

# NEWS

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

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### United Methodist Women at Climate Change Summit



PHOTO BY: SAMANTHA TUCK

A desert now exists where a river once flowed near Samburu, Kenya. A United Methodist Women delegation is pushing world leaders to help nations on the frontlines of climate change at a summit on the issue in Copenhagen, Denmark, Dec. 7-18.

by Leigh Rogers

A four-person United Methodist Women delegation is attending the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations in Copenhagen, Denmark, Dec. 7-18, 2009.

United Methodist Women, which has official non-governmental accreditation at the United Nations, is sending the delegation to advance advocacy on two major issues: greenhouse gas emissions targets and financial relief to communities affected by climate change.

The delegation's members have a long track record of participation in environmental and other social justice issues:

• **Esmeralda Brown**, executive staff for the Women's Division's Global Justice and

Green Team national action programs, is leading the delegation.

• **Tupou S. Kelemeni** is a board member of Women's Division from Honolulu, Hawaii, and a Tongan-American.

• **Pamela Sparr**, a consultant with United Methodist Women on the Countdown to Copenhagen campaign, is an economist and specialist on environmental justice.

• **The Rev. Pat Watkins** is a member of United Methodist Women's Green Team environmental advocacy program and a Church and Community Worker with the denomination's General Board of Global Ministries. Mr. Watkins leads environmental legislative advocacy efforts in the church's Virginia Conference and conducts workshops on the moral responsibility of the

faith community to be stewards of God's creation.

Ms. Kelemeni looks forward to adding her voice to the many who will advocate for the most vulnerable and working with the Pacific Council of Churches in Copenhagen. "I've been deeply concerned about the serious dangers from effects of climate change facing the Pacific Islands and the small island nations," she said.

United Methodist Women made work on climate change issues a priority and considers it a primary moral challenge of today. "This delegation will represent us well in our organizational goal to make our case for climate justice," said Harriett Jane Olson, chief executive officer of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global

■ CLIMATE *Continued on page 6*

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### Living the Vision

by Harriett Jane Olson

Why do organizations work on a strategic plan? In the best case, developing the plan calls for a conversation about what an organization wants to accomplish or become. The organization's leaders develop measures and work plans to implement the plan, and points of reference to track progress. These reference points help answer questions like: Are we working on the right things? Are our current approaches effective?

Women's Division's staff and directors have been engaged in this sort of a process. We have looked at needs in the world, considered our historical commitments and have engaged in conversations with stakeholders. These stakeholders include United Methodist Women conference leaders, members of the deaconess community, national mission institution leadership and representatives of the Council of Bishops. We've learned a lot!

Here's the vision: **United Methodist Women—turning faith, hope and love into action for women, children and youth around the world.**

Our surveys show that this description of our work resonates with United Methodist Women members. It affirms our strong commitment to helping women experience and articulate their faith, hear God's call in their lives and find ways to offer themselves in mission. I hope you find this statement an evocative way of describing what our organization does. If you do, it will inspire and provide a tool for evaluating the way we are doing our work.

If we are going to "live" this vision, we will need to be truly excellent at spiritual growth. Women must find United Methodist Women a place to

learn and worship and question and experience discipleship. We will also need to be excellent at transformative education — helping our members think critically about the world and its issues with an understanding that we must be involved both in raising concerns and addressing issues.

To do that, we need to provide excellent leadership development experience—not primarily for the purpose of populating our own teams with strong and effective leaders who can work creatively in a time of cultural change, but so that each of us is equipped to engage in projects, campaigns



Harriett Jane Olson

*"If we are going to 'live' this vision, we will need to be truly excellent at spiritual growth."*

and initiatives to make the world more loving and just.

In doing so, we will tightly intertwine service and advocacy, responding today to the needs of women, children and youth around the world who may be hungry

or abused or oppressed, as well as working to dismantle the various systems that created these conditions.

If we invest ourselves in these areas of work, we will certainly grow as an organization, in membership and financial capacity, but also internally, as our leaders "walk the talk" and externally as we challenge "principals and powers."

I'm very excited about what this "visioning" offers us! What do you think it might mean in your unit, district or conference? I can't wait to find out!

Harriett Jane Olson is deputy general secretary of the Women's Division of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

# Illinois Women Unite as “Santa” to Troops



PHOTOS BY: SHARON SHULTZ

Left to right, Arlene Johnson, Bette Dahl, Marilyn Birkey and Jan Bacorn pack boxes with a taste of home to send to U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan during the Christmas holidays.

by Sharon Shultz

For five years running United Methodist Women at Ohio and Red Oak United Methodist churches in Walnut, Ill., have let men and women serving in the military overseas know they're in the thoughts and prayers of folk back home. This year our units packed 257 gift bags for soldiers as part of a "Project Santa" effort in the community.

