

JUNE 2020
NEWSLETTER
FOR THE
PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
IN THE
PRESBYTERY OF SCIOTO
VALLEY

The Purpose of Presbyterian Women is to:

- ♥ Nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
- ♥ Support the mission of the church worldwide,
- ♥ Work for justice and peace, and
- ♥ Build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.



*“and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6:8*

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Feel free to contact any of these
women about PW.

The Peace of Christ to All:

This is such a frustrating time, it seems nothing can be planned, we have no ideas of what tomorrow will bring; however, there is one thing we know: God is with us always –a promise all of us cling to in this chaotic world of corona virus. We are tired and sad; and we miss being with each other. Now another crisis with the tragic death of George Floyd and the justified protests designed to be peaceful, but being infiltrated with people who are in it for destruction and violence, not for justice. How sad that our country has not deliberately, better addressed this racism. Let us pray that all of us get really serious about this issue and do something. And also, it is possible that the virus will rise up in greater numbers because of the large crowds. We'll just have to still go day by day. Yes, God is with us, and all we can do is to trust. And we will get through this together.

The PW/PSV had a CT meeting via phone conference. Another meeting is planned July 11th for planning and to decide whether or not to have a Gathering August 22nd. We do not have a place confirmed yet. The next Gathering is scheduled for October 24th at Hanover PC. We do have a slate for new leaders:

V.M. for Justice and Peace – Susan Imel

Resource Liaison – Diane Boster

Nancy Shuster will serve as Treasurer for one more year.

We still need two people for the Search Committee. Please contact me if any of you are willing to serve.

There will be 4 Webinars in June introducing this year's timely bible study, "Into the Light Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament". Contact Martha Pool if you don't already have the information.

Found this prayer and really liked it, however, I took the liberty of changing ordinariness to un-ordinariness. These times are certainly not ordinary.

A Prayer by Ted Loder:

***Empower me to be a bold participant,
rather than a timid saint in waiting,
in the difficult (un-)ordinariness of now;
to exercise the authority of honesty,
rather than to defer to power, or deceive to get it;
and, by grace, to find treasures of joy, or friendship,
of peace hidden in the fields of the daily you give me to plow***

Blessings of peace and joy,

Charlsie

Rev. Charlsie Ramsey, Moderator

Remembering Forbearance Church, Worship without Singing, & General info about Hymn Texts

By Martha Pool, Vice-Moderator of Study & Spiritual Development

Many of you have been around Presbyterian Women long enough to remember the Dispatches from Forbearance Church, written by Charlotte Johnstone, in Horizons Magazine from 1998 to 2008. For some of us, it was often the first article we read to quell the mounting anticipation of what might be happening in this fictional church community. Well, during the COVID-19 pandemic, PW has pulled some of these articles and put them on Facebook about once a week. For those of you not on Facebook yet with a computer browser at hand, I thought you might like to access these. You can find them by going to the presbyterianwomen.org and typing Forbearance Church in the Search window. You'll have to visit this page regularly to get the newest ones as they are uploaded to Facebook. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have each week.

When the PW/PSV Coordinating Team conferred on May 23, one of the topics I heard concerned how to have worship without singing. So, I want to give you some ideas on practical things you might do moving forward and also some background on hymn texts in general.

Experts in both the mechanics of singing and science of epidemiology (infection) backed by a large body of research are warning that the "forceful mechanics" of singing turns those infected into "super-spreaders" – projecting virus-containing droplets in larger quantities over greater distances in confined spaces such as sanctuaries and classrooms that normal social distancing practices and common masks are largely ineffective against. Simply put, when we get back together, among other things we should NOT be singing as usual. The following is from an article from PCUSA.



[SOME TIPS ON PROVIDING AND SHARING MUSIC DURING AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC](#) by
Presbyterian Association of Musicians | Special to Presbyterian News Service

LOUISVILLE — *These ideas are offered for congregations as they navigate the return to public worship and seek to bridge online and in-person gatherings. These suggestions may need to be adapted for a particular context of ministry. They should be undertaken only insofar as local resources and current conditions allow.*

1. Provide hymnals for each household or invite people to procure their own. Make use of these hymnals in online worship and encourage members to employ them for personal study, devotion, prayer, or in music making.
2. Recruit choir members and other singers in the congregation to call or video chat other members and sing a favorite hymn for them, or record in advance and send by email. This may serve as an entrée for pastoral care, outreach or fellowship.



