



United
Methodist
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

ALERT

VESSELS FOR THE MASTER'S USE

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Spiritual Enrichment Retreat

March 21-23, 2014
Blue Lake Assembly



2014 Conference Officers

- PresidentBetty Helms
- Vice President.....Pat Dodge
- Secretary.....Sheila Hare
- Treasurer.....Margaret Larsen
- Program Resources...Margie Outlaw
- Communications.....Laurel Akin
- Nominations Chair.....Cynthia Brown

Mission Coordinators

- Spiritual Growth.....Nancy Shealy
- Social Action.....Zan Jones
- M.N. & O.....Cheryl Mothershed
- Ed. & Interp.....Margie Miller

Committee on Nominations

- Julia Norton.....Jennifer Swee
- Toni Broughton.....Cynthia Brown
- Ruth Ann Powers.....Imogene Martin
- Lynn Hamric

United Methodist Women Program Committee Representative

Clara Ester

Come and be blessed by Bishop Violet Fisher as she guides us in how to be "Vessels for the Master's Use." Let's celebrate together that we are all Chosen Vessels. Invite five friends or more to share this divine event. Bishop Fisher's biography and the registration form are in this issue of the Alert. Also, we will honor the members of the United Methodist Women of the Alabama-West Florida Conference that died in 2013 during a memorial service. The names of your deceased members must be sent to Cheryl Mothershed and Betty Helms no later than February 14. See you March 21st!

Your sister in Christ,
Nancy Shealy



TAPESTRY: WEAVING LIFE'S THREADS THROUGH UNITY FEBRUARY 21-22, 2014

After February 1, you may still register for Saturday only for \$25.00. The brochure is in this copy of *Alert*.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

ALL ABOARD FOR OUR UNITED METHODIST WOMENS' MINISTRY.....



Ok ladies, it's time to get our ministry to women, children and youth in gear. I hope you are ready to get on board the 2014 UMW Ministry Train and take the trip with me.

I wonder what a UMW Ministry Train full of United Methodist would be like? We all have different backgrounds, personalities, temperaments, likes, dislikes, and "baggage" that we carry along with us. I'm not promising it will always be a smooth ride, but I do know that it will be worth taking the trip.

Look around you. Can you imagine all of us squeezed into a train car and facing the prospect of a long trip together? I can see some of you now. You've got your iPods plugged into your ears, singing along with your tunes in your own world. Some of you are probably going to curl up with a book. Many of you are talking on your cell phone or texting. And some of you – well, most of you are talking, talking with excited voices. A few are overly excited at just the prospect of the trip. I can hear a few moans mingled with some laughter in the air now!

Face it! God made us all different but there's no reason why we can't all band together as United Methodist Women and head in the same direction. We can use our differences to make us stronger. We have different strengths and weaknesses and God has a way of using those to make us better as a group.

So before we even start, I don't want any of you to miss the trip just because you think you don't fit in. So do not let anything hold you back. Everyone is welcome to come along and get on board with us! We need all types of women of different ages, personalities, and yes even different little quirks to make this an exciting and fulfilling ride.

United Methodist Women need you! It won't grow without you and if you are really concerned about the direction it's going to take, then be involved and help steer it in the right direction. You hold the key to part of what direction the Alabama West Florida Conference of United Methodist Women are headed based on whether you participate or

not. We need each other for encouragement. What will your investment be? Will it be that of giving of your gifts and talents so that our ministry to women, children and youth will function properly?

We want our UMW Ministry Train to take us somewhere. We can't just stay as we are. We have to be an active ministry in order to survive and in

order for the young girls to want to have anything to do with it when they grow into young women. Sure, there are foundations and stepping stones already in place for us to build upon but if we stand still we will never get anywhere and we want to make progress. What can we accomplish? How can we change the lives of women, children and youth for the better? I encourage you to get excited and spread the word about our mission!

Our ministry can have an impact of the lives of thousands of women, children and youth. We can do this. We can improve the lives of so many. We can improve the way we mentor and teach the young girls in our church. We can improve our community as well as our world! We can improve the support we have among each other as United Methodist Women. In the long run we can improve the lives of so many because when we are women doing our part to further the cause of Christ, we will see results. There's such potential among us. Can you see where our train is headed? I hope you'll be part of the ride. We need each other to go full steam ahead!

