

# DAILY Horizons

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL MARTIN

*A number of denominational leaders, including Diane Moffett (president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency), attended PW's business meeting to affirm and encourage PW's determined witness in the world.*

no mountain high enough to keep God from us!" She said Jesus came to "cause terror to those who loved the status quo!" She said Jesus causes us to rise and love justice, just as yeast causes bread to rise. "Rise up like evening stars and transform what is troubled!"

This was opening worship for the second day of the business meeting. What a prophetic and energetic way to begin the day! Carol Winkler, 2015–2018 PW churchwide moderator, introduced global and ecumenical guests including Nora Palma, vice president of Presbyterian (continued, page 5)

## Rise Up!

BY YVONNE HILEMAN

Arise, shine, your light has come! Diane Moffett, president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, exhorted 191 voting representatives and the approximately 75 observers and guests present for the churchwide business meeting on Thursday: "Rise up so that new stories will be told. Rise up despite the barriers. Ain't



## When (and Where) Do We Eat?

**Breakfast\***—on your own (each day of the Gathering)

\*Cash (or credit card or voucher!) and carry options will be available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings, 7–8:30 AM, outside the plenary hall (Suite, 2) and in the conservatory/pedway near Thelma's Deli (pedway, 3rd floor)

**Lunch**—boxed lunches provided in two locations:

- Grand Ballroom C (walk to the end of the plenary hall)
- Outside the Archibald Cochran Ballroom

And cookies will be in the Exhibit Hall for you to enjoy as you explore!

**Dinner**—on your own; perhaps grab a bite on your way back from the justice and peace march!

# Out of Chaos, Hope

BY LOUISE VAN POLL

“Out of chaos, hope.” That is the motto of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Forty-seven women participated in an eight-hour disaster preparedness training prior to the start of the 2018 PW Churchwide Gathering. The participants included women from all over the continental U.S. and Puerto Rico, which is still struggling with the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) started as Presbyterian World Service, helping refugees after World War II. But it was just three years ago that a conversation began about how to reach out to more families and churches to let them know of PDA resources available to help them survive and recover from a disaster. Beth Snyder, PDA’s associate for program administration and a PW herself, said, “I know just the group that can get things done.” And that was how the collaboration between PW and PDA began.

Of course, Presbyterian Women are always looking for ways to improve the ministries they support. PDA now includes a couple of new steps in their work—one of them being disaster preparedness. The thinking is, “Let’s not just help after a disaster, let’s help people prepare for it, because being adequately prepared can lead to saved lives and less fear.” Beth says, “People who know what to do, where to go and



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MARTIN

***Disaster preparedness training prompted Presbyterian Women to consider how they could help their families, churches and presbyteries be prepared for various types of disasters.***

what to expect in an emergency do not panic or experience debilitating fear.” She says these people are now able to make rational, reasoned decisions and are able to help others.

The PDA/PW training trains volunteers who then train congregations in their presbyteries. After Wednesday’s training event, the number of PW trainers now exceeds 100. “That will increase the number of people we can reach across the country and that, in turn, will save lives,” Beth adds.

And that is what PDA is all about.

All the women at this training have had some exposure to disasters, from those who have had to head for the basement or higher ground, but didn’t suffer personal

loss, to those whose communities have sustained damage and the woman who has lived through a recent hurricane. But the common theme, no matter what level of suffering or loss, was that no one is immune to disasters. No one has been untouched. No one can claim that their lives will never be changed because of the devastating results of a disaster, whether natural or manmade.

These women came together to learn through this training how to return home and share with their families, churches, presbyteries and synod their knowledge of preparing for disasters. That preparedness can take some unexpected forms. For example, does your church have a fire evacuation plan? Who

(Continued next page)

is responsible for helping people with disabilities out of the building? Who is responsible for going to the nursery and helping evacuate the children? The lack of a well-thought-out plan can lead to deadly results.

