

HANDBOOK
for
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
FOCUS ON LOCAL UNITS



Women's Division/Board of Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church

HANDBOOK

for

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

FOCUS ON LOCAL UNITS

THE EMBLEM

The emblem for UNITED METHODIST WOMEN affirms our continuity as women organized for mission. Its symbolism affirms our continuous growth and renewal.



The emblem for UNITED METHODIST WOMEN, as well as that for the church, combines the cross and a flame symbolizing the Holy Spirit. The cross and flame are ancient symbols of the church, dating back to the days of Christ and Pentecost. Each evokes images of sacrifice, witness and service. Both remind us of the opportunities and obligations of discipleship. Paul's ancient words to Timothy have fresh and contemporary meaning: "... I now remind you to stir into flame the gift of God which is within you ..." (II Timothy 1:6, NEB).

As part of the emblem for UNITED METHODIST WOMEN these symbols remind us of our PURPOSE of helping women to grow as persons and in community in their understanding of and willingness to participate in the global mission of the church. These also remind us of our heritage, women who pioneered in service for the church at home and abroad and in organization of women for mission service and support in many areas of need.

The shape of the emblem is likewise symbolic. It is fluid and free flowing, suggesting change and mobility. As organized groups of women, this has been our heritage—often at the forefront of movements for change, at times supporting the projects initiated by others, but always aware of the times and striving to move with them rather than be overwhelmed by them.

The cross, the flame and the individual with her abilities and opportunities—all are elements of a 20th century movement for UNITED METHODIST WOMEN.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
One and a half
gaps between
rejecting supports
and affirming values

FOREWORD

THE WORLD:

Six inhabited continents.

Nearly four billion human beings with needs for food and shelter, for breathable air, for education and healing.

Nearly four billion people with needs for hope and love, with needs for an encounter with the great Reality, the Spirit of God.

(But What can I do?)

Reject those things that separate us and affirm the common humanity of all, to bridge gaps between the struggle of women and other freedom struggles around the globe.

Reject parochialism and affirm my global citizenship to bridge gaps between women in the United States and women in other countries.

THE CHRISTIAN:

Called to be Christ's hands and feet.

Called to share the good news that abundant life is available to all.

Called to work, to build a world of justice where human needs are met.

(But What can I do?)

Bridge gaps between women of various races by rejecting racism and affirming sisterhood.

Bridge gaps between poor women and all other women by rejecting classism and affirming sisterhood.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN:

One and a half million women working together on the task, bridging gaps between church women and women's movements in society by rejecting superficial distinctions between the sacred and the secular and affirming wholeness.

Working through examination of our own lives and attitudes to bridge gaps between older women and younger women between single women of all categories and married women between women employed outside the home and those who are exclusively homemakers.

Working in the world of our local communities.

Working through the global ministries of the church to get the job done.

*Celebrate the task!
Celebrate God's love!*

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INTRODUCING YOUR HANDBOOK

Women organized for mission! This *Handbook* gives specific guidance and helps for local units of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN. It is intended to encourage you as a local unit/Executive Committee to develop a program and structure that most effectively meet the needs in your local situation within the context of the PURPOSE. You are encouraged to:

- personalize and make the content your own in your local situation;
- seek answers to ongoing questions;
- probe and share new concerns and questions as they arise;
- spell out specific goals, programs and structural forms for your local units;
- identify available local resources—human and other;
- learn to work effectively as a basic link in the connectional system of a national organization (movement) with global scope;
- enjoy your task!

The *Handbook* is a quadrennial publication. It is a companion piece to the *Constitution and Bylaws* and corresponds rather closely in format to that piece, including sections describing organizational forms, elected leadership, committees and other basic information.† A third companion piece is a must for treasurers, the new *Manual for Treasurers*.

The focus of this book is the local unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN. A separate handbook will provide helps for district Executive Committees and will have brief sections on the conference and jurisdiction organizations.

†Also included are expanded materials for Committees on Nominations (pp. 87-91) and information about organizing new units of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (pp. 102-103).

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN: PURPOSE, MEMBERSHIP, A CONTINUING HERITAGE

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. (Discipline, ¶ 256.4, Art. 3).†

WHY ARE WE?

The Constitution gives us a stated PURPOSE, our stated reasons for being (*Discipline*, ¶ 256.4, Art. 3). The PURPOSE summarizes basic factors which have been central through all our history as women of the church organized for mission: growth as whole Christian persons; development of a supportive community that is local, national and global in scope; involvement as Christian women in vital social issues of our day; and education about and significant involvement in the global ministries of the church through giving and in many other ways.

Local bylaws provide for *mission emphases* and other elements of program to fulfill and support the PURPOSE: "Whatever organizational form is chosen each unit shall develop its program around the four *mission emphases* as reflected in the PURPOSE: Christian Personhood, Supportive Community, Christian Social Involvement and Christian Global Concerns" (*Constitution and Bylaws*, Art. 1, Sec. 2, p. 3).

To make the PURPOSE and the *mission emphases* come alive for you (as an individual, an Executive Committee, a local unit), you will want to "live with" them, restating them or adding to them in ways that will make them your own to see the interrelations of each area to all of the others within the one mission and the one PURPOSE. You will create goals which your local unit hopes to achieve and spell out specific plans and programs through which to fulfill the PURPOSE and achieve your goals.

A serious study of the PURPOSE and the *mission emphases* will open your local unit in new ways:

†All quotations from the *Discipline* are from the 1976 edition.

- to work toward true inclusiveness—active participation of women of varying interests, ages, ethnic groupings and life styles
- to discover, proclaim and live out the revolutionary message of the gospel
- to participate more fully in the total life of the church and the community
- to identify, confront and respond effectively to the issues of the day
- to work actively and openly for the elimination of injustice and racism and for the liberation of oppressed peoples
- to be responsible stewards of your time, personnel and funds.

As you set your own specific goals and priorities within this context, determine how you will be involved and what your commitments will be, remember that you are *working together* with approximately one and one half million other Christian women across the country who are committed to this same PURPOSE. Remember that you are *involved*, through the organization, in mission activities and mission partnership ventures in thousands of communities in almost every state and in over 50 countries around the world.

What are some specific goals you hope to accomplish as a local unit during the next year? the quadrennium? See pages 74-79 for some helps in goal setting.

In 1973, the Women's Division set several objectives for itself including:

- affirming and strengthening* the organization as a separate, visible, autonomous women's group in the church organized for mission
- becoming* a community in mission
- participating* fully in the worldwide struggle for justice and mobilizing other women to participate in that same struggle
- expanding* its own concepts of contemporary mission
- eliminating* institutional racism throughout the organization.

These objectives, like those of each jurisdiction, conference and district organization, and like those you will project as your own goals, all operate in keeping with our common PURPOSE.

WHO ARE WE?

Who is a member of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN? Who belongs? Any woman may become a member if she chooses to join, to commit herself to the PURPOSE of the organization. Not all women of The United Methodist Church are automatically members of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN, though all are welcome and encouraged to belong. Membership is for those women who wish to organize for mission by participating in the organization through giving, prayer, study, action or service. The majority of members will be members of The United Methodist Church, but only the president is required to be a member of The United Methodist Church (*Discipline*, ¶ 248).

WHY A SEPARATE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION IN THE CHURCH?

Why has the Women's Division consistently reaffirmed the need for a separate, visible, autonomous women's group in the organized church? Why has the General Conference confirmed its recognition of this need by its action stating that "In every local church there shall be an organized unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN," (*Discipline*, ¶ 256.4), spelling out the PURPOSE, membership and authority of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN to secure its own funds and other facets of its Constitution?

1. It is an agreed upon fact that mission is the task of the total church. As new recognition of this became a part of the life of the church in the 60's, many denominational women's groups gave up their separate identity in an attempt to "be cooperative." In every instance where women's

groups were removed from visible policy making and power sharing roles:

the image of the *laos* (the whole people of God) was distorted;
the status of women declined;

fewer and fewer women were appointed/elected to key decision-making spots after initial agreements were fulfilled.

Therefore, for the sake of the whole, as well as for ourselves, the denomination needs to maintain an organized women's group which exercises real power. Otherwise, women will have to reorganize later, under more difficult circumstances.

2. In the life of the church, women in the mission movement have been and wish to continue to be:

catalysts for the continuing humanization of God's world,

mobilizers for the resources of women,

creators of new arenas for their participation throughout the church and world,

reconcilers in all places (working together with those of common concerns),

active participants in the global mission outreach of the church.