In Philippians 3:13, 14, Paul is talking about how he had to let go of those things that were holding him back and just keep going forward. That's what we all have to do, not only in our individual Christian lives but when it comes to our United Methodist Women's organization.

SO, ARE YOU ON BOARD?

Remember —

"Don't look back, we are not going that way"!

Betty



BISHOP VIOLET L. FISHER SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT SPEAKER



Bishop Fisher's call to ministry came at the age of 16. Though her roots were in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the affirmation for her ministry as an ordained clergy member came through The King's Apostle Holiness Church of God. In that church she served as National Evangelist and was the first woman to be ordained. During these years, she also taught in the public school systems of Virginia and Maryland.

Her journey brought her back to the church of her birth. In 1988 she was ordained a deacon and in 1990 an elder of The United Methodist Church. In July 2000, she was elected to the Episcopacy by delegates to the Northeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. Bishop Fisher's appointment was to the New York West Area, where she served from 2000-2008.

Bishop Fisher is profiled in the new book compiled by Bishop Judith Craig, *The Leading Women: Stories of the First Women Bishops of The United Methodist Church*. Bishop Fisher is a contributor to "The African American Pulpit," where several of her sermons have been published. She is also a contributor to, *The Women of Color Study Bible*, *The Women of Spirit Devotional* and several other publications.

In addition, Bishop Fisher proudly served as a short-term missionary to Kenya, Uganda, Haiti, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic.

Bishop Fisher has earned two Master's Degrees -- one in Education and the other in Divinity -- and a Doctorate in Divinity. In 2006 Bishop Fisher was awarded an Honorary Doctoral Degree of Letters from Centenary College and in 2007 she received an Honorary Doctoral Degree from Hood Theological Seminary.

In retirement, Bishop Fisher is a sought after revivalist, guest speaker/preacher, lecturer, teacher, conference leader, and evangelist.

She has a large extended family in the Maryland and Delaware area, including her son, Marcus, and her sisters and brothers.

**SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT
REGISTRATION INFORMATION LOCATED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.
MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND NOW!**



Assembly 2014: Louisville

The 2014 United Methodist Women Assembly will be held in Louisville at the Kentucky International Center. There will be a pre-event on Thursday, April 24th with an Ubuntu Day of Service. Assembly will officially begin on Friday morning, April 25th, and ends with closing worship at noon on Sunday, April 27th.

The 2014 Assembly will focus on:

- Giving Voice to the Individual.
- Connecting for Action
- Practicing Radical Welcome
- Supporting United Methodist Women Strategically

Our Theme and Vision:

MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Turning Faith, Hope, and Love into Action

Our scripture for the Assembly is the feeding of the 5,000, Mark 6:30-44.

Contact your District President on travel arrangements that may have been made.

I'm excited about the Assembly and looking forward to learning opportunities and the fellowship. 8,000 UMW gathered together in Louisville, Kentucky in April 2014. Hope you will join us!

Clara Ester

United Methodist Women

Program Representative

A NEW PURPOSE

The United Methodist Handbook 2013-2016 contains our new PURPOSE:

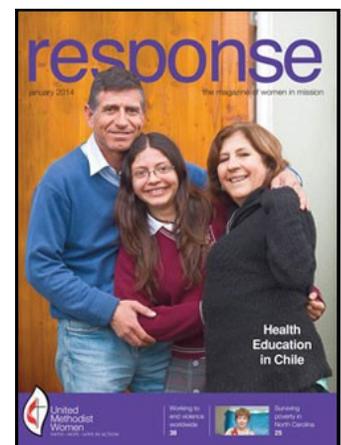
United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand the concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

The website for United Methodist Women, unitedmethodistwomen.org, still shows the old purpose but that should change soon. Our online community, umwonline.org shows the new purpose, as does our conference website: <http://www.awf-umw.org/>

Subscribe to response magazine

**Want to see the world?
Searching for meaning in life?
Overwhelmed by folks who don't care?
Concerned about neglected children?
Committed to mission?**

If you answered yes to any of these questions, **response** is for you. Monthly Bible studies, stories of faith, and mission opportunities



Want to know more about Assembly?

Check it out at:

<http://new.gbqm-umc.org/umw/assembly/>

NEW! [response blog @
responsemagazine.wordpress.com](http://responseblog.wordpress.com)

From the Vice President:

I pray you have all enjoyed a spirit filled holiday season with friends and family. It seems like more than two months since we celebrated our 2013 Annual Day and District Officer Training.

