



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

THE JOYFUL NOISE

UMW Newsletter

DESERT SKIES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

AUGUST 2020

It's the Little Things

We United Methodist Women are not the type to sit back and do nothing. We are movers and shakers as they use to say, yet these days it is hard to organize and stay safe. Below are a variety of stories from UMW women whose lives have changed because of COVID-19. What is different in your life?

In the middle of marathon mask sewing, I ordered a part for my 48-year-old Pfaff sewing machine last week. When the package came, I saw the sales receipt was for someone in Williamston, Michigan. And the part was for a Viking - not a Pfaff. I was unsure what to do. If I sent everything back to the company it could be weeks before I got my needed part. Then I noticed the phone number and email of the intended recipient was on the sales receipt. I called Cathy in Michigan. She recognized my name immediately as she had received MY part and receipt. We decided the fastest resolution would be to mail each other the parts rather than returning them to the company. We had a good laugh. It was a nice connection to a real person in the middle of this quarantine. I'm off to the post office now and Cathy and I will be back to sewing soon. ~ *Connie Kraska*

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Glenda moves to Seattle

UMW's Vice President, Glenda Burdick and her husband Bob decided to move to Seattle to be closer to their son. They were leaving on June 23rd. Due to COVID-19, UMW members couldn't give Glenda big hugs at her last UMW meeting, so we did the next best thing, a drive-by at her home.

On Wednesday, June 17th, at 9:15 a.m. (the day and time of the 49ers regular circle meeting – Glenda was a very active member), we piled into cars and drove to Glenda's home allowing us to say good bye and social distance. ~ *Adele Edwards*

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Good-by Glenda and Bob



Caravan started at Desert Skies then headed to Glenda's

Profile

Our profile this issue is our UMW President, Marilyn McKee. Marilyn was willing to get articles for the newsletter, a difficult job, but one she has had for the last 10 years. She has called, emailed, and pleaded for profiles, stories, book reports and recipes from all of you. When I would tell her what was still needed for the newsletter as we neared our deadline, she would often write up a book report or provide a recipe herself. As I gathered pictures of Marilyn for this issue, I went through hundreds of pictures, pictures of UMW members and friends, all with smiling faces having a great time chatting during a UMW meeting or event. Marilyn would stand up and start the meeting. She had previously ensured that all the little parts of the meeting were ready (someone to do the prayer, a group to make the food, someone to do the program). She was part of the larger UMW Leadership Team and many of you participated and helped to do your part, but Marilyn seemed to be the one going around ensuring all were happy, all ready, and then at the end so happy it all went so well. ~ Adele Edwards

Below are a few UMW leaders who wanted to add how Marilyn was a great leader to them and our DSUMC UMW.

Marilyn has been associated with United Methodist Women (known earlier as Women's Society of Christian Service) since her childhood. Her mother was a longtime member, and part of Marilyn's motivation to provide leadership for our Desert Skies unit has been to honor her mother's memory.

Marilyn was originally a co-president with Sandee Landsburg, eventually becoming president when Sandee was no longer available to continue in her leadership role. Marilyn is a 'people person' who has made an effort to welcome new ladies to Desert Skies. Some of our current UMW members were invited by Marilyn to attend our meetings, liked what was offered, and continued to attend.

Marilyn has organized our UMW Board meetings, bringing a group of about ten hard-working and supportive ladies together to plan our general meetings and other activities. She has also worked behind the scenes to

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Marilyn McKee



Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. **James 1:17-18**

God, sustain your people's struggle. Gather us. Make us disciplined. Make us wise. Form our hearts into fiery commitment. Burden us with your love, every day. May we build one another up into a relentless force. Amen.

Thank You Inspiring Woman of Desert Skies

I have ten years' worth of thanks to extend to each of you, so here's my best attempt. Ten years of love and hospitality, generosity and kindness, compassion, and faith. As my time physically at Desert Skies is coming to an end, the impact you all have had on my life will never cease. I extend all my thanks to all who played a part in teaching me the following vital lessons that I care to remind you all of now:

1. From my Sunday School teacher, John 3:16 is more than just a Pinterest tattoo or song lyric; it's a promise and a commitment and most of all a challenge.
2. From every single individual who has donated a cookie, a side dish, a lunch, or their time in the kitchen, feeding the 5000 is only possible when busy hands and faithful hearts are at work.

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UMW Event Calendar – 2020

August and September

Due to COVID-19, currently all church services, meetings, etc. have been cancelled. Because we don't know when they will resume, please look at ways to physically distance yourselves without being socially distant.

