

Global Women's Project c/o Karin Heckman Nelson  
1502 Foothill Blvd, Ste 103, PMB 153  
La Verne, CA 91750



## GLOBALINKS 2026



2025-2026 Steering Committee:

Maddie Dulabaum, Cynthia Mason, Sarah Ullom-Minnich, Kim McDowell (Not pictured: Karin Heckman Nelson)

## FAREWELL KARLENE & CYNTHIA!

After five years on the Steering Committee, Karlene Tyler is finishing her term with Global Women's Project. In ways seen and unseen, she has been a deeply valued presence among us. Karlene served as our treasurer and Mother's Day Project coordinator in recent years and has often given countless hours to GWP's work. She has frequently spearheaded our booths at Annual Conference and NOAC, so perhaps you've met her if you didn't already know her! Bringing a wide network of contacts to us, and a deep connection to supportive friends in McPherson, Kansas and other places, Karlene is a bridge-builder whose impact on the GWP network will continue.

Maybe as importantly as any of that, the Steering Committee, which is (for any who might be asked to serve in the future!) a rich circle of common commitment and care, has loved and relied on Karlene's warmth and laughter in this work. Karlene, we send you with every good wish! You will be deeply missed!

Cynthia Mason is also stepping away from the Steering Committee. Over the last eighteen months, Cynthia has brought a vivacious enthusiasm to her work with GWP, notably spearheading the 2024 and 2025 Giving Tuesday and Christmastime Giving campaigns, as well as helping to manage the booths at last year's Annual Conference and NOAC. As liaison to the Narus Women's Sewing Collective, she has been a considerate bridge-builder. We will miss her creativity, passion, and thoughtful approach to our work together. Thank you, Cynthia, for sharing your gifts with us!

## WELCOME KARIN!

**Karin Heckman Nelson** lives in Claremont, CA, with her husband Tim and family cat Tux. Their daughter Hannah is currently serving her second year in BVS at the Church of the Brethren Inc. Office of Peacebuilding and Policy in Washington D.C. Karin is a retired CPA who graduated with a bachelor's degree from Manchester University and a master's degree from the University of La Verne. Her career included working at a CPA firm, full-time and part-time teaching and working for a few years at the New Windsor Service Center. She is currently volunteering at her local church in La Verne, the Pacific Southwest District, and is looking forward to working with Global Women's Project. In her spare time, Karin enjoys reading mysteries, taking a quilting class, traveling, and singing with her church choir.

## GWP STEERING COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS

Jane Hirshfield's poem *The Weighing* ends with the lines, "The world asks of us/ only the strength we have and we give it./Then it asks more, and we give it." This year, the Steering Committee has grappled with the place of GWP in a world that seems to be moving backward. Progress we believed permanent is increasingly under threat across borders and in our own backyards. Confronted with an unexpected and tenuous reality, we reflect on what the world is asking of us and how this current moment in history impacts and informs our work with GWP:

**Sarah Ullom-Minnich** (she/her, New Haven, CT): In my moments of overwhelm, thinking of the growing transphobia, homophobia, and misogyny women in our world face, the road ahead of us seems incredibly long. I know we cannot possibly walk the entire way down the road. In fact, we may not all even agree on which way that road should go. Each member of our broader GWP committee, on the steering committee and at our partner projects, has her own understanding of womanhood and gender-based oppression, and we bring these differences to our work. However, rather than drifting off in our separate directions, we take small steps together. Steps to support women to support themselves and their loved ones. Small steps that we can all agree are small steps forward.

## **Karin Heckman Nelson** (she/her, Claremont, CA):

U.S. foreign policy has negatively affected many lives globally this year. 2025 started with an executive order freezing all U.S. foreign aid for 90 days. This progressed to the Recissions Act passed in July which cut billions from foreign aid. According to Oxfam, USAID provided assistance to 130 countries, addressing poverty, hunger and inequality worldwide.

The damage caused by this loss of funding is staggering and it is difficult to find ways to help when the needs are so large. GWP is one small way to make a difference by empowering women who in turn can improve lives in their small corner of the world. Through these efforts, we too are empowered.

