



ALERT

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2018 Conference Officers

President	Debbie Bell
Vice President	Joan Simmons
Secretary	Cathy Givan
Treasurer	Jean Creswell
Communications	Debbie Bush
Program Resources	Sally Ozan
Nominations Chair	Zan Jones
Spiritual Growth	Tutti Johnson
Social Action	Laurel Akin
M.N.&O.	Carolyn Coker
Ed & Interpretation	Shirley Hodges

2018 Committee on Nominations

Reda Brooks	Zan Jones
Cheryl Mothershed	Nettie Lang

President SEJ UMW	Betty Helms
UMW National VP	Clara Ester
Web Manager	Vera Moore



**PLEASE BRING
A SMALL
BAGGIE OF
SOIL FOR OUR
FRIDAY NIGHT
PLENARY**

Mission u 2018

**Friday, July 20 - Saturday July 21, 2018
Gadsden Street United Methodist Church
Pensacola, Florida.**

A cooperative event by Alabama-West Florida Conference Board of Church and Society and United Methodist Women.

Mission u Attendance

Every church and local unit of United Methodist Women is strongly encouraged to participate in what are timely studies. It is our hope that units will take advantage of this opportunity by sending at least three people to Mission u in order to offer all three studies in their local unit.

Scholarships Are Available

Scholarship are available for adults to attend the 2018 school.

Don Brill Scholarship:

for clergy during the first five years of their ministry and who have never attended a Mission u Event.

Lib Claridy Scholarship:

for lay persons who have never attended a Mission u Event.

Nell Chance Scholarship:

for NEW United Methodist Women member who have never attended a Mission u Event.

Contact: [Betty Helms, Scholarship Chair](#)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lovebugs & United Methodist Women Purpose

Well, it's time for June bugs, or as we know them in the South, lovebugs. They start showing up right where I drive and crash against my just washed vehicle. I wonder what God was thinking when He decided a love bug should be a creature He needed to create.

First, you can't find lovebug or June bug in the Webster's dictionary; but of course when you Google "love bug" Wikipedia has lots of information. Questions like: What is the purpose of love bugs? How do you get rid of love bugs? How long do love bugs stay together? Do love bugs eat mosquitoes? You can even click on and search "everything you wanted to know about lovebugs but were afraid to ask." Google or Ask Jeeves certainly has the lowdown on the lovebug, but . . .



Let me get back to my article and why I decided to share the president's space with this and how does this relate to United Methodist Women. We may never understand God's plan about the lovebug or even the electric eel. As United Methodist Women members we believe we understand His hand in our Mission to women, children and youth. We join efforts in every district and Local Unit and forward funds we've Pledged and funds we've raised during bake sales or soup sales or the like.

Like all things created by God, the lovebug was created and designed to fulfill a purpose. Remember the words of Hebrews 3:4. "For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God." Everything God created was created for a purpose. It might not always be easy for us to see that purpose, but it is always there, nonetheless.

God's purpose for United Methodist Women members speaks volumes to our Purpose for women, children and youth and I've challenged members in conference events when we gather to recite the Purpose, without looking at the program book.

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.

Don't worry so much about reciting our purpose without looking, just understand God's intent of equipping us in our purpose for those in our community, conference and nation who are most at risk. Just like the lovebug, we too serve and fulfill God's purpose.

Be attentive to the United Methodist Women five channels of Giving: Pledge to Mission, Special Mission Recognition, Gift to Mission, Gift in Memory and World Thank Offering; first and always.

Debbie Bell
Conference President

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As promised in the last issue of the Alert I'm sharing the results of the Annual Day evaluations. Ninety (51%) of the total attendees (177) filled out and turned in an evaluation. Dothan district had the most respondents with 75% participation. Pensacola came in second with 74% of attendees filling out the form. Greater than 90% of these were in favor of moving Annual Day around the districts. Their main reason was it is a way to reach more women. The Prayer Room was a valued part of Annual Day and was enjoyed by all who visited it. Age of attendees: 47% were over the age of 71; 38% were between 61 and 70; 10% were between 51-60; Younger than 51 were less than 5%

Evaluations were based on a 1-5 scale with 5 being the best. (Not all respondents circled every question)

	5	4
Registration	70%	25%
Program book	71%	21%
Hospitality	86%	11%
Displays	43%	52%
Agenda	63%	30%
Business Section	68%	26%
Music	56%	26%
Speakers	86%	10%

Scores of 3,2,1 were less than 1%

Comments:

What I enjoyed Most :

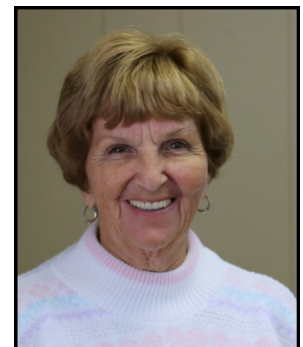
Prayer Room was a spiritual event; Food and location great; Appreciate the Bishop and DS's attending; A great job of planning and implementing this event; This was the best annual event I have attended and I've been coming for years; Great host church; Meals on both days were good for gluten free people and those with allergies

What can be improved:

Change hymns to those we know; People applaud for every little thing; Not have the registration deadline so early; Get the audience moving, had to sit too long; Introduce people on the stage when they speak; Consider using musicians of color; Offer more information on Friday such as missions we support; Put tape on the floor to guide the processional; We need a banner showing district locations; Pledge service too long; Don't have Memorial Service after lunch. Too many people left after lunch; Registration should be on-line; Skit, unable to hear

Thank you all for the valuable input. We really do take your comments to heart when planning this event. See you Annual Day February 15-16, 2019 in Demopolis, Alabama.

Joan Simmons
Conference Vice President



HOPE is planted from your Pledge to Missions
Shirley Hodges, AWFC Education & Interpretation and Jean Creswell, AWFC Treasurer

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever — Hebrews 6:19-20 NIV

“Hope is called the anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:19), because it gives stability to the Christian life. But hope is not simply a ‘wish’ (I wish that such-and-such would take place); rather, it is that which latches on to the ***certainty*** of the promises of the future that God has made.” RC Sproul

WHAT DO YOU PUT YOUR HOPE IN? As Christians we know it is Jesus or God. And I think most of us do put our hope there...but what if there is someone out there that knows nothing about the hope we have in God? Where do they put their hope? They are more likely to wish than hope as they don't have any certainties of the promises of the future we as Christians know. They may simply be trying to survive one day at a time.

