

In the process of being updated-02/01/2005

Financial File III

Financial File III Some Initial Comments

United Methodist Women and its predecessor groups have participated in many worthy projects, and still do. However, over the years we have observed and documented an underlying philosophy in many of the programs and policies of the Women's Division that is more secular than sacred, and often very politically partisan.

We have to ask if the Women's Division has changed the scope and program of United Methodist Women until it no longer resembles the organization held in the hearts of the majority of the women of the church.

It is understandable that women want to trust the organization of United Methodist women to represent them well. Their continuing confidence is born out of the past history of the organization to which their mothers and grandmothers belonged. Their generous gifts underscore that confidence and keep the organization strong. They believe United Methodist Women does great good through excellent, longstanding programs and through new worthwhile projects. They are right—to a degree.

For years, other women within the church have questioned much within the programs and policies of the Women's Division. They have found that the good that is accomplished by some division programs does not compensate for the many programs that are misguided, unbalanced, overtly politically partisan, and at times, antithetical to their understanding of the gospel.

God calls us as Christian women to remain faithful to Scriptural Christianity and to our Doctrinal Standards, and to exercise responsible stewardship. If we are to do this, we must be discerning, and we must accept only that which authenticates our Christian faith.

The time has come for United Methodist women of faith to speak out and to reclaim their organization. Unquestioning trust has gotten us where we are, and only responsible action will get us out of this spiritual malaise.

May the sincere faith of our spiritual mothers and grandmothers live in our hearts as we pray and work for the reform of United Methodist Women—our organization.

Faye Short, President
RENEW Network, 9/02

Financial File III

INTRODUCTION

WHY DID WE MAKE THIS STUDY?

This packet was developed because of the widespread concern of United Methodist women about the programs, policies and spending patterns of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global ministries. Specifically, RENEW has conducted this study in response to the request of women for this type of analysis. Because the funds collected by the Women's Division represent the energies of thousands upon thousands of women, translated into POWER within the United Methodist Church and beyond, it is important to look at how that power is used and how it reflects the actual concerns of many of the women who provide the funds.

Our purpose is to present the findings of our study in as clear and careful a manner as possible to assist women in the United Methodist Church to come to their own conclusions regarding the confidence they will place in the stewardship and leadership of the Women's Division.

We want to be forthright about our own presuppositions. We bring to our evaluation our commitment to orthodox Christian theology and an evangelical and biblically-based understanding of faith. Directors and Women's Division staff are sent around the world to see the real needs of struggling peoples. We fear that they have missed an important reality. From Latin America, to Africa, to Asia; it is a vital, biblically-based and evangelistic understanding of the Christian faith which is on the cutting edge of church growth and the transformation of individuals and societies. Ironically, evangelical women who are a part of United Methodist Women feel like this orthodox and scripturally-based Christianity is dismissed by the Women's Division as out-of-step or outdated in its application to modern culture.

The Women's Division is heavily involved in political advocacy. The narrow, politically partisan approach of the Women's Division to many social and political issues reflects a left-leaning, socialist, feminist understanding that is not held by most women within the church.

We have, at times, brought a different emphasis in political and social witness to our analysis. For example, we are generally supportive of free political and economic systems. We believe such systems provide, in practice, the best protection against the oppression, impoverishment, and injustice which the God of the Old and New Testaments so strongly condemns. We hold that the Church must speak to societal issues as the Church, which, on many issues, may not necessarily be in sync with the secular society.

Much that we read in the literature of the Women's Division is critical, and justifiably so, of those power structures in the world that refuse to recognize or allow new appropriate structures to arise to meet the needs of people, but there seems to be an overreaction--even paranoia--when new "wine skins" are needed for our own United Methodist structure. We offer this packet as a tool for women who are looking for new wine skins.

What are our conclusions? We cannot in good conscience commend undesignated giving to the Women's Division. We find that the good that is accomplished by some Division programs does not compensate for the responsibility we would face for supporting other programs which we believe are misguided, unbalanced, overly political, and, at times, antithetical to our understanding of the Gospel. We believe that there are a myriad of other agencies and groups--both within and outside the United Methodist Church--to which our offerings can be given with confidence and enthusiasm. We can, however, comfortably recommend that women give designated gifts, such as Supplementary Gifts, to specific projects within the framework of United Methodist Women.

But most importantly, we believe that these are judgements for which each woman and each local unit are, before God, responsible.

Not everyone will agree with the choice to designate, rather than to give to undesignated Pledge to Mission. We do not believe that different judgments should break the bond of fellowship among women. We are called to honest discussion and study; we seek to respect the informed consciences of one another. We affirm our call to love one another, even when we disagree. This is our prayer for all who study this material.

HOW TO USE THESE MATERIALS

This packet has been compiled to provide United Methodist women with information that examines the programs, policies and spending patterns of the Women's Division. Our purpose is to assist women in determining models and standards for responsible stewardship-- standards that are consistent with their theology.

Here are some guidelines for the use of this financial file:

1. Approach this study prayerfully and sensitively.

It is important to examine our motives and to keep central the desire to be good stewards of God's gifts to us. Sensitivity to our local setting and the persons within it is essential. These materials need to be used with care and as appropriate to your circumstances. Concerns in the area of stewardship (like all other concerns) should always be expressed with love and respect for others and with courtesy.

RENEW has created a resource to assist in a Call for Prayer and Fasting to undergird the Call for Reform of the Women's Division. You may obtain this resource through the RENEW office: P.O. Box 889, Cornelia, GA 30531, 706/778-4812; renew1@hemc.net.

2. Study these materials.

This collection of resources provides you with some basics from which to work. You will also want to request and study the Women's Division Financial Disclosure and Treasurer's Report which you may obtain by writing to the Treasurer, Women's Division, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. (These documents usually run at least one year behind, so you will want to request the most current reports.)

As you read Response magazine, UMW program resources and mission studies, you will want to do so with discernment toward the philosophical and theological ideology that directs those programs. RENEW regularly prepares reviews of UMW program materials, and you may want to request those reviews as an additional resource.

