

The Informer



United Women in Faith

South West District United Women in Faith

Fall 2023

President's Ponderings

Greetings sisters in the name of the Lord Jesus!!

Wow a year has been completed. We are moving into 2024 . The United Women in Faith continues to move forward helping women, children and youth.

Our district has seen several local church units become inactive. We need prayer for these units as most members are older and no longer able to drive.

Our scripture for this year has reminded us that we should not grow weary in doing good. I can tell you that this is sometimes very difficult for me. I know we do not always see the reward right away but if we persist on the right path then the reward will be there.

For 2024, I hope to focus on more interaction with the local units that continue. I also hope to see some new units come from the start-up churches. So please be in prayer for the district team in 2024 that God will show us his desire and that we can be faithful as his children.

Michele Smith
President 2023-24



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South West District Mission Team

President

Michele Smith

Vice President

Secretary

Marcie McNeal

Treasurer

Sally Pehler

Communications

Susan McRae

Mission Coordinators

Education and Interpretation

Membership Nurture & Outreach

Stephanie Bromley

Social Action

Ginger Sorenson

Spiritual Growth

Anne Capps

Registrar

Mary Presley

Historian

Shirley Bryan

Parliamentarian

Debbie Bell

Committee on Nominations

Carolyn Brown

Geneva Hogan

Esme Quijada

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Secretary's Scribbles

Secretaries now is great time to start retaining your records for the end of the year. From the *2022 UMW Secretary Guide* here are some tips:

- Review and follow your congregation and / district United Methodist Women standing rules on retaining records and archives.
- Check with your district or conference United Methodist Women recording secretary for guidelines.

Determine documents to be archived:

- Current Officers must weed out "working documents" (memos, planning lists, phone messages, email discussions, etc.).
- Current officers should sort, box, label and list materials to save the "final product," such as
 - One copy of unit program book and /or directory (officer lists)
 - Minutes
 - Audits
 - Other materials of historical value (e. g., one copy of program book or bulletin programs, other district events)
 - Other legal or official papers (e. g., bequests, scholarship information)



from retreats, mission

Archive at neutral site:

- Unit should determine where to house records. According to the bylaws, the secretary is the custodian of official papers and records.
- Consult with the church administrative council or historian about where records might be housed.
- Determine and document in the minutes the actual storage location. Options to consider -
 - District archives
 - Local church archives
 - Rented storage or bank box with keys held by 2 persons

Marcie McNeil

Secretary 2023-24

South West District United Women in Faith



SOUTH WEST DISTRICT Alabama-West Florida Conference

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Units and Presidents

Christ United UWFaith

Debbie Bell

Foley UWFaith

Polly Pack

Grand Bay UWFaith

Elsie Patrick

Grove Hill UWFaith

Mary English

Kingswood UWFaith

Suzanne Meadows

New Hope UWFaith

Karen Arnold

Spring Hill UWFaith

Janice Small

St. John UWFaith

Katy Wrona

St. Mary UWFaith

Suzette Williams

Theodore UWFaith

Ginger Sorenson

Theodore First UWFaith

Evelyn Stallworth

Thomasville UWFaith

Shirley Hodges

Legacy Church

at Toulminville-Warren UWFaith

Geneva Hogan

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Treasurer's Tidbits

Expand our capacity to love and to pray in the midst of all we do not understand and cannot comprehend...Walk with us through our fear, our outrage, and our pain, and enable us, as we are confronted with the fragility of life, to put our trust in you, our Rock and our Refuge.

This quote from Rev. Bryan is the beginning of my prayer over the offering at our Spiritual Enrichment program at Kingswood on November 18th. Although we may not understand the way the world is 'turning' right now, we need to cling to our Rock - Jesus Christ. As we have gone through this year not knowing which churches we may gain and lose, we must be diligent in using the money that we are stewards over to do the work of our Lord to further our mission work.

As of this article, we have lost several units in the South West District. We have had only 8 units to give any amount to the total pledge for our district. With the end of the year quickly approaching, it is time to dig deep in our units so that we can end the year strong. Please discuss with your units their plans for reaching the goals of the 5 channels of giving.

Lastly, please get your names/money to me for special recognition pins. They have been shipping quickly, but I know that the end of year rush will slow them down.

Please know that when you read this article, you will probably only have around one to two weeks to get your final money and reports turned in.

I am still receiving checks at my previous address. Please make note of the change. Also, I have had a couple of checks lost this year. Please send me a text and/or email to let me know that you have sent a check and I will be on the lookout!

Should you ever need anything, please call, text or email.