Project Santa started in 2005 when the soldier son of a woman in Ladd, Ill., a community next to ours, wrote and asked her to start a program to let military personnel stationed overseas know the people back home were thinking of them. He said many of the soldiers do not get mail and have no one at home to send them things. They need to know they are appreciated. The mother went to work, spreading news of her campaign on local radio and in newspapers. It took off like wildfire. The stores put boxes out and people donated gum, books, pencils, microwave popcorn, puzzles, granola bars, you name it.

I read about this and said, "Why don't our little country churches get together and help?" The United Methodist Women took the lead packing up our items, but the

whole church donated goodies. We bought 25 stockings and filled them.

Every year since then, we've increased the amount we do. The last two or three years, I started writing letters to local businesses to see if they would help us. I sent a letter to Wrigley's, and it sent gum, mints and more. Another company sent packages of toothpaste. This year we did 267 bags, because they're easier to stuff than stockings.

In 2007 a local soldier who was stationed in Afghanistan was moved when she received one of the Christmas stockings from home, and had her sister present our churches with a plaque and a U.S. flag that had flown over Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan in honor of our efforts.

We're two little country churches. This is part of our mission outreach.

Sharon Shultz is secretary and newsletter editor for Ohio and Red Oak United Methodist churches near Walnut, Ill.



Volunteer sorts items for Project Santa in Walnut, Ill.

# Love's in Action in Kenya

by Cynthia Rives

This holiday season, I'm grateful for the experience I had and the friends I made during a mission trip to Kenya in July. What a gift it was to be with Christians from Kenya and to share in the joy they have, even for a short time.

My husband and I were team leaders for a group of 10 from across the Central Texas Conference, including two United Methodist Women members. We worked with United Methodist missionaries Jerri and Bill Savuto to organize the trip. Our group worked with the Savutos in the Mission Giving-supported ministries at Maua Methodist Hospital in Maua, the capital of Kenya's Meru North District. Our mission team painted, sewed, built walls in the new staff apartment building, led worship and helped with a vacation Bible school for more than 300 children.

We also built a home for AIDS orphans, with the help of some very skilled Kenyans from the maintenance crew at the hospital. The two-room home was built for a blind 100-year-old great grandmother caring for her 9- and 4-year-old grandsons. I still have the "halels" of joy the grandmother sang ringing in my ears. The house dedication was a wonderful celebration of love in action. We all gathered around the home, touched the walls and offered prayers of blessings for the family and the community. We prayed that the house would always be filled with the love of God. The boys got a new soccer ball to share, and we celebrated by helping all the neighborhood children make a spin art card.

Ninety-five similar homes have been built in the area over the last few years by United Methodist mission teams.

It was a thrill to meet young adults who had



PHOTOS COURTESY CYNTHIA RIVES

ABOVE: Karol Clay and Brittani Hays of Arlington First United Methodist Church, Arlington, Texas, and Elizabeth Reed of Granbury, Texas, visit with the neighbors at the AIDS orphan home building site.

BELOW: Maua Methodist Hospital employee gives United Methodist Women member Shirley Smith of Keller First United Methodist Church, Keller, Texas, a tour of the hospital facilities.



Elizabeth Reed, Karol Clay and Brittani Hays raise the walls for the AIDS orphan home in Maua, Kenya.

been orphans of AIDS and hear their hopes for the future and their plans to achieve their dreams. They had banded together, meeting every week to support one another and plan ways to improve their community.

I visited the hospital's pediatric ward with Ms. Savuto. She told me about the new ministry providing food on a regular basis to the family of any child admitted to the hospital for malnutrition. Many of the children admitted to the hospital for severe malnutrition don't survive. But even if the child dies, the family is still given food assistance; often there are other children in the family who still need food.

Through prayer, Scripture reading, fasting and other disciplines, the Savutos and United Methodists in Kenya are finding ways to put love into action! What a privilege it was to be a part of that — and to know United Methodist Women's Mission Giving helps make this work possible.

Cynthia Rives is president of Central Texas Conference United Methodist Women.

## Killingsworth Home

# Holiday Gala Shines Light on Need to Support Mission

by The Rev. Diane A. Moseley

We kicked off the Christmas holiday season Nov. 12 with the 17th annual "Starry Night" gala fundraiser for Killingsworth Home, a United Methodist Women-supported national mission institution in Columbia, S.C. United Methodist Women leaders, bishops, pastors and other supporters from around the conference travel to the gala and even volunteer as models for the fashion show segment of the event, which includes dinner, live music and a silent auction.

