



Mary and Martha Mail Circle

Paper, Paper, Read all about it! Facebook, radio, TV, Twitter, YouTube ... You name it - MEDIA

United Methodist Women
Christ United Methodist Church
Mobile, Alabama

June 2016

Action Alert

World Press Freedom Day: Creating Change and Giving Voices to the Invisible

Extracted from the [Action Alert - May 2016](#)

The freedom of the press, and women's participation in it, are often a measure of the freedom of a nation's people.

Journalists hold a key power and vital responsibility in our society. A free press becomes a driving force in creating and upholding the rights of citizens. However, media around the world face multiple threats, ranging from oppressive government legislation obstructing journalists' ability to report freely and objectively to more physical threats such as violence, incarceration and even murder.

On May 3, the United Nations recognized these threats to press freedom that in turn threaten the independence and rights of the people by celebrating World Press Freedom Day.

Denying people the right to press freedom is denying them the freedom of information and expression. These freedoms, according to the U.N., are integral in the promotion of peace, inclusivity, justice for all and accountability.

By having women participating in the press, women's voices, opinions and issues are more likely to be heard. According to Women's Media Center President Julie Burton, people aren't getting the whole story and democracy suffers as a result. Women's stories aren't being told since women aren't there to tell it.

Not only would promoting gender equity within the journalism profession empower women, but so would having access to credible information.

"Women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to information technology," The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women wrote. "This will strengthen their ability to combat negative portrayals of women internationally and to challenge instances of abuse of the power of an increasingly important industry."

As is evident from the current threats to press freedom across the world, censorship can take many forms. Some governments control the content of the news directly, while others pass restrictive legislation to limit journalists' ability to report. Journalists face harassment, economic pressure, imprisonment and even death when covering news stories. Propaganda drowns out independent journalists' reports and spreads misinformation to the public. Religion, national security and counterterrorism increasingly become reasons to deter political criticism.

While the media face many issues that curtail press freedom, censorship—whether it's done by government, corporations, organizations or the media themselves—remains one of the largest threats

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Truth in Media

by Vera Moore

While I wholehearted support freedom of the press, I acknowledge that freedom calls me to constantly be aware and informed before accepting what I read:

WHO

The publisher - Who owns this publication? What is their church connection?

The writer – What is behind the words? - Where is this person in their spiritual life? What issues in their past bring them to this point?

WHAT

The facts – Can the statement be validated? What is the source of stated facts?

The Bible - Does the position agree with my own understanding of the Bible? What chapter and verse speaks to me on this subject?

WHERE

Point in Time – Would I have viewed this differently if certain things had not been revealed to me by personal experiences?

WHEN

Current and fresh - Is this a timely issue? Does it reflect issues of today?

HOW

Effect - Does this issue call for a change in my life? Does this change how I will witness to God's call on my life?

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

- JUN 1 A. Kay Clifton (D)
 JUN 2 Devorah Anne Umipig-Julian (M).
 JUN 3 Virginia Baker (D).
 JUN 4 Jerrie Lindsey (D),
 JUN 5 Helen De Leon Camarce (M),
 JUN 6 Umba Ilunga Kalangwa (M).
 JUN 7 Ann Farris (D),
 JUN 8 Cuba: Constructing a national camp
 JUN 9 Sarah Capers (D),
 JUN 10 **Ukraine: Funding pastors' salaries**
 JUN 11 Betsy Jack (HM),
 JUN 12 Helen Roberts-Evans (M).
 JUN 13 Switzerland: United Methodist Women
 JUN 14 Brenda Thompson (S).
 JUN 15 Dong Min Seo (M).
 JUN 16 Connie Lynn Di Leo (M),
 JUN 17 Taleah Edmonds (CCW),
 JUN 18 Neighborhood House, Wilmington, Delaware.
 JUN 19 David C. Warden (HM).
 JUN 20 Carol Van Gorp (S).
 JUN 21 Helen Sheperd (M),
 JUN 22 Cindy Moon (M).
 JUN 23 Jamaica: Providing training for evangelism.
 Alicia Golemon
 JUN 24 Wendy Putka (D).
 JUN 25 Ellen Dizon (D).
 JUN 26 North Rampart Community Center, New Orleans
 JUN 27 Evelyn Erbele (M)
 JUN 28 Gladis Lobato (D).
 JUN 29 Dominican Republic: homes for low-income
 JUN 30 Kenya: overcoming the food poverty cycle.

