

ALERT

ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE - UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

2020 Winter Alert

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2020 Conference Officers

President	Debbie Bell
Vice President	Katy Wrona
Secretary	Cathy Givan
Treasurer	Jean Creswell
Communications Coordinator	Michele Smith
Nominations Chair	Peggy Cunningham
Spiritual Growth	Tutti Johnson
Social Action	Ora Gillespie
MN & O	Kristine Jones
Education & Interpretation	Joyce Genz

2020 Committee on Nominations

Shirley Hodges	Zan Jones
Desiree Clarke	Nettie Lang
President SEJUMW	Betty Helms
UMW National Vice President	Clara Ester
Web Manager	Anne Capps



We are women with a 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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Conference President's Report

This too shall pass....

This is my final Alert article as conference President.

This will be short, sweet and to the point.

I have enjoyed serving in UMW, but mostly in God's mission in UMW.

I will continue to serve UMW and make efforts to encourage other women to get involved.

It's a daily walk. It took 150 years for others to create a Fellowship path for me to be here.

This very day you will meet someone who needs a kind word, a listening ear.

We have been strengthened to be bold, compassionate, giving, courageous, faithful.

I will be seeing you sooner than later.

It has been my honor to serve in these leadership roles.

Thank you all...

In His service

Debbie Bell, President (2017-2020 Outgoing)
Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women

A Quick Note from President-elect, Debbie Bracewell

I would like to thank all of you for your support in my next few years as the Alabama-West Florida Conference President of United Methodist Women. It is a humbling experience to be chosen for a position like this. With your prayers and God's help we will meet the challenges and blessings of 2021 by fulfilling our purpose of expanding *concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church*.

In His service

Debbie G. Bracewell, President-elect
Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women



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Conference Treasurer's Report

Is it too late for my donation to my local unit to count towards our 2020 Pledge?

NO. Your local unit has until the end of November to get all funds to your district treasurer. The District Treasurer has until December 10th to get all funds to the Conference Treasurer. All monies received after the due date will be held for the 2021 year.

What is the difference in our Pledge money, Supplementary funds and the Love Offering?

Pledge money is comprised of unrestricted donations to UMW, World Thanks offering, mission cards, memorials, and special mission recognition (pins and/or donations). 100% of this goes from the local unit to the district to the conference. At least 85% of that goes to National to fund our mission institutions, social and spiritual endeavors, leadership training, and national operating costs. The 15% the conference withholds is what funds our administrative and membership development costs both for the district and conference. For a local unit to receive the Five-star status, each of the five areas listed for the pledge has to have received donations in that area.

Supplementary funds are sent to nationals but are restricted funds. These funds include the Call to Prayer, UMCOR, and other specified designations.

The Love Offering stays in our conference and never leaves except the part that is designated by a percentage to go to Dumas Wesley, Mission u and an offering we make every two years at the Jurisdictional or Assembly events. A part of this Love Offering is also used for our administrative and membership development costs such as having our finances reviewed, events and meetings, office supplies, subscriptions and memberships, our website and other costs of running our organization.

Why is it important to give to any of the above-named funding groups?

Because we care about United Methodist Women and we are passionate about our mission to women, children and youth. Although many individuals and local units do hands on missions and financial assistance, we have committed dollars to institutions around the globe to help with the same missions we do locally. Each of our local units may and do support organizations that help women, children and youth in our respected areas, but the larger mission institutions like Dumas Wesley must have private funds to keep their doors open. They depend on each of our individual dollars to serve their constituents.

The pledge is decided by vote each summer for the following year. The district and conference, as well as national, make projections on that pledge to create their budgets. When the pledge falls short, we often over-state the budget (expenses) for that year and could create a problem in meeting the expectations of those counting on our funds, like Dumas Wesley and others.



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Conference Treasurer's Report cont'd

Where are we today on our district and conference pledge?

