



ALERT

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2021 Conference Officers

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| President | Debbie Bracewell |
| Vice President | Katy Wrona |
| Secretary | Debbie Bell |
| Treasurer | Cynthia Brown |
| Communications | Laurel Akin |
| Nominations Chair | Desiree Clark |

Mission Coordinators

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Spiritual Growth | Zan Jones |
| Social Action | Ora Gillespie |
| MN&O | Kristine Jones |
| Ed. & Interp. | Joyce Genz |
| Webmaster | Anne Capps |
| Parliamentarian | Joyce Genz |
| SEJ Chair of Nom. | Barbara Carroll |
| Nat. Board of Dir. | Betty Helms |

United Methodist Women is now ... United Women in Faith!



We've taken a new name to better reflect how we answer our calling today. It's an exhilarating time, as we commit to even greater inclusivity, action, and impact. We remain women of passion and power, united by God's love in our mission to support women, children, and youth.

We are and will remain the official women's organization of the United Methodist Church. Our theology and practice of faith will remain Methodist. The name change is to help remove barriers to participation. We want to invite more women into the work of the church. Our Purpose has not changed!

Read more in the March/April issue of **response** here: <https://online.fliphtml5.com/eiek/knab/#p=1>. This issue also shows where the money goes.

Check out the new website at <https://uwfaith.org/>

We believe Love in Action can change the world!

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



By the time we read this *Alert*, we will have had our United Methodist Women Annual Day, held our Prayer & Self-Denial program, and readied ourselves for a productive UMW year. There will be surprises this spring as United Methodist Women unveil their rebranding efforts with a new name and a new logo. We know our name has changed several times since 1869, with the last change in 1973. With the name change, new initiatives and innovations will be introduced to reenergize and inspire our members. As Yvette Moore says in the November/December *response*, “‘Branding’ are the things we do—our look, our actions, our messages—that help let people know what they can expect to get when we are in the room.” Our name may be updated, but our purpose to provide for women, children, and youth will be the same.

You still have time to register for Assembly 2022—whether in person or virtual. Great speakers and workshops are available online for those who do not wish to attend in person. Visit <https://assembly2022.org> to see what **Assembly 2022** offers.

Our scriptural guide for this year comes from John 20:21, “Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’” Peace and service—let’s shake off the rust and lethargy of the past two years to follow God’s call to service.

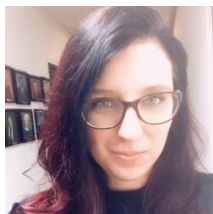
Debbie Bracewell

President

AWF-UMW



Bishop David Graves and AWF UMW President Debbie Bracewell at Annual Day



Hello friends!

I love our 2022 theme of Service & Peace. The theme scripture verse found in John 20:21 gives us both reassurance of peace and the call to go out and serve as Jesus did.

“Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

John 20:21 (NIV)

It was amazing to gather together for our 2022 Annual Day. I am thankful for First UMC of Marianna and their UMW unit for hosting the event. We celebrated the past year, learned more about what is next for UMW, remembered those we lost, and had an opportunity to learn more about Service & Peace.

Rev. Ashley Davis was our keynote speaker and she gave two great messages in our sessions. Rev. Davis serves as the Director of Connectional Ministries for the AWFUMC. She challenged us to identify the places / things in our lives that cause us to lock ourselves away and begin to break free, find peace, and grow closer to God.

The day had many God filled moments. We had a beautiful memorial service led by Kristine Jones. Zan Jones created interactive prayer stations. Our processional was filled with laughter and joy. I was also grateful for the presence of conference leaders; Bishop Graves, Rev. Jean Tippit, Rev. Dr. Debra Bishop, & Rev. Mike Pearson. We are blessed by their leadership and support of our local units. Our mission coordinators gave reports with encouraging words and inspiration for the future. Our district presidents and mission coordinators created wonderful displays. Each moment had an opportunity to connect, learn, and share with others.

