

From your East Central District President, Linda Gustafson

So glad to have the Annual Meeting over, but extremely happy to have the evaluation report that our music (thanks to Donna Halquist and our awesome bell choir, along with our famous 2017 United Methodist Women flutist, Suzy Nagy) was the thing that most people answered to the question "What did you enjoy the most in the service?" The entire Bell Choir knows that we are only great because we have Marian leading us.

The East Central District Team awarded Clermont United Methodist Women and Palm Coast United Methodist Women a Gift to Mission in the amount of \$10.00 for each unit. Both units had the largest number of attendees at the District Annual Meeting. Each unit brought 7 members with them.

We now have a committed date by the Daytona Community United Methodist Church for our January "Membership" Event. (January 28, 2017) Our speaker will be Cathy Mospens, Chair of the new Membership Committee from Tallahassee, FL. Plan now to attend! Ladies, our attendance is going down and we need new ways of inviting women to take part in the world's greatest missionary adventure. What we can't accomplish on our own, we can certainly accomplish by banding together and becoming UNITED.

For our December newsletter, I am suggesting that you drop a line to our Editor, Suzy Nagy, and let us all know what you thought your greatest mission was for the year 2016. I am betting some of you have some great stories.

Give Thanks for the things we have accomplished this year.

Linda Gustafson, President of East Central District

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NOTE SOME DATES HAVE CHANGED!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS SO YOU DON'T MISS THESE IMPORTANT DATES!

January 28, 2017...Membership Event (Community UMC, Daytona Beach)

March 18, 2017...Spring Day Apart (Palm Coast UMC)

July 13-16, 2017...Mission u (Bethune-Cookman University)

September 23, 2017...Mission Studies Sampler (Sanlando UMC)

October 21, 2017...District Annual Meeting (FUMC Clermont)

November 4, 2017...Conference Annual Meeting (Lakeland)

The Holidays are upon us and this year 2016 will be coming to a close.

Ahead is a new year....what does it hold?

At times we are so limited - even limiting ourselves. Let's refer to our greatest power the Word of God: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Ps. 51:10)

Call upon me and come to pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you search for Me with all your heart. (Jer. 29:12-13)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. (Mark 12:30)

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:34)

Let's pray these verses holding out our open hands - in thanksgiving first, in gratitude for God's faithfulness and His goodness and His assured, accomplished victory.

Then asking - asking for what He already wants to give us. Then waiting - expecting to receive the promise of newness and freshness from His Spirit as we go along through each day - praying until: He will come to us like the rain, like the spring rain watering the earth. (Hosea 6:3)

Let us pray: part Praise, part Repentance, part Asking, and a whole lot of Yes, Lord!!!!

Let God keep working in us, through us, growing us into the coming year.

Blessings from Celeste Hicks and your Committee on Nominations

(The previous was excerpted from Fervent by Priscilla Shirer)



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United Methodist Women ~ "You will know them by their fruit" Matthew 7:20



Members of the **Wisdom Circle of Flagler Beach United Methodist Women** packed 100 health kits for farm workers in Florida following their regular meeting November 1, 2016. The women purchase all the supplies over the course of the year, and the kits are delivered in January. They then start looking for bargains for the next year's kits.

Top row: Phyllis Sweeney, Darlene Hunter, Bette Rountree; Pat Vath, Patti Powell, Joanne Criswell; Tomi Rine.

Bottom row: Nancy Curl, Mary Black; Rita Simmons, Sue Baldwin; Phyllis Sweeney, Barbara Peacock.

Other members helping were Sarah Kerr and Fran Anderson. Photographs by Carol Elliott.

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The **Oviedo First United Methodist Women's** Night of Fellowship was held Tuesday, November 8th, which included a "potluck dinner" enjoyed by all and the presentation and installation of the 2017 United Methodist Women Officers and Circle Chairs. 2017 United Methodist Women's Committee on Nominations Chair, Charlene Davis, recognized Cathy Howell, the current 2016 President and stated that a gift to mission was being made in her honor for her many years of leadership,



service and dedication to the 2017 Oviedo United Methodist Women unit. Vice President Anglea Relyea also presented Cathy with a United Methodist Women's Special Mission Recognition pin. Thank you Cathy!!!



Pictured on the left:

FUMCO United Methodist Women 2017 Co-President, Denise Clonts, 2016 President Cathy Howell and 2017 Co-President Judy Jones.

