

# ALERT



United  
Women  
in Faith

## ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE

SPRING 2025

Volume 4, Issue 1



Betty Helms, AWF-UWF  
Conference President

### Inside this issue

**President**

**Treasurer**

**Secretary**

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### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: “Moving Faithfully Forward”

Remember these words during the year...they need to become words that symbolize who we are as United Women in Faith. This is a time of a lot of changes in our world. As United Women in Faith we must become courageous about standing up for the rights of women, children and youth...and most of all we need to tell everyone about our mission and PURPOSE as United Women in Faith. It is a time of thinking, planning and implementing new ideas. A time of renewal, a time of moving forward faithfully and a time of embracing where we are in our journey as United Women in Faith.

During 2025 I hope to visit each of our districts. It will be a joy to see many of you, some friends of many years and hopefully others friends for the first time. While visiting hopefully we will talk about ways and ideas to live out our PURPOSE, our programs, our finances, and most important of all our future and our mission with women, children, and youth. We will rejoice about the good things happening with United Women in Faith...raising money for mission, working together on fundraisers, endearing friendships within our units and circles, and celebrating the long presence of United Women in Faith in our churches.

Ladies, if we want this organization of United Women in Faith to continue to be an authentic and active mission support group, we need to see ourselves as mentors and nurturers. It is not about what is comfortable for us, but what will encourage women to join. We need to become enthusiastic about the mission work of United Women in Faith and tell others about why we continue to participate. We need to talk about the outreach we have throughout the world and the concerns we have about issues that affect women, children, and youth. We need to show how we care for others not only locally, but globally. We need to see beyond our own preferences and consider what will happen if we are unable to continue our ministry. We need to think about the many women, children, and youth who will no longer receive money for mission projects worldwide and locally.

So I challenge you to prioritize in your local unit to get out there and “LOVE” women into joining United Women in Faith. Remember,

“DON’T LOOK BACK, WE ARE NOT GOING THAT WAY!!!

*Betty*

## FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

We had an amazing 2025 United Women in Faith Conference Annual Day that was held January 31st and February 1st at First United Methodist Church in Dothan, Alabama. We had a very good attendance for the event, two wonderful meals provided by the ladies of Dothan First UMC, a beautiful facility, and wonderful camaraderie with our fellow United Women in Faith friends.

Friday evening we had the Reverend Lynn Nesbitt as our speaker, and she brought several of her beautiful quilts to display. We then had Debbie Bracewell and Katy Wrona present a hands-on Journey Through the UWFaith Digital Portal, which showed us how to navigate the website to find the information we need to get the most out of UWFaith.

Saturday, our guest speaker was Bishop Jonathan Holston, who has always been a big supporter of UMW and now UWFaith. Because he has a great love for missions, he received a recognition pin from Betty Helms, conference president. After communion with Bishop Holston as celebrant, we broke for lunch and reconvened with our business meeting. Our meeting ended with a very beautiful memorial service conducted by Clara Ester.

Throughout this 2025 Annual Meeting, our theme for this year was stressed: **Moving Faithfully Forward**, which could not be more timely, considering everything that has happened with the church in the last few years. It speaks to our determination to move forward with our promise to promote women, children, and youth around the world.

Blessings,

Desiree Clarke  
Vice President



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Bishop Holston  
Alabama-West Florida Conference  
Proud Member of United Women in Faith

## From the Conference Treasurer



### For Generations to Come

[uwfaith.org/dayofgiving](http://uwfaith.org/dayofgiving)

**Save the Date:** March 23, 2025



By uniting our hearts and hands, we are building a future filled with hope and support for women, children, and youth. Every gift you make, regardless of size, **will make an impact for generations to come.**

Give to The Legacy Endowment Fund on the Day of Giving, March 23!

### Ways to Give

- Online at: [uwfaith.org/dayofgiving](http://uwfaith.org/dayofgiving)
- By phone: 800-278-7771 (8 a.m.-5 p.m. ET, Mon.-Fri.)
- Text: **"FUTURE"** to **20503**
- By check to:  
United Women in Faith  
Attention: Legacy  
Church Center for the United Nations  
777 United Nations Plaza, 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10017

Write **"Day of Giving"** in the memo section.



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The Legacy Endowment Fund is a permanent endowment to support the work of future generations of United Women in Faith.

**Together, we are building our legacy for generations to come!**

**Cynthia Brown, AWF-UWF Treasurer**

## From the Conference Secretary

Ladies,

Special thanks to out-going secretary, Debbie Bell, for all of her hard work on updating the AWFC UWF 2025 DIRECTORY. I've made the updates that you've sent me, and I will send a copy of the directory to Unit Presidents if I can get contact information.

Please help by emailing any corrections/additions/ deletions that you are aware of to me at [barbara4619@att.net](mailto:barbara4619@att.net) to enable better communication and networking throughout the AWF Conference.

