



UMW District President's Word

Our Montgomery-Opelika United Methodist Women District is launched for the year 2017! In the last month, we have had District Officer Leadership Development (Training) Day, District Annual Day, an area Prayer and Self Denial Day in Auburn, and Conference Annual Day at Blue Lake. That schedule requires faith, in addition to stamina. The wonderful ladies in our district made it all worth the effort. Everyone has been welcoming and hospitable, and I appreciate their hospitality.

This year, I want to concentrate on getting to know the ladies I haven't met thus far, so I am available to you all by phone, email or text. Also, you will be getting messages through your unit presidents. The plan includes visiting each local unit, so decide which meeting you would like me to attend. I'll be looking for an invitation!

Meanwhile, make a plan of action to accomplish the projects and goals your unit wants to do in 2017:

1. Get out your Mission Today Unit form and plan your work for the year to include the items that will earn the level of award your unit wants to receive next January. (The Mission Today Unit form can be found on our UMW website www.awf-umw.org. On the homepage you will see 2017 Local Unit Forms available in PDF or Excel format.)
2. Plan how you are going to get a 5 Star Certificate.
3. Plan which books to read in order to get Reading Program Certificates next January.
4. Choose which Mission Studies your group will attend or host.
5. Put World Thank Offering program on your calendar.
6. List all the projects you want to do during the year and keep track of each one for your Consolidated Presidents Report in November.
7. Have a contest to see how fast you can get all your members to complete the UMW Census and print out their membership card. Presidents do the census for your unit. The M/O District goal is March 15 to have this done.

President's Word continued -

Remember the forms that have to be filled in at the end of the year will help you to plan the work of the local unit, if that is not already done.

I am looking forward to a fantastic year of faithfully serving with you all throughout 2017!

Your servant,

June Headrick

District Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach (MNO) - Nellie Sue Helms

Our title, Membership Nurture and Outreach Coordinator, gives great clues to our work with United Methodist Women. Membership Nurture includes lists of our local units' members which should be part of our District MNO records, so the local units lists should be sent to the district officer for her records. When a member is added to the deceased list, the information should also be sent to the District MNO. Next, local MNO officers can nurture their groups by building a supportive community among the members by staying in touch with them by mail, email, phone or visits. Finally, Outreach can increase membership and build fellowship. We should find ways to reach out to teen women, young women, mothers and working professionals. Our UMW groups provide opportunities for spiritual growth, leadership development, involvement in missions and participation in study and social action. We MNO officers can help make a difference in the lives of our members and reach out to others to become a part of our United Methodist Women!

District Coordinator for Social Action—Marge Stephens

Greetings social action coordinators, unit presidents, UMW sisters and district and conference officers! A lot of energy, compassion and determination are in the air as we begin a new year with a heart eager to change this world for the good. Here in Alabama, as United Methodist Women, we are working to end the food tax, change predatory lending laws, stop human trafficking, work toward humane immigration, seek climate justice and prison reform and to uphold and promote our Charter for Racial Justice. Our conference has passed resolutions on most of these issues. Let's get to work and see what each of us can do individually and together.

Human trafficking is an immense and daunting problem that occurs daily on Alabama interstates and highways. However, women and men throughout Alabama are coming forward to tackle the problem. A new home for rescued women and children will be opening in Monroeville late this year or early next year. Camille Place will offer shelter, support and life skills. Those who attended the annual meeting of

The Alabama-West Florida Conference on Feb. 10-11 at Blue Lake heard how the Monroeville community and many others in the state and beyond already have offered services and funds for Camille Place. Chris Ziebach, a young married mother of two daughters, vowed to God to create a safe living space for trafficked women and children who have escaped their bonds. Chris had a series of very disturbing dreams about being trafficked that created deep empathy on her part as she felt God speak to her through these dreams to open a home for these women and children. If you would like more information, visit Camille-place@yahoo.com or the web site <http://www.camilleplace.com>.