What if a wind storm or ice storm sweeps over your area? Who is contacting parishioners who live alone out in the country? Does someone in your church know how to reach a neighbor who could check on them? What about your presbytery's records? Are there backup copies stored in at least two other locations? You better have cash, because the ATMs may not be working. You will also need copies of all your important documents if you need to apply for government assistance or file insurance claims.

The training also stresses the importance of communication with resource people in your community. Get to know your county emergency management team, a contact person with the local Red Cross, first responders and other folks who will either help your church in a disaster or who will know they can reach out to your church for help.

But the highlight of the training was BOB, or "bug-out bag," which can be a bag or box or bucket; it is also called a "go box." The BOB can be as simple or as elaborate as you choose to make it, but every house and car needs one so you and your family can have at least basic needs met if a disaster occurs.

Don't know what to put in a "go box"? Don't know what your

next step is to becoming better prepared? There are 47 trained women excited and willing to help you. They'll be wearing blue scarves during the Gathering. You'll also be hearing more from them in the days and weeks ahead in your presbyteries and synods, so watch your newsletters for contact and workshop information.

The training event ended with a candlelight commissioning service where each woman vowed to serve others with love. Because that is what PW and PDA is all about. Out of chaos, hope.

*Louise Van Poll is a freelance writer for Daily Horizons.*

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## Resources Abound

The Presbyterian Bookstore (Combs Chandler; Suite, 2) has many denominational and PW resources. Stop by and find resources by Gathering leaders, tomes by beloved authors or perhaps a book by a new favorite author!

And if you're looking for PW resources, be sure to visit the PW Library (Brown Room; Suite, 2)! This room is well stocked with encore issues of *Horizons* magazine and Bible study and much more—all free! Fill a bag or box to share with your circle or to fill your PW library!

## There's a (Gathering) App for That!



Want to keep track of where you're heading next? Think you heard about a location change? Download the Gathering app and you'll have all these details at your fingertips!

If you have Yapp on your smart phone—the provider of the 2015 Gathering app—simply open the app and information for the 2018 Gathering will appear!

If you don't already have Yapp on your smart phone, go to your app store to download Yapp for Business. Once Yapp downloads, open it. Please elect to receive notifications from the app. This will allow you to receive announcements (such as location changes!) while at the 2018 Churchwide Gathering. Tap the "Add An Existing App" button and enter "PWgathering," then hit go! The app will install automatically. Once you see the sunflowers, tap the image and you are connected!



# Letting the Light In

BY SHARON DUNNE GILLIES



PHOTO COURTESY OF DARCI MCKINNON

***Before adorning the plenary stage, the paper backdrop was carefully cut and created on the floor of Oklahoma City's Westminster Presbyterian Church's fellowship hall by plenary team member Darci McKinnon.***

180 yards of paper.

23 box cutter blades.

15 rolls of tape.

200 hours of cutting.

That's just the start of what Darci McKinnon put into creating the backdrop for the plenary stage. In each of the plenary sessions, the photographic backdrop paper that Darci stenciled and cut will be illuminated. The light that shines on the backdrop will spotlight various images that represent PW and its Purpose.

Darci first encountered the idea of decorating with cut paper when she attended the 1994 Churchwide Gathering and saw the cut lace banners created by Nancy Chinn. Since then, she's used the idea to create various sizes and types of banners for her church,

Westminster Presbyterian Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

For the 2018 Gathering, Darci says the plenary team "thought about images that went with each of the daily themes and how to interpret those themes visually. And of course, it was important to make the PW logo central!" Knowing how beautifully

light can play on the photographic backdrop paper, Darci says the cut paper technique seemed a perfect fit for a Gathering whose theme is

"Arise, shine, your light has come!"

"We worked with Debbie Paris who gave us the initial art and images that are in keeping with PW's logo and style. I interpreted them by adding texture and adjusting placement," she adds.

As the images and backdrop were being developed, a few of the images changed from their original sketches. Darci said, "I thought it was important to show people with physical limitations, so we added someone using a wheelchair. I also shrunk the size of the people so that children were represented, since including children is a passion of mine."

