



MARY AND MARTHA MAIL CIRCLE UMW

Christ United Methodist Church - Mobile, Alabama

FEBRUARY 2014

Sound Foundations: Sound Missions

Adapted from the program
by Becky Louter and Clara Ester.

A special program from *A Calling for This Time-United Methodist Women Program Book 2013-14* to reflect on the rich heritage of our mission institutions and through our gifts that enable the institutions to be physically sound and safe spaces for ministry by caring for present and future property needs.

In your own mind construct a Jenga tower. Build it strong, straight, and on a secure foundation. Imagine it to be a sample of our mission institutions - perhaps Dumas Wesley Community Center in Mobile, Alabama or Gum Moon Residence Hall, San Francisco, California.

It was the dramatic stories about the needs of women and children overseas recounted by missionaries and their wives that brought about the organization of the earliest woman's foreign missionary societies. It was the equally dramatic stories of need among the women and children in our own country, especially the freedwomen of the South that brought forth the organizations for home missions.

The Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in 1869. By 1939, when three Methodist denominations merged to form the Methodist Church, women had organized foreign and home missionary societies in each of them.

In the early days, mission work was carried out almost entirely by volunteers, but the need for trained personnel became apparent. In all branches of Methodism and in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, the deaconess program was begun around the turn of the century in order to meet this need. These committed women were instrumental in establishing and developing many of the early mission projects, which have grown into today's mission institutions.



Matthew 7:24-27

"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 25 Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. 26 But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. 27 When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

Today there are 98 National Mission Institutions in full and in selected service relationships to the United Methodist Women's national office. They are located in inner cities, small towns and rural settings from Nome, Alaska, to St. Croix, Virgin Islands, and from Boston, Massachusetts, to Honolulu, Hawaii. They serve black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and multicultural communities. They are ministries with the poor, elderly, children, youth, women, families and communities.

Amelia Gibbon, executive director of the Friendly Center in North Toledo, Ohio, describes the center, its work, and its

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Selections From the Prayer Calendar + *Mary and Martha Birthdays*

Feb 1 Mary Elizabeth Inn, San Francisco CA
 Feb 2 Kabaka Ndala Alphonsine (M)
 Feb 3 Judy Poole (D)
Feb 4* Jeremias Alfiado Franca (M)
 Feb 5 Betty Tshala (M)
 Feb 6 Juan Guerrero (M)
 Feb 7 Sonia Cruz (D)
 Feb 8 Toberman Neighborhood Center, CA
 Feb 9 Carol Partridge (M)
 Feb 10 Helen Byholt Lovelace (M)
 Feb 11 M. Kathryn Webster (D)
 Feb 12 Lucie Fortier (D)
 Feb 13 Ut Van To (M)
 Feb 14 Florence Ogugua Mefor (M)
 Feb 15 Cornerstone Family Ministries, Tampa FL
 Feb 16 Sonia M. McDaniel (S)
 Feb 17 Delbert Graves (M)
 Feb 18 Marie Roc (S)
 Feb 19 Sally Vonner (S)
 Feb 20 Jae Hyoung Choi (M)
 Feb 21 Alina Saucedo (M)
 Feb 22 Diana Laureano (S)
 Feb 23 Kara Crawford (MI)
 Feb 24 Gertrude Dailey (D)
 Feb 25 Mwana Ngoie Guy Kasanka (M)
 Feb 26 Nigeria: United Methodist children's ministries
 Feb 27 Mary Escobar (M)
 Feb 28 Karen Caldwell (D)

FEB 4 9:30 am To 11:30 am

General Meeting - Hospitality Room
 Brunch - Bring a brunch item to share
 Program - Call to Prayer and Self-Denial
 Leader - Ella Dean Ellisor
Sound Foundations: Sound Missions
 Hostess - Esther Circle
 Prayer Calendar - Lydia Circle
Response - Mail Circle
 Community Building - Crossroads

Response Moments *Selections by Vera Moore*

RESPONSE February 2014 is a valuable issue, as is each issue! In this issue, you will find United Methodist Women Mission Outreach projects. Below is a breakdown by areas.

