

THE FLAME



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

THE BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

VOLUME I

MARCH 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings, my sisters in Christ on this beautiful spring-like day with the sun hiding behind the floating clouds and a chill in the air.

As I reflect on the purpose for United Methodist Women, the scripture 2 Timothy 1:6 is very impressive and fits into the mission for UMW. "For this reason, I am reminding you to fan into flame the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands."

Our foremothers, eight women on a stormy night, organized the vision for United Methodist Women in 1869, which provides services for women, youth and children. We can keep hope alive through our talents, time and contributions. As we celebrate United Methodist Women's 150th Anniversary, we can help ensure that we continue to put faith, hope and love into action for another 150 years. This can be supported by giving to MY Legacy fund gift.

On January 7, 2017, the Leadership Team held its annual planning, training and officer's retreat for the eight districts which was designed to engage and build relationship with each other for mission work. As a team, we focused on compassionate listening with open hearts in discussing and receiving information about areas of responsibility. The district leaders are committed to making training available to the local churches to help women connect.

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President's Message (Cont'd.)

The previous conference initiatives were discussed and comments were made. Conference engaged the officers in setting the agenda for mission and outreach in 2017. The signature initiative will be mass incarceration which is the outcome from the United Nations Seminar in New York City last November 19-22, 2016.

The conference and districts will develop partnerships with local grass roots organizations and form a network with prison ministry agencies to address mass incarceration social justice issues. The goal is to saturate the communities with information sessions, community education and action activities that create awareness.

The leadership team and districts will begin research in their communities by identifying churches that are involved in prison ministry, organization, grass roots agencies at the national, state, local, community, university levels, as well as politicians.

The conference UMW is in the process of gathering information to prepare an article for the Conference Connection. Please send pictures with a brief statement on mission events no later than March 10, 2017.

Thank you for your commitment to be the voices for women, children and youth. As United Methodist Women we stand steadfast in our purpose as we grow in Jesus Christ's love.

Peace and Grace,

Elizabeth Mitchell Stemley
estemley1190@comcast.net





VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am called to be a gardener
I am called to till the land
It's my joy to tend God's garden
To co-create and lend a hand.

I am called to be a Christian,
To love Christ and try to be
A channel of God's love to others,
To love them as Christ loved me.

I am called to be a lover
Though I don't always understand
The ways of God, the ways of humans,
But I know I love God's land.

I am called to be a writer.
I have words at my command,
With songs and essays, stories and poems
I can convince or take a stand.

I am called to be a singer
And I know a thousand songs.
I sing for joy, and my greatest joy
Is when other people sing along.

"I AM CALLED" By Micki Perry

Dear Sisters in Christ!

How are you called? What are you called to do? From where do you hear your call? Most of us have heard many calls throughout our lives: to be a good student; to be a responsible adult; to share our Christian faith; to be a gardener; a songwriter; a wife; a mother; a teacher; a doctor; and the list can go on and on.

The one call that we all share is, at some point in our lives, we became a United Methodist Woman. Each of us heard the call in a different way: perhaps our mother or grandmother or aunt invited us; a special mission program inspired us; our pastor encouraged us to get involved; and again, the list is as long as there are members of our wonderful mission organization.

What are you being called to do "in such a time as this?" My heart is constantly being tugged toward our good, green Earth, and working to share with you the many faces of Climate Justice. I travel around the Conference speaking and raising awareness of what we, as United Methodist Women, can do to clean up our environment, which will ultimately be inherited by our children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. At the Legislative Advocacy Day on February 15, 2017, in Annapolis, MD, a number of groups of United Methodist Women visited Legislators and asked them to vote "Yes" to "Banning Fracking in Maryland". Some groups were more successful than others, but the best part about that day is we made our voices heard and the Legislators listened.

Again, my question is, "What are you being called to do? What is tugging at your heart?" Our PURPOSE mandates us to "expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." In order for us to be effective as a mission organization for women, children and youth, we need to show our Faith, Hope and Love through Action! Nearly every District Leadership Team has one or more officer vacancies. As a result, we are less effective as a mission instrument. Please listen to your heart as you ponder the following:

District Vacancies:

Baltimore Metropolitan: Treasurer; Communications

Baltimore Suburban: Membership Nurture & Outreach; Secretary of Program Resources; Nominating Committee Members

Central Maryland: Membership Nurture and Outreach; Social Action; Secretary of Program Resources; Communications; Nominating Committee Members

Cumberland-Hagerstown: Vice President; Spiritual Growth; Education & Interpretation; Membership Nurture & Outreach; Social Action; Nominations

Frederick: Social Action; Membership Nurture & Outreach; Spiritual Growth; Education & Interpretation; Communications; Secretary of Program Resources; Nominations

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Vice President (Cont'd)

Greater Washington: Secretary; Nominating Committee Members

Washington East: Nominating Committee Members

What has God called you to do?

Peace,
Linda S. Yost
LJYost@verizon.net

SECRETARY



I live in Frederick County Maryland where I am a member of the UMW unit at Jefferson UMC. However, I worship at Middletown UMC where I serve as Certified Lay Minister (CLM), Administrative Assistant, Stewardship Coordinator, Lay Member to Annual Conference, a small group leader and as a member of several committees. I am also on BWC staff as a part-time Western Region Resource Person, available to work with all the UMC's in both the Frederick and Cumberland-Hagerstown Districts on a variety of issues ranging from lay leadership development to social justice to conflict resolution and visioning. In addition, I am a member of the BWC 2016 Delegation and represented the Conference as a reserve member to General Conference and as a delegate to Jurisdictional Conference last spring and summer.

