UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
SISTERHOOD OF GRACE
PROGRAM BOOK 2018–2019
Celebrating 150 Years in Mission
Sisterhood of Grace

United Methodist Women
Program Book 2018–2019

Celebrating 150 Years in Mission
United Methodist Women
Purpose
The organized unit of 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.

The Vision
Turning faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

Living the Vision
We provide opportunities and resources to grow spiritually, become more deeply rooted in Christ and put faith into action.

We are organized for growth, with flexible structures leading to effective witness and action.

We equip women and girls around the world to be leaders in communities, agencies, workplaces, governments and churches.

We work for justice through compassionate service and advocacy to change unfair policies and systems.

We provide educational experiences that lead to personal change in order to transform the world.
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INTRODUCTION

Ellen Blue, author of United Methodist Women’s legacy book, notes, “When women discover their history and learn their connectedness to their past and to the human social enterprise, their consciousness is inevitably and dramatically transformed. This experience is for them transcendent, in that it enables them to perceive what they share and always have shared with other women.”¹

In 2019, United Methodist Women will celebrate 150 years of women organized for mission. It is a long and detailed history, involving millions of committed women and their stories. Most of them are unknown. Though we cannot tell all the stories, this Program Book touches on pieces of our shared history, connects that history to today, then looks into the future as we continue Christ’s mission and ministry.

There are threads that connect us to the women of our history. The first thread is discernment. We try to be present to God’s presence, knowing that God is in the midst of us, in the least of these, in the silence, in the noise, and in the lessons we continually learn. Discernment leads to response. Second, all of these women, whether it’s those who came before us or those today, are part of Christ’s mission and ministry with women, children and youth. The commitment is both personal, as individuals, and collective, as an organization. Third, this work evolved as history and needs changed. Our own theological growth and education has undergirded all mission, and it continues to be dynamic (as the different missional priorities each quadrennium indicate). Parts of our history are shameful, but we are a resurrection people, so we acknowledge the sin, seek forgiveness and learn as we move forward in faith.

Finally, by adding your own stories and historical memories of United Methodist Women to these programs, history becomes more inclusive and diverse; this is essential as we all come together as God’s daughters, committed to mission. Unfortunately, just like our history books, stories are edited and exclusive. Together we can make additions and become more inclusive and expansive in
our narrative, ready to greet all women into the sisterhood of grace as we seek to live out our faith with love and justice.

The programs each feature a Bible study that relates to the sisterhood of grace theme. A variety of methods are used to make the programs interactive and exciting: food, art, historical vignettes, etc. The programs can be used individually, but if you use all the programs over the course of the year, your unit/circle will get a broader picture of our 150-year history and the diversity of our mission. They are formatted in different ways, but all will require preparation and communication with participants. Adjust them to meet the needs of the group.

Features
Below is an overview of how the monthly programs are formatted. Read through the programs well in advance and be sure to prepare the necessary resources and materials to make each gathering a valuable experience for all.

Month/Title
Each month’s program has a title that offers you a quick reference to the theme of the Bible study, which always centers on women in the Bible and relates to the topic of the program.

Objective
The objective summarizes what is inside the program and the goals for participants. What will they learn? Come away with? Do?

Preparation
This section helps the leader prepare for the program. Refer to this section for the resources and materials you will need to collect ahead of time, and a list of the volunteer leaders and readers you will need to call on. The programs are creative and flexible: You will have the opportunity to shape them to meet the needs of your own unit/circle. See the Build Your Program section below.

Bible Study and Reflection
Each program includes a Bible study that looks at the stories of women who were led by God’s spirit in their time and place. We will discover 12 women, or pairs or a sisterhood of women, from the Bible who opened themselves to God

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and participated in God’s work in the world. Time for reflection and discussion are provided.

**Historical Work: Building Our Identity/Position**

This section offers an opportunity to learn about the historic work of United Methodist Women and its predecessor organizations through the ages. It highlights specific missional focus areas that have shaped the organization’s identity over the years and continue to position us for mission with women, children and youth.

