

West District Cactus Patch



President Colleen Becker

Published for United Methodist Women

June 2021

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West District announces their theme for 2021: "Season of Change"

*"There is a time for everything and a
season for every activity under
heaven..." (3:1)*
*"...a time to tear and a time to
mend,
a time to be silent and a time to
speak,
a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time to make
peace."*

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
DESERT SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE
WEST DISTRICT

2021 LOCAL ORGANIZATION CALENDAR

All of these events are dependent upon decisions made by the leadership of the Desert Southwest Conference according to the current pandemic conditions.

Desert Southwest Annual Conference

June 10–13, 2021
Convention Center, Mesa

Mission u, via Zoom

June 25-26, July 23-24, & August 13-14, 2021

Read Christine Jones' article in this Cactus Patch for details and registration information.

Cactus Patch Articles Due

August 15, 2021

Joint Desert Southwest Conference Annual Celebration and West District Annual Celebration

October 9, 2021
Conference/Districts Leadership Co-Hosts

Cactus Patch Articles Due

November 15, 2021

Please send Cactus Patch articles to Cheryl Buchholtz: westsecBuchholtz@yahoo.com.

FAITH TALKS.... Did you know that

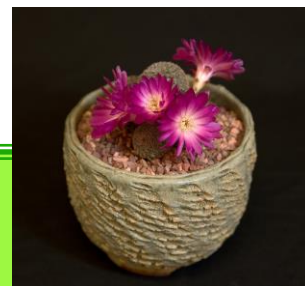
United Methodist Women has podcasts on their website called **Faith Talks**? Faith Talks are monthly conversations with United Methodist Women hosted by Jennifer R Farmer, Spotlight PR. Each conversation explores themes and resources that empower us to put faith, hope and love into action.

CHANGES CAME TO WEST DISTRICT DIRECTORY

The new 2021 West District Directory is DIGITAL this year. Do you need a copy of the 2021 West Directory? Just let me know.... Additional copies will be sent to anyone contacting: westsecBuchholtz@yahoo.com ~ Cheryl

Conversation with Colleen

United Methodist Women DSC WD president Colleen
cbecker14@cox.net



Before starting this article, I looked back to see what I wrote last year at this time. We were all told to be safe to stay at home. Churches closed their doors and shopping almost came to a standstill. The general thought was we can endure this for a month or two. Little did we know just how long it would last. Hopefully by now everyone that wants to receive the vaccine has had the opportunity. Churches are opening their doors again with new guidelines to follow. Maybe soon we can be back to more normal situations.

I want to thank all of you that completed the census for 2020. Final numbers have not been received yet from National. When more of the units respond, the program planners have a clearer knowledge of what is most important to each of us for our focus in the coming years.

In the May-June issue of *response magazine* information was included about Assembly 2022. It is time to start planning to attend. Theme for this meeting will be "Turn It Up." Orlando Convention Center will be the meeting place and the date will be May 20-22, 2022. This is a time for deep worship experiences, workshops and town halls, and bonding with our sisterhood. There is NOTHING like Assembly. Visit Assembly2022.org to find out more. Early registration fee will be \$330 and runs from September 1, 2021 through November 30, 2021. This will include lunch on Friday and Saturday. Hope to see you there.

Plans are underway now for Annual Celebration in October. Again, this year we will join the other districts and conference for a combined virtual celebration. The meeting will be similar to last year with some adjustments that we hope will be improvements. Zoom meetings are definitely a work in progress. More information will be coming later.

Blessings to all of you.

Colleen Becker, West District president

The Purpose of The United Methodist Women

United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop a creative supportive fellowship and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Chatter with Christine,

jones.sensei@gmail.com

United Methodist Women DSC WD vice president
Glendale United Methodist Church



"Maybe you were made queen for just such a time as this."
-Esther 4:14

Here we are approaching the summer. And what a busy year 2021 has turned out to be already. With my technology skills at the ready, I have joined with the Mission u team to prepare for this summer's sessions. I am once again playing the role of technical help. This year's Mission u span three months. They are on Friday evenings and Saturdays. [Registration](#) is now open. I know that I want to attend all three. The one in June is a Youth Study. I believe my unit has decided to band together to send our youth leader. What a fantastic idea!