My husband, Mike (a Mission-u, Climate Justice Facilitator), and I live in Knoxville, Maryland near our grandsons, Emeril, Dimitri and Rafael. We have three adult children who were adopted from Russia in 1994.

I have appreciated and admired the work of United Methodist Women for as long as I can remember. Over the years, both the Reading Program and Mission-u studies have opened my eyes to new issues and helped inform me. Studying God's word with, and serving in Mission alongside my sisters of faith has been an important part of what has shaped me into the woman I am today. In addition to serving as

your secretary, I look forward to working with the leadership team to revitalize UMW in the Western Region in the coming year; to exploring with women throughout the Region why their church does, or does not (which is the case with my own home congregation), have a UMW and what we can do to raise up both new units and leaders.

I look forward to serving in this new (for me) capacity in the coming year, and to getting to know the fabulous United Methodist Women of the Baltimore-Washington Conference!

Sherie L. Koob
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sheriekoob@hotmail.com.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH



It is an honor to now be serving as the Conference Spiritual Growth Coordinator after having served the past two years as the Conference Secretary. I look forward to working with the Spiritual Growth Coordinators of our districts: Annapolis - **Louella Wilburn**; Baltimore Metropolitan, **Paula Johnson**; Baltimore Suburban, **Alice Collins**; Central Maryland - **Cheryl Gooden**; Greater Washington - **Eppie Marecheau**; and Washington East - **Stephanie Willett**. (Cumberland/Hagerstown and Frederick districts do not have Spiritual Growth Coordinators.)

I have been blessed with the opportunity to experience two extremely uplifting events recently. The most recent was attending **ROCK** in Ocean City. I was fortunate to be able to attend ROCK with my husband, Rev. Gerard Green, who is the District Superintendent for the Greater Washington District. We were in attendance along with Bishop Easterling, the other seven District Superintendents ...and **5,000** youth and their chaperons. United Methodist Women members were present assisting in a variety of ways to make ROCK a success. ROCK's theme this

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Spiritual Growth (Cont'd.)

year: *Truly God is my rock and my salvation; God is my fortress, I will never be shaken. Psalm 62:2.* I would encourage all local units to reach out to young ladies from your church that attended ROCK and let them know that United Methodist Women members are praying for them: perhaps a letter of encouragement; a small token (something like what is given out at Mission u meals); a hug and a prayer, etc. Please share with me what ways you reached out.

Leadership Development Days in Charlotte, NC, was the other amazing event I attended along with Elizabeth Stemley, Sabrina White, Stephanie Willett and Linda Ford. This United Methodist Women-sponsored training event was informative as well as inspirational. See page seven in the February *response* for a taste of the message we received. If you have never attended Leadership Development Days, I strongly encourage you to do so.

Note: The March program in the Program Book is a special program looking forward to the 150th Anniversary of United Methodist Women. It highlights regional missionaries and how they are responding to God's call today.

March is Women's History Month. Take time to celebrate the senior members of your units. Make sure to capture the history they hold.

Blessings,

Rita Green, Spiritual Growth Coordinator
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Perfection in outward conduct consists
not in extraordinary things; but in doing
common things extraordinarily well.

EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

"Here I am. Send me." Isaiah 6:9

Hello, everyone! I bring you greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

This article brings to your attention the following items:

- a. **Baltimore-Washington Conference UMW Projects**. We currently have eight Conference Projects. One former project, the *Montgomery Avenue Women's Center, Rockville, MD*, is not functional now, thus was removed from our list of projects in 2016. We will let you know if/when the Women's Center is reactivated. The 2016 updated Conference Project booklets can be obtained from district presidents and Education and Interpretation Coordinators. A current list of our eight projects is attached.
- b. **Mission Today Unit Update**. The *Mission Today Unit Checklist* and the accompanying *Mission Examples Document* are important resources available to help local units plan and implement their Mission programs for the year. Copies of both documents are included in this newsletter. *Mission Today Unit* reporting will begin in September. The 2017 *District Mission Today Unit competition* is now on-going. The Washington-East District (Susan Howes, President, Alice Jackson, Education and Interpretation Coordinator) is the current holder of the rotating *Mission Today Unit Crystal Award*. Districts and local units are encouraged to work together to help ensure a robust 2017 competition. Again, in the spirit of friendly competition, the question is, "Will Washington-East hold the *Crystal Award* again for 2018?"
- c. **Mission Giving**. Local units are encouraged to obtain a copy of the UMW *Mission Giving* brochure for each member of your Unit. If you have not already submitted a 2017 Pledge to Mission to your district treasurer, please do so as soon as possible. Also, let us remember to make 2017 UMW 150th Anniversary Legacy Fund Giving a priority. Contact your treasurer or education & interpretation coordinator for help with questions on United Methodist Women *Mission Giving*.
- d. **Updated United Methodist Women Documents**. The *2017 - 2020 UMW Handbook and Constitution and Bylaws* should be available in the UMW Resource Center in February 2017. See your program resources coordinator or contact the UMW Resource Center to obtain your copy.