**Call to Action: Engage and Mobilize**

This section invites you to engage in action and advocacy with United Methodist Women. You can use the opportunities and strategies suggested here, or develop your own strategies for ongoing work.

**Sisterhood of Grace Shalom Wheel**

The Sisterhood of Grace Shalom Wheel activity is incorporated at the end of each program to help us connect United Methodist Women’s history with our present work. You will find a description of the activity following this Introduction, along with the Sisterhood of Grace covenant, ground rules that undergird all our work in these sessions. The Shalom Wheel template and stick figures of mission women, past and present, may be found in Appendix A and B, respectively.

The following words appear on different spokes of the wheel:

1. Persistence 7. Generosity
2. Inclusion 8. New Life
5. Human Flourishing 11. Human Dignity
6. Investing 12. Truth Leading to Action

The completed circle will represent these 12 specific traits of the female biblical characters in the Program Book that contribute to shalom or fullness of life (John 10:10). They also represent the characteristics of women in your unit/circle and United Methodist Women.
Prayers, Hymns and Closing Litanies
The programs include prayers to encourage us to be open to encounters with God and our sisters. The hymns are related to the current month’s Bible study topic and offer an opportunity for centering. The closing of each program is either a communal prayer or a litany.

Appendix
Templates for the Shalom Wheel and stick figures of missionary people for the monthly Sisterhood of Grace Shalom Wheel activity are found here, along with the Pledge to Mission Service litany.

Build Your Program
You are encouraged to do the full program so your group learns and gains a good understanding of each topic. The full program will take 45 minutes to an hour: The approximate time allotted for key segments is indicated after the titles. However, if you have less than an hour, use the Build Your Own Program feature underneath the Objective in each program to note the segments you want to utilize, those that would be most helpful for your group.

Special Programs
A Pledge to Mission and A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial programs are included in the Program Book. They are also available for download from the United Methodist Women website: unitedmethodistwomen.org.

We pray that you are impacted by the Bible studies and moved by the programs. We hope you learn new and exciting pieces of United Methodist Women’s history that move you to action in Christ’s mission with women, children and youth. You are part of a great cloud of witnesses—and though we may know only a smattering of stories about the mission and ministry of the women who came before us, our narrative is just as important to fulfilling God’s call. God has worked through each woman in our history and will work through us personally and as an organization so God’s will “will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Peace and blessings as you continue in this journey with Christ.

Endnote
We are a sisterhood of grace. As a community of women organized for mission it is important that we be the creative, supportive fellowship espoused in our Purpose. In that spirit, we offer this covenant as a guideline for interactions in our programs. These ground rules provide us with a framework to ensure that dialogue and participation is open, respectful and brave as we share, pray, learn and listen together.

Sisterhood of Grace Covenant

- Listen actively—with head and heart.
- Speak from your own experience.
- Be aware of body language.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Respect personal space.
- Own your intentions and your impact.
- Practice sustainability.
- Expect unfinished business—both discomfort and joy.

For a special program on the covenant, check the United Methodist Women website: unitedmethodistwomen.org.

Sisterhood of Grace Shalom Wheel

As we live into this sisterhood during the program year we will also be connecting our present to our past through the monthly Shalom Wheel activity as we continuously work towards God’s shalom.

Let us bring to our minds the image from Luke 4:16–21 of Jesus standing and reading a passage aloud—Isaiah 61:1–4—in his congregation in Nazareth. This event in Jesus’ hometown is the inaugural message of his ministry. He announces that his mission is with the marginalized: the “poor,” “captives,” “blind,” and “oppressed.” Jesus says in John 10:10 that he has come to offer fullness of life. The Bible abounds in these shalom passages. Isaiah 61:1–4 and John 10:10 are two key examples.
(Luke 4:16–24)

When he [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’” And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown.”