Constance Goldsberry was a nova in the fashion show, walking the runway with impeccably coiffed hair and donning a sparkling silver holiday gown and shawl provided by Belk, a popular Southern fashion chain. You'd never guess Ms. Goldsberry was a counselor at Lexington/Richland Drug and Alcohol Council or a mother of three girls — two in college and one still in high school.

You'd never guess Ms. Goldsberry was once a resident of Killingsworth. But before leaving the runway, she took the mike and spoke from her heart to the audience:

"I'm here out of love and gratitude for what I received from Killingsworth. I grew up here in Columbia, the youngest of three in a good family and had a good childhood—no unusual difficulties. I had a praying Momma; she made me do my homework. I had a high school diploma when I got married and then had three children. But by the time I had my third child, I found myself in a dark, sad place, which I didn't handle well.

"After leaving an addiction treatment facility, I wasn't ready to immediately return home. I came to Killingsworth, where things began to come back into focus. I regained structure in my life, with the help of the staff and inner commitment. I became accountable and responsible. Simple tasks that I had abandoned — paying bills, going to work on time, eating properly — I began to do again.

"It was a tough, long journey. I stayed at Killingsworth 11 months. I spent the last weeks there solidifying my savings for the upcoming move and securing housing for my children and me.

"Today, I have a strong enough foundation to be able to offer help to others in crisis through my current work. I'm glad to be able to come to the gala to say thank you to those who helped make my return to a more wholesome and holy life possible."

We rejoiced for this Killingsworth story!

The gala is a fun and elegant way to support a ministry that offers refuge to



Barbara Scott struts the fashion show runway at the holiday gala for United Methodist Women-supported Killingsworth Home in Columbia, S.C.

women rebuilding their lives after jail, drugs or other crises. More than 656 people attended this year's event — and we had a ball! Local artists, the Dick Goodwin Quartet, performed and charged us the same price for the 17th year! A local Sunday school class paid for decorations. One United Methodist Women member donated a seven layer caramel cake for the silent auction. Another donated a beautiful doll that



Constance Goldsberry models elegance in a silver gown and wrap during a fashion show at the gala fundraiser for United Methodist Women-supported Killingsworth Home in Columbia, S.C.

she made. Other conference supporters donated vacation beach homes. A local unit of United Methodist women will come, pool their money, bid on a vacation home and use it to go on the retreat together.

The gala is a church-wide outpouring of love desperately needed during this economic downturn.

Recently, the General Board of Global Ministries asked national mission institutions how the current economic crisis was impacting our work. With most of the early bad news being about mortgages and credit problems, it would seem Killingsworth wouldn't be affected much. The Women's Division, United Methodist Women's national policy-making body, owns our property and leases it to Killingsworth, Inc. for faithfulness and good stewardship, so no mortgage to pay. And the credit crunch doesn't touch us because we never use credit: if we can't pay for it, we do without. However, we are feeling the impact of the economy every day.

Killingsworth residents are especially affected because South Carolina has one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation — 12.1 percent in June 2009. Most of the residents move in without a job, so they are at a disadvantage from day one. Their first task is to find a job. Our residents — who often have poor job histories, resumes with employment gaps and weak skills — are competing with recently laid off, but frequently better educated and more experienced workers. Denials and delays

■ GALA *Continued on page 7*

## READING PROGRAM BOOK REVIEW

### Children's Titles Explore Compassion, Cultures of Christmas

#### Great Joy

By Kate DiCamillo

Illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline

A young girl feels the true meaning of Christmas in this story of a child's compassion in a U.S. city in the 1940s. In the daytime, Frances watches the organ grinder and his monkey turn out a tune and collect coins from the window of her second floor apartment. In the nighttime, she can't help wondering where they go. Frances' mother pays little attention to her question about the grinder and the monkey, but the girl is determined to know, and staves off sleep way her past bedtime to find out. A midnight peek out the front room window answers her question: the grinder and the monkey

are homeless. Frances is troubled and thinks about these neighbors the next day even as she rehearses her lines and gets fitted for the Christmas pageant costume she'll wear that evening. When the moment of the pageant where Frances speaks finally comes, she delivers the words perfectly at just the right time.

This book's snow scenes and dreamy illustrations in muted reds, blues and earth tones give it a warm feel and make it a fine children's bedtime selection with the Christmas message of love.

*Great Joy* is a children's book on the 2010 Reading Program list in the Spiritual Growth category (#R6012/\$16.99).