- e. **Maternal and Child Health.** National Office United Methodist Women has announced *Maternal and Child Health* as one of four priority issues of focus for 2016 - 2020. The *2016-2017 UMW Program Book* includes two participatory services dedicated to *Maternal and Child Health*: (1) for May 2017, "*Mothers in Action*," page 89, and (2) the "*Call to Prayer and Self-Denial 2017*, page 137." Self-Denial offerings will support *Maternal and Child Health* programs and advocacy around the world. Of course, each service can be adjusted to meet both your program content and time requirements.

And now, let us go forth in faith as we continue to be in Mission - at home and abroad - through advocacy and service!

Ann Price
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SOCIAL ACTION

Sisters in Christ,

Our biggest news is our successful Maryland Advocacy Day on Wednesday, Feb. 15th. We had about 70 United Methodists, coming together for a day of fellowship and action, speaking truth to power in Annapolis, the state capital. After a continental breakfast, we gathered in the sanctuary of historic Asbury UMC. Elizabeth Stemley, President of the Baltimore-Washington Conference, United Methodist Women, welcomed all of the participants and thanked them for standing up for justice issues which are essential for the lives of all people. She encouraged the group to keep faith, hope and love in action. We were addressed by the Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford and Global Board of Church and Society's new Director of Civil and Human Rights, Jeania Ree Moore. Then we broke up into workshop groups according to the issue we chose to concentrate on: climate justice, prescription drug affordability or paid sick leave. Workshop leaders gave us training on how to be effective in our lobbying, as well as information on the bills we would be talking about with the legislators. After planning our visit strategy in groups of three or four over a light lunch, we proceeded to the Capitol by foot or van, and met with senators or representatives or their staff, to present our views

on the legislation according to our United Methodist Social Principles. Of course, we do not know if we changed anyone's mind, but we fulfilled our commitment to be Christ's voice in advocating for the poor, the oppressed and for our precious earth.

If you weren't able to attend this year, plan on joining us next February. It both expands your knowledge and experience, and strengthens your faith to be part of a group of United Methodists speaking out together for justice and for the rights of others.

Judy Smith

Social Action Coordinator
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MEMBERSHIP NURTURE AND OUTREACH

NEW THIS YEAR! EVERY MEMBER SURVEY

The National Organization is compiling an ***Every Member Survey***. This will help them focus on the true make-up of the organization and our mission interests. Each member is asked to go to www.unitedmethodistwomen.org and select **myUMW**. Once at the page, type in your church, city, or zip code (I used zip code). A list of churches will come up and you select your home church. Once the church is selected, the church, district and conference lines should populate. Verify this information and change it, if it is incorrect. Your unit type will be local. It will then ask for age group, ethnicity, mission interests, and what type of social media you use. At the end you will be prompted to customize and print your temporary membership card. Instructions for filling out the forms can also be found on YouTube. Members will receive information directly from National according to your specific areas of interest.

MEMBERSHIP COUNTING

All data will be gathered electronically. The census data has always been important information for the United Methodist Women. Not only will numbers count to National Headquarters, but individual interests and preferred mode of communication will also be considered. Census can be found on the United Methodist Women website at the www.unitedmethodistwomen.org labeled **CENSUS 2016**.

CENSUS 2016 - LOCAL UNIT DATA COLLECTION

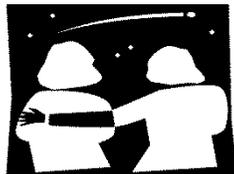
The Census 2016 webpage for unit Presidents and or a Designated person is located at www.unitedmethodistwomen.org, it is a magenta shade box, click on it, this is the unit information page. There are a series of dropdown menus requesting information such as unit type, primary language, unit president, number of members (new or lost), person reporting and types of social media used. Once you have checked all information regarding your unit, submit the form. You will be taken to another screen thanking you for completing the census. The membership census must be completed by LOCAL UNIT(S) PRESIDENT OR DESIGNATED PERSON on-line by **March 30, 2017.**

We realize that not all women have computers or internet access. We suggest you hold a Membership Party or lunch at Panera. Does your church have Wi-Fi? Or you could go to your local library. Invite members to bring their laptop, tablet, or smart phone. This way several people could complete the form at the same time. You could share the computers with the women who don't have access. If you need help, ask your district president or membership coordinator or you can always contact me.

This is a large undertaking, however, it will provide an accurate account of our members. I hope to be able to say that the Baltimore-Washington Conference is 100% enrolled!

Thank you for your cooperation,

Daphne L. Hurd
MNO Coordinator
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Comfort those in any
trouble with the comfort
we ourselves have
received from God.
2 Corinthians 1:4

*As we meet and touch, each day,
The many travelers on our way,
Let every such brief contact be
A glorious, helpful ministry.
Susan Coolidge*

COMMUNICATIONS

National Women's History Month 2017

Theme: "Honoring Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business"

The 2017 theme for National Women's History Month honors women who have successfully challenged the role of women in both business and the paid labor force. Women have always worked, but often their work has been undervalued and unpaid.

The 2017 Honorees represent many diverse backgrounds and each made her mark in a different field. Additionally, the Honorees' work and influence spans three centuries of America's history. These women all successfully challenged the social and legal structures that have kept women's labor underappreciated and underpaid.