3. Feel comfortable with your right to question patterns of giving.

First of all, we have a call to responsible stewardship. For evangelicals that stewardship will reflect fidelity to orthodox, scriptural Christianity.

The UMW Financial Handbook indicates that there are three categories of the local unit's budget: Pledge to Mission, Administration and Membership Development (A&MD), and Mission Locally. The handbook states, "There is no 'right' proportion of the budget for each of the three categories. Tradition in many areas has suggested that 60% of the budget be for the Pledge to Mission. Some units will find this percentage too small, while others may occasionally find it too large. The final decision rests with the local unit itself." (emphasis added)

As a member of United Methodist Women, you have a right to share your views within your local UMW group. The women of your unit have the right and the freedom to determine how their funds are disbursed and ultimately spent.

4. Consider alternative models for communicating concern.

How your concerns are presented will greatly depend upon the composition of your UMW group. If the evangelical perspective is strongly represented, and the women agree that reform of the Women's Division in the areas of program, policy and spending is needed, there will likely be a cohesive spirit in dealing with the question of undesignated giving.

If the group is mixed with some women expressing deep loyalty to the current policies of the Women's Division, while others question them, a committee with representation from both viewpoints might be formed. The advantage of designated and undesignated giving could be discussed. The committee could then make recommendations regarding the disbursement of funds in a way which would represent both perspectives, allowing the women of the entire unit to select programs or projects for support from these recommendations. This would require love and respect for one another and a willingness to cooperate.

At times the evangelical perspective may be represented by a minority of group members. In this case, the formation of a subgroup to address the concerns and program needs of evangelicals might be a workable solution. The UMW Handbook provides information on the formation of subgroups, and says of them, "Subgroups enrich and increase the effectiveness of other programs of the unit." Some of the subgroup restrictions defined in the handbook might have to be altered to fit this particular subgroup category, and each local unit can determine the criteria by which subgroups will function within the UMW guidelines. (If there can be a "Sophia Circle," why not a RENEW Circle?)

As an inclusive organization, UMW groups should desire to include women who hold to an evangelical viewpoint. As evangelical women who desire to be a part of the total program of the local UMW, it will be important to talk openly and honestly with the UMW leadership and unit members about the formation of a subgroup and the guidelines acceptable for it.

If the evangelical viewpoint is represented in a unit by only a few or by a single individual, the approach might be to request an opportunity to present the concerns about Women's Division programs, undesignated giving and some of the information contained in this file. If that opportunity is given, a forthright, sensitive presentation could help the other women to understand the reason for concern. If such an opportunity to make a formal presentation is not possible or feasible, regular sincere communication of your viewpoint, done with Christian charity, can go a long way toward having a positive influence.

Should your unit decide to designate part or all of their funds for a specific project through Supplemental Giving or Advance Special channels, you will want to request notification from the Women's Division if the project is fully funded or no longer active, so that you can select another project.

5. Don't hesitate to speak out beyond your local unit.

If you are acquainted with other United Methodist Women or with UMW groups in UMC Churches in your area, you may want to share the information you have with them, inviting them to pray with you and to be a part of a wider effort for reform beyond that expressed by yourself or by your UMW group.

While many individuals and UMW groups have written to the Women's Division over the years to express their concerns, most have found the response to be unsatisfactory and often demeaning of their concerns. However, it is always appropriate to send the Deputy General

Secretary of the Women's Division a letter outlining your grievances in a courteous, yet firm, manner. The address is: Women's Division, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

District UMW officers are the closest elected leaders of the organization of United Methodist Women. As such, these Christian women are usually concerned about the women in their district who are members of local UMW units. Therefore, a good first step is to contact the District UMW president, or committee, and share your concerns with them.

Your district officer(s) may want to bring the Conference UMW president or another representative of the Women's Division when meeting with you. If you do not feel ready for this, be sure you define, in advance, the terms of the first meeting. If it is suggested that others come also, ask that an expanded meeting be held after the initial meeting with the district president or district officers.

Your purpose in meeting with your district officer(s) is to show appreciation for their service to UMW and to express concerns about the direction of the Women's Division and to enlist their support for reform and accountability.

You will also want to inform your Conference UMW president of your concerns and solicit the support of the conference team for reform of the Women's Division. You may want to send an initial letter, or request a meeting after you have contacted your district UMW president or whole district team. If such a meeting takes place, show appreciation for the work of the Conference UMW committee in behalf of United Methodist Women. Express your concerns clearly and respectfully. Solicit understanding and support.

It is also appropriate to write to Women's Division directors who are elected to represent United Methodist Women at the Division level. You should be able to obtain the address of the director nearest you by calling 212/870-3600 or 212/870-3745.

6. Help your minister, district superintendent and bishop fulfill their pastoral responsibilities.

The Book of Discipline reminds us that the pastor is a member of the local UMW unit and of its executive committee, that the district superintendent is a member of the district organization and of its executive committee, and that the resident bishop is a member of the conference organization of United Methodist Women and of its executive committee. Therefore, solicit the pastor's support and counsel, honoring his or her spiritual leadership by informing your pastor of actions you as an individual, or as a UMW group, plan to take. It would be in order to send a letter to your district superintendent and your bishop outlining your concerns and planned action.

The district superintendent and resident bishop would be an important persons to receive a copy of any correspondence which you might send to your District or Conference UMW or to the Women's Division. Ask your district superintendent and bishop to support your effort for accountability and renewal.

Some pastors, district superintendents and bishops are uncomfortable with trends within the Women's Division, but feel hesitant to challenge or question women. They may appreciate your leadership. On the other hand, your pastor may get pressure from his or her district superintendent or bishop if your unit starts raising questions. Be prepared to be supportive of your pastor and to insist that the women can take responsibility for their decisions. There may be those cases when the pastor, district superintendent or bishop endorse the programs and policies of the Women's Division without reservation and would question your open disagreement with those programs and policies. Be confident of your right as a United Methodist woman to express your theological perspective, and to voice any concerns you may have.

7. Recognize that you may face opposition and rejection.

In most cases, not everyone will agree with your perspective, nor will you necessarily receive a totally receptive hearing as you endeavor courteously to express your concerns.

