



United
Methodist
Women

FAITH · HOPE · LOVE IN ACTION

ALERT

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2015 Conference Officers

President	Lynn Hamric
Vice President.....	Margie Miller
Secretary.....	Charlotte Hobson
Treasurer.....	Margaret Larson
Prog. Resources.....	Margie Outlaw
Communications.....	Laurel Akin
Nominations Chair....	Cynthia Brown

Mission Coordinators

Spiritual Growth.....	Nancy Shealy
Social Action.....	Zan Jones
M.N. & O.....	vacant
Ed. & Interp.....	Shirley Hodges

Committee on Nominations

Toni Broughton.....	Cynthia Brown
Ruth Ann Powers.....	Imogene Martin
Betty Helms.....	Julia Norton

United Methodist Women Program Committee Representative

Clara Ester

Mission u: July 31-Aug 1, 2015

Learning together for the transformation of the world!

Issue Study
The Church and People with Disabilities

Led by Ann Aldridge



Spiritual Growth Study
Created for Happiness: Understanding Your Life in God

Two Classes: one led by Rev. Tonya Elmore & one led by Clara Ester

TAKE THIS CLASS
FRIDAY OR SATURDAY

Geographic Study
Latin America: People and Faith

Two Classes: one led by Debbie Bracewell & one by Martha Rovira

TAKE THIS CLASS
FRIDAY OR SATURDAY



FRIDAY ONLY



@ Dothan First United Methodist Church

For additional information contact Margie Miller, Dean of Mission u, at margiem@fairpoint.net or Associate Dean Betty Helms at betty@fumcdothan.org

Registration and leader bios in the next ALERT
Study books available at Spiritual Enrichment Retreat or online: <http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/what-we-do/transformative-education/mission-study>

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I have never considered myself privileged. Growing up in a small rural area of Alabama on a small farm, I was well taken care of. I always had what I needed, perhaps not always what I wanted. I had a loving mother and father and older brother and a wealth of friends and teachers who really cared about my success. Opportunity was the word of choice, not obstacle. Children played outside every day, neighbors helped look after all the children, parents worked but there was always time for meals together, sharing the events of the day and planning for the week-ends.

Fast forward fifty years and we're living in an entirely different world! I'm going to single out one topic that is near and dear to my heart...human trafficking. I pray after reading this article it will become an area of concern for you and one you will work toward eliminating.

- Children in Alabama and Florida are victims every day.
- Education is the key to preventing and ending human trafficking.
- Alabama Highway 20/59 has been named a superhighway of human trafficking where young girls and women are picked up or exploited at truck stops.
- According to www.fbi.gov, task forces, led primarily by local law enforcement agencies, investigated 2,515 incidents in the U.S. between January 2008 and June 2010.
- There are more slaves today in the world than at any other time in history according to Pat McCarty, Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force.
- According to www.fbi.gov, the majority of victims in FBI cases are women and young girls from Central American and Asian countries, but 33 percent of victims are U.S. residents.
- 80% of victims are women. Men and children are also targets.
- Rep. Jack Williams, R-Vestavia Hills, has drafted a bill to be introduced in the Legislature this session. If this bill passes it means teenage prostitutes will be treated as victims rather than criminals in the justice system.
- Young girls and women do not ask to be a part of the human trafficking industry, but they don't know how to get out.

This is where you and I can become active.

- Make contact with the legislature and make your concerns heard.
- Know what the Trafficking Victims Protection Act contains.
- Contact the Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force, www.enditalabama.org or the Florida Human Trafficking Task Force, <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/human-trafficking> and arrange with them to sponsor a seminar in your church/community.

United Methodist Women are organized to work for better conditions for women, children and youth. We cannot make every child have a privileged childhood but we can work diligently to see they are cared for, and allowed a normal childhood including safe living conditions, education and a loving home in which to grow up. There are agencies with who we can work to insure this. Young women can be provided educational opportunities as well as assistance in obtaining legitimate employment.

There are many areas in need of our assistance but women, children and youth are who we are responsible for helping.

Won't you join me in this effort?

Lynn Hamric



A Message from Vice President Margie Miller

Thank you for the honor and privilege to serve this year as vice-president of Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women. The conference coordinators spend a lot of time and energy keeping us informed of events and activities. Please support their efforts by attending the activities they have planned. Spiritual Growth Coordinator Nancy Shealy has wonderful plans for Spiritual Enrichment Retreat March 20-22 at Blue Lake. The Reverend Jackie Slaughter will lead us as we explore our theme, "Sing a New Song."



See you at Blue Lake,

Margie Miller
Vice President
margiem@fairpoint.net

Education and Interpretation

"Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today." That is a quote from Benjamin Franklin, and it is a good reminder for all of us today. I am thinking specifically about our Mission Today work. Sometimes we put off some of the items, and then it is August and time to get those forms in so that the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards can be noted at Conference Annual Day in October. So, I would like to encourage our district Education and Interpretation Coordinators to ask our local counterparts to think about those items on the Mission Today forms that could be completed now. Do not wait until August to start thinking about them. You will be glad you started early. Local Mission Today information should be included on the Consolidated President's report.