#### Federico and the Magi's Gift

Text and illustrations by Beatriz Vidal

This beautifully illustrated and lyrically written book gives children a peek into Latin America's rich Christmas tradition surrounding Epiphany Day and the trek of Los Tres Reyes Magos — the three

■ REVIEW *Continued on page 5*

## Assembly 2010

# Stories from the Traveling Assembly Sisterhood

by Yvonne R. Lucas

When Assembly planners say United Methodist Women's Faith•Hope•Love in Action Assembly in St. Louis, Mo., April 30-May 2, 2010 will be an awesome, motivating, educational and Spirit-filled event, participants in past Assemblies believe it.

Assembly is a time for United Methodist Women members, who press forward year after year in mission in their local communities, to see they are not alone — and that the sisterhood of United Methodist Women makes a world of difference in the lives of people they may otherwise never meet.

Recently, we spoke to a few attendees of past Assemblies and asked how the event impacted their lives.

### Beverly Kennedy Gethsemane United Methodist Church, Muncie Ind.

Assembly was so awesome! It was definitely a big deal for me and my family. The gathering room was huge. The crowd was massive. The video screen was enormous. The puppets were gigantic. My family was considerably impressed. The highlight for me was all the fantastic music. I loved the beat of the drums, the diverse bands and choirs, the dancers, the colorful outfits, and of course, the great sing-a-longs. Standing amidst so many people and joining our voices together in praise of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, seemed to foreshadow a bit of heaven right here on earth. I know this was a dream come true for my mom, Barbara Lynch, to have her daughters and their families join in such a significant United Methodist Women event.



Members of Chikaro Daiko, a Japanese drumming group from Centenary United Methodist Church in Los Angeles, play Taiko music during opening worship at the 2006 United Methodist Women's Assembly in Anaheim, Calif.

PHOTO BY: MIKE DUBOSE

"My dear church friend and United Methodist Women mentor, Mary Etta Yoho, spotted an immense display of prayer shawls of different colors, textures, materials and patterns appeared on row after row of racks. After I looked at, touched and smelled several individual shawls, I felt as if I'd entered a special sanctuary. I realized that each creator had sacrificed a part of herself out of love for someone in need. When we returned home, Etta started a prayer shawl ministry at our church."



Lavada Redding met United Methodist Women sisters from the continent of Africa who were guests at the 2002 Assembly in Philadelphia, Pa.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GAIL HAMMOND

### Barbara Lynch Urbana United Methodist Church, Urbana, Ohio

"I've attended four Assemblies dating back to 1990 in Kansas City, Mo. I was privileged to sing with the choir at the 1994 Cincinnati Assembly. Anaheim 2006 was like a family reunion for me: my two daughters and their husbands; my son, his wife and their teenage daughter, all participated. Living distances apart, our relationship was strengthened as a result of the Assembly. We are all mission minded, but the sharing of persons from all around the world about their work, especially with women and children, was so inspiring. The husbands seemed to appreciate almost everything as much as the ladies. The books sales were a real find.

One highlight for me was a liturgical dancer at the beginning session. She looked like an angel. Then the Women's Division president sent us forth with a challenge to, "Rise, shine and glorify God." The thrill of worshipping with so many women was awesome, as was the display of prayer shawls."

### Lavada Redding United Methodist Church of Ocid, Colo.

"I was delighted when my daughter, Gail Hammond, attended the 2002 Philadelphia Assembly with me. Since it is difficult to explain the enthusiasm of 10,000 women together in song, study and fellowship, I wanted her to experience it for herself. Gail is a musician, and it was heartwarming to see her become aware of the rich inclusiveness in the music. Also, Gail had been one of the young women who gathered under the leadership of the late United Methodist Women leader Twick Morrison when the organization's emphasis on young women began."

### Gail Hammond Christ United Methodist Church, Cannon Falls, Minn.

"I was especially moved by two events during our worship services at the Philadelphia Assembly. One was the beautiful dove kites brought in by liturgical dancers. It was as if the Holy Spirit was sending the doves to fly above us and inspire us to look up. I'm becoming misty-eyed simply recalling the emotion of that moment. The other was an energetic youth choir who was eager to share a message through song."



Casamira Rodriguez Romero shares her testimony at the 2006 United Methodist Women's Assembly in Anaheim, Calif. Ms. Romero was Bolivia's minister of justice when she addressed United Methodist Women at the event.

PHOTO BY: MIKE DUBOSE/GBGM

### Linda Erwin Lafayette Trinity United Methodist Church, Lafayette, Ind.

"I remember how in 2002, my 16-year-old daughter was being dragged by me to United Methodist Women district and conference meetings. I left the room

and when I returned, my daughter informed me she was going to attend the Assembly in Philadelphia! The conference gals had made such a good presentation while I was gone, she couldn't wait to go. We shared so many new experiences: great classes, fabulous testimonials, and enough information to make your head explode! Those memories haven't faded. Four years later, my daughter and her husband joined me in Anaheim!"