Try not to take any rebuff that you might receive personally. Keep your perspective on the issues at hand. Realize that your desire for renewal and accountability within the framework of scriptural, orthodox Christianity is valid and important. Focus on issues, not personalities.

It may encourage you to know that the UMW Financial Handbook (2001-2004) states on Page 8: "Membership in United Methodist Women is voluntary and is based upon each individual woman's commitment to the PURPOSE of the organization. For most members, making a Pledge to Mission to her unit, whether local or district, is a way of supporting the organization and expressing her commitment to mission. However, a pledge or financial gift is not a prerequisite for membership." (emphasis added)

Proceeding with a prayerful and sensitive attitude in all that you attempt to do will go a long way toward making success possible. Endeavoring to work within a fixed structure and to determine proper timing is not an easy task. Remember, God gives all of us the freedom to choose. Remain faithful to your convictions.

8. Contact the RENEW Network if you have questions.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this financial file, or desire to make comments or to communicate with the RENEW Network, contact us at:

RENEW Network
P.O. Box 889, Cornelia, GA 30531
706/778-4812
renew1@hemc.net

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN - MONEY, POWER, AND STEWARDSHIP

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." (Luke 12:48, NIV)

The Women's Division is arguably the most powerful agency within our church. Thanks to the generosity of thousands of United Methodist Women over the decades, it has assets of over \$150 million. It has an annual income of over \$30 million. It has its own Board of Directors, elected through a very tightly controlled line of movement. Its approximately 110 staffers operate out of offices in New York City, Washington, D.C. and at least 10 national regional sites.

But, it is virtually autonomous. When it merged with our church's mission board nearly 30 years ago, its independence was preserved. This was meant to safeguard the Women's Division as a ministry governed by women. But instead this agency became a free agent largely unaccountable to the governing structures of United Methodism. Under the leadership of staff and directors who endorse a liberal theological and social agenda, the Women's Division has not been reluctant in using its money and power to affect the policies and programs of the United Methodist Church.

With nearly one million members of United Methodist Women, the Women's Division claims to be one of the biggest membership organizations for women in the country. It routinely speaks and operates on behalf of these women, the vast majority of whom are unaware of the real agenda of the New York-based Women's Division.

The agenda of the Women's Division can be identified through its programs, policies, in its associations, and ultimately through its spending. While "Our Basis for Concern" documents the first three of these measuring criteria, this section deals with financial stewardship.

Many of the programs the Women's Division supports financially are deserving programs. Some are long-standing institutions that are supported largely through designated Supplemental Giving, such as the various Wesley and Bethlehem community centers. Others are stateside or overseas properties and ministries that receive funds from Undesignated Pledge to Mission. While some of these projects may need scrutiny to determine how the liberal agenda of the Women's Division has affected their program, many of these institutions continue to share Christ and assist the local populace with required social services and appropriate political advocacy.

Controversial Grants

The most questionable area of giving comes under the category of grants. How does one evaluate these grants? It's clearly a mixed bag. Many of the grants are excellent and would receive the endorsement of evangelical women. At the same time, some funds go to groups about which Christians will entertain sincere disagreements, either regarding the issues involved or the strategies used. Some of the grants are very disturbing, especially given their ideological commitment. Some of these grant recipients are among the most radical that comprise and influence the religious Left. (The appendix to this section lists some of these controversial grant recipients.)

Out of the entire financial disclosure document, these grants represent those over which the Women's Division has complete discretion. We can say that they clearly reflect the choices of the division directors (guided by the paid staff), rather than donors. While they total a small portion of the total Women's Division expenditures, they offer a revealing picture of division concerns and priorities. They also reveal the political and theological assumptions which influence more traditional charitable and social service grants made from composite funds.

Do These Controversial Grants Really Matter?

Many United Methodist women disagree with these grants. When they express that disagreement, they are frequently told that these are such small amounts of money that it's really no big deal. They are told that these grants represent a tiny portion of their gift and that other good work will suffer if funds are withheld.

But are these grants so insignificant? These grants may represent significant portions of income for questionable groups, providing essential support and encouragement to their work. Three or four thousand dollars may be a small part of the Women's Division budget, but it may also be a very large grant to the recipient organization. Similarly, it may also seem a very large grant to the original donors in local units who give sacrificially to Pledge to Missions. These grants in turn influence other Women's Division programs, the work of other parts of the UM Church, and, indeed, groups beyond the United Methodist Church. Women's Division grants extend a church "blessing" to groups. These are then able to use the name of the United Methodist Church to gain entrée, respectability and additional funds elsewhere. Evangelical United Methodist women will need to evaluate carefully these groups and the priority concerns they represent against their own priorities and values. And some will want to discover avenues of giving--within and outside the Women's Division--which are free of radical encumbrances.

Most disturbing of all is the fact that these controversial grants almost certainly illustrate the ideologies which undergird the division's huge educational programs (Response, mission studies, Schools of Christian Mission, National Seminars, training workshops, Quadrennial Assembly, etc.) which require thousands of dollars. These grants represent priorities reflected in the Women's Division's own programs--and in the entire mission program of the church through the General Board of Global Ministries.

Checking the Source

The most comprehensive look at the Women's Division expenditures is found in the Financial Disclosure and Treasurer's Report of the Women's Division. You may obtain the most current reports (that usually run one to two years arrears) by writing: Ms. Connie Takamine, Treasurer, Women's Division, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

Every grant made by the Women's Division is listed in the Financial Disclosure. This is an essential tool in conducting an in-depth study of division finances. Nevertheless, this resource has some weaknesses, including the following:

1. Addresses of groups are omitted, making it difficult for most readers to obtain further information.

2. Descriptions of grant recipients are often quite vague and fail to identify the radical agenda of the program or institution.

3. Sources of income for specific grants are not clear. For example, it is often impossible to tell whether a grant is a Supplementary Gift which a local unit decides to give to a particular recipient or whether it comes from the general division appropriations.