On a unit level, Brundidge UMW hosted a program on human trafficking in February. The sheriff, mayor and chief of police were in attendance, with the sheriff being a speaker.

Laurel Akin, our conference social action coordinator, and June Headrick, our district president, also urge us to Intercept Human Trafficking with boxes decorated with slogans like “Box ‘em Up” (the traffickers) and “See something, say something” to be placed in strategic places in our churches to raise awareness, action and determination.



A mission study on Climate justice will be held at Aldersgate UMW in Montgomery (date to be set), and a study on Latin America, led by Susan Hunt, will be held on April 22 at Auburn UMC.

To close, what better way to work for a better world than to support Legacy 150 March 23 in celebration of UMW's 150th anniversary on. Legacy 150 is an endowment to help fund our missions in the years to come.

Please, let's keep in touch with one another, pray for one another and share what we are doing to make progress with our goals for social action. Contact me at msueauburn89@gmail.com or 334.703.8174 to let me know what you are doing, ask questions and share ideas or concerns. I'll include some of what we are doing in each newsletter.

Thank you for the chance to serve you this year.

God bless you,

Marge Stephens

District Mission Program Resources Coordinator—Rebecca Baird

The UMW Reading Program for 2017 is in full swing. The Reading Program is a study opportunity, but it should also lead to action.

- **Prayer** - Books often raise concerns about people, countries and issues. Bring these concerns to God during your prayer time at home and at group meetings.
- **Host a Program** - For example, a locally sponsored program on climate justice could help the church and community explore ways to be better stewards of God's earth.
- **Organize** - You and your group can contact the Office Of Community Action to work on social action plans for your local group and church.

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Go to www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram to learn more about the Reading Program.

There are a number of exciting and interesting books this year. After you read a book, please send me a one paragraph review of the book to include in a future article.

Also, I have a few items that are available. If you need any of these, let me know and I will arrange to get them to you.

- 2017 Prayer Calendar - 4 at \$14 each
- UMW Membership Pin - 1 at \$10
- World Thank Offering Boxes - 10 at 40 cents each

You can contact me at bairdrs@charter.net

District Treasurer - Dianne Flowers

Hello fellow United Methodist Women! Here we are in our first full year of our new "format". That is reporting in a calendar year instead of September 1st to August 31st. This makes it a bit easier on the Treasurers in our organization. Everything for the year is turned into the Conference by November 30, giving the Conference treasurer time to get her things done and to the national office by the end of the year. Reporting for the Reading program, Mission Today units and Five Star will be on a calendar year too. (Money given to me in December will count in the following year.) As clear as mud, right? Remember, contact me and I will answer any questions you have. If I don't know the answer myself, and that is entirely possible, I will find out from someone who does!

I want to congratulate the Five Star Units for 2016, those being Bowen, Brundidge, Crawford, Opelika AM, Opelika PM and Murphy's Chapel. Certificates were given at our recent Annual Day celebration, another thing that has changed with our calendar year format. Annual Day is now celebrated at the beginning of the year instead of October. Our District combined Annual Day with Unit Officer Training on February 4. If you did not attend, you missed beautiful music and an inspiring message, not to mention good food! If you need the treasurer training materials I would be happy to send them.

We are in our third year of collecting monies for the Legacy 150 Endowment Fund. The Annual Day of Giving for the fund is March 23, the day we were organized back in 1869. We will be collecting until 2019, our 150th anniversary. You can send money to me or directly to the National Office. Make checks payable to United Methodist Women and put Legacy Fund on the memo line. The address is: United Methodist Women, Office of the Treasurer, 475 Riverside Drive, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10115

To make a secure gift online, visit: unitedmethodistwomen.org/legacyfund

Contact me anytime at dianne1159@att.net or 334.492.5101. I'm ready to help where I can.

Many blessings,

Dianne Flowers

District Education and Interpretation Coordinator—Judy Smith

Education and interpretation helps women understand our mission and outreach ministries of the church. Many of the activities of your unit and circle are developed in reference to the 20 criteria for the Mission Today Unit award. They must be completed between January - November of 2017.

