

# **ALERT**

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#### 2017 Conference Officers

President Debbie Bell
Vice President Joan Simmons
Secretary Cathy Givan
Treasurer Jean Creswell
Comm. Coordinator. Debbie Bush
Prog. Resources Sally Ozan
Nominations Chair Lorna Wiggins

#### **2017 Mission Coordinators**

Spiritual Growth Nancy Shealy
Social Action Laurel Akin
M.N. & O Tutti Johnson
Ed. & Interp Shirley Hodges

#### **2017 Committee on Nominations**

Lorna Wiggins Reda Brooks Zan Jones Cheryl Mothershed Linda Green

> President SEJ UMW Betty Helms

UMW National Vice President Clara Ester

> Web Manager Vera Moore



2017 ANNUAL DAY FEBRUARY 10-11, 2017 BLUE LAKE

# **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.

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# FROM OUR CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

# FAITH ... "of greater worth than gold.." 1 Peter 1: 7 (NLT)



I would like to begin this first article of the ALERT for 2017 with a personal note of "thanks ever so much" to each United Methodist Women leadership for their tireless efforts that started with a January executive team meeting, workbook training sessions and the Conference Annual Day work list AND Annual Day presentation. We are a mission organization and need these meetings and gatherings to better communicate our action plan to help the many people visiting the many agencies United Methodist Women support. As I read through the 2017-2020 National handbook I found this, "Peggy Billings, former missionary and head of Christian Social Action for United Methodist Women, wrote extensively on the Purpose in the pamphlet Acting Out Our Conversion published in 1974. She notes that each part is dependent on the other. We cannot know God and experience freedom

through Jesus Christ without fellowship. And that fellowship with God and our sisters is what leads us into mission and helps us experience Christ more fully." Please consider joining in the Local Unit, District and Conference meetings in 2017 – we need to talk.

I'll also take this time to begin the promotion for Assembly 2018 in Columbus, Ohio May 18-20. Look for the registration details on our conference website. In other preparations for Assembly, the National staff is asking for each Conference to participate in the membership census. Many Alabama-West Florida members have been busy making that happen. During Circle meetings, training sessions and District events many members visit signup stations to join *my UMW*. I have not received a current report, but anticipate our conference totals will be near/at our official membership totals. The census takes less than 5 minutes, you click submit and are then prompted to verify info for your membership card to be printed. Please ask your Conference/District Membership Nurture & Outreach (MN&O) coordinator for help or visit your own District website specific for immediate access to complete on your own. When you visit our conference website, you should choose your District name and follow census prompts there.

During our 2017 Annual meeting at Blue Lake in mid-February, we gathered to complete the 2016 business reports; we celebrated the lives of the many sisters in mission that left this earth for their heavenly home last year and we did some much-needed Fellowship with each other. We prayed for our Speakers, who brought the messages of Christ fully-involved in our mission message, "Faith • Hope • Love in Action." Friday evening Chris Ziebach from Camille Place shared her endeavor for this haven for those trafficked in our state, right in our communities. Bishop Graves brought a truly significant message from Matthew 15 "...your Faith is great..." and shared his story of that great faith of the women in his family and friends in his life. We appreciate their messages to us.

Let's invite someone to our next Circle meeting, our next Local Unit meeting; let's read about Education for Mission; let's meet at Cooperative Mission u 2017 July 21-22 @ First United Methodist Church, Millbrook, AL. Please make your plans in the coming year to visit our conference website for the many actions of our mission. <a href="http://www.awf-umw.org">http://www.awf-umw.org</a>

Debbie Bell Conference President

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# Save the date!



"The Power of Bold" will be the theme of the 19th quadrennial Assembly of United Methodist Women in Columbus, Ohio, May 18-20, 2018. Learn more at https://umwassembly.org/news/

# Give Thanks. Give Now.



Keep up with United Methodist Women in our districts, conference and nationally, and find many resources on our website, **www.awf-umw.org**. There you will find links to just about anything "United Methodist Women," thanks to our website manager, Vera Moore!