Using an analogy of a tree in our mission giving, one can visualize how our mission dollars support Hope. For a tree to grow it must have three things: Light, Soil and water – kind of like the trinity...

From a seed planted in the soil, the tree sprouts and grows. Just like our Hope does when we rely on God. We don't know the future, but we know that God has a plan for each of us and he knows the future. The limbs are like our Districts and Conferences in United Methodist Women ... from these we have leaves which are the individual units and members. To produce the fruit, we must maintain the whole tree from beginning to end. The soil and water to the limbs to the leaves – for the tree to produce the fruit.

And what is the fruit – that is the rewards for our hope – *our individual mission giving*. Fruit that will be enjoyed by others around the world and in our own backyard. From this fruit other seeds will produce other fruit. "For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations." Isaiah 61:11

To put your hope into something, one needs to know fully what that something is. Do you know where your mission money will go? Did you know that you can be the hope that many women, children and youth need? This may be the hope that also gives them a glimmer of the hope in Christ. As United Methodist Women we can be that instrument of God that will provide not only knowledge of God and His love, but that there is Hope through that love.

Here are some examples of where your money will go and how it spreads seed (Hope) around our state, nation and the world. These are from the United Methodist Women's 2016 Grant Disclosure report that can be found on our national United Methodist Women's website

<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org>

Amity Foundation, Hong Kong, China \$10,000

to alleviate inter-generational poverty in rural areas by providing financial support and personal development training to female students who could not otherwise attend university.

Asociacion red de Mujeres para el Desarrollo, San Jose', Costa Rica \$10,000

To expand social and financial sustainability of women-owned and led businesses through

HOPE is planted from your Pledge to Missions (Cont'd)

an exchange of experience and knowledge between women entrepreneurs from El Salvador and Guatemala.

Batis Center for Women, Quezon City, Philippines..... \$10,000

to develop the skills and potential of transnational migrant children, women and youth who are victims of human trafficking by providing education sponsorship, home visits, counseling and peer mentoring.

Camp Aldersgate, Little Rock, AR \$17,680

Provides services to more than 500 children and youth each year, with profound disabilities so they can participate in summer camps.

Dumas Wesley Community Center, Mobile, AL \$17,680

To provide a community service through varied activities for men, women, youth, and children to strengthen family life, become responsive to expressed needs, and develop leadership and responsibility.

Murphy-Harpst Children's Center Inc., Cedartown, GA \$47,926

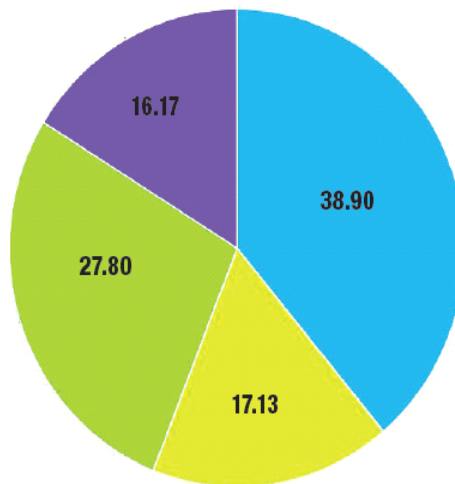
Meeting the needs of abused and neglected young people through residential treatment, placements in specialized foster care, and community programs that serve at-risk children and families.

All the above mentioned grants comprise only a small amount of your mission dollars at work that provide Hope. We United Methodist Women granted \$628,200 to international ministries and \$1,867,565 to our national mission institutions, not counting other emergency grants and support and the designated or supplementary giving such as Call to Prayer.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES

The total expenditures budget reflects services provided through programs directly administered by United Methodist Women. The budget also supports programs that reflect our mission focus but are administered by other organizations. † Mission Giving fully funds these. The remaining United Methodist Women-owned operations are self-funding.

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE BUDGET
approved for 2017 is \$30,492,993.00



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN EXPENSE CATEGORIES 2017

- Programs Administered by United Methodist Women **38.90%**
- Programs Administered by Other Organizations **17.13%**
- Program Support **27.80%**
- Supporting Services **16.17%** (not listed below)

From the Annual Report of the National United Methodist Women, 2016:

So where does our Hope come from? God, who does provide all and has a plan for all if we are willing to be in His will. To give hope to the various fruits mentioned above, we must also rely on the individual member. That is where the seeds of hope first sprout. From the individual to the district up to the conference and then to National where our seeds of hope – our fruit is replanted around the world. Join your many sisters in United Methodist Women today in

HOPE is planted from your Pledge to Missions (Cont'd)

providing the nourishment for our seeds to sprout into the Hope of others. Each member should make a pledge to mission through its local unit. No "dues" should be placed on any member, but individual pledges made by each member, just as we do in our local church. The total pledged to mission (less what the local unit needs to operate and do local missions), should then be made to the district the unit resides. The district then sends that pledge to the Conference, then from the Conference to National. Some members may pledge as small amount as \$10 a year (no amount is too small), whereas others may be led to donate over a \$1,000 a year. That pledge is between the giver and God. Only remember that each pledge should be carefully prayed about and followed through before the end of October so that the local treasurer can fulfill her duties in getting all monies to the district in time for the district treasurer to fulfill her duties to get all monies to the Conference and to National so that the hope is spread.

PLEDGE TO MISSION ALABAMA WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE 2018

DISTRICT	2018 PLEDGE	PAID AS OF 5/8/18	% PAID
Baypines	12,200	944	7.74%
Demopolis	12,000	2,686	22.39%
Dothan	14,750	6,106	41.40%
Marianna/Panama City	12,800	3,371	26.34%
Mobile	20,000	10,694	53.47%
Montgomery-Opelika	12,500	833	6.66%
Montgomery-Prattville	12,200	1,765	14.47%
Pensacola	25,000	6,216	24.86%
Events - Offering		1,589	0.00%
TOTAL PLEDGE TO MISSION	121,450	34,204	28.16%

Section 5. Funding the Mission and Finances and Policies.

Local Finances.

1. Make sure you have one checking account in the name of United Methodist Women. The president of the unit and the treasurer are the signers of the account. The bank will ask for a tax ID number to open the account. This is held by your United Methodist Women conference treasurer. Please contact her for the documentation and the appropriate number. **DO NOT deposit United Methodist Women funds in a personal account or a local church account. Keep all United Methodist Women funds separate from personal and church funds.**



Jean Creswell
Conference Treasurer



Shirley Hodges
Education & Interpretation Coordinator

MISSION u

in Alabama-West Florida
Conference of The United Methodist
Church is a cooperative event of
the Board of Church and Society
and United Methodist Women.

