



KY East District Newsletter

September 2021

DISTRICT FALL CELEBRATION OF MISSIONS

Barb Nicholls
KY East UMW President

Although we had hoped to have our KY East District Fall Celebration of Missions meeting in person this year, our Mission Team has determined that, in light of the current alarming rate of COVID-19 cases, especially the Delta variant that is spreading through our entire area, we must “love our neighbors” (protect each other) by meeting via ZOOM once again this Fall. The purpose of the Fall Celebration of Missions meeting traditionally is to share and celebrate our good mission work through the past year (August 1, 2020 – July 31, 2021). Of course, the pandemic has put restrictions on what we have been able to do since March 2020, but in spite of that, we will still give thanks and celebrate the small things we have accomplished. As I read the Annual Reports prepared by each Unit’s President, I was amazed by the good work that many of the units had still been able to do.

Having lived through this pandemic for a year and a half so far, it is easy to become discouraged when we think of all the mission projects, meetings, and activities we have missed out on. “Covid Fatigue” is real. We are all tired of it. However, we still have much to be thankful for. As we gather **via ZOOM on Saturday, September 18th at 10:00 A.M.**, I hope you will join in. Just spending time with your fellow UMW sisters will offer you encouragement as we aspire to lift each other up and celebrate the “purpose” of United Methodist Women.

Although our “program” for this meeting is still in the planning stage, we hope to share some ideas for you to take back to your unit (or even just to your own home) concerning the Social Action Priority

Item that we chose to focus on this biennium: Climate Justice. It is a big topic! What can we do about it? Where can we start? Karen Girard from the Bluegrass District will share some ideas with us. I will send the ZOOM Invitation for this meeting the week prior to the Sept. 18th date to your email address. If you haven’t received email messages from me before, I must not have your address. Please send it to me at bnicholls0001@gmail.com. Let’s continue to lift each other up in prayer as we continue to be Jesus’ hands and feet as we bring Faith, Hope, and Love in Action to our communities.

DISTRICT UMW OPPORTUNITIES

Celia Fish
KY East Chair of Nominations Committee

Our **Kentucky East Mission Team** is looking for a few good volunteers to be a part of our group. This is a great community of sisters in Christ who serve the UMW units in our area. Serving on the Nominating Committee has provided me a wonderful opportunity to meet other like-minded Christian women and develop a creative, supportive fellowship to expand concepts of missions throughout the world.

The Mission Team does most of the work by committee so you would never be alone in accomplishing any task. We meet just a couple of times a year. Currently we are meeting by Zoom so we get to enjoy others' company without leaving our homes. The opportunities to serve starting in January 2022 include:

Secretary of Program Resources- This individual helps identify resources that assist the district and local UMW units. They also promote the reading program. Erin Rice has previously served in this

position and has been nominated as the Secretary of Program Resources at the Conference level and thus cannot remain in this position on the District level. She will remain on our District Mission Team and will be an enormous help to this candidate. If you're interested in getting your 'feet wet' on the District Level, this would be a great entry level position.

Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth- This individual is responsible for organizing opportunities to develop and strengthen understanding of Biblical Studies and mission issues. This might be accomplished by providing devotions for our Mission Team Meeting or plan (with the help of our team) a District Wide event. With all the resources available from our national UMW and online access to various ideas to encourage spiritual growth, this individual would coordinate them for our District.

Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation-This individual is responsible for informing and promoting mission giving and mission education opportunities. They would share with our district team current focuses of mission from the National and Conference level. Certainly our Response magazine and the UMW website would be essential resources for this position. None of these opportunities take a lot of time, but the rewards of working with our Kentucky East Mission Team are numerous. I've met lots of wonderful Christian women, now considered friends, while working with them on common interests and goals. I hope you will consider stepping in and working with us!

A special thanks to Lisa Mantz who has agreed to serve as our Treasurer!

ACCEPTING THE CALL
Sheliah (Sam) Harlan
Kentucky Conference Committee on
Nominations

I had done my part. The table was set and ready for the District Mission team. I'm certain I tried to do

something special on the table besides the usual centerpiece and table settings, but for the life of me I don't remember what I did. So, what was it that day pulling me back to the church?

