



# ALERT

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## Hope, Joy, Peace, Trust, and Power

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Jesus Christ had, so that, with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 15: 5-6 [NIV]



## 2021 Conference Officers

President	Debbie Bracewell
Vice President	Katy Wrona
Secretary	Debbie Bell
Treasurer	Jean Creswell
Communications	Open
Nominations	Peggy Cunningham, Chair

## Mission Coordinators

Spiritual Growth	Tutti Johnson
Social Action	Ora Gillespie
MN&O	Kristine Jones
Ed. & Interp.	Joyce Genz
Webmaster	Anne Capps
Parliamentarian	Joyce Genz
SEJ Chair of Nom.	Barbara Carroll
Nat. Board of Dir.	Betty Helms

## AWF-UMW 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)*

**Virtual Mission u**  
**July 22-24, 2021**

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Spring and summer are lovely months for me. As a gardener, I can't wait to welcome my perennials as old friends and make new friends with the plants I add to my garden. This summer is especially sweet as many of us are safely venturing out to renew friendships and welcome new friends. We have a busy summer ahead with Mission u in July and many units and districts hosting local events and re-engaging in studies and fundraisers.

While **Mission u** will be in a Zoom format, the enthusiasm of facilitators and participants will still be felt, and we will be able to see our conference friends and make new ones. We have three excellent studies that will challenge us and remind us of our commitment to God and his will. Our facilitators have participated in Mission u training and are working to make each study a meaningful one for us as participants. Welcome the challenges; prepare to be transformed! Visit our website to register—<https://www.awf-umw.org/> or use the form at the end of this newsletter.

TURN IT UP! and turn your attention to **Assembly 2022** May 20-22 in Orlando, Florida. You don't want to miss out on this event of spiritual inspiration and worshipping with your sisters in Christ to celebrate the positive impact women create in the world. Read the posters at the end of the newsletter to get all the details. Our conference is offering a scholarship to Assembly 2022 for those United Methodist Women who meet the specifications. Go to our conference website (<https://www.awf-umw.org/>) and look under the **Forms** section for the Assembly Scholarship form. Early registration begins September 1, 2021. The 2022 Assembly website address is <https://assembly2022.org/>.

Enjoy this summer. As Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart . . . and he will make your paths straight."

*Debbie Bracewell*  
*President*



## ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE

*May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Jesus Christ had, so that, with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5-6*



## MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Hello everyone! I hope you are enjoying this spring time! Just like the flowers, I love seeing ministry begin to bloom again.

I enjoyed our 2021 Annual Day virtual event. Thank you to everyone who helped make it an amazing morning! Celeste's message was powerful and inspiring as we look towards the future.

I have had the chance to attend two district annual days. It has been amazing to hear how our units are serving our communities and coming together in this time of transition and healing.

This past quarter, I have been serving on the Mission u committee and planning for SER. I am so excited to see how these events unfold and to see how God moves us through our time of learning and fellowship.

I look forward to seeing each of you at our next event whether virtual or in person.

Katy Wrona

AWF-UMW Vice President



## From the AWF-UMW Conference Secretary



Did you know? A Corporate **Secretary** is required by state corporation laws for every corporation. A key responsibility of the Corporate **Secretary** is to ensure that Board members **have** the proper advice and resources for discharging their fiduciary duties to shareholders under state law.

Did you know? Our Alabama-West Florida UMW Conference LEADERSHIP TEAM should include at least a president, treasurer, **secretary** and the chair of the committee on nominations. Additional persons may be named either at-large or in the designated roles approved by the conference. Additional teams or committees may be formed as needed to fulfill the Purpose.

Did you know? The Policies of our Alabama-West Florida UMW includes language for outgoing officers for the conference Secretary that include ***“C. Conference Secretary should keep all minutes, Standing Rules and Policies, list of conference officers and other important documents in a permanent binder. As much as possible all records should be digitized and stored on the Alabama West Florida Conference United Methodist Women's Drop Box.”***

Did you know? The Standing Rules & Policies of our Alabama-West Florida UMW includes language that requires the Executive Mission Team Standing Rules & Policies committee review the “Rules & Policies” annually and presents any “Rules” changes before the voting UMW membership in attendance for approval during the meeting that includes elections. The **secretary** is a member of this review committee.

I recently found this installation question for a Secretary in an officer installation program: “SECRETARY: Will you study to know all the correct terminology so you can keep a clear and accurate history of this conference organization? Our connectional system means that there are persons in other places who need information about this conference. Will you see that this information is recorded and sent to the appropriate places? If so, answer ‘I will, with God's help.’”

