
THE SIGNAL

Fall 2020

FIVE RIVERS DISTRICT
GREAT PLAINS CONFERENCE
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



Calendar of Events

2020

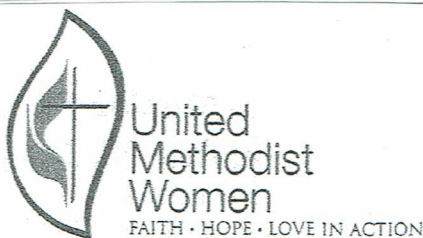
- September 18-19 Great Plains United Methodist Women Annual Meeting in Garden City, KS, has been cancelled. There will be a Zoom Meeting on Saturday, September 19th from 10am - noon instead.
- October District Annual Meetings
- October 15 Epworth Village Heart of the Matter Virtual Benefit, York, NE
- October 12-16 Midwest Mission Distribution Center Mission Trip in Chatham, IL
(This event may not happen due to Covid-19; check website for updated information regarding status)

2021

- April 2021 Five Rivers District Spring Meeting (TBA)
- April 12-16 Midwest Mission Distribution Center Mission Trip in Chatham, IL
- October 4-8 Midwest Mission Distribution Center Mission Trip in Chatham, IL

2022

- May 20-22 National UMW Assembly in Orlando, FL



UMW 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.

2021 Five Rivers District Officers

President: Rachel Wegener, 4210 W 26th Terrace, Lawrence, KS 66047 (785) 766-9598, drwegener@reagan.com	Class of 2022
Vice President: Carolyn Elder, 1146 S. Willow, Ottawa, KS 66067 (785) 242-3791, (785) 418-7272, t.riffic46@gmail.com	Class of 2021
Secretary: Dorothy Miller, 23723 NW Mitchell Rd., Garnett, KS 66032 (785) 448-3007, rdmiller62@gmail.com	Class of 2023
Treasurer: Donna Grigsby, PO Box 661, Iola, KS 66749 (703) 403-8257, donna.grigsby46@gmail.com	Class of 2022
Communication Coordinator: Julie Ward, 701 Arkansas St., Lawrence, KS 66044 (573) 795-5425, jward@usd497.org	Class of 2024
Mission Coordinators	
Journey in Faith: Nancy Rockers, PO Box 37, Greeley, KS 66033 (785) 867-3933, Wrock21@aol.com	Class of 2021
Journey in Action: Rogene McPherson, 12921 Faucett Rd., Centerville, KS 66014 (913) 579-6379, rkj.mcpherson65@yahoo.com	Class of 2022
Journey in Giving & Learning: Shirley Benjamin, 21757 SW Maryland, Garnett, KS 66032 (785) 214-3966, no email	Class of 2022
Journey in Growth: Ruth Jansen, 741 S Tremont, Ottawa, KS 66067 (785) 242-1917, ruthjansenZ13@gmail.com	Class of 2023
Program Resources: Roberta Selvy, 601 W. 14th St., Pleasanton, KS 66075 (913) 352-8360, (813) 789-8116, rselvy@gmail.com	Class of 2023
Nominations Chair: Dianne Throop, 214 Arizona St., Lawrence, KS 66049 (785) 841-1408, d.throop@sbcglobal.net	Class of 2021
Nominations Committee: Kimi Wilson, 910 Brown Ave., Osawatomie, KS 66064 (913) 594-2470, wilsonkims@gmail.com	Class of 2022
(2) Vacant Positions	Class of 2024

2020 Five Rivers District Big Sister/ Little Sister List

Big Sister

Little Sisters

Carolyn Elder	Baldwin First, Lawrence Centenary, Lawrence Central, Lawrence First, Vinland, & Worden
Dianne Throop	Clearfield, Edgerton, Ives Chapel, & Wellsville
Julie Ward	Melvorn/Quenemo, Plum Creek, Osawatomie, & Richter
Dorothy Miller	Beagle, Blue Mound, Parker, & Turkey Creek
Rogene McPherson	Ft. Scott First, Fulton, Hammond, Hiattville, Pleasanton, Prescott, & West Liberty
Ruth Jansen	Eudora, Princeton, Ottawa Trinity, Richmond, & Welda
Nancy Rockers	New Lancaster, Paola, & Uniontown
Donna Grigsby	Colony, Garnett, & Humboldt
Shirley Benjamin	Gridley, Iola, Lyndon, & Vassar
Roberta Selvy	Fontana, La Cygne, Lane, Mound City, & Ottawa First

Great Plains Conference
Office in Topeka:

1207 SW Executive Dr.
Topeka, KS 66615

Response & New World
Magazine
1-877-881-2385

Great Plains UMW Website:
<https://www.greatplainsumc.org/umw>

Five Rivers District Office
704 8th Street
Baldwin City, KS 66006

(785) 841-4804
5riversdistrict@greatplainsumc.org



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

Messages From Your Five Rivers District UMW Officers

From the President

Hello from your Five Rivers District UMW President, Rachel Wegener. I pray that this newsletter finds you healthy and happy during this strange and difficult time we are living in at this moment in time.

