



# CATCH the VISION

## Wisconsin Conference

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### President's Message

by Laura Pfeffer, Wisconsin Conference UMW President

Almost twenty years ago I moved to Wisconsin after having lived in North Carolina for six years. I know how strong Southern culture and attitudes can be. I must admit that I never thought I would see the Confederate battle flag systematically removed from the grounds of Southern state capitols and capitol buildings. I don't pretend that the simple moving of a symbol is a significant act of racial reconciliation and healing, but I do think that it is progress. We need to continue to work for serious, meaningful and far reaching change in our systems, our culture, our awareness and our lives in order to

truly see each other as God sees us. We especially need to continue to do this work without needing to first have horrific shootings like the one at Mother Emanuel AME church in Charleston, SC. Yet, very few of our units are actively engaged with our own most powerful tool – our Charter for Racial Justice.

Each year for the last several years our committee on the Charter for Racial Justice has worked to bring the Charter for Racial Justice into a Wisconsin context. They have dedicated extensive time and effort to create programs designed to highlight some aspect of the Charter and give it a uniquely Wisconsin face. Programs have covered topics such as racial diversity, White Privilege, health and healthcare, and culture and holidays (You can find past and present Racial Justice programs on our website [www.wisconsinumw.org](http://www.wisconsinumw.org) or get copies at Conference events). This year's topic has been especially relevant as it has addressed three Ps: Prisons, Policing and Profiling. Responding to controversial police shootings in Milwaukee and Madison as well as dovetailing on work being done to advocate for prison system reforms in the 11 x 15 project of the WISDOM movement, this year's program has been a great starting point for the work of binding our wounds and

building a new reality based upon the total love of God for all of God's people.

Don't have time to do a whole program? Try breaking it down. Read one skit or story as an opener to a meeting. Use the opening or closing prayer and have a time of silent reflection. Take the topic and popcorn the reactions of your members. Challenge each other to reflect on race in 6 words or less. Have a letter writing table to enable members to speak to their state legislators on the topic of prison reform. Hold one meeting as an encounter with another culture or race. Watch a movie or read one of the books from the Reading Program on race or on engaging people across barriers (I highly recommend the book I just finished "Small Things With Great Love: Adventures in Loving Your Neighbor" by Margot Starbuck). Be creative, but be engaged. The work of the kin(g)dom of God is ours. Be the transformed child of God the world so desperately need. "Let there be peace on Earth and let [peace] begin with me"<sup>1</sup>

*Laura Pfeffer*

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<sup>1</sup> UMC #431 "Let There Be Peace On Earth"

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## Treasurer

By Mary Rather, Wisconsin Conference UMW Treasurer

Hard for me to believe the year 2015 is half over! Where does the time go? Seems to me that is always my song. I hope you are enjoying the balmy days of summer. This is what we dream about during the dark days of winter.

The good news is *we are almost halfway to our \$250,000 pledge to Mission!* We must continue to work toward the goal of making our pledge this year.

The United Methodist church as of this month has switched to five

Districts but as you know United Methodist Women will not do this until the beginning of next year. ALL UNITS NEED TO CONTINUE TO SEND THEIR FUNDS TO THE CURRENT EIGHT DISTRICT TREASURERS. There will be a lot of confusion in the next few months and it is up to each of us to keep the lines of communication open.

Change does not come easy to us, I know women who still call our organization “The Guild” or

‘Women’s Society’.

We have many opportunities to be in Mission through this marvelous organization. It is up to every one of us to tell our story even if we have to do it over and over.

If you or anyone in your local units have questions do not hesitate to call me at 920-494-9638 or e-mail me at [gmrather@aol.com](mailto:gmrather@aol.com).

Peace and blessings to you,

*Mary Rather*

## Spiritual Growth By Michelle Hopp, Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth

My husband is a great cook. Not only does his food taste delicious, it looks beautiful. Our grandchildren eat his food with gusto, often asking for extra helpings.