For the Year 2020		AWF-UMW Pledge to Missions		
6. MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE)	Pledge	Paid by Districts	Balance	% Paid
Bay Pines	14,000.00	5,908.09	8,091.91	42.2%
Demopolis	15,000.00	11,612.14	3,387.86	77.4%
Dothan	14,000.00	9,760.18	4,239.82	69.7%
Marianna/PC	11,000.00	9,730.15	1,269.85	88.5%
Mobile	20,000.00	15,405.25	4,594.75	77.0%
Mtg/Opelika	8,000.00	4,133.10	3,866.90	51.7%
Mtg/Prattville	11,000.00	5,783.00	5,217.00	52.6%
Pensacola	22,500.00	12,873.93	9,626.07	57.2%
Events - Offering	2,700.00	1,816.00	884.00	67.3%
TOTALS FROM DISTRICTS	118,200.00	77,021.84	41,178.16	65.2%

Local Unit treasurers, please remember to send an acknowledgement letter to any member that donates more than \$250 to United Methodist Women. The letter needs to state that "no goods or services were received to the donor for this donation". The member needs this for their tax records. This has been a stressful and uncertain year for sure, not only for each of us but our organization and its mission. However, the need is still great and perhaps even more in this pandemic year than any year prior. It's not too late to send in your donations. Please do so before the end of November. Women, children and youth are counting on us. May God receive all the glory for all of our endeavors and may He bless each and every one of us.

2021 DISTRICT PLEDGES as presented in July and passed in October 2020	
Bay Pines	14,000
Demopolis	14,000
Dothan	12,000
Marianna Panama City	11,000
Mobile	20,000
Montgomery / Opelika	6,750
Montgomery / Prattville	10,000
Pensacola	20,000
Events - Offering	2,700
Total PLEDGE	\$ 110,450
CONFERENCE PLEDGE (TO NATIONAL) 2021	\$ 93,883

Jean R. Creswell
AWF-UMW Conference Treasurer



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Conference Communication Coordinator's Report

Thanks for allowing me the opportunity to keep you Alert! Please let me know of any changes to recipients of the Alert, as I am getting prepared to hand off my communication duties.

Faith, Hope, Love in Action

Michele Smith
Communications Coordinator

Membership Nurture and Outreach Report

Hello Ladies,

I have a brief update from the national office regarding what was formally known as the "census."

"Over the past 5 years, the form has taken shape to be more than a number reporting tool and more of a questionnaire regarding the health and vitality of the unit. The past (3) years we have asked questions about what does it mean to be a thriving unit and what attributes do you relate to thriving. This year, we are asking the unit presidents to self-select in what area(s) their members/units are thriving. This will help influence what it means to "thrive" at the district and unit level as well as inform the national office and conference leadership on strengths and areas for improvement."

Deadline: March 30, 2021.

<http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/census2020>

Looking forward to "seeing" everyone at our next event :)

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Kristine Jones
Membership Nurture and Outreach



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2021 – 2024 UMW Social Justice Priorities FAQ

What are UMW's Social Justice Priorities for the 2021-2024 Quadrennium?

United Methodist Women's Mission Priorities for the 2021 – 2024 Quadrennium are:

- **Mass Incarceration/Criminalization of Communities of Color**, with a particular focus on the Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline campaign. Here is a link to information about the School to Prison Pipeline campaign:
<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/racialjustice/school2prisonpdf.pdf>
- **Climate Justice**, with a particular focus on Just Energy 4 All campaign.

Why are we only doing two priorities? What about Maternal Health and Economic Justice?

As we move forward in this moment, we do so with a great sense of intention and discernment. To be impactful, we are constantly assessing what is needed in this moment and where our strengths lie. Reducing the number of priority issues for this quadrennium enables us to focus the resources and time of members and national staff, go deeper into each of the issues we're engaging, and develop stronger local and national partnerships in these areas.

In this time of diminishing resources, this kind of focus makes us more effective and have greater impact for good.

As we wind down our work on Maternal and Child Health and Economic Justice/Living Wage by yearend, we are confident that the organizations we've partnered with over the past quadrennium will continue to advance justice and equality in these areas.

And so, beginning in 2021, our Social Justice Priorities will be Mass Incarceration/Criminalization of Communities of Color, with a particular focus on the Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline campaign, and Climate Justice, with a particular focus on Just Energy 4 All campaign.

What about our work on gender equality and racial justice?

United Methodist Women is a women's mission organization whose founding and subsequent work evidenced the efficacy of women to lead, achieve, and answer God's calling in a time when women's roles in church and society were stymied. **Gender justice and women's leadership development are part of United Methodist Women's core commitments and will always be a key component of our work.**

Likewise, **United Methodist Women has a long-standing commitment to eradicating racism.** We began this work over 100 years ago and regularly recommit to fighting racism and anti-racist work. We know that all people are beloved in God's eyes, and until they are loved in the eyes of all, our work persists.