## **Kim McDowell** (she/her, Hyattsville, MD):

Never have I been more glad to be a part—however small—of a group that is supporting women. As one who was shaped by feminist and justice-seeking voices, I've taken deep satisfaction over some decades in the many positive steps toward greater respect for women in our world. Until now. What I experience in this current moment is rage at the dismantling of those steps and of the protections that my daughters and others of their generation had come (wondrously) to expect. For women with less privilege, it's worse.

So the tenacity of those who undergird Global Women's Project (both the partners with whom we work and the ones whose contributions enable that work) is, for me, hope-filled. As true as it has always been, it's more so now. When I feel a sense of helpless grief and anger at what is devolving, I have voices and stories of strength to hear and share. I'm incredibly grateful for GWP!

## **Maddie Dulabaum** (she/her, Elgin, IL):

As we have begun discussing our 50th anniversary, casting an eye both back into our past and forward to the future of GWP, I am called to questions with no easy answers. As an organization founded in second-wave feminism, how have we adapted through the third and fourth waves, where the definition of woman has expanded? How can I, led by principles of inclusion and allyship for our trans sisters, make space for all women to feel welcomed at our table?

According to the Human Rights Campaign, 82.3% of all recorded violence against trans people is committed against trans women, meanwhile the Trans Legislation Tracker has logged 1,014 bills proposed in 2025 that would negatively impact trans and gender non-conforming people (up over 650% from 2021). I can't ignore that the rights and protections for an already-vulnerable group of people are rapidly disappearing.

## **GWP FINANCES AT A GLANCE**

Where did your money go when you contributed to GWP in 2024? Here's a summary:

Beginning Balance on 1-1-2024:	\$23,026.23
Donations in 2024:	\$21,140.35

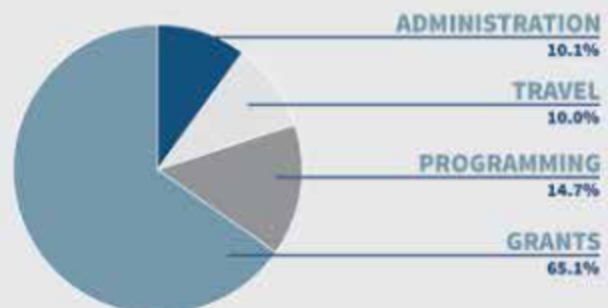
### **EXPENDITURES**

Administration:	\$2,020.97
Steering Committee Travel:	\$2,003.13
Programming:	\$2,938.55
Grants to Projects:	\$13,000.00

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**ENDING BALANCE ON 12-30-24:** \$24,203.93

Our financial reports are still a few months behind their normal cadence, but are rapidly catching up with present day. We awarded \$13,000 in grants in the spring of 2025, in line with our usual contributions. However, our reports show that we received \$15,000 in gifts in the first eight months of 2025 alone, enabling us to award an additional one-time grant to some of our partner projects for a total of \$6,000 that were sent out starting in December. We are so thankful to those of you who have chosen to support this work. Our full 2025 financial report will be made available on our blog at [www.GlobalWomensProject.org](http://www.GlobalWomensProject.org) once we receive the final few months of data. In the meantime, we were unable to provide our usual breakdown of finances in 2024, but have included data about 2024 in the chart below.





## ADVENT WRAP-UP

We rejoice for all who unwrapped the luxuries in their own lives while working through the Advent calendar. We have appreciated the response from the community through the years as friends of GWP have followed along with our advent calendar. Your gratitude for the luxuries in your lives has become generosity. Your donations to GWP will be used to support projects around the world that benefit women and girls.

## LENTEN CALENDAR

GWP's Lenten desk calendar has become a seasonal staple for many looking for a meaningful, educational spiritual practice. This year's virtual Lenten calendar included photos from our partner projects, alongside updated education reflections and challenges. Daily devotionals are sent to your inbox for each day of Lent. Sign up to receive the daily Lenten emails on our website. We hope you joined us on a meaningful Lenten journey!

## LANGUAGE LESSON

GWP invites our readers to learn the phrase "Women Together" in a language spoken at each of our projects.