Darci put the final images on overhead projector paper, then started unrolling the paper on her church's fellowship hall floor. Using box cutter blades, she created positive and negative spaces—a very literal take on letting light shine through. Hand-painted paper has been taped behind some of the images for even more visual impact.

Darci recommends a tutorial for paper cutting that can be found on Lisle Gwynn Garrity's website and YouTube channel. Lisle will be leading an educational opportunity on creativity twice on Friday. Visit <http://sanctifiedart.org/coloring-pages-banner-designs/pentecost-banner-designs> for a link to the tutorial and to purchase templates for Pentecost banners. Additional banner patterns are also available for purchase on that website.

The images on the plenary backdrop will be available for download at [www.presbyterianwomen.org/gathering](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/gathering). Consider downloading the images and trying the process with your group.

The banners created by Darci and members of her church have been hung from poles and even taped to windows. "This can be a communal project that doesn't require a large amount of artistic skill. If you can wield a knife without cutting your finger off, you can help create the liturgical art! It's accessible, yet impactful," she says.

*Sharon Dunne Gillies is PW associate editor.*

(Continued from page 1)

Women, Honduras; Liza B. Lamis, executive secretary of Fellowship of the Least Coin; Rosangela Oliveira, executive director, World Day of Prayer International; and Linda Bushkosky, executive director of Women of the ELCA.

PC(USA) Stated Clerk J. Herbert Nelson II thanked Presbyterian Women for being such a transformative influence in his life and the lives of millions who have been touched by Presbyterian women's mission and justice work throughout the last 230 years. He said his mother and grandmother traveled by bus to many churchwide gatherings in Purdue, and that they "always came home filled with the Holy Spirit."

"If I weren't here with you today, they'd be visiting me from the Lord's heaven!" he said. J. Herbert warmly honored Presbyterian women when he said, "You can see the work Presbyterian women have done all over the globe, long before they could preach the gospel. The Lord called you to preach to the world. Now we have people coming to us to find the gospel. They are looking for refuge, somewhere to escape the atrocities inflicted upon them, looking for the love of Jesus. It's time to evangelize. The trouble is, as Reformed Christians, we're not telling people about Jesus. We're private about our faith. Jesus was not private. He

was not quiet about his message. He was publicly shamed!"

J. Herbert noted that as a denomination, we find ourselves on the edges. "I am glad you are bringing a march to Louisville to address the poverty line. A march is not just about the experience of teaching; the other part is that we have to engage those on the ground. Whose streets are these? We are reclaiming our streets. We must accompany those who are pushing against the edge of oppression, who are asking us to stand with them."

Business followed these powerful addresses from church leaders.

Voting representatives approved the nominees for the board of directors that was presented by the national Search Committee (and introduced in the November/December 2017 issue of *Horizons*). Jyungin Lee was elected moderator. In her remarks, she said "You have elected your first moderator with a Korean/New Jersey accent." She added, "But Jesus had an accent! He had a Galilean accent. I look forward to hearing your stories and being a weaver of stories in many accents." Joy Durrant was elected vice moderator of justice and peace concerns, Jo Ann Burrell was elected vice moderator of mission relationships.

In other business, the voting representatives approved one item

of new business and three other proposals. In new business, the CCT voted to become more active in fighting sexual and gender-based violence. This item recommended referring the resources of [wewillspeakout.us](http://wewillspeakout.us) and IMA World Health to PW at all levels of the organization. The voting representatives also approved two bylaws changes and a new 36-month budget for the 2018–2021 triennium.

The first bylaws change related to young women's representatives on the board. Since two young women's organizations from which candidates were recommended to PW no longer exist, PW will take recommendations from Racial Equity and Women's Intercultural Ministries, an office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. If PW staff agrees with the recommendations, they will be referred to the Search Committee, who will present them to the board for election.

The other change to the bylaws states that a member of the board of directors is not eligible to serve another term until at least three years have passed since she served on the board.