I once saw a sign that said, I only have a kitchen because it came with the house. I should have bought that sign. I was certain the ladies preparing the meal didn't need me in the kitchen (I can wash dishes, but it was way too early for that!) I'm not a social butterfly, meeting the District Mission Team wasn't my priority. Besides, that would mean stepping outside my comfort zone. I was retired and I had plenty of things I could do to occupy my time. But I did respond to that gentle tugging to go to the church.

As it turned out, the team needed volunteers and a lady at church recommended me to the team for the position of Secretary (she was unable to accept the position). I quickly turned down the position because for me, taking official notes is right up there with cooking. I did offer and commit to help the team in any way I could when it came to computer work or organizing stuff. When that said, they felt the open Vice-President's position would be a good fit for me. *OH NO! I'd have to pray about that.* The next thing I knew the Mission District Team was all around me, praying that God would lead me to the right decision.

God did speak to me, and I accepted the position. Acceptance didn't mean I was comfortable, and I had a lot of concerns. I did have faith that a group of women that I didn't particularly want to meet that day could mentor and teach me what I needed to know. I've said many times since getting to know them, that they fill me with love. Joining the District Mission team has brought so many blessings into my life – in the form of the many spiritual women I have met across our District that have touched my heart and my life and the spiritual encouragement and support I receive. I'm glad I responded to God's gentle tugging to go back to the church that day; the outcome has enriched my life.



But what about you? Do you ever feel a gentle tug to do more? Does fear keep you from coming forward? Do you feel it is committing too much of your time? Exactly what keeps you from standing up, waving, and shouting,

“Here I Am, Lord!” How many blessings are you missing?

There are positions open at the District and the Conference level. I hope that you recognize your talents are needed and that you have been gifted with them to serve the Lord. Pray about how you can be of service in the UMW organization. We will be praying for you.

NEW DISTRICT TREASURER: LISA MANTZ
 by Barb Nicholls
 KY East UMW President

I am pleased to introduce our new KY East District Treasurer, **Lisa Mantz**. Lisa is a member of Greenup UMC and serves as the Administrative Council Chair there. By day, Lisa works in the Office of the Family Court in Greenup County. She and her husband Bruce have two grown daughters (Megan and Madison) and a seven-month-old grandson (Archer). As you can see, Lisa is a hard worker, always willing and able to take on a new task.

Local Unit Treasurers may submit all Remittance Forms for Pledges to Mission, Supplemental Mission Gifts, Gifts in Memory, and Special Mission Recognition along with a check to KY East District UMW. (Remittance Forms are found on the UMW website: unitedmethodistwomen.org.) Mail this to **Lisa Mantz, 1215 Main Street, Greenup, KY 41144**. Lisa’s phone number is 606-923-4009. Her email address is manli001@yahoo.com. Thank you, Lisa, for serving in this new role!

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S
 by Joy Stanley
 KY East UMW Standing Rules

I have lived in only two states in my life. Ohio was where I was born and lived there until we moved to Kentucky twenty-two years ago. Beautiful Kentucky is our home now, and we enjoy riding to Cave Run Lake close to where we live. It is a gorgeous lake surrounded by mountains covered with green foliage in spring and summer and vibrant colors of red, yellow, and orange in the fall. Many people take their families and friends there to enjoy all the activities that are available, such as swimming, picnicking, and boating. There are many other beautiful places in the state to see.

Ps. 24:1 "The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains." NISB The Lord has given us all this beauty, and we must find ways to preserve what He has given us.

MADALYN’S MESSAGE INITIATIVE AT LOUISA FIRST UNITED
 by Shelia (Sam) Harlan
 Louisa First UMW



It’s been *almost* a year since the KY East District UMW introduced a new mission opportunity called Madalyn’s Message. For the Methodist Women at First United in Louisa, it was a unanimous decision that we step up to help foster children.