Practicing Faithful Stewardship

Sincere Christian women will conscientiously disagree with one another about stands taken and groups funded by the Women's Division of the UMC. We do not want to tell any unit or individual woman how to think or what to do. We do want to equip women with alternative perspectives and information to make up their own minds. We do encourage faithful stewardship and challenge the women of the church to "put their money where their heart is." We urge you to obtain the Women's Division's Financial Disclosure and Treasurer's Report and study them for yourselves. We encourage you to write directly to organizations about which you have questions to get their information first hand, or to research them on the internet. (See "Questions to Ask" in the pink section for guidelines in writing for information.) As you evaluate the various groups, ask how this group furthers the Kingdom of God. Is the work biblically rooted and compatible with Christian understandings of human nature? Is political advocacy responsible, fair and non-partisan? Are a variety of responsible Christian views represented.

Remember, too, that among the problematic groups there is a great deal of variation.

Objections might be categorized as follows:

1. The work does not concern the church. This work is narrowly political, without any discernible relation to any institutional, verbal or otherwise explicit witness for Christ.

2. The programs are one-sided. This work is not only political, but also partisan. The points of view being advanced have a legitimate place in democratic debate, and many UMs might support them, but many others would not.

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3. The overwhelming majority of United Methodists would disapprove. The points of view being advocated are radical, extremist or unrepresentative of the informed consciences of most church members.

4. No United Methodist should support such a group. The points of view being advocated are antithetical to our Christian theology or social values.

Finally, share your findings with others. You may discover some outstanding ministries supported by the Women's Division, and you may discover some highly objectionable causes. You may also know of ministries not assisted by the Women's Division that are deserving. We hope you will share such information with RENEW and with other women's groups. And finally, do not hesitate to communicate your questions, comments, praises and criticisms to the Women's Division directly. That is what the Call for Reform is all about--calling the Women's Division to accountability and reform in all areas of ministry including programs, policies and spending.

APPENDIX

MONEY, POWER & STEWARDSHIP

Financial Research of Projects

Selected from the Women's Division 2000 Financial Disclosure

Asia Pacific Center for Justice and Peace \$3,500 - Headquartered in United Methodist Building in Washington, D.C. Professes to advocate human rights in the Asian Pacific rim. Focuses on the U.S. military presence in Japan, the Philippines and South Korea as a cause of "violence" against women, children and the environment. The Center was to "empower" people to end the U.S. military presence. It also is concerned about the International Monetary Fund and the advocacy of "free market" economics, which it claims hurt the poor. The Center opposes National Missile Defense for the United States and its Asian allies. It has criticized the U.S. for not signing the International Landmine Ban Treaty. Its attitude towards communist North Korea is generally uncritical as it blames the U.S. for hindering the unification of the Koreas.

Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) \$6,000 - ACORN says it is committed to "winning power" for low and moderate-income people who are under

attack from "the right" and ignored even by other "progressives." Its organizers are "on the streets" every day to mobilize the poor for "social change." ACORN helped to found the United Labor Unions in 1979. It is trying to form a progressive radio and television network. ACORN opposes U.S. military spending in favor of "social spending." ACORN opposes Welfare Reform.

Besides organizing in the inner city, ACORN also maintains a Washington lobby office. Generally ACORN strives to keep the Democratic Party leaning to the political left, while opposing Republican initiatives.

Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League \$2,000 - This group is a regional environmental group based in North Carolina that advocates "environmental democracy" and "social justice." It opposes nuclear power and favors greater federal government regulation of industry, especially utilities, to achieve clean water and air. It urges utilities to abandon reliance on fossil fuels. It also opposes clear cutting of forests and highway construction. It opposes commercial logging and road building in national forests. It targets the medical industry and its handling of medical waste products.

Bread and Roses Cultural Project \$1,500 - Bread and Roses is the cultural project of New York's Health and Human Service Union. It organizes lunchtime drama, music and poetry programs. Special emphasis is given to programs that interpret trade union history while generating new artistic expression. Bread and Roses is taking its exhibitions and programs beyond New York across the country.

California Council of Churches \$5,000 - In 2001 the openly lesbian Gwynne Guibord of the predominantly homosexual Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) was elected president of the Council. The MCC has belonged to the Council since 1997. The council represents 19 denominations at the state capital, mostly on social issues. In 2000 the Council unsuccessfully opposed Proposition 22, which banned same-sex unions in California. The Council has also lobbied against capital punishment and opposed organized voluntary prayer in public schools.

Campaign for Labor Rights \$5,000 - For more than 15 years this group has been "turning the slogans of international labor solidarity into concrete action." It mobilizes grassroots opposition in the U.S. against overseas sweatshops. It opposes free trade agreements such as NAFTA and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Its national co-coordinator is Trim Bissel, a former fugitive from the FBI who served prison time for his activities in the radical Weathermen Organization. The Campaign works with leftist groups such as the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, a one-time U.S.-based front for the now defunct Marxist guerrilla insurrection in El Salvador.

Center for Constitutional Rights \$3,000 - It is a legal action center that is opposed to the "deep-seated mean-spiritedness" of the "radical right" as embodied by Republican Congressional leaders. It supports abortion and homosexual rights causes. It helped "artist" Karen Finley, otherwise known as the "chocolate lady," successfully sue the National Endowment for the Arts for funding of her live performances, which include her smearing chocolate over her nude body to illustrate the oppression of the patriarchy. The Center also advocates the "decolonization" of Puerto Rico.

Center for Democratic Renewal \$5,000 - The Center's mission is to fight "hate" groups. These include not only genuine hate groups, such as the Klan, but also pro-life groups and Christian organizations that wish to heal homosexuals. The Center is devoted to "unmasking the Right," which includes portraying mainstream conservative and Christian organizations as allies of fringe extremist groups such as Aryan Nation or Nazis.

Center for Economic Justice \$1,500 - The Center wants to "strengthen international grassroots movements to counter corporate-driven globalization and to promote just alternatives." It believes that the Third World is poor because the West is rich, and it wishes to rectify this "unequal distribution of power." It wants to fight free-trade policies, "corporate domination," and U.S. foreign economic policy, all of which are part of the "newest war against the poor."