# **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.

# Participate in the 2016 United Methodist Women Census!

- Presidents: Designated presidents are asked to complete the UMW census for 2016 to help the organization meet our members' needs and allow us to grow in numbers, outreach and impact.
- Go to http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/ and look for the box All members: You are invited to complete a membership log. When you finish, you will be able to print a personalized membership card.
- Go to http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/ and look for the box



Census 2016
PRESIDENTS:
Click to
complete the
census

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# **Faith**

My favorite scripture..."It is by God's grace that you have been saved through FAITH. It is not the result of our efforts, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it. God has made us what we are and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds which he has already prepared for us to do." Ephesians 2: 7-8.

We have a wonderful book in our Reading Program, "The Power of Serving Others, YOU CAN START WHERE YOU ARE" by Gary Morsch and Dean Nelson. In the above passage God has already prepared us and now we have to pray for HIS direction. We are all on different journeys and have different opportunities to serve. This is exciting GOOD NEWS!

Take part in every opportunity offered...Bible study, Prayer, and attending our Spiritual Enrichment Retreat at Blue Lake, October 20-22. Dr. Laura Early will lead us on her FAITH journey. Put this event on your calendar and plan to attend.

It is a joy to travel with you on this Spiritual Journey.

Always, Your Servant,

**Nancy Shealy** 

Conference Spiritual Growth Coordinator

# **FAITH**

FAITH IS DEFINED AS BELIEF WITH STRONG CONVICTION;

FIRM BELIEF IN SOMETHING FOR WHICH THERE MAY BE NO TANGIBLE PROOF;

COMPLETE TRUST, CONFIDENCE, RELIANCE OR DEVOTION.

FAITH IS THE OPPOSITE OF DOUBT.

# **DUMAS-WESLEY COMMUNITY CENTER REQUEST**

The Dumas-Wesley Community Center in Mobile is still on our National UMW Agency list and associated with Dumas-Wesley is the Sybil Smith Family Village (SSFV), transitional housing for homeless families. We have received word that the SSFV is in need of special items. If your District and or any local Unit in your District is so lead, please consider to respond to the requested items. Pleas contact the Village at the number provided and mention your Local Unit/District for the Alabama/West Florida Conference United Methodist Women. It will also be helpful to track our donations for this special request:



# REQUEST FROM SYBILSMITH FAMILY VILLAGE

FAITH

Dumas-Wesley's transitional housing program for families experiencing homelessness currently has 32 children residing with their parents. If you feel led to help, we are in need of hygiene products for babies/children/teenagers. This might include toothbrushes, toothpaste, hair products, deodorant, body wash for infants, etc. Please contact the Village at 251-473-5526 for further information. Thank you for supporting Sybil H. Smith Family Village.

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## **EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION**

The organization of United Methodist Women is starting a brand new year with many mission and educational opportunities available. Hopefully, pledges to mission have been done in all units and plans are being made to attend mission studies in all eight districts.

Support of missions locally and around the globe is vital to the work of United Methodist Women in turning faith, hope and love into action. When you consider contributing monetarily to missions, please consider giving to all five channels of Mission Giving: (1) Pledge to Mission is the amount a woman gives to her local unit. It is usually the largest amount she gives every year for mission; (2) Special Mission Recognition is a set amount of money for mission (\$40, \$60, \$100, \$200, \$500, \$1,000, \$2,000) given by an individual, circle, or local unit to honor any person. The honoree receives a certificate and a small gold oval pin.(3) A Gift to Mission honors someone with a contribution of \$5 or more for mission. A card may be sent to the honoree; (4) A Gift in Memory is a gift of \$5 or more that honors the memory of someone special. A card can be sent to the family of the deceased; (5) World Thank Offerings are spontaneous gifts given out of gratitude for God's abundance.

Your Pledge to Mission supports nearly 100 National Mission Institutions across the US, including Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Mission Giving supports around 170 mission programs internationally in more than 110 countries. Remember Mission Giving makes missions possible!