**Women Together** – Growing Grounds, English

**Mujeres Juntos** – Women's Health Initiative, Spanish

**Ukunziola** – Narus Sewing Collective, Nisule

**Wanawake Pamoja** – SITEAW, Swahili

**സ്ത്രീകൾ ഒരുമിച്ച്** – CAP, Malayalam

## 2025 PARTNER UPDATES

### WABASH COUNTY, INDIANA, UNITED STATES

Growing Grounds is an outreach through the Wabash Church of the Brethren, and partners with other stakeholders in their community, providing a new start for individuals and families "whose life choices have become limited by the impact of life circumstances or past incarceration." From its roots in supporting women coming out of prison, the project has since expanded to offering support to broader populations and continued this work in 2025, which was made more urgent than ever by the rising cost of housing and the lapse in SNAP benefits in the fall.

In Wabash County, price gouging for short-term housing became so prohibitive that the monthly room rate at a local motel was raised to \$2,000 a month plus utilities. Many residents working at local businesses make only \$8 an hour. Even at a 50-hour workweek, this is only \$1,720 in monthly income. Growing Grounds was able to collaborate with Housing Action of Wabash County to persuade a local motel to charge only \$900 per month, preserving an important local source of affordable housing, and continues to explore opportunities for housing advocacy.

In response to a loss of SNAP benefits, Growing Grounds sought out additional donations of food to keep the pantry fully stocked for families who were struggling. They also found that individuals they work with were forced to spend income on food that was sorely needed for rent, utilities, gas, and other living expenses. Growing Grounds was able to support some of those expenses directly to help families remain housed and safe during the most difficult times.

Growing Grounds remains actively and intentionally attuned to the evolving needs of their local community and is always looking for new ways to support expanded opportunities for those around them.



## KERALA, INDIA

Cultural Academy for Peace (CAP) is turning 40 this year! It began as an effort to help a mother and her children seeking protection from their abuser. The Academy (as noted in its annual report) continues to focus on "empowering women and children, especially survivors of abuse, violence, and discrimination, by offering immediate support, legal aid, counseling, and rehabilitation." Since its inception, CAP has "expanded to drive change at the community level through initiatives that promote health, sustainable livelihood, vocational training, and education."

For CAP, this means investing in:

- SAKHI Counseling Centre (free emergency drop-in center)
- Shanti Bhavan Rescue & Rehabilitation Centre (offering shelter, support, and healing)
- Shaktisadan (enabling women through difficult situations, including trafficking)
- Gatherings, outings, and summer camps for children and women
- Workshops, lectures, and community activism (focused on a violence-free society)
- Vocational education and skills training (tailoring, baking, geriatric care, driving, and more)
- Community Mediation Centre (resolving family and other disputes)
- Development initiatives (Kuramkotta Island and Mulavukad Panchayat—communities in need)

Additionally, CAP is providing leadership for a 16-day awareness effort seeking to end digital violence against girls and women. With online spaces shaping many lives, the goal is to ensure that technology is a tool for good and not harm.

We celebrate CAP's 40 years of faithful and growing dedication to a gender-just and peaceful culture!



## NARUS, SOUTH SUDAN

The Narus Sewing Cooperative, led by "Mama" Manayu Gladys, provides support to their "champion girls," who are of the survivors of forced marriages. The project provides tailoring and dressmaking courses, along with adult learning opportunities to the champion girls. Through dressmaking, the women are able to provide for themselves and their families. This year, we were able to send an extra \$1000 because of your generous Giving Tuesday and memorial donations, which supported an additional women's farming group initiative. The group tends to fifty acres, growing maize and beans used to feed their families. The surplus is sold to pay school fees for their children.

## CHIAPAS, MEXICO

Women and children share in sacred conversation about their menstruation and maternal health during Chiapas Integrated Health (CIH) workshops. CIH serves anyone in need in their area, and the needs continue to increase due to climate change, violence in the region, and poverty. Mexicans have access to universal health coverage, but reliable, quality healthcare is hard to come by—especially in remote, rural areas of Chiapas.

