

PW Secretaries Workshop

What Is This?

A basic outline that can be adapted for use at a PW presbytery or synod gathering, at a cluster training day for PW in the congregations or for an event with neighboring presbyteries.

Who Is the Workshop for?

Presbyterian Women secretaries in the congregations, presbyteries and synods. The secretary may assume the historian's responsibilities.

What Will Participants Learn?

Participants will

- learn the differences between the responsibilities at each level
- understand why an accurate set of minutes is important
- learn about the PW resources available for secretaries
- contrast the two options for PW presbytery leaders to work with PW congregations

Checklist for Workshop Leaders

Several days or weeks before the scheduled workshop

- Prepare a written plan or outline, with built-in alternatives.
- Plan activities that have a change of pace.
- Secure resources needed.
- Preview any video or audio materials to be presented.
- Plan a community building activity.
- Prepare necessary handouts.
- Prepare nametags, if needed.

The day of the workshop, prepare the location of the workshop including the following:

- Post signs outside the door.
- Ensure the room has an adequate number of tables and chairs.
- Ensure comfortable temperature and proper lighting.
- Have resources and equipment ready.
- See that equipment functions properly.
- Have visual aids prepared.

Conduct the workshop

- Set a welcoming atmosphere.
- Greet the participants in a friendly manner as they enter.
- Provide nametags, if needed.
- Introduce your self, co-leaders and purpose of the workshop.
- Open with prayer.
- Provide a means by which each person can be introduced to the group.
- Direct the learning activities.
- Share your expectations for the workshop.

- Invite the participants to share their expectations.
- Show enthusiasm for the learning experience ahead.
- Offer an opportunity to share.
- Be flexible to the needs of the group.
- Provide handouts.
- Bring the workshop to a close.
- Summarize the points covered.
- Provide an opportunity for evaluation both by the participants and leader.
- Close with prayer.

The Workshop

Open the session with the following prayer or one of your own.

O God, you have given us the greatest record—your Word. We come to you now asking that you bestow upon us the importance of keeping an accurate written record that may be referred to for years to come. Direct us as we learn together. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

Why do Presbyterian Women groups need a secretary?

To introduce the participants to each other and begin exploring what it means to be the secretary for the coordinating team, ask each participant to tell which biblical woman she would like to have known and recorded information about the events of her life. Or choose another exercise of your own.

Thank participants for sharing. Remind them that many important facts are lost because they were not recorded. Recording events and recording the minutes of a meeting are similar but not identical. Ask, “Why is an accurate set of minutes and significant correspondence important?” Describe a time when minutes proved important.

Summarize the discussion. In general, having a detailed and accurate account of Presbyterian Women is important for the Presbyterian Women coordinating team as

- it does its work
- a reference for future Presbyterian Women
- the historical record of the group

What are the responsibilities of PW secretaries in the congregations, presbyteries, synod and churchwide?

The secretary for Presbyterian Women has three primary areas of responsibility

- recording and preserving the minutes and other historical records of a group
- sending and receiving correspondence for the group
- maintaining an up-to-date and accurate membership roll and directory

Remind the group that the secretary may also serve as the historian. Suggested job descriptions for secretary and historian are found in the *PW Manual*. Ask participants to find the job descriptions for the secretary at each level. Distribute **Handout S-1**. Every secretary carries similar basic responsibilities. Compare the responsibilities. Ask

- What responsibilities are common to each level?
- How do the responsibilities differ among the levels?
- What surprises you about the responsibilities?

Because not every coordinating team works the same way, not every secretary will accomplish her responsibilities in the same way. Ask the group to respond to any or all of the following questions as time permits.

- How can you ensure the minutes include all necessary information?
- Why is it important to distribute minutes in a timely fashion?
- What some ways minutes are distributed?
- What are some the resources available to help the secretary perform her job?

How does the PW in the presbytery secretary work with the PW in the congregations secretaries?

Distribute the **Handout S-2**. Review the differences in the two options. Ask for ideas about how the position might work. Ask for specific examples for staying in touch with congregations using either option. Record the comments on newsprint.

How can the workshop be used to support PW secretaries?

After comparing the position responsibilities, allow time for participants to reflect on what they would add to workshop if they were leading it. Ask what they would add to the workshop if they were the workshop leaders. Record the ideas on newsprint. Ask participants which idea they might try. Ask what additional information might help justice and peace coordinators in the presbyteries and congregations understand their responsibilities?

