#### ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Volume 46 June 2017



# ALERT

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#### 2017 Conference Officers

President	Debbie Bell
Vice President	Joan Simmons
Secretary	Cathy Givan
Treasurer	Jean Creswell
Comm. Coordinator	Debbie Bush
Program Resources	Sally Ozan
Nominations Chair	Lorna Wiggins

#### 2017 Mission Coordinators

Spiritual Growth	Nancy Shealy
Social Action	Laurel Akin
M.N. & O	Tutti Johnson
Ed. & Interp	Shirley Hodges

#### 2017 Committee on Nominations

Lorna Wiggins Reda Brooks Zan Jones Linda Green Cheryl Mothershed

President SEJ UMW Betty Helms

**UMW National Vice President** Clara Ester

Web Manager Vera Moore



**Conference Cooperative** MISSION u Saturday, July 22, 2017 First United Methodist Church

**MISSION u** in Alabama-West Florida Conference, The United Methodist Church, is a cooperative event of:

- · Board of Church and Society
- United Methodist Women

#### **EDUCATE TO TRANSFORM**

Each year, United Methodist Women members prepare for faithful living and action by studying mission studies. Mission studies are offered each year - a geographical, topical, and spiritual growth study. These studies motivate, inform, and enrich our commitment to global ministry. Local leaders are trained to lead one of the three mission studies through the organization's Mission u program offered around the country. Those leaders, in turn, are able to lead mission studies in their local and district groups.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Every church and local unit of United Methodist Women is strongly encouraged to participate in what are timely studies. It is our hope that units will take advantage of this opportunity by sending at least three people to Mission u in order to offer all three studies in their local unit.

#### **SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE:**

Scholarship are available for adults to attend the 2017 school.

DON BRILL: for clergy during the first five years of their ministry and who have never attended a Mission u Event.

**LIB CLARIDY:** for lay persons who have never attended a Mission u Event.

NELL CHANCE: for NEW United Methodist Women member who have never attended a Mission u Event.

Contact: Harry Hodges, Scholarship, Chair - harryhodges@yahoo.com

MAIL COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM with check payable to

#### **MISSION u** to the Registrar: **TUTTI JOHNSON PO BOX 598** PINE HILL AL 36769-0598

Registration/Brochure and Health Form Included and at http://www.awf-umw.org

#### **Our Purpose:**

United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

#### CAROL Y. TONEY - Spiritual Growth Study Leader

After graduating for Alabama A & M University with a bachelor's degree in secondary education, Carol was employed by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management ultimately serving as Director of the Huntsville, Alabama office for 20 years. After a long and successful career, she retired in January 2008. Carol keeps busy with activities related to her family, her church, and public service. She strives to keep Christ the center of all that she does. Carol has taught mission studies in several conferences, districts, and local church schools of mission and Mission u. Carol has served the United Methodist Church in various ways. She has worked in her local church in almost every administrative and ministry capacity. Carol served as Northeast District Lay Leader (2005-2008) and served as NE District President of United Methodist Women from 2009-2012. She has a heart for missions and for United Methodist Women. She is currently serving as a Director of United Methodist



Women, the Northeast District Superintendent Committee, and the North Alabama Conference Episcopacy Committee. She has been a delegate to several Jurisdictional and General Conferences of the UMC. She is involved in numerous other civic and community activities. Carol and her husband, Alonzo, have four children and six grandchildren.



#### KATHIE HARRIS - Geographic Study Leader

I am married and have two grown children and have lived most of my life in the Appalachian area which includes the Red Bird Missionary Conference. I attend Mary Helen United Methodist Church where I have been active in United Methodist Women, Mission u, VBS, youth and children's programs, and various church committees. For approximately 20 years, I have taught Sunday School classes for children ages 6-12.

Currently, I represent the Red Bird Missionary Conference on the Program Advisory Group to the United Methodist Women Board of Directors. I graduated from Union College, a small college in Barbourville, KY which is affiliated with the United Methodist Church and completed graduate work at Eastern KY University in Richmond, KY. In my career, my work centered on children and families as I worked as a social worker, mental health counselor, and school psychologist. I retired in 2008 to have a more flexible work schedule which allows my husband and me to travel.



