



Sangamon River District
HI LITES

February 2016 Volume XXVI Issue 1



President – Carol Sims
217-899-2880 csims@igrc.org

Dear Friends,

Greetings and blessings in this new year!

Let me share this story with you as it was sent to me:

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him, and every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming.

Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect him from the elements, and to store his few possessions. But then one day, after scavenging for food, he arrived “home” to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky.

The worst had happened; everything was lost. He was stunned again with grief and anger. “God, how could you do this to me!” he cried.

Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the sound of a ship that was approaching the island. It had come to rescue him. “How did you know I was here?” asked the weary man of his rescuers. “We saw your smoke signal,” they replied.

It’s easy to get discouraged when things are going badly. But we shouldn’t lose heart, because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of pain and suffering. Remember, the next time your little hut is burning to the ground---it just may be a smoke signal that summons the grace of God.

For all the negative things we have to say to ourselves, God has a positive answer for it.

You say: “It’s impossible.”
God says: “All things are possible” (Luke 18:27)

You say: “I’m too tired.”
God says: “I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28-30)

You say: “Nobody really loves me”
God says: “I love you” (John 3:16 & 13:34)

You say: “I can’t go on”
God says: “My grace is sufficient” (II Corinthians 12:9, Psalms 91:15)

You say: “I can’t figure things out”
God says: “I will direct your steps” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

You say: “I can’t do it”
God says: “You can do all things through Christ” (Philippians 4:13)

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You say: "I'm not able"
God says: "I am able" (II Corinthians 9:8)

You say: "I can't manage"
God says: "I will supply all your needs"
(Philippians 4:19)

You say: "I'm afraid"
God says: "I have not given you a spirit of fear"
(II Timothy 1:7)

You say: "I'm worried and frustrated"
God says: "Cast all your cares on me" (I Peter 5:7)

You say: "I don't have enough faith"
God says: "I've given everyone a measure of faith"
(Romans 12:3)

You say: "I'm not smart enough"
God says: "I give you wisdom" (I Corinthians 1:30)

You say: "I feel all alone"
God says: "I will never leave you nor forsake you"
(Hebrews 13:5)

Wow!
With God all things are possible!

I sense, more than ever, that we UMW members are in need of more encouragement, more education about what this global organization is all about and how each of our units fit into the big picture, and more communication about what we are doing and can do. These are your executive team's goals this year as we all work together in this ministry.

Mark your calendars for this year's events. Bring members and non-members with you or attend by yourself, but don't let some naysayer stand in your way. We are church leaders. As one pastor recently said to me, "Whenever I really need something done, I turn it over to the UMW!"

God bless you and your units!

.....Carol



Vice President – Carol Pinkerton
217-414-1405 bcdrp@aol.com

Let Us Gather Together: Spring Meeting – Saturday, April 16, 9-12:30

Mark your calendars and bring a guest – come to the Sangamon River District Spring Meeting on Saturday, April 16. No worries – your income tax return isn't due until April 18 so put down your pencils. Come to reconnect with old friends and make some new ones!

Keynote Speaker – Where does your money go when you donate to United Methodist Women? We're going to answer that question at the spring meeting. Come, see and hear how your hard-earned money is used for worldwide missions of the UMW. We are honored to welcome **Reverend Beverly Wilkes-Null**, Pastor of Highland Hope United Methodist Church, as our keynote speaker. Rev. Wilkes-Null is a strong supporter of the missions of the United Methodist Women.

Response Magazine – As preparation for the meeting and as follow-up with your units and circles after the meeting, see the February 2016 issue of UMW's *Response Magazine*. This month's issue contains excellent worldwide mission maps. Note that Cunningham Children's Home and Lessie Bates Neighborhood House are two of the missions that UMW's national dollars support.

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Cunningham Children's Home & Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House – Representatives from both of our UMW-supported organizations will come to the spring meeting and tell us about their current situations as they try to continue to operate during the State of Illinois' budget impasse. Your support of these organizations becomes ever more essential as a result. Please collect and bring contributions from the Cunningham and LBDNH wish lists (see below) – ask your congregations to help, too.