Madalyn, our 2020 Fall Celebration of Mission speaker, introduced us to her life as a foster child. Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) shared the challenges of removing children from their homes and trying to meet the ever-increasing needs of the children. We learned that many of the children did not have basic hygiene

essentials (toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo, soap, deodorant, etc.) A child doesn't always have a stuffed animal or a lovey/blanket, but it is comforting for a child to cling to when leaving home. Many of the children are hungry when picked up and it is not unusual for a social worker to buy them a meal using their own money. Juice, crackers, snacks, and food gift cards will help take the hunger away. Reading/picture books, coloring books, crayons, journals, age-appropriate bible books and stories, and sketch pads will help to calm and occupy a child. A night light and a small flashlight will help them navigate a trip to the bathroom at night in an unfamiliar house.

Many of these items can be purchased at the Dollar Tree so everyone has an opportunity to participate in the mission regardless of financial means. We have a collection basket for the donations and love fills it up quickly. Our children collect "noisy change" two Sundays a month and that money goes to Madalyn's Message and other church missions. What a great way to involve our little ones in church missions! God is good!

Our partnership with CHFS is a good one. We make routine deliveries and when there is an immediate need, they contact us. One of the social workers came to our monthly meeting and Madalyn and Barb Nicholls were there too. What a wonderful blessing we all received that evening. Days later, it was still be discussed among the women at the church.

There are four churches in our District that have become Madalyn's Message Units: Greenup, Sunshine, Advance, and Louisa First. I encourage your group to become a Madalyn's Message Unit. Just imagine the difference that could be made across our District and in our state if everyone joined in. To learn more, check out the October 2020 Initiative flyer or contact us at Sheliah2@outlook.com or bnicholls0001@gmail.com.

CHANGES TO THE READING PROGRAM by Erin Rice **KY East UMW Secretary of Program Resources**

The Reading Program has seen a lot of changes since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak. One large one that has come is that you can now listen to podcasts that will count towards books read in the Spiritual Growth category. If you listen to two of these podcasts, it will count as one book in the Spiritual Growth category, while listening to three counts as a Bonus Book within this category. Bonus Books are books that can count as two books instead of one. So, listening to two podcasts will count as one book, and listening to three will count as two books within the Spiritual Growth category. You can find these podcasts at <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/faithtalks>.

If you want to listen on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Spreaker, or Cast Box, you can search "United Methodist Women: Faith Talks." The United Methodist Women also have a podcast called "United Methodist Women: response." This podcast will not count towards the Reading Program, but it is still worth a listen! Remember: You can access the Reading Program catalogues at any time by going to <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram>.

SPOTLIGHT ON... **ALDERSGATE (ROBINSON CREEK) UMW** by Barb Nicholls **KY East UMW President**

As I read the Annual Reports submitted by each local unit of our District, it was obvious that the past 18 months of living with COVID-19 has impacted the mission work that we have been able to do this year. One unit, however, submitted a most impressive report that I would like to share with you.

Danya Niece, President of Aldersgate (Robinson Creek) UMW in Pike County, described her group of 10 UMW members this way: “We are a small group of women, and I am honored to be a part of this group of very special ladies. COVID has had its strain on us, but the Lord did not allow it to get in our way of being able to help when it was needed. Our projects have been local. This is where we have seen a great need, right here in our own community. I want to stress how truly giving these ladies are. During a time when everyone was dealing with COVID, we were also dealing with another situation—flooding. Our church basement was flooded, and the women who were physically able helped clean, remove ruined items, paint, and help put things back together. Today we are able once again to use our basement.”

Danya also listed other local mission projects they completed:

- \$50/month to the Blessing Box
- Sanitary napkins for girls in need at local schools
- Quilts for Hospice patients
- Pillows for cancer patients
- Donation to Appalachian Pregnancy Center
- Provided dinners to families that have lost loved ones
- Provided Sunshine Baskets (personal care baskets for hospital patients)
- Donation to outreach to buy a deep freezer to help with food donations
- Donation to a local lady whose home was destroyed by fire.
- Stuffed rabbits for Easter to Judi’s Place for Kids

Danya concluded her report by saying, “I watch these ladies regularly put their Faith, Hope, and Love in Action, and I am blessed to be a part of it. Everyone in our group gives so much of their own selves.”

Thanks, Aldersgate (Robinson Creek) UMW, for your faithful service! You are an inspiration for all

of us! May God continue to richly bless your unit as you bless others!