EDUCATE TO TRANSFORM

Each year, United Methodist Women and others prepare for faithful living and action by studying mission studies. Mission studies are offered each year - a geographical, topical, and spiritual growth study. These studies motivate, inform, and enrich our commitment to global ministry.

Local leaders are trained to lead one of the three mission studies through the organization's Mission u program offered around the country. Those leaders, in turn, are able to lead mission studies in their local and district groups.

ATTENDANCE

Every church and local unit of United Methodist Women is strongly encouraged to participate in what are timely studies.

It is our hope that units will take advantage of this opportunity by sending at least three people to Mission u in order to offer all three studies in their local unit.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE:

Scholarships are available for adults to attend the 2018 school.

DON BRILL: for clergy during the first five years of their ministry and who have never attended a Mission u Event.

LIB CLARIDY: for lay persons who have never attended a Mission u Event.

NELL CHANCE: for NEW United Methodist Women member who have never attended a Mission u Event.

Contact:

Betty Helms, Scholarship Chair
betty@fumcdothan.org

MAIL COMPLETED

REGISTRATION FORM

with check payable to

MISSION u

to the Registrar:

TUTTI JOHNSON

PO BOX 870

PINE HILL AL 36769-0598

THE 2018 DEAN

Margaret Larson is eager to know you will join her at Gadsden St. UMC Pensacola FL July 20 & 21, 2018



Additional registration forms:

AWF UMW website

<http://www.awf-umw.org>

MISSION u



2018

Alabama-West
Florida Conference

Cooperative

Mission u

Event

July 20-21

GADSDEN STREET

UNITED METHODIST

CHURCH

901 E GADSDEN ST

PENSACOLA FL 32501-

4073

Location Updated

April 9, 2018

REGISTRATION FORM

Deadline July 7, 2018
(\$10 late fee after July 8, 2018)

(name)

(address)

(city, state, zip)

(district)

(conference/district officer position, if any)

Check all that apply _____ Female _____ Male
____ Lay _____ Clergy _____ CEU Credit
____ Need assistance moving around campus.
____ List on separate sheet any dietary needs.

STUDY COURSE REGISTRATION. Each study is a 6 hour course. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. Classes begin after the opening and finish at 4:30 p.m.

Two Days School Fee: \$40

One study each day from the three offered
Friday _____
Saturday _____

Saturday Only: \$20

Choose your study
____ Embracing Wholeness
____ What About Our Money?

Each person is responsible
for their own lodging.

GEOGRAPHIC STUDY:

Missionary Conferences of The United Methodist Church in the United States

is a mission journey that guides us through the missionary conferences:

- Alaska Missionary Conference
- Oklahoma Missionary Conference
- Red Bird Missionary Conference

These conferences are mission fields close to our hearts. They are the communities and families served by individuals, churches and institutions that carry on the support and solidarity of United Methodist Women organized for mission with them.

ISSUE STUDY:

What About Our Money? A Faith Response

What About Our Money? A Faith Response explores how we relate to money within the context of our faith. Through this connection between our faith and our money, readers discover how to live closer to God and God's people, even in our North American culture that is so deeply defined by money. The author, Susan K. Taylor, explores the biblical foundation of abundance (sufficiency), which stands in opposition to the scarcity narrative our culture tells us from the time we are very young.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH STUDY:

Embracing Wholeness: An Earth Perspective for Covenantal Living

The 2018 Spiritual Growth Study, *Seeking Health and Wholeness* is the second in a two-part series about covenantal living. Part 1, *Living as a Covenant Community* by Evy McDonald explores the scriptural definitions covenant in order to bridge these definitions with their application and their implications for the modern church. In Part 2 *Seeking Health and Wholeness*, Jessica Stonecypher builds on Part 1, as she explores the ways God has called us to live in covenantal relationship with all of creation and challenges readers to work toward stronger and healthier relationships with creation, their communities, themselves, and God.



Assistant Dean:
Laurel Akin is looking forward to being with everyone at Gadsden St. United Methodist Church.

STUDY LEADERS:

GEOGRAPHIC STUDY:
Missionary Conferences
Joyce Genz

ISSUE STUDY:
What About Our Money
Betty Helms and Angie Woodward

SPIRITUAL GROWTH STUDY:
Embracing Wholeness

LODGING:

Blocks of rooms have been reserved
Thursday, July 19 - Saturday, July 21, 2018

#1 Courtyard Marriott
451 Creighton Rd, Pensacola, FL 32504

Reservations: Individuals to call 850-857-7744 to make their reservations by **June 15, 2018.**

On-site Contact: Sarah Hughes
Check in after 3 pm & checkout time 12 pm
Standard King: \$149.00
Standard Double: \$149.00
Breakfast buffet included in guestroom rate.

#2 Hampton Inn & Suites
7050 Plantation Rd, Pensacola, FL 32504

Reservations: Individuals to call 850-505-7500 to make their reservations by **June 15, 2018.**
On-site Contact: Crystal Overstreet
Minimum Two Nights Stay

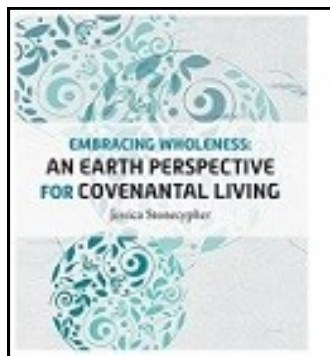
MISSION u STUDY LEADERS; STUDIES & BIOGRAPHIES

Spiritual Growth Mission Study

Leaders: Jim DuFriend and Gail Baughman

The Spiritual Growth Study, Embracing Wholeness

Is the second in a two-part series about covenantal living.



Jim DuFreind is a retired Elder in the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference. Before coming to Alabama in 1991, Jim and his wife Diana served churches in Arizona and Southern California in the Church of the Nazarene. Following that they were appointed by the Mission Board of the Church of the Nazarene to teach in theological colleges in Australia and Trinidad. Serving four years in each location. Jim and Diana have two

grown sons, seventeen grandchildren and their spouses, and five great-grandchildren. Diana is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist working in community mental health and Jim is serving three churches in the Demopolis District.

