

# **UMW FLAME**

**Eastern Pennsylvania Conference United Methodist Women Newsletter**

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**February 2015**

## **We Made Our Pledge to Mission!**

The great news to share is that we succeeded in paying our full Conference Pledge to Mission of \$160,000 for 2014. Thank you to all who made this possible! Halfway through the year it did not look like this would happen. When we talked about our Pledge to Mission for 2015, we wanted to be able to achieve it, and so we lowered it to \$150,000. Now our financial goal for 2015 is to exceed both our pledge for 2015 and what we were able to give in 2014.

What made it possible to meet our pledge? We think the idea of encouraging gifts of at least 14 cents a day in 2014 helped. So we are now saying,

## **15 Cents a Day for Missions in 2015!**

For those who are financially able, would you give 15 cents a day more than you gave in 2014? This would help us exceed our goal. For those who are not financially blessed, we appreciate whatever you can give. Perhaps you could make a small increase by skipping a non-essential purchase. If your unit has not given to the Pledge to Mission in recent years, please prayerfully consider giving in 2015.

But the important thing to remember is that the money goes to help women, children, and youth. The photos and descriptions on our colorful United Methodist Women folder tell stories of what our money has accomplished.

- Counselor Madison Nix walks with camper Jalei Mannis along a path through the woods at Camp Aldersgate in Little Rock, Arkansas. The camp offers children with disabilities a safe and fun experience.
- Ngoy Wa Ngoy Euphrasi, 17, pauses as she works in a field in Kamina, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as part of a youth training program that combines academic education and agricultural training.
- Pin Man and other women in the village of Tmar Sar, Cambodia, were helped to purchase pigs in an income generating project.
- Esther Maoriba works in a cooperative farm in Southern Sudan raising crops to sell so she can purchase medicine and school supplies for her family.

### **Girls on the Go Is A Great Place to Get Teens Involved in UMW**

Teenage girls will be gathering at Gretna Glen on March 7-8 for a week-end of fun, fellowship, and inspiration. Have the girls in your church registered? Have you offered to pay their way or at least help them with the cost of \$55 (\$60 for late registrations) Have you considered coming as an adult chaperone?

The retreat leader is Margaret Keefer of Grace Again Ministries who has been well received in previous years. She will use drama and music as she leads the girls through God-centered stories about self-worth and God's plan for their lives. Fun activities will include games and a fashion show, and the mission project is making UMCOR health kits. There will be a UMW sharing time focused on participating on our Young Women's Team. For questions contact registrar Mary Ann Repsher at 610-588-1084 or [rep164@frontiernet.net](mailto:rep164@frontiernet.net) and send registrations to her with checks made out to EPA UMW.

### **Mission u is again at Inn at Reading**

Our geographic emphasis this year is Latin America for both adults and youth. We will have a repeat of the study on disabilities, and the spiritual growth study is Created for Happiness: Understanding Your Life in God. The Mission u committee will be meeting on March 16 to finalize the brochure which will then be mailed out and put on our United Methodist Women page on the Conference website. We have budgeted \$6000 for first timer UMW scholarships, so start inviting new folks to attend. We also have financial aid scholarships for those who have attended previously, but wouldn't be able to return without some help.

A survey has been distributed asking for input about the length and location of Mission u in 2016. Please return your surveys by March 1 to Susan Dziuk.

### **Quarterly Payment of Mission Pledge**

All units and districts are asked to send in money for the pledge to mission four times each year. By paying some of your pledge each quarter, the conference can also pay quarterly, thus making money available for mission sooner. This is a strategy for meeting our pledge in full, and also will guide us in making a decision about our pledge for the following year.

### **Call for Posters**

UMW will have a table at Annual Conference May 15-17, 2014 at Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA. At the table we want to show what is happening in UMW at the Conference, District, and local level. Please take pictures of your events and put together a poster that will interest women and girls in getting involved with United Methodist Women.

### **Love Offering to Recognize the Saints Among Us**

Each year a love offering has been received at Annual Celebration in the Fall, but its purpose was never very clear. The Love Offering is now designated as second mile giving to the Pledge to Mission, given by individuals or units to recognize the members of United Methodist Women who have mentored us. The Love Offering is to be sent directly to the District Treasurer by November 1, All Saints Day. If you want to submit the names of the “saints” being honored, please do so. The district can then honor them at the District Annual Celebration.