JUST ENERGY FOR ALL

by Kay Smith

KY East District Social Action Coordinator

This is the second article relating to Climate Justice, the Kentucky East United Methodist Women Social Action priority to address.

Our United Methodist heritage reflects a history of commitment to social justice and social action. John Wesley placed strong emphasis on the Christian life as a combination of faith and love put into practice. The 2012 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church states, “For Wesley there is no religion but social religion, no holiness but social holiness.”

Caring about our energy use is part of our faith walk as Christians because the system by which we get our energy is sometimes unjust. It impacts the poor, people of color and women and children. It sometimes benefits corporations that pollute our land, air and water for profit.

One of the 13 Principles of the United Methodist Women is Carbon Footprint. This relates to how we live and impact our world. It has so many implications for our lives, such as use of energy in our homes and workplaces, recycling, our vehicles and the use of them and water quality to name a few.

Please consider how your UMW group can get involved in this priority area.

1. Choose an issue. Look around your community and find an issue that interests you. Do some research which shows how this issue is important to your community.
2. After your research narrow your focus so the issue directly relates to your community. Many of these issues are so large you could get lost, so this is why you need to narrow the focus so you can manage the issue.

3. Learn about the problem. Read books about the issue from the reading program, research info from the UMW website and use local resources from your community or state. Knowledge will help your group address the priority issue.
4. Design a plan of action. As you learn about the issue design a realistic plan your group could implement to address this issue. You could even find other UMW groups that are addressing this issue and collaborate with them.
5. Act. Your action can take many forms such as: educating others, surveys, petitions, write letters to elected officials about the issue, boycott products, get involved with media literacy in your area, and pray. Prayer is one of the most powerful sources of support and change in our lives.

Please consider within your UMW unit an issue relating to Climate Justice. Begin your work to identify, research, learn and address Climate Justice.

SUITCASES FOR KY KIDS

by **Sheliah Harlan**
Louisa First UMC



Don Pratt, a former foster father who cared for 65 foster kids over the span of his fostering career, started a community outreach to help Kentucky foster children. Don collects suitcases, duffle bags, and backpacks and provides them to children in Kentucky's Foster Care system. This luggage allows foster children to rotate between houses with dignity and is distributed within all 120 of Kentucky's counties. Louisa First recently held its first luggage drive and we delivered over 30+ items to Don Pratt.

Don was inspired to form this outreach because of an experience he had as a foster father. He was asked to meet a social worker at the home of two children he would be fostering. The social worker handed Don a roll of black garbage bags that the children could use to gather their clothes and belongings. While driving away from their former home, one of the garbage bags came open, spewing

the children's belongings on the road behind them. Don had a great sense of humor about collecting those things from the side of the road, especially when he saw a pair of underwear plastered to the front of a passing truck. But this experience inspired him to do something about the plight of foster children who lack appropriate luggage to carry their belongings.

For the past 20 years, Don has been collecting suitcases, backpacks, and duffle bags for foster kids in Kentucky. He gives his time and uses his own vehicle and gas money to distribute the luggage across Kentucky. Will you help? If you would like to organize a Suitcase Drive at your church, please contact Don. He travels all over Kentucky to *pick up donations* and deliver the luggage to agencies working with foster children.

Visit <https://suitcasesforkykids.com/> for details.

Information taken from the website: Suitcases for Kentucky Kids <https://suitcasesforkykids.com/>
 Facebook page: Suitcases for Ky Kids
 Twitter: @bags4fosterkids
 (859)552-2235
dbp91044@gmail.com
Suitcasesforkykids@gmail.com

UPDATE ON CONFERENCE CELEBRATION

by **Peggy Rice**
Conference Vice President

This year the Owensboro District will be hosting the Kentucky Conference 25th Annual Mission Celebration –



An Atmosphere of Love and Grace

We have been planning for an in-person celebration but with the recent surge it appears as if it will be a virtual Celebration again this year. With everything we've experienced in the last 18 months, we need to remember more than ever the command of our Lord Jesus Christ – to love one another. HE didn't call us to love only those who love us; Luke 6:32 tells us that ".....even sinners love those who love them." We have been called to love everyone even those who are not so lovable. In today's world, so many have forgotten this. We have little patience for those who are argumentative; who spread hate; and hurt those around them. We need to remember that it is usually people who are unhappy and hurting that strike out at others. They need the atmosphere of love and grace that we have received from GOD!

