

I am Merry Lee member of PW of Madison Valley Church, Moderator of PW of the Yellowstone as well as member of the PW of the Synod of The Rocky Mountains.

Women of the Synod requested a change in the Bylaws of PW("PW Churchwide") that "Women may also be individual members of Presbyterian Women" so that women whose churches have left PCUSA might continue to be PW members and hold offices. The new business committee referred our recommendation to the Board of Directors (CCT) of PW Churchwide for consideration and action. However, we were allowed to present our recommendation and Marilyn Collins did so very positively. I was among those who also spoke in support. This is what I said:

I am speaking in behalf of changing the wording of the PW Manual and Bylaws. As we know, PW circles in rural areas are shrinking and in some cases simply evaporating as their churches deal with issues facing PCUSA.

In 2014 our PW Synod met with the national leadership of PW, Mary Cook Jorgenson and others and discussed the unique problems of small rural churches. We were sent out with the chant,"It's the energy; not the numbers!"

Since that meeting I have envisioned a gathering if our (Yellowstone's) circles into a "new creation", a cohesive, ageless beating heart of help for even the smallest need. We need to expand our membership and organizational options in the climate of the 21st century.

The Manual states, "participation in activities of the corporation is open to all women...." Individual membership would signal that we are indeed interested in being inclusive of all women who support PW. This can be done. We can amend the Manual and Bylaws to send a strong unequivocal message of welcome.

Merry Lee Hooks,, Moderator PW Yellowstone

For more information please see an article written in 2012 www.presbyterianwomen.org.
"National task group responds to PW groups in churches seeking dismissal from the PC(USA)."