

Demopolis District Newsletter

In this issue:

- Points from the President's Pen
- Minutes from Annual Day
- Message from Bishop Graves
- Upcoming UMW Mission Study

Points from the President's Pen by Margaret Agee

Here we are, starting another year in the Demopolis District United Methodist Women. We met in our District Annual Gathering at Demopolis with a break-out session for UMW. We did not have enough district officers (only 4) to hold an Executive Mission Team meeting but we did meet with 8 local unit presidents as well

as other officers and members of 11 units amounting to 22 total in attendance. We had other officers in other break-out sessions representing their churches. We had a good discussion with questions asked and hopefully good answers given.

After our welcome Linda Sims, Spiritual Growth Coordinator, gave a mission focus from our Prayer Calendar. Jefferson UMW volunteered to host the Annual Day meeting at the Linden UMC on Saturday, February 8th with registration at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting beginning at 9:30 a.m. We will also have a memorial service. See minutes of that meeting included in this LINK.



Margaret Agee, President

Thomasville has offered to host the Mission Study which will be on "Practicing Resurrection from the Gospel of Mark" on August 1st provided we are allowed to begin meeting again. Our Spiritual Day Apart will be held August 15th. We were trying to get ahead of our schools starting back. Jackson Chapel UMW in Sawyerville, AL has offered to host Spiritual Day Apart. We also discussed AWF UMW meeting dates and encouraged attendance to those meetings as well. Wesley Chapel of Butler has offered to host the mission study in 2021.

We also had replacement pages of the directory for each of the district officers and the local unit presidents. We gave them the opportunity to pick up these pages then we discussed the changes that occurred in the Standing Rules which were only verbiage and not rule changes. It had referred to an addendum for officer duties but now it refers to the Workbook. We had officer changes and date changes to reflect as well.

Reports are important and helps us know where we are and what we are doing and whether we need to change to reach more women and more needs. This led into the discussion of the membership and the need to key online so our leaders will have a better idea of what area to follow in study and what needs to be improved.

The meeting was adjourned and everyone was reminded to register and come to the meetings sponsored by conference, SEJ, and the district.

A Message from Bishop David Graves

April 2, 2020

The Alabama-West Florida Conference has released a revised date for all-conference and district-related gatherings in the bounds of the conference.

To comply with the recommendation of President Trump, all in-person worship and church meetings are not to be held through April 30, 2020. The bishop, cabinet and leadership team will continue to assess when churches may gather again. Should you have any questions on this new date, please contact your district superintendent.



The 2020 session of Annual Conference, scheduled for June 7-9 in Montgomery, AL, at Frazer Memorial UMC, has been postponed due to the coronavirus. A new date has not been set but conference leadership is hoping to reschedule for late summer or early fall. “Although meeting capacity guidance has not yet been provided past April 30, it is evident that large groups will not be able to safely gather anytime soon,” stated Bishop David Graves. “We are in unprecedented times and are all assessing rapidly changing information by the hour. The length of the annual conference will be significantly reduced in order to be good stewards of our limited funds. Many ministries and agencies who usually give reports will need to be prepared to provide a written update for our annual Book of Reports. We know this is unlike any previous annual conference and appreciate the grace we will all need to move forward in a different way. What I look forward to most is seeing our clergy and laity in person, who have lived into being adaptive leaders during this global crisis.”

Information such as a revised working agenda; previously scheduled health screenings; and details on specific celebration and remembrance services will be released when alternative plans are made.

“My prayers continue with you daily,” said Bishop Graves. “In my lifetime I have never encountered an illness that was as far-reaching and life-changing as COVID-19. Together, we will get through this with God’s help and care for one another.”

AWF UMW directives coming out of the Called Executive Committee Team Meeting via phone are as such:

Annual Conference as scheduled in Montgomery at Frazer UMC on June 7-9 has been **postponed**.

Cooperative Mission as scheduled in Montgomery at Aldersgate UMC on July 24-25 has been **postponed**.

District Meetings including Circle Meetings will need to be **postponed** and rescheduled to be in compliance

with **COVID-19** guidelines and Bishop Graves’s directive for churches in the conference, which impacts our planned meetings.

SEJ Update Betty Helms, SEJ President said information has gone out about the **postponement**. She said the committee is working on a date and the election of directors will be held electronically at a time to be announced. Also, no registration refunds will be offered but that current registrations will transfer to when the event is held.

Minutes of Annual Day

February 8, 2020

Annual Day of the Demopolis District United Methodist Women was held on February 8, 2020 at the Linden United Methodist Church in Linden, AL. with the Jefferson UMW ladies hosting. There were 6 local units represented with 27 members present consisting of 6 local presidents, and 3 district officers. Other local unit positions were not known. Our theme this year is “In HIS Service”.