Wed, Jun 1, 2016 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM CDT

Webinar

Women's reproductive health and choices are an ongoing area of cultural and religious dispute. When the abusive use of power and control is extended into an intimate relationship, very often a woman's ability to make choices about her body, her family, and her future are taken from her by an abuser. Toni Bond Leonard, Reproductive Justice Expert, will discuss the complex intersection of reproductive coercion with religion.

Register online

[Free Webinars with the Faith Trust Institute](#)

Happy Birthday June 2nd



Devorah Umipig-Julian is a missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church serving as a social worker for the Christian Coalition for Refugees and Migrant Workers in Tokyo, Japan.

Debbie, as she prefers to be called, has responsibilities that include: extending crisis intervention to refugee applicants and migrant families; facilitation of case work; visitation to police and immigration detention centers and hospitals; and establishing work relations with government and nongovernmental (NGO) offices, other welfare agencies, and local churches.

Ms. Umipig-Julian organizes and conducts home Bible studies and prayer meetings on a monthly basis. She teaches basic English conversation once a week for refugee families and children. Debbie actively serves foreign migrant workers with special needs. They engage in the life of the local church, serving in ministries with children, youth, women, and married couples, and also providing assistance with audio-visuals. Debbie is an active member of the Japan Women's Conference, an inter-denominational/international organization, and was selected as chairperson in 2011.

"Years of ministry to migrants and refugees has taught me much and given me insight into many biblical lessons," she says. "One of them is from the Old Testament that teaches us a theology of welcome. From the beginning, in the Torah, God says, 'For the Lord your God is the God of gods. Who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends...the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him/her food and clothing. And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.'" (Deuteronomy 10:17-19)

"I do not believe we are politically defiant by helping [migrants] while struggling without legal documents to reside in Japan. What I do know is that God's mandate is for the church to accept others as Christ has accepted us. In other words, God loves the immigrants among us, and we are called to love them as well. Our duty as a church is not to judge migrants and refugees but to love them, to become arms of Christ, not the hands of tyranny. This is our prophetic and Christian duty. This is my personal experience. The stories of faith they share make God real and our mercy right."

A native of the Philippines, Debbie was the department head of the Women's Ecumenical Center for Cooperative Education, Inc. in Quezon City, Philippines from 1994 to 2000, project coordinator of the Puno Foundation, Inc. in Quezon City from 1991 to 1994, and a social worker with the Women and Family Development program of the Kapatiran-Kaunlaran Foundation, Inc. in Sampaloc, Manila from 1989 to 1991. She has Bachelor of Science degree in social work from the Philippines Christian University in Manila and a Masters degree in social work administration and supervision from the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

Debbie and Ronald are the parents of two sons, Matt Deuel and Josh Rainiel. Debbie's husband, Ronald Julian, also serves as a United Methodist Missionary with the International Seafarers Ministry in Yokohama.

(Continued from page 1)

to press freedom and in turn, to the freedoms of expression, information and speech.

Censorship is especially potent for women and women journalists, who not only face gendered attacks from governments and the public, but also face censorship within the industry. Men dominate most coverage and are even more quoted in stories covering women's rights. New tools, such as Twitter and other social media platforms, are helping women find new ways to practice free speech outside the media's male-dominated industry. In Bahrain, for example, women were able to fight gender stereotypes within the media and change how women are portrayed. According to Bahraini journalist Nada Alwadi, social media put Arab female activists on the map and allowed them to be viewed as proactive leaders in their communities. Social media offers women a new platform where they can express their views and report stories from the ground.

Women outside the industry also use these tools, gaining the media's attention and engaging their local communities to promote gender equality. Girls and women are training themselves on how to report on their local issues, since these women's stories are not being told elsewhere. Even inmates are finding ways to share their stories, like the women in Ecuador who produce their own radio shows from inside prison—giving voice to another group of women kept silent.

Such activism is helping raise awareness on women's issues in local communities and helps further the United Nation's goal to promote gender equality through the media's influence. United Nations Women has recognized the power of the media and wants to use it to empower women globally.

"Media have great influence over how we perceive and understand the world around us," UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said. "Even when reporting is entirely factually accurate, if it is reported predominantly by men, about men, it is actually misrepresenting the real state of the world. At UN Women, we want to address this through partnership to change the media landscape and make media work for gender equality."

Responsively Yours

by Harriett Jane Olson

"A Fresh Wind Blowing" is the theme of our quadrennial meetings this year, and we are reminding ourselves that the wind of the Spirit is blowing—in the world and in everyone who is born of God (John 3:8). So we might ask: Are we noticing the evidence of the movement of the Spirit?