Rev. Gail P. Baughman is a native of Cleveland, Ohio. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Capital University and has experience as a critical care and public health nurse. Gail and her husband Ron have been married for 39 years and are the parents of three grown and married children, and grandparents to 5 amazing grandchildren. Ron's career as an Air Force Officer has moved the family across the U.S. and to the Republic of Panama before settling in Alabama. Gail began her ministry in the Southwest Texas Conference, served a church in the Detroit Conference, and completed a Master of Divinity Degree at Memphis Theological Seminary in 2001. Since then she has served churches throughout the Alabama West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. Gail currently serves as the pastor of Gadsden Street UMC.

Issue Study

Leaders: Betty Helms and Angie Woodward

What About Our Money? A Faith Response

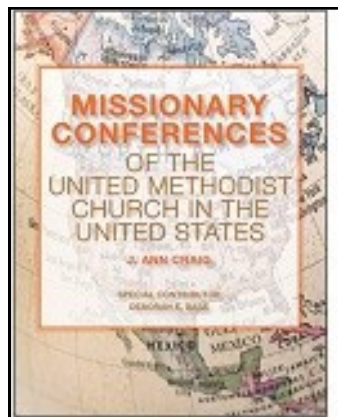
explores how we relate to money within the context of our faith.



Betty Helms grew up in Louisville, Alabama and has been married 58 years. They have lived in Dothan for over 40 years where they raised their two children: Steven and Cathy. Steve and wife, Lisa, have blessed them with two wonderful grand-

daughters. Betty is a member of Dothan First United Methodist Church. Betty grew up going to W.S.C.S. (U.M.W.) with her mother. As an adult the organization of United Methodist Women became a very important part of her life. She has served as local president, vice-president; on the district as treasurer and president; on the conference as Secretary for Financial Interpretation, Treasurer, Education & Interpretation Coordinator and president; on the Jurisdiction as treasurer and currently is serving as Jurisdiction President. Currently she also serves as a member of the National Legacy Committee. She was the conference representative for Regional School and held the position of registrar and secretary. Mission u has been a big part of her life as well serving as dean, associate dean and business manager. Betty has taught Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. She served on several local, district and conference committees within the United Methodist Church. She loves to design worship centers, plan events, read, paint, needle work and garden. She also enjoys renovating and remodeling her house.

Angie Woodward grew up in Fort Walton Beach, FL and earned her accounting degree from the University of West Florida in Pensacola. She has been a certified public accountant for 16 years and is CFO of a land development/property management company where she has worked for ten years. She is a member of FUMC Crestview, Florida, where she currently serves on the finance committee and the children's committee and has lead the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University course. She is vice-president of her local P.E.O. chapter and has served on several non-profit boards. For a change of pace from accounting and finance, she finds joy serving the elementary aged children at her church. Her family also brings her great joy - together she and her husband have two adult children and two teenagers.



MISSION u STUDY LEADERS; STUDIES & BIOGRAPHIES CONT'D

Geographic Study

Leader: Joyce Genz

Missionary Conferences of The United Methodist

Church in the United States is a mission journey that guides us through the missionary conferences: Alaska Missionary Conference, Oklahoma Missionary Conference and Red Bird Missionary Conference.



Joyce Genz lived on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona for 19 years where was employed as an educator by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as well as by Chinle Public Schools and a small mission school. She is the retired dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies at Spring Hill College, where she also taught in the Intensive English Language Institute for 8 years and served as the director of the institute for another 10 years. In retirement Joyce and her husband, Bill, continue to teach English as a Second Language at Christ United Methodist Church in Mobile to students from all over the world. Joyce holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Evangel University, and Master of Science in Instructional Design from the University of South Alabama. She is the president of the local United Methodist Women at Christ UMC and an active member of the Crossroads Circle. After being trained at Alabama-West Florida Conference Mission u's, she has led or team facilitated the following mission studies for the Mobile District: Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church, Giving Our Hearts Away, Roma of Europe, & The Church and People with Disabilities.



Gifts to the Legacy Fund can be made in several ways:

- Online at unitedmethodistwomen.org/legacyfund
- By phone: 800-278-7771 (8 am-6pm EST, M-F)
- Text Legacy150 to 41444
- By check: note "**Legacy Fund**" in memo and mail to: United Methodist Women: Treasurer's Office 15th Floor 475 Riverside Drive New York, NY 10115.

CARES AND CONCERNS

Winn Marsh is appointed Personal Concerns Coordinator for Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women. You may contact her at winnmarsh@aol.com or **850-624-9709** to request prayer for your personal concerns. Winn will share the information according to your wishes.

What's happening with "A Way Forward Conversation"

United Methodist Council of Bishops
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 4, 2018

United Methodist Bishops Recommend a Way Forward

CHICAGO – United Methodist bishops, meeting in Chicago, engaged in a prayerful process to discern a way forward. At the conclusion of the discernment process, the Council of Bishops strongly approved the following motion and rationale: Having received and considered the extensive work of the Commission on a Way Forward, the Council of Bishops will submit a report to the Special Session of the General Conference in 2019 that includes:

- All three plans (The Traditionalist Plan, The One Church Plan and the Connectional Conference Plan) for a way forward considered by the Commission and the Council.
- The Council's recommendation of the One Church Plan.
- An historical narrative of the Council's discernment process regarding all three plans.

Rationale: In order to invite the church to go deeper into the journey the Council and Commission have been on, the Council will make all the information considered by the Commission and the Council of Bishops available to the delegates of the General Conference and acknowledges there is support for each of the three plans within the Council. The values of our global church are reflected in all three plans. The majority of the Council recommends the One Church Plan as the best way forward for The United Methodist Church.

Guided by the mission, vision and scope document, the bishops agreed to recommend the One Church Plan. This plan provides conferences, churches, and pastors the flexibility to uniquely reach their missional context while retaining the connectional nature of The United Methodist Church.

The One Church Plan allows for contextualization of language about human sexuality in support of the mission; and allows for central conferences, especially those in Africa, to retain their disciplinary authority to adapt the Book of Discipline and continue to include traditional language and values while fulfilling the vision of a global and multicultural church.

This plan also encourages a generous unity by giving United Methodists the ability to address different missional contexts in ways that reflect their theological convictions. The One Church Plan removes the restrictive language of the Book of Discipline and adds assurances to pastors and Conferences who due to their theological convictions cannot perform same-sex weddings or ordain self-avowed practicing homosexuals.

The Council's discernment process was guided by the over-arching desire to strategically help the General Conference do its work and to honor the General Conference's request for the Council to help the church find a way forward.

"With convicted humility, bishops want to be pastors and shepherds of the whole church in order to maximize the presence of a United Methodist witness in as many places in the world as possible and with as much contextual differentiation as possible," said newly installed Council of Bishops President Ken Carter.

