

**Great Plains United Methodist Women
Annual Celebration 2020
Sept 19, 2020 10 AM – 12 PM CDT**



Let Your Light Shine
Ignited for Justice

Welcome to the Seventh Annual Great Plains Conference United Methodist Women Annual Celebration

WE ARE THE GREAT PLAINS!!

Our theme this year, “**LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE IGNITED FOR JUSTICE**” was taken from the 2019-2020 UMW program book. It shows how current National UMW is with the trending needs of our communities and activities that serve as a bridge and help us connect the dots between bible study and call to social action.

This could not have been a more different year for UMW members. Activities from national, conference, district to units and circles were canceled. But just like the churches that closed for worship, the church is a building – we are the church in the community. UMW looked at different ways to meet and continue with Mission Giving. We are faith, love, and hope in action.

14 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16 NIV

Let your light shine!! Shine for women, children, and youth in your communities and around the world. Let your light shine for the marginalized, those in poverty, and those who are “invisible” in our midst.

It has been my greatest blessing to be the president of the Great Plains Conference United Methodist Women for the past four years. You have increased my faith, shared fellowship, adapted to new experiences and grieved with me. You are my Sisters in Christ and I am forever blessed.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE IGNITED FOR JUSTICE

Karen Dunlap, President
Great Plains Conference
United Methodist Women

Black Lives Matter to God and Black Lives Matter to United Methodist Women



United Methodist Women continues to grieve the extrajudicial killings of Black people in America. It has only been a few weeks since we spoke out against the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, and in that time two more killings have shaken the country: the death of Breonna Taylor in her own home in Louisville and the death of

George Floyd on a public street in Minneapolis. United Methodist Women grieves with the families of those who have been killed.

United Methodist Women condemns the culture of White supremacy and the racism it nurtures. We decry the criminalization of Blackness as it shows up in these most extreme, fatal cases and as it appears in the everyday harassment that disrupts everyday life—from coffee shop meetings to street corner catchups to, most recently, even solo birdwatching. Such racial harassment exhausts the mind, body and spirit of many in the family of God.

At times, United Methodist Women members and leaders have been complicit in this violence: and in the mid-20th century it was United Methodist Women members who led the struggle for the denomination's adoption of the Charter for Racial Justice even as their mission dollars helped finance bail funds for those jailed in the Civil Rights Movement. Then, as now, work for racial justice does not just come naturally; it is work against resistance, and therefore must be an active discipleship choice we make each day.

We are committed to choosing justice. We also realize that there is no easy fix. There exists no single, one-time action that can undo a multigenerational legacy of racist violence. But we at United Methodist Women commit to engaging in the ongoing work, guided by the promise that God's future is far brighter than the present moment.

To that end:

- **Mission Giving:** United Methodist Women National Office is making a special gift this week of \$21,000 to organizations demanding justice and accountability for the recent deaths of Arbery, Taylor and Floyd. We will be granting \$7,000 each to support NAACP Georgia in its work with Just Georgia, the Louisville Community Bail Fund organized by Black Lives Matter Louisville, and the Minnesota Healing Justice Network. We are grateful for the work of both emerging, next-generation organizations and long-serving civil rights groups. We hope that this gift inspires others in our organization to give, likewise, to the local organizations that are most effectively doing antiracist work in their own communities.

- **Witness for Justice:** United Methodist Women commits that we will continue to speak out against extrajudicial killings and the culture of White supremacy and racism that undergirds these killings. We will use our public voice to bear witness. We will seek to amplify the voices of others who have been speaking out and whose voices are underrepresented in media. We will do so via virtual means, as long as is necessary, and we will do so in bodily presence, whenever it is again safe to gather. We encourage all members to do the same.
- **Transformative Education:** United Methodist Women encourages members to engage in the work of ongoing antiracist learning, recognizing that—especially for White folks—ongoing antiracist learning and self-reflection is not a one-time experience but must be, instead, a sustained spiritual practice. If unsure where to begin, we recommend that you read and study. *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo, an important introduction to this work. This is a 2020 United Methodist Women Reading Program selection bonus book. You may also join a free, self-paced, online class on the book if you so choose.

We invite conferences, districts and local units to join this work in the ways that are most appropriate and fitting to their settings, committing to support and work in partnership with the local groups that are most effectively doing the work and leading the way others in our organization to give, likewise, to the local organizations that are most effectively doing antiracist work in their own communities.

live

NEW PRAYERS | United Methodist Women is a creative, supportive fellowship. Often that creativity expresses itself through members' as their prayers take the shape of food, clothing, quilts, prayer shawls, and most recently, protective face masks to help prevent the spread the COVID-19 respiratory virus. United Methodist Women members across the country sprung to action as the virus became global and facemasks became the requirement to keep ourselves and others safe.