Please save the date July 21-22, 2017, for attending Mission u at Millbrook UMC. Hope to see you there. Thank you for all you do for women, children and youth locally and all over the world. If you have questions, do not hesitate to call, e-mail or message me.

Peace,

Shirley Hodges,

Conference Education and Interpretation Coordinator





# response: the magazine of women in mission!



# **Save the Date!**

March 23, 2017 July 21 & 22, 2017 Oct. 20-22, 2017 May 18-20, 2018

UMW Day of Giving
Mission u @ Millbrook
Spiritual Enrichment Retreat @ Blue Lake
Assembly @ Columbus, Ohio

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# TREASURER'S REPORT

First let me say thank you for showing your confidence in me as your new Alabama West Florida Conference Treasurer. It has been non-stop since January 1<sup>st</sup> setting up the books and registering ladies for our recent Annual Day event at Blue Lake.

To recap 2016, our Alabama West Florida Conference made its pledge to National by sending in \$125,000. We also stayed within our expense budget as well and have sent all the district and conference financial material for an independent audit as required.

For 2017, we have pledged \$126,200 as each of our district treasurers proclaimed on stage during the Annual Day festivities at Blue Lake. Since all five areas of giving are included in the district's pledge, the following chart shows where we are as of today.

District	2017 Pledge	Sent in To Date	Balance	
Bay Pines	12,200.00		12,200.00	
Demopolis	13,000.00	275	12,725.00	
Dothan	18,500.00	1,563.00	16,937.00	
Marianna/Panama City	12,800.00	85	12,715.00	
Mobile	20,000.00	25	19,975.00	
Montgomery/Opelika	12,500.00		12,500.00	
Montgomery/Prattville	12,200.00	120	12,080.00	
Pensacola	25,000.00		25,000.00	
Events-Offering		850	-850.00	
TOTAL	126,200.00	2,918.00	123,282.00	

We took an offering during the Annual Day event of \$850 to add to our pledge goal. As you can see we have a long way to go, but I know that you like me believe in our mission of supporting women, children and youth here and around the world. If you haven't made your pledge to your local unit, please do so soon. Each individual member is the backbone of our organization. Just like the church building isn't the church, our organization isn't what makes us United Methodist Women – YOU are what makes us United Methodist Women!! Give gladly, with a cheerful heart what God lays on you to contribute.

Jean R. Creswell Conference Treasurer

# **Our Purpose:**

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## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, UNITED METHODIST WOMEN!

### WHAT?

On March 23, 1869, eight women gathered at Tremont Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston, Massachusetts, and organized the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, what would become United Methodist Women. Those women raised money to send a doctor, Clara Swain, and a teacher, Isabella Thoburn, to India as missionaries to serve the women of that nation. We're celebrating our 150th anniversary in 2019. Like anniversaries of a marriage or school or university graduation, this anniversary is an opportunity for us to celebrate, to renew connections, to marvel at what has been accomplished in a century and a half, and to make new commitments for the work ahead.

#### WHY?

- The Legacy Fund is OUR special anniversary gift to future United Methodist Women members and ministries.
- Because we believe in the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women and want our daughters, granddaughters, nieces and friends to share our sense of meaningful "sisterhood."
- To "pass on" the legacy we have inherited.
- To be part of the joyous celebration in 2019 culminating 150 years of ministry.

#### HOW?

- As individuals, plan to give \$18.69 in 2017, 2018, and 2019.
- As units, plan to give \$150 in 2017, 2018, and 2019.
- Give in honor of or in memory of a United Methodist Woman or a loved one.
- Designate the Legacy Fund as a beneficiary in your will or insurance policy.
- Online at www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/legacyfund
- Phone 800.278.7771 (8 A.M.-6 P.M. EST, Monday-Friday)
- Text Legacy 150 to 41444
- By check to Office of the Treasurer, United Women, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. Write the "Legacy Fund" in the memo line.

# WAIT!

March 23, 2017, is the third annual Day of Giving. All Day of Giving gifts go to the Legacy Fund. In addition, a donor will match our giving up to an unspecified amount. In 2016 every Methodist conference participated in the Day of Giving. Let's do our part this March 23 to represent the Alabama-West Florida Conference!



