



Churchwide Board Meeting Summary

Rejoice in Hope!

Presbyterian Women in the PC(USA), Inc.

September 2019
2018–2021 Triennium



Photo by Michael Martin

The PW Board of Directors enjoyed a dinner cruise on Louisville’s historic paddleboat, *Mary M. Miller*, after a full day of meetings on Saturday, Sept. 21.

By Susan Jackson Dowd

The **national Board of Presbyterian Women** met September 18–22, 2019, in Louisville, Kentucky.

Many Board members shared in prayers and devotions throughout the meeting. Closing worship was led by Charon Barconey, member at large representing the African American community. The offering received for the PW Annual Fund during closing worship totaled \$3,601.

Along with committee meetings were representative meetings— young women, synod reps, and representatives from communities of color.

Education opportunities were provided by Mary Ellen Aussenbaugh, Living Waters synod representative and chair of the Stewardship Committee, and Shenea Leonard, associate for gender and racial justice, Racial Equity and Women’s Intercultural Ministries (RE&WIM), Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA). Mary Ellen provided a stewardship overview and help on creating a PW “elevate” speech. Shenea provided a racial equity briefing.

J. Herbert Nelson, PC(USA) stated clerk, Diane Moffet, PMA executive director, and Rhaskell Hunter, RE&WIM director, brought greetings.

PW sponsored a mission fair that showcased the ministries of PC(USA) agencies and mission partners.

The Board approved four recommendations from the ECO-SOC/CSW (United Nations Economic and Social Council/ Commission on the Status of Women) Task Force, voted the Churchwide Gathering budget and policies, began work on making the Widening the Circle Fund income accessible, and created Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) and Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) scholarships for young women. Details follow.

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Action without Meeting

Bylaws changes were passed by the 2018 Voting Representatives to the Triennial Business Meeting: 175 yes, 5 no, 2 abstentions. The report and updated Bylaws are under the Information Reports tab on the Google site.

Committees

Administrative Committee

CSW Scholarships. The Leadership Development Grant Committee (LDG) will create a CSW scholarship policy and procedure for young women, ages 18–30, that will provide up to \$2000 per recipient from the Leadership Development Grant Fund for up to three young women to attend CSW annually.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

Scholarships. LDG will create an Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) scholarship policy and procedure for young women, ages 18–30, that will provide up to \$1000 per recipient from the LDG Fund for up to three young women to attend EAD annually.

Stopgap Scholarships. \$1000 reimbursable LDGs will be available for up to three young women for both the CSW and EAD in 2020. This is a temporary stopgap measure for CSW and EAD in 2020 only.

ECOSOC/CSW Task Group

The task group brought four recommendations that were forwarded to the Board by the Administration Committee. All four recommendations were passed.

February 2020 Board Meeting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom meeting February 19–20, 2020, 3–6 PM Eastern • Committee meetings: January 22–February 5, 2020 • Committee reports emailed to Susan by February 14, 2020 		
Committee Meetings before February Board Meeting		
Committee	Date (2020)	Time (EST)
Administration	To Come	
Bible Study	BSC will meet after the Board	
Communications	February 5	6:30 PM
CMOC	February 11–12	1–5 PM
Finance	February 13	5 PM
Inclusive Community	January 27	6:30 PM
Justice & Peace	January 31	5 PM
Mission	October 30 and January 29	1–3 PM
Racial Equity	January 24	3 PM
Stewardship	January 30	5–6:30 PM

1. Create a CSW Delegate Team to manage the application and delegate process for CSW.
2. Create the ECOSOC and CSW Advocate position. The advocate will oversee and facilitate the ongoing strategy for facilitating PW’s ECOSOC status with the United Nations.
3. Adopt a process for completing the UN-required Quadrennial Report.
4. Create a CSW scholarship program through Leadership Development Grants.

Churchwide Gathering

Each triennium, after the Board votes to hold a Churchwide Gathering in that triennium, directors review and adopt a Churchwide Gathering budget. The budget is based on the number of anticipated fully paid registrations at a fee determined by the financials of the immediate past Gathering and

venue costs, plus inflation. The Registration fee is set at \$450. More information on Gathering costs and scholarships is forthcoming. Each triennium, the Board adopts policies to govern the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women. These policies are found in the Board Handbook.

Communications Coordination Committee (CCC)

Communication Basics. The CCC is revising this handbook for PW Communications to include more information about digital and social media.

Creative Ministries Offering Committee (CMOC)

2020 Birthday Offering. Four projects were chosen from 47 completed applications. This includes three domestic projects and one international project. The total dispersed for the Birthday Offering is \$385,000.

