

The UMW Voice

March 2019

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Spiritually Speaking

Brenda Anderson-Baker

Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth

I've been thinking about our current sermon series on hard conversations and about what it means to be able to reach out to others in genuine, caring, and sometimes difficult ways. I think about how often I simply reply "fine, thanks" when someone asks how I'm doing. And worse, how easily I accept that answer when I'm the one asking the question.

In a fractured society and in The United Methodist Church, which is currently at risk of fracture, we have to be able to talk to – and more importantly – listen to one another.

In a New York Times op-ed piece called "A Nation of Weavers," columnist David Brooks says, "We are born into relationships, and the measure of our life is in the quality of our relationships." He goes on to say, "When we stereotype, abuse, impugn motives and lie about each other, we've ripped the social fabric and encouraged more ugliness. When we love across boundaries, listen patiently, see deeply and make someone feel known, we've woven it and reinforced generosity."

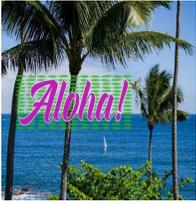
Weaving the social fabric – what a powerful concept. And the idea that it's something that each one of us can do is even more powerful. Furthermore, it conveys an important responsibility, an obligation actually: to love across boundaries, to listen patiently, to see deeply, to make someone feel known.

Where else have we heard this message? Oh, yeah, that's right – Jesus. We're called to love our neighbor, to make them feel known and loved and cared about, even when they're a naked, half-dead stranger on the side of the road. Or maybe when they're a family that needs help repairing their home that was damaged by Hurricane Harvey. We're called to cross boundaries, eating with tax collectors and morally questionable women. Or maybe just to have a civil conversation about politics with our ideologically opposed brother. (That may or may not have happened in real life.)

To listen and see and really know another person takes effort and willingness and time. Having hard conversations is part of it; having real conversations is a pretty good starting point. In fact, I believe it's an act of love and service that can send ripples across society. Brooks again: "Renewal is building, relationship by relationship, community by community. It will spread and spread as the sparks fly upward."

Brooks might have been paraphrasing Jesus: "You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world... Shine! Be generous with your lives." (Matthew 5:16, The Message)

May it be so.



UMW Women's Retreat Fairmont Hot Springs March 8-10

The Beat Goes on: In the Islands. Come and enjoy the spirit of ALOHA!

If you are interested in going please contact Gloria Zimmer at gloriazimmer@mcn.net or 586-9152



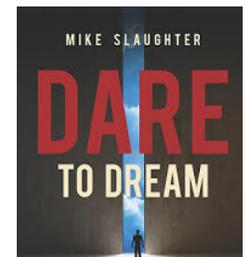
Aspen Pointe Meeting: Focus on Community

On the first Wednesday in February, the Bozeman UMW unit hit the road to meet at Aspen Pointe in Bozeman with about 20 members and guests attending. We plan one general meeting each year to be held at Aspen Pointe in February in order to include some of our members who find it difficult to come to the church during our typical Montana weather. Gloria Zimmer, who is VP and in charge of programs, welcomed all of those who braved the cold to attend. After some warm refreshments and a few announcements she turned the meeting over to BUMC co-pastor, Reverend Amy Strader. She guided us in a discussion of "Community" by first dividing us into small groups where we were given resources to help us think about what community means. We then shared with the larger group and discussed how community was represented and manifested by the early Christian Church and mid-era church and in the Church today. Everyone agreed that the results were very interesting and gave us much to think about.
Submitted by Janna Christensen

UMW members sharing ideas, laughs, memories and community at Aspen Pointe

Circle News

Miriam-Ruth Circle has just begun a new study book "Dare to Dream: Creating a God-Sized Mission Statement for Your Life" by Mike Slaughter. Many of us are at the stage in our lives where life begins to be about looking back instead of moving forward. This study has three purposes in mind to keep us looking forward and they are: wake us up to the God-dream inside, help us develop a life mission statement and challenge us to commit fully to our God-directed life mission, starting now. We hope to learn to seize the present of the presence!



Circle News

Noon Luncheon Group will have a Spring Focus on Missions. We will learn about future trips planned to El Salvador, an update on the Volunteers in Mission Trip to Texas, and the work of our TNT College Students. Join us for food, fellowship and learn how BUMC and UMW are at work.

Do you want to know what United Methodist Women are doing around the world?

Click on: <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org> and find out. To receive "the latest news" in your email inbox, click on "News" and sign up for the e-newsletter.

Upcoming Meetings

March 8-10 Fri-Sunday UMW Women's Event Fairmont Hot Springs

March 12 Tues. 10am-noon UMW Mission team Friendship Room

March 19 Tuesday 10am Newly Retired Group IHOP

March 20 Wed. 10am Miriam-Ruth church conference room

March 28 Thursday noon-1pm Noon Luncheon Group church conference room

TBA Inkspots Cardmaking at the home of Martha Hendricks



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