



Annual Report 2023

Our Common Unity,
Our Community, as
Presbyterian Women

Committing hands and hearts to loving service is our inheritance as Presbyterian Women. More than an inheritance, our joy! Despite challenges of their time, our foremothers founded PW's predecessor organizations as well as programs held dear by PW and our denomination. Even while navigating the challenges of our time, Presbyterian women build upon our faithful foundation and establish creative ways to live fully into our PW Purpose. Read on to learn how our common unity, our PW community, has blessed each of us and others in 2023, by the grace of God.

We nurtured our community by being *in* community

In 2023, several synods hosted in-person gatherings, including Covenant, Trinity, Mid-Atlantic, Southern California-Hawaii and Lincoln Trails. In June, National Asian Presbyterian Women met in Houston, Texas, for their triennial gathering; and the National Taiwanese Presbyterian Women Council (NTPW) met in April in Las Vegas for their annual gathering (and routinely stay connected through online seminars, Bible studies and even through a weekly exercise class)! At the churchwide level, Zoom-based meetings brought together hundreds for bimonthly book discussions and provided space for synod and presbytery leaders and supporters to discuss challenges, joys and opportunities as PW.

Presbyterian women across the country participated in the 2023–2024 PW/Horizons Bible study, *Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts*, by Olive Mahabir. Individuals and groups recognized Jesus' compassion for all and reflected on our own sacred encounters with God's beloved people.

And by caring for one another

Times change and our bonds only strengthen. United in faithful friendship, Presbyterian women work and play together, and celebrate sacred moments.

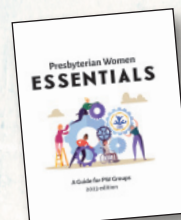
Sandy Vining, a beloved PW and longtime leader of PW in the Synod of the Covenant, is mourned by her community and family. Her dear friends celebrated her life with a gift to Presbyterian Women in her name. Sandy had "sensed how special PW meetings were to her mother and felt those same special feelings through her own participation." In 2023, PW of the

Synod of the Covenant gave a community garden in memory of Sandy through Presbyterian Women's Build a Bouquet program.

Caring for women and children around the world has been at the forefront of PW's efforts for generations. Since 2006, Presbyterian Women has participated in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and has earned NGO status. Kelsey Law, who attended CSW67, shares: "PW's delegation intentionally brings together young women, women of color, women and siblings of beloved identities. Together we share our ideas and use our platform to advance for gender equality and justice."

And by sharing gifts to support God's people

For more than a century, PW's Birthday and Thank Offerings have supported grants for programs that uplift God's people at home and abroad. In 2023, seven Thank Offering grants—six domestic, one international—of \$245,890, made possible apartments for low-income agricultural workers in Florida as well as a health center with maternity services for rural residents of Phalaza, Zambia, and more. Two Birthday Offering grants of \$249,400 were awarded for building projects. In Tallahassee, Florida, the grant assisted in the purchase of a group home where young mothers break the cycle of addiction, abusive relationships, incarceration, and build a better life for themselves and their children. In Dembi Dollo, Ethiopia, Birthday Offering funds made possible a building just for kindergarten in a Presbyterian-related school complex; the grant will ensure that this program has adequate space for young learners.



How are we called to live into our PW ministry during times of change? *PW Essentials* (in English and Spanish), newly available in 2023, responds to this question by providing a framework on "how to" PW as a churchwide community, affirming the many ways of being PW, from tried-and-true to new and flexible! Visit presbyterianwomen.org/essentials to download for free.



Dr. William Yoo, associate professor of American religious and cultural history at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, joined the online discussion of his book.

Our common unity as PW calls us to

Informed reflection

Presbyterian Women's Justice and Peace book discussion group lead with courageous conversations.

William Yoo, author of *What Kind of Christianity: A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church*, joined the February Justice and Peace book discussion to share the grim historical realities of the church's complicity in slavery. "To your point that we can't do better until we know better. This history was kept from us," shared one of the 171 attendees. "We can't turn away and pretend anymore." In 2023, hundreds of PWs joined the Justice and Peace book discussions that examined five books and one movie selected to open our hearts, inform our minds and firm our resolve to advocate for a better world.

Faithful engagement

What we learn, we share, building a common understanding of issues that require our attention. And in 2023, during the U.S.A. Mission Experience (USAME), a delegation of 18 Presbyterian women representing nine synods traveled to the U.S.-Mexico border to discern a faithful response to the realities of migration and border issues. Karri Wicka, of the Synod of the Alaska-Northwest, participated in the USAME and said, "I pray that the Holy Spirit will give me the words to educate many others about the plight of the migrants." Like Karri, each of the USAME participants will pay the learning forward by sharing their experience at PW and church events. Building community includes building understanding. (Read about the USAME in the November/December 2023 issue of *Horizons* magazine, item HZN23250; visit presbyterianwomen.org/horizons to order or to access the digital edition as a subscriber.)



Participants of the 2023 USAME are eager to share what they learned and experienced at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Loving support

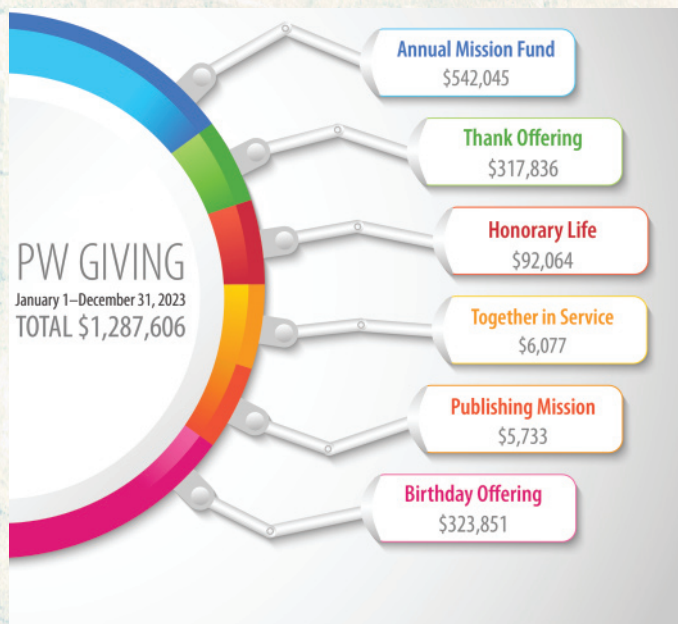
Presbyterian Women is an active, informed and faithful grassroots network that supports the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As PW, we are moderators, Bible study leaders, treasurers and *Horizons* reps! As church members, we are Sunday school teachers; stated clerks; session members; presbytery moderators; GA commissioners; elders; committee members; clergy; and childcare, mission, music and fellowship coordinators. A thriving PW and a thriving church rely on each of us and our community.

Creative visioning

In 2023, at the churchwide level, Board members began a human-centered visioning process to consider where we were, are, and are called to be. This is prophetic work and over time, will inform our network and all who are "bound for the journey"!



Carol Johns (right)—described by PW in the Congregation moderator Julia Willingham as "a shining star in Van Wyck Presbyterian Church"—was recognized with an Honorary Life Membership.



No matter how you choose to give to Presbyterian Women, your support of PW's annual fund sustains PW's work "for the good of all" (Gal. 6:10b), locally, nationally and globally.

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Questions?

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