United Methodist Women members also used their creativity to remain connected even as staying isolated and apart became necessary, with virtual meetings and celebrations and opportunities for spiritual growth. Members stretched themselves in new ways and doubled down on their practice of checking in on one another.

Thanks be to God for United Methodist Women.

Response | September/October

DEDICATED LIGHT Margaret Thomas, Journey in Giving Team Leader

\$13,730.00 was collected for the Dedicated Light through the Great Plains United Methodist Women. Local units or individuals send a \$45.00 gift through their local treasurer “In Honor” or “In Memory” of a loved one, friend, or mentor. At the District meeting, the Dedicated Light candle burns for the total collected from the units in that District. At the Conference, the Dedicated Light Candle burns for the combined total received from all the Districts. The undesignated Mission Giving becomes part of the Pledge to Missions, the \$45.00 represents funding the cost of approximately 1-3/4 minutes of mission work.



Leader: The Dedicated Light Service is a tradition of the Great Plains Conference United Methodist Women. The Dedicated Light is symbolic of the light of Jesus shining in the dark places, bringing joy and hope to those who walk in darkness. The gifts that were received from individuals and local units give additional support to the mission work of the United Methodist Women.

People: The monetary gifts that we have given symbolize our commitment to the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. As God’s women we continue to be faithful through prayer, study, service, and gifts of money for mission work nearby and around the world.

Leader: Today we join our Dedicated Light gifts to honor and remember the women and men who are and have been significant in the lives of United Methodist Women throughout the Great Plains Conference.

People: We give thanks for those who had the vision and those who have nurtured and sustained the vision.

Leader: We also give “In Honor” of those who continue to live among us and who challenge us to continue to care for the needs of others. This year we especially honor:

- Shannon Priddy, Nation President of United Methodist Women, and
- Karen Dunlap, President, Great Plains Conference United Methodist Women.

People: We give thanks for opportunities to study and worship, and for our PURPOSE that calls us to turn our prayers and study into action on behalf of others.

Leader: This weekend we burn the Dedicated Light for 5 hours and 38 minutes “In Honor” of the faithful witness of our Founding Foremothers and all the saints named and unnamed who have gone before us and who still walk among us.

All: God, we give thanks for these wonderful witnesses of faith you have blessed us with. May we, too, be found faithful. Amen

give

GIVING IS ACTION | United Methodist Women members’ Mission

Giving changes lives. It has been changing lives for the better for 151 years and counting, and it shows no sign of stopping, even during a global health crisis. From continuing to ensure the well-being of retired missionaries and deaconesses to supporting soap-making, mask-making, and food distribution internationally and national mission institutions in the United States. United Methodist Women helps communities adapt to change and uplift the marginalized.

Giving is action. Giving is community building—especially when we must remain physically apart. Giving ensures faith, hope and love in action for women, children and youth down the street and around the world for 151 more years and beyond.

response | September/October 2020

Minutes

Pat McGill Secretary

Great Plains United Methodist Women Annual Meeting

September 20 and 21, 2019 First United Methodist Church Lincoln, Nebraska

Before the business meeting was opened, announcements were given by Vice President Joyce Solomon. She then called for devotions by Lori Collins. Collins read from the. Book :
Footprints—"I love you and will leave you never, ever during your trials and tribulations" and verses from Psalms and Philippians .

At 8:16a.m. President Karen Dunlap called the meeting to order with the recitation of the purpose by the entire body. Approximately 75 persons were in attendance at this time.

Pat McGill presented the minutes, asked for additions or corrections. Hearing none she moved approval. Motion carried.

Donna Grigsby was called forward to present the financial report and the budget for 2020 due to the absence of Barbara Smith, Treasurer. Regarding the offering for The Big Garden, our national mission institution in Omaha, Nebraska, taken during the worship service on Friday, \$1,533.00 was given.

Grigsby also highlighted parts of the financial report and the proposed budget:

1. 42.56% of pledge 255,385,99 has been given as of the end of August.
2. Budget has been reduced by \$25,000 because of membership drop.
3. Changes have occurred: the Journey Teams' budget will be lowered by \$100. Copies, corsage travels budgets have also been reduced.
4. Conference publications: library moved to 0 because it no longer exists.
5. District AMD reflect requests from the current year.
6. Important amounts from the proposed budget:
 - a. \$575,000.00 Pledge to Mission
 - b. \$83,583.00 District A&MD
 - c. \$113,295.00 Conference A&MD
 - d. \$7,187.50 South Central Jurisdiction
 - e. Total 779,065.50.

Donna Grigsby moved approval of budget for the committee.

