



United  
Methodist  
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

# ALERT

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Letter from the President	2
Message from Vice President	3
Secretary Report	4
Treasurer Report	5
Committee on Nominations	6-8
Dothan District Spotlight	8
E & I Report	9-10
Spiritual Growth	10
Social Action	11
MN & O	12
Assembly 2022	13-14

## 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]

## Spiritual Enrichment Retreat

October 8-9, 2021

Blue Lake Methodist Camp

## 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



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Fall is around the corner! This is the time that our units may reconvene after the summer break. Teas, luncheons, and picnics are ways that many of our districts welcome our members to United Methodist Women meetings and events.

Spiritual Enrichment Retreat is October 8-9 at Blue Lake Campground. Reverend Jean Tippet will be the guest speaker for our “soul care” event. We will have workshops on Bible studies, Prayer through Motion, Origin of Hymns, Kindness Rocks, Prayer through Color, Essential Oils of the Bible, Armchair Yoga, and Types of Prayers. There may be a few surprises in store! Watch the conference website for registration!

Conference elections will also take place during the business meeting of SER. Be sure to read the bios of the slate of officers for 2022.

Remember to order your *2022 Prayer Calendar* and the 2021-2022 Program Resource Book—*Healing and Joy on Our Journey to God*. I have had the pleasure of working through the new program book, and I believe you will find it interesting and easy to include in any circle, unit, or district program.

2022 Theme: Service and Peace

Support Scripture: “Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’” John 20:21 (NIV)

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/>.

According to ‘Ainise ‘Isama’u, United Methodist President, “United Methodist Women is a place of connection . . . The whole work of our organization is mission, of which different parts must be seen together to understand the whole” (response, July/August). She reminds us that we are different from women’s book clubs and women’s Bible study groups. Our work is woven into the threads of the past and will be woven into the cloth of tomorrow.

*Debbie G. Bracewell*

*President*

*Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women*

## Message from the Vice President

Hello everyone,

Hello everyone! I hope you are enjoying this beautiful summer time. As we begin to transition into our fall season and with fall comes our in person meetings, I thought of this scripture.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” - Philippians 4:6-7

As our units are preparing for many new beginnings, many plans come with a level of worry / anxiety. I hope this verse from Paul brings a level of peace as we give those worries to God.

I am looking forward to our SER 2021 event. I am grateful for Tutti's leadership and the program committee for all their work in organizing this event. I hope to see each of you there as we take time away from our daily life and spend intentional time building and growing our relationship with God and each other.

Praying for each of you,

Katy Wrona  
AWF-UMW Vice President



**ASSEMBLY 2022 early bird registration (\$330) begins September 1, 2021 and ends November 30, 2021.**

## From the AWF-UMW Conference Secretary



It is that time again. The Principal, the teachers and the students and the support staff begin preparing to return to the classroom. The Summer is also the time when some Local Units decide to pause in their meeting schedule and travel or read books from the Reading Program. But the Summer for the Alabama-West Florida conference and district United Methodist Women Executive Mission Teams are busy planning 2022!

Our AWF-UMW Conference Executive Mission Team (Leadership) just completed our mid-year meeting where we approved district budgets for the following year, we approved recommendations from the various committees, and we received the report of nominees from the Committee on Nominations for upcoming office vacancies of the conference.

Of course, this is not all we do during the meeting and so recording minutes becomes vital. The Mission Team officers bring their mid-year reports, the Committee Chairs present recommendations from the meeting discussions of their committees, and the order of the agenda is followed so that all necessary information to carry out our Purpose is presented and discussed. The Secretary is the key to this meeting recordkeeping, and so she will capture those specific discussions occurred. The secretary duties will capture all persons making motions, persons seconding motions, and record a vote count. If the motion is not clear she will have to make sure of clarity from that person and she writes clear brief notes not full sentences. Immediately getting to these notes for recording minutes is beneficial because they are fresh. If you are using a recording device, you can certainly take a breather, but the minutes should be out 2 weeks after the meeting.

To end, the secretary will be organized; keep and share copies of any correspondence; check if quorum is met at the meeting; respect confidentiality; check in with the president; prepare for the meeting well in advance; and summarize any discussions effectively.