We may need to know several UMW organizational “things to do,” but the one thing we must always remember—*We will* seek God's help and He will equip & encourage us. As we begin to re-gather the AWF-UMW membership post-pandemic, let us continue our commitment to encourage others to join our mission and focus our Pledge to Mission funds to help women, children, and youth.

Debbie Bell

## News and Mission Giving Updates from the Conference Treasurer's Desk:

We are well into our 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2021 and are a little slow on getting our Pledge money into our coffers and onto National. Every year we are falling further and further behind in our mission giving. Here is a five-year comparison or from 2017 to 2021. This includes all eight districts and conference giving in the five areas of giving that count towards our Pledge to Missions.

5 Years Historical Mission Giving AWF-UMW	1/1/21- 5/10/21	1/1/2020- 5/10/2020	1/1/2019- 5/10/2019	1/1/2018- 5/10/2018	1/1/2017- 5/10/2017
Pledge to Mission	8,090	17,712	20,732	30,607	30,891
Gifts in Memory Income	1,380	470	400	733	640
Mission Giving Cards Income	80	330	454	603	298
World Thanks Offering Income	188	1,947	641	1,656	2,253
Special Recognition Pin Income	460	1,055	1,024	605	925
<b>TOTAL MISSION GIVING 5-AREAS GIVING</b>	<b>10,197</b>	<b>21,513</b>	<b>23,251</b>	<b>34,204</b>	<b>35,006</b>



However, our conference was one of a handful of UMW conferences across the nation that surpassed our 2020 Pledge to Missions. We even received a certificate for our efforts!

Also, please note that National informed us of an item of interest to all those ordering Special Mission Recognition pins or replacement pins.

I am posting this message on behalf of Tamara Clark, Treasurer/CFO for your information:

*"Our fulfillment contractor is no longer able to print and mail certificates along with the pins. So effective immediately, the certificate templates are for district treasurers and conference treasurers. We are sorry for the abrupt change but unfortunately it was out of our control. Respectfully Yours, Janet Mainor, UMW Online Group Administrator Conference and District Treasurers"*

**WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOU:** You will still get your pins from the Resource Center, but certificates will be done either by the Conference or the District Treasurer and will come in a separate mailing. Also, no replacement pins or certificates will be done on lost pins.

Conference Treasurer's Report continued on page

**CONFERENCE TREASURER'S REPORT CONT.**

For the Year <b>2021</b> as of 5/10/21				
MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE)	Pledge	Paid	Balance	% Paid
Bay Pines	14,000	2,082	11,919	14.9%
Demopolis	14,000	2,704	11,296	19.3%
Dothan	12,000	1,847	10,153	15.4%
Marianna/PC	11,000	1,028	9,972	9.3%
Mobile	20,000	285	19,715	1.4%
Mtg/Opelika	6,750	1,650	5,100	24.4%
Mtg/Prattville	10,000	110	9,890	1.1%
Pensacola	20,000	397	19,603	2.0%
Events - Offering	2,700	95	2,605	3.5%
TOTALS FROM DISTRICTS	110,450	10,197	100,253	9.2%
Pledge to National	93,883	8,711	85,171	9.3%

**COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS**

"Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful and endures through every circumstance." This is from *First Corinthians* Chapter 13, but I thought it was so appropriate for us today as United Methodist Women. We have kept our faith and are hopeful that we can return to "normal" soon.

We have had some Conference Zoom meetings as well as some District and Unit meetings. Thank you to all the officers and individuals who were able to set up our Zoom meetings.

Just think what it will be like when we can have all our meetings in person and see our friends and continue our Mission Work.

The Nominations Committee has been thinking about our officers for 2022. I will be sending out a Talent Bank form to all District Presidents to copy and give to each Unit President. Every United Methodist Women member has a God-given talent; so I want each one to talk with God about how she might use that talent in her Unit, District or Conference. If that is done, I feel that we will be able to find officers needed.

We still do not have a Conference Communication Officer. Debbie Bracewell, our President, has been doing our newsletter and has done such a wonderful job. However, she has so much to do as President we cannot expect her to continue with the newsletter. There is someone in one of our Districts who could volunteer to be our Communications Coordinator.

