



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

2022 – 2023

Moderator	Linda Foster
Secretary	Frances Craig
Treasurer	Dee Norris
Circle Co-leaders	Jane Wimmer and Peggy Roberson

Bible Study for Year: ***Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight***
Horizons Bible Study by Carol M. Bechtel

WHO ARE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN?

Covenant Presbyterian Church was founded in 1959 as a member of the Lexington Presbytery. We were known as the Women of the Church. In 1974 a new Presbytery was created from the Lexington and Winchester Presbyteries which was named the Shenandoah Presbytery. At that time we were one of 108 organized churches in the new Presbytery and the Women of the Church were serving as elders, deacons, teachers, leaders and committee members on all levels.

Dr. Martha Grafton of Staunton became the first woman and the second layperson elected as Moderator of the Shenandoah Presbytery in 1976. Mrs. Ollie Brand served as the first President of the Women of the Church in Covenant Church, one of many women to serve our church in leadership roles since that time. A new fellowship in our Presbytery and supported by our women which is known as the "Links of Love" began in 1976. Its purpose is to financially assist residents at Sunnyside Presbyterian Home whose personal income is not sufficient to meet all their special needs.

A merger in 1987 combined the structure of our Women of the Church (PCUS) with those of the United Presbyterian Women (UPCUS) and we became our present Presbyterian Women (PW) of the Shenandoah Presbytery, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. in April 1988 at Massanetta Springs.

The women of the Shenandoah Presbytery gather for a spring and fall meeting at Massanetta for study, worship and nurturing. New officers are installed at the spring meeting. In the fall, classes are provided to help women learn how they can participate more effectively in PW. Within our local church, PW meet monthly for Bible study, fellowship and service projects. Other Covenant Church women meet monthly for study, fellowship and needlework at Novels and Needles gatherings.

Over the years, PW have been involved in supporting local food pantries, shelters for battered women, retirement homes, Valley Mission and Church World Service. We also assist other mission opportunities, both nationally and worldwide with our financial offerings.

Our calendar year begins in September where new officers are installed and our study book is introduced.

The Thank Offering began in the late 1800s by the Women's General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of North America as a thank offering to the Lord for His many blessings. Forty percent of the offering supports hospitals and community health programs in needy areas. The remaining sixty percent is used for creative mission projects such as agriculture development, economic justice, elderly care, employment training and literacy. These projects are chosen by the PW Creative Ministries Offering Committee.

Covenant PW and women from many countries and cultures contribute to the Least Coin Fellowship. These coins interpret the power of love and reconciliation through an international fund for projects all over the world.

Another cause supported by PW and our congregation is the Church World Service Blanket Program. Contributions are used to buy blankets for people who have experienced disasters in their lives.

A celebration is held in May for the Birthday of Presbyterian Women. In 1922 Mrs. Hallie Winsborough, who was the superintendent of Women's Work in the Presbyterian Church, visited a girls' school in Japan and saw very inadequate facilities and crowded rooms. When she returned home, she challenged all Women of the Church to give one penny for each year of their lives (one dollar if they did not want to tell their age) as a "birthday gift" to help those school girls. Since that time money has been given to sixty worthy projects to help build hospitals, schools, shelters, youth centers, Christian colleges, and to help train and support needy people all over the world.

Every woman is a member of the PW in her church. We are blessed to be able to serve God as Presbyterian Women.

PURPOSE OF PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

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.