

HIGHLIGHTS

MARCH 2017



VOLUME 61 ISSUE 2

From our President

GREETINGS —

On March 23, 1869, eight women gathered at Tremont Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston, MA, and organized the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, what would become United Methodist Women. Those women raised money to send a doctor, Clara Swain, and a teacher, Isabella Thoburn, to India as missionaries to serve the women of that nation.

Hopefully, you have all heard this very brief description of the "beginnings" of what is now the organization of United Methodist Women. This is a great example of how one can tell a significant story in the fewest number of words.

I think the way we usually, teasingly, start to tell this story by saying, "on a dark and stormy night....." And we laugh. And, that's okay, because that does not take away the significance of what happened and what it meant for the next 150 years. And, now we are planning for the NEXT 150 years!

150 - we have been and will be seeing this number a lot these next couple of years. What can *you* do with 150 seconds, or 150.... minutes, or 150 hours, 150 days, 150 months or **150 years?** What can be done with 150 cents, or 150 nickels, 150 dimes, or **150 dollars?** We want to do NOW what we can do NOW, so we can and will still be doing it in another 150 YEARS!!!

The third annual national (UMW) Day of Giving was March 23rd. Each Day of Giving gift will be matched dollar for dollar! Hopefully, you were able to participate at that time. But if not, please feel free to make a contribution at any time to celebrate the dedication and fore-sight of our fore-mothers in mission as we lead up to our 150th anniversary in 2019. (Lots of options for giving: go on-line to The Legacy Fund; by phone at 800-278-7771; even by text: Legacy150 to 41444 or even by the old fashioned way: **WRITE A CHECK!**)

I invite you to keep up with all that is happening right now as our two Michigan Conferences are in the blending / merging process. As responsible United Methodist Women we have already begun our work towards this accomplishment. (www.michiganumc.org). As part of this, Micki Phelps, the current Detroit Conference President, and I invite those of you who will be attending Annual Conference to a Garden Party beginning at noon on Friday, June 2. Let me (989-763-8750) or Micki (313-618-5361) know if you will be attending!! Come begin to get acquainted with our UMW sisters from Detroit Conference.

Blessings to ALL,
Linda Darrow,
President



2016 Conference Team

President: **Linda Darrow (2017)**
232 N. Cooley St., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
989-763-8750 darrowlinda@gmail.com

Vice President: **Shirley Chappell (2016)**
719 S. Griffin, Grand Haven 49417
616-846-4197 shirley2billchapel@att.net

Secretary: **Beth Mitchell (2017)**
3813 Rockwood, Kalamazoo 49004
269-343-6806 bmitchell@lewisreedallen.com

Treasurer: **Julia Paradine-Rice (2014)**
4114 Sanctuary Dr., Alma 48801
989-576-0675 juliapr@charter.net

Mission Coordinators:

Spiritual Growth: **Simmie Proctor (2014)**
73486 8th Street, South Haven 49090
269-637-6053 simmiepr@hotmail.com

Education & Interpretation: **Sue Stickle (2016)**
10970 Dutch Settlement Rd, Marcellus 49067
269-646-9425 suzannestickle@gmail.com

Social Action: **Randie Clawson (2015)**
384 Lind Drive, Traverse City 49696
231-929-7808 randieclawson@gmail.com

Membership Nurture/Outreach: **Pat Snyder (2016)**
807 S. Sheldon St., Charlotte 48813
517-231-1301 dpsnyder807@peoplepc.com

Program Resources: **Connie Swinger (2015)**
255 Brown St. SW, Grand Rapids 49507
616-452-3532 connieswinger@att.net

Communications Coordinator: **Dorie Litchfield (2014)**
61470 County Road 657, Lawton 49065
269-436-0023 creator.dorie@gmail.com

Appointed:
Be Just Be Green Coordinator: **Clarice McKenzie**
396 Ford Street, Bitely 49309
231-745-3256 (Apr-Nov)
727-536-1888 (Nov-Mar) cjmckum@gmail.com