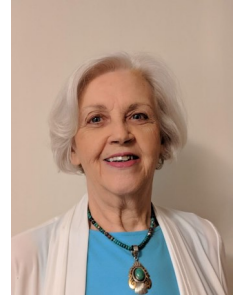
In His Service,

Peggy Cunningham  
Nomination Chair  
251-752-1714



## AWF-UMW Education & Interpretation

### Mission u: Learning Together for the Transformation of the World



It is time to start promoting the AWF-UMW Virtual Mission u to your units. This issue of the Alert provides details on the courses and leaders. Please encourage members as well as friends and anyone interested in social justice to participate this year. It will never be easier or less expensive to experience Mission u. Since our pledges and love offerings help support Mission u, participants will have an excellent education for the low fee of \$10 plus \$15 for each book. That is a total of \$40 for two classes or \$25 for one class. If you have registered for educational seminars, you know that is an incredible bargain for 6 or 12 hours of instruction plus worship opportunities. Since Mission u will be on Zoom with no additional travel or room expenses, it is very affordable for anyone who wishes to participate. For those without reliable access to the internet, small groups may wish to meet together to participate in the same class. Please note that everyone participating in a shared class will need to register individually and purchase a book. The link on the AWF-UMW.org website also has a flyer and a printable registration form for distribution. If you already have your study guides, you will need to use the mail-in registration to indicate that you already have your book(s) and only need to pay the \$10 Mission u registration fee.

Mission u is a win-win for everyone. Having two members from one unit attending Mission u satisfies item 11 on the Mission Today form and having a mission study at the district, unit, or circle level also satisfies item 4. Under the train-the-trainer model, study leaders have attended national training events to be prepared to facilitate a mission study at the conference level. After attending a conference Mission u event, you are then encouraged to facilitate the study in your district or local groups. A team of qualified facilitators can each be responsible for a section to share the workload.

For those participating in the Reading Program, all mission studies count as a bonus book (2 books in one category). For more details see the Program Resources section of this article.



***Voices from the Field*** events are held quarterly and are great resources to help interpret the need to give. This virtual conversation series features leaders sharing their work and life stories, and highlights how United Methodist Women initiatives supported by your mission giving significantly improve the lives of women, children and youth around the world. Previous episodes are available at <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/voices-from-the-field>

## Program Resources

**Reading Program Catalogue:** For 2021–2022, participants can read books from the 2015 through the 2022 reading lists.

An expanded 2021 list of Reading Program books with 34 additional books is now available through the link at awf-umw.org in the Reading Program box or <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/2021readingprogramtitles.pdf>

***You do not need to complete one of the plans to be recognized as a Reading Program participant. Please complete a reading report form to get credit for your reading and help your district win the Reading Worm for 2021.***

**Reading Book Reporting Form:** The completed reading forms should be given to your local president for the Consolidated President's Report, so she can complete her report by November 30.

**Participation:** Anyone can participate in the Reading Program and all can receive a certificate for participating. To meet the Mission Today Criteria 9, at least one unit member must be a participant in the Reading Program.

**Here are some alternative ways to increase reading participation.**

**Download books onto an e-reader** to pass around and share. This is an excellent idea for those who need large print books.

**Faith Talks:** Faith Talk podcasts can now be counted in the category of Spiritual Growth. You must participate or listen to two Faith Talks podcasts to count as one book in the Spiritual Growth category. If you listen to three, it will be counted as two books.

**Movies:** Watching these movies and documentaries will also count toward the Reading Program:

1. *Just Mercy*
2. *The Hate U Give*
3. *Pushout*

**Children and youth** books can be found within each of the categories and count toward the certificate. Read to a child/youth or enjoy them yourself.

**Bonus books:** These count as two books in different categories.

*Rise! From Caged Bird to Poet of the People*, Maya Angelou- two books in Leadership Development

**The Mission studies also count as Bonus Books:**

*Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools* by Monique W. Morris (as well as the Leader's Guide by Vanessa M. Wilson) counts as two books in Social Action

*Women United for Change 50 Years in Mission* by Ellen Blue counts as two books in Nurturing for Community.

*Finding Peace in An Anxious World* edited by Erin James-Brown- counts as two books in Spiritual Growth

Books often raise concerns about people, countries and issues. Bring these concerns to God during your prayer time at home and at group meetings. Blessings on your journey as you are transformed and seek to transform the world,

**Joyce Genz, Conference Education & Interpretation**

Some of the Information in this article was provided by Andris Salter, Operations Officer of the United Methodist Women and downloaded from [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org).



## Spiritual Growth

### SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT FOR SOUL CARE

I've got exciting news, ladies! We are having OUR FIRST LIVE, ON-SITE GATHERING October 8-9 at Blue Lake Assembly! As I'm sure you'll remember, we voted two years ago to go to a two day, one night event, but unfortunately Covid hit, and that was the end of it last year! This year, we are READY! We are very intentional about caring for our souls! We have a speaker I know you will love. She's Reverend Jean Tippet, District Superintendent of Bay Pines.