Please plan to join us for Tapestry 2014 – “Weaving Life’s Treads though Unity” at Demopolis First UMC on February 21st and 22nd. The Demopolis District has planned for a whole year. They are excited to be your hostesses for this event. Dr. Connie Shelton is our speaker.

Also, don’t forget we have Spiritual Enrichment Retreat planned for March 21st thru 23rd at Blue Lake. Bishop Violet Fisher is our speaker for this retreat. Please read her biography in this publication. This Spiritual Enrichment retreat will be a event to be remembered!

I hope to see you at one or both of these events. If you have questions or comments about our conference organization, please contact me. If you have suggestions for speakers and/or musicians for future programs, I would love to hear from you.

In HIS service,
Pat Dodge



MEMBERSHIP, NURTURE, & OUTREACH

I can't believe it is 2014! I am excited about the new year and the opportunities that we have as United Methodist Women. My goal this year is to visit each District and review the membership forms and answer questions that you may have.

I also need the names of your deceased members for 2013. Remember that this is only for 2013; deaths after December 31 will be reported in 2014. Deadline for this information is February 15, 2014.

I am always available to answer any questions.

Blessings,

Cheryl Mothershed

PO Box 1204

Bay Minette, Alabama. 36507

***ALERT!* . . . Are you a Subscriber?**

You too can become informed of Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women events and/or activities by subscribing to *Alert* today!

Send your name and address to Laurel Akin, 601 Cedar Drive, Enterprise AL 36330. Enclose a \$ 4.00 check, made payable to Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women (AWFCUMW). You may receive a copy of *ALERT* free by email. Email laurel36330@gmail.com with your request and you will be added to our email list.

Social Action: United Methodist Women on a Mission!

Happy New Years to all United Methodist Women of the Alabama-West Florida Conference! Yes, we're women on a mission. As we begin the new year, let us not forget our conference priorities for 2013, which included human trafficking, immigration and bullying. We held the Bold Faith seminar in 2013 which focused on human trafficking. In 2014 we will work to bring awareness to others through education and social and political action. This article will give focus to human trafficking.

One of the most recent efforts in the fight against human trafficking was designating January 11 as Human Trafficking Awareness Day across the country. Human trafficking is the second largest and fastest growing criminal industry in the world. Some 12.3 million children and adults around the world are currently in forced labor, bonded labor and forced prostitution. In the United States an estimated 500,000 to 2 million are victimized by trafficking each year.

In 2014 we must continue to bring awareness to this horrific issue. On Feb. 2, 2014, thousands will travel to the Met Life Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. to take part in one of the largest sporting events in our nation's history--the Super Bowl. Many among the travelers will be those who arrive in New Jersey through fraud or coercion. They will not be there freely, but as victims of human trafficking.

A major myth about human trafficking is that most trafficked persons are taken against their will, snatched off the street, and thrown into a van. Or that they are runaways or drug users exhausted of options, of money, and of hope. Most at the beginning are leaving home to pursue a good job abroad. Then they find they have been sold, they owe tens of thousands of dollars and will have to buy themselves back.

I encourage all units to continue to raise awareness. Please visit the United Methodist Women website <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/umw/act/trafficking/?search=human%20trafficking>

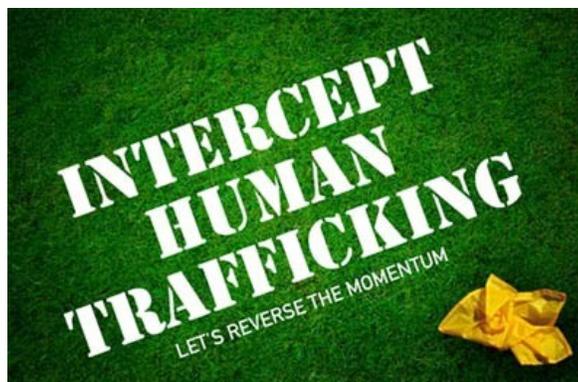
and download the Human Trafficking flyers and other information to help bring awareness to your units, churches, families, friends and community. We have so many means to educate ourselves and others and publicize this issue through social media such as Facebook,

Twitter, You Tube, and UMWOnline. Let's work to end human trafficking.

