

Spring 2020

Presbyterian Women's Purpose

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

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Westminster Presbyterian Women Newsletter (WPW of Dayton, Ohio)

Moderator's Message ...

When I first wrote my column for this edition of our newsletter, the world was humming along at its usual pace with the usual pleasures, joys, fears and problems. Our lives were also generally humming along at a normal pace whether that pace was currently good or bad. We knew where we were! Then the reality of the corona virus began to come home to us. Today we find ourselves dealing with a different kind of life, at least temporarily. We are maintaining social distance and learning what is important as many places we normally go and things we normally do are closed.



**Pat Torvik,
WPW Moderator**

Unfortunately, the changes in our current level of activities are necessary in order to slow the spread of the virus so that we can protect those most vulnerable and protect the capacity of our health system to provide care to those affected by the virus. Considering that necessity, WPW has decided to postpone our Spring Gathering. In upcoming days, we will figure out how to handle the things like election of officers that normally take place at that event. We will reschedule the speaker from the League of Women Voters. We want all of you to have the opportunity to hear their presentation on the Suffragist movement in Dayton, Ohio. Stay tuned and stay healthy.

On the inner pages of this newsletter, you will find an essay on Civility submitted by Elizabeth Herr, WPW's Coordinator for Social Justice and Candy Powers, WPW's Coordinator for Global Mission as well as 10 guidelines for managing disputes adopted by the 204th General Assembly (1992) PCUSA. This may strike you as strange material for the Westminster Presbyterian Women's newsletter. It does not feel strange to me given the current level of political and civil discourse and the extent to which that discourse strains friendships and family ties.



Those of us who have been using the 2019-2020 Horizons Bible Study on the Ten Commandments recently spent time studying the Sixth Commandment "You shall not murder." That seemed straight forward and should have been an easy lesson to understand. But, that was not the case. Our author telling us, "You shall not murder" carries a breadth of meaning far beyond taking a life. Anything that diminishes life for God's beloved children and God's beloved community "murders" spirits, self-esteem and another's ability to see themselves as loved and gifted and called. A broader understanding of this commandment compels us to review our own choices and actions for behaviors that diminish humanity....." These words bring the material that Elizabeth and Candy have provided us into sharp focus. I hope they will prove useful to you as you negotiate the difficulty of maintaining civil discourse with those around you. Let our love shine through our words.

Peace and Social Justice

Local Mission

Global Mission

These three committees have been collaborating to focus WPW's attention on celebrating voting in this 100th year of U.S. women's suffrage.

Here are some ways to put your faith into action by using your voice while seeking to be faithful together... even in times of disagreement.

Peace and Social Justice, Local and Global Mission (Submitted by Candy Powers and Elizabeth Herr)



Are you nervous about family meals on big news days? Would you like to stick your head under your pillow and try waking up again later, maybe in a less acrimonious America? We feel you, girl.

In 2020 Americans are having a hard time finding deep common ground beneath their differences. Fortunately, there are good and intelligent people working to help us unite our nation. When we strengthen the kindness and attentiveness of historically dominant voices, and encourage those voices which have previously been ignored or silenced, we have a richer conversation that enlightens and empowers every single one of us.

What is Civility?

Civility is claiming and caring for one's identity, needs and beliefs without degrading someone else's in the process.

TOMAS SPATH AND CASSANDRA DAHNKE, FOUNDERS, INSTITUTE FOR CIVILITY IN GOVERNMENT

Civility is about more than just politeness, although politeness is a necessary first step. It is about disagreeing without disrespect, seeking common ground as a starting point for dialogue about differences, listening past one's preconceptions, and teaching others to do the same. Civility is the hard work of staying present even with those with whom we have deep-rooted and fierce disagreements. It is political in the sense that it is a necessary prerequisite for civic action. But it is political, too, in the sense that it is about negotiating interpersonal power such that everyone's voice is heard, and nobody's is ignored. *(The Institute for Civility in Government)*

And civility begins with us. In a nutshell, each member of our society has unique knowledge and viewpoints, and when we learn about them with genuine curiosity we cannot help but develop the wisdom and understanding to make a future we can all live with. Presbyterians mostly know this already, and have developed some practices for such thorny times as these. If you ever wish you knew how to be more calm and loving around those with whom you disagree, these **Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement** are truly useful. (See pages 3-4.)

Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement

In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will. . .

- 1. Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ;**
 - we will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange,
 - we will not ask questions or make statements in a way which will intimidate or judge others.
 - 2. Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.**
 - 3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.**
-
- 4. Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teachings.**
 - 5. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence or integrity;**
 - we will not engage in name-calling or labelling of others prior to, during, or following the discussion.
 - 6. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.**

(Guidelines 7—10 are located on the next page.)

NOTE: These 10 guidelines were adopted by the 204th General Assembly (1992) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for use by sessions and congregations.
https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/peacemaking/pdf/guidelines.pdf

In the Winter WPW Newsletter we published practical ways to act on our faith. Enclosed with this Spring Newsletter please find contact info for our representatives at the state and national level. If you feel passionately about any issues, visiting policy makers, or calling or writing to them, is an excellent way to live your faith. In the next WPW Newsletter we will be providing a primer on best practices for finding out what candidates really stand for, and which legislation actually brings our American family closer to our deep values.

**Give them
a hearing. . .
listen
before we
answer,**

**John 7:51
and Proverbs
18:13**

**Speak
the truth
in love.**

**Ephesians
4:15**



Maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:3

Seeking to be Faithful Together: (continued from page 3) Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement

- 7. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.**
- 8. Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension;**
 - we will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.
- 9. Follow these additional guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:**
 - urge persons of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously;
 - seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement;
 - be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience;
 - abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways which are consistent with these Guidelines.
- 10. Include our disagreement in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly, and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.**



Photo:
<https://www.cnyhistory.org/2015/08/19th-amendment/>



POSTPONED: Spring Gathering!

To support national efforts to stem the spread of COVID-19, the WPW Spring Gathering has been postponed. When the postponed event dates is determined, we plan to reschedule Dianne Herman to speak on "Let the Women Vote: The Long Quest for Suffrage." (Dianne is Speaker Chair for the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area.) Donation opportunities for PDA School Kits, Birthday Offering, and Stuffed Animals will also be rescheduled. Please save your planned donations. Please stay tuned for more information on this postponed event.

WPW Newsletter — Volume 3 Issue 4
(Spring 2020) Published Quarterly
Westminster Presbyterian Women
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NOTE: Please call or email Pat to discuss how you can get involved in WPW!
937-643-2225 or torvikpa@gmail.com

Senators-National - Ohio**Sherrod Brown** - (D - OH) Class I

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Ohio General Assembly Ohio Legislators – State Senators

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 Website: www.ohiosenate.gov/senators/lehner
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Ohio District 5 - Darke (part), Miami, Preble, Montgomery (part) **Stephen A. Huffman** (R) Senator- State
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Committees: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Education, Finance - Health and Medicaid subcommittee - Chair, Health, Human Services and Medicaid, Insurance and Financial Insurances

(Continued on next page)

**Putting
 your VOICE
 to work.**

A Contact List
 of Ohio,
 National and
 State Senators,
 National
 and State
 House of
 Representatives
 in Dayton
 and surrounding
 districts
 to call or
 write about
 your concerns.

Contact
 Candy Powers
 at 937.829.5255
 or email her at
clatta136@gmail.com
 for your
 district,
 if unsure.

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for your
district,
if unsure.

Ohio General Assembly Ohio Legislators – State Senators

Ohio District 10- Clark, Greene, Madison **Bob D. Hackett (R)**

Senator- State

Senate Building, 1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215 (614) 466-3780

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Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, Ways and Means

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Ohio District 41 (Kettering, Centerville) — **Jim Butler (R)** House Representative — State

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Your WPW Slate of Nominated Officers

The Coordinating Team (CT) is comprised of elected officers, circle leaders, and other coordinators who are appointed. Some of these terms are two-year terms; others are one-year terms.

Currently, the following nominees have been selected by the nominations committee for your prayerful consideration. (The election process will be announced soon.)