CIH leader Elena Gomez Martínez continued to receive treatment this year for breast cancer, supported by her colleagues Juan López and Kevin, as well as several volunteers from across communities in the Chiapas Valley. This year, the group has worked to blend ancestral knowledge of herbal medicine with traditional Chinese medicine, as well as making psychological therapies accessible for caregivers throughout the community. Two meetings were organized in Chiapas and Xalapa, Veracruz, with the purpose of strengthening connections between healers and environmental defenders of both territories. Elena writes that the leaders of CIH hope to continue growing and would appreciate help sourcing other international funding. If you know of any groups or individuals who could partner with CIH, please reach out to [cobgwp@gmail.com](mailto:cobgwp@gmail.com).



## UGANDA

Sister Stella sent her update from Uganda, as she traveled there in August because the country's elections were posing a threat to the center. She has so far been successful in keeping the politicians away from the center. The one who has been in power for 40 years wants to stay in power for life, and he is killing those who oppose him. She asks for your prayers.

The center currently has 15 girls in school, but they want to finish the building to accommodate 20 or more. Sister Stella explains that the center needs to be able to support the girls so that if families cannot pay, the girls can still remain in school.

They are making income by raising goats and poultry. They are also making soap to give to families who have never been able to afford it for their laundry. They have almost completed the field where they hold the Basket Races for the area. Sister Stella did report that although the Basket Race was canceled this year due to political unrest, the school was able to stay open and they will be able to host the next Basket Race.

Sister Stella sends her heartfelt gratitude for the Global Women's Project!



## MOTHER'S DAY CARDS



## MOTHER'S DAY GRATITUDE PROJECT

This May, Global Women's Project invites you to honor or memorialize your mother, or another special mentor in your life, by participating in our annual Mother's Day Gratitude Project. Here's how it works: you send a donation and a note to GWP with the name and address of the person(s) you want to honor, and we send a card to that person letting them know that you gave a gift in their name. Instead of buying your loved ones material gifts, you'll be showing them love through a gift that directly benefits our partner projects. We are so grateful to all those who have participated in this project in the past, making it our most successful fundraiser during the year.

Interested in participating this year? In April, we'll email a reminder to mail your contribution to: Karin Heckman Nelson, 1502 Foothill Blvd, Ste 103, PMB 153, La Verne, CA 91750 (write checks to GWP). For any donation received by May 1, 2026, a card will be guaranteed to go out before Mother's Day. We look forward to helping you surprise your loved ones this year!

## OUR GRATITUDE FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF GWP!

The Steering Committee wants to express our heartfelt thanks to all who continue to support the life changing work of Global Women's Project! Your generous support has made it possible to provide additional grants to our partner projects, which become even more significant since the dissolution of USAID, and also provide special one-time grants to three projects: Nigeria Women in Crisis, Madagascar Prison Ministry, and Code to Inspire (an Afghanistan-based project helping teach women and girls computer literacy and coding).

We look forward to hearing from you again throughout the year. Our upcoming Mother's Day Gratitude program is a great opportunity to honor the special women in your lives, as well as memorialize those who have passed. We will be meeting again in the spring to determine grant allotments for the coming year.

## SPECIAL WAYS TO GIVE

### To memorialize a loved one:

Please write the check to GWP and use the enclosed envelope, including a note saying whom you're memorializing. We will list the names of all people memorialized throughout the year on our website, [www.GlobalWomensProject.org](http://www.GlobalWomensProject.org), and in our annual newsletter. (We do not list the names of the donors or the amounts of the donations—just the names of the people who are honored through a memorial gift.)

### To honor someone special in your life:

Please write the check to GWP and use the enclosed envelope, including a note saying whom you're honoring. If you want a note sent to the honoree on behalf of GWP acknowledging your donation, we ask that you also send an email to [cobgwp@gmail.com](mailto:cobgwp@gmail.com) with the name and address of the honoree.

## 2025 MEMORIAL GIFTS

The following people were honored through memorial gifts to GWP in 2025:

- **Carolyn Teach Denlinger**
- **Michael Leiter**

We are behind in receiving memorial names from both 2025 and 2026. If you have made a donation in memoriam of a loved one not listed above, please let us know at [cobgwp@gmail.com](mailto:cobgwp@gmail.com).