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#### REPORT FROM THE NOMINATIONS CHAIR

I know those who attended Annual Day had a wonderful experience. I was so sorry to miss it but very grateful to Sally Ozan for bring the Talent Bank forms and to Jean Creswell for inserting them into each program.

Let me tell you a little story about Talent Bank forms. Last October for our Leadership Meeting, I had divided all the forms I had by District. I gave those to each District President and asked that they pull forms for deceased members or those who had moved or were too ill to serve. I asked the District Presidents to return them to me at the meeting or mail them.

One of the District Presidents mailed me her District's forms with careful notations on each one. Our Conference slate of officers had one vacancy—that of Communications Coordinator. Several of this District's Talent Bank forms had notations indicating that the person had experiences that would enable them to be Conference Communications Coordinator. One person was selected and her Talent Bank form was circulated to the Nominations Committee. The Committee agreed that she would be a good candidate. A job description and letter asking if the nominee would agree to serve if elected was mailed to her. Her answer was affirmative and she was elected at the January Leadership Team Meeting.

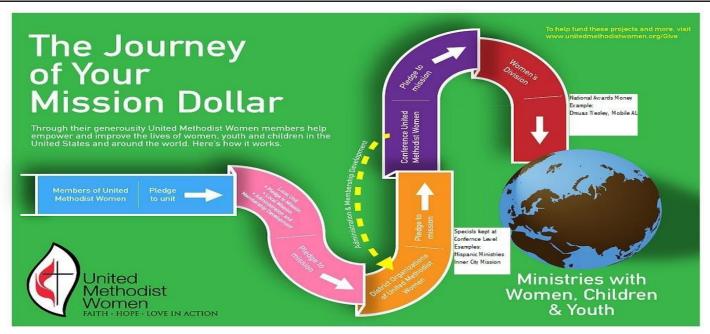
As is the case with all of our Nominations Committee members, we simply do not know everyone. We do know many of you that have had experience at the local or district levels or outside United Methodist Women in jobs that you have held. We are certainly not trying to steal members—but we want to share talent and know that having a full Talent Bank of candidates will benefit everyone. Please do fill out your form and give it to your District President, who can give it to me at Mission u. We are counting on you to help us succeed.

Lorna Wiggins,

Conference Nominations Chairperson

(Look for the Talent Bank Form in this Newsletter on Page 13)





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# **Social Action: Learning Leads to Action**

If you've been a member of United Methodist Women for more than a few weeks, you know that learning is a big part of what we do. Learning leads to understanding and action!

### As United Methodist Women, we learn by:

- Participating in the reading program. Books related to social action from the Reading Program 2012--2017 are listed here: http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/ readingprogram/socialaction
- Attending *Mission u*. Each year one of the studies is on a social action issue.
- Subscribing to response magazine, http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/response.
- Signing up for United Methodist Women e-news at http://umw.convio.net/site/Survey?
   SURVEY\_ID=1941&ACTION\_REQUIRED=URI\_ACTION\_USER REQUESTS
- Subscribing to Action Alerts at http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/members-leaders/ action/alerts
- Reading the *United Methodist Women News*, a free 8-page newspaper highlighting recent events and issues happening within the organization and its members. Sign up at <a href="http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/umwnews">http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/umwnews</a> and it will show up in your mailbox four times a year.
- Following United Methodist Women on Facebook at https:// www.facebook.com/UMWomen/ and https://www.facebook.com/ UMWPublicPolicy/
- Checking resources on the *United Methodist Women website*, http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/
- Studying scripture. One of my favorite Bibles is "The Poverty & Justice Bible." It has over 2000 verses related to poverty and justice already highlighted, plus a section of reflections and responses on a variety of justice topics. It is available on Amazon and other sites.