Committee on Nominations:

Chairperson: **Sue Emmons (2017)** 4-year term
2226 Anderson Dr. SE, Grand Rapids 49506
269-308-3802 sre.peace@yahoo.com

Committee Members: **Loretta Lee (2017)** 2-year term
142 Greenwood Drive, Battle Creek 49037
269-317-7377 weatherby2000@sbcglobal.net

Sue Franklin (2017) 2-year term
2392 Fern Ct., Farwell 48622-9789
989-339-0491 Lsfbflat@gmail.com

Jenny Kroeze (2017) 3-year term
640 Seminole Dr., Fremont 49412
231-924-4814 jennyK48g@gmail.com

Ruth Jones (2017) 4-year term
540 Georgetown Dr. #36, Traverse City 49684
231-421-3500 tcgrannynanny@yahoo.com

(Open) 4-year term

Program Advisory Group

Suzanne Hewitt (2017)
2250 Knapp St., Grand Rapids 49505
616-361-9565 suzmckhew@att.net

Historian — (appointed) OPEN

District Presidents:

Albion: **Cheryl Proctor**
[517-741-3125](tel:517-741-3125) seldominn_1@juno.com

Grand Rapids: **Sue Rietman**
269-795-7644 Susan.rietman@sbcglobal.net

Grand Traverse: **Susan Wirgau**
[\(231\) 838-5986](tel:(231)838-5986) onthebay@charter.net

Heartland: **Waitha Gaye Leavitt**
231-640-0238 wally@journey.com

Kalamazoo: **Cindy Thiele**
269-673-4514 cindahthiele@gmail.com

Lansing: **Joyce Plumhoff (past president)**
517-676-2716 tplumhoff1858@att.net



October 20, 2017 all District Officers are invited to attend officers training at the Mt. Pleasant First UMC, 400 Main Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. We

will have a light supper before the meeting. After the meeting you may stay as a Conference guest at a local motel and then attend the Conference Annual the next day. Your supper and room for the night will be paid for by the Conference. If you are planning on staying for the Conference Annual, you must make those reservations separately to Sue Emmons. The name of the motel and time to meet will be announced later. Please put this date on your calendar and plan to attend.

From Your Book Lady

"Knowledge by osmosis has not yet been perfected. You'd better read!"

Are you like me, stacking up books waiting for that perfect someday to read? Maybe when all your dishes and laundry are done, when you are not exhausted from working all day? To look at my stack of books that are waiting to be read, you'd think that I was hoping for osmosis to work! I bet I have some sisters out there who are also planning to read that book you heard was so good, but just haven't found the time yet. Let's make a pact starting today that the dishes and most of the other stuff that keeps us from reading can wait. Pick up that book and enjoy!

One book that I hope you check out from your local library or order from

Secretary of Program Resources

Amazon.com (I paid \$4 for mine) is Global Girlfriends by Stacey Edgar. It's one we will be talking about in the Book Talk at Mission u this summer. It's from the 2017 Reading List, Leadership Development, and easy to read. You can see more about it here <http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram/2017>.



As always, contact me if there is any way I can help you with Program Resources.

Happy Reading,
Connie Swinger
connieswinger@att.net
[\(616\)813-4670](tel:(616)813-4670)

Membership Nurture & Outreach Greetings

Our Winter projects have been quite different than originally planned, which places us on a work site; campground, church, or in homes needing repair in a community. When we arrived in Florida it was apparent that David's mother could not stay by herself, her mental and physical health had red flags. Calls to 911, a pacemaker, a short rehab, visits from nurses and doctor appointments; we are giving primary care in her home in a nice member owned trailer park.