- June 25-26, 2021 - *Becoming Peacemakers in a Culture of Violence*, Study Leader - Rachel Mosher
- July 23-24, 2021 - *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, Study Leader - Billie Fidlin
- August 13-14, 2021 - *Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living Into the Church's Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship*, Study Leader - Dior DeSormeau

Did you join the UMW Holy Humor Retreat? I was there. I am sure I needed that laughter yoga! I think we might have to do laughter yoga as a program later this year. It was too much fun. And did you see all the funny socks? Such fun!

Have you been planning your United Methodist Women Sunday? I had the blessed opportunity to speak at First United Methodist Church of Glendale. Writing that sermon was a bright shining moment in my week. I had the chance to share my view of my Unit, small but mighty! What are you doing for your United Methodist Women's Sunday?

Thanks to a lot of wonderful ideas from our program suggestions with the vice presidents at the LDD training, my unit has come up with restriction-friendly fundraising plans for raising our funds for mission. Did you know that in 2019, your Desert Southwest United Methodist Women exceeded their pledges by 41%. That is you! You are so incredible and actively working towards advocating for justice, fostering spiritual growth, and developing leaders. What are your restriction-friendly ideas? Send them in for the next newsletter and let's all work at changing the world.

As I shared with my congregation in May, "We can help! We do help. We will help. We are here. We are united." We are the United Methodist Women. For 152 years, we have worked to change the world. Keep it up! As National President Shannon Priddy said in 2019, "Maybe we are United Methodist Women for such a time as this." Yes. We are.

God bless you and keep you safe.

Your Sister in Christ

Christine Jones

Chit Chat with Cheryl

United Methodist Women DSC WD
Trinity United Methodist Church, Phoenix
westsecBuchholtz@yahoo.com



It is that time of year when some churches are experiencing the Methodist Church tradition of moving pastors to new assignments. Below is an explanation of this tradition and why Methodist churches still adhere to this practice.

"Our unique system of deploying clergy has its roots in the earliest days of Methodism. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, preached up to 40,000 sermons in his lifetime. He was an "itinerant" preacher, traveling from town to town in England, setting up Methodist societies.

"John Wesley believed that itinerant preachers who moved from place to place were more effective than those who settled in, grew comfortable, and wore out what they had to say," says the [Rev. Belton Joyner](#).

In a [letter to the Rev. Samuel Walker](#) in 1756, Wesley wrote, "We have found by long and consistent experience that a frequent exchange of preachers is best. This preacher has one talent, that another; no one whom I ever yet knew has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation."

In the early days of Methodism in America, a pastor — most often a [circuit rider](#) — might be appointed to half of a state or more. His appointment might be for only three months, after which he moved to another circuit. Thousands of the oldest United Methodist congregations today trace their history to a circuit rider.

These riders traveled from place to place to begin Methodist societies. Eventually, especially after the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, most of these societies became congregations. This practice continued and became the basis for the itinerant system The United Methodist Church uses today. United Methodist pastors are sent, not called or hired. "Itinerancy" refers specifically to the commitment by pastors to go and serve wherever their bishops send them. "Appointment" is the action taken by bishops. These are different, yet related.

Clergy in The United Methodist Church commit to serve where their bishop appoints them. Appointments are typically for one year at a time, though the bishop may move any itinerant pastor at any time. The goal of the appointment process is to match as much as possible the gifts and graces of the particular pastor or deacon with the ministry needs of a particular congregation or ministry setting. In this "serial leadership" of consecutive pastors and deacons — no two are alike — over time, the combination of skills blends to form a broad base of developed ministries.

While bishops make appointments, they incorporate a consultative process outlined in The Book of Discipline that includes district superintendents, clergy and pastor/staff parish relations committees. The needs and desires of clergy are considered, but the mission of the church comes first. Joyner explains, "In a connectional system such as United Methodism, the question from any individual congregation or from any individual [clergy] is not, 'What is best for me?' The question is 'What is best for us, the whole connection?' The one who has oversight, the bishop, makes those decisions. (The New Testament word for bishop is *episkopos*, which means 'the one who can see the whole picture.')

"The changing of pastors brings different and often-needed gifts to the local church (1 Cor. 12:4). The changing of settings can keep a pastor refreshed. The missionary journeys of Paul are surely a reminder of that (for example, Acts 13:2-14:7; 15:36-18:22; 18:23-21:19)."

