



**Purpose**  
 The organized unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

There are no extra pieces in the universe. Everyone is here because he or she has a place to fill, and every piece must fit itself into the big jigsaw puzzle.  
 Deepak Chopra

# Covenant Connection

Published twice a year by Topeka District United Methodist Women

**Volume 39 Issue 1 Spring Edition February 2020**



**“PIECES OF THE UMW PUZZLE” MEMBERS MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE**



TOPEKA DISTRICT SPRING EVENT  
 MARCH 7, 2020  
 SABETHA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
 806 MAIN  
 SABETHA, KANSAS

Registration begins at 8:15 AM with snacks, fellowship, and displays.

Gathering songs will begin at 8:50.  
 Worship will begin at 9:00 AM.

After the business meeting, we will hear from a panel of UMW members who will help us look at membership through the UMW Purpose and the Vision.

Join us for special music, Communion, and worship. A delicious lunch will be served for those who want to stay for food and fellowship.

Ingathering Donations of canned good and shelf stable grocery items for the Sabetha Food Pantry will be accepted.

Unit Registration form is in this issue.  
 Registration is \$3. Lunch is \$7.

Units are also encouraged to bring any mats they may have made for the homeless to be blessed during our meeting.

## A Message from Your President

Remember this song?

“This Little Light Of Mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
This Little Light Of Mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
This Little Light Of Mine,  
Yes, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.”

It is prevalent this year as our program book is featuring that theme to shine a light on social injustice. Why are you a United Methodist Woman? When my husband and I were looking at various denominations, we felt at home at the Methodist church. Why? When we looked around for people in the community who supported youth programs and promoted growth in the community, we found many sitting in the pews at Ottawa First United Methodist Church. That's how you know that your light is shining. There is a desire in all of us to work for a better world. We as UMW members concentrate on improving the lives of women and children. We believe that improves life for everyone.

I know that your actions are bringing light into people's lives that might otherwise be in darkness. Each year as your president I have written in the Covenant Connection. I am not sure who reads this newsletter. You might skim the articles or just open it to find the registration for the Spring Meeting. My hope is that you read each of the articles to learn what is happening in the district from the team. Always remember that each of us on the district team is committed to your success. See you in Sabetha!

Membership:

I have been working on the membership reports that you have sent in. We are still looking for a membership chairperson and women to serve on the nominations committee and the social action team. More importantly, in this time of change within the church, please remember that we are still United Methodist Women. I am saddened by the decision to de-activate some of the units due to the age of the members or lack of members at this time. The church as a whole is losing membership. It is now more important than ever that our lights shine! Our purpose states that we “develop a creative supportive fellowship.” Maybe your unit can strengthen ties with a unit close by? That could like sharing information about circle groups or projects with each other. Sharing our friendship with each other in fellowship is, by far, of the utmost importance. A great opportunity to begin strengthening those ties with other units is coming up with our spring event in Sabetha on March 7<sup>th</sup>. I hope you plan to attend.

Cheryl Sylvester,  
Topeka District President

## Vice-President's Greetings

Well, here we are in 2020! Where did the time go? It seemed like we were just working on the Fall Topeka District meeting, and suddenly it's time for us to put the 2020 Spring meeting together! This meeting, we are going to focus on membership by looking at it through the words in the Purpose and correlating it with the UMW Vision... "Turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world." These words fit together just like a puzzle! When we look at UMW membership, we see all types and ages of women as they work together to carry out this UMW Purpose and Vision.

One of my devotions this morning came from I Corinthians 12:8-27. Within those verses it tells about people having different spiritual gifts and that there are different types of ministries, but the same Lord. Further in the scripture it talks about Christ being like a human body with many parts. Although these parts are not the same or do the same work, they are all necessary to do Christ's work.

I see UMW members in those verses. We are all different, and even though we may bring different gifts, we all are all necessary to do the work of our units to carry out our Purpose. All these differences fit together like a puzzle and make a very wonderful organization, one of which we can be proud to be members.

It takes all these different gift and abilities to carry out our Purpose and vision. We need to get the word out to all women. We must show others what we do, how much they can learn, and how much we need them!

Our membership is getting to be a majority of "older women." We are in need of new blood and ideas. We open our arms to other women who want to know God, and experience freedom as a whole person in Jesus Christ! We need more members to help expand the concept of mission! Mark your calendar to attend the Topeka District Spring United Methodist Women's meeting on March 7, 2020 at Sabetha United Methodist Church, in Sabetha Kansas. At each meeting, we are going to start having a roll call, a book report, and a memorial service for those unit members who passed away in 2019.