By custom and tradition, The United Methodist Church still excludes women from full participation in many phases of its life. There are no legal barriers but practice has provided continuing barriers as formidable as any law.*

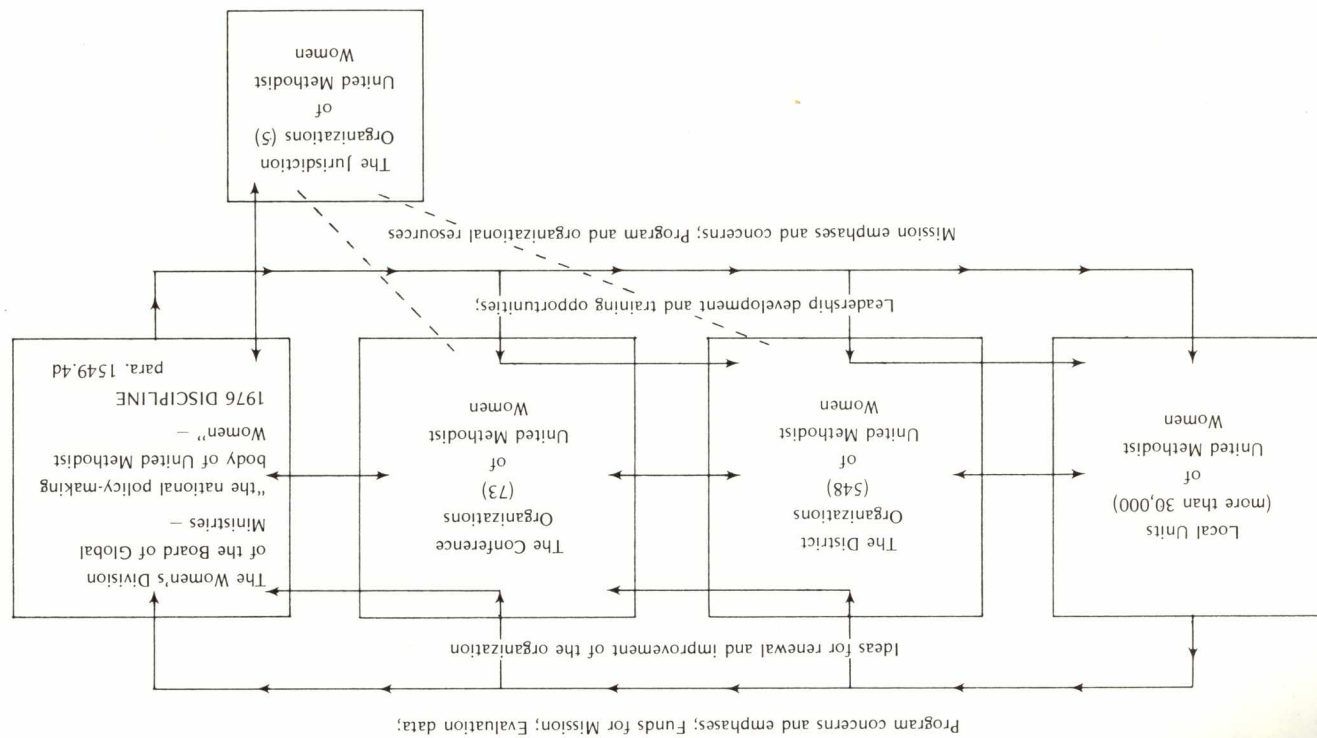
OUR CONNECTIONAL STRENGTH

What does it mean to say that we are a connectional church and a connectional organization? Why do we rely so heavily on working through this connectional framework? How does it operate? The chart, "The Links of United Methodist Women," shows just a few of the key elements of total program of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN channeled through the two-way communication links of the organization. The jurisdiction organization, set apart on the chart, is freed from the traditional

*For further detail, see *United Methodist Women: In the Middle of Tomorrow*, by Barbara F. Campbell, pp. 43-53 and 236-238. \$1.50.

Available from the Service Center, Board of Global Ministries, 7820 Reading Road,
Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.

THE "LINKS" OF UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
(Our Connectional Strength)



channeling of funds or information. It is freed for the vital function of providing experimental services or pilot projects in needed areas within the jurisdiction in response to requests either from within the jurisdiction or from the division on its behalf.

No one link can accomplish alone the vast mission tasks embodied in our PURPOSE. All are essential. As local units, your most immediate source of help, as well as your avenue for channeling mission funds to the Women's Division is the district organization and its elected leaders. However, if you have questions, concerns, recommendations or suggestions, these may go directly to the Women's Division, should you prefer to take that route.[†]

OUR CONTINUING HERITAGE

Our present PURPOSE and program as UNITED METHODIST WOMEN was not developed in a vacuum. It evolved out of a history of more than a century of women

whose primary concern was mission,

who prayed and took risks in living out those prayers,

who dealt with issues of their day out of their Christian concern and commitment.

It is in this spirit that our present — and our faith-filled steps into the future — are part of our continuing heritage.[‡]

[†]The Women's Division, Room 1509, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10027.

[‡]For more details, see the appendix, "From These Roots."

SCOPE OF PROGRAM

Our PURPOSE becomes fulfilled as we determine a structure through which it can work, and then plan and carry out a program which gives it life. The program of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN is comprehensive. It is not limited to a given time within a particular meeting. All of what its members do is the program in its totality. In program planning and building it is most important that a comprehensive view be taken. In light of the PURPOSE of the unit, the needs and talents of its members and timely concerns, the program must provide a means by which women participate fully in mission.

The total program helps to realize the PURPOSE by providing opportunities and resources to meet the needs and interests of women as they seek to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to increase their knowledge of the concerns and responsibilities of the church in the world; and to share in Christian growth, witness, support, service and missionary outreach. Support for mission is spiritual and financial. Action for mission is decision making for needed change and service to people in need. Enrichment for mission is strengthening the supportive community as well as strengthening the inner person. Participating totally means living a life of praise and thanksgiving, sharing one's resources (all kinds), being informed and knowledgeable about the task of mission for today and transforming individual and social life into expressions of a New Creation.

Each unit is encouraged to plan its program around the four *mission emphases* reflected in the PURPOSE: Christian Personhood; Supportive Community; Christian Social Involvement; Christian Global Concerns. This chapter attempts to describe the basic philosophy of each of these *mission emphases* and their expressions, their coordination through the Committee on Program, and some resourcing and program examples for each. Basic to all of these is the stewardship of personal time, abilities, and funds needed to implement the program.

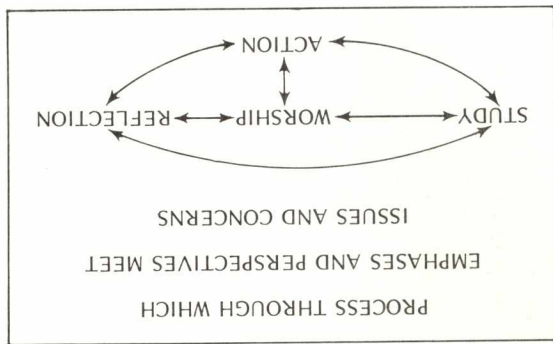
DEVELOPING A TOTAL PROGRAM

The following program planning chart is designed to assist in developing a total program within the local unit. The focal points for all elements of program are the *mission emphases*. Such a program en-

PROGRAM PLANNING CHART

PERSPECTIVES

Biblical/Theological Women's Concerns Political/Social/Economic International



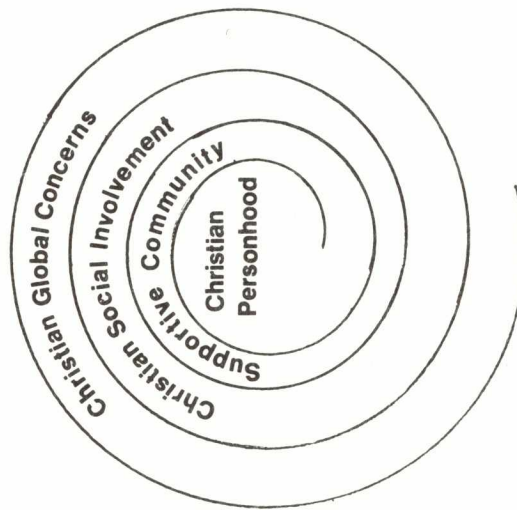
EXAMPLES OF ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Inclusiveness Aging Self-Affirmation Ecology Sexuality Special Religious Seasons Child Advocacy

Spiritual Growth Hunger Consumerism Power Abortion

MISSION EMPHASES

Christian Personhood
Supportive Community
Christian Social Involvement
Christian Global Concerns



Another way of expressing the interrelatedness of each area of program is through the diagram above. It is a spiral or cycle which moves both ways: from the person outward and from global issues and concerns inward to each individual member. The emphases, four separate mission areas for the practical purposes of implementing important tasks, are seen as part of the whole—the totality and oneness of our mission. The impression of the spiral symbolizes the global nature of our task.

compasses all experiences provided by/for/with UNITED METHODIST WOMEN. It shows the close relationship between the PURPOSE and the mission emphases. It identifies areas of concern and suggests the perspectives through which those concerns need to be viewed: biblical and theological, international, women's, and political/social/economic. It also suggests some specific issues and concerns.

For example, following the grid on the chart, the issue of power and its responsible use might be considered in its relation to each of the mission emphases. At the same time, look at the same issue from various perspectives—biblical/theological, women's concerns, political/social/economic, and international—and note the places they intersect.