DEBBIE BRACEWELL <u>Issue</u> Study Leader



DEAN OF MISSION U

#### Debbie Bracewell is a retired teacher, executive, editor, speaker and cheer judge. She currently is a tutor, president of the Recovery Organization of Coffee County, independent Young Living Distributor, and a volunteer for church and community. Debbie has been a member of the Enterprise First United Methodist Church Circle 6 since 2004 and is the current president of United Methodist Women unit at Enterprise First United Methodist Women. She is the Dothan District chair for Membership Nurture and Outreach and has been the Communications chair. She has taught the Immigration mission study and the Roma of Europe study for the Dothan District. She taught The Church and People with Disabilities study at the July 2014 Mission u event and the Latin America: People and Faith study for Mission u 2015. Debbie has a degree in 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. She is currently Dothan District UMW President and have taught mission studies across our conference this year.

of Europe, and The Church and People with Disabilities

JOYCE GENZ - Geographic Study Leader

Joyce Genz lived on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona for 19 years where she was employed as an educator by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as well as by Chinle Public Schools and a small mission school. She is the retired dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies at Spring Hill College, 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 to students from all over the world. Joyce holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Evangel University, and Master of Science in Instructional Design from the University of South Alabama. She is the president of the local United Methodist Women at Christ UMC and an active member of the Crossroads Circle. After being trained at Alabama-West Florida Conference Mission u's, she has lead or team lead the following mission studies for the Mobile District: Giving Our Hearts Away, Roma

#### **BETTY HELMS**

Betty lives in Dothan, AL and is a member of Dothan First United Methodist Church. She has been married to her high school sweetheart for almost 58 years. Their son and daughter-in-law blessed them with two fabulous grand-daughters, Kaytlan and Samantha. Betty has been deeply involved in all things concerning United Methodist Women all of her adult life. This is her last year to serve as dean of Mission u. Betty is secretary for the Dothan District Core Team and a member of the Blue Lake Board of Trustees. She currently serves as the President of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of United Methodist Women and is a member of the National Program Advisory Group and National Legacy Steering Team.

#### CLARA ESTER - Spiritual Growth Study Leader

Clara J. Ester, a native of Memphis, Tennessee, is a graduate of LeMoyne-Owen College. She moved to Mobile, Alabama, in 1970 for a job at Dumas Wesley Community Center, where she worked as a Neighborhood Organizer, Program Director and Associate Director before retiring from her role as Executive Director on December 31, 2006.

Clara is a member of Toulminville-Warren Street United Methodist Church, where she has served in numerous capacities. She currently serves as the Mobile District Lay Leader and on the Conference Episcopacy Committee, the Board of Laity, the CORE Team and the Nominating Committee. Clara is Vice President of the National Board of Directors of United Methodist Women.



She was commissioned as a Deaconess in 1986. Clara has one son, Reginald Ester.

#### TUTTI JOHNSON - Youth Leader's Study Leader

Tutti is a life-long Methodist, originally from Mississippi where she graduated at Wood Junior College; a small Methodist school and then she graduated with honors from Faulkner University. Tutti worked on the BNSF Railroad for 29 years, then worked for her family Doctor for 5 years. Tutti lives in Pine Hill, has three children, Five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She is a member of the Arlington UMC where she teaches the Adult Sunday School class and Leads music in the Worship Services. Currently Tutti is the Vice President of the local unit; and she was on the Demopolis District Team As Social Action Chair and as Secretary. Tuttie is also currently Serving as Conference Membership, Nurture & Outreach Chairperson And has taught several Mission Studies at the local and District levels. She will teach the Youth Leader's Study at Mission u.





#### MARGARET LARSON - Associate Dean of Mission u

Margaret grew up in London. She came to the States in 1970 and became a Methodist and UMW member. Margaret has lived in Florida for the past 16 years and has been a District and Conference Treasurer and now Margaret is our Associate Dean of Mission u!

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

# "How do you hug a porcupine? This prickly fellow won't be easy. (My stomach's feeling kind of queasy!). He wears a coat of thorny quills. To hug this one will take some skills! You must go slowly; never hurry. At last! It's finally time! THIS is how you hug a porcupine: CAREFULLY."