Facing stark inequalities in the workplace (lower wages, poor working conditions, and limited opportunities), they fought to make the workplace a less hostile environment for women. They succeeded in expanding women's participation in commerce and their power in the paid labor force. As labor and business leaders and innovators they defied the social mores of their times by demonstrating women's ability to create organizations and establish their own businesses that paved the way for better working conditions and wages for themselves and other women.

They proved that women could succeed in every field. While each Honoree is extraordinary, each is also ordinary in her own way, proving that women business and labor leaders can and should be considered the norm. Most importantly, the 2017 Honorees paved the way for generations of women labor and business leaders to follow.

Lilly Ledbetter

(1938)

Equal Pay Activist



Lilly Ledbetter took her case of employment discrimination all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and beyond. Today she is a women's rights and civil rights activist and sought after speaker. Ledbetter grew up near Jacksonville, Alabama; she is married, had two children, and worked various office jobs. In 1979 she got her dream job working as a manager at the

local Goodyear tire factory. As the only woman working on the factory floor, she faced daily sexual harassment. Despite the discrimination, she worked hard and stayed at Goodyear, hoping it would eventually get better. In 1998, after 19 years with the company, Ledbetter received an anonymous note informing her that she was paid significantly less than men doing the same job. In response, Ledbetter filed a sex discrimination case against her longtime employer.

The case, *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.*, was tried and found in Ledbetter's favor, but Goodyear appealed and her win was reversed. In 2007 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4 against Ledbetter, arguing that she would have had to file her complaint within 180 days after receiving her first discriminatory paycheck. Justice Ginsberg's dissent argued that Ledbetter couldn't have filed suit earlier because she was not aware of the pay inequity; Ginsberg urged her to keep fighting. Ledbetter did keep fighting. In August 2008 she spoke about pay equity at the Democratic National Convention. On January 29, 2009 President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law. The new law loosens the time restrictions on filing discrimination cases, allowing the 180-day clock to reset every time an individual experiences an act of discrimination. Despite this victory, Ledbetter never received a settlement from Goodyear.

Lilly Ledbetter is now an activist, urging women and minorities to fight for their civil rights. In 2012 she released her memoir *Grace and Grit: My Fight for Equal Pay and Fairness at Goodyear and Beyond*.

Lucy Gonzalez Parsons

(c. 1853- 1942)

Labor Organizer and Socialist Leader



Lucy Gonzalez Parsons was a labor organizer, radical socialist, and anarchist. She was a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World and was a prolific writer and speaker. At the height of her activism, Parsons was described by the Chicago Police Department as "more dangerous than a thousand rioters." Lucy Gonzalez had Native American, African American, and Mexican heritage and may have been born into slavery. She married Albert Parsons in 1871. Due to intolerance of their interracial marriage, the couple was forced to move north from Texas. Relocating to Chicago, Illinois, the Parsons became increasingly involved in revolutionary activism championing workers' rights, political prisoners, people of color, the homeless, and the Parsons were arrested numerous times for women. Lucy Parsons wrote for multiple radical publications including *The Socialist*, and *The Alarm*, the journal of the International Working People's Association.

In 1887, her husband was arrested and subsequently executed in Illinois for his assumed National Women's History Month involvement in the Haymarket Riot, believed by many to be a frame-job. In 1905 Parsons was a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World, an international organization that believes that all workers should unite as a social class. Focus on class struggles of poverty and unemployment, Parsons, in 1915, organized the Chicago Hunger Demonstrations the following month with collaboration from the American Federation of Labor, the Socialist Party, and Jane Addams' Hull House. Parsons is credited with envisioning strikes of the future, where rather than walking out strikers would stay in and take over the property of production, what would become sit-down strikes in the U.S.

Lucy Parsons continued giving public speeches well into her 80s. In 1942 at the age of 89, Lucy died in a house fire. In 1970 the Lucy Parsons Center, a Boston-based radical bookstore, was founded. The city of Chicago named a park in her honor in 2004.

Communications is the key to keeping the leadership and the community informed. The stories and accomplishments of others serve as a bridge of hope.

From the Internet

Gertrude White
Communications Coordinator
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SECRETARY OF PROGRAM RESOURCES



The reading program is an important tool for the United Methodist Women. Its purpose is to encourage members to critically think about the issues of today. The reading program provides an opportunity to broaden our understanding of our mission work. The ideal goal is to have each unit order at least five books, one in each category to read and share.

Last year we had 62 members participate in the reading program, and we hope to increase that number this year. In order to do so, we should involve our congregations in the reading program by informing them about the program and its purpose, handing out pamphlets about the books, placing flyers on bulletin boards, and informing them about the children and youth books that are also available.

Order your books early for the upcoming Mission u, *Missionary Conferences of the U.S.* and *Climate Justice* are the mission study books, and *Living as a Covenant Community* is the Bible study book. You can get an early start on reading!

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Program Resources (Cont'd.)

If you have any questions, recommendations, or comments about the reading program books, then you can email- Brenda Thompson- Reading Program Specialist at bthompson@unitedmethodistwomen.org.

Reading a great book? Just provide the name of the book and what you liked about it and we can spotlight it in the newsletter. Enjoy reading!!!!

