



United
Women
in Faith

Volume 2, Spring 2023



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2023 Conference Officers	
President	Debbie Bracewell
Vice President	Katy Wrona
Secretary	Debbie Bell
Treasurer	Cynthia Brown
Communications	Deanie DeFelix
Nominations	Desiree Clarke
Mission Coordinators	
Spiritual Growth	Zan Jones
Social Action	Joyce Genz
MN&O	Kristine Jones
Webmaster	Anne Capps
Parliamentarian	Betty Helms
SEJ Nom. Chr.	Barbara Carroll
Nat. Board of Dir.	Betty Helms



Message from the President

I don't know if you have the eternal battle with dollar weed that I have, but it seems that nothing will remove it from my yard. Boiling water, baking soda, harsh chemicals, 16-degree temperature—all have failed.

It seems to me there is much to learn from dollar weed. It is hardy and spreads in various ways. Just when it looks like it has been conquered, it returns. By now you may be seeing my point—we in UWFaith are going through difficult times as well as our home churches. We see our membership dwindling as churches disaffiliate and members age out. We have been discouraged and saddened by events that seem beyond our control. We must be more like dollar weed—continue regardless of circumstances and outside influences. Let's remember we “connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development” and educate so we “can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.”

Over the past three years many of us have continued to support our members and projects when others did not. In the 2023 January/February issue of *response* ‘Ainise ‘Isama’u says, “Let’s continue innovating. Let’s continue inviting. Let’s continue empowering the next generation to participate with us. Let’s continue united in faith despite this polarized world and a divided denomination.”

Blessings,
Debbie Bracewell
President

Let's be like dollar weed—
continuing to grow and
spreading our connections
with women in mission
throughout our nation and
the world.

Annual Day 2023

March 24th - 25th, 2023

Our Annual Day event is a time of worship and fellowship, as well as an opportunity to learn from our speakers. We regret that National UWFaith President 'Ainise 'Isama'u is unable to attend. Please pray for 'Ainise and her family as they have the Celebration of Life for her mother.



New Hope UMC
5343 Fowl River Road
Theodore, AL 36582

Registration Opens at
6 pm on Friday

2023 Speakers

We are excited to welcome several leaders across the conference to share a message!

*Dr. Bishop
Betty Helms
Debbie Bracewell*

Register Today! www.awf-umw.org

Schedule

Friday, March 24th

6 pm: Registration Opens
Prayer Room Opens
6:30 pm: Memorial Service
7:00 pm: Charter for Racial Justice Program

Saturday, March 25th

8:30 am: Registration Opens
Prayer Room Opens
9:30 am: Opening Worship
11 am: Lunch
12 pm: Program

SEE REGISTRATION FORM ON NEXT PAGE or online at www.awf-umw.org

Deadline is March 18.

For more information, contact Katy Wrona at wrokath@gmail.com

ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE WOMEN IN FAITH

2023 AWFC - UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH ANNUAL DAY



DATE: Friday and Saturday, March 24 & 25, 2023

NEW HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5343 Fowl River Road, Theodore, AL 36582

(251) 973-2285



REGISTRATION DEADLINE: March 8, 2023

(A \$10 late fee will apply to all LATE registrations if postmarked after this date)

Section A: **HEALTH FORM**

All Participants MUST Register, even if only attending for one day.

One Health Form must be submitted per calendar year. All forms are destroyed after the last conference event.

SECTION B: **NAME - ADDRESS (CONTACT INFORMATION) (Please print legibly)**

DISTRICT NAME: _____ LOCAL UNIT: _____

Name to appear on Name Tag _____ Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone Number _____

ARE YOU A FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE: YES () NO ()

SECTION C **ELECTED OFFICERS - ONLY**

CONFERENCE OFFICE: _____

DISTRICT OFFICE: _____

LOCAL OFFICE: _____

SECTION D **LODGING**

Individuals are responsible for their own room reservations and payment

Recommended Hotels in the area:

La Quinta Inn & Suites

Holiday Inn Express & Suites

Hampton Inn Mobile

5170 Motel Ct., Mobile, AL

5190 Motel Circle, Mobile, AL

5478 Inn Road, Mobile, AL

(251) 298-8361

(251) 661-9099

(251) 660-9202

SECTION E **MEAL COSTS, REGISTRATION AND LATE FEES**

1	MEAL COST (Lunch Saturday) Yes () No ()	\$12.00	
2	Late Fee - If postmarked after Due Date 3/8/2023	\$10.00	
3	Registration Fee	All must pay this	\$20.00
4	TOTAL OWED & ENCLOSED	Please add all meals, Registration & Late Fee	\$

Please fill this form completely!

