



# *KEEPING IN TOUCH*

## *Presbyterian Women of The Peaks*

### *August 2025 Edition*



**YOU ARE INVITED!**

**PW ANNUAL GATHERING!**

## **FROM HOPELESS TO HOPEFUL:**

**The Plight and Resilience of Refugees from  
Afghanistan—Especially Women**

**HEAR SOME OF THE STORIES OF THOSE TRYING TO ESCAPE THE HORRIFIC  
TREATMENT OF WOMEN. LEARN WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP.**

**Joining us will be SCOTT BAILEY and JORDAN KANE.**

**Scott is Co-Founder/President of the Board of Directors of the Blacksburg  
Refugee Partnership. He is a Virginia Tech Professor and Director of Space  
Science and Engineering Research. Jordan is an Advisor to  
Congress/State/Department of Defense. She translates policy challenges into  
simple language. She serves as Supervisory Research Analyst of Special  
Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).**

**We are privileged to serve with Coordinating Team member SARAH HYSKA. She  
and her pastor husband, Shawn, currently host six women from Afghanistan.**

**Sarah will be available to answer real-time questions.**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2025  
NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**3911 Greenland Avenue, N.W., Roanoke, Virginia**



**Take Exit 3E onto Hershberger Road from I-581 in Roanoke. Turn right onto Grandview Avenue at  
the BP Gas Station. Follow Grandview approximately 10 blocks to Avalon Avenue. Turn right onto  
Avalon Avenue, and the church is on your left. Stay left and pull into the parking lot.**

**9:30 a.m. – R & R & R: Registration, Refreshments, Reacquaintance**

**10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – Gathering Program**

**We are pleased that PAM SNYDER, Moderator of the PW, Inc., Board of Directors, our  
PCUSA churchwide leadership, will install our new leaders. Bringing us greetings will  
be REVEREND RUSS MERRITT from Northminster Presbyterian Church, and leading  
devotions will be REVEREND JANET CHISOM from Trinity Ecumenical Parish. LISA  
COX (and a few students) will tell us a little bit about the EASTERN APPALACHIAN  
TEEN CHALLENGE, a residential and private school for adolescent girls who struggle  
with life controlling issues. The offering we receive at the Gathering will benefit the  
Eastern Appalachian Teen Challenge.**

## **PW SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC SUMMER GATHERING NEWS**

Presbyterian Women from all over the Synod gathered at Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center June 12-15. There were 119 attendees, including 32 first-timers and 15 attendees from the Presbytery of the Peaks. Fellowship abounded with leadership from the author of the 2025-26 Bible Study, plenary speakers, and workshop/option leaders.

The Peaks PW offered a partial scholarship to promote attendance. ELIZABETH DAY from Blacksburg PC applied and received the scholarship. She was a first-time attendee. Below is testimony received from Elizabeth after the Gathering:

*My first time attending the PW Synod Summer Gathering was a special and memorable experience. One of the personal highlights for me was learning to play the chimes—a beautiful and meditative experience that culminated in performing before worship. It was both nerve-wracking and deeply rewarding and reminded me of the joy of trying something new in a supportive environment.*

*My days were filled with opportunities to bond and be uplifted. Group activities like PDUBS (aka BINGO) and the Dance Party brought laughter and lightheartedness. Equally memorable were the quieter moments like conversations on the front porch, with the rain falling down, that brought so much joy to my heart.*

*My first PW Synod Summer Gathering was more than just a weekend away—it was a meaningful experience of faith, friendship, and fun. I left Massanetta Springs feeling refreshed, inspired, and grateful for the women who make this community so strong.*

## **PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**

**(See attached Bylaws with Proposed Amendments.)**

From time to time, the PW Coordinating Team (CT) reviews its bylaws. The CT has chosen to present updates for the bylaws this year at the Annual Gathering. Mostly, the updates represent minor clarifications in wording and/or provide better descriptions of procedures that have been in practice for a while. However, we would like to point out one that is noteworthy:

A leader will have the option of serving a second **and a third** term of two years. Explanation – Several years back, the CT terms for leaders were two terms of three years each, or a total of six years. This revision returns the number of years a leader may serve to six years, replacing the current number of four years of service.

**WHETHER SERVING FOR ONE, TWO, OR EVEN THREE TERMS,  
THE PEAKS PRESBYTERY PW ENCOURAGES YOU TO JOIN THE TEAM!  
NEW LEADERS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE GROWTH OF PW.  
PLEASE CONSIDER SERVING!**

# **Presbyterian Women Bylaws Presbytery of the Peaks**

## **ARTICLE I – *Name***

The name of this organization shall be Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of the Peaks, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

## **ARTICLE II – *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 God's kingdom.

## **ARTICLE III – *Membership***

Members of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery shall be all women within the Presbytery who choose to participate in, or be supportive of, Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery in any way.