Center for Health, Environment and Justice \$1,000 - This group fights for "environmental justice" through community organizing and "empowerment." It monitors and opposes corporate and government polluting of the environment. It works for greater

governmental regulation to protect the environment. It helped to pressure McDonald's to stop using Styrofoam. It especially opposes chemical waste landfills.

Center for New Community \$1,000 - This Center is dedicated to fighting "racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, and other forms of bigotry." From this description, it would appear the Center might equate disapproval of homosexual practice with racial prejudice. The Center condemns advocates of immigration law enforcement as racist.

Center for Women Policy Studies \$27,500 - The Center challenges "patriarchal family structures" that allegedly perpetuate women's "lower social, economic and political status." It opposes the "fatherhood" movement and government efforts to promote heterosexual marriage as a solution to single-mother family poverty. According to the Center, the "assumption that children need discipline from fathers carries a veiled threat and reflects the notion that violence is appropriate." It wants fatherhood and motherhood to be "role-specific" rather than "gender-specific."

Center of Concern \$350 - The Center is originally a liberal Catholic organization that seeks to identify the "root causes" of poverty and human suffering. It supports "grassroots justice efforts." It supports feminist issues and has supported military disarmament by the U.S. It actively promoted the "Jubilee 2000" campaign to cancel all Third World debt to Western banks and governments. It participated in the 2001 UN conference on racism that targeted the U.S. and Israel and the main human rights abusers in the world.

Central America/Latin American Working Group \$2,000 - This group, which is a coalition of liberal-controlled religious denominations, is a strident critic of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America. It supported leftist insurgencies against U.S.-backed governments during the 1980's. It routinely opposes a U.S. military presence in Latin America in the Caribbean. Currently it is a critic of the U.S.-backed war against narcotics trafficking in Colombia. The Working Group also defends Fidel Castro's government in Cuba and has refuted U.S. complaints about Castro's creation of biological weapons.

Children's Defense Fund \$8,000 - This is a liberal education and lobby group that wants a larger federal government role in controlling the welfare system in this country. It stridently opposed welfare reform legislation. Generally it criticizes any reduction or reform of social welfare spending as conservative indifference towards the poor. It opposes U.S. military spending as theft from social welfare spending. It regularly joins in coalitions with a wide array of liberal interest groups, including pro-homosexual advocacy groups.

Church Women United \$37,535 - A coalition of mainline Protestants, Jewish groups and liberal Catholics. It regularly lobbies on Capitol Hill on behalf of liberal political initiatives, such as opposing U.S. military spending, increasing environmental regulation, enhancing federal government control over social welfare programs, homosexual rights and abortion rights. It has endorsed conferences and publications that advocate "Re-Imagining" feminist theology, which seeks to lift up feminine deities in place of the traditional biblical "patriarchal" deity.

Citizens Project \$11,000 - This group is based in Colorado to oppose conservative Christian organizations, especially those that successfully passed an "anti-gay" statewide ballot initiative that opposed special legal recognition for homosexuality. Persons who disagree with homosexual practice are labeled as "extremists" by the Project. It also opposes government vouchers for religious schools. It opposes the display of the Ten Commandments in public schools.

Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras \$2,000 - This is a coalition of labor groups and religious organizations that endeavor to promote the rights of laborers at industrial facilities in Mexico along the U.S. border. It challenges the corporate leadership, helps to organize employees into unions and organizes boycotts against companies that are believed to be exploiting the workers. It opposes international free trade agreements.

Coalition on Human Needs \$2,500 - This group was founded in the 1980's to resist President Reagan's proposals to consolidate welfare block grants for the states. This idea was later largely implemented under President Clinton. This coalition wants the federal government to have the prime responsibility for welfare and has opposed welfare reform. It opposes tax cuts and any partial privatization of social security.

Community Food Security Coalition \$1,000 - This group works to ensure "affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food for all people at all times." It wants a food production system that is regionally based and grounded in the principles of "justice,

democracy, and sustainability." It works for food production systems that are free of chemicals, environmentally sensitive and that deliver food locally rather than long distance. It lobbies for increased federal funding for small farm programs. It opposes large farm, "industrial agriculture."

Ecumenical Child Care Network \$2,000 - This group, which is originally a component of the National Council of Churches opposed the nomination of U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft. It endorsed the Million Mom March in support for more gun control. Its primary focus is in helping congregations develop child care programs. It also has an advocacy arm that supports increased federal government involvement in children's programs.

Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean \$1,000 - This program advocates "justice and liberation" in the Latin America and the Caribbean. It opposes "neo-liberal" (i.e. free market) economic policies as promoted by the U.S., World Bank and IMF. It opposes the U.S. war against terrorism as an act of "militarization." In the 1980's it was favorably disposed towards the Marxist guerrilla movements of Central and Latin America. It faults the U.S. for much of Latin America's problems.

Fifty Years is Enough \$4,500 - This group opposes "globalization" and the policies of the World Bank and the IMF. It helps to organize protest demonstrations at meetings of these banks. It opposes free market and free trade economic policies as a burden to the poor. To protect the environment it opposes the construction of large dams. It wants cancellation of all Third World debt to Western banks.

Friends Committee on National Legislation \$2,000 - This is a pacifist Quaker lobby group that opposes U.S. defense spending and U.S. military initiatives, including the U.S. war against terrorism. It advocates socialized medicine and abolition of all capital punishment. It opposes any oil drilling in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. It opposed President Bush's tax cuts.

Institute for Women's Policy Research \$2,500 - This group opposes Welfare Reform and federal "pro-marriage" programs that encourage single parents to marry. It supports the United Nation's CEDAW treaty, which is an international women's bill of rights that critics say espouses radical feminist initiatives. It opposes any privatization of Social Security.

International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund \$4,000 - This group promotes the enforcement of labor rights internationally through public education and mobilization, research, litigation, legislation, and collaboration with labor, government and business groups. It files lawsuits against U.S. firms accusing them of complicity in human rights abuses by nations where those firms operate.