FAITH.HOPE.LOVE IN ACTION

Zan M. Jones,

Social Action Coordinator



From the Treasurer

Welcome new and returning treasurers! At the January Blue Lake Finance meeting we adjusted some fees. Please read the new Conference Policies, available on-line at <http://www.awf-umw.org/>

to see the changes. Each district should have set their policies also.

Treasurers from all over the eastern part of USA meet at Lake Junaluska to learn about the new on-line remittance forms. I hope all district treasurers will remit online. Conference treasurers are already doing so. Any district treasurers who did not go to Lake Junaluska need to contact me and we will work together to get you up to speed. The up-dated on-line system should be ready the middle of February. I will try to contact each of you in the next two weeks.

Our mission giving initiative this year is "Candle Burning for Missions." All district

presidents should have information on this. The cost of one minute of Mission is \$28.35. At Annual Day, each district will have a candle. Contributions in any amount may be made in honor or memory of individuals or units. These names will be listed in the Annual Day program book. The total given in each district will be combined to determine the total number of minutes each district's candle will burn, so if your district raises \$2835 your candle will burn for 100 minutes. If your district wants to have a 2nd initiative, that is OK. Some districts raised quite a bit of money with "Change for Change" last year.

I look forward to working with you and I think we will have a great year.

Margaret Larson,
Conference Treasurer



Did you know...

We are on Facebook? Search AWF United Methodist Women and like our page!

Date	EVENT
February 21-22	Tapestry Retreat, Demopolis First UMC
March 21-23	Spiritual Enrichment Retreat, Blue Lake
April 25-27	Assembly, Louisville, Kentucky
July 10-12	Mission u, Dothan First UMC
October 25	AWF UMW Conference Annual Meeting, Blue Lake



**We Want YOU!
A CALL TO LEADERSHIP**

What if someone offered you a two-year program of education free of charge? What if they said you would receive not only traditional learning but hands-on training as well? What if they told you that the "class" would be a close supportive community of women who care deeply about the same things you care about and that the work would be part of the long continuing story of women involved in mission?

You have a chance to share just such an opportunity with the women in your conference. Not only will there be good training, excellent resources and a supportive community, but they will be putting their faith into action.

As you attend district and conference meetings, Mission u, training days, etc., be aware of persons who have leadership potential and who show interest in and excitement about the organization.

The motivation and desire to serve in leadership roles comes from several sources:

1. Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ
2. Sense of Values
3. Previous involvement in leadership roles
4. Need to have personal goals met
5. Ownership of the goals of the organization
6. Excitement about the mission work

Submit your Talent Forms today!

Go to <http://www.awf-umw.org/>. Under "resources," click "nominations"

Cynthia Brown,
Nominations Chair



2014 SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT – BLUE LAKE ASSEMBLY
“Vessels for the Master’s Use” with Bishop Violet Fisher
March 21- 23, 2014

Check In begins Friday, March 21st at 4:00p.m. Dinner at 5:30p.m.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: AWFUMW – MAIL FORM AND CHECK TO
SHEILA HARE, REGISTRAR 4074 LAFITTE RD SARALAND, AL 36571

For more information please call: Sheila Hare @ 251-654-5256

FINAL REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MARCH 8, 2014
LATE FEE OF \$10.00 WILL APPLY TO ALL REGISTRATIONS RECEIVED AFTER
FEBRUARY 28, 2014.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: (please complete all areas)

NAME: _____ **PHONE:** _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP** _____

EMAIL: _____

Conference or District Officer: Y N OFFICE: _____

CHURCH: _____ **DISTRICT:** _____

PLEASE CHECK YOUR PREFERENCE: (price includes registration fee, lodging and meals per person)

Center Section – Old Wing			Linwood – New Wing		
	Before 2/28	After 2/28		Before 2/28	After 2/28
____ Triple Occupancy	\$102.00	\$112.00	____ Double Occupancy	\$121.00	\$131.00
Roommates:			Roommate:		
1: _____			_____		
2: _____					
____ Double Occupancy	\$116.00	\$126.00	____ Single Occupancy	\$166.00	\$176.00
Roommate: _____					
____ Single Occupancy	\$156.00	\$166.00			

ROOMMATES MUST MAIL REGISTRATION FORMS AND FULL PAYMENT TOGETHER.

