

That Handful of Women

A Skit about the Beginnings of United Methodist Women

SLIDE 1: Blank

SLIDE 2: Intro – Scene Setting

Narrator: This morning, we will be re-creating the very first meeting of women organized for mission. Actors on the stage will portray a handful of women who are the founders of our present-day organization of United Methodist Women. You, as the audience, will also have a part to play. You will be the sound effects for our melodrama. Your parts will appear on the screens, and you should respond immediately with the action, words or sounds as indicated. **This half of the audience will be the left side, and this half will be the right side.** Please take your parts very seriously and respond with energy and enthusiasm when it is your turn.

SLIDE 3A: Title with lightening

SLIDE 3B: Applause.

SLIDE 4: L: RUB YOUR HANDS TOGETHER. R: SIT QUIETLY.

SLIDE 5: L: SNAP YOUR FINGERS. R: RUB YOUR HANDS TOGETHER.

SLIDE 6: L: PAT YOUR HANDS ON YOUR THIGHS. R: SNAP YOUR FINGERS.

SLIDE 7: L: CLAP YOUR HANDS. R: PAT YOUR HANDS ON YOUR THIGHS.

SLIDE 8: L: STOMP YOUR FEET. R: CLAP YOUR HANDS.

SLIDE 9: L: SIT QUIETLY. R: STOMP YOUR FEET.

SLIDE 10: STOP.

SLIDE 11: Sound of Thunder

Narrator: It was a dark and stormy night in Boston on March 23, 1869.

SLIDE 12: L: CLAP YOUR HANDS. R: STOMP YOUR FEET.

Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Parker: enter the room (struggling against the imaginary wind) and go to podium

SLIDE 13: women with umbrellas (wind sounds)

SLIDE 14: L: SNAP YOUR FINGERS. R: MAKE THE SOUND OF WIND.

SLIDE 15: umbrellas in rain (wind sounds)

SLIDE 16: Tremont Street Methodist Episcopal Church

Narrator: Mrs. William Butler and Mrs. Edwin Parker, wives of missionary husbands to India, arrive at Tremont Street Methodist Episcopal Church. Six other women have already gathered to hear them speak.

SLIDE 17: Founding Women picture from 1895 (only six of them present)

Mrs. Butler: (*Clearing her throat*) Ladies, thank you for coming.

SLIDE 18: APPLAUSE. R: CHEER.

SLIDE 19: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Parker: We know how treacherous the weather is tonight.

SLIDE 20: Thunder

SLIDE 21: L: CLAP YOUR HANDS. R: STOMP YOUR FEET.

SLIDE 22: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Butler: We hope this will not cause you ill health.

SLIDE 23: Sneeze Sound

SLIDE 24: "God bless you."

SLIDE 25: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Parker: Ladies, we have some very important news to tell you...

Mrs. Butler: About the plight of women and girls in India.

SLIDE 26: women in India cartoon

SLIDE 27: L: COVER MOUTH. R: SAY 'OH, MY'

SLIDE 28: L: GASP.

Mrs. Parker: Please, ladies, hear us out.

SLIDE 29: women meeting cartoon

SLIDE 30: R: SHHH.

Mrs. Butler: The girls are not being educated.

SLIDE 31: women in India cartoon

SLIDE 32: "Oh no!"

Mrs. Parker: There are only male doctors, and they will not treat women.

SLIDE 33: women in India cartoon

SLIDE 34: "This can't be!"

Mrs. Butler: *Please*, ladies, we must *do* something.

SLIDE 35: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Parker: Yes, our help is greatly needed.

SLIDE 36: "What can we **do**?"

Mrs. Butler: Oh, thank you for asking.

SLIDE 37: women meeting cartoon

SLIDE 38: "You're welcome."

Mrs. Parker: We think we have a plan.

SLIDE 39: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Butler: But it will require our being a bit unruly.

SLIDE 40: HISS.

Mrs. Parker: Now, now, it's not all that bad.

SLIDE 41: Founder's picture

Mrs. Butler: After all, we are proper Christian women.

SLIDE 42: Amen.

Mrs. Parker: We would not want to do anything to upset the men.

SLIDE 43: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Butler: Oh, *goodness*, no.

SLIDE 44: "Why not?"

Mrs. Parker: (*Looking to Mrs. Butler for reassurance.*)
Well then, here is our plan.

SLIDE 45: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Butler: We are going to raise the money

SLIDE 46: 3 women in India cartoon

Mrs. Parker: To send a woman educator

Mrs. Butler: And a woman doctor

Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Butler: (*In unison.*) To India.

SLIDE 47: LAUGH.

Mrs. Parker: Oh dear, Mrs. Butler, I was afraid of this.

