

August 2009

Volume 14 / Issue 2

Moderator's Mosaic

Greetings:

It seems like it was only a few days ago when we met at Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church in Des Moines for our 2009 Spring PW Gathering where our Presbytery Women approved supporting the mission project of remodeling the churches' kitchen. The offering collected for CROSS Ministries and the kitchen project at the Cottage Grove church totaled \$818. *(Pictured here are a few of the Sudanese children that are benefiting from this new ministry.)*

Thank you Presbyterian Women for your love and concern for all God's children!

If you wish to make a contribution to this mission, send checks made out to "Cottage Grove Avenue Kitchen Project", to **Office Manager Betty Dyer**, Presbytery of Des Moines, 2400 86th St., Suite 20, Urbandale, IA 50322-4306.

The summer has gone fast for me. I really enjoyed my time at the PW Churchwide Gathering in Louisville, Ky., as we witnessed to the theme "God Will Do Wonders Among You." *(See the report by Emily Seeger inside this issue to learn more about this event.)*

Our Fall PW Workshops will continue to explore how God works among us in a "Celebration of Wonders." Your CT has met and planned a wonder-filled event for you. *(See the back page for details on the workshops.)*

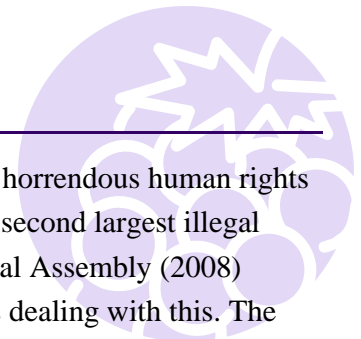
Since the mid-1800's Presbyterian Women have given unselfishly in celebration of God's grace, building a community of faith that witnesses to the promise of God's realm. Our fall workshops offering will again go to help Cross Ministries and local missions. But PW giving has never been limited to local causes.

As you plan for the coming year, consider thoughtfully your PW Mission pledge. PW giving is second-mile giving—gifts generously given that go beyond regular pledging to the church. Sacrificial or second-mile giving helps PW and the PC(USA) mission to thrive and better the lives of people throughout the world. I hope each circle and PW group will make a pledge to continue to support not only your local church and PW, but PW at the Presbytery, Synod and national levels.

Local moderators look for a mailing soon that will include pledge information as well as other information needed for the coming year. See you at Fall Gathering!

– Rev. Linda O'Connell, PWP Moderator





Websites of Interest:

- Peruvian artisans can be found at:
www.PartnersForJustTrade.org/pb
- Jewelry and hand-knit products from Peru at:
www.FairTradeTour.org

Birthday Offering Meets New Challenges

The *Thank Offering* and *Birthday Offering* are the two special offerings of Presbyterian Women. They are separate from our support for PW and the church through the Mission Pledge. The *Thank Offering* is an expression of our thanksgiving to the Lord. It supports mission projects, with at least 40% going to hospitals and other health ministries that provide services for women and children throughout the world. Many projects receive awards of less than \$50,000.

The *Birthday Offering* also goes to mission projects, but two or three specific programs receive larger amounts of money. Last year the *Birthday Offering* did not meet its fundraising goal, and the Creative Ministries Offering Committee was not able to fully fund what we had promised to our 2008 recipients. PW had to reduce the challenge goal for 2009.

We encourage each Presbyterian woman to promote the *Birthday* and *Thank Offerings* to her congregation so that we can continue our mission work, which has such a strong historical connection.

Justice and Peace Notes

Human Trafficking – Presbyterian Women have been concerned about trafficking in women and children since the Global Exchange to Thailand, Cambo-

dia, and the Philippines. This horrendous human rights violation has grown to be the second largest illegal trade in the world. The General Assembly (2008) passed two pieces of business dealing with this. The first was a resolution challenging presbyteries and churches to look for ways to identify trafficked individuals and to advocate for and minister to them. The second was an overture calling for action by our government and our church to address this human rights violation with appropriate service and legislation.

Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women July 11-15

With 2,400 women in attendance, the theme for this years triennium was “*God will Do Wonders Among You*” – *Joshua 3:5*.