Skype is free, Great for groups online - hold your meetings.

The telephone is still a great way to reach out and say I am thinking about you.

Letters and cards always bring a smile to the face of the recipient, and if you are running out of cards or stationery but have a computer, you can email your friends or relatives.

God loves us and will be with us through these difficult times. Once we can get together and enjoy great UMW food, we will.

Until then, pray for our world and reach out safely to say hi.



Marilyn enjoying fellowship and good food during a UMW Meeting

It's the Little Things (cont.)

Mrs. Humming Bird built a nest in our car port on the Christmas lights I never took down. She has two babes and is busy fluttering back and forth between the nectar feeder, flowers, and the nest. I had bought a patriotic whirligig at the Dollar Store and, in hapless ignorance, established it on the carport railing.

Oh, My Goodness. She was not happy. Too close to her nest. Probably 7-8 feet but never mind. She zoomed around it, then sat on a nearby branch and just stared for, I swear, half an hour. When I went out, she came face to face with me, flew back to the offending object, back to me, back to the branch. All I can say is "I'm so sorry, what was I thinking?". So, the whirligig is lying on the porch pending its new home. Far from her home. She is now scorning the new feeder I bought. I think it's really pretty, with sunflowers. Thankfully I kept the old one, her favorite.

Yesterday the babies took flight. They had been overflowing their nest and we're glad they chose a day when the wind was calm. I'll have to go buy another feeder. Thankfully Ace Hardware has one that matches Mrs. H's favorite. ~ Pat Walker

Profile (cont.)

meet our responsibilities to the South District UMW and has taken the time to complete applications that have brought special recognition for our Desert Skies unit many times through the years. Thanks to Marilyn's efforts we have even been recognized as the South District Unit of the Year more than once.

Marilyn is a 'can do' person who, during her tenure, has been the inspiration behind our annual Cookie Walk/Craft Sale, encouraging dozens of ladies to bake and create, raising in the neighborhood of \$1,000 in recent years, making it possible to send a nice check to our current recipient, the Sister Jose Women's Center. She has also supported our newsletter, *The Joyful Noise*, by encouraging ladies to write articles for upcoming editions and writing many items herself. When new ladies join the church Marilyn is right there, presenting bags filled with a variety of goodies to each person. She has also provided publicity for our meetings and events, and, while leading UMW, she has also been our treasurer, a job she accepted before she became president.

It has been a pleasure to work with Marilyn. Thanks to her fun and light-hearted personality our experiences together have been joyful as she has led us toward service to women, children, and youth here at home and around the world. THANK YOU, MARILYN!!! ~ Mary Broughton

We have been very fortunate to have Marilyn as president of the UMW. She has done so much to keep us organized. She has also done so much work. We do hope she enjoys her retirement as president. ~ Edie Addis and Esther Ralston

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Prayer

Lord,
 our people are hurting,
 and we don't know how to help.
 So many of the building blocks of our society
 seem to be crumbling before our eyes,
 and we need your wisdom and grace
 to learn a new way of relating to one another,
 based on the way you relate to us,
 with grace, kindness, and generosity.
 Teach us the loveliness of using our freedom
 to serve others rather than ourselves.
 In the name of the One who came not to be served,
 but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
 Amen.
 ~Provided by Barb Reuter, Sojourners daily devotional

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." **Luke 6:37-38**

Every Child Should Have a River (cont.)

Continuing the story of summers on the Susquehanna river with Molly Squire's family.

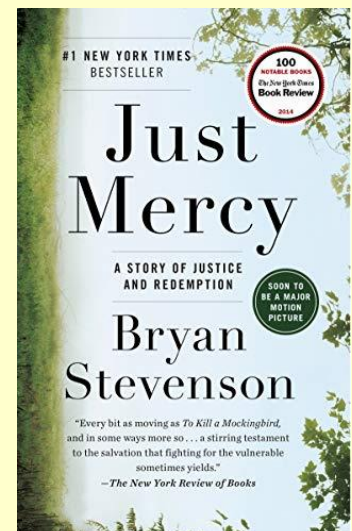
At night when the river was at flood, I could image all sorts of things slipping past the cottage in the dark and roiling water. As children, we did not lose any sleep over the fact that we might have to evacuate the cottages. Certainly, our parents didn't sleep soundly, and the floodlights on our front banks were left on all night. One summer when Lois and I were older, we decided to go swimming in that treacherous water as it lapped the top of our bank. We gleefully dove into the midst of the flood and, with the searchlights shining brightly, had a great time until my father discovered what we were doing. We were summarily ordered out of the river and into the cottage to bathe off the dirty water. We were fortunate not to have been hurt, and our Daddy was not happy with us.

