

Unit Programs and Circle Outreach

New church women are always welcome to visit and join the circles; small fellowship groups. Circles vary widely in their activities and interests. Ideas for new circles or groups are always appreciated.

All-church Mission Lunches. Seasonally, a Potato Bar, Taco Bar, and Pasta and Salad Bar have been well-attended church meals, with UMW cooks, to raise money for diverse mission projects.

Spring UMW Spiritual Retreats & Indiana Meetings. The FUMC Unit, the Northwest District, and Indiana Conference have offered spiritual retreats in the spring. Those attended by Unit members include "Our Mother's Gardens" at The Lilly Nature Center, West Lafayette, and at the Sarto House, a Silent Retreat Center, in Evansville, IN. Additional inspirational meetings enjoyed include the School of Christian Mission at a university as well as occasional District and Annual meetings at state-wide churches.

The Fall Unit Program features a light meal and program. Child care is provided. Past themes have featured "Celebration of the Spirit", "The African Experience", "After Church with Grandma", and "Alternative Medicine, Food Supplements". Officers are elected. The Woman of the Year Award is presented, and a Memorial Service to honor past UMW saints is held.

Outer Circle women pledge to missions and participate in Unit programs. Although they meet infrequently, they maintain the spirit of fellowship and serve as leaders of some events.

Mary-Martha Circle is our most traditional. This circle observes the pledge ceremony and supports Call to Prayer and Self Denial, Least Coin and takes lessons from the District Study Topics. Circle meets at 1:00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month except the months of June-August and December.

Third Thursday Thinkers Circle meets the third Thursday of each month at noon at an area restaurant for lunch, mutual support, and lively discussion. This circle participates in Least Coin and the Reading Program.

Anna Howard Shaw Circle is named after the first female ordained Methodist minister. This circle carries on her tradition of active, involved, and welcoming women. Meets at noon the third Wednesday of each month except December and is interested in fellowship, support, and service through Christian book discussions. It visits with home-bound members, has social events, and participates in Least Coin and Pledge to Mission.

Hands@Work is a craft-oriented circle. Members bring a craft to work on in Christian fellowship and sharing. *"You created every part of me, knitting me in my mother's womb. For such handiwork, I praise you. Awesome this great wonder"*. Psalm 139:13-14. They meet every Wednesday, 7-9 pm. These items are made to comfort and support. Completed projects and recipients are blessed with prayer. Recipients include babies being baptized, those persons who are undergoing medical procedures, grieving, having a baby, recovering from illness or injury, or having a personal crisis or difficulty.

Missions Supported by UMW

Pledge to Mission
School of Christian Mission
Youth and Young Adult
Lucille Raines Residence
Call to Prayer and Self Denial
Gift to Mission in honor of a special person
Gift in Memory of a family member or friend
World Thank Offering
Fellowship of the Least Coin
YWCA Women's Shelter
Village Nursery School
Wesley Foundation
Feed the Kids
LUM Food Pantry
Hanna Food Pantry

In 2011 the Unit of UMW gave approximately \$6000 to these missions.



Anna Howard Shaw Circle

Additional Ministries

CROP and Craft. The Unit hosts three all-day CROP and Craft workshops on Saturdays during the year. Proceeds benefit our local Unit of United Methodist Women for use toward our District Pledge to Missions and other Unit mission projects as designated by the Executive Committee. Circles within our Unit take turns serving and preparing meals for 25-30 participants at each event.

LUM Food Pantry. Non-perishable food items are collected in January to stock the Food Pantry. Members of our Unit coordinate the food collection, deliver it to the Food Pantry, and work there on a monthly basis.

Widow-to-Widow. Began when several widows saw a need for fellowship. They enjoy lunch together at an area restaurant on the second Sunday of each month at 12:15 pm for encouragement, mutual support, and spiritual enrichment.

Church Women United Projects. Members of the Unit sit on the board of the local branch of Church Women United.

- ✚ Hanna Food Pantry and Community and Family Resource Center. Non-perishable food items are collected several times a year and distributed.
- ✚ YWCA Women's Shelter: Personal items are donated for women and children seeking shelter and security.

Second Saturday Strollers. Dedicated walkers meet to explore local trails. Open to men too!

Reading Program. An especially popular UMW global program with a recommended reading list to choose from. Encourages women to be involved in God's mission; promotes critical thinking about social issues for all humans; increases understanding of Scripture; enhances self-knowledge and nurturing actions in the community; promotes leadership development; and strengthens local and global Christian mission efforts.



Outreach. The Unit's lunches and CROP and Craft programs, and UMW Pledges to Mission have supported state, national and global UMW missions. The recent contributions to the community have included: the Wesley Foundation for Purdue students; Village Nursery School for the playground and scholarships; Feed the Kids to supply food for poor school children; the LUM Food Pantry to buy surplus food; and to the church staff, administrative, and kitchen funds.

Contributions to the Northwest District UMW and the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church have focused on the Lucille Raines Residence in Indianapolis, a half-way house; the School of Christian Mission, a week or Saturday drive-in program; and Youth Service Projects.

Because of the Unit's participation in a number of such outreach missions, it has become a Five-Star and a Mission Today Unit in Indiana.



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“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.”

The United Methodist Women ministries of First United Methodist Church of West Lafayette offer a variety of unique and welcoming circles and Unit programs. New women in the church are invited to the Unit programs and circle meetings; childcare is provided. Also, we have benefited from participating in District and Conference events and have been recognized as a Five-Star and Gold-Star Unit. Our aim is to maintain active participation.