Intercepting human trafficking

During Super Bowl season members let the world know that human trafficking must end.

by Tara Barnes

Since 2010, each Super Bowl season United Methodist Women has hosted the Intercept Human Trafficking campaign to raise awareness about human trafficking and how large sporting events encourage and profit from the culture of sex and labor trafficking.

In February 2013, thousands traveled to New Orleans, La., to participate in Super Bowl XLVII. Not all who traveled to New Orleans did so by choice. Some arrived by force, fraud or coercion. They served food or catered parties, cleaned hotel rooms, washed dishes, delivered dry cleaning and washed windows. Others were sexually exploited as escorts or in “gentleman’s” clubs.

While trafficking is not exclusive to the Super Bowl and sporting events, such large gatherings can increase opportunities for traffickers to profit. United Methodist Women members used the attention focused on the Super Bowl to let others know that the services they are receiving may not be provided willingly—that they may be supporting modern-day slavery without knowing.

Human trafficking occurs every day in every country. Members raised awareness this Super Bowl season by posting fliers, handing out postcards and including inserts in their Sunday worship bulletins. On Human Trafficking Awareness Day on January 11 members used social networks like Twitter and Facebook to let their friends know how they could work to end human trafficking. They held seminars and marches and made posters and banners to let Super Bowl fans (and everyone) know that human trafficking cannot be tolerated in a world that wants to fulfill God’s expectations of love and abundance.

See more photos and read more stories of how members worked to raise awareness of human trafficking by participating in Intercept Human Trafficking at www.unitedmethodistwomen.org.

Have an Intercept Human Trafficking photo to share? Visit humantrafficking.umwonline.net and upload your photo!

Tara Barnes is staff editor for United Methodist Women.
Giving forward

Betty Prentice is remembering United Methodist Women in her will to support mission now and for years to come.

by Sandy Wilder

As a new bride living in Wichita Falls, Texas, 50 years ago, Betty Prentice hadn’t heard of the Women’s Society of Christian Service. But she went to a circle meeting anyway, at the invitation of a friend. It transformed her life.

Ms. Prentice grins when she describes her initial motivation for attending the then Women’s Society of Christian Service meetings: “Some of the women asked, ‘What goes on with our money? Is it getting through?’ They couldn’t go to daytime events, so I volunteered to go and find out what they were doing with our money.” After those first few meetings, she was hooked. She says, “Every time there was a training event, I went. I was taught life skills all the way through” as she continued her involvement in Women’s Society of Christian Service, the Wesleyan Service Guild and finally United Methodist Women.

“I kind of think I was just drawn” to the organization, Ms. Prentice says. “I don’t know if it was one person or all the ladies in my unit or the God-sized hole that I kept trying to fill, but I just always had the feeling that this is where I was supposed to be and this is what I was supposed to do.”

Ms. Prentice raised a family and taught school for 20 years and still managed to hold offices for decades in United Methodist Women and the predecessor organizations. In fall 2012 she finished a term as Oklahoma Conference Treasurer, and before that she’d served in several district offices as secretary, communications, vice president, treasurer, president and as conference secretary of program resources. She’s a firm believer in the value of Schools of Christian Mission, too (now named Mission u).

“It makes you ask the question, ‘where does God want me to be?’” she said.

Asking where does God wanted her to be took Ms. Prentice in an unexpected direction a few years ago. Ms. Prentice paid her own way on a Rotary-sponsored trip to India for a National Immunization Day to combat polio. That year one of the United Methodist Women mission studies focused on India and Pakistan. On an afternoon free from immunization duties, Ms. Prentice looked up Isabella Thoburn College in the phone book, found a driver to take her there, and arranged for a tour. Knowing she was a member of United Methodist Women, the staff welcomed her with open arms, and the head of the college herself, E.S. Charles, gave Ms. Prentice a tour of the buildings and grounds.

Attending her first United Methodist Women Assembly also opened her eyes to the worldwide scope of United Methodist Women’s work. Ms. Prentice says, “Seeing women from all over the United States as well as the world and getting to see and hear firsthand where your money goes … well, sometimes it is surprising that Assembly doesn’t look or sound like your unit. It’s a time to just ‘take the blinders off’ and see more of the world. There’s more to United Methodist Women than just us.”

Ms. Prentice is now an enthusiastic supporter of United Methodist Women’s worldwide mission work.

“I’ve seen the beginning [Isabella Thoburn College]; I’ve been to a lot of our mission sites. I know what goes on. I’ve been there. I’ve seen it.” So she’s planning on leaving a significant gift from her estate to the national organization to support mission work for decades to come.

