

# Joined and Knitted Together in Love

BY SUSAN JACKSON DOWD

Women's organizations of the Presbyterian Church have participated in global experiences for many years. Since 1988, this experience has been called the Presbyterian Women Global Exchange. Guided by *Ephesians 4:15–16*, which reminds Christians to grow into Christ from whom the whole body is “joined and knitted together” in love, 28 Presbyterian women embarked on the sixth PW Global Exchange in September 2008. The group traveled to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Carpath Ukraine. A smaller group of six spent an additional week with PC(USA) staff and church partners in Russia.

The overarching goal of any PW Global Exchange is to renew and build relationships with women and church partners throughout the world, in order to find ways to work together to further the ministries of Christ's church. This particular trip focused on ending all forms of violence and advocating for the rights of women and children, particularly among the Roma people.

Exchange participants will itinerate in presbyteries and synods for the next two years. For a list of participants and contact information, see page 43. European women whom the group visited during the exchange are invited to attend the Churchwide Gathering. Those who are being hosted by Presbyterian Women during the Gathering will be available for itineration in some synods one week before the Gathering. For more information about their itineration, contact Kathy Reeves, [Kathy.reeves@pcusa.org](mailto:Kathy.reeves@pcusa.org) or 888/728-7228, ext. 5402.

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Participants of the 2008 Global Exchange

## Excerpt of the 2008 Global Exchange Purpose Statement\*

Having been transformed by our partnership experiences in Central and Eastern Europe, we participants in the 2008 Presbyterian Women Global Exchange recognize that people in need and people working to meet those needs live in every country. Specifics vary because of history and culture, but generalities are the same:

- Racism, subtle and blatant, stunts lives and damages people as it tears at the fabric of society.
- Human beings are used as objects by other human beings.
- Lonely, orphaned and sick people need love, care and relationship.
- Immigrants and marginalized people need opportunity and access to resources.
- Youth struggle to find their way in cultures of mixed messages and negative values.
- Women strive for equality and voice in a patriarchal world.
- Living a life of faith is challenged by secular society.

Now more aware of the particular situation of our sisters in Central and Eastern Europe, we commit ourselves to

- learn our Reformed heritage and celebrate our connections to the faith community in Europe;
- build and maintain relationships and develop ways to do mission in partnership;
- raise awareness about the circumstances of the Roma people and work to support those who are working on their behalf;
- provide support and positive role models and examples for young women interested in ministry here, and support those who seek ordination;
- promote the establishment of legislation that will protect women and children, and support the causes of marginalized people; and
- practice social and environmental responsibility and conserve resources, following the model frequently exhibited by our European partners.

We commit ourselves to remembering that we are joined and knitted together in love with our sisters and partners in Central and Eastern Europe, and to promote the whole body's growth so that it may be built up in love (*Ephesians 4:15–16*).

\* Read the full commitment statement at [www.pcusa.org/pw](http://www.pcusa.org/pw).