Thank you for doing your part to keep all of us informed with the most up-to-date details available. In order to protect personal privacy, this directory is not posted for public access. Contact me at the address above if you need contact information for leaders involving the work of United Women in Faith in the Alabama-West Florida UMC Conference.

Moving Faithfully Forward,  
**Barbara Carroll**  
AWF-UWF Conference Secretary



*EXCITING NEWS ABOUT  
ASSEMBLY 2026—see  
next page!*



## United Women in Faith Announces Website for Assembly 2026

[New York, New York, March 17, 2025]—United Women in Faith is excited to announce that the website for Assembly 2026 is now open! This year's Assembly, themed "Dream it! Believe it! Do it!" will take place in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 15-17, 2026. Registration for the event will open on Sept. 1, 2025.

### What awaits you at this empowering event?

#### Opportunities to:

- Be nurtured by deep soul care experiences.
- Be equipped through cutting-edge workshops.
- Be inspired by top women experts in their field.
- Become influencers through networking connections.
- Make an impact through action for justice.

Now is the time to start promoting Assembly with your circles, friends, and neighbors. Marketing materials are available on the site to help members invite persons to register. The more sisters we gather, the bigger we can **Dream it! Believe it! Do it!**

### Come be transformed at Assembly 2026!

Visit [uwfaith.org/assembly](https://uwfaith.org/assembly)

*Move faithfully forward:  
Start planning NOW!*



# From Education and Interpretation

## March Women's History Feature: (from uwfaith.org)

### **Eight women in 1869 Nearly half a million members today One remarkable history**

*Our 150-year legacy began with a few bold women determined  
to change the world for the better.*

In 1869, Clementina Butler and Lois Parker, wives of missionaries to India, made a plea to a group of eight women in Boston about the spiritual and physical needs of poor women in India. They could not be treated by male doctors. Schooling for girls was almost non-existent. Help was desperately needed.

In what would become a lasting legacy of “showing up and getting things done,” the attendees were moved to action. They quickly called another meeting of more women. They wrote a constitution. And in short order, they organized the Methodist Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS).

By November 1869, the newly formed organization raised funds and sent educator Isabella Thoburn and Dr. Clara Swain to India.

Ms. Thoburn began a school with just six young girls that went on to become Isabella Thoburn College, Asia's first women's college. Dr. Swain's medical work resulted in the first women's hospital in Asia. Both institutions continue to serve the people of India today.



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## One mission, many missionaries

During this same era, when so many women were held down by prejudice and circumstance, other fearless females across the country were moved to answer the call to stand up for better lives for women and a better world for all. The Woman's Missionary Association of the United Brethren Church was formed in 1875. Two strong Woman's Home Missionary Societies were founded in 1880 and 1890. The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Protestant Church was formed in 1879, followed by The Woman's Missionary Society in the Evangelical Association in 1884.

These groups became powerful, independent women's organizations, sending hundreds of women missionary doctors, nurses, and educators all over the world and supporting countless U.S. and international projects and advocating for justice, children, women and disenfranchised communities fearlessly.

**Cynthia Jackson**

E & I Coordinator

Advocate for children and women

## Moving Faithfully Forward,

We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us!

Let us boldly claim God's promise made to us through Paul's inspiring letter to the Philippian church thousands of years ago. Our Christian foremothers could not have made their great strides forward if they had tried to rely on themselves alone. To God be the glory for his powerful love, which motivated them and instills in us the compassion and strength to continue the legacy of our fearless women's missionary groups. As we cheer for our favorite teams during this season of "March Madness," keep the words from an old cheer in mind: "Never give up, never give in—WIN, WIN, WIN!"

Jesus makes it possible for all of us to WIN!

## From Conference Social Action

### Social Action: Where Does Our Money Go?

#### Social Action and Justice Work

We mobilize our members to learn about and take action on key social justice issues. Currently, our focus is on climate justice and racial justice. The climate justice campaign, Just Energy 4 All, supports monthly events such as educational webinars, a yearly Earth Day of service, developing resources for members and the wider public, training of Social Action Coordinators in every conference, and the participation in national advocacy coalitions working for environmental justice.

The racial justice campaign focuses on interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline through educational webinars, action alerts to urge Congress to pass The Ending PUSHOUT Act of 2023, and training leaders. Click here <https://uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/> to learn more. A total of \$642 thousand was budgeted in 2024 for this work.

Blessings,

Laurel Akin  
Conference Social Action Coordinator



We connect spiritual women to act boldly  
for justice and transform communities.



## SAVE THE DATES:

Saturday, March 29th

Panhandle District Day Apart at Moss Hill in Vernon, FL

9 am Registration; Meeting begins at 9:30;

Memorial Service

Bring your covered dish and lawn chairs!!!



**Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>: Annual Game Day, Luncheon and Fashion Show Mission Fundraiser**

**The United Women in Faith of the First United Methodist Church, Panama City,**

will offer light breakfast foods at 8:30 am. Games begin at 9 am and conclude at 11:30 am.