Shalom allows all people to thrive; it is living abundantly and free from oppression. Shalom is wholeness and well-being; living at peace with ourselves, with each other and with the entire creation. There can be no shalom in the world unless all people experience this fullness of life.

Monthly Shalom Wheel Activity

To represent the concept of shalom visually, and to help us grow in our understanding of how United Methodist Women is working towards shalom, we have developed a Sisterhood of Grace Shalom Wheel. The template for the wheel is found in Appendix A. Every program will include the Shalom Wheel. This is a visual reminder that our history connects us as we move forward. There is no beginning or end to our timeline. This is God’s time and we
respond as God calls us. We learn from history, adjust and persevere, like the biblical women and our foremothers have done.

Prior to the September program, please photocopy the template, enlarging it by four to eight times so it is poster size. Also photocopy and cut out the stick figures representing mission women found in Appendix B. You will need two per program. Alternatively, instead of using poster-size paper, you may want to create a 12-piece Shalom Wheel quilt made by the members of your group. You could also construct the stick figures out of pipe cleaners and felt, if you choose. We invite you to get creative!

Each spoke on the wheel features a theme that is pulled from that month’s Bible study. The themes include persistence, generosity and community, among others, all of which represent attributes that are helpful in bringing about shalom. Which of these attributes do you see in yourself? You may see yourself in all or some of these traits. All spokes lead to a circle in the middle of the wheel where your unit/circle will be invited to write your names during the first program.

In the Bring It All Together portion of each program the group will attach two of the stick figures representing mission women, past and present, to the Shalom Wheel above the slice representing the appropriate monthly theme. Then the group will brainstorm examples of the following and write their answers in the current month’s slice of the Shalom Wheel: 1) the history of women, programs or projects that are important to remember and 2) the women, programs or projects today that have evolved from that history. These form the connection between past and present.

Next, the group will consider the program’s Call to Action and ask themselves: What is our commitment to action this month? How will we respond to Christ’s call to embody the attribute represented by this month’s theme? Within the slice of the appropriate spoke, you will write the unit’s commitment to continue the legacy of mission with women, children and youth through United Methodist Women.

At the end of the 2018–2019 program year, you will be able to not only celebrate the historic and present mission of United Methodist Women, but you also will see how you and your unit/circle have met your commitments through God’s grace and your sisterhood to bring God’s kin-dom to earth so all can thrive!
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Glory E. Dharmaraj, Ph.D.
Dr. Glory Dharmaraj is retired director of spiritual formation and mission theology for United Methodist Women. Prior to that, she served as the administrator of the United Methodist Seminar Program on National and International Affairs at the Church Center for the United Nations in New York. She also has served as United Methodist Women program resource secretary in the former Central Illinois Conference. She is an author and co-author of several books. The most recent book she co-authored with Jacob Dharmaraj is *A Theology of Mutuality: A Paradigm for Mission in the Twenty-First Century* (2014), published by United Methodist Women.

Kelly Martini
Kelly Martini is a freelance writer and former communications director of the Women’s Division. She has authored plenaries, programs, video scripts and articles for multiple nonprofits, along with three youth studies for United Methodist Women, including *Food, Faith and Me; Who Is That Kid Next Door?* and *In Mission Together*.

Michelle Okabayashi
Michelle Okabayashi is a freelance writer and former communications director of the United Methodist Committee on Relief. She has assisted with United Methodist Women’s mission studies for the last eight years as well as many other resources of United Methodist Women and the General Board of Global Ministries.
Special Programs
A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Service 2019

OBJECTIVE: To provide an opportunity for United Methodist Women members to learn more about the difficult circumstances children and youth face around the world, how United Methodist Women is promoting their well-being and equal opportunities for them, and how members can support children and youth in need through the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering.

Build Your Program
Use this space to list the segments that you want to utilize in your program this month.
PREPARATION
Take some time to prayerfully read through the entire program. Ask God to bless your gathering. Meditate on what aspects of this program might be used to draw participants closer to God and to one another, and how it might provide opportunities for action.