Motion carried

Carolyn May came forward to move the nominations from the committee. President Karen Dunlap asked for nominations from floor. Seeing none she called for the vote. Motion carried to accept the nominations. (

Louise Niemann, South Central Jurisdiction Nominations Chair presided over the retirement ceremony and the installation of officers. Becky Pishney, Marge Zakoura-Vaughan, Rogene Silletto, Virginia White and Marilyn Zehring helped with the ceremony. In thanks and appreciation each retiring officer was presented with a United Methodist Women pen, symbolic of writing UMW history. These officers have helped write our story and are part of the 150-year heritage. She challenged them to go on to lead in the futures as “PerSisters “Nieman called the new and continuing leaders forward (see Appendix 2) Barbara Smith and Marqueeeta Keeton were not present. In the installation ceremony, Niemann spoke about Mary and Martha as being representative of our UMW leaders. She counseled the new leaders to be balanced in their leadership with the qualities of both Mary and Martha. She encouraged and inspired them with a 150- year leadership pin saying, “We are all ‘PerSisters Together’ “.

In other business, Charlotte Morrow President of South Central Jurisdiction of United Methodist Women told of Louise Nieman, current board member, and Yvette Richards, former Jurisdiction President, as being present: She encouraged us to get other to come to the meeting In Little Rock, Arkansas on March 26-29,2020.; she offered us mints with the meaning “You are MINT to come” and encouraged us to bring others.

Rose Roberts, Program Advisory Group representative, then brought greetings from the national office. She reminded members that she is available to answer questions as we look forward to changes that are happening. She shared number 392 in the hymnal.: Prayer for a New Heart. She also read a poem “Children” to remind us of our mission.

Listen ..

GOOD NEIGHBORS| United Methodist Women is faith - hope- love in action. Even during a global health crisis United Methodist Women members pray not only with clasped hands but with hands that sew, feed, write and call to make life better for women, children, and youth. Those marginalized by society’s systems became only further marginalized by COVID -19 spread.

United Methodist Women’s campaigns Just Energy for All, End Maternal Mortality, Living Wage for All, and Interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline sprung to action to advocate for neighbors made even more vulnerable by the pandemic. United Methodist Women members are good neighbors and physical distance will not change that.

response | September/October 2020

Afterwards, Lori Collins presented the Eunice Harrington Award. The nominees were: Margaret “Peggy” Alford, Dodge City

Afterwards, Lori Collins presented the Eunice Harrington Award. The nominees were: Margaret “Peggy” Alford, Dodge City District, Donna Grigsby of the Five Rivers District, Jean Gaslin from the Kansas City

District, Ardith Davenport from Gateway District, Vera Williams from

Flint Hills District, Mary Bilsend from Prairie Rivers District and Debra Hayes of the Topeka District. Donna Grigsby was chosen as the recipient. Following the presentation, Marilyn Zehring talked about Eunice Harrington.

Vice-President Joyce Solomon announced the nominees for the United

Methodist Women Board of Directors: Louise Niemann and Rose

Roberts. Alternate nominees are Barbara Kruger and Barbara Jo Burns. Solomon also revealed the Program Advisory Group Nominees: Teresa Whitehead, Barbara Wright, and Esther Hay.

Looking ahead to next year, Judy Branden, Dodge City District President, invited us in song to the next annual meeting Sept 18-19, 2020 in Garden City, Kansas.

Karen then introduced Lisa Maupin, Conference Lay Leader, who spoke on the future of UMW as “The League of Extraordinarily, Unreasonable Women”- rooted in leadership development, mission and being change agents. She stated that the coming changes require us to look to our roots: Radical hospitable horseshoe shaped groups allow people to flow freely in and out. Our horseshoes go where the action is and not wait for people to come in. Our horseshoes are ecumenical; the many small towns in our conference require that we work together. Our horseshoes need to be flexible in how we do activities and education. Our church needs us: we are hurting, and, in this hurting, we are hurting each other. United Methodist Women has shown how we work together to heal. We (UMW) know how to love each other through our differences. We will continue to provide training for extraordinary leaders, steeped in the understanding of diversity, who receive our full and vocal support.

Following this inspiring talk, at 9:20a.m. the business meeting was adjourned.

Breakout sessions followed. The meeting closed informally with a box lunch to send participants out.