### **Needlework Circle is Renamed Ingathering Program**

At the Conference Leadership Team meeting on February 14, a decision was made to follow the lead of the Southeast District, and rename the Needlework officer as the Ingathering Chairperson. The Conference Needlework Circle will now be called the Ingathering Program, and the guidelines in our Standing Rules and Operating Procedures will be revised. We have the authority to do this because we are the only conference with this office. The reason for making this change is that the term “needlework” is obsolete and confusing. Very few of us are doing actual needlework. Most of us are purchasing new clothing or items such as diapers that agencies have asked for, or we are giving money for grants to local agencies.

We also decided that the agencies receiving money need to be related to United Methodist Women or the United Methodist Church either directly or through the volunteer efforts of United Methodist Women. And all the money is to be used within Eastern Pennsylvania Conference to serve low income families.

### **Legacy Fund/150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Everyone is invited to a Legacy Fund event on May 2 at Quakertown UMC from 9:30 to 12. Ethel Malone attended the National UMW Training last summer about the Legacy Fund. A committee was formed to educate us all about the Legacy Fund and the plans to celebrate United Methodist Women’s 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2019. Ethel Malone, Anna Bickhart, Gladys Hubbard, and Mary Ann Repsher are the committee members and they will be presenting a workshop on May 2 to help us learn all about the Legacy Fund. Please plan to attend.

### **Charter For Racial Justice Seminar**

For the seminar on racial justice being held May 15-17 in Blackstone, VA, each conference is asked to bring a display showing what we have done. We are looking for photos, programs, flyers, and posters showing what units and districts have done on issues related to racial justice such as domestic violence, human trafficking, immigration, poverty, climate change. Let Barbara Drake know what you have that could be displayed.

### **Resolution on Solitary Confinement**

United Methodist Women will be presenting a resolution to Annual Conference urging limitations on the use of solitary confinement in PA prisons. We learned that PA is in violation of the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution against “cruel and unusual punishment” and the Americans with Disabilities Act by excessive use of solitary confinement, with some prisoners held in solitary confinement for over 30 years. Up to 80% could be safely moved to less restrictive settings. It costs \$60,000 per year to keep a person in solitary confinement under 24/7 monitoring, as compared to a cost of \$30,000 per year per inmate in general prison population. The resolution asks the PA General Assembly to develop legislation to guide the Department of Corrections in the use of solitary confinement, and asks that the need to hold a person in solitary confinement be reviewed at least every 45 days.

### **Domestic Violence Training**

Eastern PA Conference has been selected as one of two conferences to receive training on Faith Community Response to Domestic Violence. The training will represent a partnership between your church, your conference, and the National Offices of United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, and Faith Trust Institute. The training will be held on June 6 at West Lawn. Churches will apply to be one of 2 churches from each district to receive the training, and they will need to put together a team of 4-6 women, men, and youth who will work together before and after the training to learn about domestic violence and how to respond to victims and perpetrators. A letter with more details will be coming out soon.

### **Grace Potts awarded Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence**

Mary Ann Repsher learned about this wonderful award to Grace Potts and shared this report. The congregation of Calvary UMC, Mohnton in the Central District surprised Grace Potts on Mother’s Day 2014 with the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence, created by the General Commission on United Methodist Men. At that time, this was only the third such award presented since its inception, with the requirement of a donation of \$500. According to the UMM website, a candidate must have given faithful service to the church by serving in a leadership position; have helped others in their Christian walk; and have demonstrated devotion, witness and instruction that lead others into a deeper understanding of the faith and service to Jesus Christ. The award is a curved piece of glass with inscription. Grace has served Calvary as Secretary for Evangelism, UMW President, organizer of mission trips to Bennett Center, Henderson Settlement, and Red Bird Mission in KY, and supported groups sent to Good Shepherd Mission Hospital in India. She has served United Methodist Women as District Treasurer, Conference Treasurer and Spiritual Growth Coordinator, and she volunteers at Mission Central.