We have found a good community of believers, and many opportunities to enjoy each other's company and serve. I have met many residents on my morning walks—some walking, some not. I've connected with the ladies' hobby club and helped with their fund raisers supporting projects at local schools and guide dogs, making prayer shawls and quilt tops for the Veterans at the Veteran's hospital. We also made and stuffed Teddy Bears for children in crisis to be handed out at hospitals or police departments.

Ministry has taken on a new look this year. We continue to connect with a number of churches and faith communities, Bible studies, Sunday

School classes, senior activities, Gospel music programs and lunches.

Anxiously awaiting my UMW study books for Mission u. My youngest granddaughter, Sami, is ready to attend her 3rd year. Her cousin, Spencer, may also attend with his mom, an Albion college graduate. Kids attend free.

My Study books this winter have been: "*Closing the Food Gap*" (*Resetting the Table in the Land of Plenty*) by Mark Winne; and "*A More Excellent Way*" (Be in Health) by Dr. Henry W. Wright. "*Closing the Food Gap*" opens our eyes to food insecurity in inner cities as the grocery stores have moved to the suburbs. With bus lines not running there, options are convenience stores or fast food establishments, food banks or soup kitchens. A 50 year movement of change include Farmers' Markets, community gardens, and working with public policy where communities are beginning to invest in food for people – a basic human need.

"*A More Excellent Way*" will open your thinking to the spiritual causes to many illnesses.

Step out and be a friend to someone.

Patricia Snyder
Membership Nurture & Outreach



God Is Our Refuge



Do you ever feel like your life is in turmoil? Is your life unsettled? Are you afraid?

My Bible study is studying the book of Deuteronomy. We are learning about laws, commandments and remembrances. Deuteronomy 20 talks about the "holy wars". It tells us not to be afraid because the Lord God is with us. I hope when you feel that life is in turmoil or you are anxious you will remember that God is our refuge.

When I was going through health issues and feeling depressed and scared, I would think of the hymn "*Be Not Dismayed*". The

Conference Vice President

words are a little old fashioned, but they are the ones I remember from my childhood. The chorus is: "*God will take care of you, Through every day, o'er all the way; He will take care of you, God will take care of you*"! God was there that day to help Bill and me when our son died. He was there when Bill went through heart surgery and I completed months of chemotherapy. No matter what, he is right there beside you to help you through your difficulties. Call on him. All you have to do is say his name. Don't let fear, anxiety and turmoil upset you. Do not be afraid – God is your refuge – call His name.

Shirley Chappell
Vice President

Make God-Time Daily

The weather is changing and with this change sometimes it makes it difficult for us to spend time studying the Word. It is very important that we let nothing get in the way of our time with God. I find the best time for me is early morning before I begin my day. You may like to end your day with praise and thanksgiving. Whatever works for you please make sure you take time.



Simmie Proctor
Spiritual Growth Coordinator

Join ALL Michigan United Methodist Women on Friday, June 2, at noon, for a Garden Party outside the Resort, under the tent \$15.00 per person.

Register with the conference, if possible and contact Micki Phelps by phone at 313-618-5361 or email at marchellephelps@att.net no later than April 15, 2017

Note: If you have already registered for lunch on June 2, 2017, there will be no additional charge for the UMW Luncheon.



UMW: A Gift from my Mother

At Mother's Day, when we celebrate our Mothers, I am reminded of many gifts my Mother has given me. When I was 4 years old my Mom sewed and knitted clothes for Skipper and Scooter - the Barbie dolls I received as a Christmas gift. My Mom worked on these during her lunch breaks at work and after I went to bed in order to create a magical surprise for me. These beautiful, very tiny doll clothes included coats, dresses, pants and even underwear! It was a wonderful gift for a little girl.

One of the best gifts she gave me is the gift of United Methodist Women. She has been a member of UMW and its predecessor organizations since before I was born, and has been involved in a UMW unit everywhere she has lived since, coming full circle back to Schoolcraft United Methodist Church. This covers over 55 years!