I look forward to continuing to lean into our theme of Service & Peace with each of you as we find our peace and go out and serve.

Praying for each of you,

Katy Wrona

AWF-UMW Vice President



Reverend Ashley Davis, keynote speaker at Annual Day

From the AWF-UMW Conference Secretary

This article is called for the “Spring Edition” of our conference newsletter. Our AWF-UMW Policies reference for this article content states, “The Spring issue of the conference newsletter shall include information on Financial Interpretation. Information is due to the communications coordinator February 10 for the *ALERT* to be published by March 10.”



Now, when the Secretary writes an article it seems this edition content statement may not apply to what my article should be about. I take minutes at a meeting, and I assist the President with creating the agenda for the meeting, produce the Directory, among many other skills and tasks. But my national training guide indicates, within the Bylaws, that I will “serve on the following committees: leadership team, finance and other committees as needed.” And so, I wondered “Why would the Secretary be writing on the finances of our conference?” I thought the Education & Interpretation coordinator and of course the Treasurer are the most logical officers to provide “financial interpretation.”

And yet as the Secretary and as a United Methodist Women member I must understand the impact of my Pledge and its journey of the 10 million dollars granted to National Mission Institutions, the International work, the scholarships, and other ongoing work during the 2020 pandemic. I encourage every United Methodist Women member to visit the National website <https://indd.adobe.com/view/42ba4fc1-3b63-4013-a9d6-2ae0f4910f51> to click and read about the 600,000 families that received meals or the marketable skills training from agencies we granted funds in 2020.

To end, the answer to the question “why would the secretary write about finances?” is because my heart for mission through United Methodist Women funding is the path to good stewardship in the bigger picture than recording minutes and helping with the agenda!

Debbie Bell, AWF-UMW Secretary
mawbel36575@yahoo.com

Pictured left to right: Cynthia Brown, Joyce Genz, Debbie Bell, Kristine Jones, Debbie Bracewell, Katy Wrona



REPORT OF THE AWF-UMW TREASURER

| For the Year 2021 | | as of 12/31/21 | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE) | Pledge | Paid | Balance | % Paid |
| Bay Pines | 14,000 | 9,512 | 4,488 | 67.9% |
| Demopolis | 14,000 | 8,883 | 5,117 | 63.5% |
| Dothan | 12,000 | 9,039 | 2,961 | 75.3% |
| Marianna/PC | 11,000 | 9,540 | 1,460 | 86.7% |
| Mobile | 20,000 | 14,977 | 5,023 | 74.9% |
| Mtg/Oplk | 6,750 | 5,170 | 1,580 | 76.6% |
| Mtg/Pratt | 10,000 | 7,168 | 2,832 | 71.7% |
| Pensacola | 20,000 | 17,365 | 2,635 | 86.8% |
| Events - Offering | 2,700 | 879 | 1,821 | 32.6% |
| TOTALS FROM DISTRICTS | 110,450 | 82,534 | 27,917 | 74.7% |
| Pledge to National | 93,883 | 69,329 | 24,554 | 73.8% |
| BEGINNING BALANCE CHECKING 1/1/2021 | | | | 9,975 |
| INCOME | | | | |
| Pledge from District via Local Units | 75% | | 82,534 | |
| Restricted to National | | | 7,154 | |
| Conference Specials - Agencies | | | 5,429 | |
| Conference Specials - Assembly | | | 954 | |
| Interest on Savings | | | 276 | |
| TOTAL INCOME | | | | 96,348 |
| EXPENSES: | | | | |
| Conference Budget | | 12,364 | | |
| District Budget | | 815 | 13,180 | |
| Sent to Agencies | | | 5,429 | |
| Sent to National - PLEDGE | 74% | | 69,329 | |
| Sent to National - Supplementary | | | 7,154 | |
| Savings Income | | | (3,608) | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | | | | (91,484) |
| TRANSFER TO/FROM SAVINGS | | | 4,500 | |
| ENDING CK BALANCE 12/31/21 | | | | 19,339 |
| SAVINGS / CD (Restricted) | Beginning | Income | Transfers | Ending |
| SAVINGS / CD (Restricted) | 60,215 | 185 | (4,500) | 55,900 |
| TOTAL Checking and Savings | | | | 75,239 |
| Prepared by Jean R. Creswell, AWFC Treasurer | | | | |
| 12/31/21 AWF Conference Treasurer | | | | |