UMW Cookbook Display – Do you have a vintage Methodist Women's cookbook? Bring it with you for a display of cookbooks through the ages! Elaine Knight of our Sangamon River District nominating committee recently told us that vintage church cookbooks are sometimes the only record of women's names that remain from old church membership records. The ladies of New Salem UMW are bringing a 100-year-old Ladies' Aid Society Cook Book from 1916. Can anybody beat that? Bookmark your cookbook with notable names and recipes if you wish. We'll have a viewing table set up and a guardian for your cookbooks to make sure that they are treated respectfully. Don't forget to take your treasured books back home with you when you leave the gathering.

Note: A sack lunch will be available (free will offering) – enjoy lunch with us or grab & go

Cunningham Wish List: *Men's white ankle socks, gift cards to Wal-Mart, Target, Dollar General, Dollar Tree, KFC, Culver's Jimmy John's, Steak n Shake, Pizza Hut, or Monical's. Box Tops for Education, too!*

Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House Wish List: *Diapers, socks, plain T-shirts, gift cards to Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Subway, McDonald's, Dollar General or Target.*

Illioapolis Methodist Church, 501 Matilda, Illioapolis, IL – Directions to Illioapolis United Methodist Church: From Highway 172, Exit 122 to Illioapolis, about 1 mile north of highway. Turn right onto Matilda; go almost 1 mile to the church (past school).



Treasurer – Joanne Randolph
309-287-8428 joannetracylong@gmail.com

Hello All,

My name is Joanne Randolph, and this is my first year serving as your district treasurer. Last year, I served as your district secretary and was still learning the ropes. I look forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting you all at the District Spring Meeting on Saturday, April 16th! Our district pledge for the 2016 is \$55,000. If you have not sent in your local unit's 2016 pledge, please send it to me at your earliest convenience. We will hand out treasurer forms in your spring meeting packets, so please be looking forward to those. Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

May God bless you now and forever.

.....Joanne



Social Action – Virginia McQuiston
217-877-2217 tvmcq83@comcast.net

As I look at the goal report summary for our district, I see a real lack of attention to Social Action issues. I know some of these important issues seem to be far away from us so we lack incentive to act, but I'm recommending several which are close to home. Please encourage your unit to become involved!!! Many depend upon YOU!

*Encourage voter registration within your unit and other members of the church and community. Study the issues, pray for guidance when determining your vote.

*What does your candidate for president say about hunger? Videos of their answer are available on the internet. If you don't use the internet, I'm sure someone in your congregation do OR as a youth in the church to explore these sites and give a report to your unit and congregation.

Search www.circleofprotection.us/candidate-videos or www.bread.org/povertyvideos.

*New legislation is being considered in IL to stop human trafficking. Yes, it happens nearer to you than you might imagine. This includes posting more informational signs and encouraging emergency medical facilities to recognize the signs of this abuse. Contact your state congressman or woman to encourage any legislation which will bring an end to this cruelty.

Get to work! "What does the Lord require of you but to DO JUSTICE, and to LOVE KINDNESS and to WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD" Micha 6:8.

Peace and blessings, Virginia McQuiston



Education & Interpretation - Alice Wiedrich
217-875-5325

Is it possible? Our Conference President, Marge Stout, is completing her fourth year as President! We want to honor her with a Special Mission Gift on October 1. Please send a gift from your unit clearly marked as a gift in mission in her honor.

Another opportunity for giving is the Legacy Fund. This fund is established to observe the 150th anniversary of the beginning of women's mission work in 1869. Set aside 52 cents each month for the next 3 years to reach \$18.72. Or choose to make a gift of \$15.00, \$150.00 or more at any time. We are encouraged to save the date, March 23, for a special day of giving. Details are enclosed.*

These giving opportunities are in addition to our regular pledge for missions for ongoing projects. God has given us so much. Respond generously.

.....*Alice Wiedrich*



Membership Nurture & Outreach-Cinda Pringle
217-468-2265 cjp7685_2002@yahoo.com

Hello to all our brave and blessed United Methodist Women of the Sangamon River District. Thank you to all for the counting reports which were sent to the conference officer who sends all on to National. Yes, the numbers do show we are shrinking and have some units disbanding or not really meeting anymore but are still willing to support the missions as able. We do need you all! Because we are united, we can send over \$55,000.00 to conference and then national in turn supports women, children, and youth at our missions all over the world.

