

## United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women (UMW), a supportive, inclusive Christian membership organization with over 800,000 members, focus on the mission set forth by Jesus Christ. The Book of Discipline sets forth the standards and charges for mission work around the World: "The organized unit of the 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."

Governed by a leadership team of 11 elected officers, the Baltimore-Washington Conference has 13,000 members, 460 active local units, and eight districts (Annapolis, Baltimore Metropolitan, Baltimore Suburban, Central Maryland, Cumberland/Hagerstown, Frederick, Greater Washington and Washington East). Each district has a president and leadership team.

The BWC theme is "Embracing Mission and Outreach through Love in Action." The BWC has mission initiatives in the realms of domestic violence, racial justice, immigration advocacy, transformative education, human trafficking, maternal health, environmental changes, legislative policies, climate change, and disabilities rights.

Through donations from local church, the BWC UMW supports eight projects: Baltimore Parish Family Crisis; Resource Center-Cumberland; Epworth House Mission House at Wesley Theological Seminary; Scholarship Fund- Fulton -MD; Shenandoah Women's Center-Martinsburg- WV; Susanna Wesley House-Baltimore; The Shepherd's Staff- Westminster; and YWCA Domestic Violence Counseling and Safe House- Arnold. These organizations provide services for the most vulnerable.

The BWC UMW is engaged in hands-on ministries with districts and local churches. This included preparing health care items, baby kits, and prayer shawls sent to Africa University in Zimbabwe for students and women; coat drives, foods for homeless shelters, backpack projects for adopted schools, prayer breakfasts, spiritual retreats, officers' training, legislative Seminars, National United Nation Seminar in New York, and serving hot meals in the community for hungry families.

Additionally, UMW serve in the role as chaperones and security guards for the ROCK retreat and monitor for Mission u youth school. The Legacy Fund will celebrate 150 years in ministry and mission in two years. A kick off UniTea Was held at the BWC Mission center to bring awareness to the needs to recruit younger women between ages 19-40 and to bring flesh winds into UMW.

The vision is turning faith, hope and love in action by responding to social justice issues which impact, the lives for women, children and youth around the world. As a conference, we live the vision through providing opportunities for women regardless of their station in life.

As a conference, we are called to provide advocacy and service which causes us to step out, stand up, make our voices heard and support the needs for women, children and youth. We know that we are not whole until we insure wholeness for everyone. We invite and ask you to make a difference in the lives for women, children and youth.

Elizabeth M. Stemley  
BWC UMW President