

# Mission Coordinator for Membership, Nurture, & Outreach

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As the Mission Coordinator for Membership, Nurture, & Outreach you are in a position to be the face of hospitality within your UMW Unit. You can help guide your unit in growth, in love, and in support of all the women on your church and your community. Within this role, there are several key activities to undertake:

- ❖ Work with the Executive Committee to determine the needs of the membership, to enlist new members, and to recommend ways for inactive members to participate;
- ❖ Nurture the current membership and equip women in the church to support each other in leadership roles;
- ❖ Work with the Executive
- ❖ Committee to become a supportive community and to provide regular creative fellowship activities for the unit;
- ❖ Encourage the Unit to reach out to teens, young women, mothers, and working professional;
- ❖ Maintain an updated membership list and attendance record for each Unit meeting;
- ❖ Provide District leader with annual membership numbers, as well as the names of any individuals who passed away during the year.

## Guidelines for Counting the Membership

Membership in UNITED METHODIST WOMEN shall be open to any woman who indicates a desire to belong and to participate in the global mission of the church through the organization. The pastor(s) shall be an ex officio member of the local unit and its Executive Committee.<sup>1</sup>

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### How to Count Members

1. Count each woman who has expressed a desire to belong and participate.
2. Each woman is counted only once, regardless of the number of Subgroups and Circles she belongs to.  
**(Remember, membership is in a UNIT. Subgroups and Circles are optional)**
3. Appointed pastor(s) are counted as members of the UNITED METHODIST WOMEN. If the pastor serves more than one church, s/he is counted one time and by one unit only.
4. The wife of the pastor is not a member of the UNITED METHODIST WOMEN by virtue of being the spouse of the pastor. She must express a desire to belong and participate. Then, she joins the unit and is counted only once.
5. If a member moves away and joins another United Methodist Church, her membership in UNITED METHODIST WOMEN is usually transferred too. Then, she joins the unit of her new church. If no unit exists in the new church, she may remain on the membership roll in the unit of her previous church, and is counted as part of that unit membership.
6. Keep a membership roll. Enter the name, address, and telephone number of every woman who belongs and participates.
7. At the end of each calendar year, the membership roll should be updated. Names of deceased members and women who have discontinued their membership should be removed from the roll. All new members should be added.
8. If a woman asks that her name be removed from the membership roll, you must do so. She is not counted as a member that year.
9. New members are those who were not counted as members of the unit the previous year, and who express a desire to join and participate.
10. Updating the membership Record Book monthly would enable the process of an accurate membership count at the end of each year.

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<sup>1</sup> The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, paragraph 264.4

## **Why is the Membership Responsibility SO IMPORTANT?**

Membership numbers are declining...in many local units, in districts, and in conferences.

A greater percentage of members are senior adults. Much of our decline is due to the aging process and members dying.

We need to change if we want to attract new members because what we are doing NOW is not working.

Local unit membership chairs need to understand how critical it is that they work to attract new members on a continual basis to replenish the membership of the United Methodist Women.

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### **Local Unit Exercise**

This is a helpful exercise to go over with your local unit counterparts. To share enthusiasm about why we belong, we first must know why.

To know how to attract members, we must first look at ourselves:

- ❖ How did you become a member of UMW?
- ❖ Why are you a member today?
- ❖ What has kept you involved in UMW over the years when you had so many other things competing for your time?

Use the responses for this exercise to guide your plans for new member recruitment. Also consider taking time to invite women who are not part of your unit out for coffee or lunch to talk with them about their passions and interests for ministry. From there you may start a conversation about how UMW could be an opportunity for them to become involved.

