



KEEPING IN TOUCH

Presbyterian Women of The Peaks

June 2025 Edition



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 20, 2025

Plan now to join PW for its Annual Gathering at Northminster Presbyterian Church in Roanoke. Watch for more information in our August Newsletter.

SPRING GATHERING RECAP

At its Spring Gathering at Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church on April 26, 2025, **Presbyterian Women (PW) of the Presbytery of the Peaks honored The Reverend Dr. Carl Utley with an Honorary Life Membership.** As you know, this honor is bestowed upon a woman or man in special recognition of faithful service to PW and to the church. Recipients of the honor receive a lapel pin and a certificate of the award.



Carl is retiring and PW could not let his retirement pass without acknowledging his contributions. In presenting the award, Shelda Wills, our PW Moderator of The Peaks, thanked Carl for his continued support of PW, participating in its programs and gatherings, and championing its accomplishments. She expressed that PW wishes him a rich and fulfilling retirement and will truly miss him.

In addition, led by our own CT member, Sarah Hyska, Racial Equity/Justice & Peace Representative, attendees heard a chilling panel discussion on the subject of domestic abuse and the horrific experiences of children in abused situations. The panel included **The Honorable H. Cary Payne**, Judge, 24th Judicial District Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court; **Amy Lingenfelter**, Advocate Manager, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates); and **Kristen Nolen**, Director of Housing Services, Miriam's House.

PW SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC SUMMER GATHERING

A total of 119 attendees (women and a few men) gathered at Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center for the 36th PW Annual Gathering of our Synod June 12-15. Our Synod covers North Carolina, Virginia, a little bit of West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and DC.

The Gathering all-star lineup included **Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter**, the dynamic author of the **2025-26 PW/Horizons Bible Study**, who was a big hit! From The Peaks, **The Reverend Susi Ennis** led very meaningful morning devotions. **The recovery effort in the Western North Carolina Presbytery after Hurricane Helene was chosen to receive the mission offering.** **Dr. Anne Waple**, Disaster Recovery Coordinator for the Presbytery, provided a great in-depth update of the devastation, and the offering received was \$2,352. **The Reverend Dr. Bronwen Boswell**, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk of Shenandoah Presbytery and the former Acting Stated Clerk of the General Assembly (the first woman to serve!!) was our keynote speaker, and her insight and passion were a super beginning to the Gathering.

The Gathering was planned by a Steering Committee consisting of CT leaders from The Peaks: Shelda Wills, Co-Chair; Janet Rakes, Communications; and Theresa Underwood, Treasurer. Pam Snyder from the Shenandoah Presbytery also served as Co-Chair and currently serves as Moderator for PW, Inc., our national PW. Other CT leaders attending from The Peaks were Laura Crumbley, Sarah Hyska, Natasha Lowe, and Eleese Wilson. Other attendees from The Peaks included Elizabeth Day, Sandra Gisiner, Sharon Perdue, Connie Powell, Ashley Stanley (who led a workshop), Carol Tolley, and Faye Worley.

PW COOKBOOKS

Some cookbooks are still available. They are \$25 each and include recipes from churches in The Peaks Presbytery. Email Theresa Underwood at tundwood@aol.com to reserve a copy.

NEIGHBORHOOD CORNER

From Hill Cities

In October of 2024, the Presbyterian Women of First Presbyterian Church of Lynchburg enthusiastically endorsed an application for a Thank Offering Grant from Presbyterian Women, Inc., the PW national organization, for our partners Lynchburg Daily Bread. A whole building back-up generator for this downtown Lynchburg soup kitchen is critical to its operations and food safety.

Daily Bread is a private 501c(3) charity founded in 1982 by the women of our church. In the last 12 months, Daily Bread has provided 284,428 meals to the Central Virginia Community, meeting a critical need, every day of the year. Dozens of volunteers, many of whom are Presbyterian Women at First Presbyterian, regularly prepare and serve the daily luncheon meal at the Daily Bread, as well as make in-kind donations and personal financial gifts to help in meeting the many needs of the guests.



We are excited to announce that Daily Bread was awarded a Thank Offering Grant in the amount of \$22,800 in February of 2025, and a generator has been installed in the building. (Submitted by Laura Crumbley)

From New River Valley

Earlier this year, the Presbyterian Women at Blacksburg Presbyterian Church gathered for a day of renewal, fun, and friendship during our retreat, “God’s Steel Magnolias.” We watched the movie ***Steel Magnolias*** and used the characters to learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of women in the Bible and ourselves. A personality test was taken by each person to determine if she were a Nurturer (M’Lynn and Mother Mary), Heroine (Shelby and Esther), Romantic (Truvy and Mary Magdalene), Sidekick (Annelle and Ruth), Diva (Clairee and Sarah), or Realist (Ouiser and Martha). **Learning more about each personality and character taught us to treasure the weaving of talents that makes each of us a unique daughter of God.** The day ended with a weaving project that showcased the beauty and talents of each character. (Submitted by Natasha Lowe)