The bishops expressed deep appreciation for the diligent work that the 32-member Commission on a Way Forward did in formulating the three plans: the Traditionalist Plan, the One Church Plan and the Connectional Conference Plan.

While the bishops recommended the One Church Plan, they affirmed that the Connectional Conference Plan and the Traditionalist Plan held values that are important to the life and work of the church and will be included in the final report to the Special Session of General Conference that the bishops have called for Feb. 23-26 in St. Louis, Missouri, USA.

Bishop Carter, who served as a one of the moderators of the Commission, said the bishops are adopting a spirit of collaboration with the Commission, and an attitude of respect for the delegations who will take up this work on behalf of the whole church.

"The Council's prayerful deliberation reflected the diversity of the global denomination on the matter of homosexuality and many other matters. The Council affirms the strength of this diversity and our commitment to maintain the unity of the church," Bishop Carter said.

Full details of the plans and accompanying legislative proposals will be released as soon as final editing of the entire report is completed and translated into the official languages of the General Conference. It is estimated this will be no later than July 8.

Media Contact: Rev. Dr. Maidstone Mulenga
Director of Communications – Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church
mmulenga@umc-cob.org
202-748-5172

Mentoring for the Future of United Methodist Women

At the Annual Meeting 2018 Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women adopted a program to encourage every member to mentor at least one person. The plan is to be known as **Priddy Pals** in honor of Shannon Priddy, National President who visited during Annual Meeting 2018.

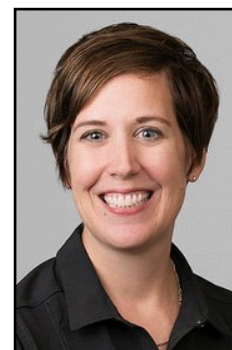
Mentoring is frequently mentioned in Shannon's writing and speaking on behalf of United Methodist Women.

How is it going?

Is it really a challenge to seek out a young woman and intentionally involve her in some activity of United Methodist Women?

What other involvement opportunities have entered beyond the list below?

Giving technical help to UMW members - that is - help with smart phone and computers.
Reading a book from the Reading Program together with a UMW member.
Driving members to meetings - even if you don't need a driver.
Proofreading newsletters and other documents prior to publication.
And in many other ways as creative members seize the opportunity.



Recognition with an "award" is just to honorably mention

Awards will be presented at Annual Meeting to those two people who have become **Priddy Pals** based on short paragraphs provided by both the mentor and the mentee (disciple) telling the story of their friendship. These stories are to be sent to Membership Nurture and Outreach and must be received 30 days prior to Annual Meeting 2019. The Program will be evaluated annually. Begin your story as a "journal" and submit the journey for us all to be inspired!

SOCIAL ACTION REPORT

Social Action: Faith and Money

When I first learned that one of our Mission u studies was called "What About Our Money?" I was curious, and you may be also. Here is an excerpt from the United Methodist Women website page about the study:

What About Our Money? A Faith Response explores how we relate to money within the context of our faith. Through this connection between our faith and our money, readers discover how to live closer to God and God's people, even in our North American culture that is so deeply defined by money. She explores the biblical foundation of abundance (sufficiency), which stands in opposition to the scarcity narrative our culture tells us from the time we are very young. If you don't have the study book yet, I encourage you to get one soon so you can be prepared for Mission u. It can be ordered from the resource center at <https://www.umwmissionresources.org>. Even if you will not be able to attend Mission u, you will benefit from reading the book, and as a bonus, mission study books count for the reading program!

"Loaves and Fishes People," an article by the study book author, Susan K. Taylor, appears in the May issue of *response*. You may read the article, or listen to an audio version, here:

<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/response/articles>

I hope to see you at Gadsden Street United Methodist Church for Mission u in beautiful Pensacola!

Laurel Akin, Deaconess
Social Action Coordinator



United Methodist Women Issue Priorities 2016–2020 Invitation to Engage

Members of United Methodist Women! You are invited to engage actively in four priority justice issues throughout the 2016–2020 quadrennium. These include:

☐ **Economic Inequality** ☐ **Climate Justice** ☐ **Criminalization of Communities of Color** ☐ **Maternal and Child Health** *Our Identity: Integrating What Matters to United Methodist Women Through engaging in these issues, United Methodist Women will work on linking spiritual growth, mission education, leadership development, service and advocacy in their worship, community and mission work.* The issues are entry points for exploring how gender, race and class differentials permeate our society, and for living out the Charter for Racial Justice in our times. Each issue offers opportunities for education, bible study, prayer, service, public witness and advocacy for justice in local communities and at the state, national and global levels.

At the same time, these issues are not separate. Questions of who sets policy for whom, and who determines the flow of resources for whom, permeate all of these issues. At the core is the need to challenge systems of oppression that exclude women, youth and children; persons of color; and communities of color. These systems also criminalize people who cross borders to seek livelihoods, or who challenge entrenched inequalities. We are challenged to explore how these issues come together in the daily headlines, and in the concerns of our own communities. **Intersectionality of the Issues** When the removal of elected officials in the majority African-American city of Flint, Michigan, enabled a manager to set policy that poisoned the entire city water system, the situation laid bare questions of decision making, economic inequality, corporate power, environmental racism, reproductive health outcomes for women, long-term health concerns for children, lack of protection for undocumented immigrants and concerns for citizens about accessing assistance from police and the national guard, due to deep-seated fears of police racial profiling and abuse. How are these issues coming together in your community? How can you engage locally to address them together?

Following is an overview of the four priority issues for United Methodist Women:

Economic Inequality

"We support measures that would reduce the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few." (Social Principles, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2012, pg. 128).

Growing income and wealth inequality in the United States particularly impacts women and communities of color. While real incomes for the top 1 percent have grown 185 percent over the past 35 years, incomes for the rest of the population have increased an average of only 13 percent. Despite signs of "recovery," millions have lost homes, pensions and jobs and are less financially secure.

