



Florida Conference United Methodist Women



Genesis

December 2020; vol. 47 no. 3

Website: www.flconfumw.org

Purpose

United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God, 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.



“Be still and know that I am Gpd!
I am exalted among the nations,
I am exalted in the earth.” Psalm 46:10s

The year 2020 is coming to an end, we are getting ready to welcome 2021 with some apprehension but with hopeful anticipations as we know that the God who is exalted among the nations and in the earth is in control of the future.

Due to the economic devastation in 2020, with heavy hearts, we decreased the amount of mission giving for 2021 by \$50,000 compared to the 2020 budget. However, by faith, we do anticipate exceeding the \$325,000 committed to mission in 2021. Due to the continued rise in positive COVID-19 cases in the state of Florida and nationwide, as of this writing we do not know how the conference events will occur in 2021, but you can anticipate the conference team will bring great educative, transformative, and celebratory programs to help our members grow spiritually and participate in the global ministries of the church. Though 2020 has been a challenging year, we have learned some valuable lessons which I anticipate will guide our planning in 2021.

My heartfelt appreciations to each one of you for your resilience and your commitment to mission in 2020. Despite the great challenges we have encountered individually and collectively, you have participated in great numbers in the study “Finding Peace in the Midst of Anxiety,” the Spiritual Enrichment Retreat, the district’s Annual Meetings, the Conference Annual Meeting, and the Advent Retreat. I am anticipating the same level of participation in conference and district events in 2021 whether we can meet physically or continue to meet virtually.

I wish you a blessed Advent season and a New Year filled with God’s promises as we live each day with the expectation that, knitting in God’s love, our lives and actions will reflect God’s light to a hurting world in need of God’s healing and Justice.

Judith P. Okerson

Deaconess Judith Pierre Okerson, PhD
President United Methodist Women, Florida Conference
The United Methodist Church

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Season's Greetings from your Conference Vice President...

Hello all! Can you believe it is the end of 2020? Most of us, I am sure, are glad to see it end and are hopeful for 2021 to arrive and witness all the great things our God has planned. I have some information to share with you regarding 2021, but I want to take a minute and recap our last few events.

- ✚ Due to COVID-19 and the world as we now know it, we have had to go completely “virtual”. Your Leadership Team met and discussed how we could still meet but do it safely. Meeting virtually was our only option. With the help of everyone on the Team, as well as MANY “behind the scenes” ladies, your Conference Team was able to hold in September their very first ever Virtual Spiritual Retreat led by Rev. Monique McBride. It was an awesome event that 122 of you participated in! Monique held a candlelight vigil on Friday evening, followed by Saturday morning prayer and we gathered again Saturday afternoon for four different workshops which included baking our own communion bread! We ended our event with Holy Communion, which was beautiful.
- ✚ We held our Conference Annual Meeting in November, again virtually. 189 ladies tuned in to hear our key-note speaker, Harriett Jane Olson, and Bishop Carter giving the invocation. What a blessing it was to have them both join us for the day!
- ✚ Due to the great response from our Spiritual Retreat, it was decided to have Rev. McBride return in December and along with her church, Christ Church in Ft. Lauderdale. Monique organized and lead a “Celebrate the Season” Advent Retreat. It again was a great event with a great attendance!! Monique led us in several workshops as we learned more about Advent and the Liturgical Seasons, Prayer Bullet Journaling, music and worship. Some of us even joined Chef Monique as we baked scrumptious, double chocolate chip cookies from scratch! It was a wonderful way to enjoy the holiday season together.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, in 2021 your Conference Leadership Team will continue to meet, but virtually. Please visit our website at: <http://www.flconfumw.org> for meeting and event dates as well as information shared from the National Office and our Florida Districts. The 2021 Calendar, Evaluation and Goal Setting can be found in this newsletter. Please print this calendar and share with your ladies.

We don't know what 2021 will bring, but we do know we serve a true and awesome God, and he is providing miracles every day!