PLEASE NOTE MY ADDRESS:

Sally Pehler
PO BOX 1435
Point Clear, AL 36564
251-490-4717

Sally Pehler

Treasurer, 2023-24

South West District United Women in Faith



The Five Channels of Mission Giving

-1-

Pledge to Mission

-2-

Special Mission Recognition

-3-

Gift to Mission

-4-

Gift in Memory

-5-

World Thank Offering

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Membership Nurture and Outreach

Recently, two events in my life inspired me to think differently and consider things more abundantly. When traveling to the Ozarks in Missouri, I stayed midway in Oxford, MS; also, a Women's Beach Retreat in Gulf Shores, AL, proved to be rich in blessings and inspiration.

Not only was the glorious nature profoundly evident throughout the trip to Missouri, but I also experienced new things. One was the Ha Ha Tonka State Park at Lake of the Ozarks where there were numerous geologic features in areas full of intriguing history.



Another was the home of one of my favorite authors, William Faulkner, in Oxford, MS, where I picked up a very special book. Pass It On is about a young impoverished black boy, Ernie, who was able to "beat the odds" to escape poverty through hard work and a college education, succeeding with the help of his benefactor, friend and kindred spirit, Mr. Faulkner himself.

From these I gained a new attitude about abundance.

The theme of the beach retreat in Gulf Shores was "Immeasurably More"! We delved into Paul's lessons in Ephesians which were written from prison no less! He reminded the people how abundantly blessed they were, which we, too, are to realize ourselves. We're chosen, we're "holy and blameless in His sight", we're righteous "by the blood", we're adopted, we're predestined, we're receivers of grace, we're forgiven, we're "full of understanding in accordance to the riches of God's grace", we're His heirs, guaranteed of our inheritance, and we are "hearers in truth of salvation".

From that lesson, amongst more of God's glorious nature, I realized even more how infinite our abundance is! We, as United Women in Faith, can do abundantly more because we are aware of our many blessings and can share further. Let's continue spreading this understanding of abundance, and *like God with us, Paul with the Ephesians, and William Faulkner with Ernie, **PASS IT ON!***

Stephanie Bromley
Membership Nurture and Outreach Coordinator 2022-23
South West District United Women in Faith

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Our Purpose

United Women in Faith 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 the concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

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Social Action

These are some ideas and thoughts focusing on racism. To know/review the objective and understand what racism is. We need to decide what it means to us personally and follow Christ in that understanding.

We all encounter a variety of people in our neighborhoods, school, workplace and other communities. We all should celebrate the diversity in the **Christian Community**.

We need to open our hearts in every way possible to God's spirit.

One verse to be referenced is from **John 13:35** **By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.**

We hope this will give us the ability to pray without ceasing for each and every person.

Ginger Sorenson

Social Action Coordinator, 2023-24

South West District United Women in Faith



Spiritual Enrichment

Thanksgiving is a gift given to us by the good and loving nature of our heavenly Father. In and out of every season of life, we have a reason to give thanks because we serve a wholly faithful, good, and loving God. We serve the only King who would lay down his life for his unworthy, rebellious servants. We serve a God perfectly worthy of all the thanksgiving and praise we could possibly give.

In using the incredible gift of thanksgiving, we remind ourselves of how truly good our Father is. In thanksgiving, we experience the joy of a proper perspective and have our hearts stirred by the renewing of our minds. **Psalms 100:4** says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!" When we come before God with thanksgiving, we seek the face of our Father while grounding ourselves firmly in the truth of his perfect nature. When we begin our days, prayers, worship, reading, and fellowship with a heart of thanksgiving, we live out of a place of faith and reality found in the kingdom of God come to earth.

Our God is bigger and better than our circumstances, fears, wounds, misconceptions, and past failures. There is security and joy in declaring the goodness, kindness, loving, and eternal nature of our Father. We dictate the emotions we feel by what we choose to dwell on and believe. Our minds are the battleground for our emotions, actions, and desire to dwell in communion with our good God.

