

PORTUGAL UNIT REPORT

“Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters.”
(Colossians 3:23)

The FMM aim is “To Know Christ and make Him Known” as well “To Love and to Serve”

With this sentence in our minds and hearts, the Portuguese women want to be involved in providing better days for many people who live near us not only from our church but also outside it. This is a way to show Christ and His Love to all.



The Federation of Portuguese Methodist Women is composed by 4 work areas:

- Area of Culture and Training
- Area of Contacts
- Area of Finance
- Area of Spirituality

Each of them includes 3 women from different regions of Portugal.

This new format of the executive group composition facilitates the preparation of activities as each group presents its work proposals and all collaborate in its preparation and implementation.

Over the years it has been verified that involving women of different ages (35 to 80 years old), from different local churches, and different gifts, enriches the work.

This diversity is reflected in the involvement and participation of women from several ages groups who participate in the activities at the national level.

We report here the activities carried out in the year 2017

Performed activities, carried out at the national level with the involvement and participation of women from the various Methodist churches from north to south of Portugal as well women of Sister Churches (Roman Catholic Church, Baptist Church, Focolares Movement, Lusitanian Church, Church of Brothers and Sisters who do not belong to any church).

We embrace each and every one with the Love of Jesus

The FMM activities are:

- Women`s work in local churches
- Once a year the executive group of FMM organized:

Plenary Session

It brings together women from various churches. Is a place where we review the existing work and the ongoing programs and discuss the chosen yearly theme.

All those present participate by sharing their work in the local churches, also suggesting activities at the national level

Spirituality gathering during a weekend- this year with the theme "**How can we have a closer relationship with God**"

This meeting was in charge and was directed by the area of spirituality 40 Women from various part of the country participated in this meeting

We reflect on:

- a) our relationship with God
- b) wanting to be closer to Him
- c) to live in unity with God and to breathe "BE JESUS"
- d) to create this unity it is necessary: time, communication, circumstance and desire to open

The more intimacy we have with God, the more He changes, transforms, influences our lives

Holiday Camp

With the theme "**How can we have a closer relationship with God**", this week was worked and directed by all the members of the executive group and also had the participation of 2 young scholars. This year, during a week, women and men between the ages of 50 and 90 spent a week sharing everything in the activities carried out:

- i) devotional moments / reflection and prayer
- ii) beach
- iii) manual work
- iv) physiotherapeutic gymnastics
- v) recreational nights / traditional games
- vi) Visit to a Portuguese tourist region (this year we went to Régua, north of Portugal, place of the vineyards of port wine;
- vii) We ended the week with worship prepared and directed by the National Federation. With the theme "Me and my Father-knowing God in person" with a message from a sister from USA (Ubuntu Journey).



This year around 60 people participated (32 Portuguese women, 13 American women belonging to the group "Ubuntu Journey"), 7 couples and 1 man

The main goal of this week is to provide to the older women (and recently men) with very low incomes a time of descent, conviviality and leisure among sisters and brothers.

Participation and Contacts

Contacts and relationships with sister church organizations and women

We share and strengthen relationships with women from sister Churches and organizations both in Portugal and abroad.

- World Federation of Methodist Women and United
- World Day of Prayer
- United Methodist Women (USA)
- Ubuntu Journey (USA)



Preparing fund raising for projects

We submit projects to different entities and international organizations with the intention of developing and supporting actions prepared and worked by the Federation of Portuguese Women Methodists.

Their purpose is to work in partnership with the funding institutions in the preparation, construction and continuity with our work in a more active way

We are engaged in:

- empowering women (supporting young women with Scholarship program for teenagers and young people)
- supporting elderly people (Holiday week for low income elderly women)
- developing activities with children, youth and teens
- developing diversified activities because of European crisis where youngest and elderly people are most vulnerable
- Preparing fund raising for projects
- social work linked to the Methodist Church

Twice a year services

- The FMM day service
- The World Women Federation service

Scholarships

In the year 2016/2017, **13 scholarships** were awarded to young women: 9 from university education and 4 from secondary education.

In the year 2017/2018, **17 scholarships** are being awarded: 5 males and 12 females. Granting of grants is subject to regulations in which only young members of the Methodist Church or children of members active in the life of the Church are essentially contemplated, and / or exceptional as well without any other financial support and scholarly use (good marks) .

We thank God for the partnership with the United Methodist Women (USA) and the Valdese Church / Italy (Project 8/1000) that over the years support us financially and give us the possibility to contribute to the education of disadvantaged young people.

In return, each fellow is expected to participate in the life of their church as well as in the life and activities of the Women's Federation

Only with the help of God and put in prayer all our work that we want to do for the sisters in Christ, it was possible to carry it out

2017 was a richly blessed year in sharing and learning about living the Love of God.

We, Portuguese Methodist Women, we committed to live in this Love and make it known to others.