This content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.

Membership Care

United Methodist Women DSC, WD

Barbara Kelton, West District, membership care

There is nothing happening with Membership at this time. We are all getting ready to hibernate from these tough summers. Everywhere the common theme is **"It will be better than ever when we get back together in the fall!"**

Have an enjoyable summer! Sent with Christian love ~ Barbara

\$\$\$\$ Money Matters \$\$\$\$

United Methodist Women DSC, WD

Michele Justice, West District treasurer, Liberty



Dear West District United Methodist Women:

Greetings and salutations from your treasurer.

We have had such an optimistic start to 2021 and financially, we have been able to maintain with all of our giving and have paid nearly 1/3 of our annual pledged amount to the conference. A few of our units have begun using the new remittance form and it is easier to complete and use. I recommend giving it a try! Off with the old, on with the new! I emailed the new form in January, but if you need one re-sent, please just send me an email and let me know.

As our pledge calls us to "continue to develop creative and supportive fellowship and to expand concepts of mission thru participation in the Global ministries of the church", we have found that this pandemic required us to become innovative regarding our fund raising. West District United Methodist Women units stepped up to the challenge! The West District was able to give more than our pledged amount to the Desert Southwest Conference for 2020. If your unit found a new and unique way to raise funds, please share your ideas with other units so they can give it a try. Happy Spring and stay well.

Sincerely, Michele Justice

Treasurer, West District United Methodist Women

Is your unit having problems coming up with programming that holds the interest of your membership? CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES ON THE WOMEN'S PAGES OF THE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN WEBSITE. <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/programs-events>



The Kitchen

The United Methodist Women Kitchen is one of those places where we organize to ensure that all are fed, both literally and figuratively. How are you organizing locally to make things happen in a new way? Resources will help you rethink your outreach and "cook up" fresh ideas

Program Resources, Janet Rummel

United Methodist Women DSC WD

giraffejanet@hotmail.com



Hi Ladies,

This is my first article for the *Cactus Patch* since taking the position of Secretary of Program Resources for the West District. I enjoy reading and sharing with others about the books on the United Methodist Women's Reading list. I have a few questions for you. Were you able to download the 2021-2022 reading list? Did you have any zoom meetings concerning the books you have read? Did you check with your local library to see if any of the books were available? Did you use any "new methods" of getting people interested in the books? Did you know you can read any book from 2016-2020 list?

I would love to hear from you.

I would like to recommend *Rise from Caged Bird to Poet of the People*. Maya Angelou. This is a bonus book and I obtained it from our local library.

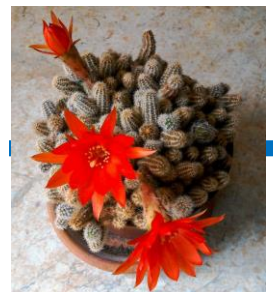
Janet Rummel
secretary of program resources

The 2020-2021 Reading List may be downloaded by this link: <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram>.

Nominations Report - Vicki Keel

United Methodist Women DSC WD

VIkeel55@gmail.com



As I write this, our world is changing with new mask guidelines for those who are fully vaccinated and thereby return to "normalcy". Many of our churches have returned to in person services. It will be good for our souls and emotional well- being to see each other, be able to hug each other and resume activities. There are changes to our spiritual world, too. Bishop Bob Hoshibata is retiring and so is District Superintendent Nancy Cushman.

Trinity United Methodist Church Phoenix is getting a new pastor as we say goodbye to our pastor of seven years, Rev. Stephen Govett. With so many changes on the horizon, I am comforted in the steadfastness of my faith and good works of United Methodist Women.

Speaking of good works, your West District needs you to be willing to step out in faith and consider being a member of our leadership. To be blunt, the nominations committee is in desperate need of members! Please prayerfully consider taking on a role- be an agent of change! The biggest commitment is attending the quarterly district meetings.

If you're not able to join; I challenge you to reach out to one or two United Methodist Women members you know and encourage them to consider it! I would be remiss not to mention that the West District also needs a Chair for Social Justice. Our new normal may look a little different- but it will always include the United Methodist Women! I look forward to seeing you and even greeting a few of you as part of our future leadership team. Let's step out in Faith to together ensure United Methodist Women continues for another 150 years and that the West District thrives. Please email or call!

