As a language coordinator from my conference, I was privileged to attend the United Methodist Voices event at Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville, Tenn., from February 27 to March 1, 2015.

At this event, I was reminded of the things that I already know and all the new things I have to learn. It is amazing how we never stop learning. Listening and learning about how “We Are the Church” from Rev. Jeannie Trevino-Tedile reminded me of the importance of language coordinators in the United Methodist Church.

Language coordinators are the voices of those who have limited English language experience. We are the language bridge. We have an important role in reaching out to one another in order to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The worship sessions were great! Leader Grace Cajiuat was so full of energy and humor that she made worshipping together even more wonderful. I looked forward to the worship sessions because that’s when I cleared my mind and listened to what God was saying. The songs, litanies and prayers were all so powerful!

Grace Cajiuat led us in a cultural and emotional intelligence session, which helped us talk about how we were truly feeling and expressing our feelings. We talked about effective Christian leadership in a multicultural church.

I learned diversity is a reality and inclusion is a choice. I never really thought about it, but it is true. We also talked about how empathy means feeling with people. People don’t seem to have the same feeling with people. People don’t seem to have the same empathy back into our lives. I needed to be aware of becoming more empathetic towards other people.

What wonderful information we took back to our conferences! We made it happen! After all, we are United Methodist Women charged by the grace of God. Because through God, all things are possible. Amen!

Kady Herr-Yang is the Hmong language coordinator for the Wisconsin conference. This was her second year at the Voices event, which she called, “a wonderful opportunity to meet old and new sisters in Christ.”

By Kady Herr-Yang

Voices participants Mary Bertram, president, Kentucky conference (left), and Kady Herr-Yang, Hmong language coordinator, Wisconsin conference (right), learn through experiential exercises at the Voices event.

United Methodist Women Voices Event: A Reflection

From the General Secretary

A Leader-Filled Organization

by Harriett Jane Olson

As I’ve attended United Methodist Women events and meetings around the country, I often meet United Methodist Women members with a fairly wide geographic experience of United Methodist Women. They may have been active in three or four conferences, districts or local units as they and their families have moved from place to place. I wonder if this is the way we think about ourselves and if we realize what a strength this is. Sometimes we talk about our own unit or the leaders as if our journeys were regular, consistent and predictable, when in reality this is seldom true.

One of the implications of a mobile membership is that when we offer opportunities to grow spiritually, to engage in mission service and advocacy and in leadership development, we are developing a base of people with experience that serves the whole organization. We are interconnected. This seasons our leadership teams with both deep local understanding and broad perspective that helps us respond to the call to mission in the midst of change.

Some of these moves are intentional, and some are not. This means that sometimes “succession planning” for leadership positions can be difficult. Since we know this, how should we work? How might we think about who needs training and opportunities to learn and lead if we think about equipping leaders for the whole organization? What if more of us found ways to job share with someone, or made way in the attendance pattern or nominations process for someone who hasn’t had the experiences we’ve had?

So, let’s not be discouraged when someone is invited to serve beyond our local unit, or moves to a new place. We haven’t “lost” someone who is serving beyond our local unit—we’re developing leaders for our whole organization. And some other unit or district is developing a leader who may come your way. Let’s do this well so that our mobile membership is “competent, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:10).

The experience and skills that each of us brings is part of being a leader-filled organization, responding to God’s call to mission service.

Harriett Jane Olson

Voices Event: A Reflection

By Kady Herr-Yang

A Leader-Filled Organization

by Harriett Jane Olson
Let Your Light Shine: Making a Difference at Henderson Settlement

by Amy Sell

At Henderson Settlement, a United Methodist Women-supported national mission institution, we are a women’s group that meets weekly that I often describe as my Baptist United Methodist Women. All of the ladies are Baptist. When we get together, we eat, have a devotion, do a presentation or a craft, we fellowship and have a good time!

I was sharing a devotion I had written last Valentine’s Day about letting your light shine. I thought that it was imperative for the women of the group to know how important they were to me. Since my family lives in another state, these women act as mothers and sisters to me. They pray for me, they cry with me, they make me chicken soup when I don’t feel well. They are important and need to know it.

I shared the verse for the day, Matthew 5.16, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Then I shared why each individual in the room was important to me. At the end of our time together, I had a woman come to me in tears. She shared that no one had ever told her that she was important. My heart broke. I think everyone needs to know they are important.

If you have a daughter or son, sister or brother, niece or nephew, granddaughter or grandson, your spouse, your neighbor or your coworker, everyone needs to know that they matter. But more importantly, you need to let people know that they matter to God and that God thinks that they are spectacular. God is head over heels in love with us and people need to know, so share that with them.

This story is not unique to Henderson Settlement or to Appalachia; this is unique to your town, your church, your United Methodist Women circle. There are people around you each day who feel unworthy and unloved. Share your love with them and the love of Christ. It may make all of the difference for them!

Amy Sell is the Christian Education Coordinator at Henderson Settlement in Frakes, Ky., one of the nearly 100 national mission institutions supported by United Methodist Women.
United Methodist Women of First United Methodist Church of McKinney
Take Aim Against Trafficking of Children in Texas

by Rebecca Traeger

On March 26, United Methodist Women members of First United Methodist Church of McKinney, Texas, held an event intended to take aim at child sex trafficking.

“The buying and selling of children isn’t something that only happens in some far-off land. It happens in our own country, our own state, and right here in Collin County,” said Patty Froehlich, Associate Pastor at First United Methodist Church McKinney. The United Methodist Women members are working with Traffick911, a nonprofit organization dedicated to freeing American youth from sex slavery through increased awareness and education for prevention, rescue and restoration. Colette Copeland Williams, the Collin County Texas volunteer director with Traffick911, spoke at Thursday’s event.

Williams told the story of a 13-year old honors student from Irving who was lured away from her middle school gymnasium with the promise of getting a clandestine tattoo. Instead, she was sexually assaulted, drugged and sold for sex for nine days. “She made one bad choice and it changed her life forever,” said Williams.

According to Homeland Security, Texas is ranked second in the United States for child trafficking. The Department of Justice has designated the I-10 corridor as the number one route for human trafficking in the country. Williams says this has little to do with Texas’s international border and much more to do with its highway system and the amount of money available in the state. At least 100,000 child victims each year. Traffickers are hiring teenage recruiters to befriend girls and boys, who are on average 13 years old, to lure them away so they can be sold for sex,” Williams said. Traffickers prey on a child’s insecurities or home life issues, all under the guise of friendship or even love. “Some masquerade as best friends, others as boyfriends. Children are meeting them online, through social media, and in person at schools, malls and movie theaters. Wherever your children are, the recruiters are too,” said Williams.

According to Traffick911, a nonprofit organization dedicated to freeing American youth from sex slavery through increased awareness and education for prevention, rescue and restoration, in every school and every church. The average person, by being informed and observant, can save a life from trafficking just by paying attention,” said Velcet Hammond, United Methodist Women leader and one of the organizers of the event. Traffick911 partners with Homeland Security and other groups to take steps to end trafficking, prevent its spread and heal its victims.

Missing and Exploited children puts the number of active missing children cases in Texas at 47,000. Traffick911.com reports that one in three runaways will be approached by a trafficker within 48 hours of leaving home.

Williams described some of the red flags to look for, including truancy, inappropriate clothing, tattoos pertaining to money or with a strange name and a sudden change in behavior or possessions. While one sign might not indicate trafficking, two or three together can be an indication. Williams gives an example: “If you are at a convenience store late at night and you see a young girl standing around alone, dressed inappropriately and by herself, do not approach her (because she is likely being watched), but do call 911. Then you can call the National Human Trafficking Hotline, 1-888-373-7888. A life might just depend on it.”

This fall, the United Methodist Women will sponsor a Traffick911 program, “Traps of a Trafficker,” at First United Methodist Church of McKinney to train middle and high school students and their parents how to avoid the tricks, traps and lures of traffickers.

“Tonight’s event and this training program are just the start for us. I want to see this information offered in every school and every church. The average person, by being informed and observant, can save a life from trafficking just by paying attention,” said Velcet Hammond, United Methodist Women leader and one of the organizers of the event. Traffick911 partners with Homeland Security and other groups to take steps to end trafficking, prevent its spread and heal its victims.

Dr. Thomas O. Brumett, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church of McKinney, explains the importance of continued conversations, partnering with other community organizations, and taking action to help stop the trafficking of children.
Seventh Annual Mission Focus Day Hosted By St. Paul United Methodist Women

by Janice McCallen
St. Paul UMC

Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor ice, nor hail could keep the hands and feet of Christ from energetically working as the St. Paul United Methodist Women in Lakeland, Tenn. hosted their seventh annual Mission Focus Day on Saturday, February 21, 2015.

Over thirty-five women, men, youth and children gathered to work on a variety of mission projects. Twenty-three homemade teddy bears were tenderly crafted and carefully created and will be donated to Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital. Nineteen handmade desk chair bags were cheerfully stitched by talented seamstresses and donated to Berclair Elementary School. Eight fleece baby blankets were stitched with love and donated to Hannah’s Hope.

Several lay dies learned to crochet at this year’s event, and eight sets of crocheted towels and dishcloths were crafted for Methodist Hospital’s gift shop. Another group baked more than 80 dozen cookies for the upcoming Kairos prison ministry weekends. Children and youth got in on the action, as well. Thirty cards and letters were creatively designed and decorated by our youth and children and sent to St. Paul shut-ins. Our Kids with a Mission group created “socks of love,” filling socks with toothbrushes, toothpaste and toiletry items for recipients.

At the end of Mission Focus Day, several laywomen gathered to reminisce and reflect on their blessings. Many are members of the church for more than 50 years, and January has become a very successful event for church members to be actively involved in mission and ministry.

Mission Resources Featured Sale Items

Prayer Calendar 2015

$5.00 Originally $10.00 (M3215)

The Prayer Calendar 2015 is a daily resource for United Methodist Women. Including colorful artwork created by children in missions around the world, each week in the calendar has a dedicated page providing daily lectionary readings and plenty of room to write notes. The calendar is also a directory of current projects, people, places of mission and a reminder of former mission personnel. An essential resource for daily planning, the Prayer Calendar is also a valuable asset in learning about the mission work of The United Methodist Church through Global Ministries and United Methodist Women, and would be a wonderful gift.

Living With Purpose in a Worn-out Body Large Print

Original Price $10.00  Price $5.00  (R6003)

Birthed out of real-life experience, Living With Purpose in a Worn-out Body is a big dose of authentic spiritual encouragement for senior adults who are frail and struggling to find purpose at this stage of life. Prayers in the book address many older-adult concerns and provide opportunities for them to reminisce and reflect on their blessings.

Same Kind of Different As Me Large Print

Original Price $17.99  Price $9.00  (R8043)

The story begins outside a burning plantation in Louisiana, and unfolds in the upscale art scene in Texas. It exposes pain, betrayal and brutality, and it shines with an unexpected life-changing love. In the end, Ron Hall and Denver Moore form an unlikely friendship resulting from charity and challenged by tragedy.

The Suicidal Planet

Original Price $15.95  NOW! $7.98  (R6036)

Climate change is the single biggest problem humans are facing, yet we continue with lifestyles way beyond our planet’s limits. Mayer Hillman examines the role of technology in addressing this issue, steps local communities and families can take to help, and why governments must act now to protect the planet for future generations.

Perfect for small groups, book clubs and Sunday schools. Selected large print books on sale, view umwmissionresources.org for more titles.
Mandarin Methodist Women’s Group Celebrates 50 Years of Camaraderie, Mission

by Beth Reese Cravey

In the 1960s, when Melissa Trawick was a young wife and working mother living in what was then small-town Mandarin, Fla., she wanted to be part of something. She wanted a social outlet, but she also wanted an outlet to help other people. While attending the community’s Methodist church, she heard other members talking about the church’s chapter of the Women’s Society of Christian Service, which a few years later would become United Methodist Women.

“I was looking for the camaraderie of other women. I was looking for the chance to make friends,” Ms. Trawick said. “But she got more. Nationally, United Methodist Women focuses on mission, particularly outreach programs for women, children and youth, locally and worldwide. That got Ms. Trawick hooked. In 2014, as the Mandarin group marked its 50th anniversary, she remained hooked. “Missions... became a part of me,” she said. “Missions became my thing.”

The group celebrated the anniversary with an October dinner that featured speakers and a fashion show depicting changes in fashion, history and issues over the last five decades. During that time, other Methodist women’s groups have come and gone, as local church priorities changed or membership declined. But the Mandarin group stayed strong, with 185 members on its current roster. They are among 57 United Methodist Women groups in Northeast Florida.

“They are a group of wonderful women who are dedicated to their church and community.” Mandarin member Nancy Rushton said the group has always produced leaders.

“The women who have been part of this group keep it strong,” she said. They have raised funds for or donated supplies to a wide range of Jacksonville nonprofits, including the Hubbard House domestic violence shelter, the Sulzbacher Center for the homeless, City Rescue Mission and Pace Center for Girls. They have supported orphans in Africa and relief efforts in Haiti, among other international giving.

For the last four years, they have assembled and delivered hospitality bags for all the women who come to Hubbard House each year, shelter Chief Executive Officer Ellen Siler said.

“These bags contain a variety of items that help welcome victims to shelter and bring some joy at a stressful time,” Ms. Siler said.

DLC (Developmental Learning Center) Nurse & Learn, an inclusive child-care center in Jacksonville that serves special-needs and other children, has been a longtime beneficiary, said Executive Director Amy Buggle. The school has received “tens of thousands of dollars” from Mandarin United Methodist Women’s annual craft show, she said. Also, members of the group’s “circles”—subgroups that focus on particular interests—have sent the school’s children and staff gifts.

“The way they have supported us is endless,” Ms. Buggle said. The members also support each other. Five years ago, when Ms. Trawick’s husband died, they provided everything from meals to hugs. “I would not have made it through without those women,” she said.

And they expand each others’ horizons through educational programming, said Ms. Rushton, who has done a lecture on human trafficking, among other things. Some of the young circles study “spiritual parenting.”

“We want to educate our women and ourselves,” she said. For 50 years, they have followed their faith and the tenets of (United) Methodism, which tell them to “go out and do,” she said. They are looking for new ways to attract more young members but have found that young women these days are busier and have more church activity options than the group’s founders had in 1964.

Still, they persevere, Ms. Rushton said. “Not everyone has that outlook on life. But it fits with me,” she said. “It is in my heart to be part of the community, do for others and make the world a better place.”

Beth Reese Cravey is a writer for The Florida Times-Union. This article first appeared in the Florida Times-Union at Jacksonville.com. Reprinted with permission.
Women’s Migration: A Global Issue

by Mary Beth Coudal

On March 12, 2015, United Methodist Women sponsored a popular workshop on Women’s Migration, Flawed Development Strategies and the Way Forward. Several dozen women attended and engaged in conversation at the Church Center of the United Nations.

The goal was to bring “a gender perspective to the discussion of migrant rights,” according to Carol Barton, executive with United Methodist Women. Topics ranged from the forces that drive women to migrate to the legal protections needed for women to stay safe.

The impact of migration on women is not simply an awareness of the “migrant women, because women who stay behind are also impacted.” The international activists highlighted facts about women’s migration, but more importantly, the international delegates sought to build alliances through small group discussions, strategizing on policies, rights and coalitions.

The panelists included Kate Sheill, an advocate at Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, and Mirtha Colon, with NALACC, National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities. Another panelist, Cathy Tactaquin, National Network for Immigrant Refugee Rights, noted that the world’s women are faring better than twenty years ago when the Beijing gathering first shed light on the international migrant rights’ movement. However, Ms. Tactaquin said, there is still much work to do. “It’s especially important now, 20 years later, to reflect back on the Beijing Platform,” said Ms. Tactaquin. “We are astounded by the mass increase in global migration and the feminization of migration and the increase in children migrating.”

“We want to explore the sources that have given rise to the forced migration of women,” explained Jennifer Meneses, a representative with the Board of Women’s Work, United Methodist Church in the Philippines. “The labor export is now the major solution for saving the bankrupt Philippines economy. As of December 2014, 12 to 15 million Filipinos work abroad. Women make up more than half, outnumbering men,

This United Methodist Women delegation to the 59th Commission on the Status of Women held at the Church Center for the United Nations included members, directors, staff and mission partners.
especially in the service sector. Based on the type of occupations abroad, the maximization of their (women’s) potential remains wanting. The isolation leads to abuse, sexual discrimination, exploitation, violence.”

Ms. Meneses advocates for the strengthening of solidarity and the creative use of “social media to make our demands known.” Paola Cyment, a delegate supported by United Methodist Women and leader of CAREF, Comisión de Apoyo a Refugiados y Migrantes in Argentina explained that global migration is not viewed as a threat to security but “as an instrument of development.” After a long civil struggle in Argentina, new laws have taken hold. “Migrants are recognized as human beings deserving of access to public health and social services,” said Ms. Cyment.

Esperanza Cardona Mercado, a United Methodist Women mission partner, leads a campaign to End Violence Against Peasant Women in Honduras.

Bintou Yafa, the deputy general secretary for Women's Committee of Confederation Nationale des Travailleurs du Sénégal, reported, “If conditions in home countries were livable they (women) wouldn’t leave. Migrant workers pay taxes and contribute to social programs that they can’t benefit from... We need to have awareness-raising campaigns. It’s important to encourage cooperation and solidarity. We’ve established listening centers and cooperatives to help guarantee dignity in both origin countries and receiving countries.” Ms. Ishallaa Serrano, with Transgender Law Center, reported on the “transgender, migrant, women of color community.” She said, “Mary women who could or should be speaking to you today cannot because they are working or they are incarcerated.” The reality for migrant women, especially trans women, is that they are criminalized, face hate crimes or are ignored. “Systemic violence impacts our access to jobs, education, health care, leadership positions.”

This workshop was held, like hundreds of other workshops during the week-long Commission on the Status of Women at the Church Center of the United Nations, at the United Methodist Women-owned building across First Avenue from the United Nations.

Mary Beth Coudal is a journalist, blogger and the interim managing editor of response magazine.

United Methodist Women Makes This World Very Small

by Jerri Savuto

On the front page of the last edition of the United Methodist Women News, a picture of my daughter and me appeared in an article about pillows made for cancer patients by the United Methodist Women of Frisco First United Methodist Church in Frisco, Texas.

As a missionary for over 20 years, I have met hundreds of United Methodist Women, particularly in the South Central Jurisdiction, and have written to United Methodist Women around the United States. When many of those women read the article in the United Methodist Women News, they sent me cards, letters, e-mails, gifts and an amazing outpouring of love and prayers. Lena, a 95-year-old United Methodist woman, whom I met in the 1980s when my family stayed with her and her mother, wrote about how she had kept up with me through United Methodist Women friends throughout the more than 30 years. Irene, whom we had lost contact with over 25 years ago, was able to share with me that her missionary mother had died and reminisced about her visit to Nigeria. Martha June, the daughter of close missionary friends who served in Liberia, sent me a beautiful note and prayer quilt she had knitted. We had not seen each other in over 30 years.