“The work we do is special,” Ms. Prentice declares. She knows that no organization other than United Methodist Women could have taught her so much and or filled her life so completely—or made such a difference for over a century in the lives of countless women, children and youth around the world. Just as Ms. Prentice embodies faith, hope and love in action during her lifetime, her legacy gift to United Methodist Women after her death will continue her faith, hope and love far into the future.

Sandy Wilder is United Methodist Women consultant for major and planned giving. For questions, e-mail Sandy at SWilder@unitedmethodistwomen.org.
Seeing God through my lens

Stacy Ganzer’s camera brings her closer to God and her sisters at United Methodist Women’s Leadership Development Days

by Stacy Ganzer

ince attending Leadership Development Days (LDD), in Tempe, Ariz., in January 2013, my camera has become my reminder of my call to serve God. LDD was three wonderful days of worship, fellowship and leadership training. Taking my camera began as just a way to capture some of the images of the event, but it soon became so much more.

Looking through the eyepiece of my Canon EOS 60D with its Tamron 18-270 millimeter telephoto lens allowed me to “see” the heart and soul of God—I don’t presume to actually see God’s face, but I do see the joy God brings to my sisters.

At LDD I captured smiles and the laughter. I glimpsed moments of deep meditation and reconnection with our Heavenly Creator. As songs poured from our lips, I captured the deep and abiding faith that we expressed.

Our guest speaker on Saturday evening was the Rev. Lorenza Andrade Smith. Capturing still photos of her was a daunting task. She is a sparky, say-it-like-it-is pastor with a calling to be present, listen and live with others in all circumstances of life. She is a faith-filled soul in motion. She doesn’t sit still, just like God doesn’t sit still.

Ms. Smith carries her pewter chalice with her wherever she goes as a reminder of her calling to serve God. While at LDD I realized that I too have a “chalice”—my camera is not only a fun toy; it is a tool and a gift I have to capture God’s Spirit living in others. It is the lens through which I see the faith, hope and love in action as my sisters serve women, children and youth in the name of Christ.

Some folks believe cameras steal souls. I am not one of them. The Spirit that lives within us cannot be stolen, only revealed. A snapshot can capture so much of continued on page 4
God through my lens

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what we are feeling and experiencing in a single moment.

On the United Methodist Women photo site on Flickr (www.flickr.com/UMWomen) is a series of posters featuring photos by missionary Paul Jeffrey. The poster “Graceful” features a young girl dancing at one of the United Methodist Women supported National Mission Institutions. So much is captured in that single snapshot. Mr. Jeffrey, also senior correspondent for United Methodist Women’s magazine, response, is an amazing photographer. He brought to life the movement of the Spirit of God within that single snapshot. He captured the very essence of faith and freedom that fills us when we let go and let God work through us. The girl represents not just the gracefulness we experience with God but also the freedom of expression and innocence we all strive for.

On Sunday at LDD the meditation room was open in the early morning. I decided to spend a little time there. As it turns out, I spent more than a little time. I sat down at one of the tables and just prayed. I poured out my soul, sought forgiveness and opened myself up to God’s presence. Prayer turned into tears as I reconnected with God in a way I haven’t been able to do in a very long time. I’m sure a few women wondered if I was having a meltdown. Nope! Not a meltdown—just a very deep connection with God. I prayed for my sisters, for those experiencing difficulties and for those who have lost loved ones and friends. I prayed for those bringing hope to our broken world. I prayed for my sisters at LDD and for all our members of United Methodist Women.

Afterward I wandered around and, yes, took more pictures. I talked with several women, including Glory Dharmaraj, now retired executive for spiritual formation for United Methodist Women, who was the meditation leader on Sunday. My nervousness about talking with a celebrated author and staff member was unfounded. Ms. Dharmaraj sat right down next to me and we had an enlightening conversation. I shared a little about my experience in the meditation room and joked about God calling me to use my camera as my “chalice.” And she shared her thoughts on where United Methodist Women and the church as a whole are headed. Times are changing. We are entering into an age when digital photography, social media and the World Wide Web are the new tools we use to spread the Gospel. This is a digital age.

The books we read are no longer just print but can be read on computers, cell phones and e-readers like Kindle, Nook or iPad. We can share God in person, in a letter, over the phone, and now over the Internet. In fact, this article first appeared on my blog! We can connect via Skype and videoconference with sisters far and wide. We can connect over social networks like Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites as well as catch updates on our websites. We don’t have to wait for a paper newsletter or magazine to come in the mail anymore. Much of what we need is right at our fingertips.

