



# THE PHOENIX

## GREATER DETROIT DISTRICT

### SUMMER 2020 NEWSLETTER

#### President

Looking to the future with hope as we continue to maintain social distancing, I assume we will have the Greater Detroit District 2020 UMW Annual Meeting and Celebration October 10. Tending to be an optimist, I hope we can be together at Detroit Second Grace UMC. Also being pragmatic, my more realistic opinion is we will meet via Zoom. Perhaps some will attend at Second Grace UMC and some will attend via Zoom from their homes, a friend's home or their church.

Having an Annual Meeting and Celebration every year is very important. It gives us an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of individual members and units, to hold a business meeting with an election of leaders for the coming year with district members attending, and to listen to a speech with an inspiring message.

It remains to be seen how the COVID-19 pandemic may impact our events. We just do not know yet what the "new normal" for attending events will be. Stay tuned.

Isn't it great that people are doing acts of kindness for people they might or might not know? We hear of so many demonstrating appreciation for those on the front lines. Such actions are reported on our local news. I watched a program last night about such deeds done for others in other parts of our country and in other countries; it made me feel good. Thanks be to God!

I close with excerpts from advice found in an April 27 *Time* magazine article, "Finding Hope." The item

was submitted by Raj Panjabi whose family were refugees from Liberia's civil war. Raj's father often repeated a lesson he learned from West Africa, "No condition is permanent." The lesson did not seem that important to Raj until recently when he shared during a TED talk: We are not defined by the conditions we face but rather how we respond to those conditions.

I pray we are responding in a good way with God's help.

**Kay Korn**

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#### Vice-President

Praises and blessings to everyone!

We do not know what the future holds for us, but we do know who holds the future. I can only imagine the prayers of everyone throughout the nation. I believe with God's help we will overcome this pandemic and return to our many agendas to improve lives all over the world.

We were blessed to have an awesome Prayer Breakfast at Redford Aldersgate UMC in Redford, MI. Our guest speaker, Amanda Mountain, Deaconess and Director of Motown Mission, was awesome. She had an unique delivery that engaged the attendees' participation like none we had witnessed before. Her theme was entitled "Where God Guides, He Provides". Her supporting scripture was taken from the Old Testament, Isaiah 58:11. It was unfortunate that we had to cancel

all other District United Methodist Women events since then. Those events were the Mission Workshop and the Spiritual Life Retreat. We are certainly hoping and praying for a clear path to a healthy and wholesome environment in October for our Annual Meeting.

There is not too much that I have to write about in this newsletter at this time. However, I would encourage us all to get caught up on all those books that we have selected from the United Methodist Women Reading Program. Spend that quality time while shut in with your loved ones which many times is compromised due to our busy lives. I have never had so much fun playing games, singing karaoke and attending meetings via Zoom. Take care and have a great summer. I am looking forward to seeing everyone in the Fall.

Blessings,

**Tina (Ernestine) Campbell**  
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## **Treasurer**

I pray everyone is keeping safe. The District Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 10<sup>th</sup>. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, only God knows what will happen in October.

One of my favorite scriptures is James 4:14. "How do you know what will happen tomorrow? For your life is like the morning fog--it's here a little while, then it's gone." What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that." (Life Application Bible) For me, this scripture means live for God, be thankful for each day and don't procrastinate. We all make plans, but I try to focus on today. When

the Holy Spirit guides me to do something, I try to follow that lead.

The mission of the United Methodist Women remains the same. The March/April 2020 **response** has an excellent article regarding where our money goes. "In 2018 and 2019 United Methodist Women members' generous Mission Giving provided \$8.9 million to 288 national and international projects and partners." It details, country by country, how the money assists others. The coronavirus does not discriminate. I am sure our pledge monies are needed now more than ever.

Many United Methodist Women units rely on fundraisers for their pledges. Many fundraisers have been cancelled and others are pending, waiting day by day to see what the coronavirus will do next. But we can still give from our personal accounts, regardless how small the amount. Gifts of ten, fifteen, twenty dollars are always acceptable and appreciated. The United States Postal Service is still open and in business. You can always mail your pledge to your Unit's Treasurer. Don't wait until you have a meeting or a fundraiser because that is an uncertainty. If your church doesn't have a United Methodist Women unit, you can send me your personal check made out to "Greater Detroit District UMW" and indicate on the memo line the name of your church. There is no excuse left for not supporting the United Methodist Women.

