

## DISTRICT FALL MEETING

Saturday, September 28  
Tuscola United Methodist Church

The program will be presented by Marilyn  
Hungerford about the Blessing Basket Project.

More information in the next issue of The Beacon.



## SOCIAL ACTION

How hungry have you been?

I was recently working on a youth project in a rural school district. We were trying to come up with ways to serve the families in this area and especially over the summer. An idea was thrown out to serve meals on a consistent basis to the students who normally get free or reduced lunches at school but may have food insecurities over the summer. In my ignorance, I loved the idea but didn't think there would be much of a need for it in this particular district. Lucky for me, a school administrator happened to be at that same meeting. Nearly 35% of students in this rural school district qualify for free or reduced lunches. 3.5 out of 10 kids have or are approaching food insecurities.

This got me thinking and I threw myself into some research. According to the Feeding America website, 2.4 million rural households face hunger and 3/4 of the counties with the highest food insecurity rates are rural. To add to this, 86% of the counties with the highest CHILD food insecurities are from rural areas. I also learned about the toll on mental health that so many parents face when they are in these situations.

This struck me in many ways. Of course I knew hunger had no bias. However, my efforts and attention as far as hunger was concerned generally looked towards larger cities. This makes me realize that I need to be more hungry to seek knowledge about social issues and not lean on my own understanding.

So how hungry are we? How can we be more hungry to search for places that need God's light? For me, that looks like exposing myself to more people, communities and issues and really yearning to understand. It's easy to donate to a food drive or set cans out for the mailman to pick up. Those are all great things! I urge you to search for a deeper understanding of social issues that are near to you heart. Be hungry for a greater understanding. Where there is compassion there is often change.

*And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." Like 3:11*

Jamie Essien  
2007 Peach St, Champaign 61820  
217.480.2698  
jmessien@ymail.com



This year we celebrate 150 years of Mission by the UMW and the women in organizations that came before us. The Legacy Fund Endowment Champaign is still active and receiving donations. Please send your donation directly to the UMW National Office - **United Methodist Women National Office, 475 Riverside Dr, 15th Floor, Attn: LEGACY, New York, NY 10115.**

If you send a check in soon and write March 23<sup>rd</sup> Legacy in comments, there is a donor fund matching, so your monies do twice as much good.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Connor Corner .....	2
Vice President.....	3
Nominations .....	3
Lessie Bates .....	4
Social Action.....	4
Calendar .....	4

## COMMENTS FROM THE CONNOR CORNER

Spring is here. Hallelujah! I always greet spring with joyful anticipation. Everywhere there are signs of revival and new life. Jesus gave us new life by dying on the cross and rising again to be our advocate with God in heaven. Remember Jesus' words and teachings recorded in the Gospels (Good News).

In Matthew 9:37-38, Jesus says to his disciples, "*The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.*" So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send out more workers for his fields. We are his workers. Each one of us has been given a mission. Some lead, some follow; but all United Methodist Women serve Jesus in ways that support and encourage women, children and youth in our home communities and around the world. (*Dicksie shared membership numbers with you and suggestions to recruit, and retain members*).

Each generation has its challenges. I hear our members say that aging and fewer numbers are our primary challenges. I wonder if apathy is a greater challenge. Have we stopped seeing the urgency of the need? This year we want to add to our numbers by retaining, recruiting and reactivating UMW units as well as current members. Remember that to be a member of this fantastic organization, you do not have to be female or a member of a UMC!!! The harvest is plentiful, the need is great.

I want to share a message Caroline Jones our Conference Social Action Person sent out this spring:

Give rather than take  
Love rather than hate  
Better rather than bitter  
Heal rather than wound  
Let go rather than dwell  
Bless rather than stress  
Encourage rather than criticize  
Be grateful rather than resentful  
Choose to be happy and focus on the light  
within each other  
Rather than the shadows.

The **Called General UMC Conference** held in St Louis this year is over. And the voting is done. The Traditional Plan means that nothing is changing in the Discipline. That doesn't mean the issue will go away. Many Christians are angry and hurting on both sides of the debate. Now is a time for caring for each other and our neighbors whoever they may be.

Harriett Jane Olson, General Secretary and CEO of UMW, sent out a pray before the Called Conference, I believe parts of it are still relevant.

**On Sunday:** Pray for the Church, for its lay members, clergy, fellowship, discipleship and leadership work.

**On Monday:** Pray for our resilience and openness to the Holy Spirit who speaks even when we are in self-protective mode.

**On Wednesday:** Pray for the outreach and mission service of the UMC; use the prayer calendar.

**On Thursday:** Pray for the education ministry; for the students and faculty that we support through scholarships, student ministries and publishing.

**On Friday:** Pray for all the justice ministries of the church. Pray for the work to address policies that marginalize and patterns that demean.

**Social Issue Priorities for 2016-2020** are also mission priorities that affect women, children and youth.

- Criminalization of communities of Color: School to Prison Pipeline was our Personal Growth Study in May at Middlefork UMW
- Economic Inequality
- Climate Justice: Be aware of your Carbon Footprint
- Maternal and child Health

**Racial Justice** is in the news more this year. We as UMW members have promoted Racial Justice since our 1<sup>st</sup> Assembly that was not held in St. Louis because the city would not allow our black sisters to stay in the same hotels with their white sisters. I see complacency in my surroundings but anger and hatred toward others more pronounced in the last 2 years. What can you in your local units do to promote Racial Justice? If you don't have a Racial Justice Time Line, pick one up off of the Resource Table. Take pictures of sharing this timeline with your unit, pictures of writing letters to your State and Federal representatives. Take pictures if you march on Springfield or meet with your local town council or school board as you address issues of racial justice. Take pictures of Book Studies. There are several good Racial Justice topics in the UMW Reading List the last few years.