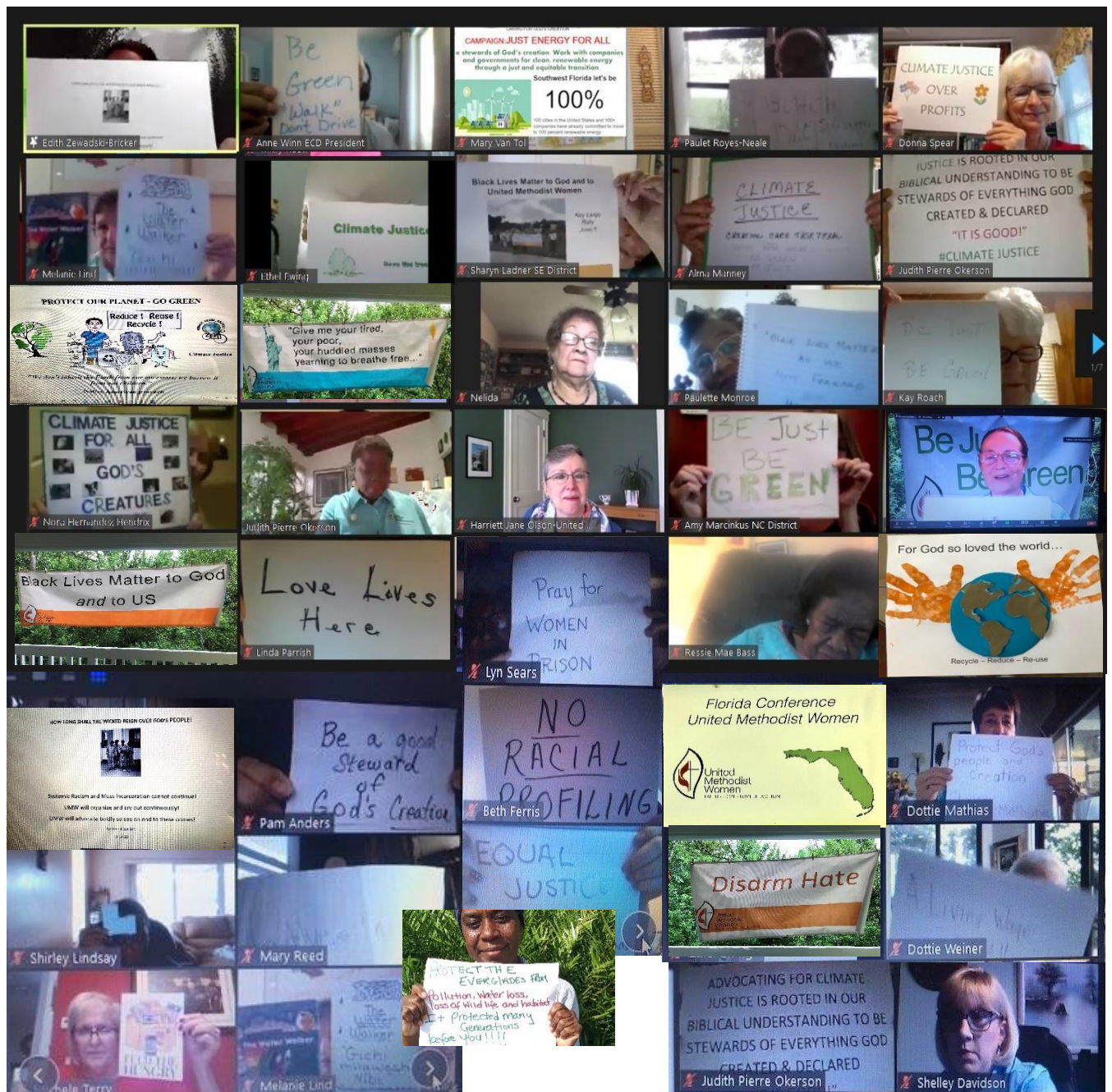
Be safe, be well and I wish you a very Merry Christmas!



Shelley Davidson
Vice-President
Shelleydavidson.umw@gmail.com
863-599-9070



Messages from the 2020 Conference Annual Meeting, November 14.



Creator God, grant that these social-action hopes and dreams will come to fruition and bring your kin-dom here on earth. Grant us patience and serenity, and, when we are certain we are responding to your call, the courage to take bold action to do your will. Compelled by the teaching of Jesus the Christ, Amen.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN READING PROGRAM