All deadline dates remain the same: September 15<sup>th</sup> for 5-Star Women and November 30<sup>th</sup> for all pledges. The September 15<sup>th</sup> date for 5-Star Women is to ensure your name is listed in the program for the Annual Meeting October 10<sup>th</sup>. Otherwise, you have until November 30<sup>th</sup> to send all pledge monies.

Remember James 4:14. Thank God for today, let the Holy Spirit guide you, don't wait for tomorrow or procrastinate.

Make all checks payable to "Greater Detroit District UMW" and mail them to my address: 3975 Cornerstone Drive, Canton, Michigan 48188.

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## **Spiritual Growth**

**WE ARE NOT IN THE SAME BOAT -**  
*Anonymous*

I heard that we are all in the same boat, but it's not like that. We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat. Your ship could be shipwrecked and mine might not be. Or vice versa.

For some quarantine is optimal. A moment of reflection, of re-connection, easy in flip flops, with a cocktail or coffee. For others, this is a desperate financial and family crisis.

For some that live alone they're facing endless loneliness. While for others it is peace, rest and time with their mother, father, sons and daughters.

With the \$600 weekly increase in unemployment some are bringing in more money to their households than they were working. Others are working more hours for less money due to pay cuts or loss in sales.

Some families of 4 just received \$3,400 from the stimulus while other families of 4 saw \$0.

Some were concerned about getting a certain candy for Easter while others were concerned

if there would be enough bread, milk and eggs for the weekend.

Some want to go back to work because they don't qualify for unemployment and are running out of money. Others want to kill those who break the quarantine.

Some are home spending 2 - 3 hours daily helping their child with online schooling while others are spending 2 - 3 hours/day to educate their children on top of a 10 - 12-hour workday.

Some have experienced the near death of the virus; some have already lost someone from it and some are not sure if their loved ones are going to make it. Others don't believe this is a big deal.

Some have faith in God and expect miracles during this 2020. Others say the worst is yet to come.

So, friends, we are not in the same boat. We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different.

Each of us will emerge in our own way, from this storm. It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance. Not just looking, actually seeing.

We are all on different ships during this storm experiencing a very different journey.

Realize this and be kind.

From Philippians 2:4:  
Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interest of others.

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## Social Action

There are so many social issues affecting us all during the COVID-19 pandemic. More testing is needed in our state and around the country, and particularly in communities of people of color. The homeless are being affected. The shelters are overwhelmed, with not having enough food for the homeless and helping the unemployed with food distribution. Our seniors in nursing homes and senior apartment complexes are highly affected with this deadly disease. Domestic violence has increased during this pandemic. Children are home all day and, for some, school was their only way to get food. Don't forget the COVID-19 is spreading throughout our prisons nationwide. We must continue to pray on these situations; pray for our state and our leaders to make the correct decisions.

The United Methodist Women National Office is urging United Methodist Women members to resist racism in hearts, homes, communities and our country. Please go to [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/united-methodist-women-urges-members-to-resist-racism](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/united-methodist-women-urges-members-to-resist-racism) for excellent coverage on this subject. It mentions the February shooting of Ahmaud Arbery in Brunswick, GA, and that an arrest was made this month (May) after a videotape was released. Also mentioned is Sean Reed who was killed this month, who live-streamed his own killing by police in Indianapolis, IN. He was shot more than 10 times and a police officer is heard on the video saying, "Looks like it's going to be a closed casket, homie."

Have you attended any of the Faith Talks offered on the United Methodist Women website? I attended the last two. On May 7, 2020, "COVID-19 and Incarcerated Loved Ones" discussed how COVID-19 is spreading throughout the prisons. On April 23, 2020, the topic was "Grief". We all are experiencing different types of grief during this time, whether you lost a friend or loved one, are grieving because you can't see your friends, are living

alone, or not able to return to your normal activities. Previous Faith Talks are recorded on the United Methodist Women website.

I know sometimes it is hard not to become upset with some of the social issues affecting our world today. I just say, continue to pray and keep the faith.

