



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH · HOPE · LOVE IN ACTION

The Connection

DOTHAN DISTRICT UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

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

Volume 2017 Issue 1

SPRING 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



2017

Dothan District
Mission Team

President

Debbie Bracewell

Vice President

Jane Dyer Brown

Secretary

Marilyn Skipper

Treasurer

Judy Bura

Program Resources

Joyce Stapleton

Spiritual Growth

Jean Johnson

**Membership Nurture
& Outreach**

TBD

Social Action

TBD

**Education &
Interpretation**

Nancy Riegler

Communications

Carolyn McInnis

Nominations

Jolinda Strickland

Greetings! 2017 has certainly been a busy year so far—Conference United Methodist Women Executive Team has met, Dothan District Mission Team has met, training day was held, Conference Annual Day attended, and District Annual Day was celebrated. Whew! It was great to see Dothan District members at training and at Conference Annual Day. Our new Bishop, Reverend David Graves, gave a stirring message about the generational influences of United Methodist Women in his family. District Annual Day is always a perfect opportunity to celebrate the missional efforts in the Dothan District and to recognize the achievements of our units. The Service of Remembrance allows us to honor the United Methodist Women who have served our units and our churches intentionally and diligently. Each event I have attended this year inspires and renews my investment in United Methodist Women.

The Conference Team and the Dothan District Mission Team has chosen *FAITH: "of greater worth than gold"* (1 Peter 1: 7) as our theme for the year. You will see this on our publications and in our events. Though United Methodist Women we are able to put our faith, hope, and love in action as we share, work, and pray for missions assisting women, children, and youth around the world. Faith is contagious—if we allow it to be shared. Reverend Gary Daniel (Enterprise First) recently preached about Christians as living letters of recommendation. This prompted me to extend this analogy to our lives as United Methodist Women. We are walking, talking letters of recommendation for United Methodist Women. What do we reflect to others? Do our actions and attitudes recommend United Methodist Women to others? Do we create a desire in others to see what United Methodist Women is all about? Sometimes we focus too much on the "job" as United Methodist Women rather than the fellowship and the opportunities for mission. This year, let us achieve the goal of sharing our faith and reflecting our joy as members of United Methodist Women.

Joyfully holding to the faith,
Debbie Bracewell
Dothan District President

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. The World Day of Prayer program is inspired by its motto *Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action*. Through informed prayer we seek out ways to act in solidarity with women and communities in need. When they prepare and celebrate World Day of Prayer, they do this as a community. More information can be obtained from the website: www.worlddayofprayer.net. For materials, one may go to www.worlddayofprayer.net/philippines-2017.html.

In review of other United Methodist Church districts and different conferences, it has been noted that the Dothan district was the only one that had World Day of Prayer on its event calendar. To meet the focus of United Methodist Women, the district has determined not to have World Day of Prayer as an event/activity. This will begin for the 2017 calendar year.

As Christian women, each church unit may consider still participating in World Day of Prayer. See web addresses above. Also, they may want to invite those churches in the World Day of Prayer Cluster Churches listed on page 7 of the 2016 Dothan District Directory, or any church.

Please feel free to contact me: Jane Dyer Brown, 678-910-7239, for any questions or concerns.

Jane Dyer Brown
Vice-President

Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayer and request. With This in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Ephesians 6:18

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

We have a place for you!!

All of us on the Mission Team have such a wonderful time together, and the thing is we would never have known that if we had not said yes to join the team. I have been blessed beyond belief by the women I have served with. Don't you want to join us too?