Ms. Dharmaraj was right—we are shifting into a new age. It’s an age that allows us to be more connected. Our pastors can give a sermon on Sunday morning and we can hear (or even see) it at a later time through the use of the Internet. We are no longer bound by restrictions of time and space. We are connected. And, most important, God is with us when we make these connections. The Holy Spirit can guide us as we spread the message of faith, hope and love in action.

I have the ability to use my camera—my chalice—to facilitate change in the world. I can help others see the joy, faithfulness and true spirit of Christ that abides within us as we live out our PURPOSE as members of United Methodist Women.

I pray that my time at LDD in Tempe is just the beginning—a starting point for wonderful things to come. I hope others may see just how beautiful, how faithful, we as United Methodist Women are when we share time together in spiritual fellowship. We aren’t just learning. We don’t just sit and absorb what’s being shared. We mirror the very Spirit of Christ as we participate, worship and express our faith in God. We are God’s vessels on earth. I pray that I can be one of the many who are able to capture those moments of spirit-fullness.

And God bless those who find themselves at the receiving end of my lens.

Stacy Ganzer is the communications coordinator for the Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women. She blogs at sahendersonblog.wordpress.com.
Sharing warmth

Ives Chapel United Methodist Women create and bless lap blankets for local community centers.

by Joy Uthoff

In fall 2012, Ives Chapel United Methodist Women in Baldwin City, Kan., made 51 lap blankets for a local care center and children’s blankets for Della Lamb Community Center in Kansas City, Mo., a United Methodist Women supported National Mission Institution. An appeal was made in the local church newsletter for fabric and sewing supplies. United Methodist Women and church members donated supplies and money, and unit members sewed, cut and tied.

The children’s blankets were blessed by the pastor, the children and the congregation during the children’s story on the United Methodist Women supported Children’s Sabbath Sunday. The blankets were also displayed during the annual United Methodist Women’s chicken noodle Election Day meal. Following the blessings and display the blankets were ready to be presented to their new recipients. The project completed to warm others also warmed the hearts of those involved.

Joy Uthoff is the communications coordinator for Ives Chapel United Methodist Women, Baldwin City, Kan.

Stitches of love

The “Sew-and-Sews” of Lynden United Methodist Church create quilts for those needing comfort.

by Marion Catron

Twelve beautiful quilts were draped over the communion altar during United Methodist Women Sunday in summer 2012 at Lynden United Methodist Church in Lynden, Wash. As part of the worship service, a group of the quilters lead the congregation in the following responsive prayer:

Leaders: O Lord our God, maker of all things, you have blessed us with so many gifts—a good eye for color, the ability to make fine stitches, the skills to develop ever-new and exciting patterns. Now we offer the fruits of our labors, the love quilts we have made, to you.

ALL: Use us as you will, always to your glory and the welfare of your people. Amen.

My reaction was: Wow! So much had been accomplished in just over three months. An old storage room had been restored, cleaned and equipped as a permanent sewing room. Materials were donated, and church and community members were invited to learn to quilt.

Quilting is a different language: Fussy cuts, fat quarters, frog stitching are explained with a smile or a good laugh. Not all the workers are stitchers. There is also sorting, pressing, shopping and various related activities that make a person feel that she belongs to a much-needed project. The members of United Methodist Women named themselves the “Sew-and-Sews” and have small, printed labels to attach to their handiwork. The workers and quilters were Ida Asprec, Nancy Brown, Marian Catron, Pamela Davies, Ann Hibbs, Bev Honcoop, Cheri Jackson, Penny Norton, Lois Polf, Jane Young and Jo Young.

The quilts remained at the altar until the following Tuesday, the usual quilting day. On this day, however, members did not quilt. Instead they folded the lovely, blessed quilts and left in two cars to deliver their gifts to the St. Joseph Hospital neonatal unit and the cancer center for infusion patients. Then they celebrated by having a meal together.

Marion Catron is a member of United Methodist Women at Lynden United Methodist Church in Lynden, Wash.
Forgiveness and reconciliation
United Methodist Women members take an Ubuntu Journey to Belfast, Northern Ireland.

by Ruby D. Anderson

Five United Methodist Women members journeyed in September 2012 to Belfast, Northern Ireland, to meet with our host the Rev. Dr. Gary Mason, superintendent of the East Belfast Mission, and the Rev. Britt Gilmore, U.S. missionary to Northern Ireland. The theme of this Ubuntu Journey was forgiveness and reconciliation. Team members were Ruby Anderson, Detroit, Mich.; Alma Blount Manney, Orlando, Fla.; Mary Lou Maloney, Lewisville, Minn.; Kevin Schaner, Cleveland Heights, Ohio; and Carol Van Gorp, staff, United Methodist Women National Office, New York, N.Y.

