

# The Flame

United Methodist Women  
Eastern Pennsylvania Conference The United Methodist Church

Volume 38, Number 2 August 2009



## From the President

There are exciting events happening in Eastern Pennsylvania throughout the districts as well as in the conference organization of United Methodist Women.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Conference Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2009 from 9 AM to 3 PM at Hope United Methodist Church, 3474 Rothsville Road, Ephrata, PA. Our theme is *"United Methodist Women Answer the Call to Mission"*. Harriett Jane Olson, Women's Division Deputy General Secretary, will bring a challenging message. Bishop Peggy Johnson, resident bishop, will lead in the celebration of Holy Communion. Plan now to be a part of this celebration. Look for the **registration flyer for Annual Meeting** elsewhere in this FLAME.

As United Methodist Women members, your gifts toward the Pledge to Mission supports more than 100 national mission institutions in the United States and 120 projects and programs in countries around the world. These projects and programs reach out in ministry to women,

children and youth and rely on the support of United Methodist Women members across the United States. The funds from UMW units in 2008 totaled \$17.8 million dollars. I encourage each of you to see how your Mission Giving is making an impact around the world and nation by reading the June, 2009 *Response* magazine.

This publication brings UMW members a year of information about the multitude of ways our *Mission Giving* puts hands and feet on our sharing of God's love with people in places most of us will never be able to go.

As you continue to study, act and pray with other UMW units across the nation, I encourage you to use the study themes--"*Food and Faith*"; "*Sudan*" and "*Native American Survival*". These challenging studies for 2010 help expand our view of the world and lift up ways we can put our faith into action. I have seen many of you, at the School of Christian Mission this summer, taking the first steps toward bringing these studies to your local units.

The members of the Conference UMW Mission Team are available to meet with your units in fellowship or to present a program for your units. Please contact us to schedule a visit. One of our goals is to visit local UMW units across the Conference. We look forward to sharing our stories and the "*UMW Story--140 years in mission to women, children and youth*". **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!! ASSEMBLY 2010, APRIL 30 to MAY 2, 2010.**

**ST. LOUIS, Missouri.** For registration information contact Assembly liason: Ethel Hibbs at [ethel.hibbs5@verizon.net](mailto:ethel.hibbs5@verizon.net) or 215-968-0632;

***Anna S. Bickhart, President***

**610-670-1671**

**[annabickhart@comcast.net](mailto:annabickhart@comcast.net)**

## **From the Vice President**

### ***UMW: Commitment to Mission***

***This mid-year point is an ideal time to reflect on the Mission initiatives for United Methodist Women of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. What have we done to meet the needs of women, children and youth? How deliberate have we been in strengthening our personal faith journeys? What efforts have we made in community building and supportive fellowship for our sisters and brothers in Christ? Have we been active participants in global ministries of the church?***

The answers to these three questions will provide a gauge for each of us to measure our commitment to the purpose of United Methodist Women. The two conference programs, our *Spiritual Life Retreat* and *School of Christian Mission*, have provided ample opportunities for in-depth involvement and Christian growth. I invite you to continue, or if you have not begun, to participate in conference programs by experiencing this year's *Annual Meeting*.

The theme is "*United Methodist Women Answer the Call to Mission*". Come and share your mission stories as we live out James 2:20: *So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, also faith without action is dead.* (Good News Bible).

Let us resolve to "*Wake Up and Dream*" as Rev. Bernice Powell Jackson challenged an audience at Ecumenical Advocacy Days. We must be the voices that speak boldly and with love for women, children and youth. All UMW programs must be centered around the biblical mandate of showing love and concern for our neighbors.

Please contact me for district or local unit programs. Let us pray without ceasing as we advocate for women, children and youth.

***Gladys B. Hubbard 610 265 1923***  
***[qbhtus1@aol.com](mailto:qbhtus1@aol.com)***

## From the Treasurer

As I write this article I have recently returned from attending Regional School of Christian Mission in Charleston, W. Va.

In addition to receiving an introduction to the courses of study for our conference School of Christian Mission, each conference officer had an opportunity to meet with a Women's Division officer. Naturally my meeting was with the other conference treasurers in our jurisdiction and the treasurer of the Women's Division, Martha Knight. As I listened to other conference treasurers express some of their concerns I realized these are not limited to one conference but are shared by many.

We had direct input to the Women's Division when we were asked for our opinions about several things they are considering, and so I'll share some bits and pieces of information that we were given.

