

**CONSTITUTION OF
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
IN MISSOURI UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ***

Article 1. Name. The name of this organization shall be United Methodist Women in Missouri United Methodist Church.

Article 2. Relationships. The organized Unit of United Methodist Women is directly related to the district and conference organizations of United Methodist Women and to the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church.

Article 3. Purpose. 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.

Article 4. Membership. Membership shall be open to any woman who indicates her desire to belong and to participate in the global mission of the church through United Methodist Women. The pastors shall be ex officio members.

Article 5. Officers and Committees. The Unit shall elect a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, and a Committee on Nominations. Additional officers and committees shall be elected or appointed, as needed, in accordance with the plans of the Women's Division as set forth in the by-laws for the Unit of United Methodist Women in Missouri United Methodist Church.

Article 6. Funds.

- a. The organized Unit of United Methodist Women shall secure funds for the fulfillment of its purpose.
- b. All funds, from whatsoever source secured by the Unit of United Methodist Women, belong to the organization and shall be disbursed only in accordance with its constitution and by its order.
- c. The total budget secured and administered by the organized Unit shall include:
 - 1) pledges and other monies for the programs and responsibilities of the Women's Division to be directed through regular channels of finance of United Methodist Women; and
 - 2) funds to be used in mission locally, which shall include amounts for administration and membership development.
- d. The organized Unit shall make an annual pledge to the total budget of the district or conference organization of United Methodist Women.
- e. All undesignated funds channeled to the Women's Division shall be appropriated by the division.

Article 7. Meetings. The organized Unit shall hold such meetings for implementing the Purpose and transacting its business as the Unit shall decide.

Article 8. Relationships in the Local Church. The organized Unit of United Methodist Women shall encourage all women to participate in the total life and work of the church, and shall support them in assuming positions of responsibility and leadership.

Article 9. Amendments. Proposed amendments to this constitution may be sent to the recording secretary of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries before the last annual meeting of the division in the Quadrennium.

* *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2000, ¶255.4.*

**BYLAWS OF
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
IN MISSOURI UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

ARTICLE I ORGANIZATIONAL FORM

Section 1. The organized Unit of United Methodist Women in Missouri United Methodist Church shall elect a president, a vice president, a secretary, a treasurer and a Committee on Nominations as named in the constitution.

Section 2. Mission Emphases

The organized Unit shall develop its program around the four mission emphases as reflected in the PURPOSE: Spiritual Growth, Social Action, Education and Interpretation, and Membership Nurture and Outreach.

Section 3. Subgroups

Within the Unit, existing subgroups may continue; new subgroups may be organized or may develop to meet other concerns and needs of members as they are recognized for experiencing community, for pursuing special interest, study or research or for designing and carrying forward projects of community service. The goals or tasks of each group shall be defined in relation to the PURPOSE.

The intent of the group will determine the length of its functioning, whether by calendar year or the time required to achieve stated goals. To organize a subgroup, any woman may enlist women of similar interests and submit a list of membership and pledges to the United Methodist Women.

A. Leadership.

Leaders of subgroups may be designated by the Executive Committee or elected by the subgroup.

B. Representation on Committees.

- 1) The leader of each subgroup (or her representative) is a member of the Executive Committee and shall help to develop ways for the group to:
 - a) be in contact with and receive information from the Unit, its meetings and total program;
 - b) participate in the plans and responsibilities of the Unit;
 - c) share with the Unit all experiences and findings which develop mission emphases and expand concepts of mission.
- 2) A representative of each subgroup is a member of the Committee on Program. Working with the committee, she shall help in the development of the program and activities of the Unit and the subgroups.
- 3) A representative of each subgroup is a member of the Committee on Finance. Working with the committee, she shall help in the development of plans for the interpretation of financial needs to the subgroups and arrange for the channeling of funds from the subgroups to the treasurer of the Unit.

Section 4. Other Offices

Other Offices and/or committees may be authorized by the Unit for further expansion and implementation of the PURPOSE.