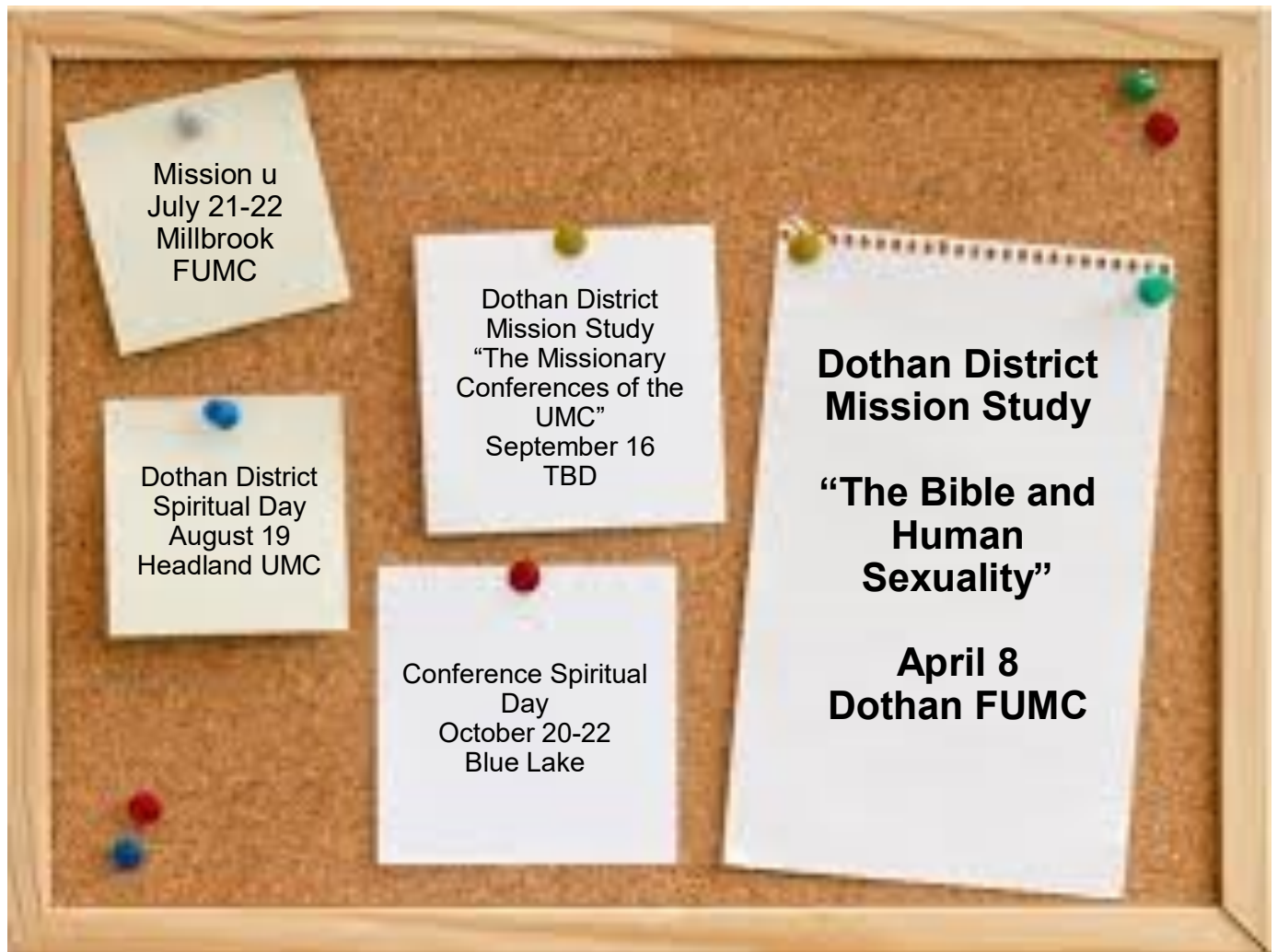
We still have a position open this year for Membership Nurture & Outreach as well as Social Action. That doesn't sound like you? How about Treasurer next year? This is Judy's last year and we need a replacement. Are you that person; do you know that person? Well please let me know!! Judy would love to start training.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon!

Jolinda



2017 Calendar of Events



Mattie Kolb Scholarship



Applications have been mailed for the Mattie Kolb Scholarship, and I have already received several letters back. The application can be found on the website at www.awf_umc.org under Dothan District, or let me know and I will email it or send it to you. Anyone entering college or in college may apply. And don't forget to get your monies in so we can give away as many \$500 scholarships as possible.

Jolinda

MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

Spring is on its way, and I am sure that many of us have already given up on some of the resolutions we made at the first of the new year. Keeping resolutions requires us to develop new habits and that is hard for us to do. While it's hard, it's not impossible. It just requires us to practice doing things differently than we are used to doing them. There are four habits I would like unit treasurers to practice faithfully.

The first is to always fill out the bottom of a **Gift in Memory** Card and send it to me, or send me a list of recipients before the end of the year. We prepare a program for the District Annual Day event, and those who were honored or remembered should be mentioned in that program.

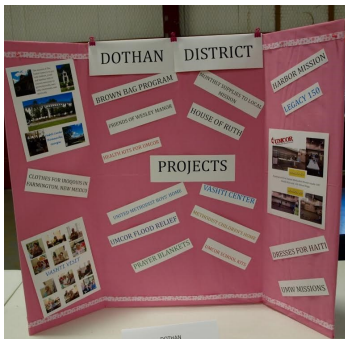
Second, when you send me a check, always make sure you also send a remittance or specials form or even a piece of paper telling me what the check is for and who is sending it. Once the check is deposited, I need something that tells me where to credit the money. Please do not mail me a check without something to tell me what it is for.