3. When congregational singing is not possible, worshipers may read and pray the words of hymns in silence while they are interpreted on the organ, piano, or other instrument(s). Project or display the lyrics. Hum instead of sing, use rhythm instruments, body movement and hand motions.
4. As long as singing and wind instruments are restricted, organize handbell, string, or percussion ensembles to provide collaborative instrumental music — wearing masks as needed and maintaining appropriate distances.
5. Identify musicians who live in the same family or household and have been sheltering in place together and invite these persons to contribute collaborative video or audio recordings for online worship. When it is safe to gather outdoors or at a distance in the sanctuary, these persons may also present musical offerings in public worship.



6. Select a hymn or song for the week, perhaps based on the biblical readings used in public worship or a season in the Christian year. Invite members to study, pray, sing, illustrate, or even memorize the selected hymn each week.
7. Teach the use of hymns as a resource for personal spiritual disciplines. Hymn texts may be used in [lectio Divina](#). An image, phrase, or word may be used in breath prayer or centering prayer. An instrumentalist might practice a melody as a form of prayer. Phrases or stanzas from hymns can be used in contemplation while exercising, creating visual art or exploring the natural world.
8. Include meditations on hymn texts in sermons, educational offerings, church newsletters, social media posts and other avenues for formation and communication. Hymn texts are a valuable resource for theological reflection because they are often so memorable, evocative, concise and accessible in their articulation of the faith.
9. Collaborate with neighboring congregations and ecumenical partners to encourage one another, learn from one another and find creative (and safe) ways of teaching new songs, reflecting on hymns, and making music together.
- 10. Do what you can with what you have — and trust in God's grace.** Try not to be anxious about keeping up with the most technologically adventurous or proficient congregations on the internet. Just glorify and enjoy God, worshiping and making music to the best of your ability at this time. Perhaps it was for times such as these that the psalmist exhorted us: ***“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the Earth” (Psalm 100:1).***



Come Sing, O Church, In Joy

Liturgical song unites the congregation as one body, moving each individual participant into the worshipping life of the community.

A lyric may be born out of personal faith experience, but must possess wider relevance to function well as a congregational song. Nobody should be excluded. Different people need to truly relate to the text of the hymn as their own, applicable to them and expressive of their relationship with God. The text must enable a diverse group of individuals to be bound together as one worshipping community.

The text must be comprehensible and meaningful. We are not singing merely to recall comforting memories from early childhood; it seeks rather to nurture mature faith. The language of well-known and even well-loved hymns may now appear archaic or exclusive. Modern scientific and technological developments have enabled us to articulate more than Biblical authors could imagine. Older hymns about creation may promote taming or domination, whereas our current concern is care for the environment. Hymns which sent many faithful soldiers out to the mission fields now appear embarrassingly racist and imperialist, and it is not common now for the word 'man' to be understood as meaning 'all people'. Thus, alterations or omissions become necessary, in accordance with the historical tradition of hymnody.

To carry meaning, liturgical lyrics must express with authenticity who we are and who God is. In order to distinguish a hymn text from a talent show song, or a ditty at a pub singalong, Christian theological content is essential. Thus hymn-writers look to the Bible and liturgical texts as primary sources. The Psalms offer the richest source of words to sing, since they are essentially the Bible's hymnbook. Psalms and Biblical canticles also offer a variety of structural models for contemporary sung prayer.

Words sung to music embed themselves in the memory more firmly than those merely recited. The meaning of the words we sing is shaped as we incorporate our singing into liturgical action. A good hymn highlights, affirms, describes, explains or alludes to the liturgical action; fewer effective hymns obscure, over-emphasize, create too narrow a focus or distract. We sing of our past, present and future, in songs which give voice to our memories, experiences and aspirations. If the words we sing seem irrelevant, we are unlikely to pay heed to them in everyday life.

Lyrics for liturgy are not dry doctrinal documents, but allow for the expression of the truths of our faith with spirit, with emotion. More than words which we hear, we make our own the words we sing. These are placed on our lips, memorized and absorbed into our bodies. We internalize these texts to nourish us so that we might share them with others with integrity and conviction.