Treasurers Report

Barbara Smith, Treasurer

2021 Proposed Budget

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN GREAT PLAINS CONFERENCE 2021 Budget				
Item	2018 pledge paid was 103% of \$625,000 pledged	EOY 2019	2020 Budget	2021 Prop. Budget
I National United Methodist Women		\$596,623.25	\$575,000.00	\$425,000.00
A Pledge to Mission	(99.44% of pledged)			
II Conference AMD (Administration & Membership Development)				
A Conference Committee Meetings		\$14,339.74	\$17,200.00	\$14,000.00
1 Conf Leadership Team Meetings (Jan 65-Jun 105)		\$14,289.74	\$17,000.00	\$13,800.00
2 Journey Teams		\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
3 Committee on Nominations		\$50.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
B Conference Leadership Team Officer Expenses		\$3,891.40	\$5,725.00	\$4,750.00
1 Annual Audit		\$500.00	\$800.00	\$600.00
2 Copies/Printing		\$251.89	\$500.00	\$400.00
3 Corsage Supplies		\$168.93	\$125.00	\$200.00
4 Dependent Care			\$300.00	\$300.00
5 Historian Supplies			\$50.00	\$0.00
6 Meals			\$100.00	\$100.00
7 Mission Sampler Mail Subscription (60 x \$30)		\$2,519.77	\$2,600.00	\$2,000.00
8 Postage/Shipping (includes Resource Room books)		\$235.71	\$350.00	\$350.00
9 Supplies		\$162.68	\$500.00	\$400.00
10 Travel		\$52.42	\$400.00	\$400.00
C Conference Programs/Events & Gifts		\$11,217.98	\$37,270.00	\$32,970.00
1 Annual Mtg/Trng-officer expenses (Sept 320)		\$8,497.47	\$20,000.00	\$18,000.00
a Registration/venue costs/honoraria		(\$413.82)	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00
b Gift to Mission Cards		\$50.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
c Special Mission Recognition Pins		\$600.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
d Eunice Harrington Award				\$0.00
2 Corsages at Meetings/Events			\$50.00	\$50.00
3 Gift in Memory		\$0.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
4 Gift to Mission		\$0.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
5 Legacy Fund Gifts		\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
6 GP Conference UMW Dinner		(\$72.00)	\$100.00	\$100.00
7 Insurance			\$300.00	\$0.00
8 Legislative Events- 1/2 KS, 1/2 NE		\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00
a Conference/District Officer Attendance (19)		\$523.81	\$5,000.00	\$2,500.00
9 Visitations		\$368.87	\$600.00	\$600.00
10 Youth Programs			\$4,220.00	\$4,220.00
a Micah Corps		\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1 Youth attend AC UMW Dinner			\$70.00	\$70.00
b METour		\$0.00	\$2,600.00	\$2,600.00
1 Scholarships		\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
2 Youth attend AC UMW Dinner			\$50.00	\$50.00
11 Odd yrs Spiritual Growth Retreat (19x\$50)		(\$1,036.35)	\$500.00	\$2,000.00
12 Ministry to Incarcerated Families (+\$1000 gift, 2019		\$500.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
D Conference Publications		\$686.25	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00

Committee on Nominations Carolyn May, Chair

2021 Slate of Officers

Office, Name, Hometown, District *new nominee

***President--Janice Elmore, Wichita, KS, Wichita East**

***Secretary--Susan Carlson, Lincolnville, KS, Flint Hills**

***Communications Coordinator--Pat McGill, Waverly, NE, Blue River**

***Faith Team Leader--Rose Hamilton, Miller, NE, Gateway**

Growth Team Leader--Vicki Leech, Lincoln, NE (served 1 yr), Blue River

Giving Team Leader--Margaret Thomas, Norton, KS (served 1 yr), Hays

***CON Class of 2021--Committee on Nominations Chair--Peg Walters,
Broken Bow, NE, Gateway**

***CON Class of 2023—Karen Dunlap, Derby, KS, Wichita East**

***CON Class of 2023—Patsy Gomez, Wichita, KS, Wichita East**

***CON Class of 2023-TBA**

Previously elected officers

Vice-President--Joyce Solomon, Merna, NE, Gateway

Treasurer--Barbara Smith, Lake Winnebago, MO, Kansas City

Learning Team Leader--Ann Cerveney, Lincoln, NE, Blue River

Action Team Leader--Gwen Sharpe, Wichita, KS, Wichita East

CON Class of 2021-- Marqueta Keeton, Leoti, KS, Dodge City

CON Class of 2021-- Mary Ellen Kilmer, Mitchell, NE, Great West

CON Class of 2022-- Barbara Kruger, Eudora, KS, Five Rivers

CON Class of 2022-- Teresa Whitehead, Murray, NE, Missouri River

CON Class of 2022--Barbara Wright, Manhattan, KS, Flint Hills

KANSAS

NEBRASKA

**Great Plains Conference UMW officers (nominees & elected) to serve in 2021
(Term: Years in that office; Tenure: Years as elected officer in any conference
UMW at the end of 2020)**

***#Janice Elmore, President 0, 8
4**

***Pat McGill, Comm. Coord. 4,**

***Susan Carlson, Secretary 0, 4**

*** Rose Hamilton, Faith 0, 0**

Margaret Thomas, Giving 1, 5

Vicki Leech, Growth 1, 1

Barbara Smith, Treasurer 3, 3

Joyce Solomon, Vice-President 3, 7

Gwen Sharpe, Action 3, 3

Ann Cerveny, Learning 1, 1

CON has a four-year term but CON term does not count towards tenure.