Finally the chart shows the necessity for an interrelated process of study, reflection and action with worship. All are integral parts of the whole.

Special activities and occasions throughout the year will further implement the PURPOSE. Some are the annual observance of the Call to Prayer, the annual mission studies, the programs for Easter and Christmas and the pledge service, and others. These, too, are specifically related to the four mission emphases.

PROGRAM EXPRESSED THROUGH MISSION EMPHASES

As indicated above, basic to the program of every local unit regardless of size, are the four *mission emphases*: Christian Personhood, Supportive Community, Christian Social Involvement and Christian Global Concerns. If yours is a small unit operating with a minimum structure, the Executive Committee will assume and/or assign responsibility for these areas of mission emphasis. In other cases, elected leaders called mission coordinators will work in one or more of the mission areas. Whatever the structural form, the persons responsible for these emphases must work very closely together and participate in the larger mission team, the Executive Committee. Only if this happens can there be real coordination of mission.

The material below deals with concepts, tasks, responsibilities, sourcing and program suggestions for each of the four *mission emphases*. It is written, for the most part, in terms of the mission coordinator carrying the basic responsibility for each emphasis. However, *whatever the size of your unit, and regardless of who carries the responsibility, the material is for you because it deals with basic elements of program for every unit.*

Christian Personhood

Definition and Scope

Christian Personhood has to do with the developing of whole integrated persons. It has to do with *being*. It has to do with a quality of spirit and life. A person expresses her self, her person, her being physically, mentally and spiritually. She is an individual but not individualistic. She is personal but not private and exclusive. She is related to all other persons in a variety of social arrangements but basically through sharing a common humanity. Her being is rooted in God. She grows and develops through relating and interacting with God and with others in all the events of life. To know herself is key to becoming a person. To live into and live out the life of Christ is the process of growing into Christian Personhood.

With this in mind the coordinator for this area will help to see that program planning contributes to this end. Consistency between the interior life and exterior life of a person is a visible fruit.

The Coordinator

The mission coordinator for Christian Personhood, or whoever carries responsibility for this emphasis, is the person responsible for coordinating the unit's efforts in understanding the meaning of the Christian faith in contemporary life. She also challenges members to practice what Christians profess in personal and societal relationships.

Concern for Individuals

The coordinator should have a vital concern for individuals in all that the unit does. For example, the organization is a vehicle for its members to be faithful in Christ's mission; therefore, the time and energy of members should be spent on meaningful tasks. The organization does not exist for its own sake. Seeing individuals as whole persons of worth will determine the attitude, manner and style in which members work together.

Working with Others

The mission coordinator for Christian Personhood should be a team person who, if the size and program of the unit call for it, can delegate authority and use committees and task forces. The energies of many persons need to be coordinated. One of her primary responsibilities is to plan a program which includes biblical and theological studies. Working with the other mission coordinators and the Committee on Program, she plans these studies to inform and sustain action outreach as well as reflection upon action which has taken place. For example, she might work with the coordinator for Christian Social Involvement for sustaining hope with those involved in particular actions in social change on behalf of the poor. With the coordinator for Supportive Community, she plans for intercessory prayer, using the *Prayer Calendar* as a focus.

There is some overlap in the work among the mission coordinators, and rightly so as all the concerns are interwoven. Each member of the team must necessarily bring strength in her area to the planning. The PURPOSE of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN is the criteria by which judgments and decisions are made regarding program planning. She assists the unit in setting goals and objectives by finding out needs and in setting priorities.

Theology and Worship

The coordinator for Christian Personhood needs to have an understanding of a variety of theological perspectives or points of view. The Doctrinal Guidelines of The United Methodist Church (*Discipline*, ¶ 69) can be of help for theologizing. She needs to understand worship as an act of the people of God. Worship is the way a community organizes, renews and maintains its identity. Liturgy expresses the life of the worshipping community. It has continuity with the past, is real now, and is connected with the communion of saints. *Transparent Worship* by David Owen provides help in understanding worship and developing services of worship. Along with newly written resources, *The Bible, Hymnal* and *Book of Worship* are basic resources. The coordinator also monitors and helps to use inclusive language in liturgy and theology. For example, instead of "all men," "all people" or "everyone" can be used.

Responsibilities

Special Days and Occasions
She makes suggestions for the celebration of special days and occasions for prayer and meditation. Call to Prayer and Self-Denial quiet days and World Day of Prayer are examples. She also has responsibility with the vice-president to make suggestions for ecumenical dialogue.

Studies
Special attention needs to be given to the spiritual growth studies. She makes sure that these are included in the program planning for the unit.

Reading Program
The responsibility of the Reading Program is shared with the secretary of program resources. Reading is an essential part of one's growth and development when it is balanced with challenge, new ways of seeing and thinking and deeper understanding of the subject. Braille books are also available.* Reading onto cassettes by members of the unit can be a great service to those who cannot see.

Self-Understanding
The coordinator for Christian Personhood also has the responsibility of making sure opportunities are available for persons to reflect upon and gain understanding of themselves as persons of worth, dignity and potential, and to explore their own feelings, values, and lifestyles.

Resource Examples

The Bible
The Book of Worship
The Hymnal
response*
Spiritual Growth studies*
Program Resources book*
Call to Prayer and Self-Denial materials*
Transparent Worship*
Illustrative Liturgies*
The People's Story*
Developing Meanings of Celebration*
On Designing Celebration*
On Phenomenologizing*
I Was Sick and You Visited Me*
Prayer Calendar*
Discipline, ¶ 69, "Doctrinal Guidelines"

* Available from the Service Center, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.

Supportive Community

Definition and Scope
Simply defined, Supportive Community means an openness to, acceptance of and sensitivity to persons, situations and crises, both individual and corporate. The scope of Supportive Community has both personal and corporate dimensions and involves process and content. More specifically, it involves:

- building group spirit, a corporate community by intentional design;
- relating to other groups working on the same goals;
- affirming women not involved in UNITED METHODIST WOMEN but living out mission in other ways;
- "being with" women during life crises, as women move into new personal arenas and as women confront expanding concepts of mission;
- experiencing openness to diversity within the group so there is less tendency to "admit" only those who agree with each other, thus allowing for honest disagreement, difference and debate;
- learning and using skills which make conflict a creative force in a group rather than avoiding conflict or allowing it to destroy group spirit;
- owning power in a responsible way rather than abusing or avoiding leadership responsibility.

The Coordinator

The mission coordinator for Supportive Community shall enable the Executive Committee and the unit to become a supportive community. With them, she shall seek to enable women to be concerned for and supportive of others in community. It is extremely important that she be a team person who can create this supportive climate. She should recognize both the importance for every woman to develop to her fullest potential and the equal importance of providing the supportive climate of a Christian fellowship in which this can occur. To accomplish this, she shall plan with the Executive Committee for experiences of study and action that will help women understand the needs, concerns and opportunities for women in the church and community. She shall enable them to achieve a sense of personal identity and selfhood, to affirm themselves and each other as persons of worth, and to participate responsibly in church and society.

The following are only a few ways in which this may happen. As you discover the possibilities of this mission area, you will want to add your own dimensions to these suggestions.

How Tos for Supportive Community

Encourage the women in your unit to support each other in leadership. Work to involve UNITED METHODIST WOMEN officers in those areas which are of mutual responsibility in the program of your church. Suggest qualified women to the Nominations and Personnel Committee of the church as potential leaders. Be aware and supportive of the women who have taken on leadership responsibilities outside your unit or church. Support your unit officers by working with the Membership Chairperson/Committee in cultivating new and inactive members, the coordinator of Christian Global Concerns in planning the study program, the treasurer in stressing our mission giving, the other mission coordinators in conducting action/reflection/renewal activities or events.

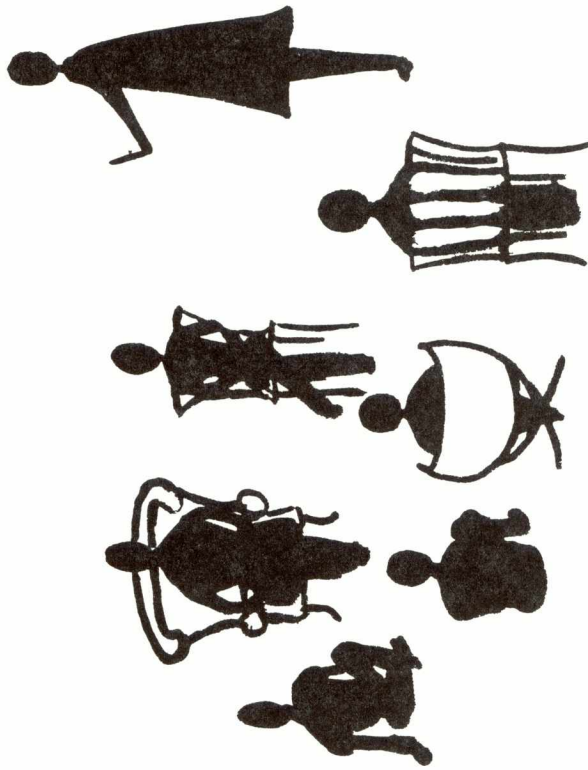
Plan regular "getting to know you" fun-type activities. Plan 5-15 minute sharing times, interpretive movement, poetry, dramatics, painting to show feelings, retreats, field trips (cooperatively with Christian Social Involvement relative to special concerns of your unit).