In an article titled *Remittance 2009* Martha writes, "Cash flow continues to be a challenge as the majority of Mission Giving (54%) is received in the fourth quarter with 39% of annual receipts in December alone. During the past four years, on average, we have received 77% of the yearly pledges in the second half of the year. This trend highlights the difficulties of year round event planning. Collectively, we need to design a strategy to get the payments to Women's Division in a more timely fashion."

This is a concern in our conference as well. Though the statistics are probably different the concept is just as applicable. If we were to shift some of the September-December income to January-April income, we would need to hold back less at year-end for the following year's early expenses, and thus more could be applied to our pledge at year-end.

In another article Martha writes about 2009 pledges. "Annual pledges continue to decline— 2008 Mission Giving declined 5.8% from 2007, and 2009 pledged Mission Giving is 3% less than 2008."

As for our conference, we have pledged \$240,000 for this year. District pledges, collectively, account for 95% of this amount with the remaining 5% coming from the conference itself. An analysis of

district giving to June 30 indicates that, of our six districts, three have given about 1/4 of their pledge for the year, two have given about 1/3, and one district has given almost 1/2. Together our conference has only remitted 24% of our 2009 pledge as of June 30.

At Regional School each conference treasurer was called forward during one of the plenary sessions to receive a certificate of achievement for our conference's contributions toward Mission Giving in 2008 but several conferences received special commendation for exceeding their pledge. Wouldn't it be nice if next year I could write to you and say our conference was one of those?

**Janet Evans 610 543 6452**                      **evanja@aol.com**

### **EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION**

It's time to remind you once again of our job as Education and Interpretation coordinators: to emphasize the five channels of mission giving; to promote and interpret the need for our pledges; to undergird the mission outreach to women, children and youth by working with our treasurers; and to promote schools of mission.

This year's school was a new experience for us all! I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did. I came home filled to overflowing with new information from our studies. Oh, yes! Lets not forgot the fellowship and the food! It's been four years since I took the office of E & I. How time flies! Thank you for the privilege of having been a member of the mission team. God Bless you all.

**Mary Lou Kerrick, E & I**  
**MALouFARM@hotmail.com**

**570 646 2443**

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

We are living in interesting times. Never before in history has it been possible for so many to share so much information with so many others, so quickly. It is our job as UMW communicators to be sure that our message gets out effectively and is not lost in the mass of materials in circulation.

The internet is our friend. When we guide others to websites

supporting our goals, it is like throwing a pebble in a stream—our information leads them to other sources of our message.

*Get involved and get excited about Assembly 2010!* Do you have a story about your own personal transformation, your involvement in United Methodist Women, and how *Faith • Hope • Love in Action* inspires your call to mission? Check out the website [getinvolved2010@gbgm-umc.org](mailto:getinvolved2010@gbgm-umc.org). To register online for Assembly see [www.umwmission.org](http://www.umwmission.org) and click on Assembly 2010. Early Bird Registration is available through November 30th at \$215 per person. Full price registration, beginning December first, will be \$250.

The United Methodist Council of Bishops is calling for renewal of the message "*In Defense of Creation: The Nuclear Crisis and a Just Peace.*" This social action issue is dear to the hearts of UMW. For more information see [www.umc.org/defendcreation](http://www.umc.org/defendcreation).

Remind members to read and review the texts offered at the 2009 School of Christian Mission. This year's classes offered more than a year's supply of food for thought! Discussions of *Food and Faith*, *Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival* and *The Beauty and Courage of Sudan* excited our spiritual thirst and planted the seeds for next year's school. I can only hope that everyone received the satisfaction that I did from the school. Be sure to pass your experience on to anyone who did not attend.

As communicators we can highlight another valuable information tool for members: *Response* magazine and *New World Outlook*. Be particularly sure to provide subscription information about these publications to those without computer access.

**Frances J. Rivers 302 326 1019      [efjayar1@aol.com](mailto:efjayar1@aol.com)**

## **SECRETARY OF PROGRAM RESOURCES**

I hope you've had a chance to fill your book bags with the excellent reading selections from our 2009 Reading Program. The mission studies and spiritual growth study this year are brimming over with information to enlighten you.

If you haven't had a chance to read **The Beauty and Courage of Sudan** and **Food & Faith**, I encourage you to do so. Please recommend them to your unit Secretaries of Program Resources as unit studies and remember that they count as part of your Reading Program. The 2010 books will be available at our Annual Meeting in October.