Marqueta Keeton, CON 1, 1

0*Peg Walters, CON Chair 3, 8

Barbara Kruger, CON 2, 0

Teresa Whitehead, CON 2, 2

Barbara Wright, CON 2, 4

Mary Ellen Kilmer, CON 3, 8

***Karen Dunlap, CON 0, 4**

*** _____**

***Patsy Gomez, CON 0, 0**

*** New nominee**

**# UMW Handbook 2017-2020: Section 2b Tenure—If a woman has already
completed her eight-year tenure in positions other than president, she may be
elected president.**

Submitted by Carolyn May, Chair

Great Plains Conference UMW Committee on Nominations

June 19, 2020

JOURNEY Team Reports

Journey in Action Gwen Sharpe Team Leader

Greetings: On behalf of the Social Action District Leaders,

I submit this Journey In Action annual report. As with the rest of the world, many of our activities came to a halt due to the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. Even so, UMW have continued to support their respective communities, and one another, during this uncharted time.

Our emphasis has been on initiating/implementing activities that support the 2016-2020 Issue Priorities: Climate Justice, Maternal and Child Health, Criminalization of Communities of Color and Mass Incarceration (also Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline); and Economic Inequality. District leaders have communicated with one another, via e-mail, conference calls, and Zoom. Some district leaders have used Facebook as a means of communication. Regardless of the manner of communication, district leaders have stayed connected with the local UMW. As a team, we strive to share ways to advocate for fair economic, racial/justice, health, and climate justice systems. Information from UMW national is regularly shared with district leaders, such as alerts, webinars, and trainings on issue priorities, which is shared by them with local units. The following is a list of some activities held and/or ongoing within respective districts, as reported by social action district leaders. As aforementioned, many activities were cancelled and/or postponed due to COVID-19.

Topeka – (Debra Hayes – Journey in Action Leader)

District churches continue to support food banks and homeless shelters;

UMW helped to serve meals to school age children;

Masks were made and distributed to the community, for protection against coronavirus;

Mats for the homeless were made and distributed;

Social action district leader regularly posts social action alerts on district's Facebook page;

UMW have been preparing for district meeting, tentatively planned for October. The topic will concentrate on social action and how the different priority issues intersect/relate with one another; focus will also be the School to Prison Pipeline issue.

Elkhorns Valley – (Linda Kastning-Journey in Action Leader)

Elkhorn Valley District Social Action - the Journey in Action leader ensures that any social action materials from national/conference are forwarded to unit presidents and social action coordinators;

In the district newsletter, which is published two times a year, the Journey in Action leader reports on two to three social action initiatives and activities.

Kansas City – (Janis Kirkeby – Journey in Action Leader)

Many activities were cancelled due to coronavirus (i.e. serving monthly at Safehome, a domestic abuse facility in Johnson County; school weekend food packing activity cancelled; annual silent auction scheduled for November cancelled (proceeds from this fundraiser support mission activities throughout the year) Even so, the unit members continue to sew (at home) to support Project Patricia (fabricate reusable sanitary napkins for women in Africa, etc.);

A district newsletter was distributed, discussing topics of interest and ideas, such as having parking lot meetings; sending cards to UMW members and to other members in the congregation; delivering gift bags to members with “thinking of you” items; zoom meetings; phone/e-mail tree to stay connected;

Contribute to local food pantry;

Read books from the UMW reading list and discuss (i.e. Do All Lives Matter? Stake is High);

Attend webinars sponsored by national UMW (i.e. Grief and Just Energy);

Attend Legislative Event for Advocacy in Faith (L.E.A.F.).

Blue River - (Jan Hauser - Journey In Action Leader)

Made, and delivered masks to Epworth Village;

Assisted with obtaining a zoning permit for a Drug and Alcohol Treatment house, New Life, located in York, Nebraska; also, continue to assist with obtaining items for the house and help residents with learning basic life skills, as needed; assist with another such facility that is already established, which is located in Lincoln, Nebraska;

Encourage units to stay connected by meeting regularly, possibly via Zoom.

Dodge City – (Michelle Miller – Journey In Action Leader)

Made masks for local medical office.

Communicate regularly with UMW via e-mail; forward Faith Talks to members.

Goals for the upcoming year include:

Continue to encourage regular communication amongst district leaders, via conference calls, zoom meetings, e-mail, etc.

Continuous discussion of activities, and ways to implement the 2016 – 2020 Issue Priorities, and discuss upcoming new Issue Priorities for 2021-2024;

Implement a uniformed way to report activities, which will help with record keeping of activities.