When I cook dinner, the grandkids look at their food with suspicion. “What is this, Grandma?” they ask. “It doesn’t look like meat. Why does it taste funny? Do I have to finish it? *Can you ask Grandpa to cook next time?*”

At church when I’m asked to bring a dish to pass for an event, I break into a cold sweat at the thought of having to cook something. Or if I’m asked to bake cookies for a bake sale, I panic. But, I have found a creative solution – I ask my husband to cook for me!

I don’t have a talent for cooking or entertaining. I would fail miserably as a member of my church’s Nurture Committee because it’s just not my thing. But God says that the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to all of us, so I must be good at something, right?

How do I find out what gifts the Holy Spirit has given to me?

In I Corinthians 12, we read that there are different kinds of spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit gives each person gifts so that they can help others. And the Holy Spirit decides what gifts to give to each person.

Here are some of the Holy Spirit’s spiritual gifts:

- Administration
- Apostleship
- Distinguishing of Spirits
- Encouragement
- Evangelism
- Faith
- Giving

- Healing
- Hospitality
- Interpretation of Tongues
- Knowledge
- Leadership
- Mercy
- Miraculous Powers
- Pastoring
- Prophecy
- Serving and Helping
- Speaking in Tongues
- Teaching
- Wisdom

You can take a spiritual gifts inventory online at the United Methodist Church’s website: [www.umc.org/what-we-believe/spiritual-gifts-online-assessment](http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/spiritual-gifts-online-assessment). I have taken this and other inventories, and the results were fascinating, I discovered that my top spiritual gifts are faith and encouragement. That explains why I love to encourage people to grow in their faith.

And what gifts did I rank low in? You guessed it – hospitality, and serving and helping!

I encourage all of you to take some time, and discover what gifts God’s Holy Spirit has given to you. It will shed a lot of light on what ministries appeal to you, and which ones you will be especially effective in.

I pray that God will bless each one of you as you discover the special gifts that God has given to you.

*Michele Hopp*

**015 Mission Action Day- April 11, 2015**

Mission Action Day was held at Peace Kaukauna UMC with 111 registered and 93 in attendance. Chris Lashock, Client Services Coordinator for Homeless Connections, spoke on his experiences with the homeless. The biggest challenge is affordable housing. Chris was overwhelmingly evaluated as an excellent, passionate speaker. The service project was putting together items for Homeless Connections upcoming annual meeting. It was great working with everyone and having a time to socialize while we worked. Chris was impressed with how fast we worked. We finished the work ahead of schedule.

The evaluations suggested topics for future Mission Action Days.

The Mission Team will be taking these suggestions into consideration for planning the next Mission Action Day. Ideas included: Racial Justice; Affordable Housing- where do we start?; Minimum wage and how it works with the homeless; Water Quality, crop and food products, changing weather; Human Trafficking- including federal; Insurance update - Advantage Plus vs. Supplemental Insurance; Healthy Eating Projects- fresh food for all.

“Thank you” to Kaukauna UMW for their outstanding job of hospitality and the food was delicious. Thank you to Pastor Lucretia Fehrmann for being the computer tech person for us.

The 2015 Mission Action Day will be at Columbus UMC on April 2, 2016. The program will be on homelessness. Hope to see you there.

**Human Trafficking Taskforce Volunteer(s) Needed**

The Board of Church and Society and the Wisconsin Conference Human Trafficking Taskforce is looking for volunteers to work on decreasing Human Trafficking in Wisconsin. Please contact me for more information.

*Ruby Dow*

[remdow@ymail.com](mailto:remdow@ymail.com)  
608-963-2954 (cell)

**MEMBERSHIP NURTURE AND OUTREACH**

*By Shirley Carpenter, Mission Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach*

The Samaritan woman we know simply as “the woman at the well” in John 4 boldly stepped out to invite her community to Christ. She lived at the fringes of her community. She would go to the well to draw water when on one else was there. When she heard the good news that this was the Messiah who was speaking to her, she proclaimed this good news in the city so boldly that they all followed the woman they had once ostracized to meet Jesus. She went out of her comfort zone to invite others to meet Jesus.