Know your women, members and non-members, their feelings and needs. Ask questions in friendship: Do working women feel a part of our unit? Should we have more evening meetings? Are child care arrangements needed? Is transportation needed? Support your shut-in, widowed, sick, single parent members in special ways. Provide a yearly evaluation time when each member is asked what things her unit offers her which are most important, what things she would like to improve.

Make available facts about the place of women in today's world. Be sure there is a real understanding about the potential of women. Contact your Conference Commission or Committee on the Role and Status of Women for ideas. Keep your studies factual and minds open. Invite some women in contemporary roles to your unit to tell of their experiences (a clergywoman, woman physician, woman lawyer, etc.).

Urge women to get involved ecumenically. Be sure your unit has chosen a representative to Church Women United; urge support and membership in Church Women United. Plan small group "dialogue" with a sister church of another denomination. Discover and become involved with other World Federation of Methodist Women members/groups in your community/area (African Methodist Episcopal; African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Christian Methodist Episcopal).

Relate to other groups working on the same goals; form coalitions. Many other community or national groups are working on many of the



goals that are also ours as UNITED METHODIST WOMEN — e.g., League of Women Voters, YWCA and many others.

Educate your women on current issues of concern to them. Find out what the common concerns are. If need arises, hold a series of study meetings ... some suggested topics:

<i>The Great American Work Ethic</i>	<i>World Stabilization</i>
<i>Inflation and Our Food Budget</i>	<i>Euthanasia</i>
<i>Censorship</i>	<i>Chemicals in Our Food</i>
<i>Being a Mother</i>	<i>Ecology</i>
<i>How We Deal With Anger</i>	<i>Starvation and Poverty</i>
<i>What Are Our Greatest Fears</i>	<i>Politics</i>
<i>Today's Morality</i>	<i>Crime and Punishment</i>

Work to function better as a group. Accept the fact that conflict and disagreement are always part of a functioning group. Utilize community resource persons for skill development.

Another way of approaching the opportunities and responsibilities of Supportive Community might be to work through the following worksheet on Supportive Community. As you explore the needs in your unit and community, you may well develop quite an extensive list of suggestions under each item on the worksheet.

Roads To Supportive Community

1. *Provide experiences enabling members to develop to their fullest potential.*
 - a. Keep an up-to-date inventory of members and nonmembers, including their current interests and concerns and expressed needs.
 - b. Help plan programs of study and action that will enlist their participation. Involve persons at the point of their expressed interests and abilities. Encourage participation in a variety of activities so that individuals do not get "typed" as having just one interest or skill.
2. *Provide a climate of concern and support.*
 - a. With the mission coordinator of Christian Personhood, plan for Prayer Partners in the Executive Committee.
e.g., *Prayer Calendar*—Members and Persons-In-Mission
 - b. Identify persons in crisis situations and respond with sensible sensitivity.
 - c. Be a friend to the busy civic leaders and church school teachers who are in mission but can't attend meetings. Sharing some of the resources for UNITED METHODIST WOMEN which relate to their area of concern may be one way to express your support.
3. *Encourage all women everywhere in their struggle for responsible freedom.*
 - a. Help promote understanding of and gifts to the "Women in Rural Development" project.
 - b. Try to understand other women's points of view that differ from your own:

International Women's Year
The United Nations Decade
for Women
4. *Affirm all women as unique persons of worth who take responsibility.*
 - a. Initiate plans for special recognition of special women in the church and community
 - b. Support and vote for women of your church aspiring to public office.
 - c. Help other elected leaders in UNITED METHODIST WOMEN gain support for their ideas and proposals (e.g., mission coordinator of Christian Social Involvement).
5. *Participate in regular, creative fellowship activities that give evidence of a sense of supportive community.*

Carry on the traditional activities if they are creative and provide fellowship. Instigate a new plan if it satisfies these criteria.

6. *Strengthen relations with ecumenical organizations in which we hold membership.*

Church Women United
World Federation of Methodist Women

7. *Enable women in the church to support each other in leadership roles.*
Give names of and data about women of ability to your pastor and church nominating committee.
8. *Become sensitive to non-members and new people coming into the church.*
Begin an informal greeters' group, not just at the doors but at the pews.
9. *Help the unit maintain contact with active and non-active members.*
Use your imagination, your telephones, your automobiles, your inactive people in a regular contact plan.
10. *Find and make available resources concerning the role of women.*
 - a. Locate and use related programs in current and recent program resource books for UNITED METHODIST WOMEN.
 - b. Check out books found under the Supportive Community category in the Reading List.
 - c. Clip articles and pictures from response and from the popular women's magazines.
11. *Urge ecumenical participation in its broadest sense.*
Use the opportunities in the local community for wider involvement and dialogue.
12. *Provide for training in group building.*
 - a. Check with district/conference officers or your pastor about people who could lead such an experience.
 - b. See and make use of resources available from Service Center.
13. *Work with the treasurer and other mission coordinators to see the importance of funding in building a supportive community that reaches beyond itself.*

Filmstrip, "As Strong as the Land
Local Budgets (in two parts)†

Filmstrip, "Let's Talk About You And
United Methodist Women."

†See constitution, section 6c, 1 and 2.

Many exercises, as indicated above, come to us from life experiences of organizational structure. Coordinators for Supportive Community are encouraged to be alert and sensitive to these experiences and opportunities to share. Packets containing suggested exercises and resources are made available to conference coordinators by the Women's Division on an annual basis. The intent is that these materials be shared with district and local coordinators in officer training experiences. If you have not received any such helps over the period of the last year or if you are just coming into office, contact your district coordinator for Supportive Community. If she has not received materials from the conference coordinator, this will give opportunity to contact her for them. Here, as in every area, we rely on our connective process to keep communication flowing.

The pages of response also offer frequent continuing resources for this mission emphasis.

A Supportive Community Vocabulary

The Supportive Community concept/office has been the newest in UNITED METHODIST WOMEN in that it could not easily be paralleled to a previously existing office or responsibility. At the same time, it is a concept that historically has been one of the most basic to the organization. The following may help you to begin building your own Supportive Community vocabulary.

Open communication — A supportive relationship is characterized by open expression and examination of any feeling or idea without disapproval, avoidance or exclusion from the relationship or group.

Caring and commitment — Trust is high because persons treat each other with respect and care about consequences for each other. Confidentiality of information is maintained according to the wishes of the individual. There is commitment to each person choosing her own degree of openness and directions of growth—an absence of coercion. There is commitment to availability in time of stress and special vulnerability. Caring also involves the open facing of conflict and commitment to working at resolution rather than rejecting, putting down or avoiding another.

Feedback and criticism — In the context of experienced caring and commitment, persons are free to openly share their perceptions of each other. This includes negative reactions, dislikes and anger, as well as affirmation or simple description of "this is how you look at me."

Accountability, to each other and committed values — Persons both act accountable to and call each other to account to shared plans and decisions. Agreements and commitments are important and are upheld. Of course, conditions change and thus tasks must change; however, persons feed back results, evaluate actions and explain departures, related decisions and commitments made to oneself and to each other in the group. The norm of consistency between actions and stated value priorities is self-consciously used in the process of each person's exploring and evaluating her own behavior, and in feedback of persons to each other.

Celebration — Having fun, affirming successes, expressing the joy of being with each other and the exhilaration or peace after having struggled through a conflict are part of supportive relationships.

Openness to change — Commitment to each other and shared values must always be balanced against the reality of changing persons and the need for fresh perspectives. When for one or another reason a person's needs are not being met by the group, this feeling is expressed and explored. Others may be feeling similarly and the discussion may lead to new group action or the person(s) may decide to leave the group. In the latter case the group, because it has openly explored feelings and circumstances, affirms the decision of the individual(s). . . .

Shared values — Supportive relationships develop shared values to which persons become mutually committed. Real sharing of values takes time to develop and is not assumed. Differences are actively exposed and explored so that genuine common grounds can be established. It is essential that core values be shared for a relationship to be very supportive.

Problem solving — Persons help each other define and create solutions to problems experienced.

Collaboration — Persons enhance the value of each others' style and ideas by hearing each other, checking the hearing for accuracy and using, building on to what is heard. Thus, there is a continuity in conversations and persons feel affirmed as making a useful contribution.