Assembly was a family affair for Barbara Lynch, far right, in Anaheim, Calif., where she was joined (left to right) by Ruth Lynch, daughter-in-law; Jessica Lynch, granddaughter; Beverly Kennedy, daughter; Martha Auslander, daughter; Larry Lynch, son; Bill Kennedy, son-in-law; and Joe Auslander, my son-in-law.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BARBARA LYNCH

### Robin Ball Community United Methodist Church, Pagosa Springs, Colo.

"My mother, Peggy Case, and my grandmother, Bess Toner, have long been involved in United Methodist Women. I wasn't certain about following their lead. But after Assembly 2006, I dedicated a large part of my life to the organization and its Purpose. Through conversations with other United Methodist Women members, I gathered ideas for fundraising, increasing membership, activities and service projects. The greatest value for me was learning where to find resources such as the online communities and resource center.

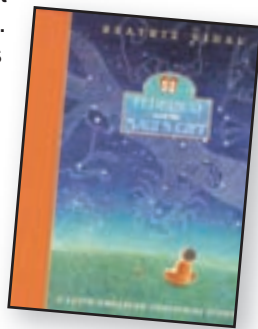
A highlight for me was the presentation by Casimira Rodriguez Romero, then minister of justice of Bolivia. She is an inspiration and proof that each of us has the potential to be a leader in the fight against injustice. I'll be attending the 2010 Assembly with my mentor, my mother, my daughter, Anna, and six members of our local unit."

Yvonne R. Lucas is a freelance writer based in New York City.

kings, the Magi. Much like Santa in Western Christmas culture, Los Tres Reyes Magos of Latin American culture travel on camelback across the sky the evening before Epiphany Day to bring toys and gifts to “good boys and girls.” Little Federico hasn’t met that criteria in the days leading up to the holiday and is worried the Magi will leave no “regalos” for him even though he told them what he wanted in a letter and left his shoes out to receive it.

Federico’s grandmother explains the tradition of the Magi’s annual journey as other children in the story act it out, gathering hay and water for the Wise Men’s camels because “They get very tired ... after such a long journey,” she said.

A decorated holiday tree in a yard lush with vibrantly colored flowers, trees, birds and grass is a refreshing setting for a children’s Christmas story. The book also introduces Spanish-language holiday terms to children in the course of telling the story and includes a glossary of these words.



*Federico and the Magi's Gift* is a children’s book on the 2007 Reading Program list in the Education for Mission category (#2419/\$9.60).

# CeCe Winans’ Music Mission Outside the Comfort Zone

by Yvette Moore

Assembly musical guest CeCe Winans is running full throttle. In addition to touring and promoting her eighth solo album, “Thy Kingdom Come,” released in 2008, and a reunion CD with her brother BeBe, “Still,” the duo’s ninth project, the award-winning Gospel artist teamed up with Abingdon Press this past summer on a vacation Bible school curriculum and continues with her four-year-old “Always Sisters, Forever Brothers” youth conferences, an effort she says will help young people know “who they are and Whose they are.”

Catching up with Ms. Winans was a challenge. But when she spoke to *United Methodist Women News*, it was clear she has quite a bit in common with the organization. She laughed in solidarity when told United Methodist Women often pushes women out of their comfort zone to answer God’s call to mission.

“I’ve been out of my comfort zone ever since they put a mike in my hand!” she said. “I was comfortable singing background or in the choir, but not lead!”

Much of that began to change when she was about 17 and singing with her brother BeBe in a group on the PTL Club television show, and they were asked to sing a duet.

“After we sang, ‘Lord, Lift Us Up Where We Belong,’ people started calling the show asking, ‘Can we get those colored kids, those black kids, to sing at our church, our event!’” she said. “We started singing as a duo.”

Ms. Winans was reared in a strict Christian home where secular music could not be played and was comfortable with that. But she grew along with a Gospel music industry that was establishing itself as a contemporary genre with mass appeal that could cross over church walls and Christian radio stations to the general public. Today, her music — along with many other Gospel artists — is a regular on R&B and pop music radio stations’ play lists.

“Sometimes people think if you don’t say ‘God’ it’s not Gospel, but the message is there,” she said. “I think Gospel music should reach out wherever it can. There was a time when people thought country music would only be received in one area. Now it’s all over. I’d like to see that happen with Gospel music.”

In 1999 Ms. Winans’ recording label

folded, and she was once again pushed outside her comfort zone in mission.

“You’re out there with no label,” she said, explaining that at first, that was scary. “But that also meant, I didn’t have any contractual obligations. My manager said, ‘Start your own label. You can do it. You hire the people you need.’”