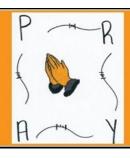
Blessings, Laurel Akin,

Social Action Coordinator

**Our National Mission Institutions** 

http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/nmi

Art from Prayer Calendar 2017 by Desare, age 14, Epworth Children and Family Services, St. Louis, Mo





# Is your **DISTRICT "SPOTLIGHTS"**District doing something that deserves to be in the "Spotlight"?

If so, submit your "Spotlight" event(s) and they will be placed in the next Newsletter. We want to know what each District is doing to make our voice in United Methodist Women stronger and

louder. Just make sure that your event(s) are those that United Methodist Women Sponsor and according to our By-Laws

Submit today!

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## VISITING WITH YOUR CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT......

It was so great seeing all of you at Annual Day at Blue Lake!

- <u>Just to highlight the meeting:</u> Friday night we heard the story of God leading **Chris Ziebach** on her journey to build **Camille Place** as a rescue for trafficked women and children. Once again Tutti gave us a beautiful and moving **Memorial Service** for those lost to us in 2016.
- After our Saturday business meeting we enjoyed hearing Bishop Graves talk about the women in his life who are and have been United Methodist Women. We enjoyed meeting him.
- Our District Treasurers presented their pledges for 2017 in the total amount of \$126,200.
- Congratulations to *Mobile District* on winning the *Many Colors, One Spirit award and Special Mission Recognition Banner!*
- **Pensacola District** took the **Book Worm** home from the **Reading Program** to enjoy for another year for having the most readers and books read.
- We had a total of 114 in attendance with nine "first timers". Bay Pines 14, Demopolis 12, Dothan 14, Mobile 15, Montgomery/Opelika 9, Montgomery Prattville 14, Marianna/Panama City 10 and Pensacola 20 and 7 guests.

We are reading the evaluations and are looking forward to seeing your comments. We are listening and making changes as needed.

See you at Mission u!!!!

Joan Simmons

Conference Vice President

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

You too can become informed of 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 (AWFCUMW).
- You may receive a copy of the **ALERT** <u>free by email.</u> Please email Debbie with your request and you will be added to our email list. However, please include a telephone number! With each issue that is sent, several mailed and emailed copies are returned!
- If you have <u>Savannahgirl1159@cox.net</u> for Debbie Bush, it is wrong! **The correct email is: Savannahgirl1959@cox.net** (girl & 1959).
- If your District has done something that you feel needs to be in "The Spotlight", that signifies our Mission Statement and those we sponsor, then send the information by email to Debbie.



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# MEMBERSHIP, NURTURE & OUTREACH: A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

#### **BAY PINES DISTRICT**

Patty Stone Eddie Bell Persons
Doris Thompson Jane Parker
Marian Corbin Betty Taylor
Martha McCord Ruth Cox

## DEMOPOLIS DISTRICT

Annie Laura Tatum

Marie Burdett Elaine Chapman
Irma Brady Carlson Betty Milstead
Georgia Compton Polly Dinning
Hattie Bush Chapman Christine Rhodes
Stella McCorquodale Deloris A. McCruder

#### **DOTHAN DISTRICT**

Irna Williamson Lanelle Brummetts Joanne Knight Ceil Williams Lucille Goff Annie Mable Branton Buelah "Boots" Dutton Nelle Burnett Helen Pilcher Andre Knick Eileen Gardner Judy Dingus Frances Crocker Mary Howell Patricia "Pat" Douglas Gladys Howell Ruth Ricketts Jean Waller Elizabeth Cook Ruby Sullivan

#### MARIANNA-PANAMA CITY DISTRICT

Mary Ellen Porter Margie Atkins
Lynelle Vanlandingham Jennell Griffin
Carolyn Kirkland Bettie Hussey
Martha Sandborn Jackie Vaughn
Eleanor Nicholson Joyce Rodgers
Verre "Tweeta" Gaskin



Nellie Jo Hudson Rodgers



#### **MOBILE DISTRICT**

Gladys O'Neal Betty Tagert
Blanche Maddox Pam Turner
Evelyn Smith Sally King
Martha Reynolds Lucille Ellis
Phyllis Killough Marion Flowers
Ariel Williams Lois MacCuish