Pamela Randall

Secretary of Program Resources
Pamelarandall53@yahoo.com

NOMINATIONS CHAIR

I bring you greetings as the new Chairperson for Committee on Nominations, Tangela Terry (Tee). My place of worship is Wilson Memorial U.M. Church. Our pastor is Rev. Gregory McNeil.

Here are the members of 2017 Nominations Committee, Pamela Aulton (A), Jean Shields (GW), Barbara Sprecher (WE), Patricia Cain (A), Phycia Conley (BS), Kia Hicks (WE) and Jeanne Panesi (GW).

Some of our duties are to provide a clear understanding of the duties of each elected leader, develop plans to help members of the committee, work with the chairpersons of district committees on nominations and also present an annual written report *etc.*

I'm so proud to be a part of this wonderful team of UMW, who shows so much passion about our kids, our land, and all lives matter. I am looking forward to being a part of this mission and being a helping hand in spreading the word to all that "Yes Jesus Loves Me."

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.
Hebrews 6:10

Have a Sparkling Day in the Lord!!

Tangela Terry
Nominations Chair
mst2136@yahoo.com

2016 Blanche Powell Memorial United Nations (UN) SEMINAR Mass Incarceration and the Criminalization of Communities of Color

On November 20, 2016, thirty-plus United Methodist Women of the Baltimore-Washington Conference travelled to New York City for its annual Blanche Powell Memorial United Nations Seminar. Upon arrival in New York, we checked into the One United Nations Plaza Hotel, located a block from the United Nations and directly across from the Church Center for the United Nations (where our seminar was held). Sunday was a free day, so many of us opted to take in a play at one of the many theaters.

Our facilitators, Chantilly Mers and Jay Godfrey, led us on a very informative journey focused on Mass Incarceration and the Criminalization of the Communities of Color. The goal of the seminar was to develop and build on our understanding of the concept of mass incarceration here in the United States. We were challenged to take a deeper look into the why, the when, and how this phenomenon has come to be.

Our Bible study lessons focused on scriptures Luke 8:22-25 "Jesus Calming the Sea" and Luke 8:26-39 "Gerasenes Demonic (Legion)." We also learned from each other in several breakout sessions. There were also guest speakers who focused on the question, "What does it take to be a community in the era of mass incarceration?":

Jeanette Bocanegra – Community Connections for Youth
Janisha Gabriel – Black Lives Matter
Vivian Nixon – College and Community Fellowship

The ladies each spoke on ways their organization is working to make a difference in communities where injustice runs rampant.

The seminar facilitators made use of current technology by tele-conferencing with two speakers from the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. Keith Wallington and Gregory Carpenter gave us insight into state-based reforms and legislature. They enlightened us about the many resources available to the public to aid in the fight against mass incarceration.

The highlight of this seminar was the screening of the Netflix documentary film "13th", focusing on the 13th Amendment in the U.S. Constitution. The film offers a long- range view of criminality and race and the rise of mass incarceration. Though it was difficult to watch, the information garnered was eye-opening. A must see for all!

Join us on November 19-21, 2017 for the next UN Seminar!

Colleen Cates
Director for Womens Division
Craftyme53@yahoo.com

DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Colleen Cates, Bishop LaTrelle Easterling and Esther Barkat

Greetings Sisters! 2017 is off and running!

Esther Barkat and I are Directors representing the Baltimore-Washington Conference. Remember to refer to our organization as United Methodist Women, not our initials UMW. We don't want others to confuse us with United Mine Workers:~)!

Esther and I had the opportunity to have a meeting with Bishop Easterling back in December. We told the Bishop that we are available to assist her in any way to promote United Methodist Women's efforts throughout the conference on behalf of women, children and youth.

Below are highlights from the Program Advisory Group Organizational Meeting held August 27-29, 2016 and the Board of Directors meeting held in New York City September 30-October 2, 2016.

Program Advisory Group Job Description:

- Esther and I serve as liaisons between local, district, conference, and jurisdiction memberships and the national organization.
- We communicate the needs of the United Methodist Women membership to the Board of Directors and the national staff along with informing UMW members and constituents about the Purpose, Vision, and scope of the organization's work and history.

- We represent the UMW membership in making recommendations to the Board of Directors about: leadership development opportunities, membership growth, spiritual growth practice, education & interpretation activities, advocacy, and fundraising development.
- We represent United Methodist Women on boards of United Methodist Women-related institutions (Colleen is on the Board of Directors for Susanna Wesley House, Inc.) and other ancillary partner organizations, as assigned.
- We also travel to annual Program Advisory Group meetings and other occasional United Methodist Women events

Assembly 2018: The 20th Assembly will be held May 18-20, 2018 in Columbus, OH. The first assembly was held in 1942 in Columbus, OH. The goal for the 2018 Assembly is to increase attendance by 30%. Actions being taken to achieve this goal include development of a new Assembly application to support email marketing. Additionally, a 2016 membership census report is being sent to annual conferences soliciting United Methodist Women membership data and the reports are to be completed and returned to the National Office by March 2017. Logistical enhancements for the Assembly 2018 will include pre-registration for all workshops and healthy lunch options during the event. **The early registration fee is \$295 if paid by November 30, 2017 and the regular registration fee is \$330 with an April 9, 2018 deadline. Start saving now for the big event!**