Diversity — Supportive relationships come to value diverse styles of thinking, talking, and feeling, etc., both because, in a low-threat situation, the richness of difference is experienced as stimulating and because more different insights and more creative solutions to problems result.†

Christian Social Involvement

The Coordinator

The mission coordinator for Christian Social Involvement, or whoever is responsible for this mission emphasis, is the person responsible for coordinating the unit's efforts in study and action on current social issues, which help UNITED METHODIST WOMEN witness with courage in the contemporary world. She also provides a challenge to members to reflect on the Biblical faith which inspires social involvement.

Commitment

The coordinator should have a vital concern for persons and for the social, political and economic conditions and systems affecting all of us. She should be open to all persons and be able to provide an opportunity for understanding among people of diverse views and experiences. A commitment to justice for all persons is one of the necessary marks of this work area and the coordinator should have the relationships, information and resources to challenge the unit to make this commitment.

†Lay Ministry: A Strategy of Hope, prepared by The Metropolitan Associates of Philadelphia, 1972, pp. 77-78. Used with permission.

Meaningful involvement for the unit often begins with the commitment of the Christian Social Involvement coordinator.

*Working
with
Others*

The coordinator should be a team person who can delegate authority and use committees and task forces. The energies of other members and non-members must be applied and coordinated if the unit is to make an impact. She must work closely with the chairperson and the Committee for Church and Society of the Council on Ministries, of which she is a member, as well as with the Citizen Action chairperson of Church Women United. Her natural allies are social action leaders in other organizations and the community at large.

*Planning
in the
Unit*

One of the coordinator's primary responsibilities to plan with the other mission coordinators and the Committee on Program for a program which includes a strong emphasis on social concerns and action outreach. The program should offer opportunities for individual and group social action, social service, social protest and demonstration on local, national and international issues. Surveys to ascertain local needs are most helpful in planning.

The mission coordinator for Global Concerns has responsibilities which overlap with those of this office, so it is essential to establish a good working relationship in order to pool information and plan jointly. For example, an emphasis on international affairs is the responsibility of Christian Social Involvement while promoting an understanding of global concepts of mission rests with the coordinator of Christian Global Concerns. In these days of international conflict, the church is at the center of the storm in many countries. Church leaders who are also national leaders appear at international forums, such as the United Nations, or become involved in Washington, D.C., in discussions on the influence of United States foreign policy on the internal affairs of their nations.

The two coordinators can plan jointly for experiences which bring these realities to the unit, including the role of Persons-in-Mission in such times and circumstances. UNITED METHODIST WOMEN are there through the Women's Division as a part of the Board of Global Ministries. Understanding how we as global citizens are participating for good or ill in current political, social and economic issues is a basic need.

*Getting
It
Together*

It will be necessary for the coordinator of Christian Social Involvement to lead the unit in exploring the reasons for this participation. UNITED METHODIST WOMEN have given money through the Pledge to Missions to create programs and projects which in a matter of years or

even months are destroyed by a mistake in government policy or an ill-advised decision of a multinational corporation.

Through the church, we support programs which promote self-termination and development with justice for all people. Yet, as private citizens we sometimes uncritically purchase stock or consume the products of corporations which can be doing just the opposite. We applaud the church's mission outreach in a particular country, yet may send persons to Congress who annually vote millions of dollars to support a dictatorial regime that is snuffing out the freedom of that same people. Not only individuals but the corporate church, including the Board of Global Ministries, often acts in this contradictory fashion.

The coordinator for Christian Social Involvement has the opportunity to work with others to learn the meaning of the Bible's call for justice and liberation and our personal and corporate participation in things which either support or impede their realization. She can help members and the unit make the necessary connections between a profession of belief and subsequent behaviour.

*Social
Principles
As a Tool*

One of the basic tools of the mission coordinator is the social policy of The United Methodist Church. She should study the social policy statements of the Women's Division and make them known to the unit. She should do the same with the *Social Principles of the United Methodist Church* and the other social policies adopted each four years by the General Conference. Social statements develop and change over the years as understanding grows and changes, so she should study to be informed, remaining open to new perspectives.

*Focus
On
Objectives*

The coordinator assists the unit in expressing and setting objectives and priorities. She can poll the members for an expression of their concern. Working from the unit's objectives is a solid base for effective action. However, if people are avoiding issues, her responsibility is to see that they are faced.

*See
the
Whole*

While setting priorities for several months, a year or longer will provide a helpful focus for study and action, it can sometimes lead to neglect of other vital areas. Local programming, to be most effective, should include the whole range of social concerns so that the unit can shift priorities if and when the need arises.

*Joint
Action*

This is where the unit's involvement with other groups can be most useful. Interaction with persons and groups of various ages, races, religions and economic background

will keep the coordinator and the unit better informed. No one group can single-handedly take on the vast array of issues and opportunities.

Coalitions

Working in coalitions is essential. Sometimes it may be necessary for UNITED METHODIST WOMEN to take the initiative in establishing a coalition of concerned groups to work on a problem in common. A coalition is formed between persons or groups which can agree on a common goal and joint action to achieve it. Each group retains its own identity; this diversity gives strength to coalitions. Members of a coalition to get a better court system might not be able, because of opposite views, to work together on another issue.

Some hesitate to form or join coalitions because the other groups are "different from us" or "they never last." But Webster's dictionary defines a coalition as "a body formed by the coalescing of originally *distinct* elements," or as "a *temporary* alliance of *distinct* parties, persons, or states for *joint action*." Emphasis is placed on the words "temporary," "distinct" and "joint action."

Coalitions are of necessity temporary and should be allowed to die a natural death when they have achieved the joint goal originally agreed upon, unless a new common goal is envisioned. The coordinator will cultivate a working relationship with many groups and promote joint action from time to time with those with common concerns.

A church group must exercise caution in joining coalitions in order not to compromise its identity and commitments. By the same token, it should not expect its religious beliefs and practices to dominate those coalitions it does decide to join. If your group does not wish to be used, it goes without saying that you will not use others.

Other Groups

Other associations such as ecumenical groups, community councils and boards of various kinds are longer range. A unit, represented by the coordinator or a designated member, may decide to have membership in such groups for resource and information sharing as well as joint action. But UNITED METHODIST WOMEN should never hesitate to "strike out alone" if there is no one else to take on the task.

Realistic Budgeting

The work area must be adequately budgeted. The coordinator will demonstrate the need by presenting a realistic budget, based on projected programming. Some units have been inactive in this area, consequently having no need for a budget. Other units have never created a program budget and need to recognize its importance.

The coordinator will need to discuss her ideas based on projected programming with the Committee on Program and the Committee on Finance, so that the budget has their support. Postage, some long-distance telephoning, minimal printing or duplicating costs, purchase of resource materials, membership fees, if anticipated, are a few of the obvious needs.

Basic Resources

response pages on Christian Social Relations contain material which can be adapted for study or action guides.*

Social Principles of the United Methodist Church (pamphlet).*

Filmstrip and study guide on the 1976 statement of *Social Principles of the United Methodist Church*.*

Other material in this work area listed in the Service Center Catalogue and on the back cover of response, such as "Speaking for Children" and "A Cry for Bread and Justice."*

Legislative action tools such as "Register Citizen Opinion," a pamphlet listing Congressional contacts and committees, and IMPACT, an ecumenical action memo designed for social action leaders (110 Maryland Avenue, NE, Washington, D. C. 20002; \$5/year).

Program Examples

1. A general meeting program might focus on a state or national legislative or election issue, for instance, ratification of the *Equal Rights Amendment* if your state has not ratified or considering the positions of candidates in a local, state or national election and studying the platforms of the parties in a national election year. You could make a checklist drawn up from study of The United Methodist Church's statements of social principles, including the Women's Division's, and compare the positions of the candidates or the parties with this checklist. Resource persons could be invited. Advance study material could be circulated. Miniworkshops could be set up and members could specialize in a given area. The best education is self-education, so members should be involved in advance preparation. The "expert" should be used sparingly and wisely as a resource person rather than as the authority who simply talks while others listen.

2. Work as child advocates. Set up a task force to act as a resource, information and action channel in the area of children's rights. Get the facts. Coordinate with others. Legislative action—local, county or state—may become a first priority. What laws are being written in your city council or state legislature affecting children? Talk to legislators. Visit the capitol for an on-the-scene investigation. Keep members updated on legislative programs through a newsletter or action-alert of some kind. Testify at hearings.

*Available from the Service Center, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.

3. Create a coalition to investigate the use of Federal revenue sharing funds in your area. Write to your elected officials, mayor or governor to learn the amount of funds made available and what method is being used to allocate them. One group discovered that a major share of the funds allocated to their county was to be spent to build a new jail when other social programs were more needed. Demand public hearings on use of funds. Create publicity through radio, television and newspapers about how funds are being used. Propose alternatives for the use of the funds based on proven communal information and will share it with date, use consultants who know governmental information and will share it with the public. If necessary, join with others to file complaints or legal suits to stop undesired use of funds. Some groups have discovered that city revenue sharing funds were to be used for new streets and better lighting in the already affluent part of town, while the poorer areas were neglected. Joint action by concerned groups can stop such unjust practices.

