



December 2014

The Inner Circle

First United Methodist Church of Downers Grove

Focus on Women, Children & Youth

From its beginning, United Methodist Women has focused on ministries with women, children, and youth.

Sarah Circle 7:00pm <u>Room 213</u>	Mary Elizabeth Circle-1:00pm <u>Chapel Hall</u>	Rachel Circle 9:00am <u>Room 213</u>	Ruth Circle 12:45pm <u>Chapel Hall</u>	Miriam Circle 12:45pm <u>Various Homes</u>	Joanna Circle 11:00 a.m. <u>Chapel Hall</u>
Dec. 12/01	Dec. 12/03	Dec. 12/18	Dec. 12/18	Dec. 12/18	Dec. 12/21
Jan. 01/26	Jan. 01/28	Jan. 01/22	Jan. 01/22	Jan. 01/22	Jan. 01/18

A message from the President....

Dear UMW Sisters,

I just have to thank our Leadership Team's retiring Vice President Judy Bittikoffer for her 10 years of service!!! She has kept me on track these past 2 years and made sure that nothing fell through the cracks. As I remarked at our December meeting, we always knew that she was irreplaceable. Sure enough, it's true, as we don't have a Vice President for 2015 . . .

I would also like to thank LeAlice Briggs for her wonderful work as Secretary this past year. She did a terrific job of capturing all of the important facts at each meeting, then sent the minutes out with lightning speed!

And, we are grateful to have Becky Quirk taking over the secretarial role beginning in January. Becky went so far as to change her work schedule to be able to attend our monthly Leadership Team meeting!! We all look forward to getting to know her better.

Finally, I thank all of you for your enthusiastic support of, and involvement with, UMW in 2014. We have a strong group that's always willing to attend, work, and donate. I'm proud to be counted among you!

Have a blessed, beautiful Christmas, everyone.

Julie

Mary Elizabeth Circle—

mostly women of grown children—childcare provided upon request

Meets in Chapel Hall-4th Wednesday 1:00pm

What a joy our December 3rd meeting was with 17 members getting together to celebrate the Christmas season. Jean Bahler and Joan Ebersold provided beautiful decorations and a delicious blueberry graham cracker whipped cream dessert, fruit, nuts and hot drinks. Our program, given by Mary Lou Gordon and Joyce Novotny, was about Christmas ornaments. Several of our group brought an ornament that was special to them and told a story about what it meant to them. We also learned the history of the candy cane. How it came to be a Christmas symbol and what the stripes on it mean. We were each given a kit to make our own candy cane ornament for our tree. We collected 87 toys and 27 books for the PRC birthday bags. Joan Wilson's son-in-law gave very generously bats, balls, and sporting equipment. What a great collection we received. The monetary value of our collection is near \$800. We also signed Christmas cards for our members who aren't able to attend anymore and to send to missionaries. The basket was passed for Adult Daycare. We give them \$100 each December to purchase crafts or whatever they may need. We ended up singing Christmas carols with Marilyn Gillham on the piano and Ellie Fletcher leading the singing.

Our next meeting is January 28, 2015!

Circle Coordinator—Joan Van Order

Joanna Circle—young ladies in 6th through 12th grades

Meets in Chapel Hall - 3rd Sunday 11:00 am

We had 8 young ladies at our inaugural October meeting. We had a “get to know you” session, enjoyed a lovely cake made by Julie Stone, and brainstormed on what direction the circle should take.

We will meet December 21st to decorate cookies and enjoy some social time celebrating Christmas.

Circle Coordinator— Shelly Davenport and Julie Stone



Sarah Circle—mostly working women—no childcare available

Meets in the Room 213—4th Monday 7:00pm

We had a great turnout on Monday, December 1st with 15 women attending. Sharon Harmon started us off with a devotion and Lenore Pitstick shared a Response article about the current challenges of HIV around the world. Gretchen Shearer presented an interesting program on advent traditions of Germany, England, France, and Italy, and Lilian Ficht provided yummy German cookies, marzipan and stollen. It was a wonderful way to start off the advent season.

Our next meeting will be on January 26, 2015.

Circle Coordinator— Lenore Pitstick

Ruth Circle—women of all ages—childcare provided upon request **Meets in Chapel Hall- 4th Thursday 12:45 pm**

On November 20 Ruth Circle met in Chapel Hall with 5 members present. In the absence of Caroline, Leanne Rolfe led the meeting. Refreshments were served by Verla Boyle and Leslie Hillard. Leanne gave the devotions and the Response moment. Verla led the program entitled “Foundation For Welcome” taken from the 2014-2015 UMW Program book. Members also shared experiences of times they were welcomed and times they did not feel welcomed. Also discussed were ways we could be a welcoming circle, UMW and church. Verla also led a brief overview of the Charter for Racial Justice. We missed two of our circle sisters, Julie Stone and Shelly Davenport, who had scheduled surgeries for this week and we signed get well cards for both of them. Happy to say the surgeries went well for both of them.