| For the Year 2022 | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE) | Pledge | Budget |
| Baypines | 11,000 | 1,628 |
| Marianna/PC/Dothan | 20,500 | 3,350 |
| Southwest (Mobile) | 24,575 | 4,085 |
| Montgomery | 20,675 | 3,326 |
| Pensacola | 20,000 | 2,850 |
| Conference | 2,700 | 25,105 |
| TOTALS | 99,450 | 40,344 |
| Pledge to National (85%) | 84,553 | |

2021 Annual Financial Report as presented by the 2022 Conference Treasurer Cynthia Brown

Greetings United Methodist Women,

As your new Conference Treasurer I greet you with the Love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Many of our Local Units have been assigned to New Districts. Please feel free to reach out to your District Treasurer to submit remittance in 2022.

District Phone #:
Baypines 251-680-0022
District Treasurer
 Susan Morrison

Marianna/PC/Dot 960-763-0367
 Peggy Pelt

Southwest 251-490-4717
 Sally Pehler

Montgomery 334-313-0965
 Jill Farris

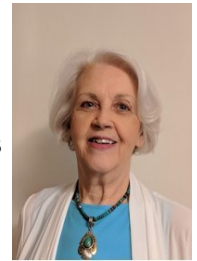
Pensacola 850-217-6960
 Margaret Larson

If you need additional assistance, please feel free to contact me at 334-202-2469.

Cynthia Brown

Mission Giving is the Lifeblood of United Methodist Women

Every officer has an opportunity to promote mission giving in her office communications with district and local leadership but it is the primary responsibility of the E & I Coordinator to guide the leadership team in developing strategies to visualize the five channels of giving and pledge dollars at work. Since the majority of our districts have not filled the E&I office, it is imperative that we all make mission giving a priority and tell the powerful stories of our mission dollars at work. To help you visualize these stories, there are excellent mission videos and articles on www.uwfaith.org. All brochures, Program Resources and the Daily Prayer Guide are now, or will soon be available in digital format.



Hopefully, you have had an opportunity to explore the United Women in Faith Resources site on Mighty Networks. This free community-building portal is a place to share resources and ideas with other members and have access to the 2021-2022 digital Program Resource book, *Healing and Joy on Our Journey*. The September-December programs, plus the special programs, are available to all. The professionally prepared videos, program ideas, and other aids can be used virtually or downloaded for in-person meetings.

You may use this link to *create an account* (if you haven't yet) and sign in: [United Women in Faith Digital Resources \(uwfaith.mn.co\)](http://United Women in Faith Digital Resources (uwfaith.mn.co)). If you scroll below the opening photo, you will find directions for obtaining the optional free app for your smartphone. To gain access to the Resources, you will need to click on the "choose a plan" button and then select one of the available options. Currently, two of the plans are free and one is to buy the Program Resource book for \$10. The next screen will allow you to create your account. Have fun with the resources to connect with other women and to sample the monthly programs to see if they are beneficial to your unit or for your personal enrichment. One excellent feature that I enjoy is a monthly program gathering on Zoom with the series author, Rev. Hannah Kardon.

As always, I stand ready to provide resources and ways to increase Mission Giving to guarantee our Regional Missionaries, National Institutions and our important mission efforts for women, children and youth will continue even in our uncertain economic times.

Blessings as you love and serve others,

Joyce Genz, Education and Interpretation

Mission Coordinator

Joyce Genz presented the AWF-UMW Reading Program award to Pensacola District President Judi Dickens.

