



### Coming Events:

- **Saturday, September 28, Heritage District Celebration at Howell First UMC**
- **Tuesday, November 12, Mission Team Meeting, Installation of Officers 2020, World Thank Offering.**
- **Saturday, December 7, 2019 at Green Wood: Sisterhood Advent Meditation and Tea at 10:00 AM**

# UMW News Fall 2019

## President's Letter

Hello Women of the Church,

Thank you for all you do. There are many opportunities for service at our church and in the community and you all respond. Today I am going to ask something else of you. I would like you to consider making a dona-



tion to our FUMC United Methodist Women. Perhaps you know about our support of missions around the world and nearby. You might know about some of the social action projects in which UMW is involved. You might have participated in programs we sponsored or listened to our members speak about the work of UMW. You might have bought from our Christmas sales or even donated items to them. For all of that we thank you.

Perhaps you have already given a donation to UMW and if so, thank you very much. If you have not, please prayerfully consider giving. All the money we give to mission must be raised. A gift of \$10, \$20, or more would help us continue our fine work. You can give directly on the FUMC website. We are listed in the donations list. You can give or send a check to Betsy Kincaid, 235 Katherine Way, Dexter, MI 48130.

Besides sharing funds to our District UMW, we also help to sponsor many local efforts. Among these are financial help for Alpha House, House by the Side of the Road, Wesley Foundation, FUMC's Appalachian Mission trips, UMW Reading Program materials, and several of FUMC's children's programs.

Thank you for being the women of the church. My prayer is that we can all feel like a community of women who hear God and act in the world as Jesus instructed and inspired us.

Warmly,

Marilee Woodworth

## MATTHEW 5:14–16

“You are the light of the world.” Present tense. Not when you figure it out, get your life cleaned up or pull the pieces together. You are already salt and light—gifts for the life of the world. You may choose to hide your light but you are in this world to shine. The “you” in this text is plural. It is a reminder that we cannot be disciples all by ourselves, we require community, a clump of disciples, in order to shine, to become visible signs of God’s grace and glory. We are concrete reminders of God’s power and presence, signposts of the “kin-dom” here, now, among us. Be who you are—light for a world sitting in darkness! The words that come just before these verses are the Beatitudes, “Blessed are the peace-makers.” And immediately after these verses about being salt and light, Jesus offers a series of statements that begin with “You have heard that it was said . . . but I say to you . . .” These are strong counters to the prevailing culture and religious practices and include some hard-to-live-out truths: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy’ (Matthew 5:43; CEB). But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44; NRSV). Jesus is challenging the way things are for the sake of what God is al-

ready bringing about. He is urging disciples to become contrast communities, clear alternatives to the systems and theologies of domination, or as I overheard one writer comment, God’s sign language in a world gone deaf. Jesus invites disciples to create visible alternatives to the structures and systems, theologies and practices that perpetuate a culture of death. Be light. Shine! The following story is taken from *Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipleship*:

Bernice Johnson Reagan tells a story about her work as a young member of the Freedom Singers, a group that shared leadership in community gatherings during the civil rights movement in the United States. They were in a church one night, getting ready to go out into the streets, knowing they would be met by angry policemen with heavy batons, by dogs and water hoses, by stone-throwing mobs. They decided to sing one more song to gather up their courage. One person suggested they sing “This Little Light of Mine.” Another commented that perhaps they should sing, “This Little Light of Ours,” noting the importance of collective witness. But then an older black woman in the back of the church interrupted, saying, “No. I want us to sing ‘This Little Light of Mine,’ be-

cause I need to know that you and you and you—that everyone here is committed to letting their light shine. Then,” she said, “we’ll shine so bright, they’ll have to put their shades on just to walk by!” Their singing solidified their collective courage and shaped their individual and communal commitment, reorienting them from fear fueled by the powers of the white supremacists, to the faith fed by the Holy Spirit already moving among us—the ongoing powerful presence of the God of justice and grace, life and liberation. Their singing was an engagement with powers and principalities, a persistent prayer, a leaning into the kingdom of God, so that they might shine bright. How might we collectively allow our lights to shine? How has your engagement with and support for the work of United Methodist Women allowed God’s light to shine bright in the world? United Methodist Women currently has the following social justice campaigns identified, for priority:

- Just Energy for All
- Interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline
- A Living Wage for All
- End Maternal Mortality

Although there are UWM supported initiatives and projects addressing each of these campaigns, locally agencies and projects include the Grand Rapids Community House (GRCH) and the Methodist

Children’s Home in Redford (MCH). The GRCH provides much needed social services and support to low income people in Grand Rapids and addresses each of the campaigns. The MCH is a residential treatment facility for children experiencing behavioral issues which cannot be accommodated while they are in foster care, and specifically addresses the campaign to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline.