Please remember the date for Mission u is July 31-August 1. If you have not already bought them, the study books will be available during our Spiritual Enrichment Retreat at Blue Lake March 20-22. See information in this Alert regarding study topics.

Call, e-mail or write me if I can be of help in any way. Thank you for all you do in the name of women, children and youth.

Shirley Hodges, Education and Interpretation Coordinator
gertbob@hotmail.com
334-636-5166 or 334-830-0809 (cell)
670 Valley Road
Thomasville, AL 36784



A GESTURE OF GRATITUDE 2015 Call to Prayer and Self-Denial



Giving Makes a Difference! By your sacrificial giving to A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial, you, United Methodist Women members have: Built and equipped schools, libraries and clinics; Trained rural and urban women of specialized ministries; Provided nutrition and medical assistance for thousands of women, children and youth; Offered relief to those uprooted by wars and other disasters; Produced long-term economic benefits through income-generation and other self-help projects. This year 100% of our funds will be used for pensions and health care for retired missionaries and deaconesses.

Invite a Deaconess to speak at your unit and get involved in this wonderful ministry.

May God Bless all of us during this most Holy Season as we journey toward the cross.

Always,
Your Servant Nancy Shealy

Tech Talk from our Webmaster: Connecting with United Methodist Women via Flickr!

Please don't be in a rush when you go to Flickr to look at the "Let's Huddle! Intercept Human Trafficking 2015" album. It will take you a little while to study the more than just pretty faces of United Methodist Women in 243 photos as they huddle to stop human traffickers. After you've paid tribute to that album, enter Florida (and later Alabama) in the search box in the top right of the Flickr page, select UMWPhotoStream from the dropdown menu, and you'll find many other faces you'll recognize.

We appreciate United Methodist Women making this Flickr site available to us. We'll be watching for your involvement in mission photos to be added to the site. Be certain to tag each of your photos **UMWomen**. Also notify the webmaster so we can add a link from <http://www.awf-umw.org/>

The simplest way to find the Flickr site is to go to <http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/> and click on the tiny "fr" in the upper right of the screen.

Moore later,

Vera

Moore



Setting the Record Straight about Where the Money Goes

Sometimes rumors get started, so I want to clear up one that is circulating about how our mission giving is spent. United Methodist Women does not fund programs that do not benefit women, children or youth and that do not comply with the Social Principles and the Book of Discipline, or programs administered by organizations that discriminate based on faith, ethnicity, race or gender.

There are many ways we can give to missions besides our 5 Star giving.

- Donations to the Legacy Fund will make sure that there is a future for the United Methodist Women.
- Selma is in the news because of the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. There is still a lot we can do to promote racial justice, and one way is by giving to the Racial Justice Fund.
- Hands-on projects such as our Tapestry project of gathering items needed by the Sybil Smith Family Village. Giving to UMCOR, either kits or financial donations, spreads our love and caring all over the world.

Go to the United Methodist Women website to learn about all of the ways we give and care for those who need a helping hand: <http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/what-we-fund>

Margaret Larson

Conference Treasurer



Give Thanks.
Give Now.



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.

ALERT! . . . Are you a Subscriber?

You too can become informed of Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women events and activities by subscribing to *Alert* today!

Send your name and address and telephone number to Laurel Akin, 104 Windwood Lane, Enterprise AL 36330. Enclose a \$4.00 check, made payable to Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women (AWFCUMW). You may receive a copy of *ALERT* free by email. Email laurel36330@gmail.com with your request and you will be added to our email list. **Please include a telephone number! With each issue that is sent, several mailed and emailed copies are returned!**

Social Action Spotlight: Racial Justice

A new Racial Justice Fund was established on December 15, 2014. Gifts to this fund allow United Methodist Women to seek justice and equality within the church, in the U.S. and in the wider world.

Racial justice is an ongoing focus of United Methodist Women mission work. We conduct regular racial justice workshops with members, and work in coalition with human and civil rights groups to track hate-crimes and to promote racial justice in the United States and the world.

United Methodist Women's Charter for Racial Justice was created and adopted by the Women's Division in 1978 and successfully adopted by the whole denomination in 1980. The Charter continues our urgent call for study and action on the principles and goals of its vision.



“From one ancestor he made all the nations to inhabit the whole earth.” (Acts 17:22)

This information and more, including Action Alerts, is available at <http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/racial-justice>

Alabama Arise Legislative Day
Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Democracy in action!

You can make a difference!

9:30 am
Registration, Capitol Auditorium

10:00 am
Issue Briefing, Capitol Auditorium
Legislative Visits, State House

11:30 am
Legislative Luncheon, RSA Plaza Terrace
(Only for those who RSVP'd)

1:30 pm
News Conference, State House steps
(Capitol Auditorium in case of rain)

2:00 pm
Membership Meeting, Capitol Auditorium

For more information, call (800) 832-9060

Make plans to attend Alabama Arise Legislative Day on Tuesday, April 14 and RSVP to Brenda Boman, brenda@alarise.org or Zan Jones, Mahogany84@hotmail.com so we can plan for morning refreshments and lunch at the capitol.