Debbie Bell, AWF-UMW Secretary  
mawbel36575@yahoo.com

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

### REPORT OF THE AWF-UMW TREASURER

For the Year 2021		as of	7/16/21	
MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE)	Pledge	Paid by Districts	Balance	% Paid
Bay Pines	14,000	2,849	11,152	20.3%
Demopolis	14,000	3,055	10,945	21.8%
Dothan	12,000	5,766	6,234	48.1%
Marianna/Panama City	11,000	4,072	6,928	37.0%
Mobile	20,000	3,528	16,472	17.6%
Montgomery/Opelika	6,750	2,162	4,588	32.0%
Montgomery/Prattville	10,000	1,515	8,485	15.2%
Pensacola	20,000	997	19,003	5.0%
Events - Offering	2,700	145	2,555	5.4%
TOTALS FROM DISTRICTS	110,450	24,088	86,362	21.8%
Pledge to National	93,883	18,140	75,743	19.3%

The following has been passed by the Alabama West Florida United Methodist Women's Executive Team for 2022:

Bay Pines	1,628
Demopolis	1,856
Dothan	1,686
Marianna Panama City	1,664
Mobile	3,236
Montgomery / Opelika	1,012
Montgomery / Prattville	1,307
Pensacola	2,850
<b>TOTAL DISTRICT 2022 BUDGETS</b>	<b>15,239</b>
Bay Pines	11,000
Demopolis	10,000
Dothan	9,500
Marianna Panama City	11,000
Mobile	20,000
Montgomery / Opelika	6,750
Montgomery / Prattville	8,500
Pensacola	20,000
Events - Offering	2,700
<b>Total 2022 DISTRICT PLEDGE</b>	<b>99,450</b>
2022 CONFERENCE BUDGET	25,105
COMBINED CONFERENCE & DISTRICT 2022 BUDGET	40,344
2022 CONFERENCE PLEDGE (TO NATIONAL)	84,533

## COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS REPORT

I know it seems like we have not been able to have a meeting where we could get together in SUCH A LONG TIME! Local Units, Districts, and Conference are not getting members volunteering to “step up to the plate” when a vacancy occurs. Have we forgotten that United Methodist Women are the mission of the church? We are the hands and feet of Jesus here on earth. Just because we have not met does not mean we totally forget what Jesus wants us to do.



We all have special God-given talents. After much work, the Committee on Nominations has been able to fill the vacant offices on the Conference level. If you have been asked to be an officer for your unit or district, please pray about accepting the position, This is a way that you will be serving God as well as sharing His love with all others. Let us all put our trust in God and He will lead us.

In His Service,

Peggy Cunningham  
Nomination Chair  
251-752-1714

## Slate of Officers' Bios

### TREASURER—Cynthia Brown

Cynthia Brown is a native of Alabama. She received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Troy State University, Troy, AL in Accounting and her Masters of Business Management work was done at Troy University at Montgomery. Her dedication to improving the quality of life for individuals in low-income communities was demonstrated by the development of Heritage Training and Career Center, a non-profit which provides remedial education, employment and support services to children and families that live below the poverty level and/or individuals in need of a hand-up in Autauga, Elmore and Montgomery Counties and a critical housing repair programs in the City of Montgomery.



Cynthia is a member of the United Methodist Women at Chapel United Methodist Church, Eclectic, AL where she serves in many capacities. Cynthia lives in Elmore County, Alabama, and has one son, JaMel and one grandson, JaDarien “JD”.

**Communications Coordinator—Laurel Akin**

Laurel Akin is a deaconess with a ministry of photography and writing. She has been active in United Methodist Women for 30 years and is a member of Enterprise First United Methodist Church, Enterprise, AL. Laurel is married to Bob Akin, and her three children, Jack, Michael, and Emily, have blessed her with six grandchildren.

**Nominations Committee Class of 2025—Melda Deverell**

Melda is a graduate of Auburn University and a retired teacher. She and husband Bob have two children, Kristine and Brad, and two grandchildren, Clair and Caran. Other members of her household include three dogs, Nymeria, Astro, and Leonidas. Melda has been a member of the United Methodist Church since she was a child.

**Membership Nurture & Outreach—Kristine Jones**

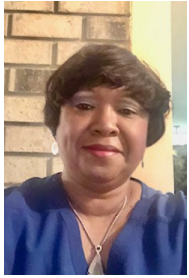
Kristine Jones will be returning to the position for MN&O. Kristine lives in Montgomery, AL and is a member of First United Methodist Church Montgomery. She is a family law attorney in Montgomery and the founding member of the KJ Law Firm LLC. Kristine is also a 1st Lt. in the AL National Command Jag Corps (Army). Kristine has three dogs, Maverick, Cochise, and Skittles.

**Chairperson of Committee on Nominations—Desiree Clarke**

Desiree has been a life long member of Spring Hill Avenue United Methodist Church in Mobile, AL. She currently serves as Vice President for her local unit. She is a full time care giver for her elderly aunt. She has been married for 28 years to Patrick, and they have one daughter, Nicole.