Recent videos of extrajudicial killings of George Floyd and other people of color has forced the church and the nation to confront the inequities in law enforcement and institutional racism. Our work on Mass Incarceration/Criminalization of Communities of Color and the Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline campaign and Climate Justice are most important at this time. Our work on these issues consistently reveals their intersectionality with gender inequality and racial justice, placing us in a unique position to lead as the nation assesses the role of systemic racism.

Faith - Hope - Love in Action,

Ora A. Gillespie

AWF-UMW Social Action Coordinator

oragillespie@aol.com



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Education and Interpretation Report

Introducing a New Model and Timeline for Mission u Curricula

We are excited to share a few important updates about Mission u in 2021 and beyond!

First, after hearing feedback from many in our Mission u community on the importance of the *Finding Peace in an Anxious World* study, we are glad to let you know that the Board has approved offering this study for adults again in 2021, alongside *Pushout*, *Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom*, and youth and children's studies on violence. This will hopefully allow more participants to engage *Finding Peace* in person next year. We plan to offer training for this study and, like a regular second-year study, conferences can choose whether they will offer all three studies.

Secondly, we are excited to implement a new model for Mission u in 2022 and beyond by delivering to our members and the broader church a new Transformative Biblical Curricula, with one curriculum for adults, one for youth, and one for children developed each year. In this new model, curricula will focus on a central scriptural and/or theological theme, and incorporate spiritual growth, social action, and the global context of the church. This approach integrates crucial elements of our previous mission studies while also creating a more flexible, modern curriculum that can be used both at Mission u and in broader contexts, such as the local church, small group virtual settings, and ecumenically. As we continue to develop this, we will be sharing more about changes to training and possible schedules for Mission u events.

For reference, the timeline below shows what our topics of study will be through 2024.

Timeline of Future Mission u Curricula

2021

- Finding Peace in an Anxious World
- Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools
- Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living Into the Church's Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship
- A Youth Study: Becoming Peacemakers in a Culture of Violence
- A Children's Study: Responding to Violence

2022

- Introduce a new model of transformative biblical curricula
- Luke 13 - Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Adults
- Luke 13 - Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Youth
- Luke 13 - Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Children

2023

- Living the Kin-dom - Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Adults
- Living the Kin-dom - Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Youth
- Living the Kin-dom - Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Children

2024

- Living the Kin-dom - Year 2 for Adults
- Living the Kin-dom - Year 2 for Youth
- Living the Kin-dom - Year 2 for Children

In His Service,

Joyce Genz

jgenz@comcast.net



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Spiritual Growth Report

Inside Spiritual Growth

If you are not receiving the response magazine, please consider completing a subscription today [see <http://www.umwmissionresources.org/t/categories/response>]

The response magazine includes many articles about the many agencies and missionary areas we support. The response articles are for your and others “spiritual growth” and to be shared. Please enjoy this article about the Red Bird Mission in Kentucky.

Red Bird Mission

Hundreds of lives depend on Red Bird Mission in Beverly, Kentucky. For starters, it's the largest employer in a 35-mile radius in the southeastern part of the state, tucked into a remote corner of Clay County at the intersection of Bell and Leslie counties.

Nearly 100 people are employed by the agency, which provides a wide range of services in the impoverished region, including child development, community aid ministries, elderly and family services, women and children's ministries, economic opportunities, and community housing improvement.

Next year, Red Bird celebrates its 100th anniversary.

“People count on us,” said Executive Director Kari Collins. “We need to be there for them, because we’re in an area where the opportunities are so limited.”

About 40 percent of the population is at the national poverty rate or lower, and unemployment is always higher than the national average. Collins estimated that about 10 to 20 percent of the residents have just given up looking for work. Drug addiction is also at higher-than-average levels.

When state and local officials began ordering shutdowns due to COVID-19, the demand for Red Bird Mission began to skyrocket. The number of clients who used the emergency food pantry and dispensary for baby items nearly doubled.

The pandemic forced the temporary closure of the community store, which stocks donated clothing, furniture and household items. And though the dental clinic stopped performing nonessential dental care, a teledentistry service was launched.

Meals on Wheels became even more vital, with the local senior center temporarily closed. Seniors who ate their main meal at the center were added to the home-delivery program. Teachers at the Red Bird School started online learning, but some of their students had no access to the internet. They had to prepare packets of homework assignments to be picked up or delivered to homes.