Third, when you order a pin, please let me know if you do not receive it within 14 days. I order pins immediately, and they are sent within a day or so of my order.

Last, if possible, please provide me an email address to contact you. If the treasurer or president of the unit does not have email, please provide the email of your church office. Sometimes there is information I need to get to you, and email is the most efficient.

Judy Bura
Treasurer,

Conference Annual Day



PROGRAM RESOURCES

Hebrews 11:1

Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see.

Hello to everyone!

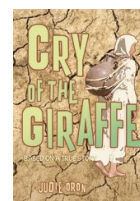
We have all enjoyed this beautiful weather we have been having!!! I want to get outside and plant some flowers, and I am sure there are several others that are thinking the same thing. Maybe soon!

I am featuring a book from 2013 entitled *Cry of the Giraffe*. Some of you might have read it, but if you haven't, it is worth your time and is based on a true story. I ordered only one not knowing that it would sell but . . . it did. I will order some more for the next group meeting.

Please let me know if you need anything ordered. Thank all of you so much, and much love to all of you

Joyce Stapleton

Program Resources



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Faith—"more precious than gold" 1 Peter 1: 7 is our 2017 scriptural focus. This reminds me of the parable Jesus gave us of the Hidden Treasure. Although few of us have searched for gold in the mountains of California or the Mayan ruins of Mexico, we think of a treasure hunt as an exciting prospect, even a risky one, and the treasure that we might find as a beautiful sight and glorious victory. In Matthew 13: 44-46, Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field." When we glimpse the glory of God's kingdom through encounters with the Holy Spirit, sometimes we don't know quite how to react. Allowing God's wonderful promises to completely envelope in joy us will lead us to *giving our all* on our Christian Walk.

This year's Dothan District Annual Day will include a service of remembrance for all who passed on in the year 2016. Our focus on Spiritual Day on August 19, 2017, will be on prayer and our Christian Walk. Does our walk match our talk? Are we giving our all to Jesus on a moment-by-moment basis?

Dear Lord, please guide and direct our steps as we keep our eyes fixed on You. Thank you for carrying us through the trials of this life and may we live in a way that is worthy of your Heavenly Kingdom. Amen.

Jean Johnson
Spiritual Growth

EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION NEWS

Our spring District UMW mission study is fast approaching!

When: Saturday, April 8th

Where: Dothan First UMC

Time: Register at 8am, study begins at 8:30am, finished by noon.

Topic: *The Bible and Human Sexuality* by Ellen A. Brubaker

Leader: Betty Helms

Bible verse: Genesis 1:27

*So God created man in his own image,
In the image of God he created him;
Male and female he created them.*

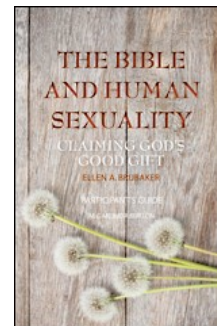
This study explores the Bible and Human Sexuality as two essential components of our Christian faith. It delves into the complexity of the biblical text and our own varied understanding of it in light of human sexuality. It will look at the influence of church leaders throughout thousands of years of Judeo-Christian history. The study also brings into consideration the influence of faith, family systems, and heritage, changing gender roles, along with the impact of race, class, age, ethnicity and orientation.

Betty will help us understand the intricacies of this topic and how it is essential to our faith as Christians. Betty is our SEJ (Southeastern Jurisdiction) President and is always showing us how to live out our faith and commitment as United Methodist Women! Come have a fun morning with us as we open our minds and hearts to this interesting topic!

Happy spring and many blessings,

Nancy Riegle

Education and Interpretation



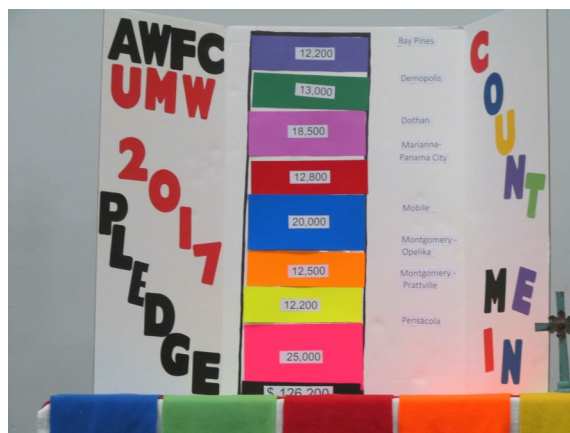
**United Methodist Women:
Faith • Hope • Love in Action
We are women with a Purpose!**

"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."