The excerpt above is from a children's book I found as I cleaned up my desk area last month. It's a "NEW" author winner Laurie Isop and she received this award when she entered a Cheerios contest. I then remembered a young woman author in my church. She gave me a copy of her first children's book she wrote titled "Squirrelly Celebration", by Lori Taylor. She shared how the story came to her one night when she heard things going on in her attic. She told her husband, "those squirrels must be having a party!" She signed my copy with these words: "Debbie, some valuable advice from a squirrel: Plan ahead – Stay active – Eat plenty of fiber – Spend time in the woods – Go out on a limb! Remember, it's OK to be a little nuts!"

I'm sure Lori and Laurie never thought their children's books would go beyond the children's reading area, but I found both books very applicable to some love in action from our United Methodist Women. For years we've reached out to those in society who've seemed impossible to "hug" and we've been on the very edge of a limb about many social issues that impact those most vulnerable in our world. Our Pledge funds have been placed at the table to be divided among the many agencies that help women, children and youth. As time draws near for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our organization we can embrace the opportunity to celebrate and continue to be:

\*Brave, Daring, Edgy, Graceful, Loving, Supportive, Strong, Compassionate



In the last edition of the Alert I had asked that you consider to invite someone to your next Circle meeting or a Local Unit workshop or gathering, how did that workout? I also promoted the Reading Program, which book has captured your attention? I also encouraged any UMW member to attend Cooperative Mission u on July 21-22 @ First United Methodist Church, Millbrook, AL. and I hope if you couldn't make the school you made plans to attend a Mission study in your District. Please make your plans in the coming year to visit our conference website for the many actions of our mission. <a href="http://www.awf-umw.org">http://www.awf-umw.org</a>

**Debbie Bell**, President (2017-2018) Alabama/West Florida-United Methodist Women (AWF-UMW) \*Paul Jeffery photo postcards are available at <u>http://www.umwmissionresources.org/products/postcards</u>

Debbie Bell Conference Tresident



#### VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Only ten more months until Annual Day 2018! Can you wrap your mind around that when we are just ending the first quarter of 2017? Well, your team is moving ahead securing the speaker and musicians plus reviewing the evaluation sheets from 2017 Annual Day. Over fifty percent of you took the time to fill these out. THANK YOU! We hear you. You want:

More music Clearer hours when the Resource Center is open More books to purchase

Healthier meals

Activities on Friday night

Music during the processional

Have time for fellowship with the keynote speakers

Singing while taking communion



These are just some of your comments but we are looking at each one on the evaluations and addressing them. Thank you again for the information.....you are so appreciated. See you at Mission u.

#### Joan Simmons Conference Vice Tresident

#### SPIRITUAL GROWTH REPORT

We are 800,000 strong women with a Purpose—to serve and save Women and Children here and around the world. Did you know women and children are under attack! Evidence of this is found in an estimate that fifty million women are presently missing from the earth! MISSING...GONE...never to be found! The major reason for their disappearance is the practice of gendercide! Maybe more than 160 million baby girls in Asia never drew breath because their birth was preempted by abortion. In countries such as China, India, Pakistan and Africa, being a daughter puts your life in danger! You could be abused, sold, neglected or a victim of an honor killing.

We are not alone in this battle. Jesus will lead our 800,000 Sisters! We begin with bold, faith based prayers.

We are in this journey together!

Always, Your Servant,

Nancy Shealy Conference Spiritual Growth Coordinator



#### Save the Date!

July 21 & 22, 2017 Mission u @ Millbrook Oct. 20-22, 2017 Spiritual Enrichment Retreat @ Blue Lake May 18-20, 2018 Assembly @ Columbus, Ohio

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

As promised I'm going to give an update as of today on how each district is doing on their pledges remitted to the conference. Our total 2017 pledge is \$126,000 which we're about 23% there. Seeing that over 25% of the year has passed, we are slightly behind.

MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE)	Pledge	Paid	Balance	% Paid
Bay Pines	12,200.00	0.00	12,200.00	0
Demopolis	13,000.00	6,771.27	6,228.73	52%
Dothan	18,500.00	5,678.25	12,821.75	31%
Marianna/PC	12,800.00	4,131.02	8,668.98	32%
Mobile	20,000.00	7,411.30	12,588.70	37%
Mtg/Oplk	12,500.00	823.05	11,676.95	7%
Mtg/Pratt	12,200.00	2,468.00	9,732.00	20%
Pensacola	25,000.00	6,128.58	18,871.42	25%
Events - Offering		850.00	(850.00)	
TOTAL PLEDGE TO MISSION	\$126,000.00	\$34,261.47	91,938.53	27.1%



It is up to each of our local units to get their pledges and all other remittance items in as quick and timely as possible to their district treasurers. The district treasurers can only send what you send them, as I (the conference treasurer) can only remit to National what the districts send, less a small percentage for our budget expenses. Our district and conference budgets (line items for postage, the newsletters, events, and travel) are based on what is collected from the totals above. Your district treasurers and I, along with the other conference officers will be meeting in July to set budgets for the 2018 year. We will also be setting other price items such as travel rates, event registrations, and many other financial items. We're plugging along, but let's push ahead in a big way before the July meeting. I'd love to see our pledge intake at least 50% by the time we meet. Can I count on you?

#### Joan Creswell Conference Treasurer



#### SOCIAL ACTION REPORT BE JUST. BE GREEN

Climate Justice is one of the social justice priorities for United Methodist Women at the National Office, in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, and in the Alabama-West Florida Conference. The United Methodist Women website provides many tools for addressing climate justice, including a webinar, an event-planning guide, and a climate justice simulation experience. Go to http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/climate-justice and explore the many ways you and your unit can learn and educate others. Each conference is assigned a jurisdictional guide for the "Be Just. Be Green" initiative. The guides are trained to help United Methodist Women make our meetings across the country more sustainable! The guide assigned to the Alabama-West Florida Conference is Deaconess Selena Ruth Smith. She may be reached at selenaruth@yahoo.com or by phone at 803-453-5876.

I hope you are planning to attend Mission u in Millbrook, Alabama July 21-22. Debbie Bracewell will lead the issue study, "Climate Justice: Call to Hope and Action," on Friday. If you haven't attended the study before, you won't want to miss it!

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and

those who dwell therein–Psalm 24:1

Blessings,

#### Laurel Akin Conference Social Action Coordinator

#### **EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION COORDINATOR REPORT**

We are getting ready for Mission u in Millbrook and I hope you al are too! Information is elsewhere in this newsletter, but I just want to encourage you to attend as it will be a great experience. As we think about Mission Studies, I want to remind you that for a local unit to receive credit for a Mission Study, it must be taught during the three-year period (ending December 31st) following the last Mission u presentation. It must also be led by a person who studied or led the topic at Mission u (this is per the AWF UMW 2017 Workbook, p. 34). So, when you are reporting studies completed, please be sure they were presented during that time period. Your District President will be completing the Consolidated President's Report in the fall and will need this information to send on to the Conference President. While I am reminding, be sure to continue working on the Mission Today items listed on that form. Don't wait until the last minute because it is so much easier to work on those all through the year. We hope to see more Bronze, Silver and Gold units during your District Annual Day. November 30th is the deadline to get your information together to send to your District President, earlier is even better as the District President needs to get her report in by December 10th. We will have reminders in the Fall ALERT! Hope to see you at Mission u!

Blessings,

#### Shirley Hodges, Conference Education & Interpretation Coordinator





### Save the date! THE POWER OF BOLD PARTY FAITH. HOPE. LOVE IN ACTION.

"The Power of Bold" will be the theme of the 19th quadrennial Assembly of United Methodist Women in Columbus, Ohio, May 18-20, 2018. Learn more at <u>https://umwassembly.org/news/</u>

# Give Thanks. Give Now.

Keep up with United Methodist Women in our districts, conference and nationally, and find many resources on our website, **www.awfumw.org**. There you will find links to just about anything "United Methodist Women," thanks to our website manager, Vera Moore!

#### Cares and Concerns

Winn Marsh is appointed Personal Concerns Coordinator for Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women. You may contact to request prayer for your personal concerns. Winn will share the information according to your wishes.