She recognized her label’s folding as God opening an opportunity, as uncomfortable as it felt. She now records on her own label, PureSprings Gospel. This is also giving Ms. Winans an opportunity to help nurture other artists in the future.

With those experiences, Ms. Winans believes her music will have a special message for United Methodist Women, an organization that’s purposed for more than 140 years to be a part of what God is doing in the world and is positioning itself for another 140 years of Christian mission.

“The Holy Spirit is the one who can guide you when you’re at that point and asking, ‘What’s next for me?’” she said. “I’m so glad that I’ve learned the safest place I could ever be is in the will of God. That’s a message in my music for United Methodist Women and all the people of God.”

Yvette Moore is editor of *United Methodist Women News*.



CeCe Winans

PHOTO COURTESY CECE WINANS

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# Call for Prayer Shawls, Baby Blankets for Assembly 2010

United Methodist Women members can warm up for Assembly by putting their legendary craft skills to work making prayer shawls and baby blankets for the quadrennial event in St. Louis, Mo., April 30-May 2. The items will be displayed in the Assembly Experience Hall and distributed after the event to mission institutions and persons in physical and/or spiritual need. Some of the shawls will be available for purchase with proceeds going to United Methodist Women’s Mission Giving.

The shawls and baby blankets may be sewn with fabric, knitted or crocheted. Suggested sizes for the prayer shawls are: triangles, 65 inches long and 32 inches center back; rectangles, 19 inches by 69 inches or 14 inches by 70 inches. Suggested sizes for the baby blankets



Assembly participants peruses prayer shawls made by United Methodist Women members for Assembly. The shawls were distributed to mission institutions and individuals in physical or spiritual need of comfort and healing.

PHOTO BY: MIKE DUBOSE/GBGM

■ CALL *Continued on page 7*

Ministries, the national policy-making body of United Methodist Women. "Our team has a three-point agenda: learn, network and advocate."

"Copenhagen is a rare opportunity to hear directly from people who are experiencing the most immediate and harshest consequences of climate change," said Sung-ok Lee, head of the Christian Social Action unit of the Women's Division.

Thousands of representatives from faith-based and secular groups from around the world will attend the event, and United Methodist Women will be part of both faith-based and secular coalitions encouraging negotiators to step up to the plate on key issues.

The delegation will focus its negotiation and advocacy on advancing the stipulation and enactment of greenhouse gas emissions targets.

"We want governments to agree to strong, binding and fair greenhouse gas emissions targets," Mr. Watkins said. "This means reducing global emissions so the atmosphere contains no more than 350 parts per million to prevent a dangerous tipping point that would make certain climatic changes irreversible."

The delegation also hope to apply pressure on the United States to join other industrialized nations in providing adaptation aid to the most vulnerable communities in developing countries that suffer the devastating effects of climate change.

Ms. Brown argues that developing nations have contributed the least to the problem but are being forced to adapt to climate change. "Appropriate resources need to be made available to enable them to address unmet energy needs and to grow in ways that reduce poverty while protecting the environment," she said.

Leigh Rogers is public relations executive for the Women's Division of United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries.

# Fine-tuning a Body for Mission

by Faye Wilson

At 73, United Methodist Women member Ernestine Shepherd of Union United Methodist Church in Baltimore, Md., is listed in the *2010 Guinness Book of World Records* as the oldest competitive female bodybuilder and is invited to appear on a TV show by the same name to be filmed in Rome, Italy, in March 2010.

*Say what?*

United Methodist Women are known for a lot of things: letter writing campaigns, candlelight prayer vigils, salad supper fundraisers. But weight lifting? Bodybuilding? Running marathons? Yes, says Ms. Shepherd, as she offers a new tweak on mission outreach that meets the needs of women, especially seniors.

Ms. Shepherd is the reigning queen of fitness for women in and out of her age range. She takes no medicines, only vitamin supplements. Now training for her fourth body building competition, she is up literally at the crack of dawn to prepare her body and her spirit to be the best that she can be.

It all began with an invitation to a church picnic. There was a pool at the location and Ms. Shepherd and her sister, Velvet, decided they were going to buy bathing suits and go swimming. As they tried on suits, they turned to each other and said, "We've got to start exercising."

"I guess you could say that it was a bit of vanity that got Velvet and me into exercising," said Ms. Shepherd, who first began exercising and lifting weights at age 56. She and her sister started out doing aerobics at an exercise class at Coppin State University, an historically black school in Baltimore. There, the instructors suggested they try weight lifting. At first, Ms. Shepherd shied away because she didn't want to develop a lot of muscles.