## **ARTICLE IV – *Coordinating Team Election and Term of Office***

### **Section 1**

The leaders shall form a Coordinating Team for conducting the business of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery.

### **Section 2**

The Search Committee shall present names of women to be elected to the Coordinating Team to the members of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery at the Annual Gathering. Elected leaders of Presbyterian Women shall be members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### **Section 3**

The term of office for all leaders shall be two years, with the privilege of re-election to a second ~~and third term.~~, ~~with the exception of the Treasurer, who shall have the privilege of re-election to a third term.~~ The Moderator-Elect shall be elected for a one-year term ~~in the last year of the Moderator's term of office~~ with the understanding that she shall automatically assume the position of Moderator for the next two-year term.

## **Section 4**

The leaders of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery shall be Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Vice Moderator, Secretary, Historian, Treasurer, Moderator of the Search Committee, three Search Committee Members, Racial Equity/Justice and Peace Representative, Missions Coordinator, and Neighborhoods Coordinator. ~~Additional leaders may be Members-at-Large with specific responsibilities to carry out the work of Presbyterian Women as needed.~~

## **Section 5**

The rotation system for the Coordinating Team shall be as follows: In one year, the Moderator, Secretary, Racial Equity/Justice and Peace Representative, Moderator of the Search Committee, one Search Committee Member, and Neighborhoods Coordinator shall be elected; and in one year, the Vice Moderator, Treasurer, Historian, two Search Committee Members, and Missions Coordinator shall be elected. The Moderator-Elect shall be elected for a one-year term ~~in the last year of the Moderator's term of office. every other year.~~

## ***ARTICLE V – Duties of Leaders***

### **Section 1**

The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Coordinating Team and at all gatherings of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery where business is conducted; shall be the key person to receive communications on behalf of Presbyterian Women; ~~shall coordinate the preparation of the PW Fall Packet of forms and reports;~~ shall be the representative to the Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women in the Synod; shall represent Presbyterian Women on the Presbytery Cabinet and on Presbytery and other ecumenical committees and projects, as appropriate; and shall be a voting representative at Churchwide Gatherings.

### **Section 2**

The Moderator-Elect shall be in training for the position of Moderator during the last year of the Moderator's term of office.

### **Section 3**

The Vice Moderator shall preside in the absence of the Moderator or at her request; shall assist the Moderator as requested; shall be responsible for

devotions at the beginning of each Coordinating Team meeting; shall chair the Program Committee for the Annual Gathering; and shall coordinate the preparation of the Annual Gathering Program booklet. If the office of Moderator becomes vacant between elections, she shall complete the Moderator's term.

#### **Section 4**

The Secretary shall keep and preserve minutes of all meetings and gatherings and shall mail or e-mail the minutes to the Moderator within two weeks after each meeting and to each member of the Coordinating Team within four weeks after each meeting; shall coordinate the preparation of the directory for the Coordinating Team; shall coordinate the preparation and distribution of the newsletters; shall coordinate the ~~preparation and~~ distribution of the PW Fall Packet of forms and reports; and shall send information to Coordinating Team members, to local PW Moderators/Contact Persons, and to other individuals/agencies as directed by the Moderator.

#### **Section 5**

The Historian shall assemble facts, brochures, and programs (including photographs) of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery; shall receive the histories from Presbyterian Women in the congregations; shall write the history for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery for the calendar year based on the above information; shall submit the history to the Historian of Presbyterian Women in the Synod, with a copy being forwarded to the denominational historical agency (a copy to be kept for the Historian's file); and shall maintain a working file for her successor.

#### **Section 6**

The Treasurer shall interpret the giving opportunities of Presbyterian Women; shall receive monies for all Celebration Giving from Presbyterian Women in the congregations and disburse as required, except the amount designated for the operating expenses for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery; shall keep accurate financial records, receipts, and disbursements of all Presbyterian Women funds; shall submit regular reports, in writing, to the Coordinating Team; shall submit an annual report, in writing, to Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery; shall provide feedback as requested to the Synod Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team; shall submit financial records for audit on an annual basis; and shall chair the Finance Committee.

## **Section 7**

The Moderator of the Search Committee shall call and preside at the meetings of the Search Committee and shall present, for election at the Annual Gathering, the names of women called to leadership positions in Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery.

## **Section 8**

The Racial Equity/Justice and Peace Representative shall bring concerns of racial equity issues to the attention of Presbyterian Women; shall encourage participation and involvement of all women in the Presbyterian Women's programs in the Presbytery; and shall review current justice and peace issues, bringing the information to the attention of the Coordinating Team, and, when appropriate, distributing the information to women in the Presbytery.