**Liturgical song draws us together as the body of Christ,
and sends us out to build His Kingdom.**

(Editor's note . . . this report is included to keep everyone informed since the April Gathering was not held. Other cancellations followed and please read the moderator's report to see further updates.)

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Scioto Valley
Winter Gathering February 22, 2020
Fredericktown Presbyterian Church
Widening Our Circle – Nurturing our Faith through Justice and Peace

The business meeting was called to order with prayer by the Moderator, Rev. Charlise Ramsey at 10:15 in the sanctuary of the church.

Approval of the agenda: The agenda was approved by consensus

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the Fall Gathering, October 26, 2019 business meeting were approved as presented

Treasurer's Report: Nancy Shuster reported a balance of \$5661.52; report was received and will be filed for audit. The budget of \$10,000.00 for 2020-2021 was approved on motion. Nancy also noted the following totals for the last year: Birthday Offerings, \$2,965.50; Mission Dollars \$21,584.28; Thank Offering \$6,481.27; Least Coin \$841.14.

Vice Moderator for Studies and Spiritual Development: Martha Pool, VM for Spiritual Studies announced the book to read for Spring Gathering is *Listening Life; by Adam McHugh*.

Vice Moderator for Justice and Peace: Karen Hjelm reminded us that the Presbyterian Women encourage the Church to take action on the chronic substance abuse disorder which needs our attention as a public health issue.

Vice Moderator for Mission Interpretation: Beth Malchus-Stafa reminded us of the Birthday Offering, and Black History Month talking about Lucy Craft Laney as a woman who had done good things for women.

Search Committee: Judy Pflaumer thanked the churches who are willing to host CT or Gatherings in the year 2020-21. We need a treasurer, vice-moderator for justice and peace and members of search for the next terms.

Yearbook and Directory: Lynne McLeish Please get information to her on schedule for the programs. Also, Lynne told us she sends 160 Newsletters by email and 100 hard copies, noting the comparison to the number of women in attendance at the Gatherings and encouraged us to think about this and hopefully arrive at a way to encourage more to attend.

Communicator: Judy Oeder reported she has Mother's Day Cards to sell; promoted the Synod Gathering July 17 and ,18 in Dearborn, MI and reminded us of Churchwide in 2021 in St. Louis, MO.

Resource Liaison: Karen Hypes, Jane McKee reminded us there would be no Women of Faith awards at the Spring Gathering as they are being done at the local churches. They will be compiling a Mission Resource Booklet in the future . Ideas for the booklet will be gathered at the Fall Gathering in October.

Announcements: Betty Kennedy announced July 17 and 18, 2020 are the dates for the Synod PW Gathering in Dearborn, MI at First Presbyterian Church sharing some of the topics for plenary speakers and workshops.

Susan Imel encouraged all to attend the Spring Gathering at Covenant to enjoy lunch, as the food is always good.

A motion was moved, seconded and passed to adjourn.

The Moderator thanked the women of Fredericktown Church for their help in making our day most enjoyable then adjourned us with prayer.

Respectively submitted,

Betty Kennedy, Secretary

PW TREASURER'S REPORT MAY 23, 2020

BEGINNING BANK BALANCE:	\$ 5,661.52
<u>INCOME/DEPOSITS</u>	
JANUARY 15 THRU MAY 23	\$ 11,989.38
<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	\$ 17,650.90
<u>EXPENSES/CHECKS</u>	
CKS# 1972-1991	\$ (13,859.42)
BALANCE MAY23, 2020	\$ 3,791.48



2019 GATHERINGS FINANCIAL INFORMATION

<u>Hosting church</u>	<u>Registration & Offering</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	
Winter - Circleville	\$523.00	\$577.00	-\$54.00
Spring - Hanover	\$1,110.00	\$676.00	\$434.00
Summer - W CT. H	\$969.00	\$767.00	\$202.00
Fall - Worthington	\$743.00	\$325.00	\$418.00
	\$3,345.00	\$2,345.00	\$1,000.00

2019-2020

Postage Costs: \$493.00 (budget \$505.00)

Printing Costs: \$886.00 (budget \$900.00)

Respectfully submitted (via phone conference),

Nancy Shuster, Treasurer