I regret that our District gatherings had to be cancelled this year due to the Covid-19 virus, but in order to make sure no one would be exposed, I felt it was the best decision to make for our District. At this point in time, we have not planned a Spring meeting for 2021, but the Executive Team will assess the situation in mid-January and decide whether to try to plan and proceed with a Spring meeting at that point in time.

In this newsletter is the Slate of Five Rivers District Officers for 2021 and the budget for 2021. A ballot for you to vote to approve the Slate of District Officers and the budget as presented has been included for your review and approval. Please return your ballot to me via email at:

drwegener@reagan.com or by US mail to: Rachel Wegener, 4210 W 26th Terrace, Lawrence, KS 66047 no later than Monday, September 28th.

Please know that I will continue to communicate via email with information and announcements that need to be passed on at the local level. Also, feel free to reach out to me directly or to your Big Sister (a current listing of the assigned Big Sisters is included in this newsletter for your information) who is ready to be of assistance as needed.

Local units, it is especially important this year to continue to turn in your pledge money to our District Treasurer, Donna Grigsby. Donna can be reached at: donna.grigsby46@gmail.com or PO Box 661, Iola, KS 66749.

In addition, this year's National Mission Institution is counting on our mission giving more than ever with the Covid-19 virus. If your local unit wishes to provide additional support to mission giving, this year the Five Rivers District is supporting Della Lamb Community Services which is located in Kansas City, MO. It is a worthy non-profit organization that needs our support more than ever. Thank you.

Please prayerfully consider volunteering to fill one of the two open positions on our Nominations Committee. Serving UMW at the District level is a fun way to get to meet new people and learn more about United Methodist Women. Thank you for your consideration.

Blessings to each of you. Thank you for your continued support of women, children, and youth, and United Methodist Women.

*May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;*

*May the rains fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again, may God
Hold you in the palm of His hand. Amen*

Rachel Wegener, President
Five Rivers District UMW
(785) 766-9598, drwegener@reagan.com

From the Vice President

Hello from the desk of your Five Rivers District UMW Vice President! It seems like forever since we have been together, but our mission is still the same - to be of service to those in need, especially women and children in the midst of challenging times. This has definitely been and continues to be a unique and challenging time.

Although we won't be meeting this fall, I ask you to be in prayer, asking God to show us how we can be of service during this world-wide situation. The women who have faced challenges in their daily lives before, face even bigger challenges now - how to work from home while helping their children with schoolwork, feed their families on an even tighter budget, or have lost their jobs and are dealing with all the stresses of not knowing how bills will be paid.

Our Purpose remains the same - to "be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God" and "to develop a creative, supportive fellowship".

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works". Hebrews 10:23-24

Carolyn Elder
Five Rivers District, Vice President

"We come to God with nothing and we are given everything. There is nothing you can do to earn it, to be worthy of this love. It is a gift".

Sheila Walsh

From the Treasurer

I am so disappointed that we have had to cancel both the Spring and Fall District meetings this year. I miss meeting with you and getting your feedback. For you new treasurers and for long-time treasurers who would like a refresher, our Great Plains Conference Treasurer, Barbara Smith, has offered to conduct a Zoom training session. I have one treasurer interested, so if you would like to participate, please let me know.

If you are new this year, please email me your contact information and let me know if you need the Local Remittance form for sending me your contributions. If you do not have email, you can call me and I will mail you some information.

When submitting your checks to the District Treasurer, please write them to "Five Rivers District UMW". They can also be written to "UMW, Great Plains Conference". I am requesting that you send me your remittance by the 25th of the month so I can get all recorded in time to mail the check to the Conference Treasurer.

I am praying the Covid-19 pandemic will end soon and we will be able to meet again in 2021.

Blessings,
Donna Grigsby
PO Box 661, Iola, KS 66749
(703) 403-8257
donna.grigsby46@gmail.com

From Program Resources

I hope you are doing well and staying safe during the pandemic. Here are a few ways to get books to read from the Reading Program list: they can be purchased through bookstores, checked out at the local library, or the local library can also do an inter-library loan for the book(s) you are looking for. For a list of the Reading Program books, go to:

<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/Media/PDF/2020ReadingProgramCatalog.pdf>

Because we will not be meeting in the fall for the District meeting, the Reading Program certificates will be mailed out to the local units by the end of September.