Finance Committee

The Board approved and adopted a proposed update to the language of the Fully Accountable Expense Reimbursement Plan. To be consistent with Presbyterian Women, Inc., guidelines on inclusive language, the committee updated gender specific language to inclusive language. Also, the committee clarified the policy regarding tips for housekeeping staff during hotel stays, requiring receipts for all reimbursed expenses.

Inclusive Community Committee (ICC)

The Leadership Development Incentive Package for synods is still available. In September 2018, the Board approved up to \$8,000 in leadership development grants (\$500 per synod) for improving communication and connectivity among PW presbytery and synod leadership.

Synod rep/PWP moderator conversation responses continue to be received, identifying positive stories and ideas, as well as ways PW Board support can be provided.

Education. The ICC will

- Provide webinars related PW 101 and post on the PW website.
- Bring the website leadership workshops into alignment with the *PW Manual: Guide for Groups* and *Guide for Treasurers*.
- Provide workshops on the website, beginning with “Telling our PW Story” including the elevate PW activity.
- Revitalize Alumnae Network



USAME participants pose with a statue of Harriet Tubman prior to visiting the New York State Heritage Center.

Photo by Yvonne Hileman

Well Chosen Words brochure provides inclusive language for people and expansive language for God and can be found on the Google site and website.

Justice & Peace Committee

The committee will create **Prayer and Beyond: Faithful Responses to Crisis**, a print resource.

PC(USA) Education Roundtable. This roundtable is building on the Educate a Child initiative, which PW supported, and which prompted PW to institute Together in Action Days for Children’s Literacy. The roundtable is proposing covenant relationships with congregations to advocate for quality public education for children. This is an opportunity for PW groups to deepen their engagement in public education, a traditional Presbyterian value.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. The committee will provide more information on this organization.

Leadership Development Grant Committee

The Committee updated policies to reflect practice regarding available grants. The program offers individual \$500 reimbursable grants (domestic) and \$1500 (international) and event/project grants of \$2500.

The Committee has approved Leadership Development Incentive grants for

- Synod of Lakes and Prairies
- Synod of the Sun
- Synod of Rocky Mountains
- Synod of the Northeast

Mission Relationships Committee (MRC)

USAME. The MRC discussed offering support to one of the mission projects that the trip participants visited while on the USAME. MRC will gather more information on the project and discuss it further at its next meeting. MRC members will send thank-you notes to the churches and individuals who made the USAME possible.

Together in Service. MRC divided the 2012 *Together in Service Guide* into sections and worked on revising it page by page. MRC will meet again in October to continue work on the guide.

Mission Stories. Sharon Dunne Gillies visited the committee and encouraged everyone to submit mission stories and to encourage PWs at all levels to share stories that can be used for the PW website, Quarterly Mailing newsletter, social media, and *Horizons* magazine.

Racial Equity Committee

Education. Stephanie Patterson provided a keynote and workshop on racism and its impacts at Shenandoah Presbytery's Big Event. Shenea Leonard provided a racial equity briefing for the Board. The committee will continue to provide opportunities for committee members and others through programming:

- Additions to the REC resource list will be read by at least one committee member.
- The committee will participate in the PC(USA) 21-Day Racial Justice Challenge. They will meet by Zoom at 5 PM Eastern beginning October 8. Meetings will be held thereafter every other week for six weeks: Oct 22, Nov 5 & 19, Dec 3 & 17.
- The committee will pursue arranging a one-day racial equity dialogue education session before the Churchwide Gathering in 2021.

Stewardship Committee

Widening the Circle. The Board voted to allow PW staff to work in

conjunction with the PC(USA) Foundation to reduce the required corpus on the Widening the Circle Fund from \$500,000 to \$275,000. The Widening the Circle Endowment Fund was created by the Churchwide Coordinating Team (now PW Inc., Board of Directors) in 1998 to provide funding for women's programming. The required corpus of \$500,000 has not been reached. Lowering the corpus to \$275,000, the current balance of the fund, will allow the Board to begin using the interest generated from the fund for the designated programming.

End of Year Giving Appeals.

Presbyterian Women traditionally offers two forms of giving opportunities to PW's Annual Fund at the end of the year: "Year End Giving" opportunities via direct mail and "Gracious Monday/Giving Tuesday" opportunities communicated via email and the PW website. Please support and promote these giving opportunities!

"Ways to Give" to PW Cards.

The Board agreed to create cards designed to educate donors about the various ways of contributing to Presbyterian Women, Inc. The cards will mail with thank you notes and other correspondence.

PW Grows Through Giving.

The Board approved reprinting the "Love Grows Through Giving" bookmarks. The bookmarks are free to Presbyterian women and have been a popular way to talk about PW giving. Send your "Why I give to PW" stories to Mary Ellen Ausenbaugh (norisk500@hotmail.com).