#### Our Purpose:

United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

#### **NOMINATIONS REPORT**

#### The Committee on Nominations will be working to fill the following positions for 2018:

- 1. Coordinator for Spiritual Growth
- 2. Nominations Committee Member for one year term
- 3. Several Members of the Committee on Charter for Racial Justice

#### The members of the Nominations Committee and the Districts they are to contact are:

Reda Brooks for Montgomery/Prattville and Demopolis Linda Green for Montgomery/Opelika and Dothan Zan Jones for Mobile and Marianna/Panama City Cheryl Mothershed for Bay Pines and Pensacola.



Committee members will be wearing pretty badges at Mission u so you can recognize and talk with them about ways you would like to serve United Methodist Women. Having completed Talent Bank forms lets the Nominations Committee know not only what you would like to do but talents that you have that we do not know about. Just remember that people who have held offices could mentor new officers and help them.

Hope to see lots of members at Mission u.

#### Lorna Wiggins Chairperson of Nomination Committee

#### WEB MASTER REPORT

Do you know all about our Logo? Links have been added to our website, <u>www.awf-umw.org</u>, left column under Resources, to help you download the UMW Brand Book and logos. The Brand Book (*United Methodist Women Brand Guidelines*) has specific instructions for the use of our logo and helpful hints when writing about United Methodist Women.

#### The story behind our emblem is beautiful:

The emblem of United Methodist Women, the cross and the flame, symbolizes our organization. The cross and flame are ancient symbols of the church and appear on the United Methodist Church emblem. Both symbols remind us of the opportunities and obligations of discipleship.

Paul's words to Timothy have fresh and contemporary meanings, "I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God which is within you." (2 Timothy 1:6). As United Methodist Women, we give our gift of God with others through mission. The overall shape of the emblem is also symbolic. Fluid and free flowing, the shape suggests change and mobility.

The women who came before us were at the forefront of movements for change. Always aware of the times, we move with ever changing circumstances rather than feeling overwhelmed by them. We are a group of Christian women with many gifts who are unified by one Spirit. We participate in God's mission in all areas of life. (Extracted from: *United Methodist Women Brand Guidelines*)

Vera Moore Web Master



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Why I think you should consider this person (attach extra sheet if necessary):

Positions I would recommend this person for:

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Phone:	_

Please return to:

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#### SECRETARY OF PROGRAM RESOURCES REPORT

Summer is upon us (finally) and it is the perfect time to curl up with a good book preferably one from our Reading Program. There is such a wonderful array of subjects to choose from. If you haven't had an opportunity to get one or two, please consider doing so. I will have the Resource Room open at Mission u coming up in July with a selection of our books as well as other "goodies". If there is something in particular you would like to see there, please end me an email and I will do my best to get it for you. Hope you have a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing you at Mission u!

Sally Ozan **Conference Secretary of Program Resources** 

#### CONFERENCE COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR REPORT

This year has flown by so fast! I cannot believe that this is the second ALERT going out already! I have received some responses to the "District Spotlights" for the ALERT and I look forward to many more!

#### ALERT!.....Are vou a Subscriber?

You too can become informed of Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women events and activities by subscribing to the ALERT today!

- To receive a copy of the ALERT in the mail, please send in your Name, Address and Telephone Number to Debbie Bush. Enclose a \$4.00 check, made payable to: Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women (AWFCUMW).
- You may receive a copy of the ALERT free by email. Please email Debbie with your request and you will be added to our email list. However, please include a telephone number! With each issue that is sent, several mailed and emailed copies are returned!
- I now have a GMAIL Account just for United Methodist Women: Savannahgirl2759@gmail.com.

**Debbie Bush Conference Communications Coordinator** 

Spotlight



If your District has done something that you feel needs to be in "The Spotlight", that signifies our Mission Statement and those we sponsor, then send the information by email to Debbie. PLEASE NOTE: District Spotlights will be in the next Newsletter





United Methodist Women Alabama-West Florida Conference Debbie Bush

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# UPCOMING IN THE NEXT NEWSLETER...... Mission u pictures and events of the weekend. Looking at the Slate of Officers for 2018 - 2019 (If you are interested or know someone who would want to be a Conference Officer, please make sure you fill out a Talent Bank Form). Proposed 2018 Conference Budget. Registration for the 2017 Spiritual Enrichment Retreat at Blue Lake. Our Guest Speaker is: Dr. Laura Early. Come see and hear her! Much, much more.....