This did not just happen on its own. Our current economic insecurity is the result of specific policy choices that have shifted wealth and income to the top: cuts in taxes for the wealthy and corporate tax cuts, cuts in public services, employer cuts to pensions and health benefits, predatory mortgage lending, stagnant wages alongside rising costs of living, work speedups and shifts from the public to the private sector in everything from schools to roads to the military to prisons, eliminating many unionized public sector jobs. United Methodist Women can act locally and in national efforts to begin to bridge the inequality gap. An education and action workshop, in partnership with United for a Fair Economy, will enable us to engage more and more members in education, reflection and action. Plan to lead this interactive Overworked and Undervalued workshop in your community. See www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/economic-inequality for the workshop and education and action ideas. Join the Facebook community:

www.facebook.com/UMWEconomicInequality **Climate Justice** *All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect.* (Social Principles, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012, ¶ 160, pg. 105)

United Methodist Women Issue Priorities 2016–2020 Invitation to Engage Cont'd

Climate change is not an equal opportunity phenomenon. While climate change affects everyone, it does not affect everyone equally. The simple truth is that the poorest people in industrialized and developing nations suffer the worst effects of the buildup of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. Women and children comprise an estimated 70 percent of the world's poor.

Women and girls are on the front lines of coping with the impact of climate change because of their economic status and because of the particular roles they play in society. They are also on the front lines of creating alternative strategies and solutions. In developing countries, women and girls often are responsible for the most basic survival needs of their families—like water, fuel and food. When these become more costly or scarce, women and girls' work increases. At the grass roots level, women are often well positioned to manage risk due to their roles as both users and managers of environmental resources, as economic providers, and as caregivers and community workers.

United Methodist Women calls for sound stewardship of the earth and sound relationships within and between communities, whether local, state, national or international. We work to provide practical, theologically sound tools to guide and inspire your work. These tools were developed to delve into deep inter-sectional injustices between gender, racial, economic and climate injustice. These include:

- *13 Steps to Sustainability: A Practical Event Planning Guide Complete with planning team checklists, evaluation questions, registration questions, sample language for requests for proposals and where to go for help.*
- *13 Steps to Sustainability: A Principled Approach to Sustainability These 13 principles form the core of the social justice concerns that United Methodist Women has committed to. There are measureable, practical steps to the 13 principles' implementation that have been developed with experts' guidance and experienced national office staff.* For inspiration and encouragement, you will find specific questions on the survey as well as bible studies, videos and an introduction to sustainability.
- *Jurisdictional Guides: Contact your trained jurisdictional guide for help and to explore or share additional resources.* For 2016–2017, our adult issue study for Mission U is climate justice, and in 2016 both our youth and our children's study will inform and inspire around this topic. We hope UMW across the country and even around the world will take advantage of this opportunity to further ground our work for the important advocacy and action we need to create together in order to build a good world for both ourselves and our posterity. For more information, see: www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/climate-justice

Criminalization of Communities of Color

"In the love of Christ, who came to save those who are lost and vulnerable, we urge the creation of a genuinely new system for the care and restoration of victims, offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community as a whole. Restorative justice grows out of biblical authority, which emphasizes a right relationship with God, self, and community." (Social Principles, Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012, pg. 137) We recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons. We rejoice in the gifts that particular ethnic histories and cultures bring to our total life. We commend and encourage the self-awareness of all racial and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them to demand their just and equal rights as members of society." (Social Principles, Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012, pg.117)

In the United States, excessive levels of policing policies and immigration law enforcement are growing incarceration rates. In addition, while there is increasing agreement that the 40-year "war on drugs" and the use of solitary confinement in jails, prisons and detention centers cause deep harm to individuals and communities, reforms to these systems are happening too slowly. Further, all of these mechanisms disproportionately impact persons of color. The United Methodist Church must work to dismantle policies that assume whole groups of people are criminals and encourage public acceptance of the injustice of racial profiling, mass incarceration and disenfranchisement of entire communities demonized as a threatening "other."

United Methodist Women Issue Priorities 2016–2020 Invitation to Engage Cont'd

In 2012, 23.9 million Americans, ages twelve and over, of all races and socioeconomic levels had used an illicit drug or abused medication, according to the National Institute of Drug Abuse. But the “war on drugs” has not been waged across all races and socioeconomic levels; it has been waged through systemic selective targeting of poor communities of color. Policies like New York City’s “stop and frisk” and “broken windows” have empowered police to detain people without probable cause and make arrests for minor infractions. In the immigration system, roundups targeting migrants mean large numbers of people are swept into the detention and deportation system. During the first term of the Obama administration, two million people were deported. Nearly 500,000 people go through the immigration detention system annually.

United Methodist Women members can engage with these issues:

- Find out more about the criminalization of communities of color by using books from the Reading Program, including *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color Blindness* by Michelle Alexander.
- Use the manuals for Racial Justice and Immigrant and Civil Rights online.
- View the webinar on Mass Incarceration on the United Methodist Women’s website
- Read and expose others to United Methodist Women’s General Conference resolutions on racial justice and mass incarceration.
- Get more information on the follow via United Methodist Women’s partner organizations:
- Immigrant and Civil Rights: National Network of Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Black Alliance for Just Immigration, Grass-roots Leadership
- Ending use of Solitary Confinement: National Religious Campaign Against Torture
- Police Accountability: SURJ: Showing Up for Racial Justice
- Ending the War on Drugs: Sentencing Project.

For more information, see: www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/racial-justice

Maternal and Child Health

“Health is a condition of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. John 10:10b says, ‘I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest.’ We encourage individuals to pursue a healthy lifestyle and affirm the importance of preventive health care, health education, environmental and occupational safety, good nutrition, and secure housing in achieving health. Health care is a basic human right.” (Social Principles, Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012, pg. 126–127)

Health care for women and children is at the heart of United Methodist Women today, and has been since the organization was founded in the 1800s. In 1869, Dr. Clara Swain was sent to Bareilly, India, to provide quality medical care to women. Our foremothers made the choice to act to save women’s lives. They chose to build hospitals and clinics, to train women and girls to serve as doctors and nurses, and to send missionaries to initiate the work. Today, United Methodist Women continues to support the health and family needs of women and children around the globe. Women are still dying in childbirth, children continue to die from preventable diseases and many communities have no access to healthcare. From Latin America to Africa to Asia, United Methodist Women works with women worldwide to address access to health care; educational opportunities in medical fields; reproductive health including family planning, cancer screening and healthy childbirth; advocacy for equity in law and services for women and children; workshops for teens at risk, lactating mothers who are HIV-positive, and all mothers.

In the United States, United Methodist Women works to address the inequitable differences in birth-weight of babies by race, an outcome of systemic racism. Several United Methodist Women national mission institutions provide maternal health services to improve access to care for underserved populations. Services include prenatal and postpartum care; baby supplies; parenting support; shelter and legal services; and health care. In addition, many deaconesses and home missionaries live their calling to ministries of love, justice and service by working as health care professionals.