It is a difficult time to think of Ingathering. We will have to get creative this year. I hope you will continue your local Ingatherings. I plan to announce a District-wide Ingathering soon.

Take care. Stay safe. And God bless you!

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## Membership Nurture and Outreach

Greetings, United Methodist Women members!

"Praise the Lord, for He is good!" During this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been witnesses to things we have never seen before. We have seen sunshine, rain, hail, and snow all in the same day. Empty grocery store shelves, toilet paper shortages, long lines at food banks, work stoppages, and sheltering in place at home. Our cities and towns have become ghost towns as we adjust to the new normal of hand washing, social distancing, wearing masks and gloves to protect ourselves, distance learning, and home schooling. Our hearts have been broken as we have not been able to visit our loved ones in the hospital nor say our final goodbyes in the way that we are accustomed. Oh, and we have lost so many. As the songwriter Frankie Beverly says, there is both joy and pain in this life that we live.

Through sheltering at home we have been able to do the things that matter, i.e., families have been able to come together and spend

meaningful time; we have learned to use technology to come together virtually in community; we have time to reflect on the goodness of God and our many blessings, time to spend quality time with our God. We have seen acts of kindness locally and across our land. Through it all, we have learned to depend totally on God. He is our only Hope. There are many scriptural references that refer to this time that we are experiencing today. God speaks to us in Isaiah 26:20, Matthew 24:7, 12, Psalms 91 and a multitude of other scriptures. I think about what the songwriter Marvin Gaye said in his song "What's Going On." It rings true today. Too many mothers crying, too many brothers dying, we need some loving here today. What's going on?

In the midst of all of this pandemic, I've learned more about joy. Joy is a feeling of peace that the world did not give me and the world cannot take away. Joy is contentment not only for yourself but for others. Joy is the confidence in knowing that God is in control of our world and our lives. Joy gives us the strength to continue from day to day as we confront difficult circumstances. God provides us strength through His grace. We are to be hopeful in joy, patient in affliction, and fervent in prayer. Hope and joy go hand in hand. Joy in Jesus allows us to rejoice even in tough times, secure in our faith and in God's unconditional love. We cannot find joy in the possession of material things, but only through relationship with our Divine Creator. God wants us to honor his commandment by loving one another as he has loved us. He experiences joy when we reconnect with Him.

My prayer for United Methodist Women members and friends is that we hold onto God's unchanging hand and experience the unspeakable joy and peace that transcends all understanding. As the songwriter Richard Smallwood tells us, Jesus is the center of our joy. He is the heart of our contentment and the hope in all we do. He is our joy in sorrow and

our hope for tomorrow. I love you and will continue to lift our ministry, our church, our state, and our nation in prayer. May God have grace and mercy on each of you. Before I go, I'd like to say "Thank you" to those churches who completed the 2019 United Methodist Women Census which closed on April 30, 2020.

Looking forward to seeing you in our virtual Mission u studies. May the love, grace and peace that our Risen Savior provides us be yours today.

**Susan Howze**  
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## **Secretary of Program Resources**

Summer has come and we need to be sure we are ready in September to report for the 2020 United Methodist Women Reading Program. I remind you that you must get your books on your own from book stores, Amazon, your library, and any place else you know to get books. To make this easy for you, look up the website for United Methodist Women: [umw.unitedmethodistwomen.org/2020readingprogram](http://umw.unitedmethodistwomen.org/2020readingprogram).

This will give you all the information you need, including a complete list of the 2020 Reading Program books and lists of books from other years that are eligible for reading credit this year. It will also give you a complete list of 2020 Reading Program books with a short synopsis of each. There is further information that should answer any questions you might have of the Reading Program. Included is a copy of the report form to fill out with your readings.

Do not forget that you must read a minimum of one book in each of the five categories and the six copies of the **response** magazine. That can be done online if you so desire. It is also of



note that the Mission u books are eligible for the Reading Program (even though Mission u was cancelled for this year) and the online information tells you about them.

Should you not be a computer person I am sure your church office or someone who is computer literate might assist you. If that does not work for you, contact me at the information listed below and I will assist you.