Section 5. Membership Lists

United Methodist Women do not furnish lists of their elected leaders or members to individuals or agencies outside the organization unless authorized by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE II DUTIES OF ELECTED LEADERS

Section 1. United Methodist Women is a lay women's organization rooted in mission whose membership is open to any woman who shares its PURPOSE (*The Book of Discipline, 2000*, ¶2555.4 Article 4). Only lay women may serve as elected leaders.

A lay woman serving as a pastor of a church, but not under appointment, is eligible to serve as an officer of United Methodist Women. A woman under appointment as a local pastor, as defined by *The Book of Discipline, 2000* (¶¶341, 343), is not eligible to serve as an officer.

Section 2. President

The President, working with the Executive Committee, shall actively seek to advance all phases of the work of United Methodist Women. She shall:

- A. preside at all meetings of the unit, its Executive Committee and serve as an ex officio member of all other committees, where they exist, except the Committee on Nominations;
- B. sign with the secretary all official and legal papers and orders on the treasury;
- C. prepare reports as necessary with the elected officers;
- D. develop, with the Executive Committee, a plan to assure the unit will become a Mission Today Unit, using the criteria received from the district or conference;
- E. represent the Unit in all meetings, or name a substitute;
- F. be a member of Missouri United Methodist Church to which the Unit is affiliated and serve, where they exist, as a member of the church council or on the Administrative Council or Administrative Board/Council on Ministries (*The Book of Discipline, 2000*, ¶251.5). Membership in the local church may include affiliate membership.

Section 3. Vice President

The Vice President, working cooperatively with the president, shall assist the unit in fulfilling the PURPOSE. She shall:

- A. guide the Executive Committee in its responsibility for planning and implementing the program of the unit;
- B. perform the duties of the president in her absence;
- C. carry coordinating responsibilities for ecumenical relations and promote the cooperation of United Methodist Women with Church Women United and the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women;
- D. chair the Committee on Program where one exists or, if there is no separate committee, chair the Executive Committee when dealing with matters relating to program; serve on the Committee on Finance.

Section 4. Secretary

The Secretary must understand the organizational form, the PURPOSE, the program and the total involvement of the Unit in order to perform the responsibilities assigned to her and to assist the president. She shall:

- A. keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Unit and its Executive Committee and give notice of these meetings;
- B. serve as custodian of all records and official papers;
- C. sign, with the president, all orders on the treasury and all official and legal papers, making certain each is properly dated;
- D. keep an accurate up-to-date roll of membership;
- E. send a list of elected leaders of the Unit, including addresses, zip codes and telephone numbers, to the secretary of the district organization immediately upon their election; and send the name of the new president to the Service Center;
- F. serve on the Executive Committee and the Committees on Finance and Membership Nurture and Outreach.

Section 5. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall actively work to fulfill the PURPOSE. For this task, she shall become informed concerning the financial responsibility of the Unit and the program and responsibilities of the Women's Division. She shall:

- A. receive and disburse funds on order of the Unit, account for all funds of the unit, and work with

- the Executive Committee to develop a plan for receiving funds from individuals or subgroups on a regular basis (see Article VII, Section 5);
- B. send all funds, except those designated for mission locally and for local Administration and Membership Development, to the district treasurer. These remittances shall be made monthly or quarterly as the conference organization may direct (see Article VII, Section 2);
 - C. make itemized financial reports to the unit at regularly scheduled meetings and annual reports to the Unit, submit the Unit's books annually to the audit committee of Missouri United Methodist Church, and send an annual itemized statement of all funds to the district treasurer;
 - D. chair the Committee on Finance or, if there is no separate committee, chair the Executive Committee when dealing with matters related to finance; serve on the Committee on Program.

Section 6. Chairperson and Committee on Nominations

The Chairperson and other members of the Committee on Nominations are responsible for the nomination of all elected leaders of the unit. This requires a clear understanding of the duties of each elected leader and a knowledge of the skills, interests, and potential of the members of the unit. The chairperson is elected for a two-year term. She shall:

- A. develop plans to help members of the committee see their task as an ongoing one;
- B. provide information to the committee concerning vacancies that need to be filled;
- C. guide the committee in its work to discover new leadership;
- D. serve on the Executive Committee, and where one exists, the Committee on Membership Nurture and Outreach.

