



## **THE VOICE – May 2018**

### **Montgomery-Opelika District**

#### **UMW DISTRICT PRESIDENT’S WORD**

Hello United Methodist Women of the Montgomery-Opelika District,

I hope you are enjoying all of the May activities and looking forward to a spectacular summer.

HOPE is our theme this year. Our hope for a successful Mission Study was realized, and I hope that each unit in the district is doing something to help preserve our environment. Plastic pollution is a growing problem. Using fewer plastic products, like grocery shopping bags, is a great place to start!

We’ve had a couple of units that have worked hard raising funds for the Legacy 150 Fund. This is a great way to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women in our denomination. The Assembly that was held this week started the celebration church-wide.

Please review your Mission Today criteria in anticipation of end of year accomplishments. So much is possible with goals and working throughout the year.

Love to all of you,

June Headrick

**NEWS FROM JUDY SMITH – DISTRICT EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION COORDINATOR**

On a beautiful day in April, we enjoyed an excellent mission study presented by the Aldersgate UMW. We look forward to your participation at the District Spiritual Enrichment retreat on October 27, 2018 at Opelika FUMC,

At your regular UMW meetings, a quick review of your progress on completion of the 20 Missions criteria can be helpful and enlightening. Is your unit a 5 Star unit?

This summer, I plan to contact each UMW unit. Your ideas on how our Education and Interpretation program can be meaningful are very important.

Your pledge to mission supports nearly 100 national mission institutions across the United States, including Puerto Rico and the U. S. Virgin Islands. Mission giving supports around 170 mission programs internationally in more than 110 countries.

UMW units donate to and support local organizations and causes in your respective communities. You may have joined UMW for this purpose. Some organizations and causes have experienced many years of existence.

“Our encounters with people become sacred when we consider that humans bear God’s image and are recipients of God’s love and grace.”

What we do takes work and leadership. It is easier when our actions are made with love and with each other. Let’s look in our hearts and souls and discover what we will do next.

Blessings,  
Judy Smith  
Education & Interpretation Coordinator



Report on ***CLIMATE JUSTICE:***  
***A CALL TO HOPE AND ACTION*** Mission Study

God gave humankind the responsibility to care for the earth and for all forms of life in our earthly home. As we experience climate change and continuing degradation of the earth's environment and witness the harmful effects worldwide, our Climate Justice Mission Study challenged us with this question:

**How are we as people of faith, with a God given responsibility to care for the earth and to seek justice for all people, responding?**

It was a beautiful, warm, sunny morning on April 28th when 33 UMW members representing 11 Units from the Montgomery/Opelika District gathered in the courtyard of Aldersgate United Methodist Church to worship God with praise and thanksgiving for the beauty and majesty of creation. A very large inflatable globe in the center of the courtyard served as a visual reminder that planet earth is our God given home and all life on earth is interconnected—and negatively impacted by climate change and environmental pollution.

Following the opening worship, Debbie Bracewell, President of the Dothan District UMW, did an excellent job of leading our Study as she presented basic information about climate change and environmental degradation and the disproportionately harmful effect on poor and marginalized peoples. The opening worship praising God for the gifts of creation and Debbie's presentation provided a good background for our small group table discussions. The participants particularly appreciated Debbie's teaching style of interspersing teaching segments with opportunities for focused individual table discussions followed by sharing with the whole group.

Certainly this Study increased awareness of the serious threats that climate change and the degradation of the environment are to the health of planet earth and to sustainability of life as we know it. The implications of a study like this can be overwhelming, but true to the *Call to Hope and Action* aspect of this *Climate Justice Study*, an action related to the worldwide problem of plastic pollution was presented at the end of the Study. District President, June Headrick, prepared an informative poster related to plastic pollution and proposed adoption of an action plan to eliminate the use of single-use plastic at District meetings. Members are asked to bring their own non-disposable implements for eating and drinking to meetings in the future, i.e. the Montgomery/Opelika UMW District meetings are "going green." June also gave everyone a big orange fabric grocery shopping bag as an incentive to forego using the plastic bags at the grocery store. Let's spread the word and be true to the commitment to decrease the use of single-use plastic. Additionally, all can take action personally by being conscientious about lowering their carbon footprints.

Members of the Aldersgate Unit served a delicious lunch and everyone present thoroughly enjoyed the food and fellowship.

Thank you Debbie for coming to teach us and thank you to Aldersgate members for your hospitality as our hosting Unit.

### UNIT NEWS

At the April meeting of Opelika FUMC Morning UMW unit, Mr. Joe Davis the Director of Ministry Operations for Alabama Rural Ministries was the guest speaker. Mr. Davis explained the three main objectives of ARM are: 1) provide sustainable homes for those who can't afford repairs; 2) to strengthen families and 3) building Strategic Community Partnerships.

The Opelika FUMC Evening UMW unit held a bake sale on May 6. They raised \$1,150 for missions.

The Opelika FUMC Morning and Evening UMW units held the annual salad luncheon on May 22.

### **2018 MONTGOMERY-OPELIK DISTRICT & CONFERENCE DATES**

Date	Event	Location
July 20-21	Cooperative Mission u Event	Gadsden St UMC, Pensacola, FL
Oct 20-21	Spiritual Enrichment Retreat	Blue Lake
Oct 27	Spiritual Enrichment (Day Apart) – District	Opelika FUMC
February 15-16, 2019	AWF UMW Annual Meeting	FUMC, Demopolis, AL

The Mission Today forms can be accessed at [www.awf-umw-org](http://www.awf-umw-org). Look for the 2018 Workbook, 2018 Local Unit forms and 2018 District forms. **A REMINDER: THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT IS DUE TO JUNE HEADRICK ON NOVEMBER 15, 2018.**