We have attended Mission u (formerly School of Christian Mission) together. We discuss articles we have read in *Response* magazine and books we have read from the Reading

Program. Through sharing these learning experiences we are both challenged to see injustices and inequalities in the world and expand



our personal concepts of mission. We have been blessed to attend 3 UMW Assemblys together - Anaheim in 2006, St. Louis in 2010 and Louisville in 2014. We are already planning to attend in Columbus in 2018. These Assemblys have been opportunities for mission learning, fellowship, spiritual growth, worship and just some plain old Mother and daughter fun!

My Mom taught me Bible stories as a child and gave my faith roots. She taught me love and compassion as I grew, and then through United Methodist Women she showed me how to put my faith into action. United Methodist Women is truly a gift from my Mother.

Julia Paradine Rice
Conference UMW Treasurer

Update

Over the past few months, the HVAC control system has been upgraded throughout the building that houses United Methodist Community House. This has been a significant investment provided by the United Methodist Women. For the first time in the building's history, UMCH has the capability to control heating and cooling temperatures for each individual room, a total of 29 rooms! This is a significant upgrade for the agency, as we are able to monitor and adjust temperatures accordingly, throughout the facility, which has the ability to significantly reduce our heating and cooling costs.



UMCH is truly grateful to the UMW for taking on the role of improving the building which houses the important programs and services that are making a difference in our community! This allows UMCH to focus on its mission, while ensuring the maintenance needs of the building are being met.

Dwayne Moore
Director of Operations
United Methodist Community House
904 Sheldon Avenue SE
Grand Rapids MI 49507



Save the Date

United Methodist Women
Assembly 2018
MAY 18, 19, 20, 2018,
Columbus, Ohio

Watch for information coming soon!
www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

Advocacy priorities for 2017-2020:

United Methodist Women:
Putting faith, hope, and love into
action for women, children, and
youth around the world!

- Maternal and child health
- Climate justice
- Ending criminalization of communities of color and mass incarceration, and
- Economic inequality

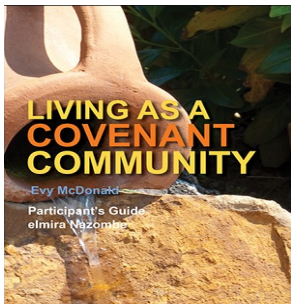


West Michigan Conference

Mission u

July 13 - 15, 2017

ALBION COLLEGE - ALBION, MICHIGAN

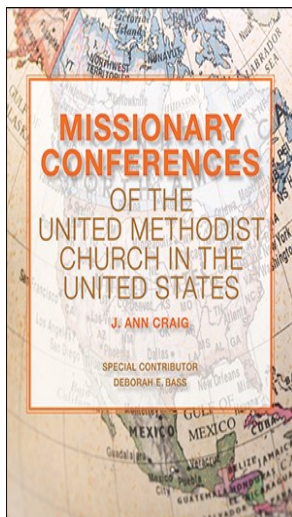
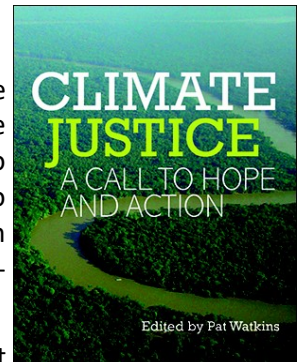


Living as a Covenant Community This study examines major covenants throughout the Bible and what they reveal about God's character and eternal love for us. It will enhance your understanding of how God works with us, in us, and through us.

Study Leader: Rev. Deborah Johnson

Climate Justice - A Call to Hope and Action This study invites you to understand climate justice, which means setting right our relationships with each other and the earth. Climate injustice is the result of climate change. The study will challenge you to see what needs to happen for climate justice to become a reality in the world today. The church needs to more powerfully model a way of doing it differently. This will entail not just focusing on the environment, but also asking hard questions regarding financial profit, a growing economy, our independent way of thinking and our understanding of efficiency.