We also have several breakouts you'll enjoy: Kindness Rocks to paint with Betty Helms, Praying with Color with Katy Wrona, Essential Oils of the Bible with Debbie Bracewell, an exciting Bible Study with Sarah Wrona, and The Origin of Old, Beloved Hymns with me. I wish I wasn't leading a Breakout . . . there are some classes I'd like to take! There are others besides these I've listed, but we don't want to give away everything just yet! This year you'll have an opportunity to go to at least three Breakouts, but that's not all – we have a few surprises up our sleeves! We are really looking forward to seeing your faces live and in person! It's going to be a fun, spiritual, "God with us" event, and we hope you'll join us! Registration forms should be on our web page around the middle of July.

Unfortunately, Blue Lake sustained some serious damage in the April storms, and they could really use our prayers. They've got a full slate of activities planned for this summer, and we know they are doing their best to repair the damage.

Blessings,  
Tutti Johnson  
Spiritual Growth Coordinator

### KEEPING YOUR DIGITAL SPACE SAFE

1. Backup your data and important documents to ensure your important information is safe.
2. Keep 3 copies of important documents by saving them to the Cloud, USB, and/or an external hard drive.
3. Organize data by using folders and sub-folders.
4. Regularly check for updates.
5. Regularly check your backups are working.

Anne Capps  
Webmaster





## Charter for Racial Justice

The United States—a nation of many peoples of different races, nationalities, languages and cultures—is challenged to make the Charter for Racial Justice a charter for everyone. The Charter for Racial Justice was created and adopted by the Women's Division of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries in 1978. In 1980 the division successfully recommended adoption of the charter by the whole denomination. General Conference has consecutively readopted it, every eight years since, most recently in 2016. The charter continues United Methodist Women's urgent call for study and action on the principles and goals of its vision.

### For Unit Enrichment:

- Display Charter for Racial Justice Policies AND lift up at least 1 issue at each unit meeting.
- Supply each member with a copy of the Charter for Racial Justice Policies.
- Purchase & discuss one United Methodist Women's Reading Program book about a different culture or written by someone of a different racial ethnic background.
- Study in depth a particular issue relating to the Charter for Racial Justice Policies.

You can find more suggestions for your units by consulting the Consolidated Report Forms (page 13) located on the Conference website—[www.awf-umw.org/](http://www.awf-umw.org/)

## MEMBERSHIP NURTURE AND OUTREACH

### THE KITCHEN

United Methodist Women are organizing to feed the multitudes. Let's expand our reach to follow Jesus' example in Matthew 14. [The Kitchen](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/members-leaders/mission-resources/the-kitchen) ([www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/members-leaders/mission-resources/the-kitchen](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/members-leaders/mission-resources/the-kitchen)) is one of those places where women organize to ensure that all are fed, both literally and figuratively. How are you organizing locally to make things happen in a new way?



Members  
Make It  
All Possible

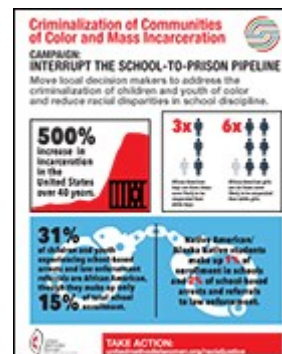
## Social Action

What can you do to become more involved in Social Action?

1. Sign up for Social Action Alerts—these email alerts will notify you of actions you can take on the four Social Action campaigns

[https://secure3.convio.net/umw/site/SPageNavigator/Social\\_Action\\_Alerts.html](https://secure3.convio.net/umw/site/SPageNavigator/Social_Action_Alerts.html)

2. Subscribe to the response podcasts—<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/responsepodcast>  
These feature audio versions of some of the articles from each issue.
3. Download Campaign Posters to use during programs.



### MONTGOMERY-OPELIKA ANNUAL DAY

Top left—Edna Williams reads the Prayer Calendar; Top right—Group picture of Carolyn, Coker, Edna Williams, Judy Melville; Bottom right—Installation of new Montgomery-Opelika District officers—Brenda Hargrave (treasurer), Debbie Bracewell (UMW Conference President), Marge Stephens (district president).