International Indian Treaty Council \$3,000 - This group promotes the rights of "indigenous peoples." It opposes oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It supports the release of Indian activist Leonard Peltier, who killed two FBI agents. It fights for the removal of Indian mascot names for athletic teams. Seeks to have indigenous tribes recognized as sovereign entities by international organizations.

Jubilee 2000 \$4,000 - This was an international campaign of protest and advocacy to persuade Western governments and lending institutions to cancel all debt by Third World debtor nations in the year 2000. There was some debt reduction but not a complete cancellation.

Kairos Theater Troupes of Washington Square UM Church \$1,500 - This theater company is the self-proclaimed product of a "revolutionary Christian community." As a "progressive" theater, it promotes "social justice, peace and nonviolence." Washington Street United Methodist Church is a "Reconciling" pro-homosexuality congregation.

Kensington Welfare Human Rights Union \$1,500 - This group is a chapter of the National Welfare Rights Union and a partner of the Labor Party. It also is an affiliate of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Workers. It believes that the 1996 Welfare Reform Act was a violation of human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It organized street protests around this theme. Five of its protesters were arrested during President Bush's visit to the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights \$2,000 - This group favors homosexual rights legislation and affirmative action programs while opposing the appointment of conservative judges to federal courts. It opposes capital punishment. Members of this coalition include trade unions, religious groups, feminist groups, and homosexual organizations.

National Coalition Against the Death Penalty \$1,500 - This group lobbies against all capital punishment. It criticized President Bush for the Justice Department decision to seek the death penalty for September 11 terrorism accomplice Zacarias Moussaoui. It has called the incarceration of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who killed a Philadelphia policeman, "racist."

National Coalition for Police Accountability \$1,500 - This organization is a group of religious, community, legal groups and "progressive" law enforcement representatives working to restrict police powers and prosecute police officers who are deemed to have violated civil rights. It is involved in "public education," community organizing, legislation, litigation, and promotion of "empowered independent oversight."

National Committee on Pay Equity \$3,500 - This is a coalition of labor unions, feminist groups, religious groups and legal associations who want federal legislation to compel businesses to increase salaries for professions in which women are predominant.

National Farm Worker Ministry \$6,000 - This group helps organize farm workers to overcome their "powerlessness and achieve equality, freedom and justice." It encourages the unionization of farm workers and organizes boycotts against firms that are deemed to be complicit in the exploitation of farm workers. It is currently backing boycotts of Taco Bell, Mt. Oliver Pickles, Pictsweet Products, and Flav-R-Pac.

National Labor Committee \$1,000 - This group is focused on defending the rights of overseas workers, especially those who work for U.S.-based companies. It exposes what it deems to be human rights abuses by U.S. companies operating in poor countries. It organizes boycotts and demonstrations against firms like Wal-Mart that use cheap foreign labor. During the Cold War this group helped to organize U.S. unions to oppose U.S. foreign policy in Central America.

National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice \$1,500 - This is a coalition of religious groups that push for government regulations that will help low wage workers and for their unionization. It supports boycotts and organizes demonstrations against corporations deemed to be exploiting laborers. Sometimes committee leaders are arrested at demonstrations. It supports legislation to increase the federal minimum wage. It supports looser immigration laws to allow for more immigrant workers.

Navajo Uranium Miner Project \$1,500 - This is a published photographic history of Navajo uranium miners. The project was administered by Tufts University

National Council of Churches \$61,000 - The NCC is comprised of over 30 mostly Protestant denominations. Its advocacy of left-wing political causes and frequent theological ambiguity, along with its lack of connection at the local church level, has led to its dramatic decline in influence. It may be poised on the verge of bankruptcy. Specific grants went to the NCC's Commission on International Affairs, its Commission on Justice, Liberation and Human Fulfillment, its Division of Church and Society and the NCC's Washington Lobby Office. All of these offices are involved in promoting the NCC's controversial political stances.

National Organization of Women Legal Defense Fund \$2,500 - This feminist organization is involved in promoting abortion rights and homosexual rights, including adoptions by same-sex parents. It opposes the nomination of conservative judges to federal courts. It opposes Welfare Reform.

Older Women's League \$6,000 - This group is a self-proclaimed advocate for women over 40 years of age. It opposes all discrimination, including that based on "sexual orientation" or "personal lifestyle." It advocates socialized medicine. It opposes any privatization of social security. It also supports abortion rights.

Precious Peace, Religion and History in Guatemala \$1,000 - This is a film based on a book by United Methodist missionary and liberation theology advocate Paul Jeffrey about the Guatemalan civil war between the government and Marxist guerillas. He works against an "international economic system that manufactures poverty and injustice for the majority." During the 1980's Jeffrey was a strong supporter of the Marxist Sandinista government in Nicaragua, where he served.

Project Equality \$2,500 - This group advocates full diversity in the workplace, including persons of different sexual orientations. It urges its supporters to pressure companies to change their employment practices. It offers advanced diversity training and affirmative action advocacy.

Interhemispheric Resource Center Religion and Labor Conference \$2,500 - This group opposes the "militarization" of U.S. foreign policy under President Bush, as orchestrated

by the "ideologues" of America's "new right" who aim to promote "U.S. supremacy." According to it, the "most immediate threat to peace and security in the Pacific is rogue officials in the Pentagon and their unilateralist and belligerent military posture." It wants to make the U.S. a more "responsible" member of the global community.

Southwest Organizing Project \$1,000 - This group's mission is to "empower the disenfranchised in the southwest to realize racial and gender equality and social and economic justice." It opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that created free trade among Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. It supports bilingual public education programs. It opposes nuclear weapons facilities. "Environmental justice" is one of its main goals.

The Employment Project \$1,500 - This group works for an "economically just society in which the earth's resources are equitably distributed." It asks the question about the free enterprise system: "Is it right to trust income distribution to such an unreliable and unjust process?" It opposes welfare reform. It advocates government-mandated elimination of overtime pay to create more jobs. It supports a guaranteed income for all persons and government guaranteed employment for all persons.