Come and experience the love and fellowship of our great organization. Bring friends to learn what we are all about. Learn about the **pieces of the UMW puzzle and how members make it all possible!**

Jo Cross, Vice-President  
Topeka District Vice-President

## Journey in Action

Maternal and Child Health is one of UMW's Issue Priorities for 2016-2020, and it is an issue that definitely needs to be studied.

Did you know that the United States is one of 13 countries where the death rate for pregnancy-related complication is worse now than it was 25 years ago? As a matter of fact, the United States has the highest maternal and infant mortality rate among comparable developed countries. It is even worse among black mothers and infants. African American women across the income spectrum are dying from preventable pregnancy-related complication at three to four times the rate of non-Hispanic white women, while the death rate for black infants is twice that of infants born to non-Hispanic white mothers.

When we look at these statistics, we might think it goes along with economic inequality, and it does to some extent, but even the tennis pro Serena Williams, who has many advantages, had a difficult pregnancy and delivery. It's been said that an educated black woman has a higher chance of her baby dying than a white woman with an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education, so a low socioeconomic status isn't the only reason for pregnancy-related complication for African-American women.

Why is this? How can this be? Studies show this has to do with a lifetime of cumulative stress of living in a racist system. It's hard for us to fully understand what living in racial disparity does to a body over years, but that is what we are seeing. It is a shame that we are seeing this fact in our country. It is a systematic issue we have in the United States, which is quite alarming.

So, what can we do to address maternal and child health in our country? As United Methodist Women, some ideas of what we can do is promote easy access to healthcare, educate women or partner with agencies that do, promote child protection, advocate for equity in law and services for minority women and children, host informal educational workshops on healthy living for teens at risk, and/or provide maternal health services to improve access to care for underserved populations.

Health care for women and children is at the heart of United Methodist Women today, just as it was in the 1800's when the organization was first founded. We need to continue to strive for change.

**Debra Hayes**

([DebraLHayes@aol.com](mailto:DebraLHayes@aol.com) 785-608-2929)

Social Action (Journey in Action) Team Leader

## From Your Treasurer

# 2020

### A NEW DECADE OF MISSION GIVING

Kelly Badenoch, Topeka District Treasurer

How did your Unit do financially in 2019? Did you make a pledge to the Topeka District for Mission Giving? Our UMW units were busy this year supporting local missions in their communities and supporting the global mission of United Methodist Women.

As a District, our pledge for 2019 was \$65,000. Our UMW units kept me busy with their mission remittances right up until the end of the year. We fell short of our goal at \$60,298.95 (92.77%), but that was still a pretty awesome amount to pass on to the Conference. In addition to that Mission Giving amount (which includes our 5 channels of giving), we also gave \$3,017.11 for Mission Giving Plus (Call to Prayer and Self-Denial), for a total of \$63,316.

We are one of 17 Districts in the Great Plains Conference. In case you were wondering, the Conference has a pledge, too. In 2019, it was \$600,000. They received \$600,706, meeting their goal at 100.12%.

In the November/December *Response Magazine*, the Pledges of all the conferences within the various jurisdictions were listed for 2018. The Great Plains Conference (part of the South Central Jurisdiction) gave more overall than any other conference. What this says is that UMW Missions are alive and well, and we are all in Mission together, particularly our Great Plains Conference. Thank you for your dedication and giving to those organizations in your communities and to those in need around the world. Let's work together to make the next decade even better.

Local UMW Unit → District → Conference → (Jurisdiction) → National UMW

The Great Plains Conference of United Methodist Women has met its pledge for this year! Thanks to all of you in your local units. I know that coordinating and planning fundraisers can be time consuming, but the dollars raised for missions never goes unnoticed. Remember that we are not under the General Board of Global Ministries within the Methodist Church. Since General Conference's action in May 2012, United Methodist Women is organized as an independent agency of The United Methodist Church with a modified board structure to meet the changing needs of women organized for mission.



Ministry to Incarcerated Families

➤➤ **Our Ministries & How you can help support them!**

**PARENTING CLASSES**

11 parenting classes per year  
 approximately 150 attending  
 Two Classes Offered  
 Active Parenting  
 The First Five Years

**Support them by sending funds  
 for Class Materials!**

Parenting book/workbook  
 \$16.95 per participant

**TWO UMW UNITS INSIDE**

**WHWI** Women Helping Women Inside

**WFJAM** Women For Justice And Mercy

Both units have crafts for sale at different events  
 Money from these sales  
 goes towards their pledges to UMW

**Support them by purchasing their crafts!**

**NEW BABY CARE BAGS**

We provide baby bags  
 with basic starter supplies to  
 the caregivers of babies born  
 to incarcerated women.