## AWF-UMW Mission u 2021

# There's 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 (produced in cooperation with GNTV), 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 (you may take one class Friday and one Saturday)

- \* ***Finding Peace in an Anxious World***, edited by Erin James-Brown. The four chapters, each written by a different Urban Village Church leader, focus on different aspects of the Serenity Prayer—serenity, acceptance, courage, and wisdom—and each concludes with a spiritual practice to help further develop the featured characteristic in your life.
- \* ***Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*** by Monique Morris. *Pushout* shows how even with obstacles, stigmas, stereotypes and despair, black girls still find ways to breathe remarkable dignity into their lives in classrooms, juvenile facilities and beyond, and challenges the rest of us to do the same.
- \* ***Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living into the Church's Moral Witness Through Radical Discipleship*** by Darryl W. Stephens. The purpose of this study is to help the church and its members discern our call and bear witness to the will of God for a more just world.
- \* Join us: **Online July 22-24, 2021** (must **register by July 12**). Opening Worship is Thursday, July 22, 6:30-7:30 pm; **Studies are July 23 & 24, 8:30 am-5:00 pm**, including opening, breaks & plenaries. Continuing Education Credit is available. All donations will be given to the Equal Justice Initiative (Montgomery, AL).
- \* **Register:** <https://www.awf-umw.org/> or mail in form to AWF-UMW Mission u, 3043 Headland Avenue, Dothan, AL 36303. Registration cost is \$10 plus \$15 per class (study book is included in class fee). Total cost for all sessions is \$40. A link will be sent to you after registration is completed to join the online sessions in real time..

## Mission u 2021 Study Leaders

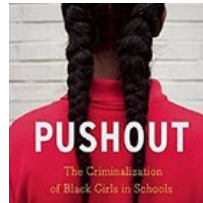
### ***Pushout—2021 Issue Mission Study***

Brenda Boman

Clara Ester

Zan Jones

Kim Sanders



### ***Finding Peace in an Anxious World—2021 Spiritual Mission Study***

Celeste Eubanks

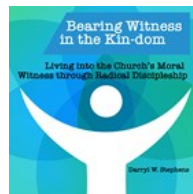
Debbie Bracewell



### ***Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom—2021 Spiritual Growth Mission Study***

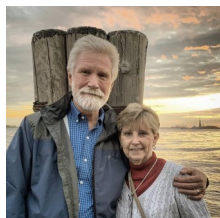
Joyce Genz

Judith Pierre-Okerson



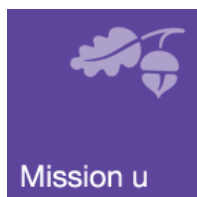
**Dean of Mission u Laurel Akin** is a United Methodist deaconess with a ministry of photography and writing. She has been active in United Methodist Women for 30 years and appreciates the many opportunities for learning and spiritual growth that has given her. She is a member of Enterprise First UMC.

Laurel is married to Bob Akin and has three adult children and six grandchildren. She enjoys reading, cooking, Tai Chi, travel and, of course, photography and writing.



**Assistant Dean of Mission u Jim DuFriend** is a retired Elder in the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference. Before coming to Alabama in 1991, Jim and his wife Diana served churches in Arizona and Southern California in the Church of the Nazarene. Following that, they were appointed by the Mission Board of the Church of the Nazarene to teach in theological colleges in Australia and Trinidad where they served four years in each location. Jim and Diana have two grown sons, seventeen grandchildren, and their spouses, and five great-grandchildren. Diana is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist working in community mental health, and Jim is serving three churches in the Demopolis District.





## MEET THE STUDY LEADERS

**Brenda Boman** is a life-long United Methodist and an Indiana native who has lived in Alabama most of her adult life. She is a member of Notasulga United Methodist Church. After a 27-year teaching career, Brenda served for 16 years as the development director of Alabama Arise, a non-profit statewide coalition of faith communities, civic organizations and individuals who work together to promote better public policies to improve the lives of low-income Alabamians. She retired in January, 2021.



**Debbie Bracewell** is a member of the Enterprise First United Methodist Church and has been a member of UMW Circle 6 since 2004. She was the Dothan District President and has served as Membership Nurture and Outreach chair and Communications chair. She has been teaching mission studies at the conference and district level since 2014. She is currently the President of the Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women.

Debbie Bracewell's professional experience includes the positions of high school English teacher, cheer coach, cheer judge, executive director of National Council for Spirit Safety and Education, editor of an online cheer magazine *Entirely Cheer*, former president of the Recovery Organization of Coffee County and public speaking. She currently is an after-school tutor and a volunteer for church and community.

Debbie has a degree in Secondary English Education from Troy State, a Master's Degree in Secondary Education from Troy State Dothan, and a Master's Degree in Strategic Communication from Troy University. Debbie is a widow with 2 sons, 2 stepsons, and 10 grandchildren. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening and traveling.