We embarked on our journey to build relationships with Methodist women of Northern Ireland, to learn of the work of the East Belfast Mission, to learn about the process of forgiveness and reconciliation in a relative context with people from both sides of a conflict and to participate in a local mission project. We also met with local political representatives and citizens who had been impacted by “The Troubles,” a period of conflict beginning in the 1960s between the Protestants of Northern Ireland, who desired union with the United Kingdom, and Catholics, who wanted all of Ireland to be independent. The Good Friday Agreement signed in 1998 helped calm some of the violence between the groups, but clashes still occur, as forgiveness is hard, and reconciliation even harder.

A member of our host team met us at Belfast International Airport. We were escorted to our hotel, which was located yards away from where the ship Titanic was built. After freshening up from a long plane ride, we had lunch at the refresh café, a community restaurant of the East Belfast Mission where the meals were always hearty. Mr. Mason and Joyce Mason were our first hosts. Mr. Gilmore coordinated the events for our Ubuntu Journey.

Sunday September 16 was very special. Mr. Mason delivered the message and gave our Ubuntu team an opportunity to participate in the service through readings, prayers, poems and singing. Worshiping as well was the president of the Methodist Women of Ireland and members of the organization.

An important site in Belfast is the location where the Titanic was built. The shipyards supplied many jobs for Belfast during the 20th century. The Titanic Museum opened in Belfast this year near the now nearly empty shipyards.

We spent a day in Belfast touring inner East Belfast interface areas, where Catholic and Protestant communities live side by side. Mr. Mason and a staff member drove and walked us through many sights, showing us murals and explaining their significance. We saw neighborhoods with peace lines.

The mission works in inner East Belfast. The Methodist Church has been in Belfast since the early 1800s. Mr. Mason is pastor of Newtownards Road Methodist Church where the team worshiped on Sunday. Later in the week we toured the amazing Skainos Project. We were hosted in the evening at the home of Mr. Gilmore and his wife, Allison, for dinner. Mr. Gilmore coordinated the events for our Ubuntu Journey.

The Ubuntu team in Belfast (left to right): Ruby Anderson, Kevin Schaner, Mary Maloney, Alma Manney and Carol Van Gorp.

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One afternoon was spent at the Stepping Stone Mission restore shop, followed by a tour and session with Sammy Douglas, a member of the Northern Ireland Assembly, on the political process at Stormont, the Northern Ireland Parliament. The day closed with a session at the Skainos project. It is centered in community, for all, from those who have much and those who have little. It surely will be a place where the presence of the Lord dwells.

On the sixth day we were treated to a tour and lunch hosted by the Londonderry Central Mission. The mission houses homeless men. The director and staff rendered radical hospitality to us. After lunch we took a tour of Londonderry and the Museum of Free Derry.

The next morning was spent with Alternatives, a group that helps teens complete high school and find jobs and meet other needs. Having worked in an alternative school, I was pleased to know the East Belfast Mission worked with teens to give them second chances and hope. Our afternoon was spent touring with Mark Hourston, director of the mission, and Glenn Jordan, Skainos director. They explained the use of the Skainos facility and the role of community development in reconciliation. The Skainos project is extraordinary. It is centered in community, for all, from those who have much and those who have little. It surely will be a place where the presence of the Lord dwells.

The day before we were to leave for home we were left alone to reflect, explore and shop. The afternoon we ventured to the Nendrum Monastic Site, where we prayed, shared stories and reflection and ate dinner at Daft Eddy’s, a beautiful countryside restaurant overlooking a night-lit Irish lake. Next we went to Newcastle, to the Conference of the Methodist Women of Ireland. We were greated royally and enjoyed conversation, entertainment and refreshments. To our surprise the president and a team of members greeted us with gift bags with our own names stamped on each one.

On our last day we left for North Coast sightseeing and fellowship with other Belfast women. A final meal took place at Made in Belfast restaurant with Mr. Mason, Ms. Mason and Mr. Gilmore. Our conversations reflected the many discussions during the week on peace, relationship building and the importance of community. From the time we arrived to our final ride back to the Belfast International Airport, a sense of pride and progress was expressed in each conversation. It is the team’s hope that we are building a lasting and growing relationship with our sisters and brothers in Northern Ireland and that we will be able to return to celebrate as their peace building is successful.

To learn how you can join an Ubuntu Journey, visit www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/programs/ubuntu. In 2013 United Methodist Women will visit Chile, South Korea and Zimbabwe.

Ruby D. Anderson is the Detroit Conference United Methodist Women secretary of program resources and local United Methodist Women vice president.