Our scripture this year comes from 2 Corinthians 13:14 – May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. We have received this; it is time that we share with others that this atmosphere is

available to them too. Watch for more information in the coming weeks on our Celebration!



2021 DATES TO REMEMBER

District UMW Dates: September 18 – District Fall Celebration of Missions Meeting by Zoom



Mission u 2021

There's Far More Here

THAN MEETS THE EYE

So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without [God's] unfolding grace. [...] There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18, The Message (MSG)

We have known and felt what it is like when “things are falling apart on us.” We have experienced a great unraveling that has shifted, quite literally, everything.

Could there be, as 2 Corinthians put it, “far more here than meets the eye”?

Mission u, like many activities in our lives, has moved online. While virtual, we are still creating spaces for spiritual community, lifelong friendships, lessons that change us and our communities, and spiritual practices that arrive when we need them most. In a time when it looks like things are falling apart on us, God’s grace is still unfolding and life is being made new.

Indeed: There’s far more here than meets the eye. Will you join us?

At our upcoming **Mission u**, we will examine anxiety, the culture of violence that impacts children in and out of schools, and how we as God’s people can deepen our moral witness and respond faithfully.

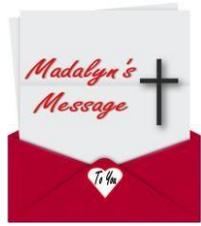
Our 2021 **Mission u** will offer the following studies:

- ***Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living Into the Church’s Moral Witness Through Radical Discipleship*** by Darryl W. Stephens
Saturdays days 11-1 pm Eastern, July 10 – July 31 with Yvette Richards
- ***Finding Peace in an Anxious World***, edited by Erin James-Brown
Sundays 7-9pm Eastern, September 12 – October 3 with Mike Feely

RSVP: Email KYMission-u@gmail.com

Registration goes to bettydodson528@gmail.com

Order books through Amazon or the Service Center (but they are closing June 11-July 2nd)

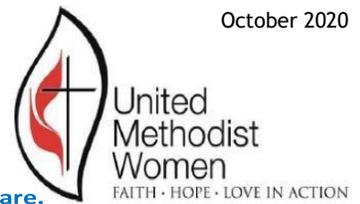


Introducing

KY East District United Methodist Women's

New Initiative Madalyn's Message

Methodist Women dedicated to providing essential and comfort items to children transitioning from family to foster care.



October 2020

We are embarking on a new mission opportunity for UMW units in the **KY East District** called *Madalyn's Message*. The project was inspired by our guest speaker at the KY East District UMW Fall Celebration of Missions Meeting on September 12, 2020. (See Madalyn's Story, page 2) As of May 2020, there were 10,000+ youth in foster care in Kentucky (<https://kentucky.kvc.org>). At-risk children are removed (often in an emergency situation) from their families and placed in foster care with only the clothes on their backs and little more. Often, what little they do own is put in a trash bag.

You are invited to become a *Madalyn's Message Unit* and help children transition from family to foster care. You can help to provide essential and comfort items to children in our communities that will make them feel more comfortable and at home in their new placement. Madalyn was excited to hear our plans. She chose the name, designed the logo, and has written encouraging letters for each age group to be given to each child when they are removed from home. She has also expressed an interest in visiting each church who participates in Madalyn's Message.

HOW MADALYN'S MESSAGE WORKS

Each UMW unit will decide if they wish to become a *Madalyn's Message Unit*. If a positive response is received, select a member (or members) of your unit to serve as Coordinator(s). The Coordinators will contact the local Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), explain Madalyn's Message and its purpose. If CHFS is interested in partnering with your unit:

- Exchange POC information and establish a clear line of communication.
- Ask for a list of children's items that are needed within your county.
- Determine how your donations should be made. (e.g. do they want items on an as-needed basis, once a month, quarterly? Do they have storage space? Do you need to store items until needed?)
- Work to provide the items.
- Share the list from your county with KED, UMW [Barb Nicholls: bnicholls@gmail.com or Sheliah (Sam) Harlan:

sheliah2@outlook.com] A district-wide, by county list, will be established and distributed to each participating church for potential sharing of excess items.