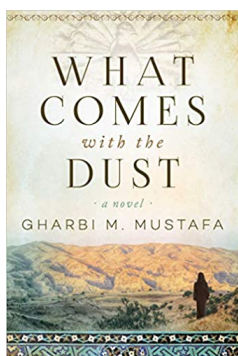
Ladies, let's read like we never read before and grow in knowledge on many subjects that are new to us. And let us get books for the youth and children of our churches and encourage them to read, or read to them, on these many topics.

In Christ,

**Mary Hutzelt Beltzman**  
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This book review provides further detail of one of the volumes on this year's list that brings not only a powerful story but highlights the experiences of women from across the world.

### Book Review



*What Comes with the Dust* by Gharbi M. Mustafa (2018).

As *The Kite Runner* and *The Swallows of Kabul* did for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, this slim, profound novel illuminates the plight of those

subjugated by the Islamic State and the spirit of the Yazidi people.

Today is Nazo's wedding. Today she will set herself on fire.

Nazo Heydo has drenched herself in kerosene and is ready to light the match in order to avoid marrying the Syrian elder who bought her from Islamic State officials. Her forced marriage is just the latest horror in a journey that began when ISIS fighters surrounded her peaceful village, demanding spoils and the Yazidis' conversion to Islam. Rebuffed, they took away her father, brothers, and the love of her life in their pickup trucks with the other village men. The women and children they enslaved and separated, transporting the younger women to be trafficked for the pleasure of their soldiers or sold for money. Only Nazo's wits and daring have saved her from further abuse or death, yet each escape leads to some new horror.

Meanwhile, in a parallel narrative, Soz, another young Yazidi, flees her family's farm when she sees the black-flagged pickups approach. She manages to reach Mount Sinjar, where she joins the Yazidi fighters who have allied with the Kurdish Peshmerga. Her journey will lead back to her homeland to do battle against ISIS.

*What Comes with the Dust* is a powerful novel about genocide and the will to survive as well as a testament to struggles of the Yazidi people. (Review from amazon.com).

### Co-Communications Coordinators

The Internet is no longer an option. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, its use is important in communications around the world. As you are aware, *The Phoenix* has been increasing changing from distributing paper copies to forwarding email copies. Our local United Methodist Women units connect by Zoom to hold business meetings. Families interface with Skype. It's something to learn and get used to.

Beginning with this issue of *The Phoenix*, we will only be sending the newsletter via email. We have added 140+ emails to churches throughout the Greater Detroit District in addition to our robust email list. Please let us know if there is someone you know who would like *The Phoenix* but is not receiving it via email. Just have them send their email address to Kristine Miranne (her email address is below).

We not only send *The Phoenix* but many other announcements as well. Let's stay connected! "We can do it!"

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## News from UMW Units

We welcome any news from local units – please feel free to share your activities – photos are certainly welcome too!

### Metropolitan United Methodist Women

The Metropolitan United Methodist Women unit continues to support various community projects through our Rice Allen Fund. Just a few funded projects this year:

**Detroit Mamas Bloom:** Originally set to conduct in-person meetings/support groups for new moms, the project is now creating and delivering "Postpartum Care Packages" to moms. The care packages will include healthy snacks, educational materials, postpartum healing supplies and baby care items all meant to support the new mother physically and

emotionally in the early weeks of postpartum. In addition, they will provide virtual meetings for postpartum support and education.

**Get Out the Vote:** Cass Technical High School, Denby High School, Henry Ford High School and Benjamin Carson High School of Science and Medicine are the sites for a project that will teach students about their responsibilities in our democracy. The multi-faceted program includes assignments geared to inform students of how to register to vote, complete a ballot and research candidates. Once students return to schools in the fall, they will help organize rallies that excite students about voting while encouraging participation in upcoming elections.

**Great Start/Christmas Boxes:** For many years, our unit has supported an annual project where Christmas boxes are given to needy children. Church members knit sweaters, mittens and caps. Boxes are then packed with donations that include an outfit, underwear, a book and a toy. We have been providing on average \$7,000 annually to help buy all of these items to be sure that as many children as possible are served.