Daily themes included the wonder of God, Community, Creation, Mission, Hope, Grace, Discipleship and Wonders. Worship and plenaries, 50 workshops, 9 forums, visits with Global Partners, and tours of interesting sites in Louisville, Ky., provided lots of options for filling the day.

The Gathering met jointly with the National Association of Presbyterian Clergy women. It provided a opportunity for the two groups to know one another better and to celebrate who we are. Prior to the Gathering participants were asked to bring gift cards for the Belleword Presbyterian Homes for Children and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Over \$69,000 in cards were collected. The offering of \$55,000 collected at the event went for the establishing of the Presbyterian Women Grant for Theological Education. Cents-ability (2cents a day) collected at the meals was \$3,000.

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At the Business Meeting attended by **PWP Moderator Linda O'Connell** and **Voting Rep. Emily Seeger**, it was reported that over \$1,000,000 in undesignated giving had been given to the General Assembly budget of the PC(USA). Seventy-seven *Thank Offering* projects totaling \$1,499,433 and 7 projects sponsored by the *Birthday Offering* totaling \$1,073,185 were funded during the triennium. Also voted at the business meeting was the incorporation of Presbyterian Women. The CCT will be the Board of Directors. The new moderator is Marta Rodriguez of Puerto Rico. Celebrating happened in many different forms as we greeted old friends, sang new songs, and welcomed the newly organized PW Women of Kenya.

The 2012 Gathering will occur in Orlando, Florida!

Mission Experience travels to the Dakotas in 2010

The second U.S.A. Mission Experience of Presbyterian Women will travel to our Synod of Lakes and Prairies and the Dakotas in September 2010. Participants will meet Native American sisters, and visit reservations, schools, churches and tribal colleges, as well as historical sites. One to two days will be spent on food and farming issues.

Together in Service (TIS) web pages updated

The *Together in Service Guide Book* will have revisions to page 8, 9, 10. These revision will be available for download on the TIS website by the end of April. To visit the TIS web pages, go to www.pcusa.org/pw/missionmatters/tis/index.htm or go to www.pcusa.org and type *Together in Service* in the search box.

HORIZONS Bible Study

Listening for God supplement to the 2009-2010 *HORIZONS* Bible study is available for free download! Mary Elva Smith's supplement, *Listening for God: Reflecting on the Book of Joshua* is being offered as a free download. The retreat model, based on selected themes from the study, gives participants the opportunity to reflect on Joshua in community and to examine it in an honest and loving communal space.

Upcoming HORIZONS Themes

July/Aug '09:	Security in the Midst of Violence
Sept./Oct. '09:	Hospitality and Community / Churchwide Gathering
Nov./Dec. '09:	Emergent Church

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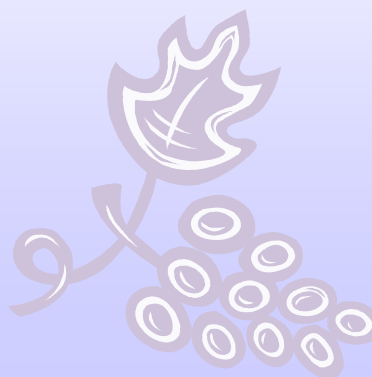
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Denise England Update

Dear Friends:

July 17, 2009

Summer has hit Egypt full-blast and temperatures have been running 40-45 degrees (104-112 F). Remember my previous story of the women on the busy metro cars and then add the extreme heat to the scene. For you women it's easy to imagine that riding the metro in July is the same as sitting inside a hairdryer. The refreshing breeze that should be blowing in the open windows as the metro moves along is absent and in its place is an intense stream of hot air that can take the breath right out of you. Smiles and friendly banter are in short supply right now and the jostling for a cooler spot intense however a few weeks ago there was a much different story to tell. As the metro train was stopped in the station an elderly man, with a cane and limp, was slowly making his way along the platform. In the midst of all the people hurrying to get a vantage spot for boarding, a group of Egyptians got off their car, surrounded the elderly man as they walked him to the entrance, held the metro doors ajar, and helped him onto the car. In the blink of an eye it was over but what was left was the wonder at seeing God's ability to show us such a simple act of compassion in the middle of such chaos.