AREA	C*	W*	Y*	
AFRICA	06	15	13	34
ASIA / PACIFIC	10	31	07	48
CARIBBEAN	01	06	06	13
EUROPE	05	11	04	20
MEXICO/CENTRAL AM	0	03	0	3
MIDDLE EAST	02	05	02	9
SOUTH AMERICA	02	15	01	18
TOTALS	26	86	33	145

*C - Ministries with Children

*W - Ministries with Women

*Y - Ministries with Youth

Samples of the listings:

Africa

- Center for Victims of Torture. Healing psychological wounds of war and famine for Somali refugees. Dadaab Refugee Camp, northeast Kenya
- Person in mission (PIM). Women's coordinator's work with children's programs, Liberia Conference United Methodist Women. Monrovia, Liberia

Asia Pacific

- Mission for Migrants and International Solidarity. Organizational development and education and advocacy for marriage rights for migrants. Hong Kong, China; South Korea; Taiwan; Japan; Australia
- Bethune House. Shelter, health and legal services for Indonesian migrant domestic workers in crisis. Hong Kong, China

Visit the online [Mission Map](#) to see all International Ministries supported by United Methodist Women giving.

This publication is the monthly virtual meeting of the Mary & Martha Mail Circle, United Methodist Women at Christ United Methodist Church, Mobile, Alabama. Our Circle is just like each of the other Circles of Christ UMW with the exception that we do not have monthly meetings other than by this "virtual" program, devotion, prayer calendar/concerns, and Response moments. We make annual pledges to mission and participate in the projects of CUMW in all ways possible. We attend General Meetings as we are able. We constantly keep each other and each woman of UMW in our prayers.

Questions? Contact: Circle Coordinator
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Service Projects 2014

Your involvement with service projects will be published here as you report them to us

- Gift to Mission in memory of Elizabeth Olson.
- Gift to Open Door Ministries - display cases

and shared with CUMW treasurer, combined with others from CUMC and throughout the organization.

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Friendly Center, Toledo, Ohio

community. Friendly Center sits in the heart of three ZIP code areas in the North Toledo, Ohio. The property is located in a very diverse portion of the neighborhoods. We have neighbors that

are purchasing historical homes, neighbors that live in subsidized housing communities and we have a very transitional population as well. On any given day we have neighbors that enter into our administrative building for emergency food and hygiene products. They always comment on the welcoming atmosphere. "It feels like somebody's house, not a facility" is a very common response to the couches, fireplaces and hardwood floors that shine.

Amelia Gibbon explains, "I can say without any doubt that not only does the quality of services matter but the atmosphere in which you provide those services matter impact as well."

Approximately two-thirds of the national mission institutions are on United Methodist Women-owned property. They receive financial support from church sources, government grants, private foundations, corporations, individuals, endowments and local fundraising efforts. Two-thirds of the institutions are members of local United Ways. The populations that our National Mission Institutions serve are often the last to receive assistance and the first to be cut.

Gum Moon Women's Residence programs and services are flexible and respond to the changing needs of local communities. The ministries seek to empower those who are in need, witness to Christ's love and work toward a community of people who can determine their own destiny, find hope in the midst of despair and know life more abundantly.



Gum Moon Residence

The Kapatiran-Kaunlaran Foundation Incorporated (KKFI), formerly known as the Methodist Social

Center, is a social development institution under the United Methodist Church. KKFI works with the basic sectors of the Philippine society: the urban poor, laborers, peasants, fisherfolks, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, survivors of natural and human-made disasters, youth and children in need of special protection.

Working with children and youth in a residential facility [Gilead Center Project] entails a lot of hard work and of course financial resources. We are developing portions of the property for vegetable gardening and poultry (swine and chicken raising) to meet the nutritional and dietary needs of the children while at the same time earning a little revenue to help defray the costs of running the facility.

The greatest bulk of expenses in the residential shelter are on food and educational assistance. Each child needs at least US\$10.00 a month to cover up for his or her allowance and school projects.