Sixteen years later, that has all changed. Now, she sports a body that only has 8-10 percent body fat, runs 80 miles a week, and leads weight lifting and exercise classes. She's also winning races and body building titles, sometimes while competing with women nearly half her age. In her first contest at the National East Coast Tournament of Champions Bodybuilding Competition, she won first place. At a recent 9.5-mile run, she came in first, winning the title from a woman who had held it for eight straight years.

Ms. Shepherd's daily regimen includes prayer, meditation, running, body sculpting and a very unique diet. "I wake up at 3 a.m. every morning without an alarm," she said. "After I do my meditation, I eat breakfast and go for my 10-mile run at 5:30 a.m."

After her run, she leads daily body sculpting classes at a local energy fitness center and works with clients as a personal trainer. She also visits senior citizen centers and is a member of the mayor's Be Fit Baltimore Council, leading community activities such as a "run-around-the-reservoir" event to help others get in shape.

One of the classes Ms. Shepherd leads is at her church, where she has been a member for more than 50 years. Every Saturday she meets with a group of women there to help them exercise their bodies and to tone up their minds.

"I never realized that I had anything to offer to anyone, not even to myself," she said. "But my pastor, the Rev. Esther



Ernestine Shepherd, 73, lifts weights under the watchful eye of her trainer.

Holiman, encouraged me and told me that encouraging fitness — especially in senior members — is my calling, it's my ministry."

At United Methodist Women events, Ms. Shepherd has a reputation of being the food police! "When my ladies asked me about how to handle the upcoming holidays, I told them that holidays aren't about eating; there're about family getting together to show love," she said. She recommends eating lots of turkey — but only the white meat — and making stuffing with whole wheat or whole grain bread.

She also encourages women to do during the holidays as she does year in and year out: eat six to seven small meals a day — which Collins, her husband of 53 years, prepares — and drink water throughout the day.

"I like to take the time to help others," she said. "I love that song 'Here I Am, Lord'; that's my favorite song. I'll cry in a minute off of it, because that is what my life is about — to help others."

Ms. Shepherd said she's inspired when women say that when they see her and read about her, it lets them know that it is not too late for them to help themselves. And that is her mission — helping women to fine-tune their bodies to become more fit and healthy physically and spiritually so they can continue in mission.

Faye Wilson is vice president of United Methodist Women at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Quantico, Md., where she serves as minister of music and arts. She served as a mission education executive for the General Board of Global Ministries in New York City for 21 years.



Senior women flex their muscles during an aerobics class at Union Memorial United Methodist Church in Baltimore, Md., where Ernestine Shepherd, leads the class.

Order yours today!



**Prayer Calendar 2010**

The Prayer Calendar is enhanced with photographs from around the globe, and features mission projects and personal reflections from missionaries, deaconesses and other mission personnel. Space is plentiful for your notes and personal contacts. (M5061-2010-01) \$11.00

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in employment translate into more days with no income to pay rent.

One of our most difficult issues in such a time as this is how to handle women who are making strong follow-through efforts to get a job, who fulfill their household responsibilities, and get along with our rules and our community, yet cannot find a job, and therefore cannot pay rent. How much rent debt is too much? When must we say, "I regret you cannot stay any longer," knowing they have no other healthy option? And if allowed to stay "just one more week," how to pay the light bill when rent money was to be used to pay it?

What would Jesus do in such a time as this?

Our residents are in a place of great challenge to find jobs and also to become stable in an unstable world. The ministry of Killingsworth is in a place of financial challenge — as is every national mission institution in times like these. Please pray that the women of Killingsworth — and our supporters — will



PHOTO COURTESY OF KILLINGSWORTH, INC.

**The Rev. Tiffany Knowlin is a diva on the runway during a fashion show at the annual gala fundraiser for Killingsworth Home in Columbia, S.C.**

have the courage to take the leaps of faith that will carry us through to a secure landing into the will of God.

The Rev. Diane A. Moseley is executive director of Killingsworth Home in Columbia, S.C.

## Durango Woman Sews for Children, Mission at Christmas



PHOTO BY: JESSICA WILSON

**Former seamstress Doris Higgins, 91, now sews for joy and to serve others.**

At 91, Doris Higgins has experienced many changes in life, but a few things have been constant: her talent for sewing and passion for mission through United Methodist Women.

A retired seamstress and United Methodist Women member since 1950, Ms. Higgins works year-round making some 60 dresses and 25 tote bags for Operation Christmas Child.

"I found someone who made dresses for little girls for this program that fills shoe boxes with items for a boy or girls and distributes them all over the world to children," said Ms. Higgins, a United Methodist Women member at First United Methodist Church in Durango, Colo. "I got a hold of the dress pattern used for the project, and I made some

improvements on the pattern. I put a pocket on them, added a hair ribbon and made them more durable. I've been doing this about three years now. I made 57 of them for 2009."