As we move into the fall season, keep in mind that the 2009 Reading Reports will be due at the end of the year. I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting. Keep on reading and opening windows to the world.

**Joy Frazier (215) 943-5998**

***[jfrazierii@aol.com](mailto:jfrazierii@aol.com)***

## **NOMINATIONS AND MISSION**

First of all, I want to thank all of the women in the EPA Conference who have committed to serve as officers at the Local, District or Conference levels as United Methodist Women. It is an honor and an awesome challenge to do the work that Christ calls his people to do on behalf of the least, last and lost.

While not everyone is able to work actively as a missionary in far-away places, or even actively in home missions, each of us can in some way support and advocate for women, children and youth who are in need of God's hand in healing, caring, informing, training; and those in need of God's hand in matters of justice, seeking to bring about peace in the world.

With abundant tears, I sat in a Plenary during the Regional School of Christian Mission to witness videos about the plight of the people of African heritage in Sudan—and with great sorrow, yet hope, I had read the study text, *The Beauty and Courage of Sudan: Why a Dream of Peace is Possible*, by Linda Beher with Study Guide by Maxine West.

Our financial and prayer support are needed by peace-makers like Elmira Sellu of Africa, a regional Missionary in Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and Sudan. She is actively working to help end violence, provide education and training to victims in displacement camps and bring about reconciliation among the people. Mission work like Ms. Sellu's is where much of the UMW money goes. Ms.

Sellu is a leader in helping to reach out to women, children and youth in times of desperation.

The UMW needs leaders who will spread unsavory messages of injustice and needs in the world, and tell how hope can be turned into courage and peace, especially through our giving and prayers. Please consider becoming an elected leader in the future as part of United Methodist Women.

The Committee on Nominations is seeking women—the young as well as the mature, —who will come to the table on the UMW Conference Mission team. We need your leadership to continue the work of the foremothers. They led with vision to reach beyond their own comfort zones and status to alleviate the suffering of women, children and youth, the world over. They worked to provide physical and spiritual food, education and training, so that those in need could grow in God's grace, with dignity and love for others, and these in turn could then pass the good news on to help others, even in the midst of adversity.

**Laura J. Gray Mitchell**  
***ljgmitchell@verizon.net***

**215-224-2193**

## **SOCIAL ACTION**

There are many issues before our representatives and congressmen that need to be solved in the near future. As mission-minded women, we need to keep abreast of events through articles in newspapers and other forms of media programs.

Health care is one of the biggest topics of the day. There are many people with on-going health problems that require expensive medications. Their prescriptions are taking a bite out of their finances and they do not have health insurance.

Abused women in many areas of the world need our support to find ways to end such treatment. Abuse of female inmates has been discovered in our own prison system.

At the School of Christian Mission this year we were asked to keep Sudan in our prayers for a just resolution of all of their problems. This

part of the world is in dire need of clean water for drinking and rain for their dry soil. This is just one of their urgent needs. We learned that our own Native American citizens need our support to improve living conditions in many areas. They also work support as they seek to prevent the loss of additional sacred land to interests that wish to acquire them for their own profit making projects.

On a personal level, are you turning off lights when they are not being used? Have you changed to florescent bulbs to save on electricity? Do you recycle plastic bottles — with lids removed — and take plastic bags back to the grocery store to be recycled? Are you doing your part to preserve the environment? When you REUSE,

REDUCE and RECYCLE, you are helping to address the problem of global warming.

**Leta M. Arnold**

**717 538 8770**

**GOING GLOCAL**

*Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.”-Ephesians 2:19 NKJV*

*Hello Sisters of The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Greetings in Membership to You!*

My reflections these days are on the many past, present, new and unique ways we can consider opening our doors to more members. “*Going Glocal*” means reaching out globally and locally. As United Methodist Christians, we are taught that the whole world is our parish. These are the challenges that are in the forefront of my mind. We need to develop a campaign of invitation to the ministry of our organization through individual, impromptu discipleship with Welcome Packets or a concerted well-planned effort to reach all ethnicities, cultures, age groups, denominations and abilities.

If you have not developed your Committee on Membership, it is time to do so. This task is too great for one Membership Coordinator to tackle alone. The Committee is made up of the Executive or Program committee on your Mission Team, whose purpose, according to our

*2009-2012 Handbook*, is to assist local and district units in inviting new members, cultivating membership, analyzing membership needs, organizing new units, revitalizing struggling units, and interpreting the PURPOSE, role and responsibilities of United Methodist Women and the Women's Division.