**Clara J. Ester**, a native of Memphis, TN, is a graduate of LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis. She moved to Mobile, AL, in February 1970 to serve at Dumas Wesley Community Center as a neighborhood organizer. She later assumed the roles of Program Director, Associate Director and retired December 2006 as the Executive Director.

She's a member of Toulminville-Warren Street United Methodist Church. She has held a number of positions in lay leadership at the congregational, district, conference, jurisdiction, and national level for both the church and United Methodist Women, including as a delegate to General Conference in 2016. She is a member of the National UMW Charter for Racial Justice team and was the UMW National Vice President from 2016-2020. She has also served on many boards and agencies in Mobile.

In 1986, she was commissioned as a deaconess of the the United Methodist Church. She has served as chair of the UMW DHM board and presently is chair of NADHM.

Clara's interest in social welfare and justice was fueled by her early relationship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She was very active in the Civil Rights struggle in Memphis, TN. and worked with several other projects throughout the south. She was one of the youth organizers for the Second Poor People's Campaign in Marks, MS.

Clara has one son, Reginald.





## MISSION u STUDY LEADERS



**Deaconess Celeste Eubanks**, is the Director of Leadership Strategies for the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church in Montgomery, AL. A native of Slidell, LA, Celeste was christened and nurtured in the Christian faith at Mt. Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Celeste received her Bachelors degree in Business Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi and her Masters degree in Communication and Leadership Studies from Gonzaga University (Spokane, WA). Upon graduating from USM, Celeste accepted a job in Mobile, AL working as a software developer for CPSI (a healthcare information systems company), and later transitioned to Human Resources at the same company.

While in Mobile, Celeste became a member of Toulminville-Warren St. United Methodist Church and later joined St. John United Methodist Church and served there until moving to Montgomery. It was while serving at St. John that Celeste answered her call to become a Deaconess in the United Methodist Church – making a lifetime commitment to full-time vocation in ministries of love, justice, and service. Celeste was consecrated as a Deaconess in May 2018 at the United Methodist Women's Assembly in Columbus, OH.

Celeste is an active volunteer with Communities of Transformation and is a Wish Granter with Make-A-Wish Alabama. Additionally, she serves on the Alabama-West Florida Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, the Tuskegee Wesley Board of Directors, and the Quad-W Missional Outreach



**Joyce Genz** is honored and humbled to be chosen as a facilitator for the 2021 Co-operative Mission u. She began her professional career in Arizona where she was employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Navajo reservation. Later she taught in the Chinle AZ Public School system and then at a small mission school where her two children attended school.

She is the retired dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies at Spring Hill College in Mobile AL, where she also taught in the Intensive English Language Institute for 8 years and served as the director of the institute for another 10 years. In retirement, Joyce and her husband Bill continue to teach English as a Second Language at

Christ United Methodist Church in Mobile AL to students from all over the world. This past year all classes were moved to the Zoom virtual platform until students can once again meet in person.

Joyce holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Evangel University in Springfield, MO, and Master of Science in Instructional Design from the University of South Alabama. She also completed doctoral courses in Adult Education and Organizational Leadership. Joyce has served as the Alabama-West Florida Conference Education and Interpretation Coordinator for the past three years. She is an officer of her local UMW unit at Christ United in Mobile. She recently facilitated "*Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church*" in the Alabama West Florida and the Central Missouri Conferences. She has facilitated a number of mission studies at the local and district levels as well. Besides being active in education and the United Methodist Women's local ministries, Joyce loves to read, cook and garden.

## MISSION u STUDY LEADERS



**Zan Jones** is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana residing in Mobile, Alabama for over 29 years. She is a member of Toulminville-Warren Street United Methodist Church where she serves as an usher, Chairman of the Prayer Ministry and Spiritual Growth Coordinator for her United Methodist Women unit. She has served as the Alabama-West Florida Conference UMW Social Action Coordinator, Chair of the Committee on Nomination and presently is the conference representative for the national board for the Charter for Racial Justice. She is active in her community.

She serves on the Mobile District United Methodist Board Ignite Mobile, also volunteers with Communities of Transformation for the Mobile District. Her love of people is implied in her profession as a healthcare worker for over 35 years. She is loving wife to Reginald and mother to Ashton Jones. In her spare time she loves to play tennis.