Resources
✱ United Methodist Women Bible (NRSV)
✱ The Faith We Sing songbook
✱ The United Methodist Hymnal

Materials
✱ Any necessary copies for readers
✱ Baskets (one for offerings and one for seed packets)
✱ Chalkboard or large piece of paper
✱ Craft materials to decorate the seed packets (e.g., colored pencils or markers, magazines and scissors, construction paper, yarn, rubber stamps, glue sticks)
✱ Cross, tablecloth and items that represent thriving for the worship table
✱ Glue stick or double-sided tape
✱ Paper or card stock cut to the size of seed packets (approximately 3.5” x 4.5”, or one-fourth of a standard sheet of paper)
✱ Seed packets (at least one per participant)
Additional Resources
Your church will receive a packet containing a Call to Prayer and Self-Denial poster, a prayer card, and an offering envelope, which you can use to promote the observance and also during the program. You can order extras as needed at unitedmethodistwomen.org/call-to-prayer.

Participants
*Invite three to six attendees to participate by reading various parts of the program.*

Worship Center
Set up a small table in the front of the room to serve as an altar and cover it with a tablecloth. Place the two empty baskets on the worship table, along with the Bible, a cross and any additional symbols that represent the concept of thriving to you.

Welcome
*Leader:* Every year, United Methodist Women’s observance of A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial gives members and friends of local and district units an opportunity to reflect on the gospel of Christ, pray together and designate funds for ministry on a particular mission focus. In response to God’s love and grace, offerings support mission with women, children and youth. This year, we focus especially on working for equal opportunities for children and youth and for their well-being.

Meditate

Sing
“Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth,” *The Faith We Sing*, no. 2050

Scripture
Read Mark 10:13–16 aloud:

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive
the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Learn and Reflect

Ask three volunteers to read, summarize or act out the following stories about United Methodist Women’s past, present and future commitment to children.

Reader 1: For 150 years, United Methodist Women and their foremothers have advocated for children and youth around the world. Historically, our foremothers funded the building of schools and orphanages in the United States, China, India, Korea, the Philippines, Brazil, Argentina and Bulgaria. In the more recent past, United Methodist Women has worked with church and grassroots organizations to offer vulnerable and oppressed children opportunities to thrive. From access to education in Haiti and Liberia to advocacy programs that teach and act on behalf of the rights of children in Sierra Leone and Colombia; from healthy living through adequate food supplies to education on substance abuse in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and Americas; from community education to end harmful traditions in Kenya and Tanzania to opportunities for children with disabilities to live whole lives at home in the Dominican Republic and Pakistan, children have come to thrive despite adversity through these United Methodist Women–supported efforts.

Reader 2: Today, United Methodist Women continues to work for the well-being of children and youth around the world and those that live right next door. According to UNICEF’s report, The State of the World’s Children 2016, millions of children are denied the basic rights of “safety, health, play and education” and “deprived of what they need to grow up healthy and strong—because of their place of birth; because of their race, ethnicity or gender; or because they have a disability or live in poverty.”

If this cycle isn’t broken, UNICEF reports that by 2030:
• 167 million children will live in extreme poverty;
• 69 million children under the age of five will die between the years 2016 and 2030; and
• 60 million children of primary school age will be out of school.¹

National Mission Institutions work to disrupt these sobering statistics.
Reader 3: As United Methodist Women continues to serve our children to build a thriving generation, there is a new mission priority to pay attention to children that are marginalized by the legal system. In the coming years, United Methodist Women will focus on interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline by advocating for a 25 percent decrease in the number of arrests of children and youth in schools with a specific focus on the youth populations that are most impacted. The organization is also seeking the redesign of zero-tolerance policies in schools in ways that protect rather than criminalize children.

An estimated 200,000 youth are tried, sentenced or incarcerated as adults every year across the United States, and many begin their journey into the criminal justice system in school. Zero-tolerance policies criminalize minor infractions of school rules, while police presence in schools leads to students being criminalized for behavior that should be handled inside the school. Students of color are especially vulnerable to push-out trends and the discriminatory application of discipline. Black and Latino youth are more likely to be sentenced to jail or prison, while white youth are more likely to be sentenced to probation.