**Support them by sending funds  
 or find creative ways to collect  
 and donate supplies!**

Care Bags cost approximately  
 \$50 per bag

**ON AND OFF SITE RETREATS**

We do 10 retreats where moms and grandmas  
 get to spend time with their children/grandchildren  
 in a fun atmosphere with lots of great food!  
 Each retreat visitor receives a ditty bag with 5-6  
 small fun or comfort items as they head home.

**Support them by signing up to bring food, by  
 donating ditty bags and ditty bag supplies or by  
 sending funds to help make Retreats possible!**

The 3 off-site retreats held at Lake Shawnee  
 cost approximately \$900

The 7 on-site retreats held at Topeka  
 Correctional Facility cost approximately \$2,275

Ditty Bags for approximately 250 children  
 per year - about \$6 a bag

**BREASTFEEDING SUPPLIES**

We help provide breastfeeding  
 supplies to new Moms

**Support them by sending funds!**

Approximately \$50 per Mom

Ministry to Incarcerated Families

**FAITH HOPE AND LOVE IN ACTION**

How do you learn more about this program? Volunteers will come speak at your event or circle meeting - please contact Teresa Tuchscherer at [teresatuch@gmail.com](mailto:teresatuch@gmail.com) or at 785-845-3406.

To Donate to M2IF please send your check to Linda Griffiths, 6024 NE Olympia, Topeka, KS 66617

## M2IF Ministry Wish Lists

### Ditty Bag Items

- Toothbrushes & Toothpaste (all ages)
- Shampoo/Body Wash/Lotion (all ages)
- Bubble Bath
- Journals
- Small Notebooks
- Puzzle Books
- Coloring Books
- Colored Pencils
- Pens
- Crayons
- Small Flashlights
- Decks of Cards
- Card Games
- Socks (all ages)
- Small Baby Toys
- Bibs
- Bottles
- Washcloths
- Books
- Toddler Toys
- Food Containers
- Sippy Cups
- Drink Cups with Straws (all ages)
- Gum
- Mints
- ChapStick
- **Creative Things for boys 12-18!**
- Homemade Ditty Bags
- Small Fun Items (Children & Youth)
- Etc....

### New Baby Care Bag Items

- Baby Wipes (not travel size)
- Package of Diapers (Newborn or Size 1)
- Diaper Ointment
- Baby Lotion
- Baby Shampoo
- Baby Body Wash
- Baby Bottles (large and small)

The Ditty Bag list is only a prompter  
feel free to use your imagination!

New Items only, please.

We do provide Ditty Bags to all Retreat Visitors

Infants, Toddlers, Children, Youth

Even Adults during special retreats where

the girls get to be the kids and invite in

their parents or grandparents to visit!

*Items do not have to be expensive to be appreciated,  
check your local Dollar Store for some great bargains!*

Ministry to Incarcerated Families

**FAITH HOPE AND LOVE IN ACTION**



## 2020 Topeka District UMW Officers

Submitted by the Topeka District UMW Committee on Nominations  
Lorene Cranwell, Kathi Baenig, JoAnne Smith, Jo Miller, Margaret Jantzen

<p><b>President (2020)</b></p> <p>Cheryl Sylvester 3612 Nemaha Road Perry, KS 66073 913-709-0895 Cell <a href="mailto:funbk@yahoo.com">funbk@yahoo.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Atchison UMW</p>	<p><b>Vice President (2022)</b></p> <p>Jo Cross 704 Hamilton Oskaloosa, KS 66066 785-863-2320 <a href="mailto:cross@giantcomm.net">cross@giantcomm.net</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Oskaloosa UMC</p>	<p><b>Secretary (2020)</b></p> <p>Cindy Ladd 9340 264<sup>th</sup> Road P O Box 109 Effingham, KS 66023 913-426-3194 Cell 913-833-2655 Home <a href="mailto:monrovaladds@yahoo.com">monrovaladds@yahoo.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Effingham Union UMC</p>
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<p><b>Treasurer (2020)</b></p> <p>Kelly Badenoch 3914 SE Skylark Court Topeka, KS 66605 785-266-9122 <a href="mailto:klbadenoch@gmail.com">klbadenoch@gmail.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shawnee Heights UMC</p>	<p><b>Registrar</b></p> <p>Anne Abbo 1954 SW Arrowhead Road Topeka, KS 66604 <a href="mailto:asabbo49@gmail.com">asabbo49@gmail.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lowman UMC</p>	<p><b>Journey In Learning and Journey in Giving (2022)</b></p> <p>Rose Souter 3736 South Street Grantville, KS 66429 785-640-6242 Cell 785-246-6068 Home <a href="mailto:gmaw_13@yahoo.com">gmaw_13@yahoo.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grantville UMW</p>
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### Mission Coordinators