SLIDE 48: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Butler: Now, Mrs. Parker, do not fret. This is not the time to lose courage.

SLIDE 49: SNIFFLE.

Mrs. Parker: Ladies, please, we must work together.

SLIDE 50: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Butler: Yes, Mrs. Parker, that's right, we must.

Mrs. Parker: If we women don't band together for our sisters in India

Mrs. Butler: *Who* will?

Mrs. Parker: The girls will *be left* uneducated,

Mrs. Butler: And the women without medical care.

Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Butler: (*In unison.*) They shall surely perish!

SLIDE 51: women cartoon in India with doctor (*Eerie music for a few chords.*)

Mrs. Butler: In God's name, we must do something.

SLIDE 52: "But how can we help?"

Mrs. Parker: Oh, I'm so glad you asked.

SLIDE 53: women meeting cartoon

SLIDE 54: "You're welcome."

Mrs. Butler: We can raise the money

SLIDE 55: women raising money

Mrs. Parker: By wearing cheap calico robes,

SLIDE 56: calico dress on door

Mrs. Butler: Instead of buying these expensive fashions.

SLIDE 57: SCREAM.

Mrs. Parker: Now, ladies, there's no need to over-react.

SLIDE 58: Founder's picture

Mrs. Butler: *Please, do* maintain your composure.

SLIDE 59: CLEAR YOUR THROAT.

Mrs. Parker: Ladies, consider the sacrifices our Lord Jesus has made for us.

SLIDE 60: Christ with crown of thorns

Mrs. Butler: It is the least we can do in gratitude and service to Him.

Mrs. Parker: Are we not as much His disciples as the men?

Mrs. Butler: Called to care for the **poor**, the widows, the **orphans** in every land.

SLIDE 61: women with baby

SLIDE 62: "Absolutely."

Mrs. Parker: We could raise the money in no time

SLIDE 63: women raising money

Mrs. Butler: If we just deny ourselves some frills.

SLIDE 64: "But calico?"

Mrs. Parker: Yes, well, it is a bit coarse,

SLIDE 65: calico cloth

Mrs. Butler: But it is very durable,

Mrs. Parker: And easy to care for.

Mrs. Butler: Who knows, we might even make a fashion statement.

SLIDE 66: women sweeping in calico dress

SLIDE 67: "Calico! Calico!"

Mrs. Parker: *Now, that's the spirit.*

SLIDE 68: women meeting cartoon

Mrs. Butler: Praise God, we are united.

SLIDE 69: "Hallelujah!"

Mrs. Parker: I know a woman educator named Isabella Thoburn.

SLIDE 70: pictures of Isabella Thoburn and Clara Swain

Mrs. Butler: And I know a woman doctor named Clara Swain.

Mrs. Parker: They have agreed to go to India

Mrs. Butler: As our first female missionaries.

SLIDE 71: APPLAUSE.

Mrs. Parker: We will build a school to educate girls.

SLIDE 72: pictures of the school and hospital

Mrs. Butler: And we will build a hospital to provide medical care for women.

SLIDE 73: "Justice! Justice!"

Mrs. Parker: This is going to be the start of something big

SLIDE 74: modern pictures of the school and hospital

Mrs. Butler: Really big.

Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Butler: *(In unison)*. And it all begins right here.

SLIDE 75: CHEERS.

Mrs. Parker: Sisters, let us commend our plans to God's care,

SLIDE 76: praying hands

Mrs. Butler: Trusting that God will bring this to pass.

SLIDE 77: "Let us pray."

The women bow their heads and fold their hands in prayer.

SLIDE 78: picture of praying hands – *(eerie organ music)*

Narrator: So it was, on that stormy night in Boston on March 23, 1869, that the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. It was the first of eight women's missionary societies founded by our predecessor organizations. Today, we continue the legacy of women organized for mission as United Methodist Women.

SLIDE 79: lighting picture

SLIDE 80: L: RUB YOUR HANDS TOGETHER. R: SIT QUIETLY.

SLIDE 81: L: SNAP YOUR FINGERS. R: RUB YOUR HANDS TOGETHER.

SLIDE 82: L: PAT YOUR HANDS ON YOUR THIGHS. R: SNAP YOUR FINGERS.

SLIDE 83: L: CLAP YOUR HANDS. R: PAT YOUR HANDS ON YOUR THIGHS.

SLIDE 84: L: STOMP YOUR FEET. R: CLAP YOUR HANDS.

SLIDE 85: L: SIT QUIETLY. R: STOMP YOUR FEET.

SLIDE 86: STOP.

The actors exit and the stage is cleared.

SLIDE 87A: Thunder

SLIDE 87B: THE END.

SLIDE 88: CREDITS