



Still, We Plant

PW's Annual Fund

BY CARISSA HEROLD

Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." This quote, attributed to Martin Luther, speaks to our call as disciples to live with purpose and hope, both in certain and uncertain days.

This may be a curious way to begin an article about PW's annual fund (the Mission Pledge) and the many programs, ministries and communities that are Presbyterian Women. Our usual ways of being (and being PW)! have dramatically shifted so that we can protect ourselves and others from exposure to the coronavirus. Upon further reflection, our ways of being are never static. Our challenge is to stay rooted in faith and to adapt in ways that sustain what is most dear. Caring for one another and remembering to tend the garden of our PW are, I think, positive and faithful ways to do "what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2) for now and for later.

Led by the Spirit

Presbyterian Women is a spirit-led organization. That's why, well before "social distancing" would become common parlance, Presbyterian Women at all levels of the church were exploring new ways to be PW—in community as always, but perhaps on a new schedule, on the internet rather than in person, engaging in new ministries and in new ways.

Like the daffodils outside my window, new ways of being PW are springing forth.

- Ellen Stoup, PWP moderator of Tampa Bay, asked that Lessons 7, 8 and 9 from the 2020–2021 PW/*Horizons* Bible study, *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments*, by Eugenia A. Gamble, be made available to Bible study

participants who could not attend a regular face-to-face Bible study to complete their study. Thanks to Ellen, the videos are available on PW's YouTube channel. Ellen says, "We need to let the women know that we can all stay connected even in difficult times."

- Presbyterian women are using technology to virtually meet! Presbyterian Women groups are staying connected—planning, discussing scripture and books, planning gatherings and more—using telephones, tablets and computers. (See pages 14–17 to read about how groups are discussing books by videoconference, or pages 36–37 for how to conduct PW business via videoconference.)

For the last two years, PW groups have been telling the story of who they are and how PW "works." If you have been to a regional gathering, then you may have admired a flowerpot display that tells the story of PW and PW giving. The "Cultivating Presbyterian Women" flowerpot displays have literally sprung up everywhere! These displays are made up of a flowerpot or other vessel filled with flowers or greenery and plant markers. The "soil" represents the PW's annual fund because all PW programs and possibilities (as noted on the plant stakes), including Thank and Birthday Offerings, Bible study, justice and peace initiatives and more, at all levels of the organization are given sustenance in full or in part thanks to PW's annual fund. Each display tells a similar story; each creative expression is unique to the loving hands that crafted the display.

This "new way" also applies to ways we can financially support Presbyterian Women. Most of us give to PW through our circles. Some also (or instead) give on line, moved to support a particular PW ministry. But did you

know you can become a PW Sustainer through recurring gifts?

Benefits of Being a Sustainer

A recurring gift is not a new idea; many churches (and nonprofits such as your local public television station or food bank) offer this option, and it just makes sense (and cents!).

For an organization like PW or your church, recurring gifts

- provide funds in an expected and regular way and
- help the organization better forecast its annual budget.

For a donor, recurring gifts

- are budget friendly; you determine your gift, prayerfully considering your needs and priorities,
- offer a way to simplify; you decide once and don't need to consider again,
- provide a way to stay in community with an organization even when circumstances change (for example, your circle does not regularly meet, you move, your work schedule changes, or even when a global pandemic changes the way you do PW), and
- are favored by younger women, who tend to be comfortable with this model of giving.

Recurring giving does not

- replace gifts made through your circle; in fact, circle giving is the heart of PW support. Presbyteries receive credit or acknowledgment for all gifts given by individuals directly at the national or church-wide level, as well as for gifts given through circles.
- mean that one can support the organization in just one way. For example, I support Presbyterian Women through a recurring gift *and* by giving at my circle meeting,

much like I support my church. My recurring gift gives me peace of mind that I am financially supporting organizations I value even when I cannot attend circle or church, or when my personal budget is constrained.

Other ways to support PW include adding to the corpus of an endowment; remembering PW in your estate plans; participating in Bible study; supporting PW's many ministries (Thank and Birthday Offering, Together in Service, Together in Action), even reading, sharing, and subscribing to *Horizons*!

Planting Our Apple Tree

For generations, Presbyterian women have "planted our apple tree" as an act of faith and love for God and God's world. Together, we have navigated economic downturns, wars and a myriad of slammed doors and social ills to do what is fair, just and kind. Supporting our organization is our way to stay connected, empowered and empowering—sisters in faith together—no matter the state of the world.

How we choose to be PW and support PW will continue to evolve over time. We simply put our trust in our God and rest in the knowledge that our lives of faith and purpose bring glory to God. "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ dwell within you richly" (Col. 2:14–16).

In new and tried-and-true ways, let us together and in confidence, plant not just one apple tree but, instead, an orchard of hope! 🍏

Carissa Herold is PW marketing associate.



PW's annual fund (the Mission Pledge) makes PW—at every level of the organization—possible. From our historic grant programs, to gatherings near and far, even the magazine you are reading, PW's annual fund supports these ministries.

Although this article lifts up recurring gifts, there are many ways to support Presbyterian Women.

PW Giving Options

On line

Give securely at www.presbyterianwomen.org/give.

By mail

- Checks
- Third-party gifts (Gifts from your financial institution or donor-advised fund)
- Employee-match donations
Presbyterian Women, Inc.
PO Box 643652
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3652

*Be sure your name, contact information and any specific designation are included.

Gifts of stock

To transfer stock, you or your broker should contact Kym Vaughn, 502/569-5909 or kymberly.vaughn@presbyterianfoundation.org.

Planned giving and estate planning

Contact Rhonda Martin, 502/569-5596 or rhonda.martin@pcusa.org.

Questions?

For help (or to have employee match forms completed), please contact Rhonda Martin, 502/569-5596 or rhonda.martin@pcusa.org.