Past Moderator (2020 – 2021)	Pat Torvik
Moderator (2020 – 2021)	Jorja Gladden
Vice-Moderator (2020 – 2021)	Jennifer DeVries
Secretary (2020 – 2022)	Mary McKinley
Publicity (2020 – 2022)	Pam Helsinger
Local Mission (2020 – 2022)	Candy Powers
Search Committee (2020 – 2022)	Ann Barr
Search Committee (2020 – 2022)	Donna Shell

Other previously-elected members of the Coordinating Team who will continue in their second year of a two-year term include:

Treasurer (2019 – 2021)	Martha Bell
Global Mission (2019 – 2021)	Candy Powers
Studies / Spiritual Development (2019 – 2021)	Sandy Vining
Justice and Peace (2019 – 2021)	Elizabeth Herr
Search Committee (2019 – 2021)	Katie Brennaman
Search Committee (2019 – 2021)	Barbara Wilson

The remaining members of the Coordinating Team are appointed positions; they will be announced in the Summer WPW newsletter. Those include the circle leaders as well as the coordinators of ministries and other projects.

The WPW CT staff representative is The Reverend Nancy Hodgkins.



NOTE:

Election of CT officers will take place soon. Please stayed tuned.

There are three proposed changes in bylaws that need to be made.

These are in regard to terms of office for Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Past Moderator, and also the addition of the Coordinator of Justice and Peace.

WPW needs your vote on a bylaws change!

The vote on the proposed WPW bylaws change scheduled to take place during the Spring Gathering has also been postponed. Please stay tuned for more information on the voting on these two articles. Current bylaws are located at: <http://westminsterdayton.org/adults/presbyterian-women.html>. Proposed changes include:

- Article VI Executive committee: Insert Past Moderator after Vice Moderator.
- Article IX Election, Term of Office, Vacancies.
Section 2 is proposed to be amended to read, “The Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and Past Moderator will each serve a term of one year. All other elected leaders serve a term of two years.....”
- Article V, Section 2: Add “Coordinator of Justice and Peace,” after Local Mission.
- Article V, Section 5, items h through l: Move down and insert item h as: “The Coordinator for Justice and Peace educates and raises awareness of issues with special emphasis on how they impact women and children.”

We Must Do More (from Elizabeth Herr and Candy Powers)...

Bring your spouse, a friend from in or outside Westminster, or other family members, or a curious neighbor! Join visionary Rev. Dr. William J. Barber as he leads a new incarnation of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Poor People’s Campaign. Details: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/event/dayton-oh-we-must-do-more-tour/>.



WPW Newsletter Spring 2020

Westminster Presbyterian Church

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Dayton, OH 45402
www.westminsterdayton.org

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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



We pray for healing from this plague, for those who have lost loved ones, for medical workers, for wisdom in quarantining, for public officials, and for all others.

May God open our hearts, finances, and political will.

(Excerpts/paraphrase from prayer of J. Herbert Nelson, II, Stated Clerk of General Assembly, PCUSA, 2/20/2020)

Consider adding one or more of these to your Summer 2020 To-Do List!

- Did you miss an issue of the WPW newsletter? Catch up on back issues at: <http://westminsterdayton.org/adults/presbyterian-women.html>.
- Include some scripture and inspirational books on your reading list!
- Explore joining a circle. (Call Pat Torvik at 937-643-2225 for help with this.)
- Ensure NOW that you are registered to vote and then VOTE at every opportunity!
- Offer your name as someone who'd like to serve on the WPW board or committee!
- Add one of the mission projects to your personal calendar and/or your financial contributions. (Contact Pat Torvik for info.)
- Join Church Women United SOON and attend an event. (Contact Jorja Gladden.)
- Stay tuned for updates regarding the postponed Spring Gathering!
- Make sure these dates are on your personal calendar:
 - Tues., Apr. 28 (5:30 p.m.): WPW Coordinating Team Meeting (West Parlor)
 - Sat., May 9 (1:00 p.m.): Church Women United (CWU) May Friendship Celebration, UCC, 8611 Hoke Rd., Clayton
 - Mon., Jun. 8 (1:00 p.m.): CWU Human Rights Celebration / Annual Meeting
St. Margaret's Episcopal, 5301 Free Pike, Trotwood
 - Fri., July 17– Sat., July 18, 2020 PW Synod of the Covenant Gathering,
First Presbyterian Church, Dearborn, MI