If you are participating in the 2020 Reading Program, please remember to turn in your paperwork by January 31, 2021.

Your sister in Christ,
Roberta Selvy
Program Resources

From Journey in Faith

Greetings to all of you,

“Dear Brothers...comfort those who are frightened, take tender care of those who are weak; and be patient with everyone” 2 Thessalonians 1:4.

Through Paul, this is the Lord’s reminder to us during difficult times. The isolation we are experiencing because of the pandemic of 2020 is taking a toll on all of us. I trust your family is staying safe and well.

July is the month that I would write up the nomination for a district officer for the Eunice H. Harrington award, recognizing an outstanding district officer from our district. Last year, in 2019, Five Rivers District was pleased to have Donna Grigsby chosen from our district as the recipient of this Great Plains UMW Conference award. Donna is our Five Rivers District treasurer who many of you know. She is hard working, organized, a faithful UMW member, devoted to her Iola church, and a caring member of her community. Congratulations to Donna on this much deserved 2019 award.

In email discussions with President Rachel, I decided to not submit a nomination in 2020 for this award. We are not meeting. The local, district, and conference gatherings have been cancelled or being zoomed. Recognition for the award would be minimal. Thank you to all the Five Rivers district officers who serve. I look forward to the time that the pandemic will end and we can physically meet again. We will nominate one of our district officers in 2021.

Following the principles of public health, let’s beat this contagion. Wear a mask in public places, stay six feet apart, and wash your hands often. Keep in mind that everyone you meet (even your beloved family members), may have gotten asymptomatic covid if they are not able to stay-at-home.

Nancy Rockers
Journey in Faith

From Journey in Action

It’s a good day. And all of God’s people said “Amen”.

Many of those out of work, fighting illness and/or emotional challenges likely disagree. It is a difficult time, but as women of faith, we have hope and the promise that God is with us.

For those underemployed or out of work, may God assist by opening doors to educational opportunities or networking with the right person at the right time leading to a better job.

For those fighting illness, Jesus is an expert in holding hands and providing strength and guidance to the patient and the health care workers.

Just this week, someone said to me, “How hard it must be for those who do not have faith”.

“The Times, They Are a-Changin’”, (Dylan, 1964) but as sisters in Christ we have faith God has not abandoned us. As the district officer for Journey in Action, I underscore the word “action”. Taking action is also difficult, but everyone can pray and praying is taking action.

I ask you to pray for our new social justice priorities for 2021-24. They should sound similar as two are versions of the current four. From the UMW website, our national leaders invite us to continue efforts in the areas of Maternal and Child Health and Justice/ Living Wage, but by year’s end the emphasis will be on Climate Justice with a particular focus on the Just Energy 4 All Campaign and Mass Incarceration/ Criminalization of Communities of Color, with a focus on Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline campaign.

I suggest you keep these in mind as you plan the objective for your meeting or activity. Here’s an example of how activities may intertwine with the priorities. My unit has assisted with tying fleece blankets for foster care children. Will giving a child a blanket keep him/her out of trouble? No guarantees, but the physical comfort and emotional support that a child receives may be more instrumental in a child’s success than any of us can imagine. Praying a short blessing over the stack of blankets is a guarantee of God’s involvement.

As the year progresses and our units begin to meet again, my goal is to develop a presentation on the new priorities and potential ideas. I enjoy day trips. Invite me!

Please spend some time on the UMW website. It is amazing how our pennies multiply as we invite God to intervene. “God, we know you are in control. Help us to rely on faith, love, hope, and lots of patience. May the challenges turn into blessings”. And all God’s people said “Amen”.

Rogene McPherson
Journey in Action

From Journey of Giving and Learning

Hello to all who are on this Journey of Giving and Learning,

I hope this finds you and yours well, safe, and happy. Although this staying at home is not all enjoyable, it gives us time to read, clean, and bake.

We are going to learn new ways to meet our pledges - we need to get creative. In order to be a 5- or 7-star unit, think of ways to honor someone with a Pledge to Mission, a Special Mission Recognition, a Gift to Mission, a Gift in Memory, a World Thank Offering, a Dedicated Light, and/or a Corsage for Mission. It would be nice if we could do all of these, as several of you have done in the past.

In the meantime, I guess we can spend more time with our flowers and gardens as long as the water holds out. Please stay inside when it is extremely hot. I miss seeing others - it is good to know that God loves each one of us and we love each other.