Black students are also disproportionately suspended from class, starting as early as preschool, according to new data from the U.S. Department of Education collected from all public school districts during the 2013–14 school year. United Methodist Women will actively work to dismantle current policies that depict children of color, particularly girls of color, as criminals and those policies that respond with mass profiling, arrest and incarceration. (For more information see “Officers, Schools and Institutional Racism, Part 1” at unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/officers-schools-and-institutional-racism-part-1.)

Leader: Around the world, United Methodist Women partners are working to provide opportunities and support the well-being of children: Let us hear and respond to these stories together.

Reader 1: In January 1920, the Woman’s Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church established the Friendship Home Nursery Kindergarten in Cincinnati, Ohio, located in the Friendship Home, a boardinghouse for
young African-American women. These women, many of whom had moved from the agricultural South to the industrial North, did not have the support of nearby family or friends and were in desperate need of childcare. The Woman’s Home Missionary Society established its kindergarten to help meet this need, and soon the women had made it a national mission concern and began to draw support from churchwomen across the country.

People: God, we thank you for those with the courage to help build a thriving generation.

Reader 2: From its beginning, Wesley Education Center has provided quality early childhood education, optimal growth and nutrition and support services for families in Cincinnati. In the 1920s, a visiting doctor and nurse made weekly visits to weigh and immunize babies. As the center grew, a day care was added, hours were expanded and children from 6 months to 14 years of age were accepted. Today, 98 percent of Wesley Education Center’s services are delivered to families who fall below the poverty level. As a safe, nurturing environment that offers additional social support services for over 40 infants and preschoolers, Wesley Education Center provides a valuable service to the community. (For more information, visit wesleyeducationcenter.org.)

People: God, we thank you for the work of Wesley Education Center and for the chance to build a thriving generation.

Reader 3: For some children, humanitarian assistance is necessary. In Laredo, Texas, and other small towns along the Texas-Mexico border, more and more buses arrive late in the day or at night at local bus shelters. The buses are filled with children and women from Honduras, Guatemala and other countries in Central America who are often fleeing drug cartels and growing gang violence. The majority of the children are traveling alone; the women are tired. Once they’ve been dropped off at the bus terminals, these children and women are left to fend for themselves.
People: God, we pray for your protection for those who are suffering or in danger. We thank you for the opportunity to help our children thrive.

Reader 1: One National Mission Institution, the Holding Institute Community Center in Laredo, Texas, is working with the First United Methodist Church and other faith-based and nonprofit organizations to see to the immediate needs of these women and children. Some 75 immigrants arrive every day at Holding, where they are given respite, food, clothing, showers, informal counseling and phones to communicate with the families or hosts they will be staying with. Places like the Holding Institute act as temporary resting places, where these children and women can get some of their immediate needs met before they continue on their journey. (For more information, visit holding-institute.org.)

People: God, we thank you for those who serve others in need. May our work build a thriving generation.

Reader 2: In the wake of the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya, an NGO worker noticed a tremendous rise in the number of girls in orphanages and wondered, What happens to these girls when they menstruate? She learned that the girls stay in their rooms, sitting on a piece of cardboard, missing out on school and work. What they desperately needed, in Kenya and many other parts of the world, was access to feminine hygiene items. The nonprofit Days for Girls provides washable, sustainable hygiene kits to girls and women all over the world. Each hygiene kit lasts two to four years, giving girls back months of missed education and opportunity.

The simple Days for Girls hygiene kits have a tremendous impact on women’s and children’s lives. Girls no longer have to miss days of school every month. And when girls are educated, they are better equipped to feed their families and lift their entire society, and they are more likely to marry at an older age, breaking the cycle of poverty. In addition, the availability of hygiene kits gives girls and women back their dignity, shields them from abuse and protects their health. (For more information, visit daysforgirls.org.)