Share the wonderful news of United Methodist Women and how this Women's Ministry can fulfill needs. It is suggested that we have a display at every gathering showing ways we can support spiritual, social, and educational growth. The spiritual growth, geographic and issue studies at our Schools of Christian Mission can lead to experiences that change lives and form disciples.

Mission education initiatives such as the *Ubuntu Explorers'* program, which enables women in the United States to partner with women around the world to experience others' lives on a short-term basis; the *Green Team*, which addresses the issue of climate change and offers suggestions on ways to improve the environment; and a Reading Program that offers thought-provoking books for reflection and discussion.

We had a productive district MNO lunch meeting at the 2009 School of Christian Mission. The meeting reminded us of our shared concerns. All districts have goals for reorganized or new local units in each district. Formal *New Unit* forms were distributed to the district representatives to cement our commitment to achieve these goals.

Please ask for my assistance wherever needed in the new unit process. It usually takes four weeks to receive instructions and certificates from the Women's Division. As a former district president without a MNO district coordinator during most of my tenure, I gained experience in reorganizing and recruiting new units. This task needs full support from all officers and the help of receptive local church pastors and women's ministry leaders. Remember, "the squeaky wheel gets the oil." Stay fully engaged with the local churches in your district.

Membership is about **Establishing Relationships**, not just visiting churches; **Expanding the Circle**, with fellowship and resources to those outside your local area; and **Building Communities**, being a

community of women involved in mission.

Working in His vineyard,

**Janet A. Mills H: 215 438 6177 C: 215 300 9080**  
[mills6240@aol.com](mailto:mills6240@aol.com)

*We Want to Share the Wealth!*

**We are looking for deserving Teen-Agers,  
Aged 14 to 18 years and  
Young Adult Women, Aged 19 to 25 years!  
Curious?**

**Call Anna Bickhart, EPAC UMW President  
610 670 1671**

<b>President</b>	<b>Anna S. Bickhart</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Gladys B. Hubbard</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Henrietta H. Thomas</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Janet Evans</b>
<b>Chairperson, Comm. on Nominations</b>	<b>Laura J. Mitchell</b>
<b>Secretary of Program Resources</b>	<b>Joy Frazier</b>
<b>Communications Coordinator</b>	<b>Frances J. Rivers</b>

**MISSION COORDINATORS**

<b>Spiritual Growth</b>	<b>Susan Dziuk</b>
<b>Social Action</b>	<b>Leta M. Arnold</b>

Education & Interpretation	Mary Lou Kerrick
Membership, Nurture and Outreach	Janet A. Mills
Needlework Circle Chairperson	Mary Ann Repsher
Chairperson, Permanent Trust Funds	Ethel L. Malone

## **COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS**

**Class of 2009 Madolyn E. Massey, Mary Bamford**

**Class of 2010 Willie A. Black, Dorothy D. Miller**

**Class of 2011 Laura J. Mitchell, Barbara Woods**

**Class of 2012 Mary White**

## **SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION**

Dean	Althea Harmon
Assistant Dean	Amy Dwyer
Registrar	Minnie Chamberlain

### **UMW Representatives**

**Anna Bickhart, Janet Evans, Donna Blanshine, Frances J. Rivers, Grace P. Potts, Gladys B. Hubbard, Mary Lou Kerrick**

### **At Large**

**Ruth Baker, Sara Bergstresser, Minnie Chamberlain, Gladys McGrath, Janet A. Mills, Mildred Simpson**

**United Methodist Women is not a knitting circle  
although we work systemically for the rights  
of textile workers around the world.**

**It is not a coffee clutch,  
although we promote an awareness and usage  
of fairly traded products.**

**It is not a self-help touchy feely support group,  
although we've changed millions upon millions  
of lives in the past 140 years.**

## **United Methodist Women**

**is an 800,000 member-strong organization of women who seek to know God and make life better for women, children, youth and marginalized neighbors in the ever-expanding global village of today's world. We create a supportive community that provides opportunities for change. United Methodist Women's Mission Giving is at work in 103 mission institutions here in the United States and in nearly 300 programs and institutions in more than 58 countries around the world. We support mission service opportunities, mission education programs and nurture and develop programs for our membership.**

**Because we believe, we act:**

**United Methodist Women is Love in Action**

**Because we believe, we have stories:**

**United Methodist Women is God's Tools for Mission**

**United Methodist Women**

**Faith \* Hope \* Love in Action**

<http://www.gbgm-umc.org/umw-epac/assembly.htm>