God calls us to notice who is already at the table and to truly see each one. One of the gifts United Methodist Women members exchange is a supportive, creative sisterhood in which we know ourselves, know one another and become better able to follow God's call. As we prepare for our 150th anniversary, I've heard many stories of gratitude for the women who have invited us, supported us, seen something in us that we did not see in ourselves. I am inviting you to see that in one another today as well as in our history. Let's use this as a moment to offer appreciation and support.

We are also invited to see who is not at the table. This requires awareness of the women in our congregations and communities who have not yet found a place in United Methodist Women. I invite you to think of United Methodist Women as a place where their gifts, needs and talents can be honored. How could we invite new women into our planning so that we can truly make space at the table for them, connect to their hearts and be a place where they can express their calling to serve God by being in mission on behalf of women, children and youth?

The Spirit prompts us to notice the needs and the structures around us. We must be alert to who is treated unfairly, who is marginalized and whose story is disregarded in the policies and practices that shape our communities, nation and world. From policies that concentrate wealth among the very few at the expense of the many who do not have enough to our crying need for movement toward racial justice and away from criminalizing communities of color, we must examine our national, state and local policies with the real struggles of women, children and youth in mind. United Methodist Women members can work and join with others in strategies to break down barriers and open up opportunities to those marginalized by race or class.

The Spirit prompts us to pay attention to climate justice to care for the earth. We must notice the science that calls for decisive action to limit carbon emissions and build energy alternatives and to notice that women and children around the world are being affected as climate changes already mean rising seas, extreme temperatures and storms and changes in arable lands. We notice the maternal and child health needs around the world—including in the United States, which ranks 34th globally in health outcomes and in places without access to clinics or midwives or family planning.

United Methodist Women, we are called to notice one another, to notice who is not yet at the table and to notice the needs of women, children and youth. The discipline of noticing will help us see God's hand at work and our invitation to be part of God's work.

May we not only notice, but may we respond with faith, hope and love in action.



Oh the wonder of it all...

I saw a butterfly just now, okay that's no big deal.
But it was confirmation for my soul that God is real.
Some days seem so unusually hard but then I see
the beauty in this world He had created for just me.



I know now why He gave me the gift of word and rhyme,
to share with you and know that as you read you'll take the time...
to look for all the wonder in the world in which we live
and thank The Lord for all the goodness that He continually gives.

Poem by Norma Spiller 5/23/2016

4-27-16

Vera,

Thank you very much
for your help with Jeff's
reception.

I appreciate the role that
the Mary and Martha Circle
played in making the
reception a success.

The cookies and punch were
wonderful and your help
was vital.

The evening was a
blessing to Jeff and our
Church. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Sharon Eckhoff
SPR Chairperson

Look who purchased the property we once knew as
Alma Mathews House -

*"Sarah Jessica Parker nabbed two properties
at 273-275 West 11th Street from the United
Methodist Women, to convert into a large
Greenwich Village home earlier this year."*

See last paragraph at
<http://goo.gl/qxhdwx>

Member Involvement

Beginning anew in this New Year 2016

*Your involvement will be published
here as you accept responsibility*

- ☛ Weekly Prayer Focus - Norma Spiller
- ☛ Members Cards - Patsy Adams
- ☛ Missionary Cards - Melissa Motes
- ☛ Circle Coordinator - Vera Moore
- ☛ Reception April 24 - Faye Sellers
- ☛ Bake Sale Workers - Glenda Contos
- ☛ Bake Sale Bakers - Glenda Contos, Sheila Hare
- ☛ Bake Sale Contributor - Vera Moore
- ☛ April 24 Celebration Workers - Faye Sellers, Melissa Motes, and Mary Anne Bemis.
- ☛ April 24 Celebration Bakers - Angel Dahlgren, Blair Parrett, Dawn Seese, Donna Alexander, Mary Anne Bemis, and Shay Bruton.
- ☛ Monthly Reflections - Mary Anne Bemis
- ☛

Service Projects

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

- ☛ Shay Bruton - Camp Rap-A-Hope
- ☛ Tips 20% to Service Persons - Renea Burns
- ☛ Magazines to Nursing Homes - Patsy Adams
- ☛ Ryan LaSource - Bone Marrow Transplant \$ - Vera Moore
- ☛ Medicines to Victory Health - Patsy Adams
- ☛ Day of Giving - In Memory Miss Alma Bryant \$ - Vera.
- ☛ Camp Rap-A-Hope - \$ - Vera Moore
- ☛ RCRC \$ - Vera
- ☛

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
Vera Moore e-mail - vmooore4474@gmail.com