## Tips for Recruiting New Members

### **INCREASE VISIBILITY (Establish a UMW presence in your local church)**

- Plan an all-church mission fair.
- Use and display United Methodist Women's resources.
- Let people know you ENJOY your membership in United Methodist Women.
- Display a United Methodist Women bulletin board at church and update it monthly.
- Use your church website to promote United Methodist Women's activities, update frequently.
- Create a Facebook page (or other social media accounts) for your United Methodist Women's unit to promote missions, activities, and upcoming events.
- Observe an annual United Methodist Women Day in the church worship service.
- Plan and promote United Methodist Women celebrations such as a Call to Prayer and Self-Denial, United Methodist Women Sunday, and the Children's Sabbath.
- Put up a United Methodist Women suggestion box.
- Use EVERY opportunity to invite ALL women to join United Methodist Women.
- Do an inventory of women to discover their interest for circles and subgroups. Do follow-up with telephone calls.
- Promote a United Methodist Women's Woman of the Month.

### **NURTURE**

- Praise United Methodist Women members to their friends.
- Focus on QUALITY programming.
- Use the Program Book for United Methodist Women.
- Keep the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women in mind when doing study, planning, or organizing.
- Be flexible in your meeting times.
- Remember employed women's schedules, including weekend work.
- Promote the Reading Program.
- Affirm the gifts that young women bring.
- Listen to young women, don't treat them as "tokens."
- Use PERSONAL contact with persons as much as possible.
- Give compliments for a job well done, and assurance in times of doubt.
- Develop ways to affirm and celebrate ALL women.
- Say "Thank You" at EVERY opportunity.
- Provide child care at all meetings and advertise it.
- Provide elder care at all meetings and advertise it.
- Offer scholarships to Mission Encounter and encourage young women to attend.
- Challenge EVERY woman in some positive way.

## **OUTREACH**

- Contact EVERY woman in the church.
- Write or call women who do not respond to invitations.
- Visit potential members in their homes and invite them personally to a special event or meeting of the United Methodist Women.
- Invite women from your place of employment to a unit meeting.
- Visit women who have experienced a sorrow or a joy.
- Seek out visitors and new members in the congregation and get to know their interests.
- Reflect United Methodist Women's commitment to multicultural and multiracial inclusiveness.
- Give a subscription to Response Magazine.
- Promote a non-member as United Methodist Women's Woman of the Month.
- Plan a United Methodist Women's retreat experience.
- Be open to NEW IDEAS.
- Recruit in communities and places where there are young women: at work sites, day care centers, college campuses, community centers, etc.
- Schedule all meetings in facilities that are easily accessible to persons with disabling conditions.

## How to Nurture Membership & Create a Welcoming Unit

### NURTURE:

*Verb:* Care for and encourage the growth or development of

*Noun:* The process of caring for and encouraging the growth or development of someone or something.

Nurturing members is key to the growth of United Methodist Women, and is a good place to start membership recruitment. When you create an environment that nurtures current members, you create an environment that is welcoming to new members.

The theme for the Arlington District UMW this year is **“Welcomed by God. Welcoming All.”** As we think about what this means for our local units, here are some tips that can help enhance your nurturing and create a space that is welcoming to all<sup>2</sup>:

- **Prepare name tags for every woman.** Don't assume everyone knows everyone. Name tags will give faces names. Using names builds community.
- **Be a “self-appointed” host at every meeting** to create an at-home feeling for all how attend-longtime and new members.
- **Keep attendance records** so no one can drop out without being noticed. When individuals miss several meetings, they are often hesitant to return.
- **Check on every absentee with a visit or a phone call** to find out why she was absent. This shows you care and can also uncover needs she may have that United Methodist Women can meet.
- **Check on or call members who have stopped attending** to invite them back. This can stimulate renewed interest.
- **Visit, call, and send cards to members who are going through difficult times** to let them know you care. Remember, some women who are recuperating from illness or dealing with an emerging or temporary disability may be hesitant to re-enter your unit or circle.
- **Some women like to share their talents.** Find out what they like to do, then invite them to lead programs, help plan events, make refreshments or phone calls, or do whatever best uses their gifts and talents.
- **Express encouragement and appreciation.** Thanks should be done person-to-person and within meetings of your whole unit. A smile or word of appreciation or encouragement goes a long way. Send or present Gift-to-Mission thank you cards as a way of honoring members.
- **Celebrate members' joys.**
- **Be sensitive to individual situations,** such as workload and family events or crises, which may make it difficult for a woman to participate or follow through on a task.
- **Provide programs, resources, and opportunities to be in mission that are challenging** and stimulating. These will motivate woman to develop their fullest potential.
- **Take every opportunity to talk personally with each member,** one-on-one. Learn each's interest, talents, concerns, and favorite activities. Listen actively to show you care.
- **Select a fellowship friend to welcome each new member** and help her get acquainted with others in your circle or unit.
- **Introduce and bring together members of various ages, interest, and needs.** Don't just introduce them and leave. Rather, stay with them for a meeting.
- Let it be known you like what you are doing as a member of United Methodist Women.  
**Enthusiasm is contagious!**

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<sup>2</sup> Tips provided by Ressie Mae Bass as part of *Response* magazine.

## Suggested Calendar for Membership Emphasis

JANUARY	<p><b>Special Emphasis: UMW Sunday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launch membership campaign</li><li>• Set-up UMW display</li><li>• Set-up a UMW bulletin board</li><li>• Give UMW recognition pins</li><li>• Promote district/conference events</li></ul>
FEBRUARY	<p><b>Membership Emphasis: Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contact new church members</li><li>• Visitation to prospective members</li><li>• Visitation to shut-in/inactive members</li><li>• Promote district/conference events</li><li>• Prepare UMW bulletin board in church</li></ul>
MARCH	<p><b>Membership Emphasis: Young Women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contact new church members</li><li>• Host event geared toward young women, involved young women who may/may not be UMW members in the planning</li><li>• Visitation to prospective members</li><li>• Visitation to shut-in/inactive members</li><li>• Promote district/conference events</li></ul>
APRIL	<p><b>Membership Emphasis: Married Women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan special event for married women, such as a guest speaker on marriage</li><li>• Contact new church members</li><li>• Visitation to prospective members</li><li>• Visitation to shut-in/inactive members</li><li>• Promote district/conference events</li></ul>
MAY	<p><b>Membership Emphasis: Teens and College-Aged Women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan a mother/daughter event</li><li>• Contact new church members</li><li>• Visitation to prospective members</li><li>• Visitation to shut-in/inactive members</li><li>• Promote district/conference events</li></ul>
JUNE	<p><b>Membership Emphasis: Prayer for Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Host a prayer breakfast to reflect and prepare for new ministry</li><li>• Promote Mission Encounter</li></ul>

- JULY
- Membership Emphasis: Prayer for Growth**
- Host a picnic for UMW members and their families
  - Visitation to prospective members
  - Visitation to shut-in/inactive members
  - Promote district/conference events

- AUGUST
- Membership Emphasis: Shut-in's**
- Consider hosting a meeting or small gathering at the home of a shut-in
  - Visitation to prospective members
  - Visitation to shut-in/inactive members
  - Promote district/conference events

- SEPTEMBER
- Membership Emphasis: Widows & Women with Young Children**
- Host a mom's night out for mothers with young children
  - Visitation to prospective members
  - Visitation to shut-in/inactive members
  - Promote district/conference events

- OCTOBER
- Membership Emphasis: Divorced Women**
- Host a ladies night out for all women of the church at a local restaurant
  - Visitation to prospective members
  - Visitation to shut-in/inactive members
  - Promote district/conference events

- NOVEMBER
- Membership Emphasis: Evaluation of Membership Efforts**
- Create membership action plan for coming year
  - Visitation to shut-in/inactive members
  - Promote district/conference events

- DECEMBER
- Membership Emphasis: Shut-in's**
- Host Christmas celebration
  - Visitation to shut-in/inactive members
  - Promote district/conference events