Ms. Higgins also volunteers in the church's thrift shop, where she gets supplies for her sewing ventures.

"I never spend a nickel on supplies," she said. "The dresses are picked up by church members. For boys I make book bags. It's fun. For 28 years I was a professional seamstress. I just love participating in the project, and now I have gotten other women involved and they are sewing too."

Last year the church joined with others in the community to pack 3,200 shoe boxes with toys, school supplies, toiletries — and Ms. Higgins' creations.

Ms. Higgins also sews for unit and church fundraisers. "I make about 2,000 items a year — placemats, aprons, crib quilts," she said. "I enjoy it."

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## Circle's Bags Filled with Care for Neighbors in Portland

*by Kate Shirley*

Members of the Lydia Circle of United Methodist Women at Montavilla United Methodist Church in Portland, Ore., assemble and travel with "care bags" filled with necessities for people in our community who are homeless or in need. The bags are designed for members to carry in their cars and hand to people in need at freeway off-ramps, downtown stop lights or other locations passed in the course of a day.

The idea for this project came from a leadership training at First United Methodist Church many years ago. A United Methodist Women member there learned of a similar project in which a simple paper lunch bag filled with non-perishable food was kept on hand to give to people in need. Our circle embellished the idea, using fabric bags — sometimes small backpacks, insulated lunch bags, and most recently, bags sewn by church members — and filling them not only with food but other needed items. Our bags can also contain socks; toothbrushes and toothpaste; soap, deodorant and shampoo; gloves, hats, scarves; small umbrellas and rain ponchos; hand sanitizer; feminine care products; travel size packs of tissue; a comb or hairbrush; a water bottle; and other items. We also include a reference list of clothing, food, housing and shelter services in the Portland Metro area.

We usually assemble the bags during our regular circle meetings and at special events, like our annual retreat.

Before we assemble the items, we put out a call to the congregation for items we need. The more items we collect, the more the bags will contain. We assemble enough bags so interested members of our congregation and community can have several bags in their cars. At the end of our collection time, we shop for items still needed using donations from church members as well as church funds budgeted for this purpose.

This project is a fulfilling and important way for our circle to reach out persons in need in our community and to live the example Jesus gave us when he said, "I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink. I was alone and away from home, and you invited me into your home. I was without clothes and you gave me something to wear. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you came to visit me.' Then the good people will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food? When did we see you thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you alone and away from home and invite you into our home? When did we see you without clothes and give you something to wear? When did we see you sick or in prison and care for you?' Then the king will answer, 'I tell you the truth. Anything you did for any of my people here you also did for me'" (Matthew 25:35-40).

Kate Shirley is chair of the Lydia Circle of United Methodist Women at Montavilla United Methodist Church in Portland, Ore.

## ■ CALL *Continued from page 5*

are: 30 inches by 30 inches, 32 inches by 32 inches, 36 inches by 36 inches, and 38 inches by 38 inches. These are suggested sizes and shouldn't limit creativity.

Prior to Assembly 2010, United Methodist Women members should take the completed prayer shawls and baby blankets to their local churches to be blessed. Send the consecrated items to Linda C. Douglas, Women's Division/General Board of Global Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1504, New York, NY 10115 by **March 1**.

In the spirit of Faith•Hope•Love in Action, use your talents and skills to share warmth and love with others.

For more information on A Call for Prayer Shawls and Baby Blankets for Assembly 2010, go to [www.umwmission.org](http://www.umwmission.org) and click on the "Assembly 2010" box or contact Ms. Douglas at [ldouglas@gbgm-umc.org](mailto:ldouglas@gbgm-umc.org) or 212-870-3753.



PHOTO BY: MIKE DUBOSE/GBGM

**Mary Weathers of First United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, finds the prayer shawl she knitted in February among a display of some 1,600 from across the United States at the 2006 United Methodist Women's Assembly in Anaheim, Calif.**

Miranda Sackeyfio is coming to St. Louis for Assembly 2010.

She is coming because she has seen what is happening around the world. And she knows she needs to help. Help is prayer. Help is advocacy. And sometimes, help is a casserole. A casserole that Miranda would be more than happy to provide.

...because our courage comes from God.

...because that's what we do as United Methodist Women.

Assembly 2010  
St. Louis, Missouri  
April 30 - May 2, 2010  
[www.umwmission.org](http://www.umwmission.org)



*“because I believe...  
we shouldn't give up  
when problems come  
our way.”* Miranda Sackeyfio



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ASSEMBLY 2010