

Purpose of the United Methodist Women

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.

Mission Studies

Each year, United Methodist Women members prepare for faithful living and action by studying mission studies. Mission studies are offered each year - a **geographical, topical, and spiritual growth** study. These studies motivate, inform, and enrich our commitment to global ministry.

Members take one of the three mission studies through the organization's Schools of Christian Mission program offered around the country. Our School of Christian Mission is in July at Biola University. If you are interested in going, please contact Laura Lei Miller very soon!

Current Mission Studies

- Geographic study: *Haiti: Challenges and Hope*
- Spiritual Growth study: *The Journey: Forgiveness, Restorative Justice and Reconciliation*
- Topical study: *Joy to the World!: Mission in the Age of Global Christianity*

Typically, our Sister's Act Circle does one or two of these studies each year. The 3M circle may or may not do one of these studies. You do not have to be in a circle to do the studies. Also, if you are interested in starting your own study group or doing your own circle (circles do not have to be study groups, but may be fellowship groups or even craft groups or exercise groups), we would like to encourage you to do so.

—Laura Lei Miller, UMW President

Luncheon Planned

On Wednesday June 8th, you are invited to attend a UMW luncheon in the Social Hall. IF you are a working person, please just come and share the experience with us. IF you are leaving from home and are able to do so, please bring a salad to share. Dessert will be served (two choices) and we will have iced tea too. Our agenda is:

11:00— Fellowship Time

11:30— Lunch

Noon— Program

Find out what is in the works for the Fall. Suggest ideas to your board members. Figure out who the board members actually are! Join us for fun (guaranteed); food (are we United Methodist Women or what?); and fabulous fellowship. We are doing so much to further the mission of the church in so many places. We are being the body of Christ and helping those who are in need of help. Let us celebrate and revel in the joy of this life.

We are blessed!

Calendar of Events

June 5	Board Meeting
June 8	Salad Potluck Luncheon
June 15	3M Circle
June 16-19	Annual Conference
June 29	Friendship Circle
July 22-24	School of Christian Mission
August 10	Ice Cream Social

Report from Haiti

By Betty Gittens

May 3, 2011

United Methodist Women is exploring ways to partner with Haiti's Methodist women to expand their ability to respond to the needs of women, children and youth and increase opportunities for them to network with Methodist women in the Caribbean and the world.

These are the primary reasons I traveled with Serna Samuel, United Methodist Women regional missionary and Dorothy Goldsmith, president of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas Women (MCCAW), to the Methodist Guest House in Port-au-Petionville in Haiti, Mar. 14-19. We met with Women's League of Haiti, which is a district of the MCCAW, to talk about building relationships and to look at possibilities for the three organizations to work together to strengthen the Haitian women's organization.

In many ways, women in the Methodist Church in Haiti feel isolated — and they are. Haiti is a hard place. There are so many basic things that need to be done that require a functional government. For example, while driving through the country to visit United Methodist Women-supported mission projects, we saw so many poorly constructed houses, shacks really, built in the mountainside. In Haiti, people often use trees for firewood for cooking, leaving much of the mountainside barren. With no trees to hold the land in place, mountainside homes can be easily swept away in mudslides when major rain storms and floods occur — which has happened on more than one occasion. However, when I asked our guides about zoning laws to prevent such tragedies, they said zoning laws were not enforced. Government is the agency that creates and enforces such regulations, and the current government in Haiti just doesn't have the capacity to do enforcement or other basic things we expect government to do.

Mission Giving is also helping Haitian Methodist women attend the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women Assembly in Johannesburg, South Africa, Aug. 10-16. This is an opportunity for them to connect with and learn from other Methodist women around the world, many of whom are in mission in countries that until very recently were impoverished and unindustrialized but are now in various stages of development. It will be the first time in awhile Haitian women will be able to meet with sisters in other countries. The August 2010 Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas Women's Assembly in the Bahamas should have been very easy for them to attend, but the Haitian women couldn't get travel visas. Haiti is so economically depressed that neighboring countries feared the women would not return home after the event but rather use the opportunity to immigrate.

Betty Gittens is executive secretary for international ministries for the Women's Division, United Methodist Women's national policymaking body.