## **Section 9**

The Missions Coordinator shall be responsible for making the local churches aware of the Birthday Offering and Thank Offering projects and shall be available to assist the local churches with their celebrations; shall be responsible for the distribution of missions materials to the local churches; and may shall prepare an exhibit for display at the Annual Gathering; ~~and shall work with the Synod Representative, as needed.~~

## **Section 10**

The Neighborhoods Coordinator shall appoint a Neighborhood Leader for each neighborhood, keeping the Coordinating Team informed of all appointments; shall be the direct link between Presbyterian Women in the neighborhoods and the Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery; shall attend opportunities for leadership training; ~~shall assist in planning the Spring Gathering with the Neighborhood Leaders;~~ and shall be knowledgeable about and provide support and program resources to Presbyterian Women through the Neighborhood Leaders.

## **Section 11**

The Out-Going Moderator shall remain on the Coordinating Team in an advisory capacity, with voice but without vote, for a maximum of one year.

## **Section 12**

The Neighborhood Leader shall function as a liaison between the Presbyterian Women in her neighborhood and the Neighborhoods Coordinator of the Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery; shall share Presbyterian Women communications and other information from the Neighborhoods Coordinator with the local congregations in her neighborhood; ~~shall assist in planning the Spring Gathering with the Neighborhoods Coordinator;~~ and shall attend opportunities for leadership training.

## **Section 13**

Members-at-Large with specific responsibilities, ~~as defined at the time of appointment,~~ including the Neighborhood Leaders, shall be appointed to help conduct the work of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery.

## **ARTICLE VI – *Duties of the Coordinating Team***

### **Section 1**

The Coordinating Team shall meet ~~in person~~ no less than once a quarter in a location to be mutually decided upon by the Coordinating Team. The meeting may also take place audibly by conference call or virtually by video conferencing.

### **Section 2**

The Coordinating Team shall plan for regular gatherings, ~~neighborhood gatherings,~~ and special interest gatherings of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery; shall identify issues of concern to Presbyterian Women; shall provide program support and resources, through the Neighborhoods Coordinator~~s~~ and related staff, to Presbyterian Women in the congregations; and shall provide for a representative(s) to serve on Presbytery Cabinet and on Presbytery and other ecumenical committees and projects when the Moderator or Vice Moderator is unable to serve in that capacity.

## **ARTICLE VII – *Search Committee***

The Search Committee shall consist of four women, one of whom shall be Moderator of the committee. The responsibilities of the Search Committee are to recommend persons to be called to leadership positions and to present them for election at the Annual Gathering of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. If an office becomes vacant between Annual Gatherings or if a leader is unable to complete her term of office, the Search Committee shall recommend a

person to fill that office, with approval of the Coordinating Team, until the next Annual Gathering, at which time an election shall be held.

## **ARTICLE VIII – *Finances***

The program of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery shall be financed by the pledges of Presbyterian Women in the local congregations to the operating expenses of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. The financial year for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery shall be from January 1, through December 31.

## **ARTICLE IX – *Gatherings***

### **Section 1**

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery shall meet at least annually and more often, if appropriate. These gatherings, which may take place as “in-person” gatherings or as virtual gatherings, shall be open to all women. The election and installation of leaders and approval of the budget shall be done in the context of the Annual Gathering of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. All members of Presbyterian Women attending this gathering shall be entitled to vote.

### **Section 2**

If Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery should be unable to meet annually by an “in-person” gathering or by a virtual gathering, actions may still take place without gathering. Presbyterian Women may vote on necessary actions, provided members who will be voting are notified in writing, either by postal mail or by electronic mail, at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the “action without gathering.” Each member will have one vote and will be able to submit her vote by postal mail or by electronic mail, based on information provided in the written notification.

## **ARTICLE X – *Amendments***

These bylaws may be amended at any Annual Gathering by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided notice of the proposed amendments has been submitted in writing, either by postal mail or by electronic mail, to Presbyterian Women in the congregations at least thirty (30) days prior to the gathering. These bylaws may also be amended by a three-fourths vote without prior notice. These bylaws may be suspended at any Annual Gathering by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided notice of such suspension has been submitted in writing, either by postal mail or by electronic



mail, to Presbyterian Women in the congregations at least thirty (30) days prior to the gathering.

## **ARTICLE XI – *Quorum***

### **Section 1**

A quorum for a meeting or retreat of the Presbytery of the Peaks PW Coordinating Team shall represent two-thirds of the membership of the Coordinating Team.

### **Section 2**

A quorum for an Annual Gathering of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery shall represent attendees from at least one-tenth of the congregations in the Presbytery that have active PW organizations.

## **ARTICLE XII – *Parliamentary Authority***

*Roberts' Rules of Order (Newly Revised)* shall govern Presbyterian Women in all cases to which they are applicable and to which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. Presbyterian Women may choose to use a consensus method of decision making, when appropriate.

Amended at Annual Gathering September 13, 2025 ~~23, 2023~~