If CHFS is not interested in on-going assistance, request they contact you if they have a one-time emergency need. your unit can help with.

IDEAS FOR MEETING THE NEED

- Dollar Tree finds are great and not expensive!
- Introduce Madalyn's Message to the children of your church. Let them decorate tin cans; twice a month let children use them to collect "Noisy Change" from the congregation. Use the money for needed items – let the children shop with you.
- Have a local Christian Bookstore? Ask them to have a Madalyn's Message Drive where the community can purchase and donate age-appropriate bibles, bible story books, bible activities pads, etc.
- Set up a donation box in your church.
- Involve the Ministerial Association to determine if other churches would like to donate items. Ask them to have a "Donation Week" once a quarter where items can be collected for your unit.
- Sew - make various sizes of drawstring bags to hold hygiene product, totes, etc.
- Crochet or Knit – make "comfy" blankets or afghans for children. Make fleece blankets, scarfs, etc.
- Encourage – You cannot be given the names of the children, but you can write them encouraging notes to be delivered by CHFS. Birthday cards are great too!
- Prayer – Make a mindful and intentional effort to pray specifically for the children and Madalyn's Message. God will provide!
- Have a Church or Unit Children's Shower. Make a cake, play games, fellowship, and bring items from the "Gift Registry."
- Instead of birthday/holiday gifts, ask that a donation be made or make a donation to Madalyn's Message in your friends name.
- Share your ideas on the KED UMW Facebook Page, with other members, and/or with Krista Mosser (animalhouseky@windstream.net) for the KEDUMW.



Madalyn's Story

Madalyn was born to a single mom who suffered from drug addiction and its complications. Her grandmother became the main caretaker for Madalyn and seven cousins whose parents also had addiction issues. The grandmother was the only wage-earner in the home, so the children grew up with less than adequate guidance and supervision. Several times the children were pulled out of the home and placed into temporary foster care homes but were always placed back with their grandparents.

By the time Madalyn was 12 years old, she basically had “the run of the town.” One Wednesday night, her friends (who also had the “run of the town”) invited her to the United Methodist Church in Greenup, Ky where free food was offered every Wednesday night—and, incidentally, a Youth

Group lesson or activity. It was the free food that convinced Madalyn to attend. Madalyn found a welcoming, safe, judgment-free environment that made her want to keep attending on Wednesday nights. She was introduced to Jesus Christ and the love of God through the Youth Group leaders (the Pastor and other church members, including Nancy, a social work professional who was herself being called to ministry at the time). Madalyn's heart was opened through these messengers of God! She began asking questions and started attending Sunday morning worship services as well. She soon asked to join in singing with the Choir, and of course she was welcomed!

The summer before she began high school, Madalyn's home life began getting worse and worse. With so many children in the small home, there was no privacy for her, and she began “couch surfing” with her friends. Nancy, one of her Youth Group leaders, recognized the immense potential in this young girl, and she and her husband felt led by God to intervene. Madalyn went to live with them and soon officially became their foster daughter. Madalyn blossomed! She, participated in Academic Team and many other extra-curricular activities, was accepted into the Governor's Scholars Program following her junior year, and graduated from high school at the top of her class. At the same time, she grew in her faith and participated in every Church activity. She even babysat on Tuesday nights for

children whose parents were participating in an Addiction Prevention program that the Greenup UMC ran. On a beautiful Sunday in June of 2019, Madalyn was baptized in front of the congregation by the Pastor who had been her Youth Group Leader and mentor during her (literal) transformation. What a Happy Day!

Madalyn is now a freshman at Morehead State University, succeeding there as well.

Madalyn and her Foster Mom, Nancy, were the guest speakers at the KY East United Methodist Women's Fall Meeting in September of 2020. They shared their story about how God had worked His miracle in their lives. Madalyn explained what it was like to grow up under the circumstances she experienced and what it was like to be pulled out of her home by the Child Protective Services Agency again and again. She suggested some ways that we, as United Methodist Women—whose mission is to serve Women, Children, and Youth—could help make kids' lives easier. That is how the idea for our new project began: *Madalyn's Message*.