Young Women's Grail Network \$2,000 - This group seeks to bring women together for social justice and spiritual growth. Its members define themselves as womanist (black feminist), mujerista (Hispanic liberationist), eco-feminist, biblical liberationist, Christian, Buddhist, among others. It seeks to explore "woman-defined theologies." Originally Catholic, this group has become more "inclusive" of other spiritualities.

Mississippi Workers Center for Human Rights \$2,000 - This is an advocacy group for low-wage, non-union workers. It conducts litigation against companies accused of employment discrimination. It opposed President Bush's nomination of Judge Timothy Pickering to a federal court because he was too conservative.

Washington Office on Africa \$11,000 - This is a Washington-based lobby group that advocates increased U.S. aid for African countries. It opposes "fast-trade" legislation that would facilitate free trade agreements. It supports the International Landmine Treaty, which the U.S. under several presidents has opposed. It supports the cancellation of debts by African countries to Western lending organizations.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom \$1,500 - This group opposes most U.S. military programs, including a missile defense system for the U.S. It opposes capital punishment. It opposes the U.S. war against terrorism. It supports more power for the United Nations. It advocates on behalf of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women.

Women's Theological Center \$3,000 - This group's mission is to "nourish women's spiritual leadership and communities for liberation movements." Through workshops and conferences it seeks to integrate women's spiritual values and the "political realities" of their lives.

World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Women \$34,153 - This is an international group of Methodist women's organizations that sometimes speaks to political issues. It urged the United States, for example, to give more financial support to the United Nations. Financial File III, 9/02

FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP RENEW RECOMMENDS DESIGNATED GIVING

As indicated at the beginning of this study, RENEW cannot in good conscience commend undesignated giving to the United Methodist Women's Division. We find that the good that is accomplished by some Division programs does not compensate for the responsibility we would face for supporting other programs which we believe are misguided, unbalanced, overly political, and, at times, antithetical to our understanding of the Gospel.

There are other agencies and groups--both within and outside the United Methodist Church--to which we can give with good conscience, putting our money where our hearts are. We fully

recognize that each local women's group must make their own decision regarding designated giving. To decide to designate requires added effort on the part of the local group to determine which projects they want to support. It is important to keep the mission focus broad, encompassing local, national and international projects. Making this decision will mean that the local UMW may not receive the recognition to which they are accustomed through the district and conference UMW organization. This is a bold stand, requiring diligence and commitment. But we believe it is essential if we are to be faithful in our stewardship, the fruit of which touches lives for good or ill.

Some Helpful Resources

As indicated in an earlier section, you will want to write to the Women's Division treasurer, Connie Takamine, (Women's Division, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115, ctakamin@gbgm-umc.org), and request a copy of the latest Women's Division **Financial Disclosure and Women's Division Treasurer's Report**. These reports run at least a year behind. A new Financial Disclosure is available in the spring and the Report of the Treasurer is available in the fall. However, when you write, just request the latest of each of these reports, and then request new ones at the appropriate times in the future. You will also want to request a copy of the **Mission Opportunities handbook**, which contains appropriations for the following year, and is available after the fall board of directors meeting, which usually takes place in October.

Beyond the Undesignated Pledge to Mission, United Methodist Women have traditionally been encouraged to give through Supplemental Giving opportunities. Some conferences have a quarterly Supplemental Giving emphasis that includes projects within the conference that are approved by the Women's Division for Supplemental Giving. While the UMW Financial Handbook for 2001-2004 indicated that United Methodist Women are discouraged from giving through Advance Specials, there appears to be a change in this policy. The Women's Division Treasurer has stated that "All Advance programs and projects are eligible for Supplementary Giving." It is our understanding that this also includes projects coming under UMCOR. The "**Questions to Ask—Of Mission Projects/Programs**" section of this file will provide helpful information for exploring Advance projects you are not fully acquainted with.

The Mission Opportunities appropriation handbook mentioned above will provide you with all the National and International Programs and Projects funded by the Women's Division, if you prefer to stay within this category.

The following catalogs will provide a listing of all Advance and UMCOR projects and programs:

- **Partnership in Missions** (Stock #1745) – Annual catalog lists General Advance Specials; explains what the Advance is and how local churches can participate; outlines General Advance priority programs; suggests resources; and lists information contacts. This resource is free for shipping and handling from Service Center, 1/800-305-9857, or e-mail SCorders@gbgm-umc.org.
- **UMCOR Resource Book** (Stock #3848) – This catalog gives more information about each UMCOR Advance project and several stories about UMCOR Advance ministries. Free for

postage and handling from Service Center (contact information above). Or, use the UMCOR web site to obtain information, <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor>.

Funds for projects selected from Advance, UMCOR or the Mission Opportunities listings should be sent directly to your district UMW treasurer through the Supplemental Giving program. Such gifts should be clearly marked for their specific designation, giving project numbers whenever possible.

If funds designated through these supplemental programs are returned by your district UMW treasurer, you may send your gift directly to the Advance or to UMCOR. You may choose the direct giving method if you prefer, however, where possible, send funds through the appropriate UMW channels. This is a way to make our interests known and understood. When designating to specific projects through UMW, it is important to stipulate that if the project you select is fully funded, you would like to be notified so that you can select another project.

One support category you will want to keep in mind is your district and conference Administrative and Membership Development (A&MD) fund. These are funds kept back by your district and conference treasurer for leadership development and programs within your district and conference. You may want to inquire as to the percentage retained at these two levels and designate funds to the A&MD fund accordingly.

In order to assist you in writing to projects to inquire about their program, etc., a list of suggested questions in the areas of mission, finance and administration is a part of the pink section of this financial file.

Alternative Giving

As United Methodists, we want to give through official church channels when the programs or projects we are asked to support are faithful to the doctrinal standards of our church and the teachings of Scripture, and, when these projects encompass the sharing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world.

As Evangelical United Methodists, we will also want to support renewal organizations within our denomination that represent our views on various issues, and that work constantly for renewal

And reform within our denomination. These groups have a tremendous impact by enabling our church to maintain its doctrinal fidelity and faithfulness to our Wesleyan heritage.