*Yvonne Hileman is PW  
assistant editor.*

## Location Change!

The location for the morning tai chi/qigong sessions (Friday, Saturday and Sunda) has changed from the Belvedere Plaza to the Fountain Room (Rivue, 2).

# Reclaiming Our Destiny

BY LOUISE VAN POLL



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MARTIN

***“Divine defiance or cultural complicity” was the choice posed to Presbyterian Women by Ruth Santana-Grace during Thursday night’s opening plenary.***

“Rise Up” was the message brought to the Gathering at the opening plenary session last night by Ruth Santana-Grace, who was speaking on the first word of the 2018 Churchwide Gathering theme, “Arise, shine, your light has come!”

Ruth’s message centered on Exodus 3:7–8, which is God’s call to Moses from the burning bush.

“I love the five verbs we find in this passage,” Ruth said. “They are when God says I have *seen* their suffering, I have *heard* their cries, I *know* their pain and I am

*coming* to *lift* them up. This is an affirmation of our call as people of faith.”

God sees, God hears, God knows and God will come to restore us as people of God.

Ruth was raised in a Presbyterian home. Her father was a minister and her mother was a ruling elder. Both of her parents came from Puerto Rico. She has been ordained for 24 years, having served first in Philadelphia for 13 years and then in California for 10 years. She returned to Philly four years ago and is now the executive presbyter of Philadelphia.

“The Presbytery of Philadelphia was the first presbytery in the United States,” she said. “I am the first woman and the first person of color to hold this office in the 300-year history of the presbytery.”

Ruth said that throughout history, the church has found itself at forks in the road—places where God calls us out of our “bubbles of complacency.” We found ourselves at forks in the road when we confronted slavery, women’s suffrage and equal rights. We find ourselves now at one of those forks, she said, where we can choose divine defiance or cultural complicity. We are often reluctant to change she said, but when we respond, we do extraordinary work.

“The newsfeeds are telling us that something is not right,” she continued. “Some of our current situations show us that we must

take a stand. We are in a position to fight the sounds of hate and violence, to bring the hope of the gospel to others. But we have to choose.”

And just like Isaiah calls us to “arise,” she explained, we have the opportunity to stand up and reclaim our destiny and to nurture and disciple other people. Evangelism needs to be more than a program; it needs to be an incarnation of our proclamation of God’s word.

“We need to be building bridges, not walls,” she exhorted. “We need to embrace all people and affirm everyone’s uniqueness. We need to be a voice for the voiceless and break the silence surrounding abuse and violence against others.

“Throughout my career, I have always said that if anything is not coming out of love, it is not of God.” That includes actions, words and policies.

Ruth said this is her first Churchwide Gathering and she is excited to see so many women gathered together. She loves the energy and passion displayed at the Gathering, as well as the opportunity to make new friends and be a part of creating change in our world.

“We can move people still,” she affirmed, “because of whose people we are.”

*Louise Van Poll is a freelance writer for Daily Horizons.*

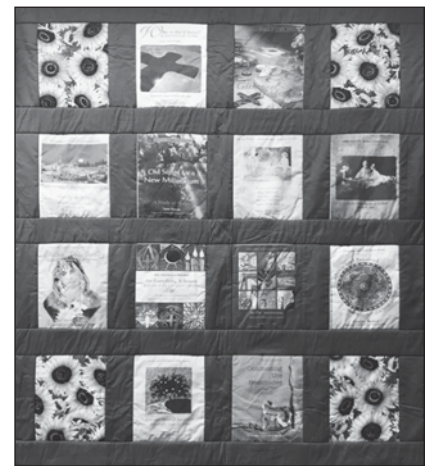


## Exhibit Hall Happenings

Visit the PW Silent Auction (benefitting the PW Mission Pledge, PW's annual fund) to bid on lovely items and amazing experiences!

Stop by Presbyterian Women's space in the exhibit hall to subscribe to *Horizons* (special Gathering rate of just \$19.95) or learn about the many ways to be and participate in Presbyterian Women! Visit every day for new material and displays at the Justice and Peace table.