Make all checks payable to: **AWF-UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH**

Mail to: Cynthia Brown, Conference Treasurer/Registrar

2151 Double Bridge Ferry Road, Eclectic, AL 36024

cynthiabrown350@gmail.com

(334) 202-2469

Special Needs: (Dietary or Physical) _____

Charter for Racial Justice Event—Annual Day

Alabama-West Florida Conference United Women in Faith Event

This meeting is focused on Native American history, especially past and present injustices. One segment will cover the Doctrine of Discover, education/assimilation, and removal from ancestral lands. One speaker will be sharing experiences with a Bureau of Indian Affairs Navajo boarding school in Arizona and the culture and contributions of the Navajo. We are hoping to have a speaker to learn more about the Poarch Creek Tribe history and cultural contributions to Alabama.

STAY UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

The following is an outline of options for those who want to stay connected to United Women in Faith (formerly United Methodist Women), even if their local church chooses to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church. In this case, the president of a local unit does not have to be a member of the UMC. (By-Laws Related to Staying Connected to United Women in Faith 8/4/22)



If the local church is leaving the UMC, the UWF (formerly UMW) unit CAN stay connected to UWF in the following ways:

- Staying a local unit and relating to a district UWF;
- Relating directly to a Conference UWF;
- Joining a cluster unit;
- Becoming a district unit (in districts where a District Conference is held annually, the district president must be a member of the UMC);
- Becoming an ALL ACCESS online National Membership Unit

Individual members of these disaffiliated units are eligible to serve as follows:

1. An All-Access online National Member;
2. A nominee for local unit leadership in all offices;
3. A nominee for District leadership (except President, who must be a member of the UMC where District Conferences are held)
4. A nominee for **Conference** leadership (except **President**, who must be a member of a UMC);
5. A voting delegate and nominee for Jurisdiction leadership - at the UWF jurisdiction level;
6. A nominee for Program Advisory Group, a national leadership body.

Individual members of these disaffiliated units are NOT eligible to serve as follows:

1. A nominee for the **National Board of Directors** (must be a member of a UMC)

From the Conference Secretary

How do you encourage someone? Do you use words like, "hang in there" or "this is what you're going thru, not who you are." Why do you encourage someone? Do you use some of the same words like, "hang in there" or do you just say "nothing" and be there.

That's it. As we begin to do "UWFaith" again this year you will probably still say "UMW" and that's OK; you will most likely be focused on this church stuff and that's OK too. Our attention to the mission for women, children, and youth remains for us to 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.

About those minutes...

To the district and local unit secretaries during a meeting "you're the guide on the side, not the sage on the stage." The best way to get minutes accurate is to follow the agenda as a framework, and even today I find using a phone or laptop recorder helps. Many cell phones or laptops have a voice recorder app to download for free. Always get the minutes back to the President for proofing before distribution. And minutes to the leadership team should be distributed within two weeks of the meeting.

I know you're a volunteer secretary. I know that during an installation you said, "I will"; I also know your membership voted to elect you; they might even have voiced (in unison) that they would "pray for you and help you."

As this years' Scripture states, "Let us not become weary..."

Serving Boldy with Grace

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time
we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9

Debbie Bell

AWF-UWFaith Secretary
Scholarship Committee Chair
mawbel36575@yahoo.com



FROM THE TREASURER

Greetings United Women in Faith,

I greet you in the name of our risen and reigning Savior. Many Local Units have been assigned to New Districts. Please feel free to reach out to your District Treasurer to submit remittance in 2023.