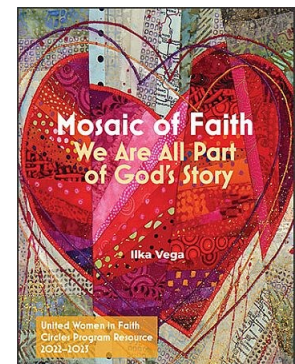
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2023

Program Resource

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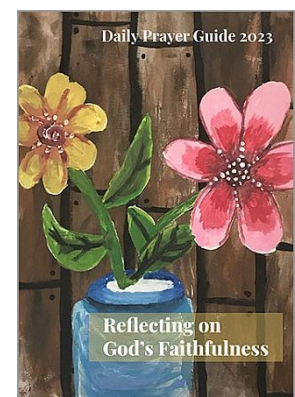


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Ephesians 5:20 says we are to be “giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And **Psalms 92:1-5** says: *It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre. For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy. How great are your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep!*

Our hearts become glad when we offer continual thanksgiving. Five minutes of thanksgiving and praise has the power to change the direction of each day. It has the power to stir our hearts and make us open to and aware of God’s will for us in every situation. It fills us with an atmosphere of joy and of the Spirit. And it can greatly assist us in choosing the life of communion with the Father over the pursuits of the world as temptations and situations arise. May you be empowered and filled with transcendent joy as you engage in continual thanksgiving.



Take time in guided prayer to practice thanksgiving and enjoy the fruits of a renewed mind and a heart filled with joy and truth.

Anne Capps
Spiritual Enrichment Coordinator 2022-23
South West District United Women in Faith

Committee on Nominations

Right now our District Team is in need of members. We gather 4 times a year to plan and prepare for the events of the District. If you or someone in your unit would be willing to serve a term beginning January 1, 2024, please **contact Michele Smith, (251-895-1306)**.

For **2024-25**, we need assistance in the roles of Vice President, Mission Coordinators for Education and Interpretation, Spiritual Growth, and Membership Nurture and Outreach, and for the Committee on Nominations.

For **2025-26**, we will elect President, Secretary, Communications Coordinator, and Mission Coordinator for Social Action plus additional members for the Committee on Nominations.



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Southeastern Jurisdiction Quadrennial Meeting

What does it mean to answer the call to "love one another" (John 13:34) in 2024?
Come GET TOGETHER!

FEEL the joy when faith-filled women unite

NURTURE our souls through the strength of our sisterhood

DEEPEN our relationship with God

EXPLORE the power of love to make a difference

TOGETHER we can *do* more TOGETHER we can *be* more

TOGETHER the *power of love in action*
can change the world!

Get Together!

Where: Chattanooga, Tennessee

When: April 19-21, 2024

Early Registration through December, 2023 - \$210

Late Registration after December, 2023 - \$240

**THE TABLE AT THIS CONFERENCE IS OPEN TO EVERYONE -
NO NEED TO BELONG TO UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH SO BRING A FRIEND!**

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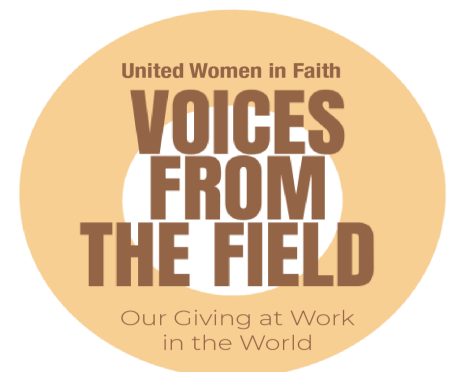
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Podcasts are an excellent source of informative, thoughtful interactions that are easy listening and have added benefits. Get podcasts at -

<https://uwfaith.org/resources/podcasts/>



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**SOUTH WEST DISTRICT UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH
ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE
2023 DISTRICT AND CONFERENCE CALENDAR**

JAN 14	AWF-UW	Faith Conference Executive Mission Team Meet XTeam Officers & District Presidents	Bay Pines District
JAN 28		South West District Mission Team Meeting 10 AM	UMC District Office
MAR 24-25		AWF-UWFAITH CONFERENCE ANNUAL DAY	UMC NEW HOPE UMC
APR 1		South West District Annual Day	St. John UMC
MAY 13		UMCOR Workshop - Hygiene Kits 10 AM	Christ UMC Fellowship Hall
JUNE 10		District Mission Team Meeting (2023 Budget Mtg)	UMC District Office
JULY 16		AWF-UMW Conference Executive Mission Team Meets	Enterprise FUMC
JULY 22		Cooperative Mission u	Aldersgate UMC
SEPT 9		South West District Mission Study 10 AM - 2 PM	Toulminville-Warren Street UMC
OCT 6-7		AWF-UWF Spiritual Enrichment Retreat	Blue Lake Assembly Grounds
OCT 28		District Mission Team Meeting 10 AM	UMC District Office
NOV 4		Training for District Presidents and Treasurers	via ZOOM
NOV 18		District Spiritual Enrichment Day 10 AM - 12 Noon	Kingswood UMC