**Deaconess Dr. Judith Pierre-Okerson** is a member at Miramar United Methodist Church in the Florida Conference. A longtime member of United Methodist Women, Judith currently serves as the co-secretary of her local unit and the President of the Conference. Judith served as registrar, Assistant Dean, Dean of School of Christian Mission now Mission u. She is a frequent study leader at the National level and led studies in various conferences including the Alabama West Florida.



Dr. Pierre-Okerson's involvement in The United Methodist Church at the National level includes board member of The General Commission on Religion and Race, The General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), The Women's Division where she served as the chair of the Committee on Nomination, and the United Methodist Women National Organization where she chaired the Governance Committee. She served as delegate to several General and Jurisdictional Conferences and is a delegate to the upcoming General and Jurisdictional conferences. ,

Deaconess Pierre-Okerson is the South East District Lay Leader, and she co-chairs the Training and Accountability Team of the Bishop's Task Force to eradicate and dismantle racism in the Florida Conference.



### **Kim Sanders, She/Her/Hers**

Kim is a Licensed Independent Social Worker in Columbus, Ohio. In her current role, Kim works with children and adults in both the individual and family settings to help meet basic physical and mental health needs with a specific focus on those who have been or are at risk for incarceration and/or homelessness.

Kim also works as an adjunct instructor and curriculum writer of social work at Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Mount Vernon, Ohio. Her primary courses include Social Justice and Advocacy, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, and Macro Practice where she is able to assist students in developing crucial critical thinking skills as well as practical steps to identify and dismantle systems of oppression, including addressing internal biases.

Kim grew up in Southeast Ohio and has been part of the West Ohio Conference. She has served in various capacities within both the West Ohio Conference and the East Ohio Conference, including her roles as a staff member of West Ohio Camps, youth director, and adult volunteer for the Young Justice Advocates Movement. She was also part of the Holy Disruption Learning Cohort on disrupting the school-to-prison pipeline and other methods of confinement disproportionately affecting black and brown bodied girls, utilizing *Pushout*. In her free time, Kim enjoys spending time outdoors, especially hiking and kayaking. She also enjoys crocheting, writing, and spending time with her dog and rabbit.



# TURN IT UP!

## ASSEMBLY 2022

MAY 20 – 22, 2022  
ORLANDO CONVENTION CENTER

[WWW.ASSEMBLY2022.ORG](http://WWW.ASSEMBLY2022.ORG)

Come to Orlando to care for your spirit, worship with your sisters and celebrate the positive impact women create in the world.



### WHY YOU SHOULD REGISTER

In 2022 we will reflect on today's challenges and together find comfort and strength to move forward, building new ways for faith-filled women to make a difference in our communities and the world. We will recommit to our purpose, but also more. For such a time as this we will **TURN IT UP!**

At ASSEMBLY 2022 we will **TURN IT UP!** for spiritual healing and renewal. We will **TURN IT UP!** for rebirth in a new time. We will **TURN IT UP!** for women leaders. We will **TURN IT UP!** for justice for women, children and youth. And it all begins with you. Will you **TURN IT UP?**

### PRICE

Assembly is a great value at the early registration fee of \$330. Few other faith-based conferences offer the following for such a low fee:

- Soul-stirring worship infused with music and performing arts
- Impactful workshops and riveting Town Hall meetings with important leaders
- Action opportunities and an Experience Hall with interactive experiences

### SAVE FOR ASSEMBLY

**Start now!** Calculate the costs as broken out below for your location, then divide by 12 for a monthly savings amount. Now it doesn't seem so daunting. The unforgettable experience of Assembly will make it worth every dollar.

**Early Registration fee: \$330** (available Sep 1 – Nov 30, 2021, which includes lunch on Friday and Saturday)

**Hotel expenses: \$158 – \$203** per night for up to four people ( double / double room )

- Travel expenses
- Meal expenses:
  - Friday and Saturday — breakfast and dinner
  - Sunday — breakfast

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# 2021 Alabama West Florida Cooperative Mission u Event Registration Form

## VIRTUAL EVENT - DATE: JULY 22-24, 2021

**Registration DEADLINE: July 12, 2021.** Mail this completed form with full payment to Betty Helms, Registrar – 3043 Headland Ave, Dothan, AL 36303 – email: [betty194159@outlook.com](mailto:betty194159@outlook.com) Cell: 334-790-8962; Home: 334-794-2172. Make check payable to Mission u. For online registration and credit card payment use the link <https://www.awf-umw.org/>. Direct all questions to the registrar. When possible, email confirmation will be sent to registrant. A link and instructions will be sent to you with your book order for the Virtual Event.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check all that apply:** \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_ Clergy \_\_\_\_ Lay \_\_\_\_ CEU Credit  
\_\_\_\_ National Director \_\_\_\_ Jurisdiction Officer \_\_\_\_ Conference \_\_\_\_ District Officer \_\_\_\_ Scholarship Recipient

**STUDY COURSE REGISTRATION FEES:** Class fees cover: Study Book + Mailing Exp. **\$10 Registration Fee is required.**

**NOTE:** Registrations received after **the July 12 deadline** – Study books will be mailed but may not be received in time for Mission u.

