

June 7 is Peace with Justice Sunday

Empowering United Methodists to work for peace, love, and compassion for God's children everywhere

Peace with Justice Sunday, one of the six United Methodist churchwide special Sundays, was established by the 1988 General Conference. It supports programs that advocate for peace and justice at home and around the world. Designated to be observed on June 7 this year, it can be recognized on any Sunday that fits the local church schedule.

Half of the offering received is remitted to the General Board of Church & Society to help fund U.S. and global work in social action, public policy education and advocacy. The other half is retained by the annual conference to fund local peace with justice programs.

This spring the National Board approved 28 grants totaling \$52,805. A

recipient of a Peace with Justice grant is a solar oven project in the Dakotas Conference that is helping improve life in Haiti. Drinking dirty water and cooking over open fires because one has no choice are justice issues. By building and taking solar ovens to Haiti, missionary Rick Jost and other United Methodist help poor families pasteurize drinking water and cook healthy meals in a safe environment.

Other grants went to ministries empowering women, immigrant legal services in Iowa, justice and peace work in Jerusalem, training election observers in Mozambique, conflict management and mediation, and a water justice project.

Conferences, such as ours, have given grants from their half of the

offering, to local churches and other United Methodist programs, that promote peace with justice, offer training in conflict resolution, or other education initiatives within the Conference.

Support materials to help educate congregations about Peace with Justice Sunday are available online at WWW.UMCGIVING.ORG/PWJS, or toll free at: 1-800-346-3862.

To apply for a local Peace with Justice grant, contact our NCNY Conference Peace With Justice Coordinator, Phyllis Covell at wcovell@twcny.rr.com or call (315) 452-0523.

"The role of charity is to eliminate need. The roll of justice is to eliminate the need for charity." -- Rev. Brenda Kneece (South Carolina)



Diane Miller

SOM Study leaders named

Phyllis Doane, Dean of the 2009 session of the School of Christian Mission has announced that **Diane Miller** and **Ginena Dudley Wills** as study leaders for *The Beauty and Courage of Sudan*.

Diane Miller, currently of New Castle, PA, is the Mission / VIM Coordinator for Western Pennsylvania Conference. In this exciting position, she speaks about mission in local churches, resources and trains leaders setting up Volunteer in Mission trips nationally and internationally, and organizes mission trips for WPA Conference.

Prior to moving to New Castle, Diane lived for 22 years with her husband, John, at Olmsted Manor, an Adult Retreat/Renewal Center, where she led retreats, presented mission programs, and interacted with adults seeking to grow spiritually and expand their understanding of mission.

The recipient of numerous state and national teaching awards when she worked with gifted students in public schools in northwestern Pennsylvania, Diane also taught geography courses for the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford.

A life-long member of United Methodist Women, Diane has held district offices in UMW, has twice been Mission Ambassador for WPA (to Latin American and India/Pakistan) has led numerous mission studies at Regional and Conference Schools of Christian Mission, and has led VIM trips to Russia, Paraguay, Lithuania, Alaska, and in Louisiana, Deridder, and Dulac.

Diane became the first WPA Mission/VIM Coordinator in 2006. In this position, she speaks about mission in local churches, resources and trains leaders setting up VIM trips nationally and internationally, and organizes mission trips for WPA United Methodists.

Schools of Mission are a Legacy of Women

Why is it that United Methodist Women sponsors the Schools of Christian Mission in each Annual Conference in the United Methodist Church, working either alone or cooperatively with others in the conference? Why do we study a country, an issue and a spiritual growth topic each year?

Have you ever stopped to wonder?

Did you notice when the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries and the Women's Division started producing the mission studies previously prepared by the National Council of Churches' Friendship Press? Do you know that Women's Division now has taken the lead on development of these studies with input from our colleagues at Global Ministries?

It's a long story! As amazing as it was, the 1869 gathering of the women of the Methodist Episcopal Church on Tremont Street in Boston, Mass., was not an isolated incident. What happened there, in response to the dire picture of women's lives in India painted by Clementine Butler — wife of missionary William Butler who was home on furlough — was echoed in other denominations.

From the beginning of our mission story in the 1800s, the mission work of women to women has had ecumenical connections. From the missionary wives sent by church boards to the single women sent by women's missionary societies, our foremothers were concerned both that the Gospel should be preached and that women and children around the world should be touched

through education and health care. The physical and spiritual condition of women and children was beyond the reach of the male-dominated denominational boards, so the women's mission movement had much in common across denominational lines. They took up responsibilities that those in need could not have done for themselves — speaking in public, traveling unaccompanied, teaching that was nearly preaching, and of course, caring for the sick and for women in childbirth.

Women participating in the London Missionary Conference of 1888 organized the World's Missionary Committee. At their meeting in 1900 they formed a committee for united study to provide "reliable information about mission." The series provided a history of mission and a contextual study about mission with women and girls. This focus on how Christian mission was being experienced "on the ground" was quite different than studies of mission that were available at the time. The study guides were designed to prompt reflection among the participants about how they could take action to improve the situation of women and girls around the world. Eventually, the Federal Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches provided a structure within which this work took place. In 1998 all of Global Ministries and Women's Division shared this work, with Women's Division assuming a larger share of the responsibility in 2006.

Ecumenical Schools of Christian Mission in which teachers were to

be prepared for the material that they would teach in the coming year began in 1904. The approach to mission of the women's societies didn't always match the approach of the denomination's mission boards. Similarly, the information that we receive in Schools of Christian Mission sometimes doesn't match what we learned in our own secondary or undergraduate study. Our view is not always the version of history told by the victors. Our interest is not quite so much in what leader emerged victorious from what battle, whether this is a battle of bullets or of words. We have much more interest in what was and is experienced by the real people for whom Jesus both lived and died.

No wonder that our Schools of Christian Mission authors sometimes surprise us with the positions they take! No wonder that the teachers and leaders of our schools still receive special training and additional information to help them!

Harriett Jane Olson is deputy general secretary for the Women's Division.

In this year's geographic study, we look at Sudan. We look not only at Darfur, but we look at a whole nation. A nation that is both blessed with assets and at war with itself. This learning will inform us as citizens of the world and as sisters of the women of Sudan. It will also inform our planning and our giving — so we will take action as a result of our study.

Deadline for June/July issue is June 8