



Holston Conference United Methodist Women Mission Today Unit Criteria

Guidelines and Supplement Packet

Use this packet to better understand and successfully complete any of the twelve (12) required criteria from the twenty-five (25) requirements. Contact your local District Mission Coordinator: Education & Interpretation for more information.

The purpose of promoting a Mission Today Unit is to: Energize United Methodist Women to be more involved in mission through prayer, study and action; Allow United Methodist Women to understand where their money goes; Encourage the effective use of mission resources through United Methodist Women; and expand concepts of mission, including social justice as mission.

How Do We Become a Mission Today Unit? In order to be recognized as a United Methodist Women Mission Today Unit, the unit must:

- ***Complete a minimum of twelve criteria; including five marked with an asterisk (*)***
- ***Criterion #2 is not optional, and a minimum of***
- ***Three (3) items from Criterion #10 must be completed.***

Activities conducted between January 1st - December 1st of a given year will be recognized the following year at the Annual Meeting of the Holston Conference United Methodist Women and at the District United Methodist Women Annual Meeting.

GUIDELINES:

***1.** The "United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church." The Prayer Calendar is printed each year and can be ordered from the Mission Resource Center.

***2.** The local unit Pledge to Mission is the money contributed to help fulfill the Purpose of United Methodist Women. All local unit pledges are contributed to the conference United Methodist Women pledge. The conference United Methodist Women, in turn, pledges a specific amount to the United Methodist Women's national office for mission with women, children, and youth and retains a designated percent to be used for district and conference administration and membership development expenses.

*3. The United Methodist Women's Program Book is a theme-oriented resource guide that features Bible studies and interactive programs that and can be used independently to meet the UMW Purpose is adopted by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church as the official mission statement of United Methodist Women. helps put our faith, hope and love into action with a daily mission focus; highlights birthdays of people in mission & holidays; and has space to plan schedules. Each week features stunning photographs of United Methodist Women and Global Ministries projects and partners in the U.S. and around the world. The Prayer Calendar needs of your unit and/or circle. Special Programs including: A Pledge to Mission and A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial programs are also included. The Program Book is printed every year and can be ordered from the Mission Resource Center.

*4. United Methodist Women's Mission U events offer classes that provide opportunities for participants to grow spiritually and be in community with others working to put faith, hope, and love into action. Contact your district or conference Mission Coordinator for Education & Interpretation to learn what the studies are for each year. Mission U resources are published every year and can be ordered from the Mission Resource Center.

*5. United Methodist Women work to link spiritual growth, mission education, leadership development, service and advocacy in worship, community and mission work by integrating what matters and engaging in the social issues campaign. The social issues explore how gender, race and class differentials permeate our society. The Four Priority Justice Issues can be found online at www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/service-advocacy.

*6. United Methodist Women are focused on the four issue priorities, and their campaigns. Registered members receive periodic e-mail alerts to stay informed and to take action! Contact: United Methodist Women, 475 Riverside Dr., 15th Floor, New York, NY 10115 and/or sign up online at: www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/actionalerts.

*7. The district and/or the conference officers of the Holston Conference United Methodist Women have diverse backgrounds and knowledge about the Purpose and Vision of United Methodist Women. These women can serve as a resource for the local unit. Contact your district or conference leadership team for their availability to provide you with assistance and support.

*8. The Five Channels of Mission Giving provide opportunities for members to help empower and improve the lives of women, youth and children in the United States and around the world. The Five Channels of Mission Giving Brochure provides specific information about each channel and can be ordered from the Mission Resource Center.

*9. The Legacy Fund Endowment Campaign, launched in 2014, celebrates the legacy of the courageous women who founded this mission movement, as well as the legacy that

today's members will leave for future generations of United Methodist women and to create their legacy to carry the mission of faith, hope, love in action forward in the world for years to come. For more information about the Legacy Fund Endowment Campaign, visit online websites at: www.unitedmethodistwomen.org or email legacy150@unitedmethodistwomen.org.