**“SLATE OF OFFICERS” cont.****Spiritual Growth Coordinator—Zan Jones**

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.

**Vice President—Katy Wrona**

Katy Wrona currently serves as the Vice President of AWF-UMW Conference United Methodist Women. In September of 2018, she became the Communities of Transformation Director for the AWF Conference. She joined COT in September 2014 as the Mobile Site Coordinator where she launched and developed the Mobile Site. Katy learned about being part of a community from her mother, a local pastor in the United Methodist Church and feels she is living into her calling walking with others as they become part of a new community. Katy loves to swim, cook, and hike in the Smoky Mountains. Katy is excited to continue her

work with United Methodist Women as Vice President.

**Spotlight Dothan District**

SAVE THE DATE!

**2021 UMW Spiritual Day**

**Saturday, August 14th**

Zoom Meeting

9:30 (open at 9:15 for visitation) - 10:30 am

Topic: **UMW 2021-2024 mission focus issue: Criminalization of Communities of Color & Mass Incarceration & School-to-Prison Pipeline**

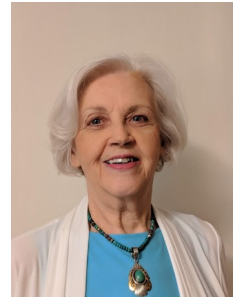
**Presenter: Ashley Adams, Attorney with Equal Justice Initiative (EJI)**

Ashley will share information about the EJI, facts, information, data and initiatives on the UMW mission focus issue. There will be a question and answer section.

Contact Carolyn McInnis at [cmcinnis595@gmail.com](mailto:cmcinnis595@gmail.com) for link information.



## AWF-UMW Education & Interpretation



### It's Celebration Time!

As our UMW members slowly reconnect with their local units and districts, it's time to welcome them home with a great celebration. The Program Resources Book for 2022, *Healing and Joy on Our Journey*, has a September program to do just that. An invitation to a tea party or other social event, perhaps before a unit meeting, would offer a joyful time for in-person reconnection after such a long hiatus.

We also need to honor the pain of loneliness and passing of loved ones while we were apart. I missed the physical presence of my own circle until we began meeting outdoors this spring after a year of virtual-only connection. We had a picnic by a small lake at one of our member's property. It was a true celebration with decorations and our best party dishes. I wish the same joy for all of you.

No matter how you are meeting, it is important for local units to encourage members to honor their pledges. Sharing our dollars-at-work videos and/or stories from response magazine will encourage members to give more generously, as they see their pledges supporting vital mission work and understand the importance of our PURPOSE to serve women, children, and youth around the world. There are numerous resources to help you educate members on the National UMW website at [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/givingstories](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/givingstories). If you haven't visited the website recently, you will see a new look that should make it easier to find resources. As always, I am always ready to assist you with more ideas.

**Program Resources:** One benefit of our extended time at home has been the opportunity to enjoy Reading Program books and other options such as viewing movies, or accessing Faith Talks, and participating in Mission u Studies that qualify for Reading Program credit. I found many new titles that I had already read and have added them to my reading report form. The lists from 2015-2022 all qualify for reading credit this year and next. Be sure to remind everyone who attended Mission u to record their studies on a report form so your district and unit get credit. All the Mission u studies are bonus books and are a great way to move to a higher reading plan level. This year's study 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 the category Social Action. Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission by Ellen Blue (which many of you completed through unit or district studies) counts as two books in the category Nurturing for Community. Finding Peace in an Anxious World edited by Erin James-Brown counts as two books in the category Spiritual Growth. (cont. p. 10)

(Cont. from page 9)

The beautifully-illustrated children's book, *Rise! From Caged Bird to Poet of the People*, Maya Angelou by Bethany Hegedus counts as two books in the category Leadership Development. I bought *Rise!* for myself even though I don't have children or grandchildren to enjoy it with me. It addresses many issues that would be great springboards for discussion in a book club or with children. I even found a great lesson plan on the publisher's website <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/rise>.

National UMW staff is testing a new digital Program Resources Book for 2022. Available in print book or digital format which will provide ready-to-use videos and downloadable programs. The site also provides resources for community building with members from around the world. I loved the professionally-produced videos and programming that will assist in planning meetings.