United Methodist Women meet online

The eCircle leadership team met in September 2012 to plan for the upcoming year.

United Methodist Women at Asbury United Methodist Church establish an e-mail circle and grow in members.

by Brenda Potts

In many churches, as the United Methodist Women membership grows older we start to lose our elders and leaders. At Asbury Park United Methodist Church in Asbury, Md., several ladies passed and several relocated to be closer to the children. Some have elderly parents to care for or other obligations, and some are unable to attend regular meetings. Losing members also meant we could not give as much to mission.

We asked a few members who could not attend meetings if we could send them meeting minutes by e-mail to keep them updated. We also had several women help with our annual Potpourri Luncheon who were not members. These women said they would join but they did not have time for meetings. We presented the idea of an Internet circle to our leadership team.

The Internet circle was approved. We had eight members to start with. We elected our board and named the circle “eCircle,” which would hold e-meetings (monthly meetings by Internet). We used the same guidelines for eCircle offices and responsibilities as for our “regular” United Methodist Women leadership team. Our eCircle leadership team will meet in September to plan for the upcoming year and in June as a recap of our year. We elected to have four fellowship meetings throughout the year, alternating lunch and dinner gatherings. Monthly e-meetings happen on the second Monday of each month.

Each new member receives a new member packet consisting of a letter of welcome; Joys of Membership brochure from the national office; A Look at Asbury’s United Methodist Women—a document that reports on the previous year’s activities, fundraisers and donation to missions; For eCircle Information—a document giving basic information about our purpose, pledges and contributions; World Thank Offering information; and current membership directory. (A New Member Packet is also available at United Methodist Women Resources at www.unmwcommissionresources.org or 1-800-305-9857.)

eCircle now has 32 members, and we are the largest circle in Asbury United Methodist Women. Most of our eCircle women were involved in various ministries, but now we have a fellowship and even more support. Our members range in age from 25 to 92, some of whom come from outside of the church.

The eCircle is for women who have other obligations and are unable to attend regular meetings but who would like to be a part of United Methodist Women. eCircle allows women to participate with flexibility and share their talents and gifts. By receiving e-mails and updates monthly through the eCircle, it helps maintain personal involvement. We all enjoy the freedom of eCircle. God works in mysterious ways.

Brenda Potts is eCircle chairperson for Asbury United Methodist Women at Asbury United Methodist Church in Asbury, Md.
Mission Resources

The Roma of Europe
By Larry Beman

The Roma people have been an integral part of European history and today are the largest minority ethnic group in Europe. This study helps readers understand the Roma people—often referred to as travelers and gypsies—and the struggles they have faced and face and The United Methodist Church's ministry with this group on the margins of society. Spanish and Korean available in May.

$7.00 M3156

The Roma: History, Culture and Faith (DVD)

Outside Europe, many have a romantic notion of the Roma, Literature, music and film conjure images of mysterious fortune-tellers, vibrant vagabonds or spirited musicians. Within Europe negative misconceptions about this group of people abound. This DVD will lead you to a deeper understanding of the Roma, their history, culture and faith.

$10.00 M3158

Welcoming the Stranger
A Youth Study on Migration
by Cindy Klick

The Handbook 2013-2016 provides you with guidelines and policies and equips each group to organize in a way that makes the most sense to them. Learn about the work of United Methodist Women and how you can engage in mission, connect with one another and find practical tips and suggestions for organization and resources to help you assume responsibility. Available June 2013.


$12.50 M3157 (English)

Leaving Home • Finding Home
A Mission Study for Children
by Anne Broyles

Leaving Home • Finding Home will help young children understand the many reasons people move from one place to another. Children will read about the courage it takes to make a new place home. Children will also understand that the Bible is the story of the Roma. Literature, music ... images of mysterious fortune-tellers, to welcome people in their community. vibrant vagabonds or spirited musicians.

Welcoming the Stranger: A Youth Study on Migration traces stories of displacement and relocation from biblical times to the present with the goal of helping young people ages 12 through 19 embrace the Christian legacy of acceptance. This study, written for leaders, comprises five two-hour sessions designed to engage, educate and inspire new thinking about the strangers in our midst.

$8.00 M3155

The Call: Living Sacramentally, Walking Justly
by George McClain, Tilda Norberg and Nancy Kruh (Editor)

This study offers tools to deepen spiritual identity, engagement in community and involvement in mission, looking at the sacramental understandings of baptism and communion and lifting up models of response to God’s call. Stories of call and response are shared from a wide array of persons from different walks of life. Includes study guide.

$7.00 (English) M3123
Spanish and Korean available in May.

Handbook 2013-2016
United Methodist Women

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