Secretary Program Resources

Jannett S. Hawley



Readers,

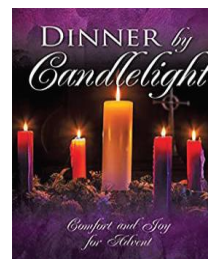
WHAT A YEAR!!! Covid-19 vaccines are being made available for front line workers at this writing, praise be to God! The Lord has been very good to us in that we have our reading program books available in so many genres. We can read at home and share them with friends through email, phone or video calls! The 2021-2022 Reading Program (yes, two years) is available through unitedmethodistwomen.org for download. Your District SPR's have it and she can get it to you. She also has the Program Resources Order List Form and individuals may call their order into the order department. Just contact your SPR and she has all the information for you. The 2021-2024 Handbook will not be printed until after General Conference is held. For now, go to unitedmethodistwomen.org/members-leaders/2021-2024-handbook to download the latest version. The 2020 book, *So You Want to Talk About Race*, is now available in Korean. Bonus books (count as two books) listed for 2021-2022 are *Rise!: From caged bird to poet of the people*, Maya Angelou (Leadership Development), *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, Monique W. Morris (Social Action), *Women United for Change: 150 years in Mission*, Ellen Blue (Nurturing Community), *Finding Peace in an Anxious World* (Spiritual Growth) plus listen to three Faith Talks podcasts and the trio will count as two books in the Spiritual Growth category. As Andris Salter, Operations Officer, states: "The purpose of the Reading Program is to better understand and participate in God's mission today, to increase sensitivity to all human beings, to explore contemporary issues, and to enhance and act on Self-knowledge. Even when we're apart, we're together - and still working to deepen our understanding of the intersections of race, class, sex, religion and gender through books and discussion."

2020 Reading Program Suggestions – Spiritual Growth

DINNER BY CANDLELIGHT: COMFORT AND JOY FOR ADVENT

Kevin Louise Schaner

Xulon Press (2017)



Christmas is coming! Feeling anxious? Expect Hope, Love, Joy and Peace this Ad
Rekindle your anticipation of Christ's birth with comforting conversation.

(As a side bar, I purchased an Advent wreath and candles since I am not physically attending church. This book is a great addition to that wreath. I'm waiting patiently for my copy.)

FAITH TALKS: A PODCAST JUST FOR YOU.....

Faith Talks are monthly conversations with United Methodist Women.

Each conversation explores themes and resources that empower us

to put faith, hope and love into action. Check out interviews with

United Methodist Women mission studies' authors and more: @ unitedmethodistwomen.org/faithtalks



Please remember to read Response magazine. This, too, is included as part of the Reading Program.

Let us not forget, as women of faith, the Lord is always in charge of our going out and
take this time to wish all my UMW Sisters a very Merry Christmas. As I light my
candle on December 25th, I will be sure to wish Jesus a HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

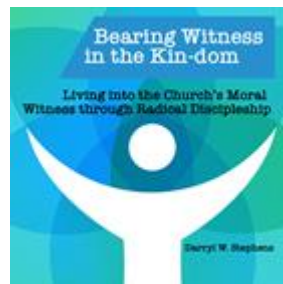
coming in. May I
white Advent



Imagine God's Justice and Lead With Compassion!

We are entering the season of Mission u 2021. The central purpose of the United Methodist Women is to support mission for women, children, and youth around the world. To help the local members connect with a mission effort, the United Methodist Women sponsors an annual mission education event to familiarize the church with the current social issues and how to respond to them. This year, we are hoping to return to Florida Southern College in Lakeland, for an in-person event, and we will also conduct several virtual events scheduled to meet the needs of a broad range of our members. I invite you to plan on being a part of at least one of the events this year.

The first study we want to highlight is **“Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living into the Church’s Moral Witness through Radical Discipleship!”**



Living in relationship with God causes us to live beyond ourselves with creation. This is not easy. It requires us to seek justice and live in love with others as God loves us. In the Kin-dom of God we must work as one for the will of God. The women of the United Methodist tradition have courageously led ministries in race relations, creation care, substance abuse, sexual orientation and inclusion, poverty, relationships with indigenous nations, and other concerns. But in these efforts to do good we have not always stayed on the righteous path. Sometimes, we have done damage to creation.

This study explores the uneven history and causes to renew our efforts to live God's justice in a relationship of compassion with creation. It helps us find a path through our human failings by focusing on the graciousness of God in our endeavors. Together, we can bear witness to God's presence in ways that make a material difference to all of creation, all persons, and especially victims of injustice and those who are most vulnerable. This is the moral witness of the church.

As we continue we are ever mindful of the effects of the pandemic, and the importance of being safe for others and self, I invite you to pray this scripture, **Psalm 139: 13-14**, offering Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love during this Advent season!

On behalf of the Conference Mission u Committee, I wish you a joyous and blessed Christmas!

Pam

Pamela Davis,

Dean, Mission u

Watch for date - place - particulars

on the

2021 Mission u in July!

What you do unto the least of these, you do unto me.

“If we could imagine looking in the eyes of a brother in prison, a person at the border, even the kid who just shot another gang member, and see Jesus, that would reorder our Justice System,” according to Michelle Alexander, author of The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness. “If women of faith are not at the forefront of a movement to challenge a system based on the denial of people’s humanity, who will be?”