May the peace that passes all understanding be with you on your journey,

Joyce Genz

## Spiritual Growth

### SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT FOR SOUL CARE

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! We are having OUR FIRST LIVE, ON-SITE GATHERING October 8-9 at Blue Lake Assembly! We want to be intentional about caring for our souls! We have a speaker I know you will love, Reverend Jean Tippit, District Superintendent of the Pensacola District and the Marianna-Panama City District.

We also have several breakouts you'll enjoy: Kindness Rocks to paint, 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. 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 first of August.

Blue Lake has made changes so take note of the following:

- ◇ Bring sheets, blankets, pillows, towels (these **will not** be provided on-site)
- ◇ Soap and toilet paper are provided
- ◇ Masks are not required (as of this printing)

Blessings,  
Tutti Johnson  
Spiritual Growth Coordinator

## Social Action Coordinator

Let me begin this article by expressing thanks to all Units for their time and participation in our mission focus for the last two (2) years. The Charter for Racial Justice in our Global Community was adopted in 1980 by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church. We are a crucial part of the United Methodist Church.

A nation of many peoples of different races, nationalities, languages and cultures is challenged to make the Charter for Racial Justice for everyone.

Our missions are programs created to focus on issues at home and around the world:

### Current Mission Priorities:

Climate Justice

Criminalization of Communities of Color and Mass Incarceration

### Past Mission Priority Issues:

Human Trafficking

School to Prison Pipeline

Just Energy for All

World Hunger, Health, Education

Economic Inequality

Maternal and Child Health

Human Trafficking

Global Migration

Domestic Violence

Climate Change

Gender Justice

Racial Justice

Economic Justice

Health Care

Food Justice

"When you look at the history of United Methodist Women, you look at the Programs that you have brought into being, the children that you fed, the naked that you have clothed, the ministry that you brought about, the aid that you distributed, the difference that you made and you think about the God beyond all that . . . that should inspire you and give you hope." E. Jones

United Methodist Women are deeply committed to the ongoing work of racial justice. We need a right relationship with one another. We work together and follow the teaching and example of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the church and world. If you feel like digging a little deeper into racial justice, download the *Racial Justice Toolkit: Tools for Leaders: Resources for Racial Justice* (<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/download-resources/racial-justice-tools-for-leaders>).

I leave you with two things to remember:

Racism is a rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

God is Creator of all people and all God's children are in one family.

Giving Hope, Have Faith, and Touching each of you with the Love of Jesus.

Sisterly Yours,

*Ora A. Gillespie*, Social Action Coordinator

## MEMBERSHIP NURTURE & OUTREACH



GREETINGS! I hope everyone is having a great summer going on vacation and getting out and about.

If you have not yet seen <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/member-resources>, it has some great information about how to host a virtual event, copyright and permissions for virtual events, and guidelines for filming yourself.

We have not yet received the 2020 Survey (formally known as the Census) information. We hope to have further information provided in the next **Alert**. So STAY TUNED!

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The Nell Chance Award will now be known as the *Nell Chance Excellence in Service Award*. The \*new\* deadline for the *Nell Chance Excellence in Service Award* will be the second day of SER. Also, the award may also now be awarded posthumously. So please, send in your nominees!

This award is named for Nell Chance as a way to remember her and the many ways she believed in our mission as United Methodist Women. She was a moving force in the mission work of United Methodist Women of the Alabama West Florida Conference for many years and a passionate believer in our mission to women, children and youth. Nell was a member of Monroeville United Methodist Women and the United Methodist Church in Monroeville, Alabama. During her adult life, she served in many positions not only in her local unit, but district, conference and jurisdiction as well.

Criteria for the award:

1. A brief letter should be submitted by individuals or mission teams giving biographical information and explanation of how this person has demonstrated the standards set by Nell Chance.
2. A photo of the nominee, if available, included with the letter will be most helpful.
3. The letter should be sent/given to Membership Nurture and Outreach Coordinator by the second day of Spiritual Enrichment Retreat.

M N & O is hitting the road! I want to visit your unit! Let's worship together Sunday morning. Let's meet for a group lunch or dinner. If you need a speaker for an event, I'd be happy to present. Please let me know if you'd like me to visit with your unit. I'd love to spend a day getting to know you, your unit, your church, and what your needs and wants are as we embark on life after Covid-19. Visits will begin early in 2022 and run throughout the year.

In Christ,

Kristine Jones

[kristineuwm@gmail.com](mailto:kristineuwm@gmail.com)

A large graphic featuring the text "TURN IT UP!" in white, bold, sans-serif font. The text is set against a teal circle that is partially overlapping a purple circle. The purple circle is larger and positioned behind the teal one, creating a layered effect. The background of the entire top section is a gradient of purple and teal.

# 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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