CONFERENCE & DISTRICT OFFICERS PAY ONLY \$20.00 WHEN REGISTERING.

Please notify the registrar of any special needs or requirements.

****Single rooms are limited therefore all requests may not be honored.**

****No guarantee of room until payment is received by the Registrar.**

REFUND POLICY – no refund of registration fee. No refund of Blue Lake costs after registration deadline of March 8, 2014 (exception – death of immediate family member)

ALABAMA/WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

HEALTH FORM

Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment Form

Name: _____ DOB _____

Home Phone: _____ Work # _____ Cell# _____

Physician's Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Health Insurance Company: _____ Policy# _____

Allergies to medications: _____

Current medications: _____

In the event of an emergency, contact:

Name: _____ Relation: _____ Phone# _____

Name: _____ Relation: _____ Phone# _____

In the event emergency medical aid/treatment is required due to illness or injury during my stay at a UMW event, I authorize AL/WF UMW to:

1. Secure and retain medical treatment and transportation if needed.
2. Release my health information to the authorized individual or agency involved in the medical emergency treatment.
3. I hold harmless the AL-WFL Conference United Methodist Women, the AL-WFL Conference, The United

Methodist Church and/or the owners of the facility for which the event is taking place for any act or failure to act during a medical emergency.

Date: _____ Consent Signature: _____

Consent Plan

This authorization includes x-ray, surgery, hospitalization, medication and any treatment procedure deemed "life saving" by the physician. This provision will only be invoked if the person(s) above is unable to be reached.

I hold harmless the AL-WFL Conference United Methodist Women, the AL-WFL Conference, The United Methodist Church and/or the owners of the facility for which the event is taking place for any act or failure to act during a medical emergency.

Date: _____ Consent Signature: _____

Non-Consent Plan

I DO NOT give my consent for emergency medical treatment/aid in the cases of illness or injury. In the event emergency treatment/aid is required, I wish the following procedures to take place:

I hold harmless the AL-WFL Conference United Methodist Women, the AL-WFL Conference, The United Methodist Church and/or the owners of the facility for which the event is taking place for any act or failure to act during a medical emergency.

Date: _____ Consent Signature: _____

Date: _____ Witness Signature: _____



Keynote Speaker
Dr. Connie Shelton

Former Co-Senior pastor of Galloway Memorial United Methodist Church in Jackson, is the new Director of Communications and Connection for the Mississippi Annual Conference. Connie and her husband, Joey, were previously appointed to Galloway in 2008 after serving as Co-Directors of Field Education/Church Relations at Duke Divinity School in Durham, NC. Both Joey and Connie are elders in the Mississippi Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Connie is a native of Piceyune, MS. She previously served as Executive Director of The United Methodist Hour, headquartered in Hattiesburg, MS. Connie is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi with a Bachelor's Degree in Radio, Television, and Film, and a Master's Degree in Public Relations. Her Master of Divinity is from Duke University and Doctor of Ministry is from Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA.

The Sheltons have two daughters, fourteen-year-old Bailey and nine-year-old Jessica.

Schedule

Friday, February 21

- 4:00-5:15pm Registration
- 5:30pm Opening Ceremony
- 6:00pm Dinner & Entertainment
- 7:00pm Assembly—Dr. Shelton

Saturday, February 22

- 7:30-8:00am Registration
- 7:30am Continental Breakfast
- 8:00am Morning Assembly & Devotion
- 8:30am Focus Group Session 1
- 9:30am Focus Group Session 2
- 10:30am Break
- 11:00am Assembly—Dr. Shelton
- 12:00 noon Lunch

Tapestry Registration

- Early Bird- \$35; postmarked by 12/1/13
- Regular- \$40; postmarked by 2/1/14
- Late- \$45; postmarked after 2/1/14

One Day- \$25

Mail registration form to: Margaret Agee
810 Shadow Creek
Camden, AL 36726

Make check payable to: **AWF UMW**

Additional information:

- margaret_agee@yahoo.com 334-682-5579
- Jean Creswell jean@pinebelt.net 334-385-2521



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE • ACTION

Tapestry 2014

Weaving Life's Threads through Unity



February 21-22, 2014

Demopolis, Alabama

United Methodist Women
Alabama-West Florida Conference
Laurel Akin
601 Cedar Drive
Enterprise, AL 36330-3426

Annual Day October 12, 2013