REPORTING DUE DATES

Local Officer to District Officer

<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
Treasurer's Report Unit Treasurer	By November 30 Judy Bura, District Treasurer
*Name of Deceased Members Unit Secretary	By November 30 (please report any December deaths by January 10) Jean Johnson, Spiritual Growth
*Local New Unit Report Unit Secretary	By November 30 TBD, Membership Nurture & Outreach
*Social Action Report Unit Social Action Coordinator	By November 30 TBD, Social Action
*Reading Program Reports Unit Program Resource	By November 30 Joyce Stapleton, Program Resources
*Mission Study Participants Unit Education & Interpretation	By November 30 Nancy Riegler, Education & Interpretation
Consolidated President's Report Unit President	By November 30 Debbie Bracewell, President
New Officer Lists Unit Secretary	By November 30 Marilyn Skipper, District Secretary
*Included in the Consolidated President's Report	



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!



AWF United Methodist Women Do Not Share Personal Information Online

We believe personal online information should be limited. Safety precautions online must contain the wisdom of self-protection and security of our counterparts as we work together for good for all.

When you share your whereabouts to the social media world, you are putting yourself at risk. Many people on social networks are not aware that a tweet or status update may also expose their current location. When you share your location, this is risky because it advises any potential thieves that you may not be home.

In like manner, when someone visits our website and sees there is a meeting scheduled at Blue Lake, First Church, etc., and your address has been shared in a newsletter, that lets any potential thieves know you may not be at home. The best method of being accessible to your counterparts and mission team members is to always ask them to find your contact information in the conference and/or district directories.

We use a special method of protecting your email address on AWF-UMW.org. While officer names are listed beneath areas of responsibility on the webpages, clicking that link sends an email to awfumw@aol.com which is received by Website Manager and is forwarded as determined appropriate. We know you are a busy person and do not need to be distracted by unnecessary and unwanted e-mail contacts.

Vera Moore
Website Manager
<http://awf-umw.org>



United Methodist Women Census

United Methodist Women is asking unit presidents and individuals to complete an online information form for the 2016 United Methodist Women census. Gathering this information will enable the organization to meet its members' needs more efficiently as well as allow the organization to grow in numbers, outreach and impact. United Methodist women will never share contact information without express permission.

Census 2016
▶ **PRESIDENTS:**
Click to
complete the
census



Go to www.unitedmethodistwomen.org; on the home page you will see two boxes—one blue for individual members and one pink for unit presidents. Click on the appropriate box and follow the directions. The form is short and will not take much time to complete. Unit Presidents or fellow circle members (with permission from the individuals) can complete the individual information forms for members without access to computers.



TALENT BANK INFORMATION ON PROSPECTIVE LEADERSHIP

(To be completed by prospective leader)

Type or Print (attach additional sheets as necessary) Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Local Church _____ District _____

Age _____ Email _____

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 _____

Areas of Special Interest or Concern

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> secretarial | <input type="checkbox"/> recruiting members | <input type="checkbox"/> publicity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> social issues | <input type="checkbox"/> workshops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> computer | <input type="checkbox"/> creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> newsletters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> accounting/bookkeeping | <input type="checkbox"/> recording minutes | <input type="checkbox"/> retreats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> organization of details | <input type="checkbox"/> public policy | <input type="checkbox"/> music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nominations | <input type="checkbox"/> public relations | <input type="checkbox"/> youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> program planning | <input type="checkbox"/> community building | <input type="checkbox"/> children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> administration | <input type="checkbox"/> inclusiveness/pluralism | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Do you wish to serve on which level (circle): Local District Conference

Which office(s) on the United Methodist Women’s Team would you most like to hold given the opportunity to serve?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> President | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Nurture & Outreach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vice President | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Growth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chair of Nominations | <input type="checkbox"/> Communications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education & Interpretation | |

Why are you interested in this position and what qualifications do you feel you have for your office(s) of choice?

Would you be able to use your gifts and talents to uphold and strengthen United Methodist Women through the PURPOSE of the organization? _____

Is it possible for you to be away from your home or employment for:

Full Day _____ Weekend _____ Extended Time _____

Yes or No Yes or No Yes or No

_____ I am sorry but I am unable to accept an office this year. Please keep my name on file and contact me in _____.