This fall our World Thank Offering observance will be a time of meditation and reflection. Think about the women, children and youth you know who have been impacted by one of our four social justice priority issues: climate justice, criminalization of communities of color, economic inequality, and maternal and child health.

World Thank Offering is a way to give to monetary support to these initiatives and priorities. During your reflection please consider the opportunity to give to this campaign. To do so, you may write a check payable to United Methodist Women and either put in the offering plate at church or send it to our local unit Treasurer, Betsy Kincaid at 235 Katherine Way, Dexter, MI 48130. All contributions are welcome, tax deductible, and most appreciated.

Thank you.

*Submitted by Julie Roesch*

**Response, July/August 2019**  
**Janet Chen**  
**Education and Interpretation**

Summer may be a slow time in many ways but not in this issue of "Response," in which much good reading can be found.

First, take a look at how different states have commemorated UMW's 150<sup>th</sup> year. In particular, one whole article covers the New England Conference's celebration in Boston, where UMW was founded, at the time called Women's Foreign Missionary Society. The event was held on March 23, the day of the founding, at Boston University. It was marked with speakers, skits, music, and looking back in history as well as ahead to the future. And, of course, cake!

On the International front, two articles describe missions supported by UMW in Portugal and Sri Lanka. In Portugal where 81% of the population is Roman Catholic, there are 2,000 members of the Portuguese Methodist Church among 14 churches, mostly in the northern part of the country. UMW supports the Portuguese Methodist Women's Federation. PMWF awards scholarships to young women to assist them with secondary school or their university education. In 2018, 19 received scholarships. One young woman is studying forensic biology and used the scholarship for lab materials and other expenses she couldn't otherwise have afforded. Scholarship recipients give back by helping with church school, music ministry, and other activities and programs.

The cover story is "Hope for Widows in Sri Lanka." UMW supports women who became widows as a result of the civil war that took place in that island nation. During the final months of fighting in 2009 up to 70,000 civilians were killed, and some of the surviving widows and their children sustained injuries. These women are often discriminated against and harassed, and have trouble making an income to support their families. Suicides have increased, often due to being deeply in debt. One local Methodist church provides a support group where the women can share problems and challenges, and help each other. The church also helps with free educational opportunities for children and encourages the women to remarry. Another initiative digs wells for families and leads a sewing group. One Sri Lankan female Methodist minister is working to bring together women from both sides. UMW supports her efforts to lead workshops for the women to share their experiences and understand their viewpoints.

Lastly, being a dog lover, I really like the article on "The Four-Footed Ministry of Gail Scoates." Her Wesley United Methodist Church in Bloomington, Illinois, offers a course in dog therapy. PAWS is an obedience class for members who want to visit others with their pets. In 2012 Scoates took over the class. PAWS alumni and their dogs make twice-monthly visits to a skilled care center where some church members live. In addition, Scoates created Karing Partners (named after her sister Karen, who had cancer), a dog therapy program she developed for a hospital in Bloomington. Says Scoates, "PAWS and Karing Partners provide care, compassion, and pure love – a sense of God."

## Happy Upcoming Birthdays

### October

3 Nancy Morrison  
4 Nick Berlanga  
6 Gwynn Sterken  
10 Donna Fowlkes  
11 Carole DeHart  
11 Jean Shaw  
12 Marge Whitacre  
14 Cathy Pardon  
16 Marcia DeBoer  
17 Adele Roy  
19 Naki Sung Kripfgans  
20 Gene Anne Bennion  
20 Amy Unsworth  
23 Amy Kennedy  
23 Kelly Young  
24 Betty Ballard  
26 Deanna Dittmar  
30 Sue Seitz  
31 Jan Hansen  
31 Linda Leslie

