



**Synod of
Lakes & Prairies**

Synod Gathering

All About the 2025 Synod Gathering

◆ June 12-15

◆ Watertown, SD



Plan to Register Early!

Registration is now open for PW's 2025 Synod Gathering, which will be held June 12-15 in Watertown, SD. Join Presbyterian women from around our Synod in learning about, rejoicing in and embodying what it means to "Let your Light Shine," as guided by Matt. 5:14-16.

Leadership Team

Elona Street Stewart will be our Worship Leader. She serves as our Synod Executive and has been part of PW for more than 30 years. She was honored as a PW Woman of Faith in 2010 and was co-moderator of the 224th General Assembly in 2020.



Rev. Kristi Holler will be our Music Director. She is currently the pastor at Emanuel Presbyterian Church in Marion, SD.

Fern Cloud will be our Artistic Director. She is a Native American artist and member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Tribe who lives in Granite Falls, Minn.



Full Registration, \$150

It's the event you've been waiting three years to attend. It begins with dinner reception on Thursday and ends with morning worship on Sunday. A full registration is your ticket to community, learning and worship with PW sisters from across the region. It includes all meals, even snack breaks; up to eight workshops from inspiring leaders; group presentations; shopping; a program book; book groups; mission opportunities; guest speakers; a Gathering choir; and so much more!

Single-day Registration, \$75

Enjoy the day's plenary sessions, provided meals of the day, and select from the day's programming options, up to four workshops.

Pre-Gathering Event, \$10 with full registration, \$35 for all others includes Thursday evening reception

A pre-gathering Mini Mission event will occur Thursday when we meet in the lobby at 8 a.m. to carpool to the Lake Traverse Reservation. A full day of tours, speakers, and special events are planned, including a lunch hosted by our Dakota Presbytery PW sisters.

Program Book Ads, starting at just \$50

Now is the time to purchase your group/individual ad for the program book. A full-page ad is just \$150. {Think of it as \$50 per year to tell someone how much you appreciate them every triennium.} A half-page ad is half the price at \$75. And a quarter-page ad is only \$50.

Send your request and payment to Synod Treasurer Terri Sherman at 12244 N 84th St.: Lincoln, NE 68517. Ad copy may be emailed to her at terrisherman99@gmail.com.

Gathering committee staff will happily build your ad for you at no additional cost. Just submit the information you want included and a photo, if desired, and we'll do the rest!

**Register NOW to reserve
your spot!**

2025 Synod Triennial Gathering



**Synod of
Lakes & Prairies**

Watertown, S.D.

June 12-15

Registration



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone and email: _____

- \$150.00 Full registration includes five meals and snack breaks.
- \$75.00 One day registration includes two meals. Please circle one: Friday or Saturday.
- \$10.00 Mini-Mission Experience with full registration. Includes lunch and transportation.
- \$35.00 Mini-Mission Experience without full registration. Includes lunch, transportation and evening reception.
- I can drive for the mini-mission trip and take _____ passengers. [Gas money provided.]

Food allergies: _____

Emergency contact name and phone: _____

Book your room reservation with Ramkota Hotel direct using this number: 605-886-8011. Ask for the PW Gathering rate. If you book online or use a different reservation telephone number, you will not be given the discount rate. Rooms must be reserved by May 12 to receive the discount.

Roommate[s]: _____

There are a variety of rooms: Single and double kings and queens to accommodate up to four per room.

Some rooms are on the second floor and there is no elevator. If you are capable of accessing an upstairs room, please book accordingly and save the ground floor rooms for the elderly and infirm. Thank you.

Please return this form to Maggie Horak at 5601 Barrington Park Dr.; Lincoln, NE 68516 by May 12, 2025.

The hotel offers a complimentary breakfast with both hot and cold items. There is a pool and fitness center.

Workshop schedules will be sent upon receipt of your registration.