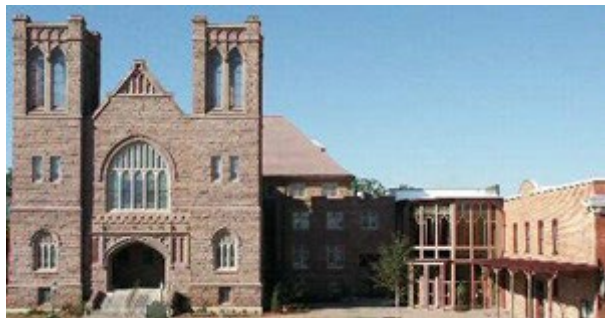
Lunch will be served at noon with

spring fashion trends being shown during lunch.

**Reservations are required**, and tickets can be purchased from UMW members **or by calling First United Methodist Church.**

The cost is **\$25 with checks made payable to UMW.** You are cordially invited to make your reservations by **March 24<sup>th</sup>.** We look forward to seeing you on April 1st for fun and fellowship.

Sheila Knoll, Program Chair  
PCFUMC ph.# 850-763-6537  
822 East Hwy 98  
Panama City, FL 32401



**June 8th - June 10<sup>th</sup>**

**AWF Annual Conference**  
**First United Methodist Church, Pensacola, FL**  
Theme "Make Us One" is based on  
our United Methodist communion liturgy.



**Fri. and Sat., JUNE 27-28 Mission u**

**Ashland Place UMC, Mobile, AL**  
**Theme: “HOPE”**  
**Studies for children, youth, and adults**  
**Scholarships available**

**Clara Ester, Mission u Dean**

More details coming with registration information link. Check the [www.awf-umw.org](http://www.awf-umw.org) website often.

**October 3 – 4, 2025**

**Conference Spiritual Enrichment Retreat**  
**Blue Lake, near Andalusia, AL**



**October 18th Panhandle District Fall Meeting**  
**Gulfview United Methodist Church**  
**(time TBD)**

**245 Wisteria Ln.**  
**Panama City Beach, FL 3241**

# EASY DOES IT!

When you need a quick dessert for your next UWFaith meeting, try the recipe below. It's easy as pie and really good if you love chocolate and peanut butter together.

## *Award Winning* PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE PIE

From a past National Peanut Festival Recipe Contest

Dothan, Alabama

Each pie serves: 8; Prep Time: 15 minutes; CHILLING Time: 2-3 hours

### INGREDIENTS:

2 graham cracker pie crusts  
1 instant chocolate pudding mix (family size)  
2 cups milk  
3 oz. cream cheese  
1/2 cup crunchy peanut butter  
1/3 cup 10-x sugar  
8 oz. Cool Whip, thawed

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Mix dry pudding with milk as directed on box.
- Pour half of the mixture into each pie crust; set aside.
- Use a mixer to combine cream cheese, peanut butter, and 10-x sugar until creamy.
- Fold in the Cool Whip, and mix lightly.
- Top each pie with half of this mixture.
- Chill at least 2 hours prior to serving.

Enjoy! And God bless you with a wonderful Resurrection Day,

*Deanie DeFelice*

Communications Coordinator  
AWF Conference UWFaith

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# ALERT Addendum

Spring 2025, Vol. 4, Issue 1

## MEMBERSHIP NURTURE and OUTREACH

Our mission as United Women in Faith is to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education; so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

The Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:4-42 boldly stepped out of her comfort zone to invite her community to Christ. We, too, must reach outside our comfortable group of friends to invite others to join us in mission as United Women in Faith. Here we find a place to nurture faith, experience community, and put faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth. (Adapted from *UMW Handbook 2012-2016*)

### A Few Membership Tips:

- ✿ YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A UNITED METHODIST TO BE A MEMBER OF UWF.
- ✿ NURTURE YOUR CURRENT MEMBERSHIP WHILE INVITING OTHERS.
- ✿ TELL PEOPLE WHAT YOU LOVE ABOUT UWF.
- ✿ PARTICIPATE IN DISTRICT, CONFERENCE EVENTS.  
(You will learn, grow spiritually, and be a part of a creative, supportive fellowship of women whose focus is mission with women, children, and youth.)
- ✿ INVITE ALL WOMEN OF YOUR CHURCH TO SOME SPECIAL EVENT AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO JOIN.
- ✿ REMEMBER IT TAKES AT LEAST 5 INVITATIONS FOR SOMEONE TO ACCEPT WHEN YOU INVITE THEM TO SEE WHAT UWF IS ALL ABOUT.
- ✿ WHEN YOU HAVE NEW MEMBERS, DON'T ASSUME EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY THINGS LIKE:
  - Call to Prayer and Self-Denial
  - Gifts to Mission
  - Pledge to Mission
  - Charter for Racial Justice
  - Special Mission Recognition

**I BELIEVE LOVE IN ACTION CAN CHANGE THE WORLD**  
**(TOGETHER WE CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS US)**

Blessings,  
**Clara Ester**  
AWF-UWFaith  
MNO Coordinator