### November

2 Melanie Snook  
3 Julie Roesch  
5 Amy Bridges  
5 Sarah Nooden  
6 Ellen Lewis  
7 Carol Hulbert  
8 Jean Bush-Bacelis  
9 Marcia Chesney  
10 Marion Haines  
11 Jole Mowry  
15 Carole Hunter  
16 Jen Sopoci  
17 Claire Dahl  
19 Barbara Krick  
21 Mary Eldridge  
21 Debbie Houghton  
22 Kathy Fojtik-Stroud  
25 Deborah Wood  
26 Barb Higdon  
26 Kristi Jenkins  
27 Kim Hussey  
28 Jennifer Wilkening  
29 Marianne Clauw

### December

1 Carolyn Wiseman  
5 Joan Cho  
5 Kathryn Grammel  
8 Jennifer Hinesman  
9 Jean Wong  
11 Margaret Cressman  
11 Linda Haywood  
13 Shannan Shaw  
15 Robyn Bishop  
19 Gail Nicklowitz  
19 Doris Reinholt  
22 Deborah Nicholas  
24 Martha Gray  
29 Kendra Kerr  
31 Stephanie Casey

## Uncommon Threads

Uncommon Threads is a group of knitters and quilters who make prayer shawls and prayer quilts for those who need comforting. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, **1:00 PM** at Green Wood. Visitors and drop-ins are always welcome. Below are our upcoming meetings. For more information, contact: **Sandy Hultquist, [slhultquist@comcast.net](mailto:slhultquist@comcast.net) or 734-663-8890 for more information.**

### Meeting Dates

October 14th

October 28th

January 13, 2020



## Mother's Too

Mother's Too usually meets the second Sunday of the month at **11:00 a.m.** in the Aldersgate Room (next to the chapel). We are a discussion group, discussing personal or church issues in a caring, non-judgmental way.

Meeting dates: October 13, November 10( Our bean soup bagging event), December 8, January 12, 2020

Questions? Contact Sarah Nooden at [snooden@umich.edu](mailto:snooden@umich.edu).

## Sarah's Sisters

Sarah's Sisters will be gathering at **1:15 PM**, at Moon Winks Café, on Plymouth Road in Dixboro on October 11. Come and be part of a group of women who are asking and listening, encouraging and supporting, caring and doing. Join us as we share, pray, and listen. For more information, call Dee Chapell at 734-235-2547 or by using email: [deechapell@aol.com](mailto:deechapell@aol.com). **Newcomers are welcome!**

**PM<sup>3</sup>**

We are a sharing and caring group of women who meet on the 4th Friday of the month at **Noon** for dessert, fellowship, and a program. Our programs include making valentines for the VA, book study, local mission work, and speakers on current subjects of interest. Following are the dates for future meetings. For more information, contact: **Sandy Hultquist, [slhultquist@comcast.net](mailto:slhultquist@comcast.net) or 734-663-8890.**

### Meeting Dates

September 27

October 25

January 24, 2020

***Be Still! Departure from Collective Madness, written by Presbyterian Minister Gordon C. Stewart, is a collection of essays regarding many important issues of today's world. Each essay begins with a quotation from a philosopher, poet, or clergy. Preface materials include part of Psalm 46: Be still and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations. I am exalted in the earth.***

The author asserts that we need places of silence, solitude, and wonder – to ponder the sacredness of nature and to live with less anxiety. “In a time of anxiety and fear, we want to live in the light of humility, courage, and wisdom.” As he discusses issues such as gun violence, threats from various dictators, capital punishment, civil rights, climate change, and political infighting, the author suggests that all of us have cause for concern! And that we should look to God for enlightenment. “For God alone my soul waits in silence for my hope is in Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation...” (Psalm 62:5-6).

One especially touching essay described a group of Christians in an ICU waiting room as they prayed about the doubtful outcome of a relative in surgery. They asked for the support of a group of Muslims who were also gathered in support of a friend in intensive care. Describing how they prayed together, Stewart stated, “For a split second I could imagine the world as a waiting room...” Would that this kind of cooperation be found in solving the world's many problems! After quoting Martin Luther King Jr. that nothing is more dangerous than sincere ignorance or conscientious stupidity, Stewart offers this thought: “Willful ignorance knows but chooses not to know or it does not know, but acts as though it does...”

This short book offers much food for thought about current problems and issues. Perhaps it is best read in short segments with time for reflection, stillness, and prayer in between segments.

Jean M. Shaw



# Holiday Sales

We need your help! The UMW women will have our annual holiday sales on **December 8, 15, and 22** to support our local, national, and international mission work. If you knit, crochet, bake, make cards, or create crafty items, we have a place for your labors of love. In addition, this year, we will feature a table with jewelry at a flat fee.