A Call to Prayer makes a difference: KKFI received funds from the 2010 Call to Prayer for renovations for a dorm, student library with computers and a wellness clinic. Organizations such as Murewa Mission school and the Methodist Mutare Women Center in Zimbabwe also utilized the grant to build and renovate facilities.

Settlement Houses were a great pioneering social ministry of the women of southern Methodism. The earliest of these ministries was begun in Nashville in 1901 and in Dallas and Atlanta in 1902. Others followed rapidly, but there was reluctance to use the term "settlement house" because many such programs were seen as non-evangelical and even non-Christian. Thus the term "Wesley House" came to be used almost exclusively for the settlement houses. Later, as work developed in black communities in the cities where Wesley Houses were already in operation, the term "Bethlehem Center" became the official name.

United Methodist Women put faith, hope and love into action in ministry with women, children and youth in all communities while often overcoming barriers. What barriers have you experienced and overcome in your journey as a United Methodist Women member?

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In 1912 the Woman’s Missionary Council sent a deaconess to assist the pastor at the church at Bayou Blue, La. In 1919, centenary funds made possible the purchase of land and an old mansion, which was converted into a Wesley House. In 1922 the MacDonnell French Mission School was established to meet the need for trained leadership. Later as social and educational needs in southern Louisiana changed, the school was converted to a home for orphans and children from broken homes.

MacDonnell Children’s Services now ministers to children with severe social, emotional and behavioral problems at the original and much-enlarged Houma, La, campus. The mission institutions are proactive in responding to the needs of the community. As a community changes, programs, services and facilities also change. What changes have you witnessed in your own community’s needs? “Relationship. Accompaniment. Being present to another. It is a holy and spiritual practice, because when we are fully present to another we catch a glimpse of what it is like to be fully present to God’s Spirit. When we enter into personal relationships, when someone shares his or her life with us and we come to understand this person’s joys and struggles, our lives are also transformed. When we create the space and the opportunity, Christ is incarnate and visible in us, around us and among us.”

Our mission institutions provide safe spaces for grace for those we serve with. In this process we all experience transformation. How do you see our National Mission Institutions as being transformational in your area? More than 100 years ago, Methodist women gave birth to mission institutions all across the United States and the world. Their main purpose was to serve and protect women, children and youth. We must help preserve and protect our mission institutions. We have an obligation as United Methodist Women members to properly care for the mission institutions that we birth into the world.

Mission institutions must keep their buildings up to code standards and be able to renovate or expand spaces as needed to meet emerging ministry needs. Over the years, some great mission institutions have been forced to close due to funding or property needs. When we allow this to happen, we are neglecting our purpose in serving women, children

and youth. We have an opportunity to dig deeper and protect our institutions as well as give hope and opportunities so their work can continue to happen in neighborhoods that are dependent on them. As we partner in this Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering, we can continue to operate safe and vital programs across the United States and the world.

Since 1991, United Methodist Women has funded mission projects through the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offerings in four-year cycles. The first year supports programs at institutions related to United Methodist Women, the second year has an open theme, the third year funds buildings and institutions that have relationships to United Methodist Women, and the fourth year supports pensions and medical care for retired missionaries and deaconesses.

The offering from 2014 will make it possible to offer grants nationally and internationally toward keeping our mission institutions buildings safe and strong.

Think back now to the Jenga tower you built in your mind. Pull out the block on the bottom right and imagine that is your contribution to the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial 2014. Pull out the next block imagining that to be the contribution of another member of the Mail Circle. What do you see happening to your building? If it does not collapse it becomes very unsteady. Can you see how important your Call to Prayer and Self-Denial gift is to the mission work to children, youth and women?

Prayer

Creator God, we ask you to open our minds and hearts that we might perceive your love in places where we least expect your love and in persons whose lives may become a revelation of your love and grace. We pray that we might continuously recognize that it is not our effort and power that accomplish the mission but rather your overwhelming love and unending grace that is present in the mission. Help us, Lord, to see the need of solid foundations and realize our responsibility to contribute so that we will have a presence in the lives of those reaching out for faith, hope and love in action. **Amen.**