Our next meeting is December 18 in Chapel Hall with a cookie exchange.

Verla Boyle

Circle Coordinator– Caroline Bertolino



Making the World a Better Place for Children

First Sunday in Advent

By Julie Taylor



Children received new backpacks at a special blessing of backpacks at West Nashville United Methodist Church.

Prayer:

Today begins Advent, O God, and we call on You to open our hearts to this first Sunday of the season ... a season not of Hallmark cards and department store sales, of red and white clad Santas and greenery hung in every space, of holiday parties and shimmering lights, but a season of reminder that the church year began with a teenage girl, donkey travel, barn lodging and a helpless baby.

May our minds see all that is around us draped in the context of materialism while our souls translate it into that which is immeasurably valuable, like joy and love and peace. On this day we pray for children. We pray for those long awaited and those suddenly blessing us. We pray for those who are loved and wanted and for those who are met with anxiety. Forgive us that we sometimes abstain from the hard work required to make this world a better place for all children. Forgive us for being caught up in our own selfish pursuits and not noticing that needs exist around us even if they are not the reality in our own home. Forgive us if we do not seek to do all we can to care for the children in our family, the children of our community, the children of our nation, the children of our world ... because they all belong to us and we to them.

From the Prayer Calendar:

We pray for Bethlehem Center in Spartanburg, S.C., Lester Domon, Elaine La Van, Tisha E. Turnbull, Scott Vickery and Tylie S. Waters.

Rachel Circle—mostly mother's of young children—childcare always provided
Meets in Rm. 213 - 4th Thursday 9:00 am

Rachel Circle had 4 members attend our November meeting. We finished the last installment of our study of the book, Love Does. Cindi Roselieb had attended a conference where Bob Goff and Donald Miller presented programs relating to their books that we have read over the past year. She was able to tell us all about the conference. Our December meeting will be our annual brunch.

Circle Coordinator— Stacey Ramsey

Miriam Circle— mostly women of grown children—meet in women's homes
Meets at various homes—4th Thursday 12:45pm

Ten of us gathered at the Miriam Circle meeting on November 20 at the home of Garland Cramer. This was a change of the planned venue for us, as Marj Froemke was originally going to host the meeting in her home - and then had the misfortune to fall, injure her knee and wind up with her leg having to be immobilized! We were fortunate that Garland stepped up to the plate and took over the hosting duties, as well as providing us all with a lovely HoneyCrisp apple pie for dessert. Many thanks, Garland - this made two months in a row for you to host the circle, and we do appreciate your generosity. And, Marj, we're glad you were able to come to the meeting, injured leg and all. As if her hosting duties were not enough, Garland also served as our speaker, making an extended Christian Personhood presentation. We always learn something from Garland's talks about Christian communities elsewhere in the world and about how better to serve as God's messengers in our daily lives. Her message was especially meaningful, coming just one week before our Thanksgiving celebrations.

Our next circle meeting will take place on December 18 at 12:45 pm in the private dining room at Oak Trace. We look forward to welcoming back former circle member Connie Ogdon, who will read us some excerpts from her book about the very interesting life she has led, living on three continents.

Co-Circle Coordinator— Frances Stone and Laural Briggs

Stay Connected! Keep in Touch!

Browse the United Methodist Women website - www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

UMW Mission Resources website: <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/umw/resources>

DGFUMC website: <http://www.dgfumc.org>

FUMCUMW website: <http://www.dgfumc.org/fellowship/umw>

UMC General Board of Church and Society Faith in Action website:

<http://www.umc-gbcs.org/site/c.frLJK2PKLqF/b.2798475/k.7A8F> Faith in Action.htm

Facebook: group is called [United Methodist Women of DGFUMC](#)—find us and ask to join, then invite your friends to join.

Aurora District Facebook group is called [Aurora District UMW—Illinois](#)—find us and ask to join, then invite your friends to join.



Purchase With a Purpose December 2014

Thank you everyone who has shopped, shared, worked at the table on Sundays, sorted gift cards and ordered. Your Purchase With a Purpose makes a difference in the lives of women and children everywhere.

If you need a last minute gift or stocking stuffer we continue to have Amazon, Home Depot, iTunes, Jewel, Kohl's, Meijer, Panera Bread, Speedway Gas, Starbuck's, Target, Ultra Foods, Walgreens, and Downers Grove Downtown Dollars ready to pick up at the table in the Parlor every Sunday!

Our last order of the year will be placed on December 14th and arrangements can be made for you to pick up your order in the church office during the week. Check and Carry of our regular cards and order pick up will continue through the holidays and on January 4th, 2015 we will resume ordertaking.