Learn more about the Reading Program at <https://uwfaith.org/resources/2022-reading-program/>



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Greetings, members of the Alabama West Florida Conference of United Methodist Women, happy New Year as we continue to strive in these usual times, we must not lose sight of the road ahead. We must enhance our spiritual ability to deal with life's ups and downs and bounce back from those difficult experiences.

Let us embark on this journey of spiritual growth together. We have and will face many challenges as we strive to live up to our 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 in the global ministries of the church.”** For over 150 years United Methodist Women have used their faith to bring hope and love to women, children and youth.

As your new conference Spiritual Growth Coordinator, I look forward to working with the district Spiritual Growth Coordinator or your district designee. We know that things have changed as we continue to move beyond the pandemic and get back to a sense of normalcy. I encourage all members to get the new prayer calendar which has a new look and a new name: Daily Prayer Guide 2022. It's a great resource for daily devotion. I challenge you to use it daily, share its monthly scriptures and prayers. You will find it uplifting and spirit filled.

United Methodist Women let us take this journey together and watch God change things. I can be reached via email at Mahogany84@hotmail.com. I will be planning some brief 30 minute Zoom meetings with Spiritual Growth coordinators and will forward that information of the scheduled meetings. Anyone who wants to be included in our spiritual journey through prayers, Bible study and fasting, please don't hesitate to email me as well and I will include you on the Zoom meeting. Let's put our Faith, Hope and Love into Action.

Your Sister in Christ,

Zan M. Jones

ALWF-Spiritual Growth Coordinator



Above: Zan Jones speaks at Annual Day; left, Annual Day prayer room

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Hello everyone,

As early as it may seem, it is not too early to be thinking about filling positions for 2023. The positions that will be coming up for election or re-election are:

President

Secretary

Education and Interpretation Coordinator

Social Action Coordinator

Committee on Nominations member for the Class of 2026

Communications

Charter for Racial Justice (2 new members)

The Conference Mission Team needs volunteers who are motivated by the purpose of United Methodist Women and want to work on behalf of women, children and youth around the world. Please prayerfully consider where God is calling you to use your special gifts and talents and be willing to accept a position when asked by one of our committee members; Peggy Cunningham, Shirley Hodges, Clara Ester, Melda Deverell or myself, Desiree Clarke.

Peace in Christ,

Desiree Clarke

(251) 454-5549



Membership Nurture & Outreach

Greetings!

Have you heard of an “elevator speech”? Think about being in an elevator. You start on the ground floor and are headed up. You notice someone around you and you strike up a quick conversation. You find out it’s someone new to your area and she doesn’t know anything about the community. What do you tell her? Do you tell her the best restaurants? Best places to shop? Or.... do you tell her about UMW? An elevator speech is between 30 and 60 seconds long. It’s a short description about UMW that any listener can understand quickly. It’s a happy, up-beat “speech” about what matters most to you about UMW. It can be the fellowship. A sense of community and belonging. Gathering with a group of women to talk about your faith and how you see God working in your life. And maybe it is a bit of getting those details from the local ladies about the best restaurants and places to shop. Whatever you decide to share with someone in a short amount of time, I urge you to consider sharing your love for UMW.

Warmly,

Kristine



Membership Nurture & Outreach Coordinator Kristine Jones led a Celebration of Life at the AWF-UMW Annual Day meeting at Marianna First UMC in Marianna, Florida. Seventy members who had died in 2021 were honored.

More photos may be found at <https://www.awf-umw.org/2022-annual-day>



On the Charter for Racial Justice

Talking about the things that make for peace, let's talk about the Charter for Racial Justice.

Did you know that the Charter for Racial Justice was created and adopted by the Women's Division (former policy-making body of United Methodist Women) in 1978, successfully recommended for adoption by the whole denomination in 1980, and consecutively readopted, every eight years, since then?