4. Plan the above actions in such a way that members are expected to spend a certain amount of individual and group study on the Bible as they plan. Avoid "proof-texting" methods but search for the prophetic word and example.

Christian Global Concerns

The PURPOSE of the organized unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN requires that members develop an understanding of the global nature of the modern mission movement. Related to this understanding is the recognition that programs and policies of our national life have an influence on international needs and goals. As a part of the global community we are called to participate in national decision-making to the end that our witness in international mission will not be jeopardized. We are now, as we have been historically, concerned with ministries to women and ministries to children, and, through these, with ministry to all persons.

In our program, we should plan ways to enhance the understanding and acceptance of appropriate action and response to new areas of missionary activity both within and outside the church. This is in addition to becoming familiar with the areas where national and world mission programs are presently carried on, where missionaries and deaconesses are at work and where funds for concerns of the Women's Division are implemented.

The Coordinator of mission, this person shall seek to enable women to better understand and participate in the contemporary mission outreach of the church. She shall:

- maintain contact with the missionary thrust and outreach of the church through study and support;

- participate in and encourage attendance at district and conference mission events including the School of Christian Mission;
- plan with the Committee on Program to promote involvement of the local unit in mission studies; (Cooperate with others on the Council on Ministries who have concern for mission outreach and mission study, working toward the possibility of a churchwide mission study. If such avenues of cooperation do not seem open, it is essential that the local unit continue with mission studies;)
- work with the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Program to interpret the funding, program and responsibilities of the Women's Division;
- seek ways to involve members of the unit in understanding the work of the Board of Global Ministries for which the Women's Division has responsibility;
- seek ways to help women understand changing concepts of mission and changing roles of missionaries and deaconesses as well as the role of other persons in mission;
- interpret the various resources that cultivate mission awareness, including *response* and *New World Outlook*, to the local unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN;
- promote, along with other members of the mission team, cooperation with Church Women United and other ecumenical and community ventures;
- be a team person who can work well with others in the common mission task.

The mission coordinator for Christian Social Involvement has responsibilities which overlap creatively with those of this office, so it is essential to establish a good working relationship to pool information and plan joint strategies. For example, promoting an understanding of global concepts of mission rests with the Christian Global Concerns coordinator, while an emphasis on international affairs is the responsibility of Christian Social Involvement. In these days of international conflict, the church around the world is at the center of the storm. Church leaders who are also national leaders often appear at international forums such as the United Nations or become involved in Washington, D. C. in discussions of the influence of United States foreign policy on the internal affairs of their nations.

Understanding how we as global citizens are participating for good or ill in current political, social and economic issues is a basic need. The two

coordinators can plan jointly for experiences which will bring these realities home to the unit, including the role of Persons-in-Mission in such times and circumstances. UNITED METHODIST WOMEN are there through the Women's Division as a part of the Board of Global Ministries.

The mission coordinator is a member of

the Executive Committee
the Committee on Program
the Committee on Finance

Basic Resources

Mission Study

Opportunities for study abound in the unit and in the general church. Materials are in abundance. Organizing to implement study requires careful deliberation and may include cooperative planning as well as planning for study in the setting of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN. Mission study emphasizes change periodically, so plans for local mission study must be reviewed and revised annually.*

GOALS FOR EXCELLENCE IN STUDY

1. Use of a current approved mission study course and text.
2. A capable, responsible committee which makes detailed plans.
3. A leader who is prepared and who can give capable group leadership.
4. A minimum of six hours for the study group.
5. Attendance at each session by every member of the study group.
6. Preparation between sessions — reading the text and other assignments.
7. Class member participation — panels, discussion, informal drama, audiovisuals.
8. Action growing out of study.

Cooperative study by groups representing the general church membership is a worthy goal. Such planning must be done in advance and should include a representative of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN, the mission coordinator for Christian Global Concerns, working with the

work area chairperson or Commission on Missions. The unit may also wish to plan special study sessions for its membership since a single study opportunity may not meet the needs or interests of all persons. Such planning is the responsibility of the Committee on Program. Excellent preparation for local church mission study is provided annually at your conference School of Mission.†

Mission Interpreters

Planning for the itineration of world and national mission interpreters in an annual conference is the responsibility of the conference/district mission coordinator for Christian Global Concerns in cooperation with the conference/district missionary secretary. Detailed planning for the schedule and program of meetings should be undertaken jointly. Local church leaders can secure their own interpreters by direct contact with persons available as well as planning with and through district and conference leaders. Conference and district missionary leaders receive the Mission Interpreter's List which is issued three times a year.‡ For information on policy and suggestions for planning, see the leaflet, *I Witness: Inviting a Person-In-Mission to Your Church*.*

Missionaries on furlough may be available to itinerate in supporting conference if specific requests are made by the conference and if necessary details can be cleared. All general itineration is arranged by the Office of Field Interpretation in consultation with conference leaders.

Missionary Letters

The conference mission coordinator for Christian Global Concerns is the only person in the organization of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN who, upon request, may be placed on the mailing list to receive letters from the missionaries assigned to her annual conference. Hopefully, each conference organization will find a way to circulate excerpts from letters to local units. If your local unit has not been receiving such information, you may wish to write to your district or conference coordinator to encourage that this be done.

Only a limited number of leaders from local churches should ask to be placed on a missionary's mailing list and then only on a maximum of three lists.

Prayer Calendar

Produced annually, *The Prayer Calendar* contains a listing of the projects and programs of the Board of Global Ministries and the personnel involved in these programs. Names

†For more details on Schools of Mission, see pp. 70, 109-110.

‡Write to Office of Field Interpretation, 13th Floor, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027.

*Order from **The Service Center, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237. Free for postage.**

*Consult Service Center Catalogue. Available from **the Service Center, Board of Global Ministries, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.**

and addresses of the Board of Managers and of the staff of the Board of Global Ministries may be found in this publication. Following the people and programs with our prayers is one way in which we widen our concern and become involved personally in mission outreach.

Annual Report *Board of Global Ministries Annual Report: Usually appears as a special edition of the New World Outlook magazine in the spring of the year and as a separate enlarged edition.*

Report of Work of Women's Division *To Fulfill the Mission Task, a supplementary program help which gives an overview of the current work of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN through the Women's Division.*

Audiovisuals *"As Strong as the Land": This filmstrip, useful in interpreting the Women's Division emphasis on "Women in Rural Development," is typical of resources produced periodically in support of the total Women's Division program. Other films and filmstrips are produced at frequent intervals. Watch carefully for such information in response, New World Outlook, and the Service Center Catalogue.**

response *response: Pages on "Mission and Membership Development."*

Program Examples

1. Working with other churches in the area to itinerate a missionary on furlough.
2. Local unit pledge service — Offers opportunity to interpret how our funds and our gifts make mission possible locally and around the world.
3. Subgroup meetings using current mission studies for program.
4. Collecting materials for Vietnam-US Friendship program (Friendship People-to-People Aid to Vietnam, 235 East 49th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017).
5. Involvement in a local legislative issue whose purpose is compatible with PURPOSE of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN.

*Available from the Service Center, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM: THE COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM

The Committee on Program

vice-president, chairperson	secretary of program resources
president	chairperson, Committee on Membership
treasurer	representatives from subgroups
all mission coordinators	others named by Executive Committee

Membership In a unit with minimum (basic) structure, the Executive Committee may serve as the Committee on Program with the vice-president as chairperson.

Functions of Committee on Program The Committee on Program, with the vice-president as chairperson, is responsible for planning and recommending to the local unit such programs of study and action as will contribute to the fulfillment of the PURPOSE. This involves bringing together into total program the content projected above in each of the areas of mission emphasis. The committee shall guide in implementing these plans and evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

In more specific terms, the Committee on Program shall:

- Meet in the fall to discuss overall goals and objectives for the coming year (January through December);†
- Review carefully available resources such as the following before making plans for the year;

Program Resources Book and related resources
response and *New World Outlook*

Board of Global Ministries Annual Report

Materials related to special day observances
study materials

- Take into careful consideration in its program planning;

†See also "Steps in Stating Action Goals," pp. 74-79.

- churchwide plans for study and action and special day observances
- community action responsibilities
- special ecumenical observances (Church Women United, World Federation of Methodist Women, others)
- district and conference plans
- choosing of program and study leaders
- ways of maximum involvement of and participation by members
- Encourage program and study leaders in the unit and subgroups to adapt available resource materials to local needs and interests and give guidance for such adaptation;
- Plan for interpretation and promotion with Committee on Finance;
- Order supplementary resources as needed;
- Meet as frequently as necessary to accomplish its work.

MEETINGS

General Meetings

The constitution (Article 7) provides for each local unit to determine the number of meetings needed to implement the PURPOSE and to transact business. The bylaws (Article VI) spell out quarterly meetings of the total membership of the unit as a *minimum*. Many units meet more often than this. The time of meetings needs to be flexible enough to permit attendance and participation of both employed women and those not employed, of young women and those who are retired. Reasons for such general meetings include:

opportunities for worship and fellowship programs to implement the PURPOSE reports and business as needed (see bylaws, Article VI).