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O God, breathe your Spirit of grace, truth, and love into our lives. Reveal and remove all shadows of idolatry and hatred; thereby, enabling us to hunger and thirst for righteousness and justice. May our words and actions better reflect the way and will of the risen Christ. Amen.

Book Report

Just Mercy is Bryan Stevenson's account of his decades-long career as a legal advocate for marginalized people who have been either falsely convicted or harshly sentenced. Though the book contains profiles of many different people, the central storyline is that of the relationship between Stevenson, the organization he founded (the Equal Justice Initiative, or EJI), and Walter McMillian, a black man wrongfully accused of murder and sentenced to death in Alabama in the late 1980's. Throughout the book, Stevenson provides historical context, as well as his own moral and philosophical reflections on the American criminal justice and prison systems. He ultimately argues that society should choose empathy and mercy over condemnation and punishment. *Just Mercy* was released as a motion picture in 2019. [~https://www.litcharts.com/lit/just-mercy/summary](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/just-mercy/summary)



Profile (cont.)



Marilyn at a UMW Board Meeting



2013 DSUMC UMW Received the Outstanding Unit of the Year



Marilyn leading a UMW meeting

In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him.

1 Samuel 18:14



Caesar Salad

I hardly know where to begin. Marilyn has a knack for seeing potential leadership skills in women, and she knew how to get them involved in UMW. She wasn't pushy, but gave people responsibility and then let them do their job. She is always one step ahead in her planning, remembering to do notices in advance of events and meetings (no small task as deadlines were often weeks in advance, and I found myself several times too late for announcements in the Skyline - but not Marilyn.) She is fiercely protective of UMW's time slots and stands up for our priority use of time that we have signed up for. She is liberal with her praise for a job well done, open to new ideas and always looking for ways to improve and enhance what we are already doing. She is a wonderful, faithful, kind friend - not pushy, but always there when you need her. A woman of faith and prayer. I feel privileged to call her my friend. ~ *Glenda Burdick*

I know Marilyn has had a big influence on my life. She was one of the first women I met at DSUMC and has remained a friend since. I don't have too much interaction with her now, but I know she is always there. As I have been mailing and making birthday cards for UMW for over 3 years, I have relied on her help to keep the list up-to-date, and to know when I need to send an extra "care" card. I have not been able to take an active part (other than attending 49ers circle and decorating for this and that) in UMW meetings yet Marilyn, has always been there to answer questions. Best of luck to her in her "retirement" but I know she will still be around for consultation, etc. It's been a pleasure, Marilyn. Thank you! ~ *Theo Vandenberg*

Don't forget Marilyn has been doing double duty all these years as Prez and treasurer. She heads up the cookie walk and delivers the ditty bags to new women joining DSUMC. Marilyn always has a sympathetic ear to listen. She has been my "designated nag" to remind me of what I should be doing or promised I would do. Now I'll have to rely on my unreliable self. She doesn't get to retire from being my UMW sister. She's stuck in that job; I won't let her go. ~ *Jeanne Myers*

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Recipe

Easy Caesar Salad Dressing

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 clove garlic, mashed | ¼ cup fresh lemon juice |
| ½ cup olive oil | ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese |
| 1 fresh egg (egg Beaters or sub) | 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce |
| ½ tsp salt | ¼ tsp pepper |
| Crumbled bacon | Romaine lettuce |
| Croutons | |

Serves 6

Use a blender to mix all ingredients except Romaine, bacon and Croutons or shake thoroughly in a jar. Cut up Romaine and mix in dressing and bacon. Dressing keeps safely for several days. ~ *Jan Poullette*

Circles

Methodism founder John Wesley knew the key to social change is small-group gatherings. Circles are a basic unit of United Methodist Women all over the world. Desert Skies has two circles, Zippy 49'ers and Mary Martha. Currently our circles are practicing social distancing but are very much looking forward to gathering for fellowship. Please contact Lorna Niven or Jeann Fishback for more information.

New Leadership Still Needed

In April's edition of the Joyful Noise there was an article regarding the need for new UMW leadership. As you can see just to the right, UMW needs a President, Vice President, and Treasurer. Now is the best time to plan for what Desert Skies UMW will look like after COVID-19. There are opportunities to be more involved in UMW without taking on the full responsibility of President. Marilyn left big shoes to fill, but many hands make light work. Please contact Mary Broughton regarding any role the Lord is asking you to fill. ~ Adele Edwards

Profile (Cont.)