<p><i>The Importance of Awe</i></p>	<p>Awe experiences are self-transcendent. They shift our attention away from ourselves, making us feel like we are part of something greater than ourselves and making us more generous towards others. But what is awe? What are the effects of awe?" (from the Science of Awe). When we focus on feeling awe in our everyday lives, we become the light for others, we show them the awe of life.</p>
<p><i>Make a Joyful Noise</i></p>	<p>Please join me in making a noise to the Lord! We will sing our favorite songs and hymns, making music together from the heart. No musical background or experience necessary! Where two or three or more are gathered, Christ is present! We will sing and shout, laugh and cry, and most of all---make a lot of joyful noise together!</p>
<p><i>Forgive!</i></p>	<p>We are called to embrace forgiveness. As a community we strive to forgive and support each other. But can we genuinely forgive someone and move forward? What does it mean to truly forgive? What are the transformative effects of forgiveness? Forgiving someone is a complex journey, but the experience of it can be freeing.</p>
<p><i>Shining our Light in Dark Places</i></p> <p><i>Gen 28:15 I am with you and will keep you wherever you go</i></p>	<p>Listen to stories and recollections from the 3 delegates from our Synod who were able to participate in the 2023 USAME</p> <p>Listen & learn</p> <p>Build relationships</p> <p>Faithfully Serve</p>
<p><i>Armchair Advocacy</i></p>	<p>We're called to champion the environment, uplift the vulnerable, support service institutions, and cherish our families. But how does one step into the role of an advocate? What tools do we need? Are our busy lives a barrier to effective advocacy? Are we too old to wave signs and stand on icy street corners? Must we? With today's technology, advocacy is more accessible than ever. The challenge is, with countless pressing issues, how do we decide where to focus our efforts? How do we find reliable information? Where do we start?</p>
<p><i>Introduction to 2025-26 Horizons Bible Study: Finding Resilience, Joy and Identity in Jesus Christ</i></p>	<p>Introduction to content of the Bible Study and suggest resources and teach ideas to Bible Study Leaders.</p>
<p><i>Lap Robes for Seniors to Brighten Their Days</i></p>	<p>Help create 10 or more lap robes for seniors residing at a local nursing facility. These robes can bring warmth on a chilly day and a little brightness to their lives. No experience necessary.</p>
<p><i>Celebrate Newborns with the Warmth of Baby Hats</i></p>	<p>Make pompoms and sew them on knitted baby hats made with loving hands by a longtime member of P. W. Did you know that hospitals put hats on newborn babies to ensure they stay warm. Newborns have very little body fat so it is important to protect them from becoming chilled and getting sick.</p>

<i>Help Children in Disaster Areas go Back to School</i>	We will be putting together School Bags to send to national disaster areas. There is a huge need for these after the hurricanes, floods and fires have devastated communities.
<i>Just for Fun Rock Painting</i>	Join us anytime during the day on Friday & Saturday to explore your creativity through rock painting. This is a fun and easy way to relax and just have fun. All you need will be provided. Let your light shine through creativity.
<i>Soul Collage: Transformation Through Images and Reflection</i>	Spiritual growth can take many forms and images along with creative activity is one of the best ways. Through guided meditation, creation of a soul collage of images and reflection, participants will gain insight into their own faith, spirituality, and the state of their soul.
<i>Shining Light on the Native American Boarding Schools</i>	Native boarding schools were founded to eliminate traditional Native ways of life and replace them with mainstream American culture. The first boarding schools were started in the mid-nineteenth century either by the government or Christian missionaries. This workshop will explore the life-long trauma caused by these boarding schools, the generational impact and the role of the PC(USA).
<i>Processing Enlightenments from the PWS Mini Trip to Lake Traverse Reservation</i>	Many sites were visited during the PWS Pre-Gathering Mini Trip to the Lake Traverse Reservation and many speakers were heard. This workshop provides an opportunity to further discuss the experience and the topics address, including Mission & Murdered Indigenous Women, support services for prevention of domestic violence/abuse, college scholarships for Native students, boarding school experiences at the Tekakwitha Boarding School and more. You do not need to have participated in the mini trip to join this discussion.
<i>Letting your light shine by stepping out of your comfort zone</i>	Churchwide Board of Directors. Challenges, opportunities, expanding new horizons. Hoping to encourage others to take the opportunity to serve.
<i>Place it on a Lampstand: Best Practices for Saving and Sharing PW History</i>	This workshop focuses on best practices for preserving PW history at the congregational level. I will focus on “Saving” and “Sharing”—what you can do to ensure the records and history you want to preserve survive and are accessible well into the future, and what make preserving records and histories worthwhile. Participants will leave with tools for accessing their archival material, ideas for preserving it onsite, and suggestions for leveraging it for storytelling and fundraising.
<i>Provide a Credible Witness for Justice</i>	Restorative Actions is an economic equity initiative born from the intersection of theology, justice, and economics. It allows U.S. Americans who benefit from institutional racism, to provide a credible witness for justice , by acknowledging the unjust advantages produced by racism, and then surrendering the gains of those advantages toward the establishment of just relationships with Afro-American and Indigenous communities.
<i>PW: RED</i>	Anyone interested in the Racial Equity Dialog program through the Churchwide PW is invited to this informational meeting. Our goal is to form a RED team in our Synod to help presbyteries and congregations to begin or continue the dialog on racial equity. We will set program goals and a tentative Zoom schedule for quarterly meetings, as well as practice a conversation technique to build trust in our relationships.
<i>Welcome the Child</i>	This program was a PW Thank Offering recipient. Director Lisa Schrader will tell us about the program and the impact it has on families and children on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Dome Homes	Chief Red Cloud started Red Cloud Renewables on the Pine Ridge Reservation, and it was the recipient of the PW Birthday Offering. The goal is to build affordable, efficient, dome homes while training workers in construction skills. Chief Red Cloud will share insights into this exciting project.
Gaza	Find out what is happening in Gaza from PW sisters who have been there. Learn what the stance is of the PCUSA and how we can help promote peace and equity.
Yoga	Yoga? At my age? Yes! Yoga is for anyone. Grab a mat or grab a chair. You can do yoga without getting on the floor. Yoga is a great way to stay limber, keep flexible and help retain your balance.
Book discussion	Attendees will have the option of reading a book and joining an informal discussion group. A different book will be discussed each day. Read one or read them both. Book titles will be announced in the registration materials.