United Methodist Women Website: all of us should familiarize ourselves with the various resources available, including timely news articles and videos about United Methodist Women social impact. The website is: unitedmethodistwomen.org

Committee and Work Team Assignments:

- Esther is assigned to the **Finance Committee and the Identity Team** (offering advice on ways United Methodist Women can be more effective in establishing its identity in spiritual growth, mission education, leadership development, service, and advocacy for justice); and serves as a member on the Board of Global Ministries.
- Colleen is assigned to the **Planning and Assessment Committee; Brand and Story Team** (evaluates the best channels to disseminate the United Methodist Women Legacy and story of Faith, Hope, and Love in Action); and the Legacy Steering Committee (make recommendations on ways to enable each United Methodist Women member and friends to participate in the financial sustainability of United Methodist Women leading up to our organization's 150th Anniversary in 2019 and beyond.

- Both of us are encouraging and suggesting ways that all members can connect to technology. National office is moving towards more social media (website) usage, and wants us to get on board. We have to help each other in this fast-moving technological world.
- Both of us are "**membership cheerleaders**," working with the Conference and District Membership Nurture and Outreach coordinators to get every individual member to sign up on the Membership website, and have every unit president complete the Census Report by March 30, 2017.

Continue to keep Faith, Hope, and Love in Action!

Esther Barkat eunica99@aol.com 304-685-9147 (cell)

Colleen F. Cates [craftyme53@gmail.com](mailto:craftyne53@gmail.com) 410-598-9470 (cell)



Save the Date!

Thursday, March 23, 2017

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Annual Day of Giving towards the Legacy Fund!

**Come join us for a light lunch of soup, cheese and crackers
at the Conference Mission Center
11711 East Market Place, Fulton, MD**

**Questions? Contact Daisy Farmer at 240-533-6448
or Linda Yost at 410-239-0429**

BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON CONFERENCE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The next meeting for the Board of Trustees will be held on Tuesday, April 11, at the Baltimore-Washington Conference Center. At the beginning of the meeting, Geraldine Whitley will be sworn in as the new President of the Board of Trustees. I am pleased to leave them in good hands and knowing that every Conference has a representative on the Board.

Of all the committees I have been on in my 70 years, I have learned so much financial information. The committee only meets two times a year – the second Tuesday in April and September. Doug Potter who is our financial advisor with Lombard Securities Inc. has so much patience with us and answers all of our questions so that we completely understand what is going on. I highly recommend if any of you have the opportunity to be a part of this worthwhile organization, don't hesitate to do so. It has been a pleasure serving you over the last three years.

Susan Howes
President
showes@chesapeake.net



LEGACY COMMITTEE REPORT

Daisy Farmer asked me if I could represent her at the training in Nashville, Tennessee where the National Office was providing training for the Legacy Committee members. It was an awesome feeling to be surrounded by women who love our Lord Jesus Christ and support the purpose of the United Methodist Women. There were fifty-four sisters in Christ in that room. I met women from every state in the United States. Colleen Cates was our representative from the National Office and it was good to spend time with her as well. During our three day training I was surprised to learn that the Baltimore-Washington Conference seems to be ahead of the game.

Several Conferences are just getting a team together and getting organized. The emphasis from the National Office is to "Tell your Story." Everyone has a story to tell – your story, a relative's story that can be written down so the Legacy will continue for the next 150 years. I shared with the group that the BWC was in the process of publishing a journal filled with stories from the Baltimore-Washington units and will be dispersed at our Gala in October of this year. Make sure you get your articles in by March 1. The journals will be available for preorder. When I mentioned that we were planning a cruise to Hawaii to finish the five year celebration, everyone wants to join us! Who says we can't fill up a cruise ship celebrating 150 years of United Methodist Women. So, yes the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Women is on track!

- 2015 – Pastor's Dinner explaining how the UMW helps women, children and youth
- 2016 – UniTea – organized by our younger generation – 150 in attendance
- 2017 – Journal being published and Gala Celebration in October
- 2018 – Fashion Show and Cultural events celebrating 150 years
- 2019 – Cruise to Hawaii

There was much discussion about the funds for the 150th Legacy. This will be an ongoing fundraiser. They are asking that each United Methodist unit either donate \$150 or each member donate \$18.69 this year. On March 23, the Conference Center will be open from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. for your convenience so you can come in and sign up and make a donation. We encourage churches that have buses to provide transportation for our senior population and others.

Last but certainly not least, the Legacy Committee is busy working out the final details for our Gala Celebration on October 7. More details to follow. Tickets will be available to purchase the first week of March.

Yes Ladies – I am proud to be a member of the United Methodist Women. I am proud to be a part of the Baltimore-Washington Conference and I am excited about the Celebration of 150 years of ladies helping Women, Children and Youth not only in our own communities, not only in our country, but all around the world.

God Bless each and everyone one of you.

Daisy Farmer and Susan Howes

FROM THE ANNAPOLIS DISTRICT



Greeting UMW Sisters:

Happy New Year! 2017 is off and running and the Annapolis District UMW is already working together on our mission projects with Faith, Hope and Love in Action.

Nearly one hundred UMW local unit officers attended our Annapolis District Officer Training meeting in January. Thanks so much to the John Wesley Waterbury United Methodist Women for hosting the event.