**Red Bird Mission:** Since 1921, the Red Bird Mission, Inc. and Red Bird Clinic, Inc. have been providing ministries in this region of the Appalachian Mountains. There still are critical needs in this isolated, distressed rural area. Chronic poverty, lack of jobs, poor housing and rugged mountainous terrain provide obstacles to a fuller life for the residents of this area. The Metropolitan UMW supports their education ministries where children and youth of this community get a quality education in a loving Christian environment empowering these young people with tools that will help them escape this cycle of poverty in which they are exposed to and live in daily.

## American Son



On March 26<sup>th</sup>, our unit hosted the viewing and facilitated discussion of “American Son.”

Based on the acclaimed Broadway play, “American Son” tells the story of Kendra Ellis-Connor, the mother of an 18-year-old son who goes missing. As she waits at a Miami police station, she is interviewed by Officer Paul Larkin who assures her that his questions about whether Jamal has priors, a street name or gold teeth are strictly protocol and not racist. Larkin suddenly discloses new details regarding Jamal’s whereabouts when Scott arrives, not initially realizing that this white FBI agent is Jamal’s father. As the three hash it out in the otherwise deserted waiting area, urgent questions arise concerning the degree to which race, gender and class play into police procedure.

The event was well attended and there was a robust, albeit difficult, discussion following the viewing of the movie.



## Southfield Hope United Methodist Women: Season of COVID-19

II Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” KJV

During these days of social distancing, Southfield Hope United Methodist Women members continue to seek persons requiring help to maintain their daily life, such as delivering food, providing survival tools, and giving mental and spiritual support.





With the many changes we are experiencing in our lives, our business meeting also changed. Our most recent meeting in April 2020 was held by Zoom. We were delighted to fellowship in a technological/virtual setting. The feeling of warmth in our conversations was exceptional. As always, we focused on the guidance found in the United Methodist Women Purpose: to be in community, to know God, to be creative and supportive in our fellowship, and to expand our concept of mission.

Plans as we move forward are, but not limited to, the following:

- Continue to develop ways to be in mission to the community
- Include our church congregation in our plans to reach out to the community
- Support the non-technical people among us with recent and updated information
- Reach out to the vulnerable
- Mourn with the bereaved in this time of epidemic
- Minister to our sick and shut-ins with greeting cards

- Include our frontline responders with cards of thanks
- Remember with cards those among us on Nurses Day May 6
- Make phone calls to check on the elderly in the Church and the community

### **Prayer**

God, we come to you at a time when the world is engulfed in crisis. We pray for every area of brokenness in the land. We indeed humble ourselves as we submit to your will and your way. Cleanse our land, dear Lord, from every threat of this virus and restore our health, our peace and our abundance. Bless the homeless, the unemployed, the medical community, and the vulnerable among us including children and the elderly.

Pour out your healing power and take back the world! We stand against this form of evil known as COVID-19 and call on your intervention in the name of Jesus.

We come together believing this as your children and servants.

In Jesus' name. Amen!

Offered by Rev. Dr. Kevin Smalls

**Emmie J. Hawkins**  
**Communications Director**  
**Southfield Hope United Methodist Women**

### **LEGACY STORIES**

We have a long history of courageous women who have made an impact on the lives of women, children and families in their communities. Their actions were driven by faith and often with little fanfare. Here is but one story:

#### **Reverend Sallie Crenshaw**

In 1930, Sallie Crenshaw, became a licensed preaching missionary. At that time, ordination was not available to women, especially African-

American women. Ms. Crenshaw attended school at Gammon Theological Seminary and Tennessee Wesleyan College. She served over 12 churches in this capacity anywhere from coal mining towns in West Virginia to the poor neighborhoods in Chattanooga. In 1968, she founded the Good Shepherd Fold day care that would become a part of the Bethlehem Center in Chattanooga TN.

In 1947, she commissioned a beer tavern to use for Sunday Bible studies. She noticed a need to take care of children left at home while their parents worked. By 1948, Ms. Crenshaw rented an old house to open an official day care center. By 1954, she was able to buy a plot of land to build a new facility, serving up to 130 children. Just a few years later, Reverend Sallie Crenshaw became the first woman to be ordained as a pastor in the East Tennessee Methodist Conference.