GWP would like to note that Michael Leiter is the husband of former Steering Committee member Cynthia Mason. We want to extend our heartfelt sympathy to Cynthia and the rest of Mike's loved ones as they grieve his loss, and express gratitude for the numerous donations we received on his behalf.

## BECOME A MONTHLY SUSTAINER

Did you know that you can sign up to make ongoing, monthly donations that continue until you decide to cancel or change your gift amount? This ongoing support gives us a steady foundation in supporting our partner projects. You simply choose the amount that best fits your budget and sign up using your preferred payment method. To sign up, click on the DONATE button on our website and choose a Recurring Monthly Gift.

## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GIVE

No matter what time of year, it's never too late to give to Global Women's Project. Use the enclosed envelope any month of the year or mail your donation made out to "Global Women's Project" to GWP, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin IL 60120. Thank you!

You can also give online at: [www.brethren.org/globalwomensproject](http://www.brethren.org/globalwomensproject)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

There are many ways you can support GWP throughout the year. Check out some of these opportunities to engage with our work:

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY** – Sign up to have our Lenten Calendar sent daily to your email to guide your spiritual journey this year. Email us at [cobgwp@gmail.com](mailto:cobgwp@gmail.com) to be added to the daily Lenten Calendar email list. Lent begins Wednesday, February 18, 2026.

**MARCH** – Celebrate International Women's Day with your faith community this year on Sunday, March 8, 2026. Consider dedicating your worship service to women worldwide. Check out the amazing collection of worship resources and reflections on our website written by women across the country. Congregations are welcomed to donate a portion of their offering to Global Women's Project to support women's empowerment projects around the globe.

**APRIL/MAY** – Begin thinking about the women you would like to honor on Mother's Day through our annual Mother's Day Gratitude Project. Donate in honor of someone by May 1, 2026, and we will send that person a lovely card letting them know you have honored them with a gift to GWP. Mother's Day is May 10, 2026.

**JUNE/JULY** – Stop by our booth at Annual Conference in Fort Wayne, IN, June 28 - July 2, 2026. We always enjoy connecting with you!

**NOVEMBER** – Consider including GWP in your annual Giving Tuesday donations.

**DECEMBER** – Join us for a time of Advent reflection by following along with our annual Advent Calendar filled with scripture, prayer prompts, activities, and a color-by-day Christmas image.

**ANYTIME/BIRTHDAYS/HOLIDAYS** – To celebrate a special day or any day, go to [www.GlobalWomensProject.org](http://www.GlobalWomensProject.org) and click on "GIFTS" to see how you can donate to GWP.



## GET CONNECTED!

Follow us on **Facebook**:

[www.facebook.com/globalwomensproject](http://www.facebook.com/globalwomensproject)

Subscribe to our monthly email newsletter, **Global e-Links**, below

Visit our webpage:

[www.GlobalWomensProject.org](http://www.GlobalWomensProject.org)

Email us at: [cobgwp@gmail.com](mailto:cobgwp@gmail.com)

Clip and send to GWP

## SEND US YOUR CONTACT INFO ... AND WE'LL SEND GWP TO YOU!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

- This is a change of address
- Enclosed is my donation to continue the work of GWP!

- Add me to the monthly Global e-Links list.
- Add me to the annual paper Globalinks mailing list.
- Send me the Lenten calendar one day at a time by email.
- Send me a new Lenten calendar by mail. (How many? \_\_\_\_\_)
- Contact me about honoring a special woman through GWP.
- Contact me about hosting a GWP steering committee meeting.
- Contact me about serving on the steering committee.
- Contact me about other ways I can connect with GWP.
- Please remove me from your mailing list.

Return this form and your donation to GWP's partner projects in the enclosed envelope.

**Thank you for your generosity!**

Please make checks out to Global Women's Project.

Mail donations and address info to:

**GWP c/o Karin Heckman Nelson**  
1502 Foothill Blvd, Ste 103, PMB 153  
La Verne, CA 91750

Print more newsletters from our website and fill out a second form for your church or women's group!

[www.GlobalWomensProject.org](http://www.GlobalWomensProject.org)  
Email us at: [cobgwp@gmail.com](mailto:cobgwp@gmail.com)