**Book Review: Scott Kelly with Margaret Lazarus Dean *Endurance: A Year in Space, A Lifetime of Discovery* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2017)**

Although this book is not on the UMW reading list, nor does it have a direct Christian orientation, the book is inspiring. In it, astronaut Scott Kelly reveals much about his personal experiences, courage, persistence, and moral values as he offers an account of his education, astronaut training, and the year he spent on the International Space Station.

Scott Kelly had an identical twin brother Mark Kelly, a fellow astronaut and husband of U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords, a victim of an Arizona mass shooting several years ago. Because of the Kellys' identical twin status, physicians could compare medical changes in them as they participated in various space travels. Raised in a middle class home in New Jersey, Scott was a reluctant student until he finally decided that he wanted to be a pilot. Only then did he learn to study! He finally qualified to become a military fighter pilot and test pilot as well an engineer.

The book contains vivid descriptions of rigorous and physically demanding training as well as a look into the life of those men and women chosen to be astronauts. Interestingly, Kelly describes what it was like to be in the gravity-free atmosphere of the space station. From exercise routines, to the many chores and duties and consumed the astronauts' time the book gives us a glimpse into the many challenges and rewards of living and working in a very fast-moving (90 minutes to orbit the earth) and crowded space craft. Descriptions of space walks to repair various aspects of the spacecraft are riveting!

On the international space station, Kelly working with colleagues from Russia, Japan, Italy, and Great Britain; he learned and showed great respect for them and put aside any political and personal differences to build and participate in a team. His admiration and appreciation of the knowledge and skills of others was essential in several life or death situation that required vast knowledge, courage, and problem-solving skills.

Especially moving were Scott Kelly's many answers to the question: What did you learn from your year in space? Among his dozens of varied answers were these: to enjoy the beauty of our earth and care for it. That small steps toward a goal can add up to giant leaps. To appreciate the importance of family (the astronauts did become a family on their voyage!) and spend time with them. To appreciate and value of simple things such as taking a bath, placing things on a table and knowing they will not float away -- the smell of grass and the feeling of wind and rain! Scott asserts that we must build on our successes and keep doing harder and harder things -- or else lower our sights and compromise our goals. Scott concludes the "what did you learn" section with this: "I've learned a new empathy for other people I don't know and disagree with. I've started letting people know that I appreciate them ... something I'm glad to have gained and hope to keep."

PBS had a recent special on Kelly's voyage, but of course the book offers much more information. This book is very inspiring and includes some lessons and ideas that we can apply to our everyday lives as Methodist women. But beware: It also includes a good many cuss words!

Jean M. Shaw

## From *Response* March-April 2017

### Did You Know....

- That this is the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of United Methodist Women?
- That UMW has an Archive and History Center in Madison, New Jersey?
- That UMW has a Legacy Fund to fund future mission efforts?
- That UMW member Ellen Blue has written *Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission, honoring the efforts of our faithful, persistent women?*

The April/May 2019 issue of *Response* focuses on these topics and more, making it interesting, inspirational, and thought-provoking reading! In a timeline of UMW predecessor organizations, for 1869 we learn that our organization was first called Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC). After more changes by 1880 it was known as the Women's Home Missionary Society ((MEC), and it 1921, it was named The Wesleyan Service Guild (MEC). Finally in 2013, our group became known as the United Methodist Women (UMW) of the United Methodist Church.

One intriguing tale in the issue was about Martha Drummond, an African-American Methodist nurse and deaconess who was sent to Angola 1906. There she provided nursing care and health education and well as serving as a popular preacher. Her mission still exists today and sponsors a boarding school which is supported by UMW's Board of Global Ministries. Her request: "Say Africa when you pray." Perhaps we need to say this still today.

*Response* also featured an article about Bethune House, which sponsors two shelters in Hong Kong that help women, mostly migrant and domestic workers. About 370,000 foreign domestic workers, roughly 5% of Hong Kong's population, help middle class families; this in turn helps family members to seek outside into a "kind of modern slavery." They are on call 24/7 and are legally required to live at their worksites which in Hong Kong's' already crowded living facilities, the domestics' living quarters are often very cramped and unhealthy. Bethune House personnel helps workers in need communicate with their families that live elsewhere, assists with legal problems, and in the worst cases, provides a place for them to live as they escape abusive situations and trains them to upgrade their working skills. Indeed, Bethune House serves as a source of empowerment for the women they serve!