We, too, can reach outside our

comfortable groups of friends to invite others to join United Methodist Women – a place to nurture faith, experience community and engage in mission. Are you sharing your love for UMW with friends, in and outside, of your church? Membership in The United Methodist Church is not required. *Membership is open to all women committed to and engaged in mission.*

For the third year, 100% of our 254 units reported their membership count! We have 6,821 members, down from 7,105 in 2013. Sadly, we had seven units

who went on “Inactive” status.

I am so proud of our Legacy Women. They will be our future’s leaders – keep them in your prayers.

*Remember Christ has no hands, but our hands, to do His work today, He has no feet, but our feet, to lead us (UMW members) in His way.*

In Christ’s Love,

*Shirley Carpenter*

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[shorenuf35@gmail.com](mailto:shorenuf35@gmail.com)

## RACIAL JUSTICE

Over many months now we have witnessed heart-breaking event after event that makes it clear: racism continues to plague our society. United Methodist Women has named racial justice a priority area for our work for justice. There are many resources available to you, your local UMW, and your districts in this important justice work. Here are some ideas to get you started.

A good place to begin is to review our *Charter for Racial Justice*. Created and adopted by Women's Division in 1978, adopted by the whole denomination in 1980, and readopted at General Conferences (most recently in 2008), this document outlines our principles and goals in fighting racism. The Wisconsin Conference UMW creates programs based on the Charter each year.

1. The *Wisconsin Conference UMW website* is the place to find current and previous years' programs on the Charter as well as supporting files. On the homepage ([www.wisconsinumw.org](http://www.wisconsinumw.org)) click on "Charter for Racial Justice Programs" on the left.
2. Check out the many resources available on the *national United Methodist Women website* ([www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org)). You can click on the Racial Justice logo on the homepage to take you to the *Racial Justice: Advocacy and Education* page with many links and downloads:
  - If you don't have a printed copy of the Charter for Racial Justice, read it online here.
  - Read the statement "*Because We Believe: A Wesleyan Response to Ferguson, Missouri*". Download the comprehensive *UMW Racial Justice Manual* with resources for Bible study, discussion groups, worship, and more.
  - Download the *Racial Justice Fact Sheet*

Click on the link on the page to read about the *History of Racial Justice*

3. Inform yourself with the *Racial Justice Time Line*. This free resource charts United Methodist Women's efforts for human rights and milestones in US history. Paper copies have been available at conference events. It is now available as a "flipbook" on the United Methodist Women website. The link is on the Racial Justice page; just click on "Racial Justice Time Line." The online version has been updated to include events through 2015. The *Reading Program* offers books to inform us about racial justice issues and help deepen our understanding of other people's experiences of injustice. Two particularly good choices are *Dear White America: A Letter to a New Minority* by Tim Wise and *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander.
- 4. The United Methodist Women website suggests viewing media through a social justice/racial justice lens and lists *Color Lines Magazine* (online at [www.colorlines.com](http://www.colorlines.com)) and *The Center for Media Justice* ([www.centerformediajustice.org](http://www.centerformediajustice.org)) as resources.

Use these tools to learn about systemic racism, engage in conversations on racial justice, and work to end racism. We do so prayerfully, remembering these words from the Prayer for Charleston posted on the United Methodist Women website:

*"Heal us of racism and race-based fears that produce a multitude of sins and psychoses.*

*Open our eyes so that we see the things that make for peace: justice and mercy and love. Open our ears so we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit so willing to guide us to true safety, justice and peace and abundance for all. Give us the hearts to follow."*

Gloria Carter

[carter53597@tds.net](mailto:carter53597@tds.net)

## *Wisconsin Conference Annual Gathering 2015* By Jean Bonney, Vice President

The 2015 Wisconsin Conference Annual Gathering is still in the planning stage. Some focus groups and activity tables still have to be confirmed, as well as the program on Friday Evening while District Leaders are in their training.