The best way I can describe my experience with Marilyn McKee at Desert Skies and in her leadership with UMW is with the phrase, (she kept her) "eye on the prize". Though that phrase is associated with the Civil Rights movement, it also describes one of UMW's purposes, among others. UMW is to address social justice and equity, i.e. bringing God's kingdom on earth, as Christ equips us to do. In other words, Marilyn has committed to the purpose and goals of UMW as an organization and maintained that focus in her leadership. Whether it was organizing and promoting the Cookie Walk to donate the maximum possible amount to UMW's selected charities, coordinating speakers to educate our church as to community needs, or working to increase the membership for commitment of women in mission, she dedicated years to such ends. Leadership requires vision, focus, and the ability to translate that into daily interactions with others, the church, and the broader community. For Marilyn's focus and resulting accomplishments, I am grateful. ~ Barb Reuter

For the past MANY years, the ladies of Desert Skies have benefited tremendously from all of the time, work and effort that Marilyn along with her past copresident Sandee Landsburg have put into UMW. Their common goal has always been to keep the tradition of UMW alive and well. They both made it a point to educate all of us on the history and the traditions of UMW. A few of Marilyn's traits that stand out the most to me are her endless loyalty, her much needed memory and her remarkable patience. If Marilyn said that she was going to do something, no matter what was going on, she always made sure it got done. Her memory is incredible, she is always able to share with us how things have been done in the past and whether it worked or whether the process needed improvement. She has shown so much patience in her effort to keep UMW alive and strong at Desert Skies, but she is such a tough act to follow! Thank you Marilyn from the women at UMW. ~ Sandy Kleen

If you have any questions about UMW, its meetings and activities, please contact one of the UMW Board Members:

President: Marilyn McKee

Vice President: Glenda Burdick

Secretary: Mary Broughton

Treasurer: Marilyn McKee

Social Action: Jeanne Myers

Zippy 49ers Circle: Glenda Burdick, Lorna Niven

Mary Martha Circle: Sandy Kleen, Jeann Fishback

They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." **Acts 16:31**



A packed UMW Meeting



Handing over the mic to new leadership

River (cont.)

Storms rose quickly along the river and when the lightening got too close, anyone out on the water pulled up anchor and went home. If you could not get back to your cottage, the safest thing to do was to row to shore and sit tight. One afternoon a very bad storm came up while my father and neighbor were fishing. They waited too long to head for home or to the shoreline. As the lightening snapped around them, Daddy and his friend took off their clothes, stuffed them into a dry bait bucket, turned the bucket upside down on the seat, and slipped over the side of the boat into the water. They clung to the boat and waited out the storm. Once the storm abated, Daddy and his friend climbed back into the boat, bailed it out, removed their dry clothes from the bait bucket, dressed, and finished their fishing trip. No mere thunderstorm was allowed to interrupt their fishing.

Our neighbor's wife had been waiting fearfully at our cottage for the men to come back off the water. My mother remained very calm, knowing my Daddy was river wise. She knew he would figure a way to survive the storm. In good time the two fishermen returned with their catch, none the worse for their experience. The same can't be said for our neighbor's wife. Her husband received a good tongue lashing for worrying her, and my father received a few choice words, also. The motto "neither rain nor snow, etc." applied nicely to my Daddy's feeling about interrupting his fishing trips.

Early morning and late evening white spots appeared on the river. They were small flecks of foam and I haven't the slightest idea what caused them. We didn't usually swim then because the foam would be dirty. I remember swimming at night when the water was inky black and oily smooth. The water also seemed warmer at night. I did not enjoy swimming then because the river lost its feeling of familiarity. The landmarks on the shoreline took on a sinister look. Swimming in the river at night gave me a feeling of slipping into a black void. I wasted little time in getting out of the river when that feeling came upon me and gladly made my way up to the lighted, cozy cottage. So much for being brave.

In the fall of the year, our river was usually clear and running smoothly. The water level was quite low which made it possible to see the stones on the riverbed as we rowed along in the boat or swam in the piercingly cold water. Autumn enable the river to purify itself of the filth accumulated during the spring and summer. The October blue skies reflected upon the crystal-clear surface and somehow you knew all was right with God's world. That month was also the signal that summer at the river was over for another year.