Our annual Prayer Brunch will be held on Saturday, April 8th at Baldwin Memorial UMC. The theme will be: A Time for Hope: Communities Challenging Mass Incarceration.

The Baltimore-Washington Conference UMW & the Board of Church and Society held the annual Maryland Legislative Advocacy Day on February 15th. Many members of the Annapolis District UMW attended and we advocated for Climate Justice, Prescription Drug Affordability and Paid Sick Leave.

It is with great sadness to report that Sharon Bence, president of the UMW at Davidsonville UMC, passed away on January 25. Sharon was a strong advocate for the UMW and will be missed by many.

The Annapolis District UMW continues to be servants of God by reaching out to women, children and youth.

Blessings and love,

In God's Love,
Janice Crowe, President
Janice.a.crowe@comcast.net

BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

Greetings to all from the Baltimore Metropolitan District. As we move forward in this new year 2017, we do so joyfully and with hope in our hearts. We recognize that there will be challenges ahead, but we press forward knowing that we do not walk this walk alone. We thank God each and every day for His clear and present presence in our lives and in the work we continue to do for women, youth and children.

On January 28th we held our Leadership training and Mini Mission u at Mt. Washington Aldersgate UMC. Thank God this year we did not have the blizzard we had in 2016 that caused us to cancel our training altogether. We were truly grateful that the Mt. Washington Aldersgate United Methodist Women were willing to host us again. We were blessed to have a musical selection from the youth praise band of the church that warmed our hearts. Rev. Vera Mitchell, the new Pastor of Mt. Washington Aldersgate UMC, expressed her welcome to the UMW and thanked us for choosing her church to hold our first District meeting of the new year. Our very own Conference Vice President, Linda Yost, graciously gave an excellent presentation on Climate Justice which was well received by everyone. Colleen Cates, our National Board of Directors member, talked with us about the census and helped nearly twenty ladies sing up electronically. Finally, an offering was collected for the Legacy Fund.

Moving forward the District will begin planning our Spring event scheduled for April 22, 2017. Place to be determined. We still need a treasurer. Denise Fitzgerald, District Vice President, and I continue to share this responsibility; but we press on. Our prayers go out to everyone who experienced the transition of a loved one in recent months. Please accept our deepest condolences.

Love and blessings,

Gwendolyn Brooks
gwndlynbrooks@aol.com



CENTRAL MARYLAND DISTRICT

Greetings and "Happy 2017!" from the Leadership Team of the Central Maryland District!

The Central Maryland District is off to a booming start in 2017 with a higher attendance at the District's training than in recent history, and with inquiries from the women in two of the District's churches regarding forming new United Methodist Women units!

Our Sister United Methodist Women at Trinity UMC in Germantown, MD, hosted the Central Maryland District's annual Officers' Training on Saturday, February 4th, with record attendance! Nearly 50 dedicated officers from around the district gathered to deepen their understanding of the key responsibilities and current best practices for effectiveness in their local units. Supported by Conference Leadership Team Officers, Linda Yost and Sabrina White, and Washington East District Communications Coordinator, Dee Majors, all in attendance benefited greatly from the new information and "best approach" ideas exchanged among the participants.

On Sunday, February 19th, Conference President, Elizabeth Stemley, and I joined our UMW Sisters of the West Montgomery Charge Unit, as they committed to exploring new options to best serve the work of the UMW in the two churches that make up their charge: West Montgomery UMC and St. Mark's UMC. President Stemley shared valuable information regarding the purpose, organizational structure, and operating guidelines and expectations for United Methodist Women units and fielded questions from the highly-spirited group. The topic of being more effective in their outreach to potential new members was raised and the basic outline of the Central Maryland District's forthcoming "Engagement Toolkit", now in its initial prototype phase, was shared and its completion is now eagerly awaited by the West Montgomery group. Through prayer, open communication, discernment of God's Will for their unit, and the follow-up support by the Central Maryland District Leadership Team, our UMW sisters from the West Montgomery Charge look forward to increased collaboration and membership growth over the coming weeks and months.



The next Leadership Team Meeting of the CMD is scheduled for Saturday, March 4th, in Sykesville. Each officer has been charged with reporting on her goals, action plan and requests for support as she brings the very best of her time and talent to her UMW Leadership role. At that time, the District Team will also create an action plan for mission outreach in the Baltimore-Washington Conference's special focus area of our social justice agenda – stemming the tide and mitigating the impact of the Mass Incarceration of People of Color on women, youth and children. Stay tuned for updates, as we look forward to sharing the plan and our progress in future editions of The Flame!

On a personal note, I am grateful for this opportunity to express my deep gratitude for the outpouring of prayers, love and support I received at the passing of my mother, Mrs. Claytease C. Hull, on Monday, January 16th. In addition to the many cards, calls, emails, and texts from individuals, a beautiful Letter of Condolence,



authored by Conference President Stemley and Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, Resident Bishop of the Washington Episcopal Area of The Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church, was received and read at my mother's funeral service on Saturday, January 28th. Additionally, an extraordinary floral arrangement sent by the Central Maryland District was so large and lovely that

it was selected as a focal point and placed at the center of the main aisle directly in front of her casket!

I am also grateful for the continued support I have received from the Conference and District Leaders as I face the challenge of "picking up the pieces" after an approximately 4-6-week absence from work and in my role as Central Maryland District President.

