

# Circuit Writer

MAY 2021

## DISTRICT:

**NOVEMBER: UMW Sunday in Local Churches** (Start planning now.)

## CONFERENCE:

FIND DETAILS HERE:

[awf-umw.org](http://awf-umw.org)

**JULY 10: AWF-UMW Executive Mission Team, Christ UMC, Mobile, AL**

**JULY 23-24: Mission u via ZOOM**

**OCT. 8-9: Spiritual Enrichment Retreat, Blue Lake**

**NOV. 6: Conference Training for District Officers, 8:30a.m.-3:30 p.m., Location TBD**

Next *Circuit Writer* Deadline:

**AUGUST 1, 2021**  
Editor: **Deanie DeFelix**  
[deanie575@gmail.com](mailto:deanie575@gmail.com)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

### Hope, Joy, Peace, Trust, Power

Greetings to our Resilient and Faithful UMW Ladies,

Most of us share the hope that the pandemic nightmare will soon be over. We are also joyful that the fear and suffering it brought are waning because our Gracious Heavenly Father has not deserted us. He continues to give us peace amid our anxiety or grief, and we can always trust that we can weather all storms in life by tapping into His mighty power.

Just as we try to regain a stronger sense of normalcy by taking cautious steps forward through vaccinations and increased awareness of the importance of good hygiene measures, we find ourselves gradually moving back to in-person habits of meeting with each other—such a joy! While Zoom helped keep us connected, I much prefer the personal engagement of coming together face-to-face. You'll notice throughout this issue that we have several opportunities to return to our traditional way of doing things, with a few tweaks of adjustment, Spiritual Enrichment Retreat (p. 3), for example, is meeting again at Blue Lake in October!

For those who've always wanted to attend Mission u but couldn't because of travel limitations, Zoom is providing us a virtual opportunity to attend. Invite your tech-savvy friends to help you connect (good way to encourage some younger ladies to join your unit). See p. 5 for details on Mission u (Registration deadline: **July 12 online**). Then, you'll find some excellent information on p. 6 about new ways to qualify for Reading Program awards: audibles, movies, etc. Don't miss the creative fun on display from a local unit on p. 7, either!

Serving the Lord with gladness,

*Deanie DeFelix*



***"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth" I John 3:18 (NIV)***



## *From the Secretary's Pen*

*Janis Johnson*



One often thinks of the office of secretary of an organization as having a focus on words; recording the minutes of the group, keeping up with its records, reporting the actions, and similar activities. Recently, I was intrigued by the title of a book, “Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus.” (Author: Lois Tverberg) As I read the synopsis, I was struck by the attention to the words of Jesus as He walked and taught His disciples and others, using the words of the Hebrew language. I purchased the book and have been captivated by the familiar teachings of Jesus from His Jewish background and the language of His culture. (Incidentally, there are three books in the series, the one I mentioned plus “Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus,” and “Reading the Bible with Rabbi Jesus,” all of which I highly recommend.)

One of the first topics addressed in the book was on the Shema (which I learned had the correct pronunciation of “Shmah”). In Mark 12:28-31, Jesus responds to a question from a lawyer asking which commandment was the most important. “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

As I read and studied the book, I found the scripture quoted by Jesus came from two Old Testament books, Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Leviticus 19:18. Because Jesus (and other Jewish rabbis) memorized the Scripture, He was able to quickly combine those two Scriptures to respond to the lawyer’s question. This command, I think, is highly relevant to our world today as we see the division and conflict in our society, in our nation, and even in our church. Reading and studying what it means to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and loving our neighbor as oneself from the perspective of the Hebrew teachings was eye-opening and life changing. There isn’t room or time to share the depth and breadth of this teaching in this article, but a paraphrase of the Shema at the end of the chapter captured it in amazing clarity. I will close my article with it and invite you to read it several times (maybe even cut it out and put it where you can review it frequently).

As United Methodist Women, our mission is to exemplify this amazing love to those we meet in our daily lives, especially considering who our neighbors are and how we treat them, because in doing so, we also show our love for our Lord and God. And, when one reflects on Jesus saying this is the greatest commandment, it reminds us that everything we do should revolve around our commitment to living in the sacrificial loving way He taught us.

Quoted from “Walking in the Dust with Rabbi Jesus—Lois Tverberg:

### **A Modern Shema**

“Listen up, Israel—The Lord is your God, he and he alone! You should love him with every thought that you think, live every hour of every day for him, be willing to sacrifice your life for him. Love him with every penny in your wallet and everything that you’ve got.”