We never had formal swimming lessons but learned early to do what was disparagingly known as the "Susquehanna crawl". We did the breaststroke, backstroke, dead man's float, doggy paddle, free swim, and lots of weird strokes we made up ourselves. Esther Williams we were not! I thought I was a wonderful swimmer and was very insulted when a guest asked me what stroke I was using. That was the first time I was told I did the "Susquehanna crawl" and the remark was not taken lightly.

On a hot summer day, it was great fun to float on my back in the river with the sun shining on my face and the sky arching above me. Some days, the sky was filled with clouds of all shapes. Other times, the sky was a summer blue and empty. The trees outlined against the sky were a dark dusty green filled with birds chattering back and forth. The mud swallows darted in and out of their nests on the riverbank, and the black crows across the river cawed noisily as they quarreled. My youthful body lay weightlessly supported by the water, and I came close to knowing a perfect peace. The chatter of the birds, the distant call of a train whistle, the sharp bark of a dog, the whisper of the wind coaxing the green leaves into motion, the faint clatter of dishes in a cottage kitchen all produced a serenity that made a memory to be cherished.

We spent a great deal of time swimming under water. Taking a white bar of soap with us into the river provided us with a much fun and inexpensive game. We threw the soap as far from us as we could, waited for it to sink and then dove to the bottom of the river to retrieve the soap. We had no need of facemasks or snorkels but just took huge gulps of air and stayed submerged as long as we could as we searched for that bar of soap. Back to the surface for more air and then down into the water world where no sounds could be heard. The first one to locate the soap and swim back to the surface with it was the winner. Many happy hours were spent in this fashion. ~ Molly Squire

We will continue this story in our next newsletter.

Thank You (cont.)

3. From those who shared a donut or cup of coffee on the patio after service, laughter, sometimes tears, and always good stories, which are the medicine for every ailment any given week
4. From those bearing witness to my growing comfort in front of the church, kind eyes can ease the greatest of fears.
5. Finally, from those who proved the power of a text, a phone call, an email, a card, and a drive by; that they can all make anyone's day a little brighter.

To the many sisters, mothers, grandmothers, and all the friends I've gained from my Desert Skies family. I will never be able to fully express the fact that I would not be the young woman I am today without your guidance, your unfaltering support and love, all the unconditional love I could ever ask for. I didn't just find God at Desert Skies, I continued to see him working through prayer, mission, and the awe-inspiring disciples of Desert Skies. It's a bittersweet goodbye for me, but, as I've heard, it's not "goodbye", rather a "see you later". So, See You Later Desert Skies, I cannot wait to see what glorious things you have done when I come back. ~ Paige McDowell

'May the Lord bless and protect you; may the Lord's face radiate with joy because of you; may he be gracious to you, show you his favor, and give you his peace.' **Numbers 6:24-26**

Coffee with a Mission

Growing up in Anna, Illinois, a large portion of my life was centered on our UMC and our close circle of friends there. One of my friends was David Michel. David felt called into ministry, and he studied at Southern Methodist to pursue that calling. After serving in parish ministry, he felt called into a different kind of work - creative entrepreneurship! Some of you may recall the PBS series for children "JJ the Jet Plane". David was the creator. He went on to birth and grow several healthcare companies while maintaining his home in the Dallas area and his involvement with his family in UMC mission work.

After being involved in mission trips to Costa Rica, he has created another company which may interest all you coffee drinkers. Please look at his creation: Seriously Good coffee. This brand is dedicated to providing support to a small family run children's home in Costa Rica called Hogar Metodista. www.seriouslygoodcoffee.com is the company website. I encourage you to check it out and to watch their short story video.

My connection with the Michel family runs deep. David's Mom along with my Mom were the music leaders at our church. My Mom was my first piano teacher. David's Mom was my second, and she prepared both my sister and me to major in music as college undergraduates. I'm so thankful for David's creative work in our world and for our UMC connection. ~ Susan Schild

But remember this—if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much. Everyone must make up his own mind as to how much he should give. Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to, for cheerful givers are the ones God prizes. God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more so that there will not only be enough for your own needs but plenty left over to give joyfully to others. It is as the Scriptures say: "The godly man gives generously to the poor. His good deeds will be an honor to him forever." **2**

Corinthians 9: 6-9



God in heaven, we offer our deepest appreciation for the many blessings you shower upon us every day. We are truly humbled by the bounty of your graces. We ask for the compassion to follow the inspiring example of the good Samaritan. Help us to embrace and bring comfort to those suffering immensely. Let us remember that each day that we help someone we are helping you. Amen.