Subgroup Meetings

Information about the possibilities for participation in smaller groups within the unit, allowing for diversity of interests and concerns, is on pages 33-37.

EVALUATION

One ongoing essential phase of the work of the Committee on Program is that of regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in relation to the membership and the PURPOSE of the unit. Such eval-

uation not only shows trends and interests but provides the basis for future planning and programming. In addition to evaluation within the committee, encourage involvement of program and study class leaders and subgroup leaders in the evaluation of their part of the program. Several times during the year members of the unit should also be given the opportunity to evaluate its total program.

Some specific guidance for the Committee on Program to use in its evaluation could be the following—or develop your own!

Committee Evaluation of Program

Committee evaluation should be a regular part of the activity of a Committee on Program at intervals during the year.

A. Purpose

What was the purpose of the meetings, event or task force?

How did it fulfill the purpose?

Was it relevant?

In what ways did it meet needs?

Did members get what they expected? more? less?

In what ways is the group's overall purpose being fulfilled?

B. Content and Process

What did it do to capture interest?

How did it hold attention?

In what ways did the process help?

What degree of participation was there?

C. Learning

In what ways was it informative?

How was worship built in as a part of it?

To what decision making did it lead?

What new interests came to the foreground?

How do you identify a growing sense of community?

In what ways are you more aware of the needs of the world?

What further study will you do?

How did it stir you to action?

RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each mission coordinator and each other representative on the committee comes with a specific responsibility to channel into the committee the concerns of and potential for the area of work or the group she represents and with specific ideas and resources for integrating such knowledge and understanding into the total program of the unit. Each person should also come with an openness to the other phases of program being proposed and help the group become unified in its approach to program.

The vice-president, as chairperson, should come with a basic understanding of all phases of the unit. She should help the committee see the program in its wholeness and understand the responsibility of each member for planning and implementation. She brings the committee needed information about the local church calendar of study activities, as well as information about plans in the district and conference organizations that relate to the program in the local group.

The Vice-President

The vice-president shall actively assist the unit in fulfilling the PURPOSE. She shall cooperate with the president in understanding and interpreting all phases of the work. She shall perform the duties of the president in her absence.

The vice-president shall become informed through reading, study and participation in enrichment training opportunities. As chairperson of the Committee on Program, she shall guide the committee and the unit in its planning and implementing a comprehensive program of study/action/reflection to help achieve the PURPOSE.

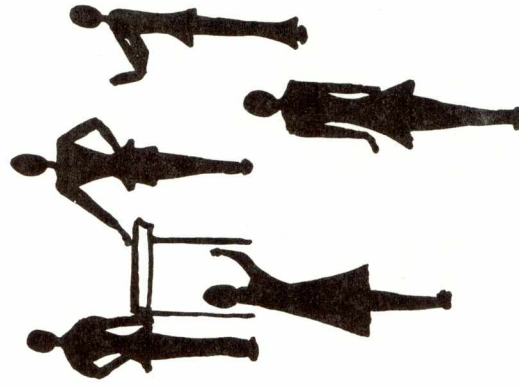
In units with minimum structure, the vice-president shall, with the Executive Committee, plan the implementation of a program of study/reflection/action. This program shall include the four mission emphases.

Working through the president of the unit, who is a member of the council, the vice-president shall encourage the Executive Committee or the Committee on Program to suggest ideas for and to cooperate with the plans of the Council on Ministries. This will enable the unit to assume its share of responsibility in the total church program.

Ecumenical Involvement

The vice-president shall coordinate the participation of the unit and/or its members in ecumenical activities within the community. She shall share with other elected leaders in promoting the cooperation of women of The United Methodist Church in the program of Church Women United and/or other ecumenical groups. She shall interpret the World Federation of Methodist Women* to the unit and urge its participation in activities involving local groups when possible.

The vice-president is a member of the Committee on Program (chairperson) the Executive Committee the Committee on Finance.



SUBGROUPS OF THE UNIT AS VEHICLES FOR PROGRAM

What Is A Subgroup?

A subgroup of the unit is any small grouping of women organized by the local unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN to help implement the PURPOSE. It may be created because the size of the unit warrants dividing the membership into "circles" or other formations for particular functions related to program and PURPOSE. It may be begun after a survey has identified special mission needs and particular mission interests among the women of the church that can best be met by organizing "satellites" for a stated function related to program and PURPOSE.

*See Handbook of the World Federation of Methodist Women.

Available from the Service Center, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.

*Advantages of
Smaller Groups
within the Unit*

Smaller groupings provide greater freedom for individual participation, nurture of membership, and development of leadership. They allow members to be involved in a significant way in one or more areas of their interest and concern, recognizing the variations within any unit.

*Starting
New
Subgroups*

New subgroups are started by action of the unit. Initiation may come out of a need recognized by the Executive Committee or recommended by the Program Committee and/or the Membership Committee. Concerned persons will undoubtedly take/accept responsibility for leadership in early stages. It is important that the Executive Committee and the unit take official action, come to agreements regarding timing, participation and goals, and establish the relationship to PURPOSE. Subgroups may be short-term, one-project groups or they may be ongoing.

*Relationship
to the
Unit*

The program of all subgroups, by whatever name they are called, should be supplementary to that of the unit. It may be a prelude to what is going to happen at a unit meeting, sparking an interest or giving an opportunity to prepare oneself on the issue or area around which the program will revolve. The program might be a follow-up of the unit meeting giving time to discuss the issue or event and plan some action. It may deal with some element of the PURPOSE not being dealt with elsewhere.

When organized, subgroups shall:

- help to accomplish the PURPOSE of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN;
- help to advance the total program of the Women's Division;
- be responsible to the Executive Committee, Committee on Program and/or Committee on Finance;
- keep structure at a minimum and emphasize function and total program involvement;
- supplement, enrich and increase effectiveness of other programs of the unit;
- channel funds through the local treasurer of the unit;
- recognize when goals have been accomplished and a task has been completed.

*What's
in a
Name?*

The name, "subgroup," is used only for the purpose of underscoring its supplementary nature to the total unit. Choose whatever name you think best describes the small groups your unit has created and which speaks best to the climate you are trying to create in the group—circle,

study group, quest group, action center, or any other name suited to your group. Subgroup is the designation; the name is up to you!

*Types of
Subgroups
(Small groups)*

Ongoing small groups give opportunity for in-depth study, closer experiences of community, and action involvement on a continuing basis. They call for a more long-term involvement than would probably be true in a task group. The content dealt with may change, but the membership remains the same for a given period of time.

Ongoing small groups may include

study groups—Bible study, mission study, issue-centered quest groups (in-depth search into theological concerns or current issues), *consciousness-raising groups* (focus will vary with the needs of the group), *circles* (program-centered or action-centered).

*Task Groups
(Short-term
Small Groups)*

Task Group is a term that is used with increasing frequency. A task group is characterized as a small group that

has a short-term assignment,

works on behalf of a larger group and is dismissed when the task is completed,

is appointed or elected to carry out a single responsibility,

may require in-depth study as a basis for formulating recommendations,

may or may not share in the implementations of its recommendations.

Task groups may include interest groups, action groups, work groups, and planning groups for seminar, retreat, workshop or action projects.

These task groups may be established at the beginning of the year by the Executive Committee as a result of an annual inventory of interests/needs. They may be an outgrowth of one of the ongoing groups. They may develop out of the needs and interests of members at any time. They may be organized around

interest in common activity

desire to pursue special interest

common work or vocational background

special job to be done.

Knowing when to terminate a group whose task is complete and doing it is as important as initiating new groups.

Rotation of Membership

The nature of the small groups will determine membership. Periodic rotation should be an established part of any continuing group. Whenever and wherever possible, changes should be made in the groups in order to

- provide a wider fellowship among women in the church,
- encourage loyalty to the unit as a whole,
- discourage a tendency for a group to become ingrown,
- allow for interest changes,
- recognize that needs of group members change,
- acknowledge completion of a project.

When subgroups (whatever their nature) are formed, the units should decide, on recommendation of the Executive Committee, how and when and why membership should rotate. If this kind of agreement has not been reached prior to small group formation, representative consultation and open negotiation ought to be the order of the day.