The Martha Circle at St. John’s United Methodist Church in Santa Fe, N.M., my home church, learned of my cancer through the article and sent prayers and love. Brenda from S.C., who shared my birthday and had written to me as a project of her unit many years ago, reconnected and shared my story with her circle recently... Reconnecting with these special friends brought me much joy and thanksgiving. Along with letters, e-mails and cards from those I have known, many United Methodist Women groups and circles wrote to say they were praying for me.

The Love Circle from North Highlands United Methodist Church in Shreveport, La., sent a card and e-mail filled with love and prayers. Marge from Ill. shared that she had knitted. We reached around the corner and around the world in the name of Jesus Christ to make a difference to women in need. They are not too busy to stop and send their love and prayers to others. What a great blessing this was to me now and when I was a missionary. In December I learned that I was in remission from my ovarian cancer. I was so filled with joy and thanksgiving for all those who prayed and sent their love to me. I am well today because of God’s amazing, healing love, excellent doctors and treatment and the prayers and support of so many people.

Thank you, United Methodist Women, you make the world a small place to live, filled with the love and care. I am so blessed and so very thankful. I am “happy dancing” with joy!

Jerri Savuto is a retired missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church currently living in McKinney, Texas. Her story appeared in the article, “Small Pillow, Big Difference.”
Mission Resources


2015–2016 Program Book: Growing in Blessedness
$10.00 (English M3251; Spanish M3252; Korean M3253)

Mini Datebook $1.50 (M3254)
Journey through the scriptures together in this next program year. Explore what it means to not only live in blessedness, but also to practice and work towards extending blessedness to all.

In each program, you will have the opportunity to determine how you can best reach out to meet all kinds of needs within your church, community and world. Available July 22, 2015

América Latina: la gente y la fe
Sonia Maria Barbosa Dias $10.00 (M3224)
Este libro presenta una visión general de la riqueza de América Latina y de su pueblo. Aprenderá acerca de la historia de la región desde tiempos precolombinos que conducen a la colonización y a las luchas por la independencia. La autora explora los retos actuales de las naciones, así como su riqueza artística y cultural, y la contribución de la mujer. El rol de la religión está entretejido en todas las páginas y le ayudará a entender cómo América Latina ha recibido la influencia de diversas religiones y tradiciones de fe.

Creados para la felicidad: Entendiendo su vida en Dios
Cynthia A. Bond Hopson y Sarah Heaner Lancaster
$10.00 (M3221)

América Latina: Povo e fé
Sonia Maria Barbosa Dias
$5.35 (Kindle version) (K3245)
Este libro presenta un panorama de la riqueza de América Latina y su povo. Vocé poderá conhecer melhor a história da região desde o período pré-colombiano, passando pela colonização, as lutas pela independência e os desafios atuais, além de mostrar sua arte e cultura exuberante e as contribuições das mulheres dessa região. Ao longo do livro, você também vai poder entender o papel da religião na América Latina e como esta tem sido influenciada por diferentes crenças e tradições religiosas.

América Latina y su vida en Dios
Sonia Maria Barbosa Dias
$10.00

Dios está llamando a vivir.
Carlos escribió hinosos acerca de la felicidad que los primeros Metodistas cantaron. La felicidad que buscaban, era felicidad en Dios. Este estudio examina el significado de la felicidad y cómo vivir la vida que Dios nos está llamando a vivir.

 행복을 위해 창조된: 하나님의 안에서 사는 삶의 이해
(Created for Happiness: Understanding Your Life in God)

신디아 애브 본드 허스턴과 사라 헤너 랭커스터 공동 지음
(Cynthia A. Bond Hopson and Sarah Heaner Lancaster)
$10.00 (M3227)

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