Blessings,
Vicki Keel, West District, chair of nominations
Email: vkeel@gmail.com

UNIT PRESIDENTS...IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Each of you will soon be getting a phone call from a West District Officer asking that you supply a name of someone to serve on this committee. It is not feasible for Vicki to do all of this work on her own. Please contact someone in your unit who will be willing to help Vicki with this work - West District cannot continue without your help and involvement.

Positions we need to fill:

Social Action

About four or five members for the Nominating Team

Ladies, we have lost another unit. District is aware that units are having trouble filling positions. We probably need to have a District-wide conversation about what we can do to prevent other units from closing. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please send those ideas to any West District Officer. Please be part of the solution for this **mission-oriented** society - the world needs us and the work we do.

**"2021 MISSION u Studies -
Delivered to your home at "no charge" -
All Are Welcome!**



June 26, 2021

"Becoming Peacemakers in a Culture of Violence"

Youth and young adult study

Study leader: Rachel Mosher

July 23 - 24, 2021

"Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in School"

Study Leader: Billie Fidlin

Saturday, August 14, 2021

"Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living in the Church's Moral Witness Through Radical Discipleship"

Study Leader: Dior DeSormeau

REGISTER NOW: <https://dscumc.org/united-methodist-women/mission-u/>

We hope to see you all there!

Janette Gann, Mission u dean

Jgann1329@gmail.com

480-980-1329

Billie Larme, Mission u assistant dean

Education for Mission

United Methodist Women DSC WD

Susan Briner, Lakeview United Methodist Church



I have about 30 kitchen bags full of clothing that we have collected for immigrants and border families. Does anyone know where we can donate them to be used by those who need them? Please contact me. My contact information is in the West District directory.

Spiritual Growth

United Methodist Women DSC WD

Jen Kistler, Trinity United Methodist Church

Sisters in Christ,

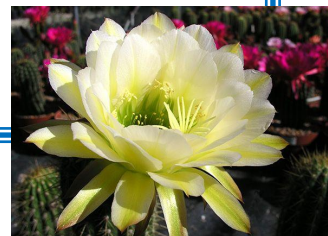
I have been thinking of the hope we all carried with us during this last year. I'm sure there is joy among us that we seem to be getting a reprieve. I have hope that is true.

The Bible has over 100 references to HOPE. I have enclosed a few of them.

"And now I want each one of you to extend that same intensity toward a full-bodied hope, and keep at it till the finish." (Hebrews 6: 10-11)

"We who have run for our lives to God have every reason to grab the promised hope with both hands and never let go." (Hebrews 6:18-20)

"But now what do I look for? My hope is in you." (Psalms 39:7)



A Prayer of Gratitude for Spiritual Growth

Dear God,

There is so much that I am **grateful** for today, I have arms! I have legs! I have feet! I can speak! I can think! I can hear! I can see! I am well! My family is safe, and I am so **grateful!** Today, I will allow **gratitude** to open new doors and close old ones.

I will be **grateful** for everything! Every little thing! Every big thing!

Today, I will allow **gratitude** to be my God!

Today, I will allow my **grateful** heart to let God know that I am trusting, believing in and holding on to God's promises. I am **grateful** that God has promised that s/he will clothe, feed and shelter me!

God has promised that s/he will open the sea, and that I will make it across without being drowned. God has promised that I shall now get weary! I shall not fall! I shall not be overcome by anything.

I am **grateful** that God is with me; on my side and by my side!

What could possibly go wrong today?

Nothing! And for this, I am **grateful!** And So It Is!

~ written by Iyanla Vanzant

The Cactus Patch "Town Crier"



Contrary to what the local town crier has been "crying" - the United Methodist Churches are NOT closed during this deadly virus pandemic. United Methodist Women are still actively engaged in learning opportunities such as Mission u and their famous reading program. Many churches are supporting ZOOM Bible studies, journaling, church services, or other forms of programs focusing on the physical and mental health of their members. Units are finding ways to raise mission money by hosting virtual pledge and installation services, virtual and email cookie and baked goods sales.