***10. The unit must complete at least three (3) criteria from the Charter for Racial Justice.** Adopted by the 1980 General Conference of The United Methodist Church; the Charter for Racial Justice, in part states: "Because we believe, God is the Creator of all people and all are God's children in one family; we commit ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ in word and in deed and to struggle for the rights and the self-determination of every person and groups of persons."

a. Charter for Racial Justice <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/racialjusticecharter>

b. The Charter for Racial Justice provides eight specific opportunities for the local unit to grapple with the persistence of racial injustice at every level of our church and society. United Methodist Women commit ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ in word and in deed, and to struggle for the rights and the self-determination of every person and group of persons.

c. The United Methodist Women Tools for Leaders: Resources for Racial Justice is a collection of resources which the resource manual is available at <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/download-resources/racial-justice-tools-for-leaders.pdf>

d. The United Methodist Women Tools for Leaders: Resource for Racial Justice offers many ways to get involved in implementing the Charter for Racial Justice, including Bible studies, worship, programs, workshops, displays, issues and action ideas. The appendix section of the manual includes the United Methodist Church Resolutions related to Race; other United Methodist Women racial justice resources; and general Anti-Racist resources, plus more.

e. The purpose of the Reading Program is to better understand and participate in God's mission today, to increase sensitivity to all human beings, to explore contemporary issues, and to enhance and act on self-knowledge. The Tools for Leaders: Resources for Racial Justice identifies books suggested by United Methodist Women that have been featured as a part of the national Reading Program.

f. Within the local community there are other churches, agencies, organizations and civic groups who have a similar or likeminded mission as that of United Methodist Women. Building relationships and partnership strengthens the opportunity to fulfill our Purpose and to be in mission and to organize for the purpose of elevating racial justice.

g. From its beginnings, United Methodist Women have tried to build a community and social order without racial barriers, as shown in the resource; Racial Justice Timeline: Important Moments of Racial Justice History in the United States and United Methodist Women. Human rights for all people are one of the historic principles of United Methodist Women. Racial justice continues United Methodist Women's urgent call for study and action on the principles and goals of its vision. United Methodist Women seek to be in right relationship with one another and work together for the transformation of the church and world, following the teaching of Jesus Christ. allows the local unit to explore our biblical and theological roots for racial justice; to interpret them in our current realities; and to continue our faithful action for justice. is an ongoing focus of the United Methodist Women mission as members work to promote racial justice in the United States and around the world. Visit the website to download or order the Racial Justice Timeline: Important Moments of Racial Justice History in the United States and United Methodist Women. <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/racial-justice/history>

h. The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) was created by The United Methodist Church in 1968 to address the uncertainties as legalized racial segregation and separation were being dismantled in the church and society. Continuing its work today, GCORR provides Vital Conversations resources to facilitate meaningful conversations and activities related to basic concepts of race and racism. Vital Conversations on Race series with accompanying study guides can be access from <http://www.gcorr.org/series/vc1/>.

11. **Response** is the official magazine of United Methodist Women and is published by the national office. Topics and issues cover spiritual growth, mission outreach and reports on our local, national and international work. Featured items include: Bible studies, opportunities for spiritual growth and development, program suggestions, articles on where the Pledge to Mission money goes, and regular features such as "Bright Lights" and "Responsively Yours." The Response magazine is printed six times per year and can be ordered from the Mission Resource Center.

12. The Reading Program is a cherished United Methodist Women tradition that brings together members in mission as they explore, share and discuss the books. The books are divided into one of five categories: Education for Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Social Action and Spiritual Growth and are available for people of all ages and reading levels.
<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram>

13. The National Observance of Children's Sabbaths, sponsored by the Children's Defense Fund, is designated for the third weekend of each October. The weekend celebration unites faith communities to raise awareness of problems facing children and families in our nation and engages people of faith in immediate and long-term action to nurture, protect, and seek justice for children. For more information about the Children's Sabbaths Celebration, visit the website at:
www.childrensdefense.org/programs/faith-based/childrens-sabbath-celebration/#why

14. A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial is an opportunity for the members to reflect on the gospel of Christ and make an offering (separate from Pledge to Mission) that helps sustain ministry around the country and the world. In response to God's love and grace, offerings collected through A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial support worthy initiatives that relate to each year's mission focus. A Call to Prayer and Self Denial program is included in the Program Book which can be ordered from the Mission Resource Center.

15. A Pledge to Mission giving is the foundation for mission work through United Methodist Women. An individual Pledge to Mission is the amount each member decides is her share of the local unit's total budget. A Pledge to Mission program is included in the Program Book which can be ordered from the Mission Resource Center. (This local Pledge to Mission is separate from the district Pledge to Mission which supports the conference budget.)

16. A Penny and A Prayer is an avenue of mission giving that is designed to put prayer back in our giving. Members are asked to give one extra penny a day and a prayer for our work as United Methodist Women in missions. Members set aside a penny and give a prayer as an opportunity to reflect on the gospel of Christ and make an offering that helps sustain ministry around the country and the world. In response to God's love and grace, offerings collected through A Penny and A Prayer is a way of daily reminding us to take time to pray and offer up our gifts to God.

17. A Candle Burning ceremony is held in honor of a loved one through the local unit. Honorees may be anyone living or deceased whom the donor wishes to publicly recognize for a job well done or who has impacted the donor's life. A minimum donation of \$5.00 for each individual honored is given to missions. Funds received from candle burning do not take the place of the unit mission pledge but do go to mission giving. The link below is an example of a ceremony.

<https://www.sgaumc.org/files/websites/www/Candle+Burning.pdf>

18. United Methodist Women is not a social club—it is an organization of women who seek to know God more fully and participate in mission. We want to invite more women to join us. The Welcoming Event Toolkit available at <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/member-toolkit> is a resource for those who want to reach women who aren't involved in United Methodist Women. It will help you host welcoming events that engage potential and existing members and offer exciting and inspiring content and opportunities for learning and relationship building.

19. The Welcoming Event Toolkit is a helpful resource for engaging others with United Methodist Women.

20. The work of United Methodist Women is done by the faithful and committed woman of Holston Conference. Potential leaders are often identified through the submission of a Talent Bank Information for Prospective Leadership form. The form can be submitted by an individual and/or the local unit. Talent forms are available from your district leadership team members.

Transformational experiences happen when we are intentional about inviting individuals into a space and creating environments that appeal to those whom we seek to attract and engage. When we are creating positive experiences in which young women can make new friends, share, have fun and keep in touch creates a sense of safety and security that then allows them to connect their hearts, minds and identities with United Methodist Women.

21. Leadership development is essential to fulfilling the mission of United Methodist Women. Elected officers in each local unit are encouraged to participate each year in District led training.

22. Within the local community there are other churches, agencies, organizations and civic groups who have a similar or likeminded mission as that of United Methodist Women. Building relationships and partnership strengthens the opportunity to fulfill our Purpose and to be in mission and to organize for the purpose of working with woman, youth, and children in need of support and/or assistance.

23. There are times when the Holston Conference United Methodist Women and/or the District United Methodist Women and the local unit organize hands-on and other mission projects during the year. These mission projects are a collaborative effort for a non-United Methodist Church sponsored agency; but fulfills our Purpose of being in mission on behalf of woman, youth, and children in need of support and/or assistance specific to the position held. Opportunities for leadership development are offered throughout the year for those interested in serving and are currently serving.

24. Communications for United Methodist Women is basically through an electronic online hub, www.unitedmethodistwomen.org. Additional communication is also available to explore through other digital and print resources, including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, and Flickr. Visit each site at: facebook.com/UMWomen; twitter.com/UMWomen; pinterest.com/UMWomen; youtube.com/UMWomen; flickr.com/UMWomen; umwmissionresources.org.

25. United Methodist Women members across the country have inspiring stories to tell, beautiful prayers, poems and songs to share, as well as program and fundraising ideas to help us all put our faith, hope and love into action. United Methodist Women also have a rich history and legacy to preserve. Those stories can be shared at <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/mystory>. **United Methodist Women – Mission Resource Contact Information The e-store:**
<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/mission-resources>

Use this address to mail in orders United Methodist Women PO Box 742349 Atlanta, GA 30374-2349

Make checks payable to United Methodist Women

Customer Service

phone: 800-305-9857 fax: 770-280-0061 e-mail: cs@umwmissionresources.org

Hours of Operation

8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. EST Monday through Friday