



# MARY AND MARTHA MAIL CIRCLE UMW

Christ United Methodist Church - Mobile, Alabama

**FEBRUARY 2015**

## A Gesture of Gratitude ~ 2015 Call to Prayer and Self-Denial

Adapted from the Program by

Mary Z. Longstreth\* and Donald W. Turman\*\*

**A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial** is an annual observance during which members reflect on the gospel of Christ and make an offering to mission in response to Christ's love and his people.

### **Purpose of offering**

The Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering is dedicated to a particular area of mission each year and funds national and international programs. The areas of mission occur in four-year cycles. The first year supports programs in mission institutions related to United Methodist Women, the second year is an open focus area, the third year funds buildings and property needs of institutions historically related to United Methodist Women and its predecessor organizations, and the fourth year provides for the pensions and health care of retired deaconesses and missionaries.

### **Focus of offering**

In 2015, the offering received will go toward the pensions and health care of retired deaconesses and missionaries. One hundred percent of the offering will go directly to provide health and pension support for retirees.

Background: Volunteers of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and Methodist mission work in the late 1800-1900s conceived and organized deaconess and missionary services based on the needs of women and children. Their early mission projects have produced the United Methodist Women mission institutions of today. United Methodist Women carries the responsibility to undergird active and retired missionary personnel services and needs. This includes personnel pensions, health insurance, the Brooks-Howell Home retirement and health care facility, communications and service resources. This year's offering supports all of these programs. Your gifts make a difference. Our Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering sustains this ministry into the future.

\* Mary Z. Longstreth is a deaconess, social worker and retiree of the Indiana Annual Conference residing at Brooks-Howell Home retirement community, Asheville, N.C.

\*\* The Rev. Donald W. Turman is a resident at Brooks-Howell Home and is retired from ministry in the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, Malaysia and Indonesia.

### **Member Response**

[Member Responsibilities](#) include: "You will be invited to make a Pledge to Mission, a contribution to Call to Prayer and Self-Denial, and the World Thank Offering."

Thank you for responding to January's Virtual Meeting by making your "Pledge to Mission."

United Methodist Women at Christ Church celebrate the World Thank Offering in November. The Call to Prayer and Self-Denial 2015 will be observed February 3 - 9 am in the Fellowship Hall. Ella Dean Ellisor will present the program.

**February's Response: You may take your Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering to the Feb. 3 meeting or it may be sent to the CUMW treasurer, Phyllis Allen.**

For more than 125 years, deaconesses and other missionaries have been in mission service in many places. It's likely that some have served in or near this community or are serving now. ([Clara Ester](#) is one who serves the Mobile area).

[Susan Hunt](#), Alabama-West Florida Conference Staff Program Administration in Montgomery, AL.

[Judy Poole](#) - Senior Adult Ministries in Pleasant Grove, AL.

[Carol Gullatt](#) - Education/Teacher in Huntsville, AL.

[Jeff Murrell](#), Home Missioner, Environmental Ministries in Madison, AL.

Learn where other Deaconesses and Home Missioners are now serving on [The Google Map](#).

Deaconess Susan Carmichael says, "The financial support from United Methodist Women local units convey welcome and nurture to retired and active deaconesses by continuing to recognize, adopt and support them in other ways."

### **Scripture:**

*As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 1 Peter 4:10*

### **Our Gifts of Gratitude**

This year's offering will support the Retirement Benefits Fund for retired missionaries and deaconess for whom United Methodist Women is responsible.

### **Learn More**

Visit [Brooks-Howell Home](#) to learn more of those we honor by our gifts to Call and Prayer and Self-Denial.

## Selections From the Prayer Calendar

### *No Mary and Martha Birthdays in February*

- Feb 1 Bethlehem Community Center, Winston-Salem
- Feb 2 W. Fran Lynch (D/CCW)
- Feb 3 Judy Poole (D)
- Feb 4 Jeremias Alfiado Franca (M)
- Feb 5 Betty Tshala (M)
- Feb 6 Juan Guerrero (M)
- Feb 7 Doreen Grayless (D)
- Feb 8 Camp Aldersgate, Little Rock AR
- Feb 9 Carol Partridge (M)
- Feb 10 Margie I. Greene (D)
- Feb 11 M. Kathryn Webster (D)
- Feb 12 Lucie Fortier (D)
- Feb 13 Ut Van To (M)
- Feb 14 Lawrence Kies (M)
- Feb 15 Community Center, St. Crois, Virgin Islands
- Feb 16 Sonia McDaniel (S)
- Feb 17 Delbert Groves (M)
- Feb 18 Marie Roc (S)
- Feb 19 Gary Locklear (HMR/CCW)
- Feb 20 Jae Hyoung Choi (M)
- Feb 21 Alina Saucedo (M)
- Feb 22 Diamond Pate (US-2)
- Feb 23 Carol Bruder (D)
- Feb 24 Gertrude Dailey (D)
- Feb 25 Tara Vinson (M)
- Feb 26 Janis Rosheuvell (S)
- Feb 27 Mary Escobar (M)
- Feb 28 Karen Caldwell (D)

We received a special emailed thank you from Jane and Larry Kies for birthday greetings sent in 2014. Let me know if you'd like a copy of their newsletters and I'll send to you by email.