Annual Fund Booklet Survey

The committee needs information from PW synod, presbytery, and congregation moderators regarding the use and effectiveness of the PW Annual Fund Booklet (the Mission Pledge packet), and asks synod reps to gather information on the following questions:

1. The position of the survey responder (PW synod representative to the BOD, PW moderator—synod, presbytery, congregation, or PW participant)
2. Did you receive the 2020 Annual Fund Booklet? (Y/N)
3. How did you receive it? (mail, email, website, Facebook, other)
4. Was the booklet helpful in your communications and pledge decision? (Y/N)
5. Was the length of the booklet appropriate? (Y/N)
6. Do you use the pledge forms? (Y/N)
Comment: Why or why not?
7. How do you prefer to receive this booklet in the future? (Directly mailed to you, mailed to the Church / Pres / Synod office, email, social media link, other)

Synod Reps are asked to return responses to Mary Ellen Ausenbaugh (norisk500@hotmail.com) no later than October 31, 2019.

Representative Meetings

Young Women Representatives

The young women reps shared a report that included concerns about young women’s participation: age range for young women in the church, when are young women acknowledged for what they bring and other barriers. Suggestions for improving participation include increased voice, flexibility in meeting times, social media campaigns, mentorship, inter-generational dialogue, inclusive language around gender and sexual orientation, gender justice campaigns, space for young women in PW publications and media, and an informational guide that appeals to young women.

Representatives for Presbyterian Women of Color (PWOC)

PWOC reps shared personal stories and discussed dismantling dividing lines in PW and in the denomination. The also discussed supporting PWOC who are struggling with basic life necessities. The reps determined, “We have to use our voices continually/consistently—in season and out of season—until change happens.”

Synod Representatives

Synod reps provided feedback on roundtable discussions with PWP moderators. Those who have not met plan to. They discussed promoting PW at gatherings and sharing Board information throughout



Photo by Yvonne Hileman

During a time of sharing, Synod of Pacific representative Barbara Clark shares her favorite children’s book.

the network. Synod reps will provide Annual Fund packet feedback to the Stewardship Committee and create their own Facebook group.

Summary of Board Actions		
Committee	Recommendation	Action
Admin	Elect corporate officers	Approved
Admin	Housing Allowance, Rev. Cheri Harper	Approved
Admin/TG	Create CSW Delegate Team	Approved
Admin/TG	Create CSW Advocate, volunteer position	Approved
Admin/TG	Adopt process for UN Quadrennial Report	Approved
Admin/TG	Create a CSW scholarship program for young women, 2021	Approved
Admin	Create an EAD scholarship program for young women, 2021	Approved
Admin	LDG to create policy for \$1000 LDGs for CSW and EAD for 2020	Approved
CWG	2021 Budget	Approved
CWG	2021 Policies	Approved
Finance	Update Fully Accountable Reimbursement Policy	Approved
J&P	\$750 to create <i>Prayer and Beyond: Faithful Response to Crisis</i>	Approved
LDG	Update to LDG policies	Approved
Personnel	2% raise for staff in 2020	Approved
Stewardship	Staff work with Foundation on reducing Widening Circle corpus	Approved
Stewardship	Approve funds for End of Year Giving appeals, \$2,500	Approved
Stewardship	Approve funds for “Ways to Give to PW” cards, \$960	Approved
Stewardship	Approve funds for Love Grows by Giving bookmarks, \$1,000	Approved

Legend

CSW=Commission on the Status of Women
 TG=PW Board’s ECOSOC/CSW Task Group

ECOSOC=Economic and Social Council, United Nations
 EAD=Ecumenical Advocacy Days
 LDG=Leadership Development Grant



Churchwide Gathering in St. Louis Talking Points

There has been some feedback regarding PW's choice of Missouri for the 2021 Gathering because of recent legislation inhibiting women's autonomy regarding their lives and their health. The following talking points will help Board members communicate PW, Inc.'s, position.

- PW supports Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) positions on women's health, will make those policies/positions clear, and will advocate for choice.
- Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc., guided by the actions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly and committed to
- PW supports the rights of women worldwide, fully supports the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s position on safe, legal abortion rights.
- PW, Inc., will plan advocacy around women's health and choice leading up to and during the Churchwide Gathering in 2021.
- PW has an opportunity to stand with the Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Giddings Lovejoy, as well as all women across Missouri, and will make the organization's voice known to Missouri legislators.
- PW leaderships will be in conversation with Stated Clerk J Herbert Nelson regarding Presbyterian churches in the area that participated in the PC(USA) Big Tent (2017) and General Assembly (2018). Big Tent was a three years post-Ferguson. The Gathering will be a few years post current decisions on women's health.

We have a logo!