United Methodist Women Issue Priorities 2016–2020 Invitation to Engage Cont'd

United Methodist Women is committed to promoting abundant health for women and children in our local, national and global communities. Here are a few ways that our members may engage in that important work:

- Partner with a National Mission Institution/Community Organization: Contact your local organization to find out how you can support maternal and child health needs, with a focus on high priority zip codes. Organizing a workshop or forum with local faith and community leaders is one way to begin building partnerships and addressing needs in your community.
- Help make reusable feminine hygiene kits for girls: Did you know that girls miss up to 2 months of school every year because they lack proper sanitary menstruation materials? We have partnered with Days for Girls to ask our members to help sew, assemble, or distribute kits around the world. Visit www.daysforgirls.org.
- Host a Mother's Day program, event or film screening on the subject of Redefining Motherhood. In this campaign, we invite you to recognize and affirm those who are often stigmatized and excluded from traditional definitions of motherhood. Resources for Mother's Day programs will be available soon on our website.
- Educate yourself and your members on global issues and national trends in maternal and child health. Reach out to your elected officials to advocate for policies that improve the lives of children and their mothers. For information, see:

www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/maternal-child-health

CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS REPORT

United Methodist Women Needs You!



The United States Army has used several slogans: "I want you for the U.S. Army and Be All You Can Be", as a means of recruiting for the military.

As United Methodist Women we're embarking on a 150 years of devoted service to the caring of women, children and youth.

No organization can exist without the support of its members. UMW needs its members to move beyond just being a supportive member, but step up to be a LEADER. We must step up and help the Alabama West Florida Conference United Methodist Women continue to excel in the service of women, children and youth.

The Committee on Nominations needs anyone that's interested in serving on the conference level or even in your local districts please complete the talent bank sheets and

return to Committee on Nominations Chairperson Zan Jones,

Help keep our legacy going for another 150 years, do your part.

Be a leader!

Faith, Hope, Love and Action

Zan M. Jones,

Chairman Committee on Nominations



SECRETARY OF PROGRAM RESOURCES REPORT

There are several ways you can participate in the Reading Program - buying books at a UMW event, order the hard copy of a book on-line or order an e-book in several forms. Go to our Conference website at awf-umw.org. On the left hand side is a list of Resources. Click on Reading Program Book Lists for all the information you will ever need to see what books are available and in what form. If you have any questions, or I can help you in any way, give me a call or e-mail.

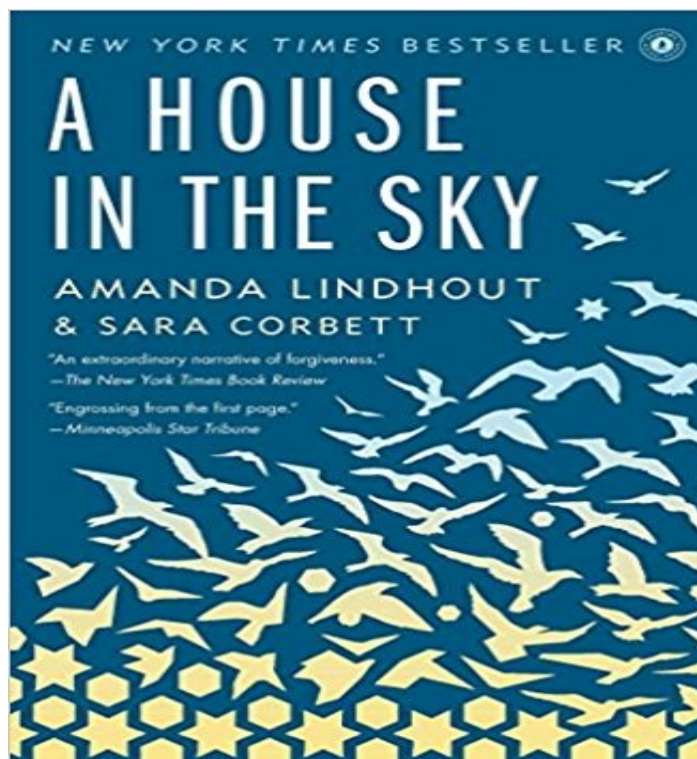
One of the books on the 2018 List is *"A House in the Sky, a Memoir"* by Amanda Lindhout. She wrote about her fifteen month abduction in Somalia. This is a memoir of a woman whose curiosity led her to the world's most remote places and then into captivity. "A young woman's harrowing coming-of-age story and an extraordinary narrative of forgiveness and spiritual triumph" (The New York Times Book Review).

As a child, Amanda Lindhout escaped a violent household by paging through issues of National Geographic and imagining herself visiting its exotic locales. At the age of nineteen, working as a cocktail waitress, she began saving her tips so she could travel the globe. Aspiring to understand the world and live a significant life, she backpacked through Latin America, Laos, Bangladesh, India, Sudan, Syria and Pakistan. In war-ridden Afghanistan and Iraq she carved out a fledgling career as a television reporter. Then, in August 2008, she traveled to Somalia - "the most dangerous place on earth". On her fourth day, she was abducted by a group of masked men along a dusty road.

GOOD READING!!!