Study Leaders: Clarice McKenzie and Suzanne Hewitt



Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States The aim of this study is to give an overview of the three missionary conferences in The United Methodist Church, the contexts out of which they grew and their current engagements: The Alaska United Methodist Conference, Red Bird Missionary Conference, and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference are a hybrid of home and international missionary work. What does the future look like for these conferences? Broad-ranging conversations are taking place around this question. The General Board of Global Ministries and the missionary conferences are exploring best operational and structural options for maximizing mission and ministry going forward in these unique locations. These dialogues, different in each case, have begun and will take place across the 2017-2020 quadrennium. The objective is mutuality in mission partnership and collaboration, which provides the heartbeat of all productive mission within the United Methodist connection.

Study Leader: Rev. Julie Yoder Elmore

JOIN US FOR A TIME OF LEARNING, FELLOWSHIP AND COMMUNITY

For more information, contact Linda Burton-Collier, Dean (lindaburtoncollier@gmail.com)

Simmie Proctor, Assistant Dean (simmiepr@hotmail.com)

or Beth Mitchell, Registrar (beth-mitchell@att.net)

Making History

By (Rev. Retired) Gordon Schleicher,
West Michigan UMW Historian

March is Women's History Month so let's celebrate the history that United Methodist Women have made (and are making)! Celebrate that you've been making history for almost 150 years.

Did you know that a Methodist Woman is linked to establishing Mother's Day? In the late 1860's before there was an official Mother's Day holiday in the U.S. a Methodist mom, Ann Reeves Jarvis, organized "Mothers' Friendship Day," at which mothers gathered with former Union and Confederate soldiers to promote reconciliation. She also started women's clubs to serve suffering mothers and children. Methodist faith was foremost for when her daughter Anna was older she continued the efforts resulting in Mother's Day being recognized as a national observance by President Woodrow Wilson in 1914.

Watch the four and a half minute video story produced by the United Methodist Church at <http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/transcript-the-founding-mothers-of-mothers-day>. Better yet, download it and show it at your circle or UMW unit meeting or print out and distribute the script. You'll learn what this Methodist woman had to say to those who began commercializing Mother's Day.

United Methodist Women has grown from 8 women in 1896 to 800,000! Organized when women and children were legally



classified as "non-persons" two women, wives of missionaries to India home on furlough, spoke to a group of women in Boston about the desperate spiritual and physical needs of women in India. It was the beginning of the Methodist Women's Foreign Missionary Society. Today, thousands of UMW groups all over the United States continue to meet and raise funds to support local and world-wide mission work. Come celebrate the place that you have in continuing to make history through United Methodist Women.

(Rev. Retired) Gordon Schleicher, member of United Methodist Women since 1987 when he became a pastor, attends University United Methodist Church East Lansing and serves on the UMW Mission Team as Mission Educator. Mission u participant and teacher as well as a Volunteer in Mission leader on more than a dozen foreign and domestic mission trips.

2017 Mission u Registration Form * July 13-15, 2017 * Albion College

Duplicate form as needed. Deadline for registration is **JULY 3, 2017**

Each person registering to attend Mission u must have their own registration form, regardless of age.

INFORMATION

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____

Home church _____

District _____

Name tag (if different from above) _____

If Child or Youth:

Age _____ Grade entering August 2017 _____

Enriched Child Care:

Age (0-5) _____

Name of adult responsible for the child/youth
registering above.

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Requested roommate: _____
(Your roommate must have same needs regarding housing.)

MISSION STUDIES

Spiritual Growth: "Living as a Covenant Community"
Everyone will be taking this study.

Select ONE Choice Study:

- ____ "Climate Justice - A Call to Hope and Action"
____ "Missionary Conferences of the U.S."