Please take pictures of what you do to Promote Racial Justice and send them to Pat Setzler and to our IGRC UMW communications person Kay Fisher. Her contact info is in the District Directory the Presidents received last December.

(continued on page 3)

## VICE-PRESIDENT

Greetings Ladies,

I know that summer is barely here, but I'm **so** excited about the program for our Annual Meeting in the Fall that I have to tell you about it!

Marilyn Hungerford will speak to us about the Blessing Basket Project which is "helping artisans we serve sustainably graduate from poverty." She will tell stories of the weavers who are using their artistry to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. She will also have some of their beautiful baskets available for purchase so be ready.

In addition, we will have a musical presentation by Rod and Sandra Cain from Northern Illinois. This couple has

been singing together for over forty years. They are involved in presenting Christian music to seniors on a regular basis. They will sing a mix of old hymns and some contemporary Christian gospel music.

Mark your calendars now and join us for a wonder filled day on Saturday, September 28 at Tuscola United Methodist Church! It will be great!

In love and service,  
Pam Socie  
IRD UMW VP (that's a lot of initials!)  
533 CR 2200 E, St Joseph 6183  
217.469.2782  
psocie@gmail.com

## NOMINATIONS

Hi, Ladies, I would like to report that Cindy Dodd from the Mahomet unit will be the new representative for 2021 on the Committee on Nominations. We are still looking for another representative for 2022.

The position for a Program Resource person still needs to be filled. Nina Drollinger, the Conference Secretary of Program Resources and I explained at the Spring meeting that the job does not entail as much physical activity as

before because the books will not be sent for display. Please consider that position, ladies. Have a happy summer!

Judy Hudgens  
978 N Martha's Ct, Rossville 60953  
815.889-4975  
judy.hudgens@gmail.com

(President's article continued)

Officers take note of the handouts and flyers in the President's packet we handed out at the Spring meeting. We did not just kill a few trees, we felt the urgent need to share the information contained in the packets.

- New Shepherdess List - some changes were necessary after the original list was printed in your directories.
- NEW Mission Today Report Form - look at this monthly and see where your unit is on the activities of being involved in mission.
- Legacy Fund - flyer/poster with the mailing address for your checks.
- Next is the Personal Growth flyer - Please notice it is only half a day and is a Social Action activity.
- Mission u flyer and registration form - feel free to copy and distribute to all your members. Notice Bish-

op Frank Beard is doing the main Study.

- IGRC UMW Annual Celebration - please make copies and hand out to your members. This is part of our continuing celebration of UMW's 150 Years of Mission.
- Annual Report from CCH - included are two patterns for items CCH has as an ongoing need. You might think about making a few of these for the children in your own church or school system/community.

I hope to see many of you at Mission u in July.

Yours in Christ,  
Susan Connor  
1431 CR 800 N, Sullivan 61951  
217.259.1649  
radtech20032003@yahoo.com

# LESSIE BATES DAVIS NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

Hello IRD UMW! This is my first time serving as a representative for LBDNH. I am calling myself a re-tread. At one time I was the Program Resource person for our district, and most recently I just rolled off of the nominations committee for the IGRC. You might remember that I LOVE acronyms.

The spring meeting was a blessing, every meeting is for me. Although instead of just making trouble, visiting, and taking pictures, I had work to do. Lisa Graves provided the wish list and you responded in kind. Eighteen of our units provided:

- over \$800 in monetary donations
- \$130 McDonald gift cards
- \$90 for Wal-Mart
- \$35 for Subway
- \$20 for Dollar General
- \$20 for Target
- \$10 for Steak & Shake
- \$10 Dollar Tree

- and a \$15 Visa gift card

Other items brought with love were four children's quilts, blankets, books, toys, and clothing.

Well done ladies! Thank you to those who brought items with them and everyone for continuing to hold this vital resource high in prayer. Our appreciation goes to Lisa Graves who fought the wind and rain to present at two district meetings on the thirtieth of March.

Barb Rascher  
802 E Larmon St, Tolono 61880  
217.766.3578  
rascher@illinois.edu

Patty Russell  
215 Forest Glen, Tuscola 61953  
217.521.0425  
prussell61953@yahoo.com

## MORE SOCIAL ACTION

You did it! Thanks to you and other advocates, the House of Representatives voted 242 to 187 to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA) with bipartisan support.



We're one step closer to ensuring every woman can take home the pay she rightfully earns. Now it's up to the Senate to act, and we need your support to succeed.

Equal pay for equal work is something we can all get behind. As legendary equity advocate Lilly Ledbetter put it, "This is not Democrat. It's not Republican or Independent. This belongs to everybody." Congress must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would:

- Require employers to prove that pay disparities between

men and women are a business necessity and job-related.

- Ban the use of salary history, which has been shown to negatively impact women.
- Protect workers from being penalized for discussing their salaries.

Help employers implement fair-pay practices.

### Resources:

State & Congressional District Gender Pay Resources:

<http://bit.ly/StateofFairPay>

Two Minute Activist on Paycheck Fairness Act: <http://bitly.com/paycheckfairnessact>

The Fight for Fair Pay: <https://www.aauw.org/fairpay/>

The Simple Truth: <http://bit.ly/AAUWTheSimpleTruthEPD>

Work Smart Online: <http://bit.ly/EPDWorkSmart>

## DATES TO REMEMBER

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
July 19-21		Weekend Mission u	Springfield
July 21-24		Weekday Mission u	Springfield
Sept 28	9:30am-2:30pm	District Fall Mtg	Tuscola
Oct 12		GRC UMW Annual Celebration	Fairview Heights



Iroquois River District  
United Methodist Women  
2305 Village Green Place, Ste D  
Champaign IL 61822

**Address Service Requested**