

Anti-Domestic Violence Pilot Project Launch by United Methodist Women and Men in Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference and Partners

The United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men Collaboration to End Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference will host training at Sharp Street United Methodist Church in Baltimore on October 11 at 8:30a – 5:30p EST. This event is a first-time educational opportunity designed by The Collaboration and a partnership with the Baltimore-Washington Conference, United Methodist Women national offices, Faith Trust Institute, and Sumayya Coleman with Share Time Wisely Consulting Services.

A selection committee from United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men's leadership selected 35 people from three districts and 25 churches which made up eight teams. Each of the teams is composed of two churches per district or region for Church Team Training. Each church team is made up of 2 women, 2 men and 2 youth representatives (at least one of them is 18 years old or more and one of them being responsible for youth programming at their church). A minimum of four and a maximum of six people are required to make a team. The 35 church team members made a commitment to:

- Participate in at least one pre-event meeting to discuss the preparations they need to make for attending a one-day event and spend enough time together for a presentation and discussion on basic domestic violence awareness
- Attend the entire event on October 11, 2014 and follow up
- Engage in post-event work within their church and community to address domestic violence in practical and systemic ways as agreed to at the October training event

This Church Team training is a pilot project for the Inelda Gonzalez Domestic Violence Initiative. Inelda Gonzalez was president of United Methodist Women during the 2008-2012 quadrennium. In the Baltimore/Washington Conference, it is part of the collaborative work between United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men. This pilot effort will be used as a model to replicate in other United Methodist conferences. The goal is to educate laity to support persons who experience domestic violence and abuse who attend United Methodist Churches and live in the surrounding communities.