Journey in Learning

Ann Cerveny, Team Leader

What are the goals/tasks of the Journey in Learning Leader? (Education and Interpretation) The primary responsibility is to “interpret the impact and importance of Mission Giving as an act of faith and commitment.”

We do this by:

1. Promoting understanding of where the money goes. We support programs in the U.S. and around the world that impact women, children, and youth and their communities.
2. Learning about these UMW-supported programs including National Mission Institutions, International Ministries, Regional Missionaries, Grants, etc.
3. Participating in these opportunities: -Local mission opportunities - Mission u and mission studies - Leadership development events -Spiritual Growth retreats - National Assembly - Ubuntu Days of service -And attending Circle, Unit, District, and Conference meetings.
4. Using print, online, and audiovisual resources provided by UMW that are made available to us. Some of these tools include: -the Annual Program book -mission study books -Prayer calendar -the Reading Program and Response Magazine -UMW videos -Pledge, World Thank & Prayer & Self-Denial materials -And the UMW website – It is new and improved! Go to and explore unitedmethodistwomen.org. For Conference and District information, go to greatplainsumc.org/umw.
5. Advocating for the Five Channels of Mission Giving and the use of the Mission Do form for reporting and planning to meet our goals. The 2020 Mission Do form is available on the Great Plains/UMW website. This Covid-19 year has presented challenges at all levels of our UMW organization. It has made it more difficult to fund raise and meet our pledges. But the need to support our Mission work continues! I encourage you to be creative if the pandemic has impacted your Mission Giving. Consider having a fundraising “Tea” by mail or a “Bakeless Bake Sale” by setting out a mixing bowl for churchwide collection for Missions. I have materials and ideas available if you need help. Please feel free to email me and I’ll be glad to assist you. We will persevere! Blessings,

Ann Cerveny, Great Plains Conference UMW Journey in Learning anncerveny@yahoo.com / 402-420-2420

“Every Unit a Mission Do Unit”

2020 Report is Due January 15, 2021

This Covid-19 year has brought us much anxiety and lost opportunities for meetings, programs, and activities. But it has also pushed us all to do a better job of communicating with each other by emails, calls, and Zoom meetings. Do the best you can to complete this form and then use it as a tool to guide your planning for 2021. Our UMW Mission Giving and Goals continue. We will persevere! Blessings,

Ann Cerveny, Great Plains UMW Journey in Learning

Our Purpose: 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.

We are to fulfill our purpose and put faith, hope and love in action through our Great Plains Journey areas. Each unit may determine how to do this in their unit. Please plan your unit programming for the year by selecting at least one activity from each of the five areas. By selecting activities from each of the five, you will be participating in a Journey in Planning. Try a new activity you haven't done before.

Name of Unit:

_____ District: _____

Your Name:

_____ Address: _____

(Person completing this form)

- Please complete at least one activity in each of the Journey areas below.
- o Circle the dot by the activity your unit completed or
- o Use the blank lines for a one sentence report of something new that you tried.

Report is Due January 15th! To Your District Journey in Learning Leader or Education & Interpretation Coordinator

Journey in Action - Activities might include the following:

- Attend L.E.A.F. in Kansas or Ecumenical Legislative Day in Nebraska
- Become a Green Unit and implement one step.
- Study the difference between mercy and justice then do a justice activity.
- Have a program on one of the recent Social Action Studies:
 - United Methodist Women's work is in 4 priority areas:
(Explore one or more area & take action to help locally or beyond.)
 - o Maternal & Child Health
 - o Climate Justice
 - o Criminalization of Communities of Color & Mass Incarceration
 - o Economic Inequities
 - o Charter for Racial Justice
 - Make UMCOR Health Kits

Please complete both sides

Journey in Faith - Activities might include the following:

- Use the Prayer Calendar to pray regularly for a Missionary; Church and Community Worker; Deaconess; or Home Missioner
- Use response magazine or other UMW resource to provide a devotion for each meeting
- Have at least one member attend the National UMW Assembly
- Have a program on one of the recent spiritual growth mission studies:
- _____

Journey in Giving - Activities might include the following:

- Select one of the three National Mission Institutions (NMIs) to which the Great Plains Conference relates and learn more about it: (Epworth Village, United Methodist Ministries, Della Lamb).
- Adopt one of the three GP Conf NMIs and send a supplementary financial gift to them each month (Send to your District Treasurer).
- Learn about the rest of the 87 National Mission Institutions
- Learn about the “Where the Money Goes”
- Give to the Legacy Fund
- Contribute money in each of 7 categories: Pledge to Mission, Special Mission Recognition (\$40); Gift to Mission; Gift in Memory; World Thank Offering; Corsage for Mission (\$1 each), Dedicated Light (\$45)
- Help support a young woman participating in the METour (Mission Education Tour)
- _____
- _____

Journey in Growth - Activities might include the following:

- Make a list of the women in your church who are not members of UMW and invite them to join you for a special program or mission activity such as making UMCOR kits.
- Consider joining with a nearby unit to hold a meeting or do a special activity together.
- Reach out to women in your community and invite them to participate in a Mission Do activity, such as Volunteering your services for an NMI or other local agency
- Invite a METour participant or staff to share about her experience. If she is a local woman, invite her to another meeting and ask her to consider joining your group.