CHILDREN/YOUTH STUDIES

Children - "Joined and Held Together"
Youth - "In Mission Together"

PAYMENT INFORMATION

ON CAMPUS

Adult	\$250.00
Children/Youth	FREE
Enriched Child Care	FREE

COMMUTER WITH 5 MEALS

Adult	\$150.00
Children/Youth	FREE
Enriched Child Care	FREE

COMMUTER WITH NO MEALS

Adult	\$100.00
Children/Youth	FREE
Enriched Child Care	FREE

Total Due: _____

* Make checks payable to West Michigan Conference UMW

* Registration is not complete until payment is received.

* You may pay for multiple registrations with one check.
Staple all registration forms together, include payment and
mail to:

**Beth Mitchell, Registrar
3813 Rockwood Drive
Kalamazoo, MI 49004**

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| ____ First time attending | ____ Clergy |
| ____ Study Leader | ____ District Officer |
| ____ Conference Officer | ____ Missionary |
| ____ Scholarship Applicant | |

Please submit your scholarship application to the Registrar along
with your completed registration form. Send to:
Beth Mitchell, Registrar, 3813 Rockwood Drive, Kalamazoo, MI
49004.

SPECIAL NEEDS

- ____ First floor housing
____ Minimal stairs
____ Minimal walking
____ Help moving around campus
____ Sign language interpreters
____ Special dietary needs (please specify)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JUNE 28, 2017

MISSION u SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The Standing Rules of the West Michigan Conference United Methodist Women provide the following scholarships to attend MISSION u:

- two first time attending pastors, male or female, ordained or local
- two or more for young women, including child care and/or registration fees for Kid's Mission School.
- two or more for racial ethnic women, including child care and/or registration fees for Kids Mission School

(duplicate this form as needed)

Date submitted _____

Check which one applies: ____ first-time attending pastor ____ young woman ____ racial ethnic woman

Name of person submitting form: _____ Phone: _____

District _____ Local church/UMW unit _____

Name of Nominee _____ **Phone:** _____

Mailing address _____ City _____ Zip _____

E-mail address, if available _____

Nominee's age group: ____ 18-25 ____ 26-35 ____ 36-45 ____ 46 +

Is nominee now a member of UMW? ____ If yes, where? _____

Name and ages of youth and children who will be attending; or will need child care (pre-school):

Please explain below why this nominee should be considered: (attach additional sheet, if needed)

RETURN TO: Beth Mitchell, Registrar, 3813 Rockwood Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49004 (269) 343-6806

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JUNE 28, 2017



THE NONVIOLENCE OF LOVE

From Our Social Action Coordinator



Distance of Killing
I am reading the book, *The Non-Violent Cross a Theology of Revolution and Peace* by James W. Douglas written in 1966. It

is previously my mother's book. It has been in my possession since 1998. However, I am just now getting to it. Yes, I have a lifetime-plus of books to read.

The book indicates that modern technology and weaponry blind us to the humanity of the "enemy." The enemy's humanity is less likely to be considered. Since the writing of the book, the distance and method of killing has expanded. Our current Drone Policy has our young military personnel sitting at and killing by way of a computer screen.

The Contrasting Example of Jesus

Christ's example of suffering love on the cross for us is the part of Christ's example we are called to follow for others. Jesus came to love enemies. God willingly incorporated suffering for us into the Trinity's intention for us. The Holy Spirit is to mold us so that we have

the same intentions, exhibiting suffering love for the entire world.

We have all sung, *Have Thine Own Way, Lord*. Do we realize we are asking to be made into suffering love for our enemies?

Distance of Care

I gained a similar insight from an article in a Lenten Series from Ignatian Solidarity Network, *A Culture of Care*. Part of the indifference United Methodist Women are called to interrupt stems from how far removed we live from the margins of our society, our world.

As many of you know, I am serving for three months at La Posada, <http://www.lppshelter.org>. This shelter takes Matthew 25 seriously. The ministry here is dedicated to the primary commandment of love God and neighbor. Here it is a hands on face-to-face experience. I am blogging about this experience at <http://www.considerourcall.blogspot.com>.