Trinity United Methodist Church, Phoenix

Submitted by Cheryl Buchholtz, communications

Trinity United Methodist Church is slowly opening its doors. We may have been on Virus Vacation, but we have not been **CLOSED**. Our mission work has continued, and we are always looking for ways to support our mission commitments.

We have found that having small group meetings at a member's home after church has been a welcome way to again join together in fellowship and catching up on "the latest news." We may be rethinking our meeting format to make attendance more realistic in light of our members who can no longer drive or drive at night. We are thinking out of the box and considering lots of options for meetings and bringing our members together.

New Song United Methodist Women, Surprise

Submitted by Kimi Ivey, communications

Despite the pandemic and all the challenges it has put our congregation through, our United Methodist Women continue to meet and share and explore different ways to share God's love with others in our church and surrounding community.

Since being able to meet in person again, we have had not only a fabulous Souper Supper fundraiser for a monetary donation to our local St. Mary's Food Bank and Eve's Place women's shelter, but also a Bible and Upper Room collection for donation to UMOM New Day Center. Our generous congregation gathered 125 Bibles and over 100 devotionals for the UMOM donation.

To top off the quarter a group of ladies had a very special tour of Eve's Place shelter and were able to see just how blessed the ladies and children are who go through their programs.

But our plans did not stop there. Despite the fact that there are fewer people here in the summer months, the United Methodist Women will continue to meet. We will continue to take safety precautions but encourage those who are able and comfortable to come and join us over the hot summer months. Plans are being made for fabulous programs and gatherings for those that are here and will include lunch out, a church-wide movie and even a new school year recognition! We are very excited to get back into the groove of things and share with our congregation and community.

Our Dabblers card making group, as well as our Needlers quilting circle and Knit Wits Prayer Shawl Ministry have not stopped sharing their special brand of God's love over the quarter. Each one continues to make cards, quilts, and shawls to share with our church and community. Each circle a reminder of how we can make a difference in people's lives, even with the smallest items!

The United Methodist Women of New Song look forward to a busy, productive, and blessing filled summer.

Prescott United Methodist Women

The Prescott United Methodist Women has had several busy months! We are enjoying the programs crafted each month around our theme for this year that follows four key points of the Serenity Prayer (Serenity, Acceptance, Courage and Wisdom). The Mission u January retreat that centered on the book *Peace in an Anxious World* gave us the idea to continue the learning and healing from all that has transpired these last several months. Each quarter we look at all aspects of one specific point and how our lives and the world are affected. It has been an enjoyable time to share and take a deeper dive into a particular aspect.



We started our Saturday meetings every other month, and that allows us to have people who work to be able to join us. We are still on Zoom through May, but that is to change soon after the May Saturday meeting. We will rejoice at time in person again!

We gained three new/returning members and we are ready to launch a new spring program, called a "Fun-Raiser". It is designed for fellowship and supports our mission project identified as raising funds and other resources to support childhood hunger initiatives locally. The Fun-Raiser "Art in the Air" will be the first Saturday of June, outside, and provides ample space with perfect weather to be socially distanced at tables yet together. All art supplies are being donated. We'll have painting on canvas and colored-pencil drawing all to music with art-full tips guided by our resident artist whose medium is colored pencils. Many local families have

struggled this year and children the most with being out of school and missing meals. Our donations are going to local groups that feed families with children, and our focus for the remainder of the year is toward this as well. Entrance to the event is a request for a cash donation and/or non-perishable food items. We are marketing this actively and hope to fill all 25 seats easily with everyone welcome to space/seats/easels available.

We appreciated receiving the Mission Today certificate and the certificate of completion for Racial Justice for the projects we worked on last year, including the books many of us read from the UMW Book list and those certificates. Additionally, we also were finally able to give a special award to Peggy Rambikur for her amazing contributions to United Methodist Women and Prescott United Methodist Church. From the book club - Hooked on Books - to all her volunteer activities such as the Women's Bible Study, Peggy is loved by all of us. As with everything, even though we applied in the last quarter of 2020, the Covid challenges and meeting in person to give her the award took time. We made it happen though. Karon Keeler, our past president was able to present it to Peggy in person, picture included here. We think Peggy knows how much we treasure her, but it was fun to surprise and see her smile. We look forward to our other events that are in planning now.



