

UM Women and Young Women decoration

Sunday, February 19, 2006 was another great day that will not be forgotten in the history of the United Methodist Church in Senegal. Fourteen women and seven young women were decorated at the Nord Foire UMC in Dakar. "Decoration" is a ceremony where people – women and young women in this case – are honored for their commitment to the Lord's service. By doing so women and young women are encouraged to serve Christ and the church with all their heart, all their mind and all their strength.

That Sunday morning was one of those great moments of joy and celebration we will remember all the time as long as God allows us to live on this earth. Decoration was performed by Mbwizu Ndjungu, "Mother" and "Counselor" of all UM Women and UM Young Women in Senegal. A team from First Evanston UMC witnessed the celebration. The team that arrived last Friday, February 17, 2006, includes: Rev. Dean Francis and his wife Nora; Curt Erixon; James Watts; Barbara Johnson; Gail and Nancy Webber; Joanna Gwinn; and Leah Biber. They will be working in villages next week before they go back to the USA next Sunday, February 26, 2006.



The VIM team from First Evanston UMC singing at the Women and Young Women decoration service in Dakar

Sunday's celebration was the second ceremony of this kind in the history of the UMC in Senegal. The first one was done on February 22, 2004. Twenty women were decorated at that time. The young women unite did not exist then.

Names of women who were decorated that Sunday morning are: 1) Landrada Mukanyandwi; 2) Marie Preira; 3) Gisèle Yotognon; 4) Dibor Fatou Ndour; 5) Peggy Masengo Kalonda; 6) Amy Ndiaye; 7) Penda Diawara; 8) Jeanne d'Arc Diedhiou; 9) Noumo Diatta; 10) Angèle Faye; 11) Mambu Lydie Ngouala; 12) Mamie Manga; 13) Mossane Faye; 14) Odile Senghor.



Women singing to praise the Lord after being decorated

Decorating women consists in putting on: 1) a green blouse; b) a yellow scarf on their head. Those two colors have a significant meaning. Green means life and peace. United Methodist Women must be bearers of life and peace in the community where they live and in the world. Yellow symbolizes the light. UM Women are to be the light of the world. Everyone can see this light that leads to Jesus Christ.

Before being decorated women make promises to God and to the church. They express these promises in terms of vows. Each woman has to recite these vows in front of the congregation. There are five of them:

1. I promise to dedicate my life to Jesus Christ by reading the Bible and praying everyday.
2. I promise to do a god job in my family with the help of my husband and my children. We shall pray everyday in our family and at the church every week.
3. I promise to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to my parents, my friends and to everyone everywhere.
4. I promise to bear good fruit in God's work by loving and helping other women.
5. I promise to participate each week, with other women, in the church services and in other activities organized by the Women Unit.

Names of young women who were decorated that Sunday morning are: 1) Jatu Weber; 2) Elise Masoya; 3) Naoutane Ndecky; 4) Ivone Diouf; 5) Alice Mendy; 6) Antoinette Sagna; 7) Madeleine Diouf. Young women on their side put on a white blouse and a wrap on which purple, red and black colors are combined. White symbolizes joy and purity: young women are encouraged to always rejoice in the Lord and live in purity for Him. Purple is the color of royalty because young women belong to the kingdom of God; red symbolizes the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also the flame of the Holy Ghost; and the black of the cross points to the state of sin from which Jesus came to save young women and the entire humanity.



Mbwizu Ndjungu decorates Young Women

Alike UM Women, UM Young Women too have expressed their vows in front of the congregation before being decorated. Here are the vows:

1. Before God, before men and women, and the church as witness, I, servant of Jesus Christ in the United Methodist Church, I promise to serve the UM Young Women Unit according to the Discipline of the United Methodist Church based on the Holy Scripture.
2. I will love other young women of the unit. I will show them the way of truth and life. I will tell them that Jesus is their Lord and Savior so that they may believe in him and serve him.
3. As a UM young woman, I commit myself, with all my body, my heart, my mind and my strength to bear fruits that will please the Lord in his kingdom.
4. I will always be ready for repentance in times on failure, preserve my faith by fearing God. I will live in holiness which is the perfect live of a true christian life. This is my promise.

We thank you all who pray for us and for the work in Senegal day and night. May the Lord bless you abundantly!

All mission gifts to be sent to Advance number 12594A.

Nkemba Ndjungu
Mbwizu Ndjungu
Missionaries