Love and God bless,
Shirley Benjamin

(Please return this ballot by e-mail to: drwegener@reagan.com or by USPS mail to: Rachel Wegener, 4210 W 26th Terrace, Lawrence, KS 66047 no later than Monday, September 28.)

Five Rivers District
United Methodist Women
Proposed 2021 BUDGET

PLEDGE TO CONFERENCE	\$35,000	AMOUNT	TOTALS
INCOME	Beginning Balance	\$ 840.00	
	A&MD	\$ 2,520.00	
	Other Income		
			\$ 3,360.00
A&MD EXPENSE			
District Team Expense			
	Postage	\$ 200.00	
	Supplies	\$ 150.00	
	Phone		
	Mileage for Team planning	\$ 500.00	
	Printing/Copies	\$ 100.00	
	Dependent/Child Care		
	SMR's, GTM's, GIM's	\$ 160.00	
	Mission Resource (Sampler)	\$ 120.00	
	Audit	\$ 200.00	
	District Special Project		
	Miscellaneous/Other	\$ 200.00	
	Directory/Newsletter	\$ 120.00	
Total District Team Expense			\$ 1,750.00
District Program & Events Expense			
	Honoraria for Speakers	\$ 100.00	
	Speaker Expense	\$ 20.00	
	Mileage for Team	\$ 300.00	
	Meals/Lodging for Team	\$ 200.00	
	Printing/Copies	\$ 100.00	
	Dependent/Child Care	\$ 50.00	
	Supplies	\$ 20.00	
	Book Postage/Handling	\$ 20.00	
	Book Give Away	\$ -	
	Honoraria for venue, IT, pianist volunteers, etc.	\$ 400.00	
	Mission u Scholarship	\$ 300.00	
	Miscellaneous/Other	\$ 100.00	
Total District Program & Events Expense			\$ 1,610.00
Contingency Fund			\$ -
Total A&MD Requested			\$ 3,360.00



Great Plains Conference UMW Local Unit Mission Program

“Every Unit a Mission Do Unit”

UMW 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.

We are to fulfill our purpose and put faith, hope, and love in action through our Great Plains Journey areas. Each unit may determine how to do this in their unit. Please plan your unit programming for the year by selecting at least one activity from each of the five areas. By selecting activities from each of the five, you will be participating in a Journey in Planning.

As women already engaged with faith, hope, and love in action, you are encouraged to try at least one new activity that you haven't done before. Below are some new ideas as well as ones you have seen before.

Name of Unit: _____ District: Five Rivers

Name of person completing this form: _____

Address _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

1. Please complete at least one activity in each of the Journey areas below.

- A. Circle the dot by the activity your unit completed or
- B. Use the blank lines for one sentence to report something new that you tried.

REPORT IS DUE JANUARY 18, 2021 to: Shirley Benjamin, District Journey in Giving & Learning Officer, 2757 SW Maryland Rd., Garnett, KS 66032.

Journey in Action – Activities might include the following:

- Attend Legislative Event for Advocacy in Faith (LEAF) in Kansas or Ecumenical Legislative Day in Nebraska.
- Become a Green Unit and implement one step.
- Study the difference between mercy and justice then do a justice activity.
- Have a program on one of the recent Social Action Studies:
 - Push Out—The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*
 - Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission*
- United Methodist Women's work is in four priority areas (explore one or more area & take action to help locally or beyond):
 - Maternal & Child Health
 - Climate Justice
 - Criminalization of Communities of Color & Mass Incarceration
 - Charter or Racial Justice
- Make UMCOR Health Kits
- _____
- _____

Journey in Faith – Activities might include the following:

- Use the Prayer Calendar to **pray** regularly for a Missionary; Church and Community Worker; Deaconess; or Home Missioner.
- Use **Response** magazine or other UMW resource to provide a devotion for each meeting

(Please Complete Both Sides of this Form)



- Have at least one member attend National UMW Assembly.
- Have a program on one of the recent spiritual growth mission studies.

Journey in Giving – Activities might include the following:

- Select one of the three National Mission Institutions (NMIs) to which the Great Plains Conference relates and learn about it: (Epworth Village, United Methodist Ministries, and Della Lamb).
- Adopt one of the three Great Plains Conference National Mission Institutions (NMIs) and send a supplementary financial gift to them each month, send through your District Treasurer.
- Learn about “Where the Money Goes.”
- Give to the Legacy Fund.
- Contribute money in each of these 7 categories: Pledge to Mission; Special Mission Recognition (\$40); Gift to Mission; Gift in Memory; World Thank Offering; Corsage for Mission (\$1 each), and Dedicated Light (\$45).
- Help support a young woman participating in the METour (Mission Education Tour).