A listing of most of the major renewal groups is included in this section. A brief description and contact information is provided. We urge you to make further inquiry with these groups to find out the full scope of their ministries, and to receive their various publications. If possible, you will want to check their web sites.

In all of your giving, put your money where your heart is. Your gifts of time and money represent *you*. You are the steward of these resources and have been given the responsibility, before God, for accounting for their use. May God guide each of us in decisions related to this most important aspect of enabling Christian ministry.

QUESTIONS TO ASK of Mission Projects/Programs

Mission Related:

- Ø What is the overall mission of your program? What needs is the program fulfilling?
- Ø How is the Gospel of Christ integrated into your program?
- Ø How do you understand your programs faithfulness to the doctrinal standards of the United Methodist Church and to the teaching of Scripture?
- Ø What are some of the major goals, both long and short term?
- Ø When did your program begin? Was it the result of a need which surfaced in another program? If so, which one(s)?
- Ø What is your vision/growth expectation for the next five years?

Financial:

- Ø What are your financial needs on an annual basis?
- Ø Who/what are your major funding sources? Can you tell me how much they contribute individually?
- Ø Do you receive ecumenical or international funding?
- Ø What principal denominations are involved in your program?
- Ø What are your administrative costs?
- Ø Can you provide me with financial information regarding your larger program?

Administrative:

- Ø What is the structure of your governing body? (Is it made up of church laity, community members, professionals, volunteers, etc.?)
- Ø How do you carry out your stated goals?

UNITED METHODIST RENEWAL GROUPS

RENEW NETWORK -- The RENEW Network began in 1989. RENEW is the women's program arm of the Good News organization, structured under Good News' board of directors, an oversight committee and its own steering committee.

This nationwide network is organized to be in ministry to and with women of the United Methodist Church. RENEW is a support network for evangelical, orthodox women, providing a voice for their concerns, supplemental program resources for their program needs and a place for them to share ministry with other women. RENEW has a two-pronged ministry calling for renewal for United Methodist Women and accountability on the part of the Women's Division. For more information: Faye Short, RENEW Network, P.O. Box 889, 133 Clarkesville Street, Cornelia, GA 30531, (706) 778-4812; (706) 778-4818 (fax); e-mail: renew1@hemc.net
Web site: www.renewnetwork.org

GOOD NEWS -- Founded in 1967, the mission of Good News is to be an evangelical voice within the United Methodist Church, urging the church to be faithful to the biblically-based principles of its historic Wesleyan heritage. It seeks to unite and encourage all Christians who affirm the church's basic traditional doctrines and values. Good News provides a strong voice for the maintaining of our doctrinal standards and biblical Christian witness at all General Conferences.

Good News magazine is published bimonthly. You may receive the magazine for a gift of \$15.00 or more.

For more information: Jim Heidinger, Good News, P.O. Box 150, Wilmore, KY 40390, (859) 858-4661; (859) 858-4972 (fax); Web site: www.goodnewsmag.org

THE MISSION SOCIETY FOR UNITED METHODISTS -- Its purpose statement: "The Mission Society for United Methodists (MSUM) has a vision of mobilizing United Methodists to obey the Great Commission and help complete the task of world evangelization. The Society assists mission efforts at the local church level and serves as a sending agency for evangelical United Methodists whom God has called into cross-cultural ministry. Its chief objective is to win persons to Christ and establish and strengthen the church." The MSUM ministers to the broad spectrum of human need, not the least of which is the salvation of souls.

For more information: The Mission Society for United Methodists, 6234 Crooked Creek Road, P.O. Box 922637, Norcross, GA 30092-8347, (800) 478-8963; (770) 446-1381; (770) 446-3044 (fax); Web site: www.msum.org

UMACTION -- UMACTION is a committee of The Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD) specifically focused on the UM Church. It works to renew and reform the social and political witness of the church. It promotes religious liberty around the world, stresses the importance of moral responsibility in the maintenance of democracy, and advocates accountability by the church to its members.

For more information: Mark Tooley, UMACTION, 1110 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 1180, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 969-8430; (202) 969-8429 (fax); e-mail: mtooley@ird-renew.org

CONFESSING MOVEMENT WITHIN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH -- "The Confessing Movement is a witness by United Methodist lay men and women, clergy, and congregations who pledge unequivocal and confident allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ according to 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints' (Jude 3). The Confessing Movement contends for the apostolic faith within the United Methodist Church through theological statements and political action. The Confessing Movement seeks to reclaim and reaffirm the Church's ancient ecumenical faith in Wesleyan terms within United Methodism."

For more information: Patricia Miller, 7995 E. 21st Street, Indianapolis, IN 46219, (317) 356-9729; (317) 356-9742 (fax); e-mail: confessingumc@iquest.net
Web site: www.confessingumc.org

LIFEWATCH/TASKFORCE OF UNITED METHODISTS ON ABORTION AND SEXUALITY --

Lifewatch is the pro-life movement within the United Methodist Church. Statement of Purpose: "Out of obedience to Jesus Christ, the Taskforce of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality (TUMAS) 'will work to create in church and society esteem for human life at its most vulnerable, specifically for the unborn child and for the woman who contemplates abortion.' Therefore, the goal of Lifewatch is to win the hearts and minds of United Methodists to engage in abortion-prevention through theological, pastoral and social emphases that support human life."

For more information: Mrs. Ruth Brown, 512 Florence St., Dothan, AL 36301, (334) 794-8543—(fax) is same; e-mail: tumaslw@sprynet.com

Web site: www.home.sprynet.com/sprynet/~tumaslw

TRANSFORMING MINISTRIES -- Transforming Ministries is a caucus within The United Methodist Church which calls the church to be in ministry to homosexual persons but affirms the biblical witness that homosexual practice is sin and that the power of the Holy Spirit is available to transform the life of the homosexual. This group can assist your church in starting a Transforming Ministries program.

For more information: Jim Gentile, Transforming Congregations, P. O. Box 7146, Penndel, PA 19047, (215) 752-9655; e-mail: TransCong@aol.com

Web site: www.transformingcong.org