Serving Women in Distress

Members of the **Rebecca Circle of Grace United Methodist Women**, Lake Mary, serve dinner to the women and their children who are temporarily housed at the Safe House of Seminole. Twice a year for the past three years, the circle members have cooked and served a meal to give these women a break from cooking their own meals. During the visit, one of the members helps the children make fun crafts. All of the circles at Grace fill Christmas gift bags with gifts for the women each year, since the children receive gifts from several agencies. Grace United Methodist Women also gives a monetary gift to the Safe House to help with their mission to keep these women safe. The women (and a few men) are kept safe from their abusive spouses in a secret "house." Rooms are available to the women and their children. Clothing and personal items are available as well as food and shared community areas. Faith, Hope and Love in Action.

Reminder: Judith McNorton wanted to remind all units to send your roster of 2017 elected officials to her as soon as possible, even if you have no changes. hway55@live.com

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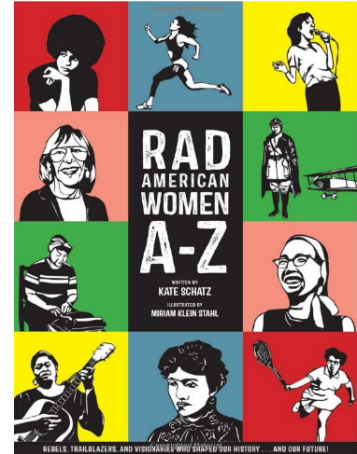
RAD AMERICAN WOMEN A-Z

The New York Times Bestseller!

“A book for kids – and their parents, teachers, and cool grown-up friends

-documenting America’s famous and unsung heroines.”

**Rebels, Trailblazers, and Visionaries Who Shaped Our History...
and Our Future!**



“If you could have any of your heroines at a party, who would you invite? In Rad, we meet 26 diverse women from A-Z who shaped America’s history. These artists, abolitionists, scientists, sports heroes, rock stars, rabble-rousers, and agents of change of all kinds span several centuries and multiple professions...”

March is Women’s History Month. RAD is a Leadership Development book on the 2017 Reading List and is a wonderful book to be read during March. I know that women in Orange County have been blessed to know two of the women featured. During her tenure in Orlando, Mayor Glenda Hood initiated a program called “Diverse Discussions” where women in the area had the opportunity to meet famous women and to share among ourselves. Wilma Mankiller, the first female chief was also our first Diverse Discussions speaker. She led her people with strength and courage. As the President of a women’s organization in Orlando, I had the privilege of serving on the Diverse Discussions Committee.

Over many years United Methodist Women in Orange County have volunteered at the internationally known Zora! Festival held annually in Eatonville. Zora Neale Hurston captured the stories and voices of many generations. She is considered one of the greatest American writers of the 20th century.

This book is a popular one in the Conway United Methodist Women’s library but is also available in public libraries and the 2017 Reading Program. My middle school grandson and I read the book together. An honor student, history and sports buff, he commented that he learned about many famous people he did not know. The book is a “quick” but informative book to read.

~ Submitted by Joyce Waldon Bright

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For years we have worked with various agencies and government leaders pleading for help to open a Crisis Shelter for Human Trafficking victims. Now this dream is becoming a reality. Last Tuesday morning, Orange County Commissioners unanimously approved a proposal to open a crisis human trafficking shelter.

The crisis shelter will provide 10 beds for women and would be open 24/7 so that victims can have a safe place with qualified treatment from the minute they are recovered. Florida Abolitionist will provide all of the intake for victims and oversee the programming while a mental health agency will staff the facility. It should be open and running by the Spring.

Join us in thanking God and our local Orange County Commissioners for this wonderful blessing.

Mark your Calendar.

November 29 is #GivingTuesday. Join Florida Abolitionist and commit your social media posts to spreading the word about human trafficking and helping raise funds!

December 3, come help Florida Abolitionist end human trafficking in local hotels! Visit their event page for more details and to RSVP.

December 8 from 11 am - noon, join us for the Ribbon Cutting and Open House at our new offices at Calvary Orlando. Click website for more information and to RSVP.