At the most recent United Methodist Women’s Assembly, Michelle Alexander shared the stage with Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children’s Defense Fund. It was the Children’s Defense Fund that “conducted the initial research documenting the cradle to prison pipeline that UMWomen is addressing in the School to Prison Pipeline campaign against mass incarceration.” *Response* magazine stated, “Both women said the U.S. phenomena of mass incarceration that disproportionately impacts people of color is a moral issue tied to economic policies and to the unresolved history of racial injustice.”

Response magazine stated, “Both women said the U.S. phenomena of mass incarceration that disproportionately impacts people of color is a moral issue tied to economic policies and to the unresolved history of racial injustice.”

“God does not have two classes of people” Marian Wright Edelman declared, and she named mass incarceration as America’s resegregation. But, Edelman added that women working together can bring about change.

Since this UMWomen Assembly in 2018, a movement has grown which can address one of the causes of mass incarceration. Before the US Congress is the CAHOOTS Act which would mandate and fund mobile mental health crisis response teams ensuring mental health professionals, rather than law enforcement, respond to the calls for help invoked by individuals experiencing a mental health episode. Decriminalizing mental illness will, not only alleviate the prisons and jails, but will provide on-site de-escalation and then the follow-up essential in preventing future crises.

Tune in on January 28, 2-4 pm, to the webinar, *Reimagining Crisis Response in the Florida Keys*. Who knows, you could be the catalyst for change in your county. For more information on mobile mental health response teams and the up-coming webinar, contact me at edithzewadskibricker@gmail.com

Let’s start a dialogue, let’s reimagine public safety, let’s bring God’s Kin-dom on Earth.

Edith Zewadski-Bricker
Social Action Liaison to the FL Conference Leadership Team
United Methodist Women



Greetings all,

I am so thankful to be part of the United Methodist Woman Florida Conference, it has been a year since I was getting prepared to become the new Haitian Language Coordinator, it has been a wonderful and at times challenging experience and I am looking forward to the new year. I wanted to take the time to say thank you to all of you for your help during my first year.

It is with pleasure and so much excitement that I bring you some information regarding our upcoming 10th annual Florida Conference United Methodist Woman Haitian Convocation.

The Haitian Convocation will be Saturday March 13th, 2021 from 4 PM to 6 PM via Zoom. Our theme is “Building the next 150 years: A future with hope” our verse is Proverbs 23: 18. We will have two speakers in 2021 a mother daughter duo. Our National Organization Director, Sister Magdala Edmond and keeping with our theme “A future with hope” Sister Ruth Fleurimond, because she is part of our future. Mark your calendar you do not want to miss the 10th Annual Celebration, Registration is \$10.

While we are saying goodbye to 2020, the year that changed our Live's in so many ways good or bad, but we are hopeful and looking forward to a blessed 2021 in Jesus name.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all

Natacha Etienne Joseph

Florida Conference UMW

Haitian Language Coordinator.



Bondye beni nou,

Mwen rekonesan anpil pou m'fè pati Konferans Fanm Metodis Ini nan Florid la. Mwen te vle pran tan sa pou m' di tout moun mèsi pou èd ou pandan premye ane mwen an.

Se ak anpil plezi é ak eksitasyon ke mwen ap pote kèk enfòmasyon konsènan 10yèm anyèl

Konvokasyon Fanm Ayisyen Metodis Ini nan Konferans Florid la.

Konvokasyon an ap fèt Samdi 13 Mas 2021, soti 4h jiska 6h nan Zoom. Tèm lan se

“Bati on lòt 150 ane: Avni ak espwa”. Vèsè nou se Pwovèb 23:18. Nou pral gen

de moun kap pale jou sa, yon manman ak pitit fi li: Magdala Edmond ki yon Direktè nan Òganizasyon Nasyonal la, epi, pou n' kenbe ak tèm nou “Yon avni ak espwa”, Ruth Fleurimond, paske li fè pati avni kap vini an.

Ekri dat la nan kalandriye ou, ou pap vle manke 10yèm anyèl selebrasyon sa.

Enskripsyon an

se \$10.

Pandan nap di orevwa ak ane 2020, ane ki chanje lavi nou nan anpil fason, bon oswo move, nou gen espwa pou yon 2021 Beni nan non Jezi.

Jwaye Nowèl é bòn ane pou nou



Greetings from the North West

By Lynn Lovallo, President

It has been a very busy fall for UMW statewide, but a welcome diversion from the news. The NW District had a successful annual meeting, with a big thank you owed to the Leadership Team and our speaker, the Rev. Michelle Shrader from Good Samaritan UMC in Tallahassee. The willingness to step up and get things done was amazing, though I should not be amazed as that is what we do. Our district is truly blessed.