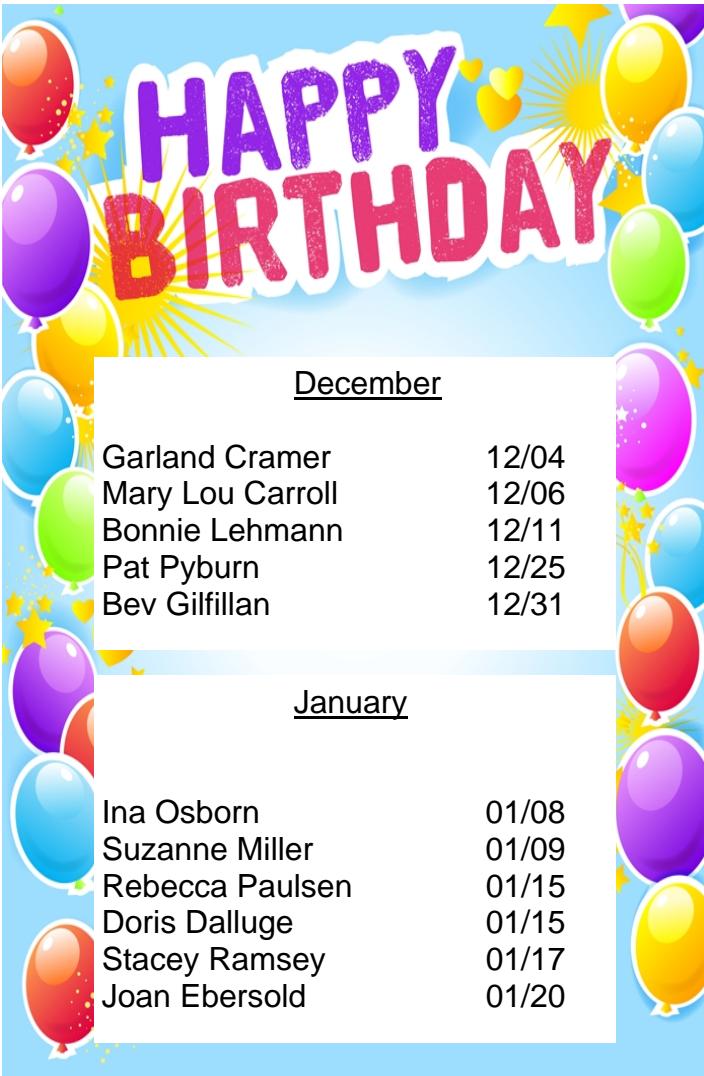
Kohl's is the only merchant that allows customers to pay their charge card bill with gift cards in \$25 (available every week) and \$100 denominations. When you receive your bill, order the cards you need on Sunday so that you'll be in time to pay your bill. You can pay it at the check out as well as customer service!

I continue to encourage you take advantage of the convenience of ordering online from home at www.MannaOrders.net. You can buy your usual gift cards and pick them up on Sunday or you can get certain specialty cards directly to your email address via MannaEscrip. You can also send someone else a gift via email. The list of MannaEscrip is at the PWP table and can be found online at www.MannaGroup.net. Ask Ina for an account at inamairi@mac.com.

Any regular Amazon shoppers could help raise money in two ways. Use AmazonSmile and choose an organization to benefit. I chose UPAVIM. Use the BenefitAPP to buy your Amazon gift cards to load onto your account and PWP earns money. Download the Benefit MobileAPP and register with First United Methodist Downers Grove, Purchase With A Purpose. You will need to set up your bank account for direct debit but once that is in place you can buy gift cards at any time and use your phone to pay in store or online. I have been using this APP at Target and there are a couple of things helpful to know, ask me!

These are convenient ways to buy gift cards without having to remember your check book on Sunday morning!

Again, thank you for your support of this fundraiser. Changing lives everywhere!



**God is good all the time—
All the time God is good**

- Rebecca Paulsen’s daughter, Hannah, needs healing prayers.
- Maribeth Schauert needs healing prayers.
- Ina Osborn’s grandchildren, Natalie and Jack, need healing prayers.
- Prayers for everyone in the world that they may know peace and love!

PWP Rotation

January—Ruth
 February—Mary Elizabeth
 March—Rachel
 April—Sarah
 May—Ruth and Mary Elizabeth
 June—Rachel and Sarah
 July—need volunteers please!
 August—need volunteers please!
 September—Ruth
 October—Mary Elizabeth
 November—Rachel
 December—Sarah

We took a free will offering at the Christmas Tea. After a motivating speech given by Leah Ostwald, the paint can was passed. We collected **\$261.67** to be given to Imagine No Malaria

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER
(mark your CALENDARS!)

Jan. 8	Leadership Team	9:00 a.m.
Jan. 16-18	Winter Mission u Camp Reynoldswood, Dixon, Il.	
Feb. 5	Leadership Team	9:00 a.m.
Feb. 7	Aurora District Training Faith UMC Orland Park	8:30 a.m.
Mar. 5	Leadership Team	9:00 a.m.
Mar. 23	General Meeting	7:00 p.m.