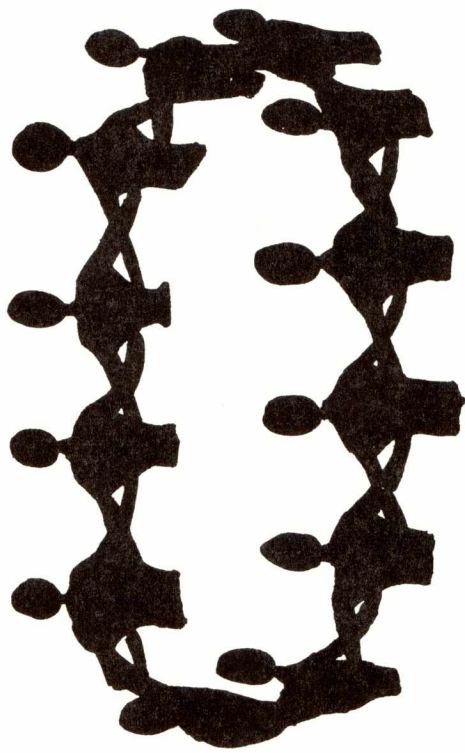
Evaluation of Group/Program

In every instance, the Executive Committee and Program Committee (representative as they are of the total unit and its small groups) should encourage an evaluation process; the small group should itself be helped to evaluate its effectiveness in relation to the PURPOSE. The Program Committee should evaluate program in the light of the PURPOSE and the established goals of the unit.

Support of Unit Budget Through Subgroups

There is only one treasurer in the local unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN and one treasury. Members of the local unit who choose to pledge and to channel pledge funds through subgroup to the unit need to be reminded that the funds belong to the unit and are subject to the decisions of the unit. Subgroups should not have separate bank accounts. Encouragement for this understanding to take place requires:

1. individual, personal contacts as well as group education
2. continual involvement of a representative from each subgroup in budget-making



3. regular interpretation of "where the money goes" and what it does and can do.[†]

Leaders of Subgroups

The leaders or representatives of all subgroups are members of the Executive Committee, the Committee on Program and the Committee on Finance. This provides for a close correlation of all elements of program and mission activity, for the interpretation of financial needs to the subgroups and for the channeling of funds from the subgroups to the treasurer of the unit.

[†]See also "The Subgroup and Finance," pp. 48.

STRUCTURE TO DO THE JOB

Basic Functions and Responsibilities

Whether it is operating on a minimum or an expanded structure, each unit has certain basic functions. They may be assigned to individuals, groups or committees. These include:

- goal setting
- program planning
- budget building and securing funds
- interpretation of need for and use of funds
- providing necessary resources
- developing and training leadership
- research and recruitment regarding potential membership
- cultivating membership and public relations
- evaluation and data reporting

Local Unit Freedoms

Each local unit has freedom to determine within the framework of the *Constitution and Bylaws* its patterns of leadership, to decide its number and kinds of groupings and to designate its schedules of meetings. Regardless of its size, each unit shall plan its program around and choose its structure to best implement the four *mission emphases* reflected in the PURPOSE: Christian Personhood, Supportive Community, Christian Social Involvement and Christian Global Concerns.[†] Whether the membership is 5 or 500, there is unity in a common PURPOSE and a common mission task.

The constitution (Article 7) provides for each local unit to determine the number of meetings needed to implement the PURPOSE and to transact business. The bylaws (Article VI) spell out quarterly meetings as a minimum, with flexibility as to the time of meetings. The unit will work in many forms. It will meet to transact business; it will meet in various subgroups. The final decision is with each local unit.

As part of a connective system, each local unit of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN accepts financial responsibility, with all other local units,

[†]See Chapter Two for more material on these emphases.

for undergirding the global ministries of the church through an annual Pledge to Missions. In turn, the Women's Division and the conference and district organizations of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN offer resources and materials to each local unit for program and leadership development and provide opportunities for involvement and channels of mission outreach beyond the local community.

Each local unit determines for itself whether it can best function with a minimum structure or with one of a variety of possible expanded structures (see bylaws, Article 1, Sections 3 and 4). The minimum structure is primarily for the small unit (25 or less). A minimum (basic) structure calls for the election of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, and a secretary of program resources, and the chairperson and members of the Committee on Nominations. Expanded structures offer many options.

MINIMUM (BASIC) STRUCTURE

Possible
Structural
Models

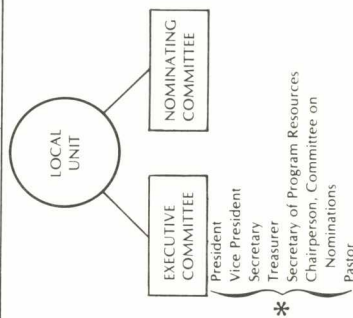
The minimum (basic) structure is designed primarily for the smaller local unit. Local unit bylaws (Article 1, Section 3) require only six officers for each unit: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, secretary of program resources and chairperson of the Committee on Nominations. (Members of the committee are also to be elected.) Where a minimum structure is used, responsibility for the four *mission emphases*, at the heart of the PURPOSE and program of any unit, is to be carried out or assigned by the Executive Committee.[†]

Should a unit decide to function with minimum structure it will be necessary for the Executive Committee to function in several other capacities. When it is functioning as the Executive Committee, the president presides; when it functions as the Committee on Program, the vice-president presides; when it functions as the Committee on Finance, the treasurer presides.

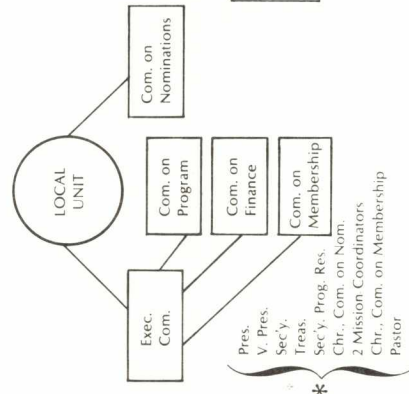
EXPANDED STRUCTURES

There are several options for expanded structures. Each includes the basic requirements as outlined in the *Constitution and Bylaws*. Each one also has built into it as central to it the four *mission emphases*. Within this framework, the options are many and up to the decision of the local unit. Possible examples are shown in the chart on page 41. Advantages of an expanded structure include: more opportunity for shared leadership, opportunity for greater emphasis on each of the four *mission emphases*, and

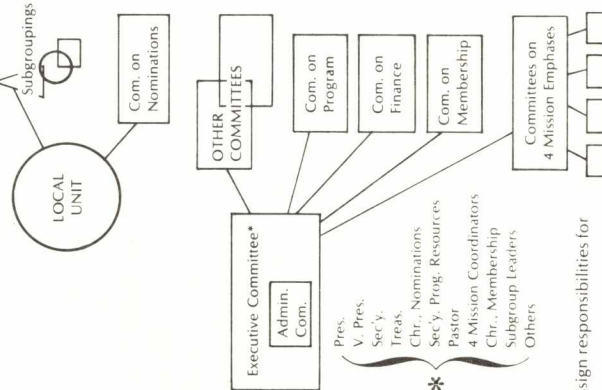
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
Minimum Structure (Basic Structure)



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
A Possible Expanded Structure



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
A Possible Expanded Structure



* The Executive Committee shall assume and/or assign responsibilities for all basic functions and areas of mission concerns.

[†]See Chapter Two for information on these responsibilities.

involvement of larger numbers of members without overloading any one person.

*Evaluating
Your Unit's
Structure*

As you seek the best structural model for your own unit, these are some questions you will want to ask on a regular ongoing basis:

1. Are all elements of program—*mission emphases*, involvement in related total church program, organizational detail—being adequately carried out?
2. Is leadership being shared among the membership of the unit or concentrated consistently among just the same four persons?
3. Are some persons overloaded with responsibility while others have little or none? If so, analyze the reasons for this.
4. If yours is a very small unit (5-25), how can the program best be accomplished without getting bogged down in structure?

*Relationships
with the
Local Church*

Members of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN are usually members of a local congregation. Each has accepted membership vows that express loyalty in terms of "your prayers, your presence, your gifts and your service." Membership in UNITED METHODIST WOMEN is an additional membership with further opportunities for worship, attendance, giving and participation. Our loyalties may seem divided when we become deeply involved in the program and activities of the local church, as well as those of the unit. As individuals we will be participating in the various phases of general church life and other events planned by and for members of the unit. The two are not unrelated, even though marked differences may exist.

As an organization, UNITED METHODIST WOMEN relates to the total congregation in multiple ways:

- most members of the unit are first of all members of the church;
- the pastor is a member of the Executive Committee;
- the president is a member of the governing bodies of the church (Charge Conference, Administrative Board, Council on Ministries) and reports according to established patterns;
- liaison relationships may be established between specific mission coordinators of the unit and work area chairpersons and commissions of the local church (for instance, Christian Global Concerns with work area on mission, Christian Social Involvement with Christian Social Concerns, etc.);

It is hoped that members of the unit will have an understanding of, concern for and loyalty to the total program of the local church.

Units of UNITED METHODIST WOMEN are authorized by the *Discipline* to secure funds and disburse them in accordance with the constitution and by the order of the group involved. These funds belong to these units. Budgets are prepared and approved annually by the unit and include pledges and other monies for the programs and responsibilities of the Women's Division of the general Board of Global Ministries, funds for local administration and membership development, and funds for local church and community programs (mission locally).† Units channel funds for the Women's Division through the local, district and conference treasurers of the organization (see constitution, Article 6, Funds).

†See Chapter Four for further details.