•

Journey in Learning - Activities might include the following:

- At least one member complete a level in the UMW Reading Program
 - Regularly share information from Response magazine at meetings
 - Participate in the District UMW Meetings
 - Participate in the GP Conf United Methodist Women's Annual Meeting/Celebration
 - Participate in a District or Conference Mission u

 - Have a program on one of the recent Geography Studies:
 - Participate in a - Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC) Mission Trip to Chatham, IL
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-

Journey Growth Leader –

Vicki Leech Team Leader

My goals for Membership and Growth included the following:

- Set up an email group with all District Growth contacts • Send an introductory email to all District Growth contacts
- Develop regular contact with District Growth contacts via email/conference call/zoom • Nurture UMW membership
- What actions to take when we receive notice of a unit closing their UMW unit. • Encourage involvement in Mission u, METour
- Provide information on the yearly census and follow-up I accomplished some of these goals, others are a work in progress and still others will be ongoing. The Census was the biggest responsibility I had over the past few months. Due to the pandemic the date for units to submit their information for the 2019 Census was extended to April 30, 2020. I then worked with units to get corrections submitted to the National Office. A Zoom meeting was held with the National UMW MNO office to review the results of the census data. The results of the Great Plains census data were shared with the districts in mid-August. In August the National UMW MNO office had a Zoom meeting with all conference Growth Leaders to share the information from a national perspective.

Following are those results. 52 Conferences Reported 5330 Units (this was 600 units less than the previous year) 292 Districts There was a decline in all three areas More virtual units are beginning to report - Included in the new UMW Handbook is information on establishing virtual units On the chart that was shown it indicated that Great Plains Conference was 2nd in 2 categories - Major Conference by number of units - 309 and Major Conference in number of members - 9693 Average Age - 95% of members are age 56 to 70+ 56 to 69 - 50% 70+ - 44% 35 to 55 - 4%

This year units were asked to define a Thriving Unit/Organization (listed in order of responses)

1. Inviting & attracting new women into UMW (Notice it does not specify Young Women)
2. Pastor Support
3. Working on Social Justice issues
4. Creating new circles
5. Shifting meeting times

Created new ways for women to join virtually No one indicated get new women in leadership positions. Conversation evolved and discussion was about how different young women's lives are different now than they were in the 50s 60s and even 70s. Many are married with children and careers and all that goes with that - most don't have energy for even one more thing. So,

asking them to take on a leadership role at the unit, district or even conference level is something many do not have time for.

When recruiting it is important to ask ourselves: Why do women want to join UMW? What's in it for them?

Next was a discussion on Education. Education is great but it stalls if it does not move into action after the training. The 2 priorities for 2021 will be:

- School to Prison Pipeline
- Just Energy for All Everyone agreed that this is an unprecedented time, especially for any organization trying to recruit new members.

In order for UMW to sustain for another 150 years we need to grow. I was glad to hear the emphasis not only being placed on recruitment, but also need to retain our current members. The census for 2020 will begin October 1, 2020 and will conclude March 31, 2021. National UMW MNO office has decided they will rename the census, but the name of the 2020 census was not disclosed yet.

National UMW MNO office will be piloting a new virtual retreat entitled Soul Care Retreat. As more information on this event becomes available, I will be sure to share it with the districts and the conference. As we continue to conduct our affairs virtually rather than in-person the real challenge is how to keep people involved. Email, conference calls and Zoom meetings definitely keep everyone safe, and they are viable ways to stay in touch and keep everyone updated. However, I am sure I speak for most United Methodist Women – I miss meeting in person, being able to see old friends and putting new faces with names. Praying 2021 will be healthier, safer and that we will be looking at Covid in our rear-view mirrors!

Vicki Leech

Journey in Growth Leader 402-770-9233

Vgleech76@gmail.com

National Mission Institutions

Della Lamb's Mission Lives On

Organization offers Kansas City community four core services.

Della Lamb Community Services has played an important role in the development of Kansas City. From the beginning of the 20th Century, through the 1920's and 30's, into the 50's and 60's and to today, Della Lamb's Mission is alive and serving.

Della Lamb Community Services exists to empower its clients to meet the challenges of education, employment, and self-sufficiency in an ever-changing world. Its vision is that every individual will be nourished, educated, and supported in an atmosphere of love and respect to permit them to achieve to their full potential.

