



WINTER 2024

Putting faith in action is what we do!



A NOTE FROM THE PW MODERATOR

Barbara Brinson

After several years of not having a Winter Gathering, PW held a wonderful assembly of over 50 women in the Fellowship Hall on January 14 after church. We enjoyed a variety of homemade soups, crackers, and cornbread as well as many delicious desserts. Rev. Mary Katherine Robinson gave our blessing, and after we ate, we had a brief business meeting. Leslie Applewhite of the PW Nominating Committee officiated over the voting process for our new officers and moderators. Led by Karen Austin, an inspiring lesson with a good group discussion followed. We all brought gloves, hats, socks, and scarfs to donate to SVCM, and Becky Jo Sumner closed our meeting with prayer, giving thanks for the food and fellowship we had shared as well as blessing the donations we had brought and the people who would be wearing them. The gathering was spirit-filled and full of enthusiasm, energy, and inspiration! We look forward to our Spring Gathering on May 16 at 5:30 p.m.



PW VIRAL VIDEOS

written by Karen Austin



How to Watch Karen's Videos

- Go to the BMPC website, bmpcnc.org.
- Put your cursor on the word **Grow** at the top of the page.
- A menu will drop down. Click on **Presbyterian Women**.
- Scroll down to the bottom of the page where there are buttons for each year's videos.
- Click a button and a menu of that year's videos appears.

Click **HERE** to be redirected to the YouTube playlist.

In the spring of 2020, Covid ran into BMPC like a freight train and PW struggled to cope. Then we had an inspiration - we could post lesson videos on the internet, and our circle members could watch in the safety of their own homes. I had no experience with this kind of thing but we were blessed that Sam Webber, our Operations Manager, did. We recorded the videos with little more than a camera and a tripod. Still, they were appreciated, and the videos got more "watches" than expected. *Who was watching these homemade lessons?* I got an email from a PW sister in Missouri, saying her circle was using the lessons. There was an email from a Presbyterian woman in Ireland who'd stumbled across a lesson and wondered if there were more. Emails continued to trickle in. Recently a woman near Norfolk, VA emailed, saying that her church's PW is using the videos, and she's recommended them to other churches in her Presbytery as well! In spring 2022 we upgraded things when James Robinson-Long, a newer church member, volunteered to record the videos. He had experience with video production, along with top-notch equipment.

His expertise gave them more polish and I love referring to him as "my videographer." We considered suspending the videos as Covid restrictions eased, but folks encouraged us to keep making them. Soon we'll send information on our videos to WNC Presbytery and PC (USA) headquarters in Louisville, KY. In the meantime, thanks for all the support and encouragement from my PW sisters here at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church!

Women's Connection

Registration is open for the Women's Connection 2024 at Montreat Conference Center! This year's Keynote Speaker is Becca Stevens. Stevens is a nonprofit leader, entrepreneur, priest, survivor, founder, and President of **Thistle Farms** in Nashville, TN. Her message of love as the strongest force for change will inspire you and the deep connections you'll make with other women will nurture and bless you. Register for Women's Connection **HERE** or visit <https://montreat.org/events/wc-2024>

Scholarships may be available and more information will follow.



Becca Stevens/Martin B. Cherry/Nashville Business Journal

MISSION MINUTE

COLD HANDS, WARM HEARTS

written by Jane Belsches

On frigid days, many in our community will have warmer hands, feet, and heads. I delivered a HUGE bag of our cold-weather donation items to Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry last month. As you can see in the picture below, they have shelves for these items just inside the clients' door. A portion of the Winter Gathering donations were also placed in our Blessing Box located on Montreat Road near the BMPC south parking lot.



SVCM employee Sherry Lunsford

HEART & SOUL

written by Jane Belsches

Lydia sisters continue to support Bounty & Soul by creating activities for the weekly Kids' Markets. A Heart Party was held for the mothers & children living at Hope for Tomorrow on February 13. We provided soups, fruit, and cookies, along with Glo-sticks, crafts, and Bingo. What a wonderful way to celebrate an early Valentine's Day!!



BLESSING BOX

written by Linda Stroupe

Bringing non-perishable items, as well as personal hygiene items, gloves, hats, and water for the Blessing Box as we come to circle is the perfect reminder that in our midst, are people, especially the homeless, who need an immediate solution to hunger and trying to stay warm.

Adding items to our grocery carts throughout the month is a simple way for each of us to address a need in our community. We are hopeful that Dorcas' contributions each month will assist church members who assume the responsibility of keeping the Blessing Box full for those who need it. You can help too, by donating nonperishable food, water bottles, and personal hygiene items in the two baskets in the narthex.

Would you like to help stock the Blessing Box?

You can sign up [HERE!](#)



Blessing Box bins in the narthex



NAOMI CIRCLE: A RENAISSANCE

written by Karen Austin

I don't recall how I landed in Naomi Circle, but I'm so glad I did. These strong women became my great friends, supporting me through difficult times and rejoicing with me in happier times. Sadly, time and circumstances took a toll, and a couple of years ago, we didn't have enough members remaining to field a basketball team. There was serious talk about dissolving the circle.

Did I mention that we were strong women? Stubborn might be closer to the truth. We refused to go down without a fight. These days we've got enough women to field a softball team, with an extra to keep the bench warm. *How did we do it?*

- We devoted ourselves to the goal of building up the circle we loved.
- We let PW folks know that we needed members, and encouraged anyone willing to change circles to give us a try.
- We approached women who weren't in PW and encouraged them to come to a meeting.
- We took advantage of the growth in our church's membership and looked for new members, let them know how vibrant our PW is, and invited them to check us out.
- We valued our members' talents. Some are great organizers. Others work quietly but diligently. There's value in being a social butterfly and in being a bookworm.
- We were willing to adapt our meeting place, time, and other practices to accommodate folks.

We realized that most of us avoid driving at night, and none of us is crazy about hosting nearly a dozen women in our (small, messy, or whatever) homes. So we meet at 3 pm at the church. We realized we're there for the fellowship, study, and mission work rather than snacks. If you want to bring something, we'll probably eat it but we won't fret about the lack of tea and cakes.

None of these steps has magical powers. All of them depend on committed PW members taking the time and initiative to plant those seeds of growth. Just know that it can be done, and you're the right one to do it!

NEW TO PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN?

Our 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.

[Learn more at presbyterianwomen.org](http://presbyterianwomen.org)

In each Postmark issue, we'll be sharing a story from one of our PW Circles. These stories can be anything from your Circle meeting.

Submit a story by emailing:
bmppostmark@gmail.com



Presbyterian Women Circle Meetings

First Tuesday

Dorcas 10:00 a.m.
Church House

Priscilla
10:00 a.m.
Contact Gayle Shelton

Esther
10:30 a.m.
In members' homes

Naomi
3:00 p.m.
Church House

Ruth
1:30 p.m.
Highland Farms
Cypress Room
in The Lodge

First Wednesday

Joy
6:30 p.m.
(email Margaret Fouse for details)

Second Tuesday

Lydia
6:30 p.m.
Church House

PLEASE JOIN US!

For more information, contact:

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(716) 307-9054

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(713) 851-5418