“It was a challenge beyond words,” Collins said. “But we knew we weren’t alone, because this was happening all over the country. It’s just that we’re sitting in a part of the world that’s so isolated, so poor and with a lack of transportation.



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Spiritual Growth Report cont'd

She said the longstanding partnership with United Methodist Women played a critical role in being able to keep up with the additional demands, which stretched the nonprofit's \$4.6 million annual budget. Aside from the annual national mission institution grant, United Methodist Women also donated an emergency grant of \$40,000 to cover unexpected expenses due to the pandemic.

"United Methodist Women has always paid close attention to the special needs of this community and has always responded to our requests for assistance," Collins said. "They founded us, and they have kept us going. They are truly the hands and feet of this mission."

In the beginning, when some programs had to be put on hold, Collins was faced with having to lay off some of her staff. But the emergency funding from United Methodist Women, along with a payroll protection assistance from the federal government, allowed her to maintain most of her work force. To keep staff safe, the mission now has a 14-step "Health at Work" plan that includes staggered times in the office, daily sanitizing of workstations and temperature checks.

One of the mission's most crucial programs is Work Camp. The program draws about 2,400 volunteers from churches, schools or service organizations for short- or long-term mission trips for projects such as housing repairs and building accessibility ramps for elderly and low-income families.

Because the people stay in cabins, paying the mission room and board, the camp had to be delayed about a month so that a health and safety plan could be put in place. Many volunteers whose trips were canceled sent a donation instead, which was directed to hire local people to tackle the jobs they would have done on the mission.

Collins anticipates a "new normal" regarding health guidelines going forward. She also worries about a drop in charitable giving, which Red Bird Mission depends on to survive.

"It's easy to get discouraged," Collins said. "But all the acts of kindness we've witnessed these past few months restore my faith in humanity. At the heart of it, people really do care for one another and take care of one another, especially in the worst of times." 🇺🇸

Michelle Bearden is a former religion reporter and freelance writer based in Tampa, Florida.

Faith, Hope, Love in Action

Tutti Johnson

Spiritual Growth Coordinator



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National News - Program Advisory Group

I have attached the National Program Advisory Group names and committee connections. Betty Helms is our Southeastern Conference Director. Please continue your prayers for her in this term as she presides in the next quadrennium of UMW polity.

You will also find assigned (and include in your prayers) Celeste Eubanks, Home Missioner/Deaconess in our conference, on the group list. Each conference had a Deaconess assigned along with other members in the Southeastern Jurisdiction.

The members of the PAG have been elected to represent the membership of the organization at the National level in such areas as: programming, leadership development, membership growth, spiritual growth, and service/advocacy.

The members are a liaison between districts, conferences, jurisdictions and the national organization sharing information from your conference, and also, giving reports of national activities to your Conference Leadership team and all membership at meetings and events.

As members of PAG, they will be in a position to bring a strong stewardship message to each conference, promote Mission Giving and working with the Legacy liaison to promote the Legacy Fund. Generosity to Mission Giving makes miracles happen in the lives of women, children, and youth around the world day by day. The Legacy Fund secures our future by endowing core expenses, to ensure that our work in service and advocacy for women, children, and youth continues in the years and decades to come. Interpreting Mission Giving reports, encouraging conference pledge growth, and sharing the success stories of faith, hope, and love in action are some of the ways to accomplish this goal.

The Program Advisory Group meets annually in the spring and functions through smaller teams (Membership, Identity, Relationship, Technology and Story) as well as in specific working groups. Please click for a full list of [Program Advisory Group members](#), [working team assignments](#), and [PAG Operating Principles](#).

In His Service,
Debbie Bell, President
 Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women



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2020 AWF Conference Calendar of Events

Theme: In His Service,

1 Timothy 3:13 ***"Those who have served well gain a good standing and considerable confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus."*** (CEB-Common English Bible)