Mariana/PC/Dothan

District Treasurer: Bonnie Brant - 478-262-5600

Southwest

District Treasurer: Sally Pehler – 251-490-4717

Central Alabama

District Treasurer: Jill Farris - 334-313-0965

Pensacola

District Treasurer: Patricia Franklin: 850 217-7905

Conference Treasurer: Cynthia Brown – 334-202-2469



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH at work in NORTH AMERICA

REPORT OF THE AWF-UMW TREASURER

For the Year 2022		as of 12/30/22		
MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE)	Pledge	Paid by Districts	Balance	% Paid
Bay Pines	11,000	8,153	2,847	74.1%
Marianna/PC/Dothan	20,500	17,299	3,201	84.4%
Southwest (Mobile)	24,575	9,159	15,416	37.3%
Montgomery	20,675	12,055	8,620	58.3%
Pensacola	20,000	12,109	7,891	60.5%
Events - Offering	2,700	1,087	1,613	40.3%
TOTALS FROM DISTRICTS	99,450	59,862	39,588	60.2%
Pledge to National	84,533	50,234	34,298	59.4%
BEGINNING BALANCE CHECKING 1/1				19,339
INCOME				
2. Meetings & Non Prog-Events			1,650	
3. General			4,075	
4. Program Committee			3,761	
5. Total Love Offerings Others			2,834	
6. MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE)	60%		59,862	
9. TOTAL SUPPLEMENTARY NAT'L			6,357	
10. NON-BUDGET ITEMS			1,858	
TOTAL INCOME				80,398
EXPENSES:				
Conference Budget		28,617		
District Budget		(404)	28,214	
Sent to Agencies			1,226	
Sent to National - PLEDGE	59%		50,234	
Sent to National - Supplementary			3,775	
Savings Income			604	(197)
TOTAL EXPENSES				(84,054)
TRANSFER TO/FROM SAVINGS				0
ENDING CK BALANCE				15,486
SAVINGS / CD (Restricted)	Beginning	Income	Transfers	Ending
SAVINGS / CD (Restricted)	55,943	0	0	55,943
TOTAL Checking and Savings				71,429
Prepared by	Cynthia Brown, AWFC Treasurer			
1/10/2023	AWF Conference Treasurer, Cynthia Brown			

FROM SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Greetings United Women in Faith of the Alabama-West Florida Conference,
Happy New Year. Let us start this year with the love of God, continue to be driven by the
love of God and united in sisterhood, as we continue to work to improve the lives of
women, children and youth.

We must continue this faith journey together. You're encouraged to do daily devotional
reading from our Prayer Guide. It is also available digitally at the United Women in Faith
website. You will find daily
encouragement to help you deal with our daily life.

Please consider joining our conference monthly devotional called, "Food for Your Soul." It is a zoom devotional that I hope will help enrich your day through music and biblical scripture. The link will be the same each month. You can email me Zan Jones, Conference Spiritual Growth Coordinator at Mahogany84@hotmail.com and I will email the link.

(Meeting ID:228 178 7819) Passcode:8N5qNP

Meeting dates: March 4, 2023 @ 9:00 a.m Debbie Bell will be the devotional leader.

April 8,2023 @ 9:00 a.m. - Cynthia Brown will be the devotional leader.

May 6, 2023 @ 9:00 a.m., June 24, 2023 @ 9:00 a.m.

Our Conference was chosen to sponsor our first Soul Care Event, to be held on June 2 & 3, 2023. Our theme for this event is "Women Walking in Their Purpose." How is Soul Care different from our Spiritual Growth event that is held in the fall at Blue Lake? Soul Care events focus on nurturing your mind, body, and spirit while deepening your faith through spiritual practice and creating bonds of sisterhood. Please check the conference website in late April. By then we should have the registration information loaded. The focus for this event is to encourage and engage young women to become a part of United Women in Faith. Our focus group includes women from 29 years to 60 years of age. We encourage each district to encourage a young woman to attend this event.

Let us prepare for our Conference Annual Day to be held in Mobile, Alabama, on March 24 & 25, 2023. Our National President Ainise Isama'u will be in attendance. We look forward to seeing the Alabama-West Florida Conference United Women in Faith here to welcome her.

Be blessed, my sisters, and continue to put your love
into Action.

Your Sister in Christ,

Zan Jones

Spiritual Growth Coordinator



FROM MEMBERSHIP, NURTURE, AND OUTREACH

NEW EMAIL FOR KRISTINE JONES: KristineUWF@gmail.com

The UWFaith Conference Memorial Service will be held on Friday evening, March 24, at Annual Day. The women we will remember deserve our respect for the examples they lived before us as women united in their faith in God and their dedication to spreading the sunlight of His love to all, especially the women, children, and youth around the world. This will be a special time of reflection on what really pleases God in our earthly walk and the legacy we want to leave for those who will follow us.