Journey in Growth – Activities might include the following:

- Make a list of the women in your church who are not members of UMW and invite them to join you for a special program or mission activity such as making UMCOR kits.
- Consider joining with a nearby unit to hold a meeting or do a special activities together.
- Reach out to women in your community and invite them to participate in a Mission Do activity, such as Volunteering your services for an NMI or other local agency.
- Invite a METour participant or staff to share about her experience. If she is a local women, invite her to another meeting and ask her to consider joining your group.

Journey in Learning – Activities might include the following:

- At least one member complete a level in the UMW Reading Program.
- Regularly share information from Response magazine at meetings.
- Participate in the District UMW Meetings.
- Participate in the Great Plains Conference United Methodist Women’s Annual Meeting/Celebration.
- Participate in a District or Conference Mission u.
- Have a program on one of the recent Geography Studies.
- Participate in a—Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC) Mission Trip to Chatham, IL.

2021 - 2024 UMW Social Justice Priorities

What are UMW's Social Justice Priorities for the 2021-2024 Quadrennium?

- **Climate Justice**, with a particular focus on *Just Energy 4 All* campaign
- **Mass Incarceration/ Criminalization of Communities of Color**, with a particular focus on the *Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline* campaign

Why are we only doing two priorities? What about Maternal Health and Economic Justice?

As we move forward in this moment, we do so with a great sense of intention and discernment. To be impactful, we are constantly assessing what is needed in this moment and where our strengths lie. Reducing the number of priority issues for this quadrennium enables us to focus the resources and time of members and national staff, go deeper into each of the issues we're engaging, and develop stronger local and national partnerships in these areas.

In this time of diminishing resources, this kind of focus makes us more effective to have greater impact for good.

As we wind down our work on Maternal and Child Health and Economic Justice/ Living Wage by year end, we are confident that the organizations we've partnered with over the past quadrennium will continue to advance justice and equity in these areas. Resources on these issues will continue to be available on the United Methodist Women website through 2022 for use by members.

Priority work on Mass Incarceration/ Criminalization of Communities of Color and on Climate Justice will continue to explore the economic and women's health implications in these areas.

What about our work on gender equity and racial justice?

United Methodist Women is a women's mission organization whose founding and subsequent evidenced the efficacy of women to lead, achieve, and answer God's calling in a time when women's

role in the church and society were stymied. **Gender justice and women's leadership development are part of United Methodist Women's core commitments and will always be a key component of our work.**

Likewise, United Methodist Women has a long-standing commitment to eradicating racism. We began this work over 100 years ago and regularly re-commit to anti-racist work to dismantle structural racism. We know that all people are beloved in God's eyes, and until they are loved in the eyes of all, our work persists.

Recent videos of extrajudicial killings of George Floyd and other people of color has forced the church and the nation to confront the inequities in law enforcement and institutional racism. Our work on Mass Incarceration/ Criminalization of Communities of Color and the Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline campaign and Climate Justice are most important at this time. Our work on these issues consistently reveals the intersections with gender inequity, racial, and economic injustice, placing us in a unique position to lead as the nation assesses the role of systemic racism.



Ministry to Incarcerated Families

Dear Friends,

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. As you well know things have certainly changed for everyone in 2020. The Topeka Correctional Facility has had changes as well. They closed the doors to visitors and volunteers in mid-March and so our Ministry has been in a holding pattern since then.

We were able to have a Zoom meeting with some of the UMW board members in late June and we are in touch with the WALC Coordinator by email. The women are well and are able to have video visits with family on a regular basis but of course that's not the same as face to face visits.

They have done some freshening up of the visitation rooms in the WALC (Women's Activities Learning Center) area and we've delivered some donations during this time. We look forward to continuing our Ministry whenever the prison officials deem it safe for us to come in. Likely that won't be until 2021 I'm sad to say.

*I send you this letter to let you know that we are grateful for your donations to the Ministry to Incarcerated Families in the past. We know that UMW units are mostly not meeting right now but wanted to let you know that when and if you would like to send a donation in the future, there is a new treasurer for our Ministry. **Please send future donations to Jeanette Grenz, 9763 W 121st St., Overland Park, KS 66213.** Thanks again for your support!*

Grace and peace,

*Teresa Tuchscherer
Chairperson M2IF*

Five Rivers District UMW
Julie Ward, Communication Coordinator
701 Arkansas St.
Lawrence, KS 66044