Section 7. Mission Coordinators

In the Unit there shall be persons designated to work as a team to develop programs of study and action in the mission areas of Spiritual Growth, Social Action, Education and Interpretation, and Membership Nurture and Outreach. These persons may be elected especially to promote one or more of the areas of mission. Such persons are called Mission Coordinators.

Each Mission Coordinator shall work actively with the Executive Committee to fulfill the PURPOSE. She shall:

- 1) assume responsibility for personal preparation related to her area of mission emphasis through study and training opportunities;
- 2) promote and utilize the Reading Program, Response and New World Outlook magazines, the Prayer Calendar, the Program Book, and other printed or audiovisual resources from the Women's Division;
- 3) maintain contact with the corresponding district mission coordinator;
- 4) relate to the appropriate work area chairpersons and/or commissions of the Council on Ministries or alternative structure in the local church.

A. Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth

The Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth shall coordinate opportunities for spiritual and theological development related to mission. She shall:

- 1) understand and communicate the connection between personal spiritual development and mission as expressed through social and global involvement;
- 2) coordinate and/or promote special times and events for worship, prayer and meditation such as A Call To Prayer and Self-Denial, ecumenical worship, retreats, and devotions at meetings;
- 3) incorporate language and images into worship that are inclusive of and affirming to women, people of color, and people with disabilities;
- 4) involve women in biblical and theological study, utilizing the annual spiritual growth study, *Response*, *New World Outlook*, the Program Book and the Reading Program;
- 5) provide opportunities for study of theology, starting with the United Methodist "Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task" in *The Book of Discipline, 2000*, ¶¶101-104;
- 6) serve on the Executive Committee and the Committees on Program and Finance.

B. Mission Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach

The Mission Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach shall actively assist the unit in fulfilling the PURPOSE. She shall:

- 1) work with the Executive Committee to determine the needs of the membership, to enlist

- new members and to recommend ways for inactive members to participate;
- 2) nurture the current membership and equip women in the church to support each other in leadership roles;
- 3) work with the Executive Committee to become a supportive community and to provide regular creative fellowship activities for the unit ;
- 4) chair the Committee on Membership Nurture and Outreach, or if there is no separate committee, chair the Executive Committee when dealing with matters relating to membership; serve on the Committees on Program and Finance.

C. Mission Coordinator for Social Action

The Mission Coordinator for Social Action shall coordinate the unit's programs of study and action relating to current local, national, international and global social issues. She shall:

- 1) work with the Executive Committee to select several priority social issues on which to focus local unit prayer, study and action, taking into consideration district and conference priorities;
- 2) coordinate the public policy and legislative activities of the unit;
- 3) promote and interpret the biblical basis for social action and the position of The United Methodist Church on social issues, utilizing the Social Principles (*The Book of Discipline, 2000*, ¶¶160-166, and *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church, 2000*);
- 4) cooperate with the work area on church and society or its equivalent;
- 5) serve on the Executive Committee and the Committees on Program and Finance.

D. Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation

The Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation shall empower women to understand, interpret and participate in the mission giving and outreach of the church. She shall:

- 1) promote and interpret the work of the General Board of Global Ministries that the Women's Division supports, including interpretation of the changing concepts of mission and changing roles of mission personnel;
- 2) promote mission education opportunities: mission studies, local mission opportunities, Schools of Christian Mission, United Methodist Seminars on National and International Affairs, mission encounters, and supplying material resources for mission programs and projects;
- 3) promote and utilize printed and audiovisual resources of the General Board of Global Ministries to tell the mission story;
- 4) promote and interpret the need for undesignated giving to undergird the program of mission outreach of the General Board of Global Ministries that is supported by the Women's Division, with special emphasis on women, children and youth ;
- 5) work with the president to assure the unit will become a Mission Today Unit, using the criteria received from the district or conference; when the unit meets the criteria, report to the district mission coordinator for Education and Interpretation ;
- 6) serve on the Executive Committee and the Committees on Program, Finance, and Membership Nurture and Outreach.

