

# God's Word

Part two of a four-part discussion



BY JANICE CATRON

“In the beginning . . . God said” (*Gen. 1:1a, 3a*). The start of the whole story of faith lies in these words. As the rest of *Genesis 1* unfolds, we see God speak several times, and each time a new portion of creation springs into existence. There is no doubt in the mind of the biblical writer that God’s spoken word carries within it the power to create life.

The rest of the Bible, from *Genesis 2* through *Revelation*, attests that God’s spoken word also has the power to heal and save (see *Ps. 107:20*)—and call. Moses hears a voice from a burning bush (*Exod. 3:4*), then leads a people to freedom. King Josiah receives the spoken word of the Lord through the prophet Huldah and then guides his nation in widespread religious reform.

In the New Testament, God’s spoken word (or call) often is linked to mission. We see this in two ways. First, mission is defined as the call to share God’s message with the world. After all, the resurrected Christ directed the disciples to “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (*Mark 16:15*). This same call holds for each generation of believers.

Second, we read that God’s word is at work in those who hear it and accept it (*1 Thess. 2:13*). *Genesis 1* teaches that God’s word has the power to create; here we see that God’s word also has the power to transform. Through the gracious

As Presbyterian Women prepares for the 2006 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women in Louisville, Kentucky, July 7–11, 2006, members of PW and women planning to attend the Gathering are contemplating the theme—Creation! Celebration! God’s Word—Light for the Journey.

The articles in this series unpack the theological implications of the theme. Dive into this second part of a four-part series to see how PW finds God’s Word.



## The PW 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*
- *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.*

power of God’s call, we are able to “lead a life worthy of God” (*1 Thess. 2:12*), a life that involves caring for the world as God does—through mission (see *Matt. 25:31–40*).

This connection of God’s call and mission comes as no surprise to Presbyterian women. In the previous century, before our denomination supported mission nationally or abroad through its formal structure, Presbyterian women heard God speak and they collected coins for missionary projects. They rolled bandages for hospitals, donated food and clothing, started soup kitchens, and performed countless other acts of love and outreach. Their efforts live on today in a variety of services and programs in and with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Thus, it is no surprise that the second commitment we make in the PW Purpose is “to support the mission of the church worldwide.”

At the 2006 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women, we will meet mission partners and hear God speak through them. We will hear reports on situations around the world where God calls us to be involved right now. We will have an opportunity to visit mission sites in Louisville and see God’s word in action. We will be challenged anew to raise our voices with God’s own in bringing good news to the world.

Janice Catron is pastor of John Knox Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky.