

Heritage Vine

The Newsletter of the Heritage District
United Methodist Women
January 2021



United
Methodist
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

President's Note

Dear Sisters in Christ!

How exciting, we have entered a New Year and I hope all of you are finding some Joy and Excitement in that! I wanted to share a small writing my friend Terri Shirey had on Facebook and I thought it was great for our new year!

Hello, welcome to Flight #2021. We are prepared to take off into the New Year. Please make sure your Attitude and Blessings are secured and locked in an upright position. All self-destructive devices should be turned off at this time. All negativity, hurt and discouragement should be put away. Should we lose Altitude under pressure, during the flight, reach up and pull down a Prayer. Prayers will automatically be activated by Faith. Once your Faith is activated you can assist other passengers. There will be NO BAGGAGE allowed on this flight. The Captain (Spirit/God) has cleared us for takeoff. Destination: Love

That is Flight 2021, and we are on our way. So, buckle your seat belts and let's make it the best year yet! HDUMW Strong! It is up to us to encourage, assist and love those who need us. I am so excited about our meetings, whether Zoom or in person, as we begin our year with some connecting. I hope you get some Spiritual Direction, think about what God wants from each one of us, and we get to know each other better. We also promise some fun!

Some of the fun things we are planning are:

- Spring Prayer/Spiritual Day on March 27 10 -12. This will be a Zoom meeting and you will find more information in this newsletter (Zoom information and link to follow). Registration begins in February.
- HDUMW Celebration and Annual Meeting – September 25 at Saline United Methodist Church. We hope this will be an in-person meeting! Help us pray for that!

Exciting news: I want to welcome Pat Reamsnyder as the new Secretary for the HDUMW. She has served on Nominations for the past two years and we are excited to have her move into this position.

There is always so much to do but I want to encourage you to stay strong and work together with your local units to keep the mission of United Methodist Women for more than 150 years going. Your Leadership Team can even join your Zoom meeting as a part of your program if you would like.

God Blessings and prayers to all of you! Stay safe!



The District Newsletter, Forms, and contact information for the Leadership Team can be found on the Conference UMW Website
www.umwmichiganconference.org/hrd.html

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Vice President/Program Coordinator

New Hope, New Beginnings, New Joy



Greetings! I hope you are enjoying this crazy weather we are blessed with. Don't get me wrong, I do love the softly falling delicate snowflakes. It was so beautiful on Christmas morning to see the evergreen trees covered in snow. The peacefulness of the scene was a gift from God. Just as He sent His Son as a gift to each of us.

For those of you who do not know me, here is a little info. This is the start of my second year as vice president/program coordinator with Heritage District United Methodist Women. My home church is Erie United Methodist Church in Erie, MI. If you don't know where Erie is, southwest corner of Michigan about two miles from the Ohio line. I have three grown children, a son in Texas, a daughter in Temperance, MI and a daughter in Monroe, MI. I have eight wonderful grandchildren that call me Nana.

My role on the Leadership team is to plan, secure and make all arrangements for the meetings and programs that are held within our District. Boy ... for the first year in a position, it was challenging, to say the least. We moved from face-to-face meetings to online Zoom meetings. What a learning process that was! Our first team meeting of this year was last Saturday, and we talked about how much we had to learn to even fly by the seat of our pants. But we also talked about how we had saved gas money, and didn't have to worry about driving in the weather. We had to learn to survive ... and survive we did. We have also learned how to have fun on a zoom meeting. In December we all wore ugly decorated hats (like ugly Christmas sweaters) during the meeting. And also made a cinnamon stick and fabric Christmas tree ornament. And even played a game called "One Word". The consensus of the group stated they were looking forward to having some more "FUN" at our meetings.

I would ask that you pray for the Heritage District Leadership team this year. You can support us by participating in the programs that we have planned for the coming year. The first one coming up is a Spring Prayer/Spiritual Day on March 27, 2021 that will be held as a virtual Zoom meeting... Jeanette Harris will be our speaker. Mark your calendar to save the date.

I would like to leave you with this one last thing:

- *New Hope* ... We have Hope because we know whatever the challenge is, as a United Methodist woman we will get the job done.
- *New Beginnings* ... We welcome new ladies to the Leadership Team to help expand concepts of mission to women, children and youth.
- *New Joy* ... We have joy because we will survive the year of 2021 and have fun doing it.

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Save the Date!
Spring Prayer/Spiritual Day
Saturday, March 27, 2021
10 am-12 noon
Speaker: Jeanette Harris, Greater Detroit District UMW
(Zoom info to follow)

Mission Coordinator for Social Action



What a year we have had! 2021 shall be better than ever, God willing. He gives us and lets us experience troubles in order to grow in our faith, so we have grown!

I recently led a training for new and returning Social Action Coordinators for this year. If you were unable to attend by Zoom, new to the team, or would like to further the conversations, feel free to contact me.

The District would like to share what YOU have been doing during these times, whether within your family, church, community, or state level. We may pick up new ideas from each other in how we can be God's hands and feet. I personally put my sewing skills and materials to good use, making over 900 masks. The requests have lessened now, but I was glad to help many family members, friends, my church, a backpack program, as well as selling a few which helped replenish the fabric. Over 200 were used at St. Joe Hospital, and nursing homes in Plymouth and South Lyon. An amazing lady from South Lyon (won't share her name) made a few hundred as well, and we donated to many needs together. The new friends that I have made through these works are another of God's gifts to me.

So, please share with me what is happening in your area. Praying and contacting others are important as well. Each is capable of what God has given them to do.

I hope all of you voted. That is one great way we can support our country. These continue to be trying times so many prayers are needed, whatever your personal opinions. Sometimes we have to have strife to come up and be better than ever.

Please check out the UMW Conference and National websites for further projects and information. The *Response* magazine helps us to keep up with national and international happenings.

United Methodist Women - United Methodist Women

<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org>

Heritage District United Methodist Women

<https://www.umwmichiganconference.org/hrd.html>

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UMW Census!

Don't Forget ...

... to complete the census for your local unit. The 2020 Census is in full swing. Please plan to register your local unit. The website to register is

www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

then click on **Census 2020**

There are instructions on the website that will walk you thru the registration process. Our goal is to get **EVERY LOCAL UNIT** registered. The registration deadline date is March 31, 2021. If you have any questions or need help registering, please contact Nancy Meade (nancymeade@live.com, (517) 607-9706)

Remember to also register as a member of United Methodist Women at

www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

then click on **myUMW**

You will be able to print out a membership card to carry with you.

Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth

"What just happened?"

Glynn Washington, on his NPR radio show *Snap Judgment*, ended 2020 with this question to his audience: "What just happened?"

You and I were there every day of 2020. God was present too. We witnessed it all. So "What just happened?" Did we see God at work? What do we have to say about it? What is our testimony? What did *you* witness? As I reflected on 2020, I was drawn to the notion of "witness" and "testimony" because in our United Methodist vows we pledge our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and **witness**.

We all have personal direct knowledge of 2020. We have seen for ourselves and now are called to bear witness. The Apostle John on I John 1:1-4 speaks of being a witness and offering testimony:



"That which existed from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, that we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; ² (For this life was revealed to us, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and declare to you this eternal life, which was with the Father, and was revealed to us;)" ³ That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you too may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you, that your joy may be full."

Well, most things that I've read in the news and social media have NOT been such that I was brought closer to anyone or shared "that my joy may be full." Therefore, I been increasingly prompted by the Holy Spirit to ask both myself and you: What have we seen and heard of The Word of Life in 2020? **To what can we personally bear witness?**

Below is my primary source, eye-witness report: I saw . . .

Young boys shoveling sidewalks for neighbors – just because.

People paying the bill for people behind them in line at fast food restaurants – on multiple occasions!

Youth decorating sidewalks with chalk drawings and messages to make people either think or smile.

A nurse, who, even though she lost many patients, still got up and went into work day after difficult day because she was needed.

People making phone calls to friends because things can't be left unsaid anymore.

Creative and caring people gathering to plan vital and meaningful holiday church gatherings in spite of COVID restrictions.

Everyone confessing how much they depended on humor and the arts to get through the isolation and pain.

A 77 year-old Santa carrying gifts and encouragement to the homebound in Adult Care Facilities (ACF).

Civic organizations supporting people with special needs with fundraisers and "We Care" drops of entire holiday dinners to an ACF.

People sharing – whether it be coloring books and puzzles or huge acts of profound generosity.

Door drops of creative materials and snacks to exhausted parents working from home who added "teacher" to their job titles!

The joy of making a snowman.

People sending cards, making phone calls, writing emails, and passing on that funny meme to maintain the connection.

Neighbors being intentional in checking on each other and showing each other more kindness.

Ladies at Adrian's Comstock Park Christmas Tree Celebration who slowed down enough to have an unexpected conversation where they heard the beautiful story told by two (of five) sisters separated young who found each other as grown women.

People reaching out to a family in need after a house fire.

Neighbors taking care of those put-off, neglected projects.

Folks having conversations about not taking the "small things" for granted: seeing a smile, getting or giving a hug or a simple handshake.

(Spiritual Growth, con't)

This reflection is not a comprehensive list, but this exercise made me realize that for everyone with their hair on fire panic buying toilet paper, there were a thousand other people out there helping with food delivery and shopping services and "not taking the last one on the shelf."

Yes, I have seen real fear in the faces around me and we do face a lot of uncertainty, but one thing is certain – I bear witness that God's love is alive and we still find it in each other. We have each other and are NOT alone. This is unifying and encouraging – so let your joy be full! Be encouraged by these eyewitness accounts of the love of God made manifest among us and create your own list.

Jesus' first recorded words were "**I must be about my Father's business!**" The choice of the word "**must**" allows for no ambiguity or procrastination. We too must be about the work of love as well as bear witness when we see it. This is essential to overcoming in 2021.

Do not make being a witness harder than it needs to be. It is simply "see" and "tell." Will you be a witness? What just happened?

***Lora Crombez** is a former school teacher who focuses on music composition and arranging as well as writing during her retirement. She is an active member of Adrian First UMC and makes her home in Adrian with her husband Rene & their 8 cats. She looks forward to serving the United Methodist Women of Heritage District in 2021. She will be contacting your church's unit soon! Share your "eyewitness accounts" with her via email.*

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Food for thought

Wanted – Opportunity for something new

Trust Him

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" Jeremiah 29:11

Maybe you know the call that God has placed on your life, and you even know the mission that he has given you. But so often the way that God's plans for us play out is different than what we pictured.

It is possible that when we get tunnel vision for our version of the fulfillment of God's call on our lives that we could completely miss opportunities that are given to us for preparation and advancement.

The Heritage District UMW Leadership Team continues to seek women to fill positions on their team for 2021:

Treasurer

Committee on Nominations

There will be other openings in 2021 for the 2022 term.

So, please search your heart and if you are stirred by the spirit or feel prompted to seek a new opportunity, please contact me (Sherry), Joyce Mitchell, or Shirley Carpenter for additional information. Call any member of the Leadership Team and ask them what is it like being on the district team. We can provide a job description and other details. Then you and God can decide.

If any of you consider this as an opportunity for you, please contact us. Contact information is on the team list.

Sherry Wagenknecht
Shirley Carpenter
Joyce Mitchell

Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation Who Am I, and What Am I Doing Here?



Who knows what month it was in 2020 when I got a phone call from the Heritage District UMW Nominating Committee? All the open positions were challenging, well, maybe even daunting. Did this octogenarian have anything left to offer? I prayed mightily, sought my husband's advice, and finally agreed to serve on the Team as Coordinator for Education and Interpretation. So here I am, old but new to the Team of enthusiastic women of Heritage District with whom I already feel at home, praying to meet them in person very soon. However, Zoom is lots of fun.

I have not consulted a Handbook for a while. For several years, my local unit (Albion First) has held together with a leadership team and a treasurer. Team members share monthly responsibilities. We still use the Prayer Calendar, the Program Book, read *Response*, meet monthly (until COVID-19), support local missions, and give a generous pledge to continue to be a 5 Star unit. My longtime UMW experiences as a local, district, and conference officer, and for decades, a faithful mission u and Assembly participant have all given me a passion for the work and heart of United Methodist Women and the missions of the United Methodist Church.

I was recently weeding out a bag of UMW "stuff" and came across a 2010 issue of "Response" that featured an interview with Thomas Norman DeWolf, whose memoir, *Inheriting the Trade: a Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U. S. History* was also on the Reading Program that year. That's the kind of history that informs us. In participating in local community unity discussions or taking life-long learning classes, I often encounter book recommendations that I have already read such as Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*. I am always amazed at the perspective shown by the choices for the Spiritual Growth studies, such as *Finding Peace in an Anxious World* for this year especially. Perhaps I should have used different words to begin this paragraph. I was finding gems while mining UMW archives.

I am here to promote, encourage, talk, sing, Zoom, write, help, learn, challenge, love, learn, and pray with you. Let me know how I can help your UMW unit, no matter what size, grow in your understanding and support of the mission of UMW.

Blessings always,

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Newsletter Distribution

Newsletter distribution is primarily done as a PDF email attachment. You should also be able to find it on the UMW Heritage District website within a few days of us sending the files out. We also post it on our Facebook page. The newsletter is available to any district member who wishes to view it.

We are happy to print and mail the newsletter to any local units who do not use email, but it has become too expensive to mail a physical copy of the newsletter to every member.

If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Everett, District Communications Coordinator, at wendy@fumc-a2.org or 734-255-9146.

Communications Coordinator

I'm writing this article after attending a Zoom meeting with a handful of members from the Brighton church and my own Ann Arbor church to explore digital ministry. As we've all learned during this pandemic, there's more than one way to do things. Did you know that the conference mission team had already started meeting over Zoom before the pandemic to allow the group to meet without travel expense? I think your district mission team doesn't always mind being able to Zoom in from their comfy homes! Don't get me wrong – we all miss those hugs and in-person experiences. But it's also nice to be able to sleep in just a little longer or not worry about a harrowing drive in poor weather.



I'm reading (well, technically, listening to) a book called *Social Media to Social Ministry*. Our church websites and Facebook pages (and maybe even Instagram accounts) are more than billboards announcing what is happening inside the church building. They are platforms where people can engage and connect.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the conference director for youth workers launched a weekly support group for youth directors over Zoom. When we began meeting, I think everyone was still a little shell-shocked. But over time, I developed a supportive relationship with the group members that I came to look forward to and rely on. We lamented, laughed, prayed, and inspired one another. I very much missed the days when I was unable to attend. I have never met anyone in-person who was on those Zooms, but I wouldn't hesitate to call one of them if I needed support and guidance.

My own church is exploring the idea of a digital campus. This will not replace our existing campus in any way, but expand to where the people are. Remember, Jesus went where the people were; he didn't wait for them to show up at the synagogue every weekend. If 220 million people are on Facebook in the U.S. (2/3 of the population!) should we go there and see what the needs are?

"See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:19 19

This year, with God's help, we've found new and fresh ways to do many things, and I believe God continues to challenge us to go beyond our traditional borders.

P.S. Don't forget to join our Facebook group! Search for UMW Heritage District.

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Treasurer

Through this past year, we have surely learned that life is unpredictable. We never know when we might reach the end of our resources – financial, emotional, mental health, spiritual. We never know what the future holds even from day to day. We may think we are alone in the struggle, but we also know the truth, that the Lord is ALWAYS with us.



There were (are) many negative situations in our world happening during these pandemic times, but there were also so many, many, good things that happened, as attested on the daily news reports of the goodness of the people who stepped up to help and who gave all they had to help others; first responders, health care workers, neighbors helping neighbors, giving all they had. This reminded me of the widow who gave her two pennies for the offering. Mark 12: 43-44, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all of the others. They all gave of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on."

In our time of need, we can remember this dear sweet widow who so blessed the Lord. She remembered the goodness of the Lord, and all He had done for her. She knew, that surely, He would continue to provide for her. By giving all she had, she placed herself completely and totally in the Lord's hands. The Lord was her peace, her provider, all that she needed. She brought everything she had and laid it at the Lord's feet. Through this act of giving, she gave not only money, but her whole heart, trust, daily bread, and her future. She in turn left with all she needed, walking with her hand in His and trusting in the Lord's gift of provision.

Thank you for all the donations from the units of 2020. I was totally amazed that even though the groups were not meeting, so many donations came through. These gifts will continue to show to the women and children who are in need the gift of the Lord's provision.

I have consented to continue to do the treasurer's job until someone else is willing to volunteer for this position. It has been a challenge to learn about all of the forms, responsibilities, etc. but as the woman who gave her two pennies, I know the Lord is with me and will continue to help me with what will be needed.

Thank you to the units who have emailed their 2021 year pledges to me. If you have not sent pledge information yet, just email me at missionumary@gmail.com. If you prefer to send it through the mail, I did not have a "form" made up, so just write it on any piece of paper and send it to me. You can also call me at (734) 634-6484. (My mailing address is my work address, not my home address.)

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The Hill We Climb

When day comes we step out of the shade, aflame and unafraid.

The new dawn blooms as we free it.

For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it.

If only we're brave enough to be it.

Amanda Gorman
National Youth Poet Laureate

Mission Coordinator for Program Resources

Happy New Year! This is the first year that I will be serving as the Secretary of Program Resources on the Heritage District Leadership Team. I previously served a term as Spiritual Growth Coordinator. I am a retired special education teacher with more than twenty-five years of teaching in the public schools. My husband John and I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary on April 26, 2020. We have two grown children and have been blessed with three grandchildren. We look to our Lord and Savior for continued strength and guidance as we navigate through our daily lives.



As we look into this new year, may we continue to learn and grow in our faith walk. A great way to do this is to participate in the UMW Reading Program. This program includes many books in the following areas: Education for Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Social Action, and Spiritual Growth. I would like to SpotLight a book entitled *When Others Shuddered*, under the category of Education for Mission. It is a book about eight women who refused to give up. One of the women was Fanny Crosby. She became blind as an infant and went on to write an estimated 8,000 hymns under as many as 200 pseudonyms. Two we often recognize include *Blessed Assurance* and *Rescue the Perishing*. Once Fanny was asked by a Scottish evangelist: "Miss Crosby, I think that it is a great pity that the Good Master, when he showered so many gifts upon you, did not give you sight." Fanny answered, "Do you know that if at my birth I had been able to make one petition to my Creator it would have been that I should be made blind. The evangelist was startled. "Why?" he asked. "Because," said Fanny, "when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior." This book about Fanny Crosby and seven other women is wonderful testimonies of their great love and faith in their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The *Response* magazine Nov/Dec 2020 issue has a great section on the 2021-2022 UMW Reading Program. Also, if you go online to Mission Resources-United Methodist Women, there are downloadable materials that include Reading Program Catalogs, both current and previous. There are many other items available to support your local unit.

Just a reminder – please submit Reading Program participants names and the plan (I, II, III, or IV) they finished to Diane Tandy as soon as possible. Certificates will be sent to the participant's units in the spring. We will recognize them at our Heritage District Celebration in the fall of 2021.

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Unit Officers!

Please Submit These Items As Soon As You Can

2021 Pledge - to Treasurer

2021 Officer List - to President

2020 Reading List Participants- to Program Resources

2020 Mission Unit Objectives - to President and/or Treasurer

2020 Names of those UMW who have passed - to President

Heritage District 2021 Calendar

(all meetings via Zoom unless indicated otherwise)

March 6	Leadership Team Meeting
March 27	10:00 am – Noon Spring Prayer/Spiritual Day
April 3	Keep Making Peace
June 2-6	Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

Ideally, the following calendar items will be in-person, but that is subject to restrictions from MI Department of Health and Human Services and recommendations from the Michigan Conference.

June 5	Leadership Team Meeting		
mission u Dates	July 7-10	West	Albion
	July 24	South	TBD
	August 19-21	East	Lake Huron
	October 18-19	North	Gaylord
September 11	Leadership Team Meeting Saline UMC		
September 25	8:00 - 3:30 Annual Celebration/meeting Saline UMC		
October 22	(evening) Michigan Conference Leadership training (location to be determined)		
October 23	Michigan Conference Annual Celebration Meeting (location to be determined)		
November 13	9:00 - 1: 30 Local Unit Training Dundee UMC		