The Times Free Press attributes the following quote to her: "I'm no common, ordinary person. I do God's work and I live to the part. He provides everything for me. I just stand in front of the mirror every now and then to see how I am looking." Her dedication to children and the advancement of justice for all people remains a driving force for the Bethlehem Center in Chattanooga.



At the dedication of the Bethlehem House in 1960, Mayor Olgiati gave a tribute to Mrs. Brock who in turn thanked the entire staff for their hard work. The facility was a unique fixture in South Chattanooga at the time because very few community spaces were equipped to serve such large numbers in specifically African-American neighborhoods. The "house" lived up to its potential by hosting summer camps, Boy and Girl Scouts, community development activities, a church on Sundays, and Bible studies throughout the week.

By 1968, the Wesley House, the Good Shepherd Fold day care, and the Bethlehem House had all formally partnered together as the United Methodist Neighborhood Centers Inc. known as the Sallie Crenshaw Bethlehem Center, or "the Beth" for short. Reverend Crenshaw continued working with the Beth until her retirement.

<https://www.thebeth.org/104/history>



## Life in the Time After Covid-19

Will there be lessons learned? Will there be changes made? So much has been exposed for **all** to see. Pray that people are looking and seeing.

Will finally every person in the country acknowledge the terrible disparities foisted on people of color?

Will finally people acknowledge that our healthcare system is not on a sound basis? Even those who have coverage from employers, well, that has been disrupted and shown to be unsatisfactory.

Will finally our media report the actual reality, contrasting it (even directly contradicting it) alongside all the fog coming from the White House?

Will finally the pursuit of “the rights of the individual”, “profits”, “capitalism” be acknowledged not as end-all things but to be shaped, moderated for the inclusion and benefit of all?

Will finally all people spend the energy and time to keep abreast of what is happening on their local, state and federal levels, so they can vote with knowledge and confidence in their choices?

You have plenty of your own thoughts. It is a wide and complicated subject. Still, thought precedes action. And, we all know, also, that prayer is a wonderful support in all things.

**Anne Cramton, member  
Detroit Metropolitan United Methodist  
Women**

## A Quiet Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Our need for You is greater today than ever. As we face these uncertain times, we need our hope restored. We need to be reminded of Your constant and complete healing grace and love for us. As we reach out to You, we pray that You help us to heal the burdens of our neighborhoods, our country and our world. Help us be faithful in prayer and put our hope in You.

Teach us what You want us to learn from this pandemic. Please help us to not take our fear and lack of control out on those around us, and show us how to be patient as the world heals. In these days of sickness, give us the wisdom to draw nearer to You. In Your name we pray. Amen

From The Salvation Army bookmark May 2020

## Poetry from Our Youth

The following is a poem from Katy Lyons, a student from Hilton Head Island High School. There is power in her words and, of course, her present is greatly impacted and who knows how her future will go. We need to listen to our youth – they may not have life experience yet but they are often quite wise.



The Virus  
by Katy Lyons

Here I sit  
In complete isolation.  
All of us separated by the invisible.  
I would reach out to you,  
But a simple elbow touch wouldn't do.  
Lysol spray has become perfume,  
Hand sanitizer has become hand lotion,  
The news has become the bible.  
A simple virus,  
Whose name resembles royalty,  
Has done the unthinkable.  
Destroyed businesses,  
And has ruined relationships.  
The death toll rises,  
And hope decreases.  
What to do?  
Everyone scrambles to find a solution.  
Maybe it is found in the empty grocery  
shelves,  
Or maybe in the fear of going outside.  
Online assignments plague the  
uninfected.

But I believe,  
We will all get through this together.  
We will all get through this,  
Just not with each other.

[https://hhihs.beaufortschools.net/academics/student\\_work/poetry/covid-19\\_poems](https://hhihs.beaufortschools.net/academics/student_work/poetry/covid-19_poems)

### Ongoing Social Action

The United Methodist Women National Office is still working diligently on multiple social, economic and justice issues. Below is a press release from February 2020 arguing that indefinite detention of immigrant children and their families must cease. This important issue is not in the forefront as COVID-19 dominates all the news.

