



## Great Plains Conference United Methodist Women

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My beautiful, gorgeous, marvelous Sisters in Christ:

During the first week of December thirteen Great Plains UMW members ventured into New York City, NY to the Church Center for the United Nations. WOW what an experience.

The Church Center for the United Nations, located across from the United Nations headquarters, came about after church leaders had worked to build support for the Declaration of Human Rights and urged government leaders to ratify agreements that supported the Declaration. In 1960 a dream for a Christian center that would support the work of the United Nations emerged and became a reality in 1962 when the building was dedicated. Owned by the United Methodist Church, as of 1968 specifically UMW, it houses tenants such as Church Women United, the American Baptists, the Presbyterians, the World Council of Churches, the Methodist Division of World Peace.

We studied Mass Incarceration and the over population of people of color. Our plans include bringing this conversation to the Great Plains within the next two years, so be on the lookout.

But today I wanted to bring to your attention two topics that touched my heart. First the simple one: One of our trainers divided us into three groups, not by counting 1,2,3, but by counting **beautiful, gorgeous, marvelous**. Now isn't that great. Simple, great and TRUE! Every day we had worship and because of the season we sang Carols with Justice. Another WOW moment. I have copied a *Statement on Biblical Justice* and provided a link to the website, so you can use Carols with Justice.

I thank Marilyn Zehring for coordinating this effort and all the beautiful, gorgeous, marvelous women who attended. I wish each beautiful, gorgeous, and marvelous UMW members a blessed celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Karen Dunlap, president  
Great Plains United Methodist Women

Copied from Alternatives for Simple Living

## **A Statement on Biblical Justice**

The prophet Micah writes, "And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8) John the Evangelist tells us that Jesus said to his disciples, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

God's people have always been given the task of showing God's Love to others... all others. We understand this in our personal relationships. If a member of our family or of our church is hurt or offended, the biblical course of action is to come together in a spirit of love and forgiveness.

But how do we love in a world where love and forgiveness are not the norm? For this difficult task God has called us to do justice.

In the real world, most people are exploited and hurt by corporations large or small, by governments and by power groups. Some are discriminated against because of race or gender. Some are abused economically, physically or emotionally, and many are asked to live without dignity or worth. How do we show love in this world with all its pain and injustice?

If we go to people in power speaking of Jesus' love and forgiveness, we may soon be dismissed. We may claim to be suffering for the faith, but the injustice and the pain of people continues. On the other hand, if we speak to employers, government officials and people in power in terms of what is fair and just, then we may begin to get a hearing. We may begin to change *the conditions and causes* that result in suffering and exploitation. When we speak on behalf of those who have little or no voice, when we seek justice, we speak a word of love on behalf of God.

It is God's intention to show love to all the world. This love is not only meant to be expressed privately, in our personal relationships, but it is also to be proclaimed in a world that does not know God or God's Love. Doing justice is proclaiming God's love in the world, a love that puts ourselves and others in right relationships with God, with each other and with the Earth. Justice brings God's love to those who foster greed, racism, and violence. . . and to their victims.

Justice is a gift that God gives us. . . to proclaim love to a world that detests justice. Biblical justice holds that God's love is for everyone and that all have dignity, given first in creation, and established forever through the death and resurrection of Jesus. -

Chuck Hazlett, Custer, SD

"The Lord of Hosts is exalted by justice." -Isaiah 5:16

For a list of Biblical passages related to hunger and justice, see *Beyond Guilt and Powerlessness* by George S. Johnson. Contact Alternatives for details.

## **God Rest You Merry Gentlemen**

1 God rest you merry, gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay,  
Remember Christ our Savior  
Was born on Christmas day,  
To save us all from Satan's power  
When we were gone astray.  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

2 Now he is come to all the world,  
This lesson to impart:  
If we're to show his love there must  
Be action on our part  
To feed the poor, protect the weak,  
Show kindness from the heart,  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

3 Let justice like a beacon glow  
In every willing heart  
To shine a path of righteousness  
Where greed or envy start,  
That knowledge and forgiveness might  
Illuminate the dark.  
Hear our prayer, Lord of all things right and good, right and good.  
Hear our prayer, Lord of all things right and good.

4 Divest, you merry gentlemen,  
Your military schemes.  
Return your cash back to the poor,  
Fulfill the children's dreams  
That those who claim the name of Christ  
Shall live where justice gleams.  
O tidings of justice and rights, human rights,  
O tidings of justice and rights!

5 God rest you weary laborers,  
You need a living wage  
And fact'ries healthy, safe and clean  
And just eight hour days  
To save us all from corporate power  
And values gone astray.  
O tidings of justice and rights, human rights,  
O tidings of justice and rights!

Verse 1: Traditional

Verse 2: Cynthia A. Douglas

Verse 3: Susan Gardstrom

Verse 4: Rod Reinhart

Verse 5: Jeff Borg, Denver Justice and Peace Committee

For more Carols with Justice, follow the link

[http://simpleliving.startlogic.com/indexoth.php?place=archives/Articles/Carols.php#  
Why](http://simpleliving.startlogic.com/indexoth.php?place=archives/Articles/Carols.php#Why)