Respectfully submitted and blessings to all,
Cheri Hull, president
PRESCOTT UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Women

A letter sent to members and fellow United Methodist Women of the West District by
President Sandra Bradley

SPRING INTO SUMMER UNIED METHODIST WOMEN NEWS!

Well, it looks like, by the time we are all back in Sun City West in the fall, we will be maskless. I am hoping that we can get together for a fall luncheon. It may need to be box lunches but at least we will be together. The Team will be keeping track of the guidelines over the summer and we hope to plan something.

Thank you all for your generous donations to "Prayer and Self Denial." We sent \$515.00 to the National Office. We also, as a Unit, donated \$100.00, on the National Day of Giving, to the Legacy Endowment Fund. Together we are building our legacy.

I am sure many of you heard about the "break-in" at Dysart Community Center. Many expensive items were stolen including the children's electronic tablets. The Team voted to send \$500.00 to them. The funds coming from our pledge account and Mission Candle account. It will be used to help with their summer programs. We also donated \$100.00 to the Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church Mission Committee to help them buy Bibles for UMOM New Day Center.

Our own National Mission Institution, Wesley Community Center and Golden Gate Community Center were the recipients of a donation from "Season of Sharing" this year, which was GREAT NEWS!! They provide for over 350 children in after school programs. They need items for their summer programs as well, so we sent them \$200.00 to help with snacks and other program needs.

The Team discussed creating a fund that could be used to help our United Methodist Women members in case of a financial need. This past year our membership has experienced some tragic losses which can be financially overwhelming. We would like to create an account—we will call "United Methodist Women Cares" and it would be for these special times of need. If you would be interested in helping us build this account you can donate by sending a check to Jan Bosio, our Treasurer. Make the check out to Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church-United Methodist Women and on the memo line, put "United Methodist Women Cares."

Lastly, the Missions Committee is planning to collect school supplies for Dysart and Nadaburg school children during June and July. They will provide a list in the "e-news" and in the June "Voice" stating the items needed. I know many of you have helped out with this summer project in the past and I told Missions we would help again.

Although we have all been restricted because of the virus, our love still goes out and your dedication to our projects continues. Thank you again for your pledges and continuing to light our Mission Candle. These things have helped us help others. I will be in Show Low this summer but the Team will still be available if you have needs or suggestions for our unit. Please contact any of us.

Hope to see you in person in October! Blessings, Sandy Bradley

***KUDOS to the women of Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Women. This report from President Sandy Bradley demonstrates the dedication that we all have to helping others in our world. Congratulations to this group of awesome women and the others who are also involved in such meaningful mission work.

Sun City First United Methodist Women

First United Methodist Women of Sun City

Summer is almost here and our unit is in recess until September. We began the year combining our three circles into one. With so many of our members not feeling safe to meet in group settings we decided to have one meeting a month. We have met in the fellowship hall at our church so we could social distance.

At our May meeting we decided to have a speaker come to present the program. Cheryl Buchholtz, our West District secretary and communications chairman came. She told the story of "The Little Teacup" based on Jeremiah 18:1-6. She also talked about her life the last few months. Jen Kistler, our West District spiritual growth coordinator and shepherdess to our unit, came also. Everyone enjoyed having them with us and we will invite them to one of our monthly meetings when we reconvene in September.

During the month of February our soup ladies conducted our annual frozen soup sales. They get together once a week and make three favorite kinds of soup and then freeze it to sell. This has been a very popular project for about 10 years. Several people buy many bags of soup to have in the freezer. Proceeds are used to support our missions.

Another ongoing project we do for missions is recycling. Members of our congregation bring water bottles and aluminum cans. We then turn them in for cash. This helps us do a small part in saving the universe.

Colleen Becker, secretary/treasurer



Willowbrook United Methodist Women

Submitted by Nancy Prevost



Willowbrook United Methodist Women made it through 2020. Now it is 2021 and we are still staying safe and slowly getting back to normal with our meetings and lunches for the summer.

All of the circles kept in touch during 2020. Some had monthly zoom meetings with a program and devotion and getting all information regarding United Methodist Women and also the church. Others made phone calls and used email. Not everyone has the technology, but we were able to reach out to everyone. This year some of the smaller circles are meeting for lunches.