<p><b>Spiritual Growth (2021) (Journey in Faith)</b></p> <p>Jo Miller 1717 SW Arrowhead Road Topeka, KS 66604 785-273-8894 <a href="mailto:ldypoet@cox.net">ldypoet@cox.net</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topeka University UMC</p>	<p><b>Membership, Nurture &amp; Outreach</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Open</p>
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## 2019 Topeka District UMW Officers, page 2

### Social Action Team

<p><b>Social Acton (2021) (Journey in Action)</b> Debra Hayes 107 SW 16<sup>th</sup> Street Topeka, KS 66612 785-608-2929 <a href="mailto:debralhayes@aol.com">debralhayes@aol.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topeka University</p>	<p><b>Member (2021) (Journey in Action)</b> Linda Montgomery 411 Allen Road Holton, KS 66436 785-872-3773 <a href="mailto:L.Montgomery@schenckprocess.com">L.Montgomery@schenckprocess.com</a> Effingham UMC</p>	<p><b>Member (2022) (Journey in Action)</b> Carol Hughes 1485 160<sup>th</sup> Road Seneca, KS 66538 785-336-6255 <a href="mailto:chughes@bbwi.net">chughes@bbwi.net</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Seneca UMC</p>
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<p><b>Co-Communication Coordinator (2020)</b> Betsy Scott 3435 SW Alameda Drive Topeka, Ks 66614 785-267-7556 <a href="mailto:scotteli@usd437.net">scotteli@usd437.net</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topeka Countryside UMC</p>	<p><b>Co-Communication Coordinator (2020)</b> Brittany Bemus 3418 SW 47th Court Topeka, KS 66610 785-845-5358 <a href="mailto:bnbemus@gmail.com">bnbemus@gmail.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topeka Countryside UMC</p>	<p><b>Coord. of Ministries to Incarcerated Families</b> Teresa Tuhscherer 5316 SW 25<sup>th</sup> Street Topeka, KS 66614 785-266-7575 <a href="mailto:teresatuch@gmail.com">teresatuch@gmail.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topeka Crestview UMC</p>
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### Committee on Nominations

<p><b>Committee on Nominations Chair (2020)</b> JoAnne Smith 828 SE Rice Road Topeka, KS 66607 785-234-9843 <a href="mailto:joanne7439@sbcglobal.net">joanne7439@sbcglobal.net</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topeka Asbury/Mt. Olive UMC</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Member</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Open</p>	<p><b>Member (2020)</b> Sherry Seifert 11118 94<sup>th</sup> Ozawkie, KS 66070 785-633-7533 <a href="mailto:sseifert@embarqmail.com">sseifert@embarqmail.com</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ozawkie UMW</p>
<p><b>Member (2021)</b> Jo Miller 1717 SW Arrowhead Road Topeka, KS 66604 785-273-8894 <a href="mailto:ldypoet@cox.net">ldypoet@cox.net</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topeka University UMC</p>	<p><b>Member (2022)</b> Diane Hanzlicek 304 Harrison St Sabetha, KS 66534 785-284-2776 <a href="mailto:dianeflood@sbcglobal.net">dianeflood@sbcglobal.net</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sabetha UMC</p>	

## CONFERENCE EVENTS

### Turning Faith, Hope, and Love into Action

United Methodist Women is the largest denominational faith organization for women with approximately 800,000 members whose mission is fostering spiritual growth, developing leadership, and advocating for justice.



Dates are set! Put **May 30 - June 7, 2020** on your calendar and travel with us to **Red Bird Mission**, Beverly, KY, **Upper Room**, & **Cookson Hills Center**, Cookson, OK. We will be leaving from and returning to Topeka, KS again in 2020.

**For more information**, please contact the METour director, [Venedith Vargas](#), or via phone at 308-352-8085.

### South Central Jurisdiction UMW Meeting - March 26-29, 2020

#### Little Rock, Arkansas - Downtown Marriott & Little Rock Convention Center

Registration begins September 15, 2019

Save the Date! Read the latest SCJ Newsletter below to find out more about it

#### 150th UMW Birthday Video

Here is a link to a 4 minute video prepared by National UMW for use in celebrating our 150th either locally or at your district level meetings: <https://youtu.be/h-VWKMFuG5s>

Note: 2020 GP UMW Conference Annual Meeting will be September 18-19, 2020 at Garden City, KS! Shannon Priddy, National UMW President, will be our keynote speaker, so you'll want this on your calendar NOW!