People: God, we thank you for those with the courage to help build a thriving generation.
Reader 3: Murphy-Harpst Children’s Centers began as a dream cultivated by two women in the early 1900s. Their dream continues to thrive through the care and devotion of United Methodist Women members today. In 1924, Ethel Harpst was sent to Cedartown, Georgia, by the Woman’s Home Missionary Society, where she opened the Ethel Harpst Home in order to provide orphans with better resources and facilities.

A few years later, Sarah Murphy, the daughter of former slaves, founded the Sarah D. Murphy Home, one of the first institutions established in Georgia to care for African-American children. In 1984, the Sarah D. Murphy Home and Ethel Harpst Home merged to become Murphy-Harpst United Methodist Children and Family Services. The site is now home to Murphy-Harpst, a National Mission Institution supported by United Methodist Women with three locations in northwest Georgia.

People: Thank you, God, for women who followed the call to care for children in need.

Reader 1: Murphy-Harpst now provides individualized treatment and secure living space to children, regardless of their gender, race or religious beliefs, who have been abused or neglected. It is a nonprofit organization committed to meeting the needs of young people through residential treatment and placements in specialized foster care and community programs. Women’s groups travel from across the North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church to serve and celebrate this dearly loved mission. (For more information, visit murphy-harpst.org.)

People: God, we thank you for those with the courage to help build a thriving generation.

Reader 2: Let’s thank God for the work of all National Mission Institutions and international partners, especially those that work with children. Please lift up the name of a specific organization as you feel called.

(Pause to allow women to name national and international partners of United Methodist Women.)
ALL: Thank you, God, for the work of Wesley Education Center, of the Holding Institute, of Days for Girls, of Murphy-Harpst and of all the other mission organizations nationally and internationally that serve children and youth. As we work to support a thriving generation, let us remember the example of Jesus, who taught that the kingdom of God belongs to children. Amen.

Activity: How Do We Create a Thriving Generation?

(20 minutes)

Leader: One goal of United Methodist Women is to nurture a thriving generation. What does thriving look like in our context and around the world? How can we follow the examples of Jesus and our foremothers to help children thrive?

Invite participants to explore what thriving might look like by decorating their own seed packet template. When all are finished, ask them to attach the template to a packet of seeds and put it in the basket.

• Before the gathering, place seed packets, paper seed-packet templates and craft materials (glue sticks, colored pencils or markers, magazines and scissors, etc.) in an area where participants can gather and craft together, perhaps a long table at the back of the room.

• Invite each woman to decorate one of the seed packet templates with her own interpretation of what a thriving generation might look like. It may be helpful to have one packet completed ahead of time as an example.

• During this time, encourage conversation and reflection on the stories you have just heard, as well as the overall theme of nurturing a thriving generation.

• After 10 to 15 minutes, once women are finished decorating their seed packets, invite them to glue or tape their decorated templates to a packet of seeds and place them in a basket. Bring the basket to the front of the room and place it next to the empty basket that will be filled with offerings during the next part of the program.
From Reflection to Action

Leader: Let’s move from a time of reflection and learning to a time of action. We have heard of United Methodist Women’s work to ensure the well-being of children. We have created our own vision of how a thriving generation might look, and we will take packets of seeds home with us and plant them to remind us of our commitment to helping others thrive.

What can we do to nurture and support a thriving generation as United Methodist Women members?

You may wish to spend time gathering ideas from the group and writing them on a chalkboard or large piece of paper so that everyone can see them.

Leader: An important part of our action is giving to support the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering.

Women may wonder what their offering to the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering supports. Below is a description of some of the programs that may be included. If desired, this may be listed in the bulletin or meeting agenda, read aloud or discussed among the group.