**FEB 3** – 9am to 11:30am – Call to Prayer and Self-Denial – Fellowship Hall  
Mail Circle's responsibility is Response Moment. I'll prepare the page and will send to you if you can go to the meeting to make the presentation during the meeting. Let me know - [vmooore4474@gmail.com](mailto:vmooore4474@gmail.com)

## Action Alert

### *Futures in Peril: Human Trafficking Among Homeless Youth*

Human traffickers prey on the vulnerable and marginalized in society. The Polaris Project, an organization dedicated to eradicating this form of modern day slavery, lists child runaways and homeless youth as targets for pimps and traffickers to be exploited in the commercial sex industry or various labor or services industries: "...sex traffickers are skilled at manipulating child victims and maintaining control through a combination of deception, lies, feigned affection, threats, and violence." States and the federal government can deal with this serious threat to the safety of homeless youth by passing laws that provide protection, training, and education for this vulnerable population.

#### **Runaway Children**

It is estimated that 85 percent of confirmed sex trafficking victims in the world are in the United States, and most of them are runaway children. The United States Department of Justice estimates that "there are an estimated 200,000 American children at risk for trafficking into the sex industry alone." According to a study conducted amongst 200 homeless youth in New York by Covenant House and Fordham University, "48 percent of those who participated in commercial sexual activity said they did so because they did not have a place to stay." Additionally, the interviews showed that, "Kids who had a history of childhood sexual abuse, who lacked a caring, supportive adult in their life, and who had no means to earn an income were particularly vulnerable to such exploitation." Research studies conducted by Department of Health and Human Services employees supported the fact that traffickers target children with low self-esteem and little social support, and indicated that, "These traits are highly prevalent among young people experiencing homelessness or those in foster care, due to their histories of abuse, neglect, and trauma."

The following statistics reveal the connection between homeless youth and human trafficking in America. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) estimates that 1.3 million youth live on the streets in the United States due to running away from home, being abandoned or becoming homeless. On average, these boys and girls are solicited for sex within 72 hours of being on the street. The ACF also estimates that 55 percent of girls on the street engage in formal prostitution, and 20 percent of girls end up in nationally organized crime networks, where they are forced to travel far from their home and are isolated from loved ones.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, over 600,000 individuals experience homelessness on any single night in America. And while overall homelessness in the United States has been decreasing during the economic recovery, "the pool of people at risk of homelessness, those in poverty, those living with friends and family, and those paying over half of their income for housing, has remained high." The National Alliance estimates that approximately 39,000 children who experience

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homelessness or leave their home are sexually assaulted or experience youth trafficking. The children who are victimized by commercial exploitation often have broken relationships with their families and histories of child abuse. To further complicate matters for these child victims, they can often be treated as criminals because of law enforcement practices: "Though children engaged in prostitution are victims of trafficking, many law enforcement and legal systems still view them as juvenile delinquents."

### **Developing Programs**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children Youth and Families (ACYF) published a guidance letter for states to consider when developing programs and policies to address the crime of human trafficking and its prevalence among homeless youth. Federal law defines human trafficking as the use of force, fraud or coercion in situations of forced labor for services or any time a child is found in the commercial sex industry. The ACYF letter points to the responsibility of general citizens in identifying potential situations of trafficking: "For example, victims of child trafficking may attend school, participate in other social activities, or have contact with neighbors and community members who may be in positions to help identify situations of child trafficking."

The following true story from a United States Department of Justice case provides an illustration of labor trafficking with a young girl:

"In 2006, a wife and husband in Lakewood, Washington, pleaded guilty to charges of forced labor after bringing their 12-year-old niece to the United States on promises that she will attend school in exchange for childcare and housework. The victim was forced to cook, clean, provide childcare, and work at the defendant's coffee shop twelve to fourteen hours a day. The child was physically abused, threatened with deportation, not paid for her work at the coffee shop, and attended school for only a short time. The child escaped with the help of friends and a community-based organization."