We have come to realize that, because we are a nation of different races, different nationalities, different languages, and multiple cultures, a directive such as the Charter for Racial Justice, while it is a much needed and appreciated by some, is unfortunately seldom followed.

What is racism, where do we find racism, where does racism come from, what do we believe about racism, and what will we do in view of our beliefs are topics addressed in the Charter. Please take/make time this year in your United Methodist Women journey to "Peace and Service" to review and affirm the doctrines noted and promoted in the Charter. If, in fact, we are who we say we are, God's "hands and feet", inclusive and outreaching, acting in faith, hope and love let us be bold enough to live out the claims we believe in the Charter for Racial Justice. This realm of our world would be a better place because we among the over 800,000 members around the world decided to act out what we say we believe in the Charter. What if all mankind acted out the beliefs in the Charter? What a more peaceful world we'd have in which to serve. What if.....?

Respectfully submitted by
Marsha Clayton, Conference Committee for Racial Justice

Why United Methodist Women Engage in Social Action

For more than 150 years, Methodist women organized for mission have worked in the name of Jesus to take positions on social justice issues and change legislation, systems, structures and practices considered unjust and oppressive. These bold foremothers advocated to end lynching, improve women's health, raise women's status in society, organize for fair wages and benefits for workers and families and adopt the Charter for Racial Justice. Today, we continue to build on this foundation as we work to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline and ensure energy that is just for all. As United Methodist Women of the 21st century, we are called to be bold in our witness, working to dismantle systems of oppression and build, together, a better world.

Social
Action

We serve, we advocate, we make a difference

Learn more and connect at <https://uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/>

Climate
Justice

"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."

Criminalization
of
Communities
of
Color & Mass
Incarceration



**THE LEGACY FUND
ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN**

United Methodist Women continues to build upon the foundation set forth by our founders almost 150 years ago. Yet the difficulties encountered by women, children and youth around the world continue to sustain separation from life affirming compassionate care and support that heals, restores and empowers. Imagine what is achievable, what is possible, if United Methodist Women had the resources to deepen and expand its mission to transform lives and ignite change in places near and far.

In 2014, the Board of Directors launched the Legacy Fund Endowment Campaign, setting a goal to raise \$60 million. To date, \$32,094,994 has been raised. The Legacy Fund Endowment Campaign is both historic and unprecedented, with the campaign's theme, *Together, we are building our legacy*, celebrating the **legacy** of the courageous women who founded this mission movement, as well as the **legacy** that today's members will leave for future generations of United Methodist women, to create their **legacy** to carry the mission of *faith, hope, love in action* forward in the world for years to come.

Give a gift in honor or memory of someone!

Our DAY OF GIVING is March 23, 2022, but you can contribute to the Legacy Fund anytime! Visit <https://uwfaith.org/give/?form=legacyfund>



Have you joined in a United Methodist Women Faith Talk? Faith Talks are conversations hosted by United Methodist Women on mission, advocacy, and spiritual growth topics that members care about. Faith Talks are live conversations and also a podcast you can listen to anytime. Recent topics include Church and politics, faith in the midst of uncertainty, and caring for the body. Join in the live conversations and listen to past talks at <https://uwfaith.org/?s=Faith+Talks> and subscribe to the Faith Talks podcast wherever you get podcasts.



Mission u 2022!

Luke 13: One Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Everyone

For more than a century we've been gathering annually to better understand how to live our faith in the world by studying for spiritual growth and learning about contemporary issues and neighbors in different geographic areas.

Beginning in 2022, we are taking an exciting new approach to Mission u curricula!