Have you attended one of the Abolitionist Trainings? If not, you won't want to miss it on **December 10** from 10 am - 4 pm. You will gain a wealth of knowledge about human trafficking in our community and what you can do to stop it! ~Submitted by Alma Manney

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12 Ways to Be Kind Without Spending a Dime

(Reprinted from Ramsey Solutions)

In this season full of traveling, feasting, and gift-giving, your budget might begin to feel the strain.

You love giving, but you're committed to staying out of debt over the holidays. The good news is you don't have to buy more stuff to bring joy to others this season. In fact, one of the best things you can give in the coming weeks is kindness.

It's absolutely free and will do you (and those around you) a world of good! Here are 12 ways to multiply your kindness and brighten someone's day:

1. Send a handwritten note (or email).

This isn't a "thanks for the gift" card. This is an out-of-the-blue note you write to someone who's impacted your life. Maybe it's a parent, a pastor, a sibling or a friend. Maybe it's your favorite high school teacher. Whoever it is, let them know how much they mean to you. Don't assume they already know!

2. Recreate a special day.

Think of a day (or event) in your life that meant a lot to you. Maybe it was your first date with your spouse or a road trip with your best friend. Find little ways to share that memory all over again via photos, food, music and stories. They'll be touched by your effort, and you'll both have a great new memory to share.

3. Listen without distractions.

Often, we're too busy multitasking to give our undivided attention to those around us. Put down your cell phone, mute the TV, and give folks some good old-fashioned eye contact (yes, even in meetings at work!). This simple practice signals that you value the speaker. And you don't even have to say a word.

4. Include someone new.

We all have our comfort zone when it comes to our friends. They're our go-to invites whenever we're hosting a cookout or heading out to lunch. But be conscious of new people too. Maybe it's been a long time since you were the new person. It can be pretty lonely. Add someone to your next guest list and you might just make their month.

5. Smile more.

One of the kindest gifts you can give someone is a genuine smile. We're not talking a creepy glare-and-grin at strangers here. We mean look up at your cashier and smile. They aren't robots who scan your groceries. Be kind by acknowledging them *as a person*. The same goes for waiters, neighbors, and the receptionist at your doctor's office. You never know what people are going through. Your smile could be the kindest thing they see all day.

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6. Look for common ground.

All of us know people who disagree with us on just about everything. You have conflicting views on politics, parenting and potato salad. Instead of dreading another conversation with them, try seeing things from their point of view. We're not saying you have to become BFFs, but keep your cool and keep it friendly. **The more grace you give, the more glory God gets.**

7. Assume the best in people.

This one's all in your head—but it's extremely kind all the same. When you assume the best in people, it changes your attitude toward them. When a friend cancels lunch plans at the last minute or a stranger says something that hurts your feelings, give them the benefit of the doubt. This saves you the effort of trying to figure out their motives. And it gives them the kindness of your good opinion.

8. Share your prayers.

It's a blessing to be able to pray for those you love. If your sister is home sick or your church friend asks for prayer, stop what you're doing and share in their need. If you aren't in a place where you can pray out loud, just type out a short prayer and email it to them. It will bless them to know you are lifting them up, and your words will bring them comfort.

9. Repeat someone else's great idea.

When you're in a meeting (or on an email chain), uplift the ideas of others. If someone has a great idea, tell them how much you like it in front of everyone! You're being kind by encouraging them among peers. This will give them a self-esteem boost and bring the best thoughts to the top.

10. Apologize early and often.

The next time you strike up a fight with your spouse, yell at your kids, or snap at your friend, don't wait hours to mend things. Go to them right away and ask for their forgiveness. You can't undo what you said, but you can humble yourself and strengthen your relationship because of it. Oh, and forgive yourself too! You're only human.

11. Be clear (but polite).

Around the office, we say "To be unclear is to be unkind." This doesn't mean you should blurt out whatever you're thinking. It means you should be direct, but have the other person's well-being in mind. If you want your spouse to do the dishes, don't stomp around the kitchen and hope they get the hint. Ask them to do the dishes without any biting remarks. If that's not kindness, we don't know what is!

12. Be kind to yourself!

You know that annoying voice in your head that beats you up whenever you forget to mail your second cousin a birthday card? Or the harsh voice that tortures you with that unfinished to-do list? Be kind to yourself and let the little stuff go. Like lost-in-the-Bermuda-Triangle gone.

Being kind doesn't cost a dime. But it multiplies your happiness exponentially.

~ Submitted by Suzy Nagy

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