However, these items have been confirmed:

**Date:** Friday night and Saturday, October 23-24, 2015

**Place:** Eau Claire Lake Street UMC

**Theme:** Welcomed by God - Welcoming All

**Registrar:** Nancy Flath

**Registration:** 5:30pm – 6:30pm on Friday; 8:00am – 8:40am on Saturday

**District Leaders' Training** - Friday evening

Secretaries and Historians together

Vice-Presidents, Spiritual Growth and Social Action together

All other district leaders in separate groups

**Keynote Speaker:** Deanna Shimko

**Local Mission Collection:** Beacon House, Homeless Shelter in Eau Claire;

Kelly S. Christianson will give a 5 minute talk.

**Focus Groups:**

Solitary Confinement – John Stedman

Rising Sun Camp – Afi Dobbins

Books on Reading List – Billie LaBumbard

Lectio Divina – Spiritual Growth Study – Liz Dempsey

**Activity Table:** Moola Labels and trimming soup labels

**Pianist** – Paula Upphall

**Song Leader** - Kathryn Gearhart

*Jean Bonney* [r.bonney@mchsi.com](mailto:r.bonney@mchsi.com)

## *Historian* By Velma Hockenberry, Wisconsin Conference UMW Historian

Historians/Secretaries,

Good news regarding storing our records. Lake Street UMC in Eau Claire is willing to house our UMW records for now. So if you can have everything together by our Annual Gathering in October, you can bring them to Eau Claire when you come. Your district gathering will be over and your officers will have copies of minutes to refer back to when necessary as you start your new district.

Be sure everything is well labeled. If you don't have enough acid-free boxes we can transfer them at a later date. Hopefully we will be ready to start a new chapter for United Methodist Women. If you have any questions please feel free to let me know.

Thank you for all the hard work you have done in getting our history up to date.

*Velma Hockenberry*

608-372-3783 [velhoc@centurytel.net](mailto:velhoc@centurytel.net)



The United Methodist Women ladies from Ripon Immanuel United Methodist Church spearheaded a sewing task this past winter. The ladies met at the church on four Saturday mornings for "sewing bees". Some also preferred to work at home. UMW members and other ladies and a man from the church gathered to make washable sanitary pads for Project Patricia. Some cut. Some pinned. Some trimmed and some sewed. There was an activity for every ability level. Jan Livingood made the most pads- over 100!!

Glenda Wylie of Missouri organizes this project out of her home. Girls in school in Africa cannot attend their schools during their periods. To enable them to continue their schooling, each of these girls will be provided with 5 sanitary pads, panties, and a tract in their language if possible. These pads should enable them to continue their schooling throughout the months in school.

This project was met with increasing response throughout February and March from church members in general. The entire church also provided panties for over 80 girls. The greatest part about this project was getting to know each other better during the sewing bees. Coffee also helped and we also discovered unknown talents!

Kathy Hilscher, UMW member, and her daughter, Nicole Zuber, delivered the pads and panties along with additional fabric and patterns to Glenda who was delighted to receive them. Glenda's son will add the necessary snaps to each pad and they will be sent to Africa. There was a great sense of completion at the end of the project along with education and new-found friends.



Jan Livingood



Betty Marquart, Betty Eichstedt, Bonnie Bartig



Marge Burling, Carol Schulz



Glenda Wylie, Kathy Hilscher

W H A T ???

W Women have a great knack for reaching out and helping others

H Helping is done in many ways ..

A Adding YOUR talents and abilities.. makes for a Special .....=

T Team !! TOGETHER.. we Can Make A Difference !!!

??? W H Y not become a

H E L P I N G woman

A D D I N G Y O U to the ....

T E A M of Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women !!!