#### **Women's Faith Group Signs Amicus Brief for Ban on Indefinite Detention of Immigrant Children and Families**



NEW YORK - United Methodist Women is a mission organization founded in 1869 to address the needs of women, children, and youth. Since that time, the organization has sustained ministries to assist immigrant



women, children, and families. Much of this work is now conducted through our more than 90-plus community centers and residences around the country as well as through member engagement on behalf of migrating people and families. It is in the spirit of this historic and continued work for the welfare of women, children, and youth that we join this amicus brief in support of the district court decision rejecting **proposed federal rules permitting the indefinite detention of immigrant children with their parents.**

We believe the family to be the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect and fidelity (UMC Social Principles, Paragraph 161 B). It is deeply disturbing that the federal government would seek to break up the family unit and do so in unlicensed facilities. Children belong with their families, and no family should be caged behind bars. Not only is this proposal unjust, it is dangerous. Children and adults are dying in U.S. immigrant detention centers, and scores more have had their civil rights violated.

Putting families in immigrant detention centers would greatly and tragically contribute to mass incarceration. The only beneficiaries of such a system is the prison industrial complex, and the United States should not be subsidizing the expansion of this system.

Rather than criminalizing families and swelling the ranks of prisons, we should be doing as Jesus commanded in Matthew 25:35, “welcoming our neighbor.”

*Posted or updated: 2/4/2020 12:00:00 AM*

## **Responsively Yours: Dwell in Us, Holy Spirit**

*by Harriett Jane Olson*

What are United Methodist Women members called to do today, when the world has changed so much? As I’ve thought about this, the hymn that comes to mind is “Women

Called to Act in Love,” commissioned for our 150th anniversary. The hymn, which is this issue’s prayer, captures so much about who we are as a movement of faithful women.

First, we act as a sisterhood. We reach out to one another, listen, support and pray. We study together: What a blessing that our current spiritual growth study is Finding Peace in an Anxious World. I encourage you to use this resource and remember that we are studying together even if we aren’t physically together. Continue to connect to one another as you can, and take time to take care of yourselves as well. I hope you find comfort knowing you are part of a creative, supportive fellowship.

We are also, as the song says, called by God to serve and to works of justice. National mission institutions and local missions providing food distribution need our support. We can make masks as those are needed, and we can speak out against racist associations of the virus. Needs will keep changing, and United Methodist Women will continue to call for action on behalf of women, children and youth and marginalized people.

The hymn pleads, “Dwell in us, Holy Spirit! Bring us to the greatest needs!” Like the psalms, the hymn makes a close connection between the presence of God and the service of those in need. This has been a repeated prayer of mine in this anxious time.

Where do we see the greatest needs in this moment? People in prison or detention and people who work in those locations are in great need. They are uniquely vulnerable with limited protections during our global COVID-19 health crisis. We have joined with others to call for release of persons with special vulnerability who can be released safely. Look to our website and social media pages for how to be a part of this and other coronavirus resources, and sign up for action alerts at <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/action>.

The spread of coronavirus touches each of our advocacy focuses—women and children’s health, climate justice and economic inequality in addition to mass incarceration. Persons experiencing domestic violence are especially at risk at a time of stay-at-home orders. What can you do to boost awareness of the domestic violence resources in your state or county in this time of extreme stress? What about persons without sick leave pay or who have lost their jobs, people who suddenly can’t make rent or pay a mortgage or bills. We’ve called on state regulatory agencies to prohibit electric and water shutoffs during this time. If your state still has not taken this action, I encourage you to speak out for it. We must also remain alert to environmental protections that may get loosened at this time.

Together we can watch and care for those among us in great need. Together we can speak up for those without protection during this crisis. Together we can stay informed, continue in prayer and express our love for God in our service of others and our advocacy for justice.

Dwell in us, Holy Spirit! Open our eyes to see those in need. Open our hearts to your love for them—may it become our love as well. Strengthen our hands and our spirits to be who we are called to be for this hour.

### **Harriett Jane Olson**

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<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/responsive-ly-yours-dwell-in-us,-holy-spirit>

## **Girls Without Future: Sewing Project**

The United Methodist Women National Office recently reported this project supported through their international funds. Many of you have been making masks to share during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here is a great story of

how girls can learn skills that will financially support them in the future.