JAN 17-18 (Fri-Sat)	Friday start 5:00PM XTeam Officers & Distr. Presidents	*Executive Mission Team Meeting Location: Marianna First UMC, Marianna, FL Officer reports
FEB. 6-8 (Fri-Sun)	Friday start conf president, treasurer, CON Chair, GC delegates	Leadership Development Days (LDD) Location: St. Louis, MO National organizes hotel/event schedule
FEB 14-15 (Fri-Sat)	Fri 3PM Checkin All invited	AWF-UMW Conference Annual Day Location: Enterprise First UMC in Enterprise, AL
APR 17-19 (Fri-Sun)	Fri 8AM-6PM checkin	Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) meeting Location: Mobile, AL CANCELLED
JUL 11 (Sat) CHANGE	Friday start 5:00PM XTeam Officers & Dist. Presidents AND District Treasurers	**Executive Mission Team Meeting 2020 District Budget Reviews Location: CHANGE / ZOOM MTG. District Treasurers will also be required to attend this meeting
JUL 24-25 (Fri-Sat)	Schedule pending	Cooperative Mission u Location: Aldersgate UMC in Montgomery, AL CANCELLED
OCT 9-10 (Fri-Sat) ! NEW, 2-DAYS !	Fri 3 PM Checkin Sat 7AM Checkin All invited	Conference Spiritual Enrichment Retreat 2021 Executive Mission Team elect/install Location: Blue Lake Assembly Grounds CANCELLED
NOVEMBER (Recommended)	ALL	UMW Day celebrations per Local Unit Be Invitational!
NOVEMBER 7 (Sat ONLY)	Sat. 8:30AM to 3:30PM	District president & District treasurer <u>ONLY</u> Location: TBA

CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINES FEB.10, MAY 10, JULY 10, NOV. 10

* Includes conference executive mission team officers AND District Presidents

** Includes conference executive mission team officers, District Presidents AND District Treasurers

† March 6-7, 2020 COSROW – Blue Lake Assembly Grounds All Invited
 † Sept. 13, 2020 **CHANGE** Clergy, ONLY UMChurch Annual Conference – ZOOM meeting
 † Sept. 26, 2020 **CHANGE** LAITY UMChurch Annual Conference – ZOOM meeting
 AWF-UMW - Conference President and District Presidents
 Non-Voting Live Stream will be available for interested guests

† May 5-15, 2020 **POSTPONED** General Conference 2020 Minneapolis, MN Delegates

In 2020, the AWF-UMW calendar of events and meetings were adjusted for the COVID-19 Stay-at-Home and Safer-at-Home orders for the Nation.



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**2020 HEALTH FORM AUTHORIZATION
FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT**

Name: _____ **DOB:** _____

Physician's Name: _____ **Phone #:** _____

Health Insurance Company: _____ **Policy #:** _____

Allergies to medications: _____

In the event of an emergency, contact: Name: _____

Relation: _____ **Phone #:** _____

In the event emergency medical aid/treatment is required due to illness or injury during my stay at the Mission u Event, I authorize the ALWF Mission u to:

1. Secure and retain medical treatment and transportation is needed.
2. Release my health information to the authorized individual/agency involved in the medical emergency treatment.

I hold harmless the ALWF Conference Mission u, the ALWF Conference, the United Methodist Church, and/or the owners of the facility for which the event is taking place for any act or failure to act during a medical emergency.

Consent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Consent Plan: This authorization includes x-ray, surgery, hospitalization, medication, and any treatment procedure deemed "life-saving" by the physician. This provision will only be invoked if the person listed as emergency contact person is unable to be reached. I hold harmless the ALWF Conference Mission u, the ALWF Conference, the United Methodist Church, and/or the owners of the facility for which the event is taking place for any act or failure to act during a medical emergency.

Consent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Non-Consent Plan: I DO NOT give my consent for emergency medical treatment/aid in the case of illness or injury. In the event emergency treatment/aid is required, I wish the following procedures to take place: _____

I hold harmless the ALWF Conference Mission u, the ALWF Conference, the United Methodist Church, and/or the owners of the facility for which the event is taking place for nay act or failure to act during a medical emergency.

Consent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Witness Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



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TALENT BANK INFORMATION ON PROSPECTIVE LEADERSHIP

(To be completed by prospective leader - Send to District Nominations Chair)

Type or Print (attach additional sheets as necessary)

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Email _____

Local Church _____ District _____

Age: _____ 20's _____ 30's _____ 40's _____ 50's _____ 60's _____ 70's _____ 80's+

Languages Spoken _____ Racial/Ethnic Group _____

Professional skills, job experience _____

Office(s) held in United Methodist Women

	Office(s)	Dates of Service
Local	_____	_____
	_____	_____
District	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Conference	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Jurisdiction	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Additional Experience on the local, district, conference or general church level (other than United Methodist Women) or in the community

Special Talents or Skills:



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