WE NEED .. Secretary,

Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth,

Language Coordinators for Korean and Native American Women

and Nominations!!

HOW WILL YOU HELP FILL THESE POSITIONS ??????

ADD .. Spark, Service, close friends .. by coming on to the

TEAM! It is a Great Group and gives many enjoyable experiences!!!

Contact ... Bev Maser ..

715-832-7107 or [bjmaser@gmail.com](mailto:bjmaser@gmail.com)

or Julie Mieke

608-221-306 1 or [julie.mieke9@gmail.com](mailto:julie.mieke9@gmail.com)

or Bernice Kohlman

715-675-3165 (no email)

or Shirley Jackson

414-354-5258 or [mrsshirleyjackson79@gmail.com](mailto:mrsshirleyjackson79@gmail.com)

for any questions, and Great Support for your Willingness to SERVE!!

*Editor's Note -*

Please notify me of changes of address or email so that the newsletter can be sent to you.

Ellen Eastman, Editor

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## WISCONSIN CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN MISSION TODAY

### Mission Tasks for 2015

To become a Mission Today organization, please complete two (2) criteria from each category. Please try at least one (1) new criteria and report in fall of 2015.

*United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God...*

- F** 1. Plan programs that encourage spiritual growth. (Program book, *response*
- A** *magazine, etc.*)
- I** 2. Create prayer partners with other church groups.
- T** 3. Pray using the Prayer Calendar at meetings.
- H** 4. Organize the spiritual growth study from Mission u, possibly several evenings/  
weeks.

*to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ;*

- H** 1. Take advantage of opportunities through UMW such as Mission u, Spiritual
- O** Growth Retreats, Annual Gatherings, Mission Action Day.
- P** 2. Set aside a time to go over the year's plans using Mission Today Mission Tasks.
- E** 3. Implement the Charter for Racial Justice program.
- 4. Present a mission study from Mission u, inviting church members.

*to develop a creative, supportive fellowship;*

- L** 1. Honor the organization's leaders and member's contributions with Special  
Mission Recognition pins. Don't forget community leaders.
- O** 2. Encourage everyone to visit or invite visitors to/from other local UMW organizations.
- V** 3. Publicize your events using newsletter, bulletin boards, Sunday bulletins, social
- E** media, phone calls, etc.
- 4. Plan an year-end program to give thanks and celebrate your accomplishments.

**I** *and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries*  
**N** *of the church.*

- A** 1. Encourage all members to participate in the Pledge for Mission; give reports on
- C** where the money goes.
- T** 2. Involve all members in fund raising. (Think creatively.)
- I** 3. Contribute to scholarships (UMW-related) and Mission u (\$25 or more)
- O** 4. Partner with a mission institution such as Northcott House, Hmong House of Good
- N** News, etc.



# *A Fresh Wind Blowing*

## **North Central Jurisdiction Quadrennial Meeting Grand Rapids, MI June 24 - 26, 2016**



Keynote speaker will be Harriett Jane Olson, General Secretary/Chief Executive Officer, United Methodist Women



Yvette K. Richards, President of the United Methodist Women National Office



The Rev. Carolin Spragg will bring scripture to life

Fresh beginnings . . . new commitments . . . refreshing ways to deal with change. We'll have terrific speakers, elect new directors and new NCJ Leadership Team members. Watch for registration forms to be posted online soon.

**Six Workshops:**  
Be Just Be Green  
Spiritual Growth  
Self Defense  
Liturgy for Women  
E Waste  
Laughter Yoga

**Bonus Bus Trip**  
Come early on Friday, June 24th and tour special attractions in Grand Rapids.



United Methodist Women  
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

*Come, Soar With Us!*

WISCONSIN CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

215 N Lafayette St  
Shawano WI 54166

Address Service Requested



*United Methodist Women shall be a community of women  
whose purpose is to know God  
and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ;  
to develop a creative, supportive fellowship;  
and to expand concepts of mission  
through participation in the global ministries of the church.*