We finished off our zoom meetings with the Installation of United Methodist Women Officers on February 20th, program written and presented by Lynn Koan. the importance of the cup lies in the fact that it has its own unique function to perform. Then Lynn added, "Likewise, you are the only woman called by God to perform the duties of your office at this time."

She then explained the meaning of the favorite cup to represent the commitment and dedication to the office to which we were elected. The simplicity of the cup reminds us of everyday tasks of each office, the importance of the cup lies in the fact that no other item would serve its function as well as it does.

"Now hold the cup in your hands," the size and shape represent your responsibilities are manageable, as long as you are in God's hands, the rim which has no beginning or ending which symbolizes Christ's mission is never ending. The fact that your cup is empty suggests a need to be filled. The question is: How will you fill it? Will you fill your cup with enthusiasm and joy as you perform the duties of your office, will you uphold the Purpose of United Methodist Women? Will you fill your cup with the spirit of care for all God's children? If so, please answer:

With God's help I will!
She then congratulated the new officers!

There were 19 that attended, and it was lovely. Picture attached of our zoom installation!



We were finally given the approval to have Unit meetings inside the church in the Fellowship Hall. Following procedures, we could only accommodate 34 members. Tables were set up with 6 feet distancing with having to wear masks and we were able to use a couple of microphones. We decided to make this a fun meeting, so we played games. Prizes were given out to the winners. Cute Christian jokes were told. It was a wonderful time to be together with people we had not seen in person for over a year. We are ending the season with another get-together of games and fun for May with a hat contest for the most glamorous and most creative.

HOLY HUMOR....and God surely knows we can all use more of this.

A woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services, when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled: "Stop! Acts 2:38!" (Acts 2:38 says "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins.")

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: 'Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you.'

'Scripture?' replied the burglar. 'She said she had an Ax and Two 38s!'

Best to know your Bible verses better!

Message From the President

We Are Commissioned

The Easter story makes me laugh. It's so relatable to women leaders in the church.

Consider the scene at dawn on Easter morning. All four Gospels record the story, and each Gospel lists women as the discoverers of the empty tomb. Matthew says it was Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary." Mark's account is similar: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome. Luke simply states "the women" went to the tomb but later explains that Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Joanna and several other women told the apostles what had happened. John notes only Mary Magdalene.

The writers didn't get their stories straight about which women were at the empty tomb—but they agreed that it was definitely women.

For Jesus' followers, surely that morning was one of confusion and despair. Their teacher, their hope, had died a gruesome death right in front of them. Where was the kingdom he had promised? Where was the peace he was to bring? How could they spread Jesus' teachings now that their own lives were in danger?

Then enter the women declaring that Jesus' body is gone. How will the disciples explain that?

Luke says Peter rushes to the tomb to see for himself. John says Peter and John need to verify the women's news. It wasn't good for the credibility of the movement to rely on the word of women. And yet the angel, or Jesus himself, depending on the account, appeared first to the women.

That empty tomb was an important moment in the new movement to be called Christianity. The news of the Resurrection being given to women was an important moment in the new movement to be called Christianity. The women receiving, believing and sharing the

news of the Resurrection was an important moment in the new movement to be called Christianity.

The women are commissioned for a critical role. We, United Methodist Women, are commissioned for a critical role.

"Go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God,'" Jesus tells Mary Magdalene after appearing first to her on the first Easter morning (John 20:17). And she did just that, becoming the first person to proclaim the good news of the Resurrection. Her role even earned her the title of the "Apostle to the Apostles" from theologian Hippolytus of Rome.

The Easter story speaks especially to us women in ministry. It reminds us that Jesus is doing a new thing, bringing new life all around us, and we get to witness that work and be part of it. Even if we're overlooked, even if others can't remember our name, we are important to the work God is doing in the world. God calls women to mighty works.

When I read the Easter story, I laugh because though the world misleads us, God's truth prevails. Though the world tells us we don't matter or that we're less-than, God says otherwise. Though the accounts of which women were at the tomb may vary, we know that news of the Resurrection was first given to *women*.

I laugh with joy as I think about God's daughters persevering in tough situations, living out the call God has given us and letting the Holy Spirit to move in us, strengthen us and compel us to be the people God created us to be. Happy Easter. ■

'AINISE ISAMA'U
President
United Methodist Women

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