In my Easter newsletter I told of the time spent at the Geriatric Center and the start of my service at the hospital on the geriatric unit. I continue to share daily fellowship with the residents and am blessed to be a part of their lives. I have been working with the care-givers to increase their understanding of infection control and the role they play in it. For a time I struggled with the slow progress being made but have since given my agenda over to Christ's timing and now celebrate each small victory. In May, my role was expanded to include two medical floors in the hospital. In June, I spent two weeks traveling with the Presbyterian Joining Hands program working with Fair Trade. Please visit my blog site for details and more pictures at www.deniseadventure.blogspot.com.



(Pictured (L to R): Carrie Hawthorne with Partners for Just Trade and me enjoying a meal.) I will spend the month of August in the United States and resume my service at the hospital when I return.

It has been a year since I moved to Egypt. The books say it takes up to a year to adjust to a different country and cultural changes. I have established a routine, know how to navigate around Cairo, can speak basic Arabic, and have some grasp of Egyptian traditions however there is still much to learn and I am sure I will spend all three years adjusting and readjusting. In reality life here is not much different than anywhere or for anyone; each day some plan goes awry, there is something new to learn, or something unexpected happens. The good news is that God is with us wherever we are.

I will end with my "Top 5 Things I've Learned This Year"

1. There is no such thing as *quickly* in Egypt – I am adjusting to the fact that life has it's own pace here.
2. Egyptians are hospitable people with powerful tradition of offering lots of refreshments – I have learned not to eat or drink anything well in advance of visiting.
3. It is great to have a plan but even better to have *flexibility*. I have come to understand I am not in control.
4. Egyptians love to be helpful and don't like to say they don't know – I have figured out that when asking for directions I need to keep asking until I get two answers the same.

There is a season for every relationship – I have realized that ex-patriots in Cairo are constantly coming and going so I am always saying good-bye to one friend and hello to a new one. I pray each of you is able to see the simple acts of compassion amidst the daily chaos in your lives.



Day at the Pyramids

July 27, 2009

As told to me, the pyramids of Giza are the only original Seven Natural Wonders still left standing and no other monument in the world is so instantly recognized. I have visited these Pyramids of Giza several times but have never gone to any others. Today I went on a Pyramid field-trip with friends. Each of the pyramids we saw had different things that made them a unique experience and it was hard to choose a favorite.

Our first stop was at Giza. Cheops (Khufu) is the oldest and largest of the three pyramids here and visitors are allowed inside to see the Kings chamber plus the smaller rooms for his after-life belongings and food. The passage-way is only about 4 feet tall so you have to crouch and walk down a fairly sharp incline in mostly darkness. The air becomes quite tight the farther in you get. Chephren (Khafre) is the middle pyramid and is connected to the fu-

nerary temple near the Sphinx. The smallest is the Menkaure pyramid. Next we headed to the Dashur pyramid field. The Red Pyramid gets it's name from the unique red limestone used. It was built by Snofru but he was not buried in it.

My favorite was the Bent pyramid behind it. My first impression was "what a sad looking thing that is". It was much smaller and the angle was incorrect so it looks like it bends as it gets to the top. The great thing about it though is that very few people come out to this one so we had the place to ourselves and were able to have a picnic lunch right beside it. The security police let us feed their two camels (Ramses & Antonio) and then today I finally gave in and rode one. (I had been looking into taking a week-end camel trek into the desert but after today I think I'll pass).

At Saqqara, we enjoyed a respite in the air-conditioned Imhotep Museum which has many items from the site as well as a mummy boy of about 20. King Zoser's funerary complex has had restoration to it and leads to his Step Pyramid. The Step Pyramid was built by Imhotep in the 27th Century B.C. and is thought to be the oldest and the surrounding area is rich with excavated ruins.

The day started at 6:30 a.m. and lasted until 5 p.m. with the temperature at 43 (109 F). I returned home hot, tired, sunburned, and happy. The chance to explore our ancient world was a day to remember.

I will be flying to the states and spending the month of August with family, friends, and supporters. I will not be blogging until I return in September.

In Christ-

Denise England (Audubon, First)

PC(USA) Mission Co-Worker to Egypt

Check out Denise's blog at <http://deniseadventure.blogspot.com/> to discover the variety of amazing things she has been doing in Egypt as a "nurse of all trades"!



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