Let your district team know if anything we can do to help your units to be the best you can be. What the units looked like 20 years ago may not be what your church needs now. So it's okay to think outside the box as long as in the end our missions and service for Christ are fulfilled. It has been such an honor to help all of you by being a part of the district leadership team. I say thank you Lord for all the blessings each of you are to me.

.....Cinda Pringle



Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood Reps.
Linda Schneider 217-735-3756 sitnknit@comcast.com
Jeanne` Sims 217-498-7187 pjsims@comcast.net

The Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House is struggling in their efforts to provide services to families in the East St. Louis area. Services like Day Care for both children and older adults, after school programs for kids who need a place to go and have help with their school work, emergency services for homeless, help with utilities, job placement and skills, providing school supplies, and many other needs.

With the state budget still in limbo, Neighborhood House has had to cut back on some of these services, even cutting the wages of those who are employed there. They are depending on volunteers and donations from UMW and other groups in the area to bridge the gap until the state budget is in place. We still need to contact the Governor and other state legislators to urge an end to this budget impasse.

Linda Schneider
217-750-1062
sitnknit@comcast.net

Jeanne` Sims
217-498-7187
pjsims2@comcast.net



Secretary – Barbara Norem
217-864-5948 mnorem2@comcast.net

After serving as your treasurer for the last several years, I am now the secretary for Sangamon River District. I am hoping to see each of you on April 16th in Illiopolis at the Spring District Meeting. If you have any questions that I can help you with, please let me know.
Barbara

LEGACY FUND

2016 marks the second year of the UMW Legacy Fund leading up to the celebration of 150 years of UMW mission in 2019. Please consider giving a gift in memory of one of the women in your unit who made a difference---since 1869 was our founding year, why not give \$18.69 in honor of each of your unit's founders or in honor of women you have known throughout your UMW journey. Or perhaps you, or your unit, want to go the \$150 route. Either way, The Legacy Fund will be an ongoing endowment to ensure that UMW is still mission-strong for our daughters, granddaughters, and all those who follow us on the mission journey. Be sure to send all donations to our District Treasurer, Joanne Randolph, and clearly mark them for The Legacy Fund. Donations will also be accepted at the Spring Meeting in Illiopolis, and pins will be available at that meeting.



CUNNINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOME REP.
Helen Kershaw 217-875-0818
kershaw@ameritech.net

We are still in need of a second District Representative to Cunningham Children's Home. We thank Marcia Brelsfoard for her past years of service as a Dist. Rep. and now she has retired from that position on the District UMW Board. Can you help in this position?

If you or someone you know would be willing to serve in that position, I would be happy to talk with you. There is a Dist. Rep. meeting at Cunningham on Friday, March 4, 10:00-3:00. I will be unable to attend so would like someone to attend in my place. Call 875-0818 if you can attend.

Festival of Quilts: April 8 & 9, 2016

Your president has received the packet of information about the Festival. All forms are included in the packet. Please consider the following:

- Becoming a sponsor of the Festival (individual or unit)
- Be a baker for the Bake Sale
- Volunteer at the Festival
- Enter a quilt in the Show

- Donate a quilt for the Silent Auction
- Donate handmade items for the Gift Shop or Boutique
- (Check all forms in the packets for deadlines for each of these areas.)

MISSION U! Have we got a deal for you!

As United Methodist Women, as well as intelligent individuals, we are life-long learners. Besides, maybe you just need to get away for a few days and don't mind learning something in the process. Mark your calendars and plan to attend Mission U this summer in Springfield.

You have your choice of two: the weekend of July 29-31, or week days of July 31-August 3. If you haven't been before, apply for a scholarship! We will completely pay for one first-timer to the weekend, one to the week day, and one youth for the week day study. Awesome! Further, if you are not a district officer and not already there on scholarship, we will reimburse you \$50 at the end of the study for attending! Learn, share, AND get some money back! What a deal! Watch for the registration forms to come your way!



Chairperson of Nominations—Leanne Roseberry

217-585-8279 leanneroseberry@comcast.net

The Nominations Committee needs your help!!

We are still looking for one more Cunningham Children's Home Representative and a Communications Coordinator. The CCH rep will attend meetings with other district representatives 3 times a year at Cunningham Children's Home. You will be trained by staff on how to be a speaker for CCH. You will set up displays at special events (CCH staff will help, if needed). You will also write an article for the District newsletter, and attend District Officers' meetings. You will serve a maximum 4 year term.