### **States Take Action**

In response, states are taking action through new legislation and coalitions to provide appropriate training for law enforcement and social work officials. In the state of Texas, the Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance was formed to provide collaboration between law enforcement agencies and non-governmental organizations that work to address the needs of victims. "It is one of five Bureau of Justice Associates (BJA) funded task forces throughout Texas and forty-two across the country. The collaboration of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies works with social service organizations to identify and assist the victims of human trafficking and to prosecute the perpetrators of these horrific crimes."

In Atlanta, Ga., previous mayor Shirley Franklin collaborated with the Juvenile Justice Fund to initiate the "Dear John"

program to educate the public about the exploitation of children. Additionally, the Juvenile Justice Fund founded a statewide initiative called "A Future, Not a Past." This initiative aims to end child prostitution through research, prevention, intervention, and education. In New York, the state legislature has taken steps in recent years to address human trafficking through legislation. In 2009, the state Assembly passed a law that made trafficking a felony, and advocates supported it as one of the toughest and most comprehensive laws in the nation. State legislatures in Minnesota and Ohio have since passed similar laws to criminalize traffickers and provide protection and support for its victims. The most recent Ohio law, called the End Demand Act, turned paying for sex with a minor into a third- or fifth-degree felony. One Ohio lawmaker said that "Ohio has a strong set of laws against human trafficking, and the state's next step is to punish those who purchase sex with a 15- to 17-year-old with the same-level felony as those who purchase sex with a child."

### **The Federal Response**

To respond at the federal level, Representative Joseph Heck of New Jersey introduced H.R. 5076, the Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking Act of 2014. The bill, which was passed in the House in July of this year, would provide grants to states, local communities and non-profit organizations to carry out "research, evaluation, and service projects regarding activities designed to increase knowledge concerning, and to improve services for, runaway youth and homeless youth." Specifically, this bill would require government officials to give priority to projects related to staff training in the behavioral and emotional effects of trafficking, as well as any agency-wide strategies for working with runaway and homeless youth who have been victimized by trafficking.

S. 2646, the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act was introduced in the Senate by Patrick Leahy of Vermont. This bill modifies the Basic Center Grant Program to require local emergency shelter and family reunification centers to provide trauma-informed services to runaway and homeless youth and would extend the maximum stay period for these youth from 21 days to 30 days. Steps like these provide better informed services to this vulnerable population. Because this crime is so widespread, it is clear that governments will need to continue to work with and rely on professional trauma-support and counseling services from shelters and other non-government organizations to best meet the needs of victims.

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Visit [UMWomen on Flickr](#) to see photos of groups as they #UMWHUDDLE to stop human trafficking.

**Christ United Methodist Women Dates 2015**

<b>FEB 3</b>	9:00am - 11:30am	9:00 General Meeting - Fellowship Hall - Brunch ~ Bring a brunch item to share. 9:30 Program - Call to Prayer and Self-Denial - Ella Dean Ellisor Hostess - Esther Circle Prayer Calendar - Lydia Circle Response - Mail Circle Community Building - Crossroads Circle
<b>MAR 29</b>	8am-Noon	Bake Sale - Jean King, Chair - Courtyard Porch and Christ Center
<b>MAY 30</b>	9:00am - Noon	9:00 General Meeting - Hospitality Room 9:30 UMCOR Workday - Health Kits Brunch ~ Bring a brunch item to share    Bring your own cup (green day) Hostess - Lydia Circle Prayer Calendar - Esther Circle Response - Crossroads Circle Community Building - Mail Circle
<b>AUG 8</b>	9:00am- 2:00pm	9:00 General Meeting - Hospitality Room 9:30 Program: Mission Study (4 hours required for the study) <i>The Church and People with Disabilities</i> Salad and Dessert Luncheon    Bring a salad or dessert to share Hostess - Unit Officers Prayer Calendar - Crossroads Response - Lydia Circle Community Building - Esther Circle
<b>OCT</b>		Children's Sabbath - To be announced
<b>OCT 6</b>	10:00am	Program Planning for 2016 - Room A-204
<b>NOV 8</b>	NOON	United Methodist Women Sunday & General Meeting Catered lunch at noon - Christ Center Hospitality Room Program - World Thank Offering - Lydia Circle Hostess - Crossroads Circle Prayer Calendar - Mail Circle Response - Esther Circle Community Building - Lydia Circle
<b>DEC 6</b>	9am-Noon	Soup Sale - Bobbie Ferguson, Chair Courtyard Porch and Christ Center

**Service Projects 2015**

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

Mobile Inner City Mission                                  \$35.00  
Walk MS - Kim Johnson walked for her mother.

Please let us know when you are involved in any service or community project so we can add that to this list.

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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