Editor's Note: The March/April 2023 issue of *response* includes an excellent Bible study article entitled "Attuning Ourselves to Lament," in which Tabatha Holley, senior pastor at New Day Church in Bronx, New York, offers a healthy way to "navigat[e] the waters of the trauma caused by the pandemic." (See pp. 8-10.)

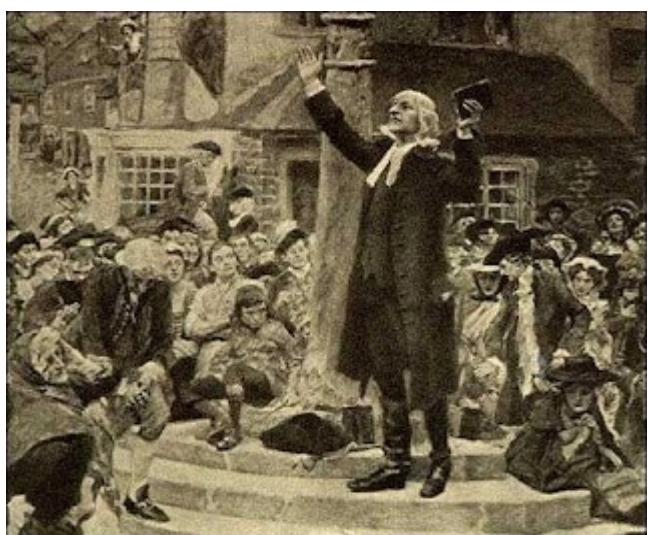


The same POWER that can
calm a raging sea
LIVES within us.

FROM SOCIAL ACTION

As United Women in Faith, we have a historical and continuing commitment to work on behalf of women, children and youth. We are committed to the Gospel-based work of mission. At the same time, holding a particular focus on women, children and youth means that we sometimes bring different questions, concerns and approaches to mission to the world. We look at the same situations, understand the same facts and talk to the same people, but we are able to see differently because we bring this special perspective to our mission work, whether globally or in our own backyards. It is like we're wearing special women-, children- and youth-seeing eyeglasses in a world where women, children and youth are too often treated as either invisible or expendable.

As Wesleyans, we also follow the teachings of John Wesley. Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe, Board of Church and Society said, "Social holiness is unique to Methodism. It is part of who we are. Wesley has said, 'There is no religion that is not social, no holiness that is



not social.' Wesley goes on to say that without social holiness, we cannot exist. It is because of God's love for us and Christ's love that we reach out into the world to walk with others and to accompany them in their journeys."

Social action is also in our DNA as United Women in Faith. One 2023 action campaign, Just Energy for All, is derived from scripture and our UMC Social Principles. Caring for God's creation and our neighbors is not political. Scripture tells us in Psalms 24:1-2 "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the

world, and those who live in it.; for God has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers." Our United Methodist social teachings make clear our call to "stand in solidarity with environmental justice movements led by people of color and native peoples who have been adversely impacted by environmental toxins in their neighborhoods" ([Resolution 1025: Environmental Racism in the U.S.](#)) "oppose any energy policy that will result in continuing exploitation of indigenous peoples' lands" ([Resolution 1001: Energy Policy Statement](#)); and "advocate for national policies that shift resources, including subsidies, away from high-carbon development and toward alternative, cleaner energy sources." ([Resolution 1035: Climate Change and the Church's Response](#))

The second campaign is Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline. "Every child has

value and people of faith must continually assert the dignity and value of all of God's children," said Harriett Olson, chief executive officer, United Women in Faith. "In fact, we cannot adhere to our faith without addressing systemic injustice that pushes certain children, namely children of color, out of the classroom and into the criminal justice system. To follow the [tenets] of our faith and live as Jesus taught us, we must link arm and arm and support the youth of color all across our country who are leading the struggle for racial justice and educational equity."

Social Principles Paragraph 162.A also supports this campaign, "We oppose the creation of a racial hierarchy in any culture. Racism breeds racial discrimination. We define racial discrimination as the disparate treatment and lack of full access and equity in resources, opportunities, and participation in the Church and in society based on race or ethnicity. Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons."