\_\_\_\_ Full School Package: includes 2 study books + mailing exp. & registration fee \$ 40  
\_\_\_\_ One day Study with 1 book and registration fee \$ 25  
\_\_\_\_ One day Study, no book (must already have book on hand) \$ 10  
\_\_\_\_ Both day studies, no book (must already have book on-hand) \$ 10  
\_\_\_\_ Optional: Offering (include amount in total, but please list amount here) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

All donations will be given to the Equal Justice Initiative (Montgomery, AL)

### Choose one study for each day (see list below)

#### FRIDAY

\_\_\_\_ **Push-Out:** The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools  
\_\_\_\_ **Finding Peace** in an Anxious World  
\_\_\_\_ **Bearing Witness** in the Kin-dom

#### SATURDAY

\_\_\_\_ **Push-Out:** The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools  
\_\_\_\_ **Finding Peace** in an Anxious World  
\_\_\_\_ **Bearing Witness** in the Kin-dom

**Each study is a 6-hour course and offered one full day. See schedule below.**

#### THURSDAY SCHEDULE

6:30 – 7:30 P.M. OPENING CERMONY

#### FRIDAY & SATURDAY SCHEDULES

8:30 A.M. WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

9 A.M. – 12 NOON: Class time

12 NOON – 1 P.M. Lunch Break

1 P.M. – 4 P.M.: Class time

4 P.M. – 5 P.M. Closing Plenary .



**Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women**  
**ASSEMBLY 2022 Scholarship Event Application**

***Please check the box that best describes you. You must fall in at least one of these categories to be eligible.***

- ☐ A FIRST TIMER TO A UMW ASSEMBLY
- ☐ UNDER 40 YEARS IF AGE
- ☐ A NEW MEMBER OF UMW, HAVING JOINED IN THE LAST YEAR

***One \$500 scholarship will be awarded for Assembly 2022 from the Southeastern Jurisdiction United Methodist Women from the AWF-UMW Conference. AND one \$600 scholarship will be award from the Alabama West Florida Conference.***

Please use this form for both scholarships. You will need to show proof of registration prior to receiving the funds. The DEADLINE is NOVEMBER 10, 2021 as early registration prices end November 30, 2021. The link to register is <https://assembly2022.org/price/>. Send application to AWF-UMW Conference Secretary: Debbie Bell, 9640 Sky Vista Dr. Semmes, AL 36575 / mawbel36575@yahoo.com

***Terms of the Agreement:***

- a) A committee of the Secretary, Coordinator for Spiritual Growth and the Vice President will review your applications and choose the recipients for each scholarship.
- b) The recipient and the Conference Treasurer will be notified by November 25, 2021.
- c) The recipient must submit an event registration confirmation form immediately to the AWF-UMW Conference Treasurer: Jean Creswell, 10227 AL Hwy 5, Thomaston, AL 36783 or [jean@pinebelt.net](mailto:jean@pinebelt.net). She will issue the recipient a check to cover this cost. The remaining balance of the scholarship will be paid after the event when receipts for room and meals are received by the Conference Treasurer.
- d) If you are chosen and unable to attend, funds will revert to the scholarship fund.
- f) Applications must be submitted to the Conference Secretary by November 10, 2021. Only applications received prior to the deadline will be considered. SEND TO: DEBBIE BELL, 9640 Sky Vista Dr. Semmes, AL 36575 / mawbel36575@yahoo.com

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Your Name

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Your Address

---

Your Phone Number(s)

---

Your E-Mail Address(s)

---

Your District

---

Your Local Church



**Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women  
ASSEMBLY 2022 Scholarship Event Application**

Your age:

- 1 Have you previously attended a United Methodist Women's Assembly event?

- 2 What year did you join United Methodist Women?

- 3 Why would you like to attend this specific event?

- 4 How are you involved in United Methodist Women in your local church, district or conference? Dates and events will be helpful if available.

- 5 How will you share your event experience with others following the event?

Thank you for submitting this application. Please by your signature below acknowledge you have read and understood the terms of the scholarship agreement contained in this document.

Signature

Date

Rec'd by  
AWFC