Tunison lalocat@aol.com

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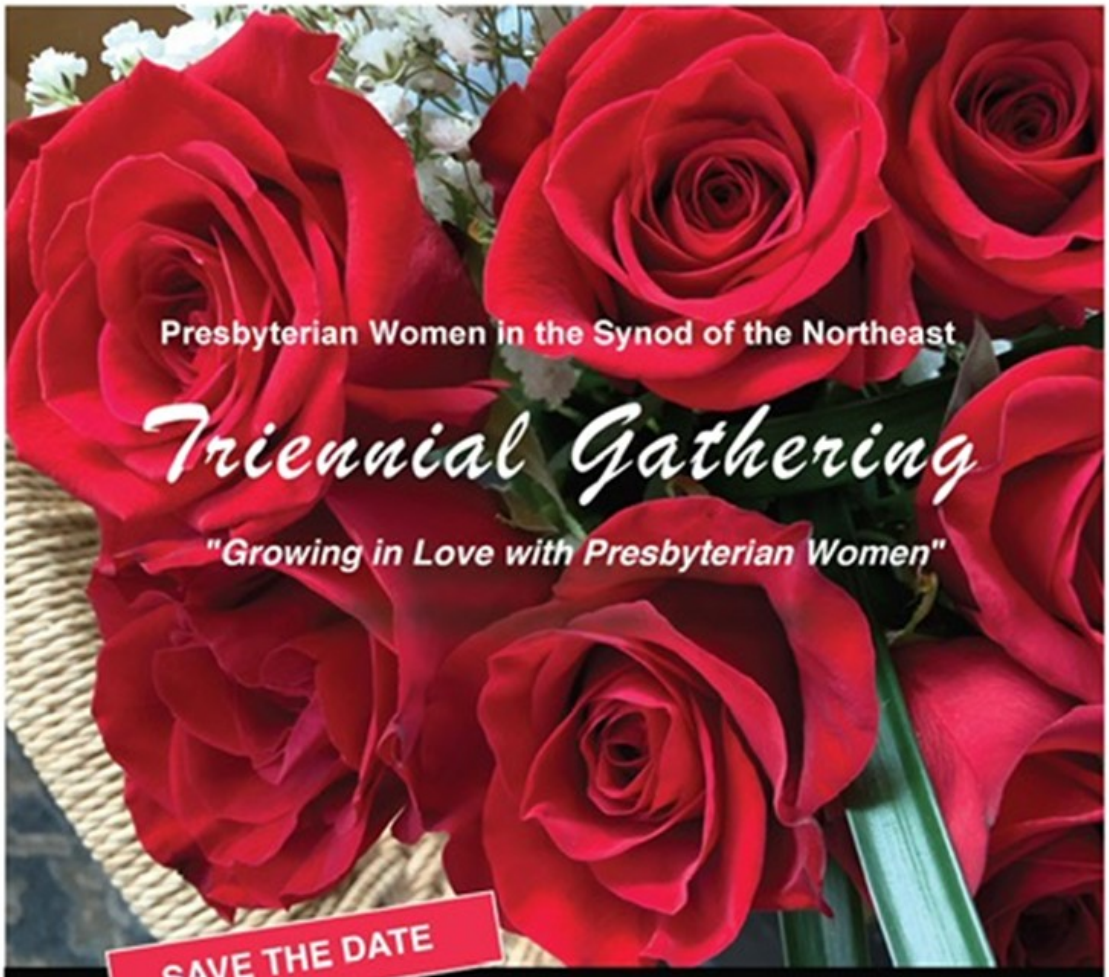
More News from PW of Southern New Jersey

They have a great newsletter called "Kindred Spirit" which has some additional news you may be interested in. Jenny Stark is the editor and can be reached at jenny.lou.stark@gmail.com to receive their newletter.



Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast

Triennial Gathering

"Growing in Love with Presbyterian Women"

SAVE THE DATE

OCT. 2-4, 2026

Singing Hills Christian Camp
71 King Drive
Plainview , NH

Keep Alert,
stand firm in your faith,
be courageous,
be strong.

Let all that you do
be done in love

1 COR. 16:13-14