What can we, as women of faith do? We can build relationships and volunteer with local organizations already engaged in justice work, educate ourselves through publications such as Faith Talks, issue-focused bible studies and UWF Reading Program books, and advocate for legislation that addresses justice issues. We can sign up for climate and racial justice events and newsletters at <https://uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/racial-justice/#sign-up-form>. Look for our Social Action display at the AWF-UWFaith Annual Day on March 24&25 at New Hope UMC Church in Mobile for more information on the current campaign actions.

To paraphrase a prayer from Rev. Janelle Gayle, I give thanks to God for the ways He has worked through faithful, strong and persistent women like you to make our world more just and more loving. It's not easy to speak up, push back, or act out. For many of us, it can feel uncomfortable, frightening or frustrating. Yet when we step out in faith, God gives us the strength to carry us through.

Joyce Genz

Social Action Coordinator
Cell/text 251.259.1675



At least 5 million children in the United States have had an incarcerated parent.

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"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

(Luke 4:18-19)

FROM NOMINATIONS

Even though we are barely into Spring, our Committee on Nominations is looking ahead to the election of officers later in the fall. We will have a display set up at the AWF-UWFaith Annual Day to be held March 24-25 in Mobile at New Hope United Methodist Church. Please stop by to pick up and fill out a Talent Bank form and consider joining the Executive Mission Team with your God-given gifts of service as we seek to work on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world.

The following positions will need to be filled in 2023:

Vice-President

Treasurer

Communications

Membership, Nurture and Outreach

Spiritual Growth

Chairperson of Nominations (Selected from within the committee)

Member of Committee on Nominations (Class of 2027)

Education and Interpretation (Still unfilled from last year)

Two nominees and one alternate for SEJ

Please consider one of these positions and be receptive if a member of the Committee on Nominations contacts you. Also, please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Blessings,

Desiree Clarke

Chairperson of Nominations

(251) 454-5549



UNITED WOMEN in FAITH T-SHIRTS



Show your UWFaith commitment by wearing

one of these official t-shirts (available at Annual Day).

Bring cash or check to purchase yours.

\$20 for sizes Small to XL

\$25 for 2XL



Southeastern Jurisdiction Quadrennial Meeting

WHERE: Chattanooga, Tennessee

WHEN: April 19-21, 2024

Registration opens September 2023

Early Registration: \$210 (thru December 2023)

Late Registration: \$240 (after December 2023)

THE TABLE IS OPEN TO EVERYONE - NO NEED TO BELONG TO
UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH, SO BRING A FRIEND!

MISSION GIVING

SAVE YOUR DOLLAR BILLS.....

with a "J" on them for "Jesus" and "Jurisdiction"
AND "G" for "God".



For additional information, go to our website at: www.sejuwf.org

MISSION U

From www.awf-umw.org

Mission u 2023



LIVING THE GOOD NEWS

Reflecting God's Love

This study gives fresh eyes to the Lord's Prayer. Often learned by rote, the Lord's Prayer is a rich guide for how we can live out God's kin-dom in our lives. Participants dive deep into the meaning of each line over the course of the study.

Study location, date, time and study leaders will be announced when finalized. Keep checking for registration info!

Just announced

July 22, 2023

Aldersgate UMC, Vaughn Road

Montgomery, Alabama

FROM UNITS IN THE CONFERENCE

The Marianna-PC-Dothan District is having its memorial service at the Moss Hill Day Apart at Moss Hill Methodist Church near Vernon, Florida, on March 18. All who attend will surely be blessed in a special way by experiencing the service in this historic setting. Dress appropriately for the weather since there is no electricity for AC/fans. There are modern restroom facilities detached from the church. Bring a covered dish and a folding chair for dinner on the ground behind the church. Registration with coffee and breakfast goodies will begin at 9:30 am. All are welcome.



**SPIRITUAL DAY APART at MOSS HILL METHODIST CHURCH
VERNON, FL, MARCH 18, 9:30 A.M.**

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9



PENSACOLA:

Connie Vance, Reading Program Chair, presented awards to four members of the UWFaith unit at FUMC Pensacola at the February meeting. Those who received awards were Nettie Joseph, who read 10 books; Martha, who read 10 books; Pat Franklin and Julie Vickery, who each read five books.



The ladies are standing in front of the UWFaith book section of the FUMC library. Connie is in the middle holding the bookworm. Congratulations to these readers who are learning more about the needs of women, children, and youth of the world and are "hearing" inspiring stories across cultures.