TOGETHER IN SERVICE
By Pat McKisson, Committee Chair

‘Answering the call to be the hands and feet of Christ in the World.’
“Each one should use whatever gift one has received to serve others,
faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” (1 Peter 4:10)

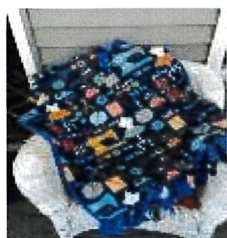
When the P.W. coordinating team of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies started discussing the plans for the upcoming Synod Gathering in June of this year, our committee was tasked with coming up with the hands-on project for the event. Over the months since then, our course has been plotted.

As P.W., our focus for Together in Service is three-fold.

One, we support the work the women of our churches do at the local level in our communities. Second, we support the work you do at the national level, those projects that affect our neighbors in the U.S. Third, we support the work you do at the international level, giving to those beyond our borders where there are so many needs.

At the upcoming Synod Gathering you will have a chance to participate in 2 different projects; each will be as a session. One will benefit the community of Watertown, SD, and one will go to the Native American Concerns committee. For our national needs we are asking each presbytery to bring Kid’s Kit bags (previously known as School Kit bags) to the gathering to support the Gifts of the Heart mission of the PC(USA). The bags will be sent to the Ferncliff location where they will fill them with the school supplies needed.

Your Together in Service team has also planned a Just for You time to come and paint rocks. Stay tuned for more information on the Gathering.



Pre-Gathering Mini-Mission Trip... To Lake Traverse Reservation June 12



Our pre-gathering event will take place on Thursday, June 12. We will tour the Lake Traverse Reservation, visit many sites and hear from guest speakers. Plus enjoy a delicious lunch provided by our PW sisters of Dakota Presbytery.

We will gather in the lobby and carpool to the reservation, which is just a hop, skip and a jump north of Watertown.

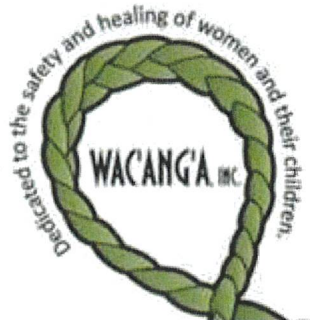
We will visit the three Presbyterian churches on the reservation and hear their histories.

Next, we will tour Sisseton Wahpeton College and hear from the dean. We might even be able to visit with some of our scholarship recipients. Our lunch break will be in the District Center in Old Agency.



We will then visit Tekakwitha Memorial Park, the site of the Indian Boarding School and Orphanage. We will hear from Elder Alvina Hayes and others who attended the school. A grove of trees is being planted in memory of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and their relatives.

Our last stop will be at the Wac'ang'a, or Sweetgrass, domestic violence center and hear from the director, Crystal Owen. Attendees are asked to bring a gift to the shelter of personal care items, feminine hygiene products, and baby necessities.



This tour is available to all. Cost is \$10 with your Gathering registration; \$35 for all others and includes the evening reception. Drivers will receive gas money.



WANTED: LOVING, WILLING SERVANTS WITH HELPING HANDS

We are seeking the PWS CT's help in managing the 2025 Synod Gathering. We have compiled a list of job opportunities/responsibilities that need loving, willing servants to volunteer, direct, guide and manage. What will you choose?

Please look over the list and decide what God is calling you to do to help at the Gathering.

1. **Hands on Mission Room:** Synod Committee members will be on hand for workshop sessions, but the room will be open all day, each day, for individuals to drop in. We need volunteers to be available to keep the area neat.
2. **Centsability Offering Coordinator:** Someone [or two] to help Treasurer Terri Sherman.
3. **Skits Coordinator, (Horizon's skit and PW skit):**
 - Procure/locate skits, work with Maggie Horak
 - Recruit actresses, practice skits
 - Be in charge of props
 - Be the director
4. **Displays coordinator**
 - Organize display area, help set up displays
 - Oversee area to make sure it remains looking inviting(Each Synod Committee expected to have some kind of informative display plus encouraging every PWP and local PWs to provide a display of some kind)
 - Contact SLAP PWCT committee mods to: finalize table size and remind them of their responsibility for a display
5. **Book Discussions Facilitators:**
 - Facilitate discussion of the books participants have read. One each Friday and Saturday.
6. **Processional (Thursday evening & Sunday morning) Coordinator:**
 - Help plan and finalize processional details
 - Herd cats!
 - Line up CT members, keynoter speakers, etc.
 - Remind PWP moderators to wear stoles
7. **Photographer:** Take photos of all group events and candid shots throughout the Gathering.