Section 8 Secretary of Program Resources

The Secretary of Program Resources has the responsibility of helping the members and elected leaders of the unit know about and secure resources that enable them to fulfill the PURPOSE. She shall:

- A. be informed about and promote use of printed and audiovisual materials of the Women's Division and General Board of Global Ministries, which are available through the Service Center;
- B. carry primary responsibility to promote the Reading Program; receive reports from individuals regarding their participation in the Reading Program and send a report to the district secretary of program resources;
- C. promote the mission magazines *Response* and *New World Outlook*, and *Response* magazine on cassette; encourage each member to subscribe; and keep subscription lists current;
- D. send any change of secretary of program resources to the Service Center;
- E. serve on the Executive Committee and the Committees on Program and Finance.

Section 9 OTHER ELECTED LEADERS.

Other elected leaders for the further expansion of specific areas or needed services for implementation of the PURPOSE of the unit may be elected.

ARTICLE III EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Executive Committee, as a functioning mission team, shall involve women in mission emphases coordinate all program and other activities towards the fulfillment of the PURPOSE. The president serves as the chairperson.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, secretary of program resources, chairperson of the Committee on Nominations, mission coordinators, leaders of subgroups, the chairpersons of the committee on membership nurture and outreach and other committees, and any unit members serving in district or conference positions, and the pastor.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall:

- A. set goals to fulfill the PURPOSE and evaluate progress on such goals;
- B. transact interim business;
- C. prepare and recommend the total budget to the unit for adoption;
- D. fill vacancies which occur ad interim, upon nomination of the Committee on Nominations;
- E. cooperate with the Council on Ministries or alternative structure;
- F. encourage all women to participate responsibly in the total church program.

Section 4. The Executive Committee determines the schedule for its meetings. A special meeting of the Executive Committee may be called by the president to consider urgent business.

ARTICLE IV OTHER COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committee on Program

- A. The Executive Committee may function as the Committee on Program, with the vice president as chairperson.
- B. The committee shall:
 - 1) plan and recommend to the unit programs of study and action that will contribute to the fulfillment of the PURPOSE;
 - 2) give guidance in implementing these programs and evaluating their effectiveness;
 - 3) work with the representatives of the subgroups in the development of programs and activities that are integral to the PURPOSE.

Section 2. Committee on Finance

- A. The Executive Committee may function as the Committee on Finance, with the treasurer as chairperson.
- B. The committee shall:
 - 1) analyze local unit income and giving patterns, and prepare financial goals and strategies to recommend to the Executive Committee that will strengthen undesignated giving;
 - 2) prepare the total budget of the unit for approval by the Executive Committee and adoption by the unit;
 - 3) develop and recommend to the Executive Committee or the unit plans for securing all funds to be spent locally or channeled to the district treasurer;
 - 4) work in cooperation with the Executive Committee or the Committee on Program, to:
 - a) develop and recommend to the unit plans for financial interpretation and promotion;
 - b) make plans for opportunities for individual pledging and for interpretation of the program and responsibilities of the Women's Division in the unit and subgroup meetings.

Section 3. Committee on Membership Nurture and Outreach

- A. The Executive Committee may function as the Committee on Membership Nurture and Outreach, with the mission coordinator for membership nurture and outreach as chairperson.
- B. The committee shall:
 - 1) search for and enlist new members, nurture existing members, and interpret the PURPOSE;
 - 2) seek contact with all women of the church to discover their needs and special interests and keep the Executive Committee informed about those needs/interests.
- C. The committee shall meet at least semi-annually and on call of the chairperson.

Section 4. Committee on Nominations

- A. In the unit there shall be a Committee on Nominations, composed of four to six (4-6) members, one of whom shall be elected as chairperson. The committee shall be divided into classes with no member serving more than four consecutive years. Each member shall be elected for a four-year term, except when classes are established for the first time. Members of a new class shall be elected annually to replace the class which is rotating off, with members being elected to fill any vacancies in the other three classes.
- B. The committee shall:
 - 1) gain an understanding of the program and organizational form of the unit and the responsibilities of each office;
 - 2) work throughout the year to discover new leadership and recruit women for leadership roles in the local unit;
 - 3) ensure that the elected leaders of the unit and members of the Committee on Nominations reflect the diversity of and are representative of the membership within the unit. Elements of this diversity are age, race, marital status, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, disabilities, and employment and non-employment. (Representation for racial and ethnic groups in proportion to their membership should be seen as a minimum requirement.)
 - 4) secure leaders for subgroups as requested by the Executive Committee;
 - 5) make nominations to fill vacancies that occur ad interim.
- C. The committee shall meet at least semi-annually and on call of the chairperson.