Visit Scotus Tours in booth 31 to learn about the tour "The Women in Scotland's Story"—created with Presbyterian Women in mind—or to inquire about other Scottish tour possibilities! To learn more, visit <https://scotustours.com> or email [office@scotustours.com](mailto:office@scotustours.com). And make note! Jim will recite poetry by Robert Burns at the booth on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 11:30 AM, 1:30 AM and 2:30 PM.



The images pictured above are but just a sampling of the many items you will find available in the PW's Silent Auction at the Gathering!

### Shining the Light on Redlining: Marching for Justice and Peace

Do you plan to participate in the justice and peace march? If so, plan to assemble at 4:45PM on Friday, August 3, in the Rivue Tower lobby (west tower). Marching to the theme "Ninth Street Divide," the march will address the lingering effects of racism and the discriminatory practice of redlining that have resulted in segregation in Louisville and in many other cities and towns across the nation.

Visit the Justice and Peace table in the PW space of the exhibit hall to pick up a brochure, sign a release form and make your own placard. Depending on the pace of the marchers, expect to return to the Galt House between 6:15 and 6:30 PM.

### Thank You, Presbyterian Foundation!

Thank you again to the Presbyterian Foundation, who sponsored the Gathering name tag holders!

# Take the Gathering Home

BY CHRIS WOLF

Going to a Churchwide Gathering (or any PW Gathering) is such an *adventure*! I love adventures! Don't you? Especially, when it's an adventure with other women! And what an adventure the Churchwide Gathering is. I have been eagerly anticipating this event since before I registered!

What specifically am I anticipating, you ask? Why, EVERYTHING! For starters, I can't wait to run into people whom I haven't seen in a while (like the three years since the *last* Gathering). I look forward to meeting people from across the country and from around the world. I can't wait to see our marvelous PW staff, knowing how hard they work. I'm awaiting my opportunity to thank the outgoing board of directors (Churchwide Coordinating Team) and to welcome the new board members. As Julie Andrews' Maria von Trapp would say, or rather sing, "These are just a few of my favorite things."

Truly, these connections are part of what shapes the Gathering experience for me. When I return home, I try to take that excitement home and share it with my local PW.

And there's more! I come for the adventure found in plenary sessions. They fill my mind, they shape my heart, they feed my soul. My soul needs to be fed this year. I need this adventure that God has shaped for us all, in this Gathering (which I know has been prayerfully created for us). I can't

wait for the liturgy, the singing, the prayers. I take those home with me and use them in my personal devotions, but I also share them with my PW circle, session and adult Bible study. (I used to try to share my singing with my church choir, but they asked me to stop. Perhaps *your* singing will be appreciated!)

But, wait, there's more! I come for the adventure found in the educational opportunities (the workshops, forums and tours). I'm an old Christian educator (by old, I don't mean age!) and we Christian educators are always looking for things we can share, as are PW! I love our PW/*Horizons* Bible studies! I am looking forward to the ed op on the 2018–2019 study, *God's Promise: I Am With You*. It seems to me that this is a study "for such as time as this." We all need to be reminded and reassured that God is sovereign,



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MARTIN

***Of the many wonderful things attendees take home from the Gathering, the connections with other Presbyterian Women top the list!***

that God is with us no matter what. I am so looking forward to this study and can't wait to hear about it from the author.

But there's still more! I come for the adventure to be found in the exhibit hall and bookstore! I plan on going home with a suitcase full of books, brochures, fair trade items and more! (Why else would I bring my husband?! Somebody has to lift the suitcase into the car!) As soon as I get checked in, I'm off to the exhibits.

If you're looking for me, I'm the lady with a backpack and a shoulder bag, pulling a wheeled bag and lugging a Presbyterian Bookstore shopping bag—just a few items I need to "take the Gathering home"!

How will *you* be taking the Gathering home?

*Chris Wolf is a Christian educator from Peck, Michigan.*