As part of an article on her book "Writing our Legacy," Ellen Blue reminds us that "Women in our societies were very much in the tradition of Methodism's founder, John Wesley, who was an ardent evangelist but who also started free health clinics and schools for poor children. He insisted that his members visit poor people and care for them in person. Methodist women studied scripture and heard Jesus' call to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger...Their courage in establishing ministries was remarkable." We can be proud of this legacy in our 150<sup>th</sup> year!

Jean M. Shaw

## **Book Review *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future* by Mary Robinson with Caitriona Palmer**

This book is a touching and compelling call to arms by an important voice in the international fight against climate change. Featured in UMW's Reading program for 2019, the author is president of the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Change. She served in two capacities in the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for climate change and was the first female president of Ireland. She is recipient of many honors including the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Indira Gandhi and Sydney Peace Prizes. Robinson asserts that least responsible for the world's contribution to climate change – the poor of the world – are the least responsible for the problem. Yet they suffer the most when affected by drought, uncertain weather patterns, rising temperatures, higher sea levels, and disease, stress, and death caused by these phenomena. All around the world, people are struggling as their islands are inundated with water, their crops fail, and their homes and farms are ruined. The authors describe how since the mid 18th century, use of fossil fuels, deforestation, poor agricultural practices, and sea level rise, climate change has brought increasing many hardships and disasters – and more are to come unless we act! She asserts that governments

must agree that problems exist and set priorities and what they can do in the fight against climate change. The bulk of this short book tells of the many people, mostly women, who have headed local movements to cause positive changes in their home areas where climate disasters have occurred. (Most touching to this reviewer was the story of a Mississippi Gulf Coast woman's efforts to help the poor after Hurricane Katrina. I went on 5 mission trips to the Coast and saw for myself the devastation, the sorrow and courage of the survivors, and the work of UMCOR in cleaning up, encouraging victims, and rebuilding.) This former African American beautician, Sharon Hanshaw, worked tirelessly to bring change to the region's poor, uninsured, and underserved. She went on to attend UN climate summits and interacted with women from many different countries. Another American, a native Yupik fights against problems of Alaskan permafrost melting and the need for relocation from long-held lands. Other stories of people – again mostly women-- from Chad, Scandinavia, Vietnam, Pacific Islands, Australia, Canada, and Costa Rica are included. It also mentions Desmond Tutu's efforts in Africa. This book is short, inspiring, easy to read, but scary! For the sake of our children and grandchildren, if not for ourselves, climate change and climate justice are issues we must address.

Jean M. Shaw

## **Sister Helen Prejean's September 10 Talk at FUMC**

As the third author to speak at FUMC this year, Sister Helen Prejean inspired an almost-full sanctuary as she introduced her new book, *River of Fire*. After an introduction from Literati Bookstore, Rev. Nancy and Sister Helen engaged in a thoughtful and engaging discussion of Sister Helen's work. Growing up in Louisiana, Sister Helen entered the convent at age 18. She described the transition of herself and many Catholic nuns in the 1970s as they went beyond their cloistered life and went out into the world to look for justice, fairness, and the need to serve people, especially those of racial minorities and lower income groups. "The sisterhood came alive!" This was an era in which the Civil Rights movement and protests about the Vietnam War made many in our country and abroad aware of the need for charity for all and remembering, "We are all beloved of God." Among the many causes for which Sister Helen has worked is capital punishment. Her work with a death row inmate led to her book and the movie *Dead Man Walking*. This story is now also told in an opera. Sister Helen's new book is *River of Fire*. In the book, she describes her faith journey. She stated -- with both seriousness and humor -- that we all have a deep desire for peace and that people are beginning to rec-

ognize the needs of others -- and act to address some of these needs. An inspiring quote: "I saw the suffering and I let myself feel it... I saw the injustice and was compelled to do something about it. I changed from being a nun who only prayed for the suffering world to a woman with my sleeves rolled up, living my prayer." A challenge for us all! Sister Helen Prejean's talk was preceded by two earlier 2019 presentations by Ann Lamott and Nadia Bolz-Weber. We are so grateful for the dedicated leadership of Debbie Houghton in arranging these fine, thought-provoking sessions!

Jean M. Shaw