During its 120+ years in an ever-changing world, Della Lamb (DLCS) has developed a network of services which move children and families out of poverty and toward an improved quality of life ultimately, to self-sufficiency.

DLCS serves the needs of 1,500-plus low-income families every day in northeast Kansas City, Missouri and the urban core. This includes rent and utility assistance, food, clothing, and other emergency services. These are among the most vital and the most basics human needs.

Yet in 1999 DLCS once again acknowledged that the route to move from poverty to self-sufficiency is through Education, which drove Della Lamb to establish the first Charter School in Missouri. Today, more than 600 students (Kindergarten through 8th grade) attend the Della Lamb Charter School, which was recently spun off from DLCS and now operates as a separate, independent, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation.

Overall, DLCS offers four core services:

- **Early Education**
- **Youth and Recreation Services**
- **Emergency Services**
- **Refugee Immigrant Resettlement**

Della Lamb Community Services

500 Woodland Ave. Kansas City, MO 64106 816.842.8040

Thank you for your generous support.

The Big Garden

Our Mission:

The Big Garden's mission is to cultivate food security by developing community gardens, creating opportunities to serve, and providing education on issues related to hunger.

The Big Garden was founded in 2005 by United Methodist Ministries through funding from the USDA's Community Food Project. The initial goal was to create 12 community gardens in three years. As of today, The Big Garden has helped to establish more than 170 community gardens in urban and rural communities throughout Nebraska, Kansas, and Southwest Iowa.

Our goal is to reduce hunger by increasing access to fresh, healthy produce and teaching people to grow, cook, & preserve their own.

The Big Garden is funded in part by the Great Plains United Methodist Conference, the Missouri River District of the Great Plains Conference, private grants & foundations, and by donors like you.

Your donation helps us to grow justice by increasing access to fresh produce, building skills, and creating stronger communities through community gardening.

The Big Garden (via United Methodist Ministries) is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization.

You may also donate by check, made payable to United Methodist Ministries or The Big Garden and mailed to:

The Big Garden Rooted in United Methodism

The Big Garden is funded, in part, by Mission Share dollars from the Great Plains Annual Conference. We are thankful for the support of the United Methodist Church through the Great Plains Annual Conference, United Methodist Women, Missouri River District, and local congregations. The following resources, while of potential help to a broader audience, may be especially useful to United Methodist members and congregations.

5602 Read Street

Omaha, Nebraska 68152

Epworth Village

OUR MISSION

To provide comprehensive family-centered services that bring hope and healing to children, youth and families across Nebraska in a compassionate and caring manner.

OUR VISION

A world where families will have a clear pathway to the resources, they truly need to lead healthier, more hopeful lives.

Together we can find a way!

Epworth Village, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) operating in the state of Nebraska.

2119 Division Ave / PO BOX 503

York, NE 68467

**THIS YEAR'S HEART OF THE MATTER BENEFIT AUCTION WILL BE AN ONLINE
EVENT OCTOBER 15, 2020**

VISIT

[HTTP://WWW.CHARITYAUCTION.BID/EPWORTHVILLAGE2020](http://www.charityauction.bid/epworthvillage2020)

act

THE MIRACLE OF MISSION GIVING | *Mission Giving: it transports our caring to places we will never go in person. It connects us to all of God's creation. It travels as close as the mission project down the street and as far away as the work of a regional missionary on another continent. It combines everyone's small gifts into one mighty whole. It's the way we live out our Purpose.*

Mission Giving is undesignated, unrestricted giving for the total program of United Methodist Women, and it's been a hallmark of our organization for decades. Mission Giving is our history, starting with "two-cents a week and a prayer" that our foremothers gave. Today, we raise millions of dollars for our work with women, children and youth through the five channels of Mission Giving— millions made up of the small, faithful gifts of hundreds of thousands of women.

Whether we give deliberately, spontaneously, or both, we model the grace of our loving, giving God. Making and keeping a Pledge to Mission encourages spiritual discipline

Mission Giving grows our creative supportive fellowship. Members of United Methodist Women work together to raise funds for mission needs, often through bake sells, bazaars or other special events. We give Special Mission Recognition pins or Gift to Mission cards to honor special people or other events. We celebrate the lives of loved ones with Gift in Memory. The annual World Thank Offering is a time of fun and fellowship in our local unit. We grow together as we learn about the local, national and international mission work our giving makes possible.

Mission Giving is leadership development. Raising funds together fosters teamwork. Treasurers and committee on finance learn budgeting and money management skills as they develop district and conference budgets.

Participation in Mission Giving knits our entire organization together as we share in the responsibility and the joy of giving. That's the miracle of Mission Giving! Visit unitedmethodistwimen.org/give.

response | September/October2020