Blessings,

*Janis*



## Spiritual Growth

Martha Spiva

If you have missed our in-person Spiritual Enrichment Retreats at Blue Lake as many of us have, you will want to read this announcement from **AWF-UMW Spiritual Growth Coordinator, Tutti Johnson**. Mark your calendar for OCT. 8-9! Hope to see you there,

*Martha*



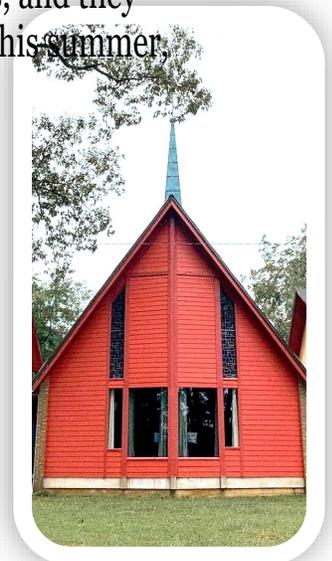
### SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT FOR SOUL CARE

I've got exciting news, ladies! We are having OUR FIRST LIVE, ON-SITE GATHERING October 8-9 at Blue Lake Assembly! As I'm sure you'll remember, we voted two years ago to go to a two-day, one night event, but unfortunately Covid hit, and that was the end of it last year! This year, we are READY! We are very intentional about caring for our souls! We have a speaker I know you will love. She's Reverend Jean Tippet, District Superintendent of Bay Pines.

We also have several breakouts you'll enjoy: Kindness Rocks to paint with Betty Helms, Praying with Color with Katy Wrona, Essential Oils of the Bible with Debbie Bracewell, an exciting Bible Study with Sarah Wrona, and The Origin of Old, Beloved Hymns with me. I wish I wasn't leading a Breakout . . . there are some classes I'd like to take! There are others besides these I've listed, but we don't want to give away everything just yet! This year you'll have an opportunity to go to at least three Breakouts, but that's not all – we have a few surprises up our sleeves! We are really looking forward to seeing your faces live and in person! It's going to be a fun, spiritual, "God with us" event, and we hope you'll join us! Registration forms should be on our web page around the middle of July.

Unfortunately, Blue Lake sustained some serious damage in the April storms, and they could really use our prayers. They've got a full slate of activities planned for this summer, and we know they are doing their best to repair the damage.

Blessings,  
Tutti Johnson  
Spiritual Growth Coordinator



*(Photos from Blue Lake's fb p.)*

# Tidbits from the Treasurer

Peggy Pelt



Ladies,

Congratulations to the following Five-Star Units:

Graceville  
Gulfview  
Marianna First  
Panama City First  
Port St. Joe  
St. Andrew  
Wewahitchka.

To be a Five-Star Unit, donations must be made to each of the following:

- ◆ Pledge to Mission
- ◆ Special Recognition Pin
- ◆ Gift to Mission
- ◆ Gift in Memory
- ◆ World Thank Offering

**Remember**, in order to meet our **\$11,000** pledge, we need each member to pledge at least **\$38, plus give \$10** for the Conference Love Offering. That is **\$48** total per member - only \$4 per month. *(Based on 295 district members)*

Please contact me if I can help you in any way.

Peggy Pelt  
[ppelt@comcast.net](mailto:ppelt@comcast.net)

**PROGRAM RESOURCES  
and E & I**

**Elizabeth Bell**



Dear UMW Friends,

It is with great joy that I can report that my local unit met in April for our Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Program. We enjoyed being back together for fellowship and learning for the first time in over a year! I pray that by now many of you are meeting again.

Below is basic information about Mission u, and you can get more info at [www.awf-umw.org](http://www.awf-umw.org). Since it is virtual, I hope many of you will be able to attend.

**July 22 - July 24, 2021  
AWF-UMW  
Virtual Mission u**

The 2021 Alabama West Florida UMW Mission u will be a virtual event where we will examine **anxiety, the culture of violence that impacts children in and out of schools, and how we as God's people can deepen our moral witness and respond faithfully.**

**Mission u 2021**



*There's Far More Here*  
THAN MEETS THE EYE

Join us: Online July 22-24, 2021

**(must register by July 12).**

Opening Worship is Thursday, July 22, 6:30-7:30 pm.

Studies are July 23 & 24, 8:30 am-5:00 pm, including opening, breaks & plenaries.

Continuing Education Credit is available.