In 2019, the offerings received from the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial observance will support programming and advocacy for children. Programs may include but are not limited to:

- Advocacy to end the school-to-prison pipeline
- Anti-violence and child-protection programs
- Afterschool and wraparound programs
- Vocational livelihood training for refugees and vulnerable children and youth
- Formal and informational workshops on healthy living
- Equal access to education
- Access to education and life opportunities for children with disabilities
• Education that destigmatizes health issues as well as the social standing of women, married or single, and encourages children to be welcoming to all
• Involve children in care of the earth through learning, action and advocacy
• Health care for children
• Access to clean water
• Attention to the new needs of girls as puberty begins
• Scholarships
• Programs that teach open-mindedness as a lifestyle

Leader: As we move from contemplation to action, let us remember that God loves justice and mercy; as it says in Deuteronomy 10:18, we serve the one who “executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers.” As we bring forth our offerings, let us reflect on how—through our prayers, presence, gifts and service—we can work for the well-being of all children. Let our seed packets, and the plants that grow from them, be constant reminders of what it means to raise up a thriving generation.

Offering and Song
Sing together as the offerings are brought forward. Invite participants to put their gifts in the offering envelopes and place them in the empty basket on the worship table. Invite each participant to take one of the seed packets that they decorated earlier in the session home.

“You Are the Seed (Sois la Semilla),” The United Methodist Hymnal, no. 583

Concluding Prayer
Leader: Loving God, we pray for the millions of children who are denied the basic rights of safety, health, play and education.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the children who are deprived of what they need to grow up healthy and strong, through no fault of their own but rather because of reasons such as their race, ethnicity, gender, ability or social class.
ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the children who live in extreme poverty, without the basic necessities of adequate food, shelter and health care.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: As we go out into the world, let us remember that Jesus called the children to him in the Gospels. May we be faithful disciples of Jesus and remember that children are a sign of the kingdom of God on earth.

Together: Amen.

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Endnotes


Appendix A: Shalom Wheel Template

INCLUSION
COMMUNITY
SALVATION
GENEROSITY
NEW LIFE
BELONGINGNESS
SERVICE
HUMAN DIGNITY
HUMAN FLOURISHING
TRUTH LEADING TO ACTION
INVESTING
PERSISTENCE
Appendix B: Stick Figures of Mission Women
Pledge to Mission Service Litany

Opening Worship

Call to Worship

Leader: We come as women who have received a rich heritage from our foremothers.

ALL: We give thanks for those who were faithful to their call.

Leader: We come as women who use our combined weaknesses and strengths to serve women, children and youth.

ALL: We are thankful for those with whom we serve.

Leader: We come as women who look to a bright future of boldness and leadership.

ALL: We give thanks for those who are being prepared to lead us into this future.

Closing Worship

Pledging Your Commitment

Pray in unison

God of the past, present and future,
We are grateful for those who came before us and we seek to be faithful to their example.

We appreciate those who serve and commit themselves today; we strengthen each other.

We look forward to the generations of women you will raise up to continue the journey.

In Christ’s name we pray, amen.

Pledge to Mission Service Litany

Opening Worship

Call to Worship

Leader: We come as women who have received a rich heritage from our foremothers.

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In Christ’s name we pray, amen.
Evaluation
Please complete and mail this evaluation form to help us continue to create effective and meaningful programs.

Which sections of the Program Book worked best for you? ________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Which sections did not work well? ________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

What specific actions or projects grew out of these programs? __________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

What are the important issues in your community? ___________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Your Name: ________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

E-mail Address: ____________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Group Name: _________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Mail to:
Communications, Attention: Program Book Editor
United Methodist Women National Office
475 Riverside Drive, Room 1501
New York, NY 10115
This Program Book celebrates United Methodist Women’s 150 years of women organized for mission. Each of the monthly programs looks back to our legacy and connects it to where we are today.

We form a sisterhood of grace—a community of women organized for mission who foster the creative, supportive fellowship that is espoused in our Purpose.

Monthly Bible studies, reflections, program activities and a call to action will help your unit to not only connect with one another, but also to those who came before us, our worldwide mission and even extend to the next generation of leaders.