United Methodist Women's intentions call us to faith, hope and love. Too often, we are disconnected physically, geographically from those who need our love. The *Culture of Care* article challenged readers to consider that "practicing Matthew 25 may mean that

we need to cross many social, economic, and racial barriers to become women of social intimacy and tenderness."

Mold Us and Make Us after Thy Will

Our actions will show if we really mean it when we sing, "Make us and mold us after Thy will." Our creative United Methodist Women fellowships, Units, Districts, Conference, will intentionally devise strategies to enhance social justice actions. We will strive to experience social intimacy and tenderness in our ministries with and for the marginalized and oppressed in the world.

Contributing to our realization of God's

intention is our continued dedication to spiritual growth, transformative education and leadership development as a part of our creative fellowships. Each member will then be equipped to answer **SOCIAL ACTION's** call. Individually and in community we are called to compassionate service, passionate advocacy, social intimacy and tenderness.

We serve in the Holy Spirit's power,
"I can do all things through Christ!"

Randie Clawson
Social Action Coordinator

Five Channels of Giving

I encourage units to become a 5 Channel unit. Most of you do these things. Let your District Treasurer know, fill out the paper work.

The 5 Channels of Mission Giving are:

1. Pledge to Mission
2. World Thank Offering
3. Special Mission Recognition Pins and Certificates
4. Gift to Mission
5. Gift in Memory

Give this some serious thought. For more information go to the UMW Web site.

Sue Stickle
Education & Interpretation

Be Just Be Green

The Mission u study, "*Climate Justice*", is a powerful study. Each time I prepare for leading a study, new thoughts and passions for caring for God's good creation surface. We have no shortage of opportunities to advocate and speak out for our preservation of the environment.

I hope each of you have the "*Climate Justice*" book, reread it, lead a small study group, talk about it with family and friends, and live the life of recycling, reusing, simplifying, and enjoying God's creation

Clarice McKenzie
Be Just Be Green Coordinator



West Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church

www.michiganumc.org (Ministries-UMW)

United Methodist Women

61470 County Road 657, Lawton, MI 49065



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Inside This Issue

From Your Book Lady
Mission u Registration
Annual Conference Luncheon
Legacy Fund
Climate Justice
and more

HIGHLIGHTS-- the official Newsletter for West Michigan Conference United Methodist Women; Is published quarterly: Dec., Mar., June, Sept.

Submissions requested by the 5th of each previous month to:
Editor: Dorie Litchfield, creator.dorie@gmail.com
OR 61470 County Road 657, Lawton, MI 49065

2017 Calendar of Events

April 1	Keep Making Peace	East Lansing University UMC
April 21—22	Grand Traverse Spring Retreat	Lake Louise Retreat Center
April 28—29	Albion District Spiritual Growth Retreat	Wesley Woods
April 28—29	Kalamazoo District Spiritual Growth Retreat	Crystal Springs
May 5—6	Grand Rapids/Lansing Districts Spiritual Growth Retreat	DeWitt Retreat Center
May 5—6	Heartland District Spiritual Growth Retreat	Wesley Woods
June 10	Grand Rapids District Mini Mission Day	TBD
June 21	Kalamazoo Mission Day	Hartford UMC
July 13—15	Mission u	Albion College
August 3	Grand Traverse Mission Day	Barnard UMC
September 16	District Annual Grand Traverse	Ludington UMC
September 20	District Annual Lansing	TBD
September 21	District Annual Grand Rapids	Lowell UMC
September 21	Heartland District Annual	New Life UMC
September 23	District Annual Kalamazoo	Sodus Chapel Hill UMC
September 30	District Annual Albion	Three Rivers UMC
October 20	District Officer Training/Conference Team Meeting	Mt. Pleasant UMC
October 21	UMW Conference Annual	Mt. Pleasant UMC
October 16—17	Mission u School of the North	Gaylord UMC