All donations will be given to the Equal Justice Initiative (Montgomery, AL).

AWF-UMW Virtual Mission u. **Register online** at <https://www.awf-umw.org/>, or **Mail-In** form from the same website can be downloaded.

May we bless others in His service,

*Elizabeth*

# Reading Program Reboot



## Program Resources Reading Program Catalogue:

### WAYS TO RE-ENERGIZE YOUR UNIT

For 2021–2022, participants can read books from the [2015 through the 2022](#) reading lists. Reading Book Reporting Form: [The completed reading forms should be given to your local president for the Consolidated President's Report, so she can complete her report by November 30.](#)

**Participation:** Anyone can participate in the Reading Program and all can receive a certificate for participating. [To meet the Mission Today Criteria 9, at least one unit member must be a participant in the Reading Program.](#)

Here are some **alternative** ways to **increase** reading participation.

**Download books** onto an e-reader to pass around and share. This is an excellent idea for those who need large print books.

**Faith Talks:** Faith Talk podcasts can now be counted in the category of Spiritual Growth. You must participate or listen to two Faith Talks podcasts to count as one book in the Spiritual Growth category. If you listen to three, it will be counted as two books.

**Movies:** Watching these movies and documentaries will also count toward the Reading Program:

1. *Just Mercy*
2. *The Hate U Give*
3. *Pushout*

**Children and youth** books can be found within each of the categories and count toward the certificate. Read to a child/youth or enjoy them yourself.

**Bonus books:** These count as two books in different categories. *Rise! From Caged Bird to Poet of the People*, *Maya Angelou*- two books in Leadership Development.

The **Mission u** studies also count as Bonus Books:

1. *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, by Monique W. Morris, (as well as the Leader's Guide by Vanessa M. Wilson) counts as two books in Social Action
2. *Women United for Change, 150 Years in Mission*, by Ellen Blue, counts as two books in Nurturing for Community.
3. *Finding Peace in An Anxious World*, edited by Erin James-Brown, counts as two books in Spiritual Growth.

Books often raise concerns about people, countries, and issues. Bring these concerns to God during your prayer time at home and at group meetings. Blessings on your journey as you are transformed and seek to transform the world,

## Joyce Genz

Conference Education & Interpretation

(Some of the Information in this article was provided by Andris Salter, Operations Officer of the United Methodist Women—see [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org))

FEATURING MARIANNA-PANAMA CITY  
DISTRICT UMW UNITS AT WORK

CREATIVITY ABOUNDS  
in  
GULFVIEW UMW



On May 1, 2021, the Gulfview UMW held a drive by to collect donations for the Mothers' Day Memory / Honor Roll and raised almost \$800 for local missions that help women and children. The scooter driver was Scott Flowers, hubby of our projects chair Dianne, with a donation in memory of his mother.



FUN IN THE SUN  
WITH GULFVIEW  
UMW  
FOR A GREAT  
CAUSE!



MARIANNA-PANAMA CITY DISTRICT  
\*ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE  
**2021 United Methodist Women Calendar**  
*All times are Central time.*

Find forms and other resources online:

[www.awf-umw.org](http://www.awf-umw.org)

- \*March 6 AWF-UMW Conference Annual Day; Virtual, All Invited,  
REGISTER ONLINE: [www.awf-umw.org](http://www.awf-umw.org)
- March 20 Marianna/Panama City Annual Day; Virtual; Including  
Memorials (**Canceled because of inclement weather**)
- \*July 10 AWF-UMW Conference Executive Mission Team Meeting  
Christ UMC, Mobile, AL or Zoom; includes District  
Presidents and District Treasurers, attendance required
- Sept. 25 or Oct. 23 **Fall District Gathering / Annual Day: TBD**
- \*October 8-9 AWF-UMW Conference Spiritual Enrichment Retreat (SER)  
Blue Lake Assembly Grounds
- NOVEMBER Schedule a Sunday this month for UMW Emphasis.  
*Invite a District or Conference Officer to attend.*  
(UNIT **TREASURER'S REPORT** DUE in NOV. to Peggy Pelt)
- DECEMBER UNIT **CONSOLIDATED PRESIDENT'S REPORT** IS DUE TO  
DISTRICT PRESIDENT DEANIE DeFELIX BY  
**DECEMBER 5, 2021**

**NOTE:** District start times may be adjusted, based on meeting formats.

Lunch, if served, is \$7.00. Please call in lunch numbers the Monday  
before the event unless it is a holiday; then it will be a Tuesday.