*L t R: Henriques Anopa, District Superintendent Filipe Massango, North Conference Executive Secretary, Rosa Vicente. Photo Alzira Sebastião.*

Women and young women are the target population for supporting income-generating activities because they are the most economically vulnerable groups due to socio-cultural practices that in most cases hinder them from getting education that would allow them access to formal employment. Therefore, these projects help them acquire some skills and/or other means of sustaining themselves and their families in the areas of sewing and fish farming.

It has been well documented that poverty disproportionately affects women and girls due to violence, culture and lack of sustainable economic opportunities, globally, but to a greater extent in Sub-Saharan Africa. Concern for the economically underprivileged women and girls of their community prompted the Mozambique North United Methodist Women through their Executive Secretary, Rev. Alzira Isaac, and her UMW team to start the Girls Without Future sewing project with funds from the United Methodist Women National Office in New York. The Girls Without Future sewing project began with the purchase of 12 sewing machines and materials. Above all, the solution to unemployment of any employable age is to provide skills through training. This fee-free skills training in sewing for livelihood support admitted its first batch of 12 in April 2019, but only seven graduated six months later. Rosa Horacio Vicente, a wife and mother of two girls, finished at the top of her class.

One of the reasons for these six-month empowerment programs in skillful sewing training is to create sustainable livelihoods for self-employment, something that surely makes a difference to many families' well-being. A number of the trainees plan to start their own sewing workshops. Others would like to have further sewing training of a more professional type to earn more money. Those who cannot do so will seek employment as an assistant with an already established tailor for a small income. You will be amazed to know how far this "small" income can take them. It will enable them to achieve many goals that they otherwise would find difficult or near impossible to do. The trained women and girls will be able to help family members by sewing needed clothes, including school uniforms. Women will be able to send their children to school regularly and provide educational support and healthcare, something most of us take for granted. More importantly, their earning power will give them some measure of control over certain decisions at home, in the family.

Working in a team, the trainees gained more than just sewing skills during their training. After spending six months together, experiencing the challenges of learning a new skill, supporting each other, listening to one another's daily challenges, sympathizing, empathizing and encouraging, they developed relationships with their mates, unintentionally creating a support network for themselves and one another that will last a lifetime.

These women's and girls' lives have been transformed, empowered with skills nobody can take from them. This would have been impossible without the economic development grants of United Methodist Women USA. Such an investment is a sure path to poverty reduction. In as much as the women's and girls' immediate success can be attributed to the teacher who taught them sewing skills and guided and encouraged them, as well as to the UMW leaders of North Mozambique who saw the need for such a program, all these would

pale beside the generous grant support of UMW of the USA, to whom we send our profound gratitude. The grant is a huge contribution to positive social change. This six-month training program may be a simple one but it has given the participants the much-needed foundation to later on undertake the intermediate and advanced sewing techniques as they, individually and collectively, are able to progress from one level of competency to the next. We hope to be able to build on this success. In the meantime, let us glory in the fact that they have learned skills that will provide an income for their families in the future. Watch this space for our follow-up feedback of the post-training impacts. There are plans to recruit students for a second batch of empowerment programs in skillful sewing skills training after the COVID-19 crisis has ended. <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/girls-without-future-sewing-project>

*Posted or updated: 5/18/2020 12:00:00 AM*

### **Websites Every United Methodist Women Member Should Know**

We include these websites in each issue of *The Phoenix* because we think they are valuable resources. These are websites you should bookmark in your "favorites" list. There is a wealth of information within each one. Be sure to visit them on a regular basis so you can keep up with the great work of United Methodist Women!

#### **National**

<http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/>

#### **Michigan Conference United Methodist Women**

[www.umwmichiganconference.org](http://www.umwmichiganconference.org)

Once you open the page, you can scroll down to the Greater Detroit District.

## Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/MichiganUMW/groups/>

## Reading Program

<http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram>

## MIConnect

[http://news.michiganumc.org/.](http://news.michiganumc.org/)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

At this point, all upcoming Greater Detroit District (GDD) events have been canceled. However, as we see how society begins to open up, the GDD board will re-evaluate when it will be safe to convene various meetings and trainings.

We will be sure to keep you updated so watch your email inbox for announcements!

