



The UMW Voice

The Newsletter of Bozeman's United Methodist Women

March 2018

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Spiritually Speaking

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Writing a column called *Spiritually Speaking* month after month is kind of intimidating. I sit down and feel compelled to share an insight, maybe a personal story, connect it to Jesus/God/Scripture, and wrap it all up in a neat little package of about 450 words. I want you to think that I'm spiritually connected and emotionally aware; in other words, that I have my act together.

I don't have my act together right now.

I've felt disconnected from God and my faith and sometimes even the church for several months. I know God hasn't moved away from me, so there's only one other conclusion to draw: I've moved away from God. I don't know why that is, but I do know that it's true. I can tell it in my withdrawal from certain pieces of my life, in my quickness to irritation, and in my overall malaise. I'm missing God.

Don't get me wrong. I know in my heart and soul that God is with me; I just don't act like it. I'm not living my life with a sense of God's presence. I worry and fret and act as if it is all up to me to make my life turn out the way I want (assuming, of course, that I even know what that looks like).

So where do I go from here? All I can come up with is to return to the beginning, to the things that are part of my life when I'm feeling closer to God. Everyone's list is different, but mine includes morning prayer, journaling, a gratitude practice, and talking about my faith with spiritual companions. I know in my heart that it also must include more silence and less screen time.

I also know that I can't define these touchstones as a to-do list. I can't create a check-the-box spirituality, and I can't pile on an impossible list of goals. So I'll choose one or maybe two and try them out for a week or so. And I'll try to be kind to myself as I try to be open to God.

I once described a time in my life of feeling hungry for God and prayer. A friend told me she didn't feel that hunger, and I suggested that maybe it would help if she prayed for the hunger to pray. That seems like advice I need to take myself these days.

Lent is a time of preparation for Easter, a time of readying ourselves to greet the risen Christ. It's a time of laying down some practices and picking up others, a way to deny ourselves and focus on God and others. I pray to use this season wisely.

Bozeman UMW 2018 Membership Booklets are out! Don't miss out on meetings, special events, or staying in touch with UMW members. Be sure and pick up your booklet. Thank you Gloria Zimmer for your hard work in putting together this wonderful resource. (And to Jen, her office staff, Jackie, Janna, Wanda, Jeannie and Martha for their help).

You are Welcome Wednesday March 7th at Aspen Pointe submitted by Gloria Zimmer

We are lucky our pastor is an artist and teacher excited about sharing her joy in art! Pastor Deb Christine's mission trip to El Salvador brought renowned local artist Fernando Llort to her attention. She will share her learnings at a general UMW gathering on March 7 at 1:00 p.m. at Aspen Pointe, 1201 Highland Boulevard, and give us a chance to experience his art by creating in his style, coloring a provided image, or simply watching. Don't miss out on this rare opportunity before Pastor Deb moves to another parish in the summer!

We will meet in the Fireside Room, reached by going through the main lobby, past the dining area, and into the hallway. Refreshments will follow the program.

For a preview of Llort's beautiful and colorful artwork : <http://www.fernando-llort.com/serigraphs>

Reflections on Mission u winter 2018

submitted by Jeannie Haight

Mission u is a wonderful opportunity to read about, study, discuss, learn and reflect on our Christian faith and issues informed by that faith. This year's studies were Living as a Covenant Community and Missionary Conferences of the United States. Under the excellent leadership of Peg Plimpton and Anita Turner, we explored major covenants throughout the Bible, such as God's covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David and what they reveal about God's character and eternal love for us. It enhances our understanding of how God works with us, in us, and through us. See the April Response for more information about covenant relationships as a concept and in practice. Through Anita's personal experiences, we learned about challenges and opportunities in all three missionary conferences. Alaska's huge geographical area and isolated population create transportation and communication issues, discrimination and corporate exploitation of natural resources raise more problems. Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference is ethnic rather than geographical with multiple tribal traditions and heritage to be accommodated. Red Bird Mission experiences extreme poverty plus water and soil contamination due to mountain top removal for coal mining, creating major health and education challenges. These are many challenges for us to consider in our spiritual growth and mission concerns.

Circle News

At our January meeting the Noon Luncheon Group was excited to have Gloria Edwards share with us her inspiring stories from her trip to Angola. Our church helps to support the Methodist community there and Gloria gave us a personal look at how our support plays a part in sharing God's love, education, and recovery from years of civil war. We do make a difference. Thank you Gloria for being our ambassador to our friends in Angola.



The Noon Luncheon Group

Did you know....? **YOUR** Bozeman United Methodist Women, working together in 2017 helped to support Fork and Spoon, Family Promise, Haven, the Intermountain Home, Blackfeet Parish, and more. Thank you for reaching out to our neighbors in Bozeman and throughout Montana.

Upcoming Meetings

March 7 Wed. General meeting at Aspen Pointe Fireside room 1pm "The Art of El Salvador"

March 13 Tues Mission Team Meeting 10am-noon

March 20 Tues Newly Retired Group, IHOP, 10am

March 21 Wed Miriam-Ruth Circle, church conference room, 9:30-11:00am

Trinity Circle, Fireside Room, 1:15pm

March 22 Thurs. Noon Luncheon Group Christus Collegium, 12-1:00 pm

March 26 Mon. Inkspots card making 4-6pm at the home of Martha Hendricks myhendricks@icloud.com

SAVE THE DATE! MAY 2 UMW GENERAL MEETING AND SPRING LUNCHEON "LET US PRAY"