Melissa Compton, president of the Jefferson UMW welcomed everyone; Linda Sims, district Spiritual Growth Coordinator read the Mission Focus from the Prayer Calendar along with the names of missionaries and staff with birthdays. Kathy Patterson gave the devotional and offered the opening prayer in the absence of the pastor whose first grandbaby was being born.

Eleanor Park led a beautiful memorial service for the 5 deceased members. They were: Grove Hill – Bernice Feagin and Joy Welch; Pine Hill – Lora Reed Irby; St. Paul – Bernice Hill; and Wesley Chapel – Sandra Cowan. Each unit was given an opportunity to comment about their lost member. The sister of Lora Irby, Mamie Reed, was also present for the memorial service.



Margaret presented the Special Mission Recognition pin to Paula Bonner in appreciation of her years of service with the district.

The business session was called to order by President, Margaret Agee, leading the group in the reciting of the purpose. She reviewed future dates of meetings to come. Those being August 15th at Jackson Chapel for the Spiritual Day Apart with elections and installation; Mission Study date will be August 1st hosted by Thomasville with Tutti Johnson teaching “Practicing Resurrection, the Gospel of Mark”.



Margaret reminded everyone of the Reports Due date of November 30th. Margaret read the minutes in the absence of the Secretary. She also gave the Treasurer’s report in the absence of the Treasurer. We started the year with \$691.50 and ended the year with \$483.39 in the bank. Our pledge to conference was \$15,000 but we were short \$668 and only sent in \$14,332. We spent 1,259 of our A&MD Funds and received 500 from conference. The A&MD Funds available to us are figured on the amount of Pledges we paid the previous year. All were encouraged to send in pledge money on a regular basis – quarterly would be great.

Minutes from Annual Day (continued)

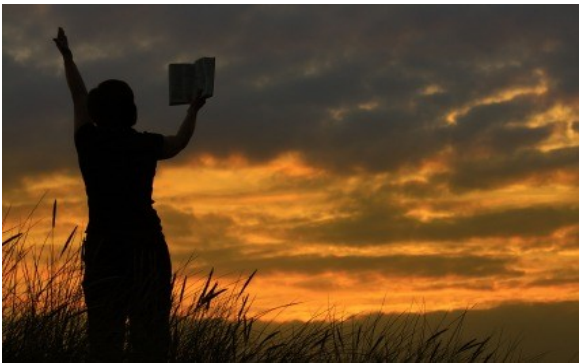
Statistics for the meeting was reported as 26 members present with 1 guest and there were 6 units represented. We had an offering of \$392.00 which will go to pledge.

Margaret then gave the Recap of 2019 Awards stating that the Certificates are included in the unit Presidents' envelope and could be picked up after the meeting. She reported 3 Gold, 2 Silver, 1 Bronze, and 3 Participating. The Reading Program had 4 in Plan 1, 6 in Plan 2, 2 in Plan 3, and 8 Participating. She also gave out Mission Today Forms and how they could be used on a regular basis and in making your plans, reviewing at each meeting. In addition a couple of ladies had been invited to discuss things their units do for women, children, and youth, encouraging others to participate in telling what UMW means to them. There was good discussions with Bobbie, Kayte, Jane, Renee, Vickie, Josephine and others participating. The Demopolis group explained their S.A.L.T. organization which is a ministry to Senior Adults, mostly women.



Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with the blessing given by Reba Wiley for lunch. Reviewed sheet with dates of upcoming meetings.

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 concepts of mission through participation and the global ministries of the church.

UMW Mission Study

By Linda Sims

Please attend our District UMW Mission Study led by Tutti Johnson on August 1, 2020, at the Thomasville UMC. Our study will be "Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipleship".



If possible, you may purchase the book from www.umwmissionresources.org or by calling 800-305-9857. The cost of the study book is \$10 plus shipping cost. If you are unable to obtain the study book, please read the the Gospel of Mark in your Bible in advance.

"Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipleship" by Rev. Janet Wolf, presents this well-known Gospel through voices and experiences that are often relegated to the margins. Where we stand, what we see, who we listen to, whose stories and voices we value or dismiss shape the way we understand the world and the Bible. This study incorporates the stories of those on the margins to uncover how the gospel is alive and well today--how God is, and always has been, calling us to live out the Word in a radical way.

The study begins in Mark 14 with the story of a woman who bursts into a gathering of male disciples to anoint Jesus, and, to the surprise of the disciples, is resoundingly affirmed. Throughout Wolf utilizes personal experiences and stories entrusted to her through her work in prisons and as a community organizer to invite us to experience the power that stories have to heal, transform, liberate, and unshackle. In five chapters, the study examines different passages in Mark and challenges readers to discover what radical discipleship looks like in their context. It reminds us to stop and think: WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

Note: The book is a Bonus Book and counts as two books in Spiritual Growth on the 2020 Reading Program Book list.

Bring your sack lunch and join us. The hosts will provide drinks, desserts, and chips.