#### MONTGOMERY-OPELIKA DISTRICT

Winnie Boyd Mary Ann Norrell
Joanne Hinton Dean Wall
Betty Ann Polluck Elaine Heath
Dot Bullock Dorothy Laney
Angela "Angie" Kittrell David Stewart

#### MONTGOMERY-PRATTVILLE DISTRICT

Jimmie Lee Robertson Bailey Chris Green
Jane Cunningham Dunlap Mary Furr Davis
Mary Nelle Hampton Edith Roddy Gaffey
Carole Jane Hutchinson Betty Staples Blow
Francis Smith Williams Nan Hayes Lazenby

#### PENSACOLA DISTRICT

Marie Postell
Faye Curl
Nell Holzberger
Dot Siler
Lois Shawger
Anne Freeman
Mitzi Miller
Clara Mae Turner
Margaret Landers
Cheryl Hayde

What the caterpillar perceives as the end......
.....to the butterfly is just the beginning.....



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# **STOP** HUMAN TRAFFICKING

We have had our "one day" to "raise our umbrellas" and make a statement! Now it's time to actually put our words into action. We need to work with our local agencies to identify where we can "plug" in and actually do some "hands-on" work. You can go to the National Office web page to get started: <a href="http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/humantrafficking">http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/humantrafficking</a>
Here are some agencies and their contact information to get started....both in Alabama and West Florida:

- National Human Trafficking Resource Center: 1-888-373-7888
- Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force: 1-800-991-0948 / 8121 Parkway Dr., Leeds, AL
- West Florida Center for Trafficking Advocacy: 1-727-940-2282 / P.O. Box 2282, Tarpon Springs, FL
- Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking: 1-727-442-3064 / P.O. Box 2948, Clearwater, FL.
- Alabama Immigration Info. Center: immigration.alabama.gov
- Alabama Law Enforcement Agency: 1-855-837-4396 / P.O. Box 304115, Montgomery, AL
- Catholic Charities of NWFL/Immigration & Refugee Services (Pensacola Office): 1-850-436-6420
   / http://www.ccnwfl.org immigration@cc.ptdiocese.org

Whether your unit is small or large, there is something you can do to make a difference in the lives of women, children and youth.

THINK OUT OF THE BOX......

## **COOPERATIVE MISSION u EVENT-**

Sponsored by: Church & Society and United Methodist Women

WHEN: July 20-21, 2017 WHERE: Millbrook First United Methodist Church - Millbrook, AL

Each year, United Methodist Women members prepare for faithful living and action by studying mission studies.

<u>Spiritual growth study</u> - A Covenantal Community - study leaders are Clara Ester and Carol Toney.

<u>The geographical study</u> - The Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church - study leaders are Joyce Genz and Kathy Harris

The issue study - Climate Justice - study leader - Debbie Bracewell

New offering this year is a youth study - A Youth Study on Missionary Conferences. We are offering this study to youth leaders in order for them to go back to their respective churches and teach this study to their youth. Tutti Johnson will be leading this study.

#### The school over 4 different types of scholarships:

**<u>Don Brill Scholarship</u>** - for clergy during the first 5 years of their ministry and have not previously attended a Mission u Event.

<u>Lib Claridy Scholarship</u>- for lay persons that have not previously attended a Mission u Event.

<u>Nell Chance Scholarship</u> - for new United Methodist Women that have not previously attended a Mission u Event.

**Youth Scholarship** - for youth leaders that have not previously attended a Mission u Event

#### Registration information may be obtained from the following places:

Alabama West Florida Conference United Methodist Women's website-

Betty Helms, Dean @ 334-790-8962 or

Tutti Johnson, Registrar @334-963-9001.



# TALENT BANK INFORMATION ON PROSPECTIVE LEADERSHIP

(To be completed by prospective leader)

Type or Print (attach additional	sheets as nece	essary)	Date _		
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Email					
Local Church		Distri	ct		
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Special Talents or Skills:					

United Methodist Women Alabama-West Florida Conference Debbie Bush 173 Overlook Drive Pensacola, FL 32503