Section 5. OTHER COMMITTEES for expansion of specific program areas or needed services for implementation of the PURPOSE of the unit may be named by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. ELECTIONS

- A. In September of each year the Committee on Nominations shall present for the ensuing year nominations of leaders to be elected. To prevent vacancies occurring in all offices simultaneously, Group #1 shall be elected in the odd years and Group #2 in the even years.

Group #1:

President
Secretary
Mission Coordinator for Christian Social Action
Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth
Two members of the nominating committee

Group #2:

Vice President
Treasurer
Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation
Mission Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach
Secretary of Program Resources
Two members of the nominating committee

- B. There shall be opportunity for nominations from the floor. Election may be by acclamation or by ballot. A majority vote is sufficient for election.
- C. Those elected shall assume their duties on January 1 following their election.
- D. The term of office shall be two years.
- E. Vacancies occurring ad interim shall be filled by the Executive Committee upon nomination of the Committee on Nominations, and submitted to the unit for confirmation.
- F. All on-going subgroups may follow the same procedures.

Section 2. Tenure

- A. No officer shall hold the same office for more than four consecutive years.
- B. Service of six months or more in an officer year by an interim or acting officer will be counted as one year of tenure.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1. The United Methodist Women shall hold meetings of the total membership of the unit as needed, with quarterly meetings a minimum. The time of meetings shall be flexible to permit attendance and participation of both employed and non-employed women.

Section 2. Meetings of United Methodist Women shall include opportunities for corporate and/or individual worship, programs to Implement the PURPOSE using resources recommended by the Women's Division, and reports of the elected leaders, committees, subgroups and such other business as is needed.

Section 3. A special meeting of the unit for a stated purpose may be called by the president with the approval of the Executive Committee. At such meetings no business shall be transacted except that for which the meeting is called.

Section 4. Subgroups of the membership may be organized out of the needs of the unit or develop out of the interests of the members. The groups shall meet as needed for effective implementation of the PURPOSE.

ARTICLE VII FUNDS

Section 1. On the basis of her understanding of and commitment to the PURPOSE, each member determines the amounts and forms of her giving: pledge, gifts and special donations.

Section 2. The United Methodist Women in the Missouri United Methodist Church shall make an annual Pledge to Missions to the district. Funds shall be channeled through the treasurer of the district organization of United Methodist Women. (*The Book of Discipline, 2000* ¶255.4, Article 6).

Section 3. Funds for mission locally and for Administration and Membership Development shall be a part of the unit's budget. (*The Book of Discipline, 2000* ¶255.4, Article 6).

Section 4. All funds received for Supplementary Gifts and for A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial must be sent to the district treasurer.

Section 5. All funds of the unit or subgroups are part of the monies of the unit. Requests made to the unit or subgroups for funds not included in the adopted budget shall be referred to the Committee on Finance for recommendation to the unit.

Section 6. The monies that must be sent to the district treasurer for forwarding to the Women's Division include bequests and devises to the local unit (or a former women's organization of the

church) from decedent estates which are designated in whole or in part by the donor for national and/or world missions.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONAL BYLAWS

Section 1. Amendments to these bylaws may be made by a majority vote at a regular meeting of the Women's Division, provided a thirty-day notice is given in writing to all members of the Division by the Executive Committee or by the Committee on Bylaws of the Women's Division.

Proposed amendments to these bylaws may be sent by the secretary of the local unit to the recording secretary of the Women's Division for presentation to the division.

Section 2. Standing rules may be made and amended by the unit provided they are in harmony with the Women's Division's Constitution and Bylaws for the unit in the local churches.