Sally Ozan
Secretary of Program Resources

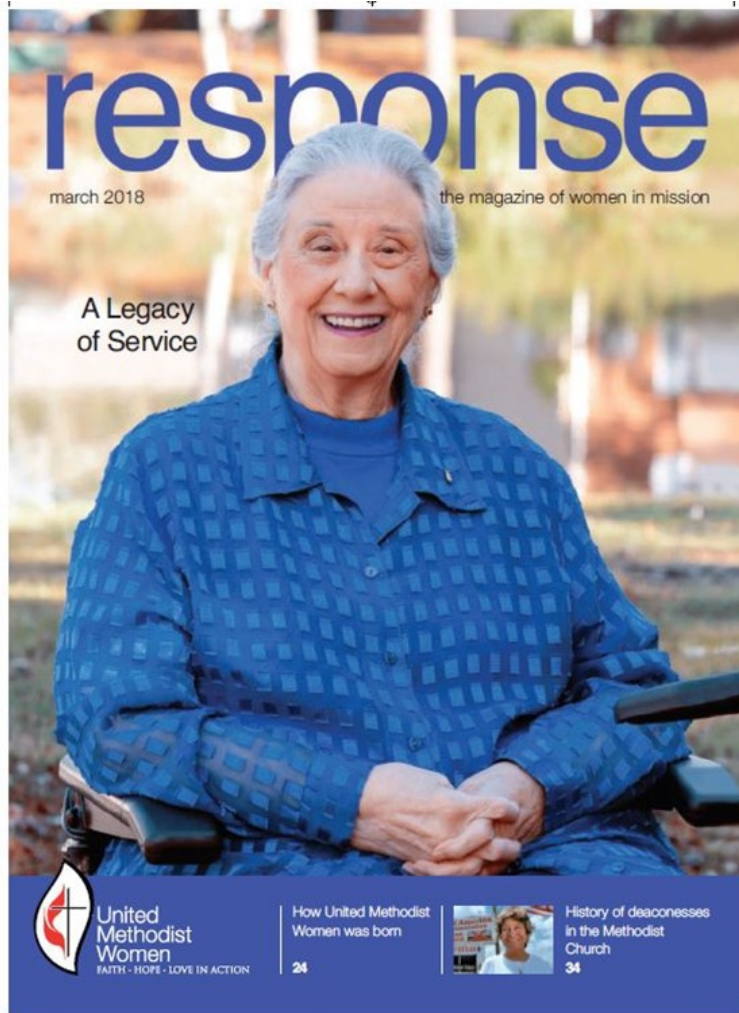


United
Methodist
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

response:
the magazine of women in mission!





WEBMASTER REPORT

Making good use of the Internet

People seem to try to find ways to misuse the Internet but I believe we can equally make use of the good that is to be found there.

- 1) Read what United Methodist Women are thinking daily
- 2) Share your views through social media
- 3) Immediately take action to Action Alerts
- 4) Have dates, places, speakers at your fingertips.
- 5) Catch up with friends from long ago
- 6) View photo albums at your leisure
- 7) Mentor a younger woman

You have the keys at your fingertips. Enjoy, grow, love!

Moore later,

Vera Moore,
Web Master

Message from the Conference Secretary

Please help to keep the Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women Directory up-to-date by sending any changes in contact information to me,

Cathy Given,
Conference Secretary



ASSEMBLY 2018





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MEMBERSHIP NURTURE & OUTREACH

The Joys of Membership

Is this new to you? How many times have you recited this Purpose and really considered what it means, or even why it is stated as it is?

As a member of United Methodist Women, I affirm and support the Purpose: The organized unit of 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."

Well, there is more to the Purpose than you may realize.

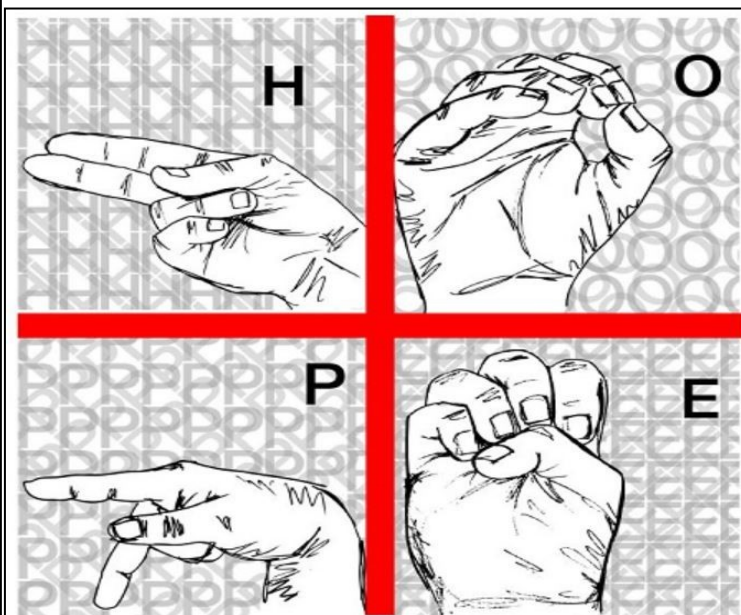
I Commit! My prayers: That I will grow and renew my relationship with God and others; My Time: That I will respond to human need through study, reflection and action; My financial gifts: That I will share in the global ministries of the church through United Methodist Women.

I Celebrate Mission! I will: make the most of learning opportunities and mission-education events; I will: expand concepts of mission, including social justice as mission; I will: engage in mission studies at Mission u; I will: read response magazine and join the Reading Program; I will: be empowered by the history and heritage of United Methodist Women.

Please continue to support and Pledge to United Methodist Women in the Spirit of Faith, Hope, Love in Action.

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT COORDINATOR REPORT

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19th - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21st
BLUE LAKE
THEME: HOPE
GUEST SPEAKER:
REV. DR. CONNIE SHELTON

**HEBREWS 6:19-20**

"This HOPE we have as an anchor of the soul, a HOPE both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever."

We are very excited about our Spiritual Enrichment Retreat this year! There will be some very interesting Focus Groups. And everyone will find something of interest.

Watch for more information on our Conference Website in the near future!



Tutti Johnson,
Spiritual Enrichment Coordinator

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR REPORT

YOU CAN BECOME INFORMED OF ALL OF THE ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES BY SUBSCRIBING TO THE ALERT TODAY!

- To receive a copy of the ALERT in the mail, please send in your Name, Address and Telephone Number to Debbie Bush. Enclose a \$4.00 check made payable to: ***“Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women”***.
- You may receive a copy of the ALERT free by email. Please email Debbie Bush with your request at: **Savannahgirl2759@gmail.com** and you will be added to our email list.
- **Stay informed and catch up with your Conference news and make sure each person, unit and District knows what is happening in the Alabama West Florida Conference!**



Debbie Bush,
Conference Communications Coordinator

STAY INFORMED!

AROUND THE CONFERENCE COOLER

I have received items from various Units in the Conference like St. Andrews UMC in Marianna/Panama City on a unit project that they are involved in I thank you but the News Around the Conference Cooler needs to be what the Local, District or Conference is doing in relation to our Mission and our Issue Priorities:

- Economic Inequality
- Climate Justice
- Criminalization of Communities of Color
- Maternal and Child Health

Any news that you have on these issues please let me know so that I can let others know about it. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or by email.

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.

United Methodist Women
Alabama-West Florida
Conference
Debbie Bush

Save the Date!

July 13-14

**Executive Committee @ Dothan UMC
(Presidents & Treasurers)**

July 20-21

**Mission u @ Gadsden Street UMC,
Pensacola, Florida**

October 19-21

**Spiritual Enrichment Retreat
@ Blue Lake**

February 15-16

Annual Day in Demopolis, Alabama