Everything is free. Please come and support this event. We are Women of Action!

**Zan Jones
Social Action
Coordinator**



THE READING PROGRAM LEADS TO ACTION!

For 140 years, United Methodist Women have been involved in mission that includes prayer, study and action. The Reading Program is a study opportunity, but it should also lead to action. The purpose of the program is to encourage United Methodist Women members to:

- Expand understanding of and participation in God's mission.
- Increase sensitivity to all human beings—their needs, interests and concerns.
- Encourage critical thinking about issues facing humanity today.
- Grow in understanding of Scripture as it relates to Christian faith in contemporary life.
- Enhance self-knowledge and act from that knowledge.
- Strengthen involvement in local and global Christian mission.

Do you have a book you would like to recommend for the Reading Program?

CONTACT THE READING PROGRAM SPECIALIST

Brenda Thompson administrates the program and welcomes book recommendations, as well as questions and suggestions about the reading program.

e-mail: bathomps@unitedmethodistwomen.org

phone: 212-870-3733

When suggesting a book please include the title, author, publisher, date of publication and price.

From <http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/reading-program>

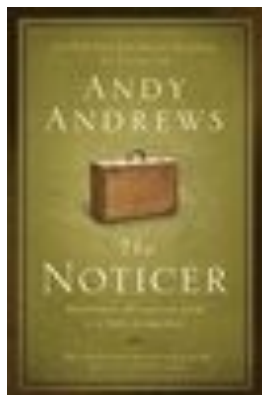
Be sure to visit Program Resources when you are at Blue Lake for Spiritual Enrichment Retreat!

I will have all of the Mission u study books and reading program books as well as some gift items.

In His Service,
Margie Outlaw
Program Resources



Read books from 2011-2015 for this year's Reading Program report! Get the lists here:
<http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/members-leaders/readingprogram/plans>



Recommended from the 2011 Reading List: ***The Noticer* by Andy Andrews**

In this easy-to-read inspirational best seller, Andrews introduces us to a drifter named Jones with a gift for noticing and wisdom. In Orange Beach, Alabama Jones helps people he encounters transform their lives by changing their perspective. This book counts in the Spiritual Growth category.

This book and others from the 2011 list are available at a reduced price on the United Methodist Women website. Many are also available at public libraries in print or audio versions.



A Call to Leadership:

Submit your Talent Bank form today!



What if someone offered you a two-year program of education free of charge? What if they said you would receive not only traditional learning but hands-on training as well? What if they told you that the "class" would be a close supportive community of women who care deeply about the same things you care about and that the work would be part of the long continuing story of women involved in mission?

You have a chance to share just such an opportunity with the women in your conference. Not only will there be good training, excellent resources and a supportive community, but they will be putting their faith into action.

As you attend district and conference meetings, Mission u, training days, etc., be aware of persons who have leadership potential and who show interest in and excitement about the organization.

The motivation and desire to serve in leadership roles comes from several sources:

1. Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ
2. Sense of Values
3. Previous involvement in leadership roles
4. Need to have personal goals met
5. Ownership of the goals of the organization
6. Excitement about the mission work



Cynthia Brown, Nominations Chair

Tapestry II: The Journey



2015 Conference Events

Spiritual Enrichment Retreat	March 20-22
Mission u	July 31-Aug 1
Annual Day	Oct. 24

Looking Ahead

A Fresh Wind Blowing
Southeastern Jurisdiction Quadrennial Meeting June 3-5, 2016

Love in Action: United Methodist Women of Saraland United Methodist Church, Mobile District

Raising awareness of social injustice and working for justice for all God's children has been the goal of United Methodist Women at Saraland United Methodist Church since May 2012, beginning with educating themselves and their community.

In working to achieve their goal, they have:

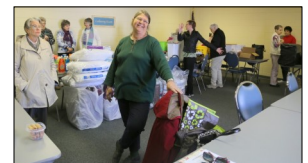
- Hosted a community discussion on immigration
- Written letters to members of Congress, asking them to improve Alabama's human trafficking report card
- Purchased videos and training packages (CHOSEN from Shared Hope International) designed for youth groups and schools that raise awareness of the signs of sex trafficking
- On Super Bowl Sunday this year, they had a bulletin insert on Intercepting Human Trafficking and placed yellow ribbons on the church doors to symbolize waiting for 12.3 million adults and children in forced labor to return home. A United Methodist Woman spoke at both services about human trafficking.

The article above is a summary of one written by Luvenia Spotswood of Saraland United Methodist Women that appeared in the March 2015 issue of "The Informer," the newsletter of the Mobile District United Methodist Women edited by Judy Burnham. The complete article may be found at <http://www.awf-umw.org/informer201503.pdf>

Love in Action is a new feature of **ALERT** designed to highlight ways that local units and district United Methodist Women are putting faith, hope and love into action. Please submit your articles to laurel36330@gmail.com



Restocking Shower for Sybil Smith Family Village at Tapestry II, the Journey



The Purpose of United Methodist Women

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

United Methodist Women
Alabama-West Florida
Conference
Laurel Akin
104 Windwood Lane
Enterprise, AL 36330