All criteria are important. Think about pledge to missions, UMW mission resources catalog, UMW program book, mission study, charter for racial justice, Five Star Unit, Response and New World Outlook magazines, reading programs, visitation, mission u school, Women's Action Network, district annual meeting, prayer calendar, campaign for children, UMW mission agencies, spiritual growth (Day Apart), hands on mission and "Green Meetings".

Auburn Methodist Church will host a Latin America mission study on April 22, 2017. A mission study on climate justice will be announced later.

The following District Mission Team positions are still vacant.:

- ◇ Vice President
- ◇ Secretary
- ◇ Nominations (Chair)
- ◇ Spiritual Growth

Opelika AM Unit Report

The morning unit of UMW is glad to report that in 2016 \$1,785.95 was given to local projects. These projects included the Disabled Veterans of America, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Lee County, the Salvation Army, Alabama Rural Ministry, Lee County Literacy Coalition, Women's Hope and Christian Women's Job Corp.

The Morning and Evening units of FUMC hosted District Training and District Annual Day on February 4. Approximately 40 people attended these events in the Fellowship Hall of Opelika First Methodist Church.

Crawford Unit Report

The month of January was a very productive month. Reorganizing and getting new officers trained has been very interesting.

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Crawford Unit continued..

We had our month long January WINTER COAT DRIVE. Collecting around 300 various winter items of clothing, new coats, shirts, sweaters, hoodies, gloves, socks, etc. for those in need in our area.

These items were donated to a local charity. However, with the mild winter we have had it seems sort of strange not to have immediate needs for the items. BUT we continue on.

A group of us attended the Montgomery-Opelika District Town Hall Meeting with Bishop Graves on Sunday, January 29 in Montgomery. This was a very insightful meeting.

The first weekend in February we attended our district training and awards day at First United Methodist Church in Opelika. For the six members that attended this was a very informative day, especially for the new president and vice president.

Our UMW ladies organized the annual Valentine's covered dish lunch on February 12, which was held immediately after the regular church service. Along with the lunch, the children present were given the opportunity to work in the CRAFT CORNER where they made a take home Valentine craft. This has become a little something we do on most significant holidays for the kids.

We meet the second Monday of each month at 6:30 EST.

We are looking forward to additional training and retreats this year.

Friends in Christ,

Jo Ann B Laney

President



Attendees at Montgomery-Opelika District Leadership Development and Annual Day on February 4, 2017 at First United Methodist Church Opelika

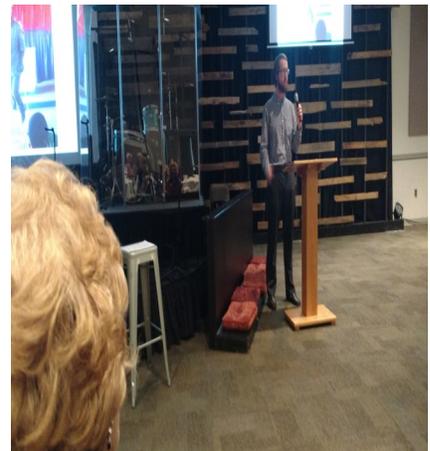


Dr. Rhonda Marable Harden our speaker at Annual Day held at First Methodist Church Opelika



Some of the attendees at Call to Prayer and Self-Denial held on February 9 at Auburn United Methodist Church

Davis Rhodes, the speaker at the Call to Prayer
And Self-Denial program held at AUMC on Feb.
9. Mr. Rhodes is serving in Tanzania.





This is some of the attendees at the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial meeting at Auburn United Methodist Church on February 9, 2017. Left to Right: Edna Williams, Bowen unit, Lisa Abercrombie, Opelika Evening unit, Joan Salter, Opelika Morning unit, Cathy Sands, Wesley unit, Davis Rhodes, speaker for the event, Cordelia Walker, Watoola unit, June Headrick, District President and Mary Richburg, Auburn unit