During my absence, the District Leadership Team, assisted by the Conference Leadership Team, did a truly outstanding job managing the District Officer's Training earlier this month. I salute each of them and will be forever grateful for the exemplary way they functioned as an effective, cohesive team to conduct one of the most important District events of the year with grace and excellence!

In closing, I thank you all again for your continued support as I transition back into my first year as Central Maryland District President. I am looking forward to working, learning, collaborating, serving and growing with both of my Leadership Teams – Conference and District – in the year to come!

With Love from your UMW Sister in Christ,

Tamara A. Hull, President
tahinspired@hotmail.com

WASHINGTON EAST DISTRICT

It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Deuteronomy 31:8

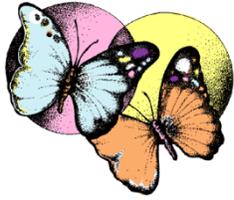
As I plan our events for 2017 and our Calendar gets filled with lots of events and responsibilities, instead of feeling overwhelmed I get excited about all the things that the United Methodist Women are doing to help make a better place for women, children and youth. (Remind me of this when I say "help").

I am very excited that we have a new treasurer for our district. A giant thank you to our Conference for sending Linda Ford to the training provided by the National Office. She is a good fit for our team. We had training for our unit officers on January 21 and our attendance was the best ever at 95. Our next event will be on April 22 at Brooks UMC in St. Leonard where we will have a workshop on Climate Justice. Linda Yost, our Conference Vice President will be our presenter as we learn more about how our church can go green and what we can do to protect our water. This event is not just for UMW members but I am sending an invitation to all the churches in our district to join us and take advantage of the United Methodist training that is available.

One of my other "hats" I wear is the Vice President of the Epworth House Mission Project Committee. The Epworth House Mission Project Committee Luncheon will take place on April 8, 2017, at the Holiday Inn, 10000 Baltimore Avenue, College Park, MD 20740. Early Bird donations by March 11 is \$35.00. After March 11 the cost is \$40.00. There will be a "Hats on Parade" contest. Prizes will be given. You do not want to miss this event. The entertainment will be the Glory Ringers from St. Matthews in Bowie. I understand the "color for this year" is green which is perfect because we are to wear any "shade of green" to the Luncheon. The flyer should be in this edition of the Flame. Don't miss it and be thinking of creative ideas for your hat!

Our prayer breakfast will be on May 20 and our speaker will speak on the subject of Mass Incarceration. Marva Bigelow, our Social Action Coordinator, is setting this up for us. As you can see the Washington East District is up and running for 2017.

Susan Howes, President
shows@chesapeake.net



GARDENERS OF GOD

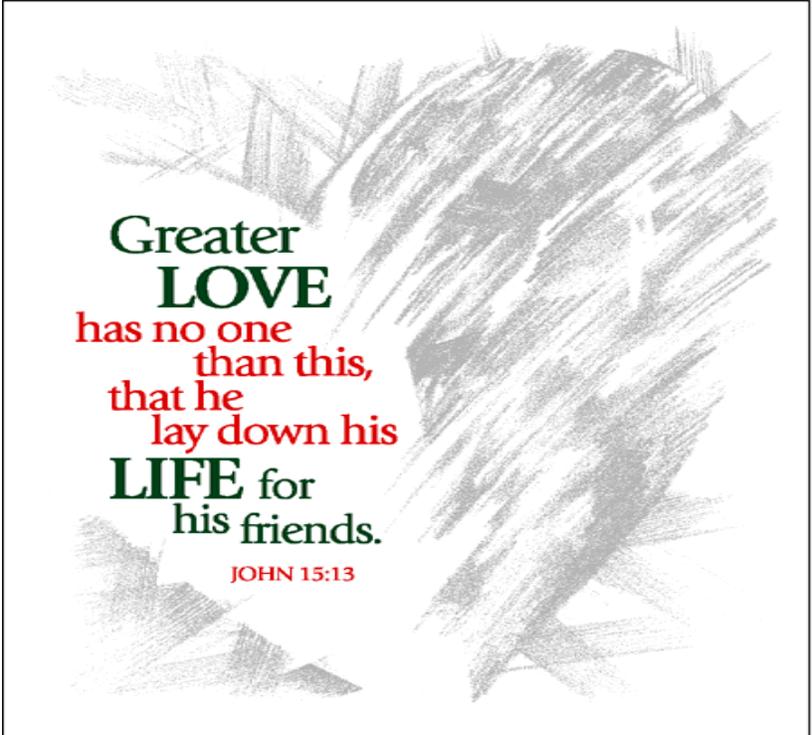
The seeds we sow are made to grow
In acts and deeds we do,
And what we harvest, in return,
Is what our efforts grew.
So, if we sow God's seeds of love -
Throughout our years of time -
The crops we harvest, every day,
Will always be divine.

It is, for us, to show His cares
In deeds of every kind
And live the Christian way of life -
In body, heart and mind -
So we may harvest, every day,
The joys He wills to be
To gardeners of His love and care -
And Christianity.

Michael Dubina

Cast all your worries upon him
because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

BWC-UMW Leadership Team



Greater
LOVE
has no one
than this,
that he
lay down his
LIFE for
his friends.

JOHN 15:13