Close with the following prayer or one of your own.

Redeemer God, we give you all the praise and all the glory for the good that has happened during this time together. We ask your forgiveness for any human frailties that have sneaked in to make our conversation or our actions a distraction. As we close, we do so with thanksgiving for this community of believers serving as your leaders and for You, our living, dynamic communicating God. It is in the precious name of your son, Jesus, we pray.

What Are The Responsibilities Of Presbyterian Women Secretaries In The Congregations, Presbyteries, Synod, And Churchwide?

Secretaries have three primary responsibilities

- Recording and preserving the minutes and other historical records of a group
- Sending and receiving correspondence for the group
- Maintaining an up-to-date and accurate membership role and directory

Congregation	Presbytery	Synod	Churchwide
Keeps and preserves minutes of all meetings of the coordinating team and of all gatherings	Keeps and preserves minutes of all meetings of the coordinating team and of all gatherings	Keeps and preserves minutes of all meetings of the coordinating team and of all gatherings	Records all minutes of the CCT meetings and the churchwide business meetings
Sends minutes to CT members immediately after the meeting	Sends minutes to CT members within 30 days of the meeting	Sends minutes to CT members within 30 days of the meeting	Sends minutes to PW office within 4 weeks of the meeting
Keeps copies of the current bylaws, standing rules, PW manual, and dates of any amendments properly recorded and has available at each meeting of the CT	Keeps copies of the current bylaws, standing rules, PW manual, and dates of any amendments properly recorded and has available at each meeting of the CT	Keeps copies of the current bylaws, standing rules, PW manual, and dates of any amendments properly recorded and has available at each meeting of the CT	<i>[Office keeps copies of the current bylaws, standing rules, PW manual, and dates of any amendments properly recorded and has available at each CT meeting]</i>
Serves as correspondent for PW	Serves as correspondent for PW	Serves as correspondent for PW	<i>[Staff assists with correspondence]</i>
Assists the moderator with correspondence	Assists the moderator with correspondence	Assists the moderator with correspondence	<i>[Staff assists with correspondence]</i>
Coordinates the preparation of a directory and an annual report	Coordinates the preparation of a directory and an annual report	Coordinates the preparation of a directory and an annual report	<i>[Staff maintains CCT directory]</i>
Sends current names of appropriate leaders to PWP secretary	Sends current names and addresses of all PWC moderators to PW Louisville office	Sends current names and addresses to appropriate groups	<i>[Staff maintains churchwide database]</i>
Performs other duties as requested by the CT or the moderator	Performs other duties as requested by the CT or the moderator	Performs other duties as requested by the CT or the moderator	Performs other duties as requested by the CT or the moderator
Keeps a personal file of all minutes for her term of service and for the preceding term	Keeps a personal file of all minutes for her term of service and for the preceding term	Keeps a personal file of all minutes for her term of service and for the preceding term	Keeps a personal file of all minutes for her term of service and for the preceding term

How Does the PW Secretary in the Presbytery Work with the Congregations?

When PWP Secretary Is Primary Contact	When PWP Cluster Leader Is Primary Contact
The secretary is a member of the PWP coordinating team and works with the other members to plan and carry out the work of PW in the Presbytery.	The secretary is a member of the PWP coordinating team and works with the other members to plan and carry out the work of PW in the Presbytery.
The secretary provides training and resources for the secretaries in the congregations.	The cluster leaders help the PWP secretary provide training and resources for the secretaries in the congregations.
The secretary has direct contact with the secretaries in the congregations to send and receive information.	The secretary sends and receives information through the cluster leaders to the secretaries in the congregations

Suggested Resources

- *PW Manual*; item PWR-07-101*
- *PW Gathering to Work and Worship*; item PWR-01-115*
- *Horizons*, the magazine and Bible study for Presbyterian Women; subscribe online, www.pcusa.org/horizons, or call 800/524-2612; subscription includes six issues of the magazine and the annual Bible study
- *PW Communication Basics*; item PWR-01-120*
- *Bias Free Guidelines*, a free, downloadable resource for eliminating bias in speech and writing; available on the PW Web pages, www.pcusa.org/pw
- Acid-free paper can be found in any office supply store.

*Order through Presbyterian Distribution Service, 800/524-2612 or www.pcusa.org/marketplace.