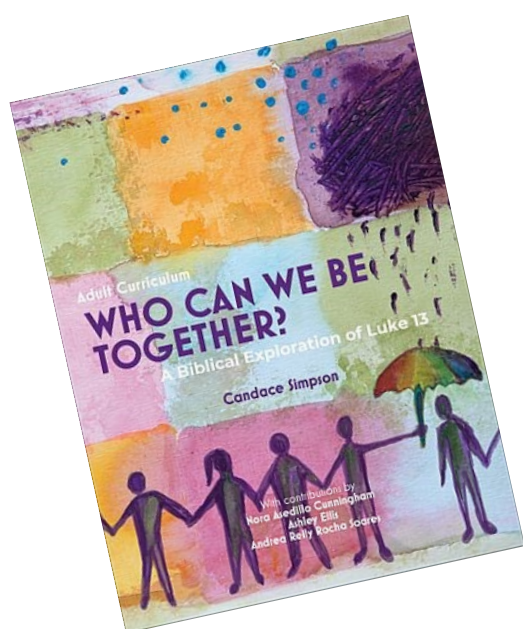
Mission u will now introduce three new curricula each year—one for adults, one for youth and one for children—all focusing on a shared biblical theme. Through these vibrant, relevant, justice-oriented and biblically centered curricula, Mission u will continue its commitment to learning together for the transformation of the world.

These inspiring curricula include opportunities for intergenerational learning and are designed to be easy to use in small groups, local churches, vacation Bible schools, retreats and other settings.

Developed by diverse teams, each study was tested in different church settings and adapted and optimized based on feedback. And now they are ready for you!

Make plans to attend Mission u at Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Montgomery on July 23, with an optional Ubuntu Day on July 22. For the first time in many years we will have youth and children's studies! Go to <https://www.awf-umw.org/> for more information and on-line and mail-in registration forms.

The Reverend Jim DuFriend is our 2022 Dean and Deaconess Clara Ester is our Assistant Dean.



District Spotlight: Montgomery District

Greetings from the newly-formed Montgomery District with merged units from Demopolis, Montgomery-Opelika, and Montgomery-Prattville. We are blessed to come together for God's good works for we are truly better, stronger, and more outreaching as a larger body. We look forward to this "new wineskin" from "old wineskin", stretching our limits, expanding our talent base and efforts to bring more love and justice to this needy world.

We are preparing for our first district-wide event, Montgomery District Annual Day and Leadership Development set for Saturday, March 19 at Dalraida UMC in Montgomery. We seek for this event to be a time of renewal, remembrance, and growth.

Montgomery District is on a path to one of its best years ever in the mission field serving women, children, and youth by working, praying, and learning together. We look forward to sharing this year's journey with all of the members of the Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women Conference. Hope to see you some of you at Conference Annual Day, February 19, Marianna1st UMC, Marianna, FL.

God bless all our earnest efforts to make this a more loving, caring, and just world.

Respectfully submitted,
Marsha Clayton, District President



(L-R) Clara Ester, Nancy Graves, Debbie Bracewell, David Graves, & Ashley Davis at Annual Day on February 19



We welcomed First Timers at Annual Day!

Assembly 2022**May 20-22, 2022**

In 2022 we will reflect on today's challenges and together find comfort and strength to move forward, building new ways for faith-filled women to make a difference in our communities and the world. We will recommit to our purpose, but also more. For such a time as this we will TURN IT UP!

We encourage you to register now so that we can plan the best experience for Assembly 2022. If you register for in-person attendance now but decide to switch to the virtual option later, you will be issued a refund for the additional cost of the in-person registration (minus a \$5 processing fee).

Virtual Option

Can't join us in Orlando? Then join us from your living room! Assembly 2022 has both in-person and online experiences allowing even more women to participate and Turn it Up. Virtual attendees get access to all five Community Gatherings, one workshop on Friday and Saturday, exclusive behind-the-scenes speaker interviews, and sisterhood networking.

Registration fee

The registration fee for in-person is \$365.00; virtual is \$235.00; and is good Dec. 1, 2021 – April 11, 2022.

Registration and more information at <https://uwfaith.org/event/assembly-2022/>

Annual Day 2022 at Marianna First United Methodist Church



More photos at:
<https://www.awf-umw.org/2022-annual-day>