The Communications Coordinator is responsible for the Hi-Lites newsletter. You will gather articles sent in from the other officers, then create and mail out the newsletter. You must also keep an updated mailing list. You will attend District Officers' meetings, and you will serve a maximum 4 year term. Ruth Johnston, our former Communications Coordinator, will be happy to answer any questions regarding this position. Her phone number is 217-825-5533, and her email address is rkjohnston2@comcast.net. (Ruth, thanks for getting this newsletter out for us. We REALLY appreciate it.)

I remember how I felt when I was first asked to serve. I wasn't sure I would be able to do it. But...I soon realized I was working with some amazing women who were there to help me and to support me. These amazing women are here to support you, as well. I thank the ladies who considered these positions, but were unable to commit at this time. I know someone out there is looking for an opportunity to serve. Are you that someone, or do you know that certain someone who would be great in one of these positions? Please let me know. Thanks so much for your help.

.....Leanne

2016 Get Out the Vote Campaign

United Methodist Women are encouraged to work in their communities to help register voters and get out the vote in the 2016 elections. Did you know that in many instances, funds are allocated to local governments based on the voter turnout in their precincts? Your vote does affect your own area's economy in ways you may not have expected. The bigger the voter turnout, the better allocation of funds to your local governmental units. Who knew?

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umw Calendar of Events 2016

Conference Spiritual Growth Seminar

February 26-27 at Springfield First UMC

Cunningham Festival of Quilts

April 8-9 at Cunningham in Urbana

Spring Gathering

April 16 at Illiopolis UMC

Mission U

Weekend School: July 29-31

Weekday School: July 31-August 3

At the Northfield Inn & Convention Center in Springfield

Fall Gathering

September 14 at Auburn UMC

Conference Annual Meeting

October 1 at Decatur Grace UMC

Personal/Spiritual Growth Seminar

November 5 at Decatur First

[End of the Year Reports due in December.]

We have a liaison format to help communications between the district and local units. The shepherdess will try to get reminders and information to you and you, on the other hand, may wish to invite your shepherdess to at least one unit meeting. They would be happy to simply attend and get to know you better, or they'll do a program for you.

SHEPHERDESS ASSIGNMENTS 2016

For information and making connections in keeping with our purpose as

United Methodist Women

Joanne Randolph
Lincoln
Clinton

Helen Kershaw
Monticello
Cisco
Decatur Garver Brick

Carol Sims
Chatham
Riverton
Spfld. Laurel
Spfld. Cotton Hill

Lena Banks
Pana
Blue Mound
Illiopolis

Elaine Knight
Elkhart
Cantrall

Jeanne' Sims
Divernon
Spfld. Douglas

Virginia McQuiston
Cerro Gordo/Hammond/LaPlace
Macon
Decatur Wesley

Linda Schneider
Athens
Mason City
San Jose

Gloria Jones
Assumption
Fairview
Stonington
Morrisonville

Barbara Norem
Forsyth
Niantic
Argenta

Ellen Dixon
Sherman
Rochester
Springfield Kumler

Carol Pinkerton
Pawnee
Auburn
Island Grove

Janet Haning
Beason
Hartsburg
New Salem

Cinda Pringle
Decatur Grace
Moweaqua
Decatur First

Alice Wiedrich
Edinburg
Elwin
Long Creek

Leanne Roseberry
Petersburg
Springfield First
Springfield Grace

Pat Howard
Decatur Christ
Mt. Auburn
Williamsville

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COMMUNICATIONS

If you would like to receive a copy of the Conference UMW newsletter, "The Bridge", by mail, you can subscribe for the 3 issues a year for \$2.00. Send your check and mailing information to the GRC UMW Communications Coordinator, Kay Fisher, 324 S. Center Ave., Bradley IL 60915. Checks should be made payable to IGRC UMW. You can also find the newsletter online at www.igrc.org, click on "communications" and then find United Methodist Women. You can also subscribe to be on the emailing list by checking the box beside United Methodist Women. Kay has also established a UMW Facebook page at igrc.umw. Be sure to "like" and "share".