We have had several zoom meetings for planning purposes—to get “our ducks in a row” as the saying goes. To that point, the other day I was looking out at the lake behind my daughter’s house and saw about 8 ducks floating single file and staying in military format. I had never seen that before, but it brought to mind the saying ducks in a row. The District Team is working hard to be ready for 2021 and have exciting plans coming together.

Best wishes for a happy, peaceful Christmas season and a healthy New Year. May we fulfill our UMW Purpose and remain close to our Lord. God Bless you all.

On December 12th The **Gulf Central District** United Methodist Women had a special UMW Christmas Event to Benefit Women in Pakistan, via Zoom. Special guest, Alice Garrick, joined live from Pakistan! Alice is the executive director of the Women's Development and Service Society (WDSS) and founder of Royal Range for Women by Women.

Driven by extreme poverty, Pakistan is a hotbed for Homebased Prostitution (Sex Trafficking), Organ Trafficking and other forms of Human Trafficking. Alice’s ministries provide hope and opportunities so women can have a dignified way to provide for their families.

During the event, Alice shared how her ministry is making a difference. The zoom participants not only saw the items made by the women Alice helps, as well as some of GCD members modeled items they have purchased.

Learn more about Alice’s ministry in this 2014 article from Response
<http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/pakistan's-women's-development-service-society>

A Virtual Celebration of the Beloved Community in the South East District



On **Saturday, December 5**, 38 members of the South East District United Methodist Women representing 15 units celebrated the coming of our Lord with a **Hanging of the Greens** worship service. This was followed by a joyful **Virtual Tea Party** with games, monologues, laughter and joy—and an “open mike” showcasing the diverse talents of our SE District United Methodist Women. **Wesley House Family Services**, our UMW National Mission Institution in Key West, was the focus of our gift to mission offering this year. We ended with a prayer of lament for family and friends lost to COVID-19 (by Tara Barnes, in November/December issue of *response*)

In the **South West District**, Cape Coral First's New Life Circle has been working on fulfilling the Cypress Cove Retirement Center mission. They decided to make Christmas Cards, write a Christmas message, and attach a Christmas ornament. Each member received 5 cards to make. The creativity was wonderful!! Truly a piece of joy for a resident of Cypress Cove!

They then decided to contact the Youth director of the church, Matt Irwin, to see if they could involve the youth in this mission. On November 22nd, they met with the youth who made an ornament for each card. Matt, Pastor Rini Hernandez and the youth spent the evening creating ornaments while listening to Christmas carols and having a great time. At the end of the project, they all prayed for the mission and blessed the cards and ornaments they had created.

Pastor Rini Hernandez (former SW-DS), Matt Irwin and the youth at church



Cards made by the Circle members



Ornaments made by the Youth



**FLORIDA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
2021 CALENDAR, EVALUATION AND GOAL SETTING**

January 8	Program Committee	Zoom
January 9	Mission u Committee	Zoom
January 28-30	National Leadership Development Days (LDD)	Zoom
February 13	Leadership Team / Membership Emphasis	Zoom
March 13	Haitian Convocation	Ft. Pierce Haitian, UMC
March 20	Program / Mission u Committees	Zoom
April 10	Leadership Team / Charter for Racial Justice	Lakeland
May 22	Program / Mission u / Nominations Committees	Lakeland
June 10-12	Florida Annual Conference - UMC	Lakeland
July 8-11 Or July 15-18	Mission u Event	Florida Southern College, Lakeland
August 6	Program Committee	Lakeland
August 7	Finance / Mission u Committees	Lakeland
Aug. 29-Sept. 7	General Conference - UMC	Minneapolis, MN
September 10-12	Spiritual Enrichment Retreat	LEC, Fruitland Park
October 2	Leadership Team / Membership Emphasis	Zoom
November 6	Conference Annual Meeting	First UMC, Lakeland
November 10-12	SEJ Conference	Lake Junaluska, NC
December 4	Goals & Evaluations	Lakeland

FLORIDA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN BUDGET - 2021

	2020	2021
PLEDGE TO NATIONAL	375,000.00	325,000.00
SEJ PLEDGE	3,750.00	3,250.00
 A & MD BUDGET		
Church Women United	500.00	500.00
Florida Impact	500.00	500.00
District's A&MD	53,925.00	47,024.50
Goals and Evaluations	7,000.00 *	3,000.00
Leadership / District Training	7,500.00	7,500.00 *
Committee on Nominations	900.00	900.00
Annual Conference	2,500.00	2,500.00
Florida Conference Mission u	60,000.00	60,000.00
Leadership Update at Mission u (includes travel)	5,000.00	5,000.00
Spiritual Enrichment Retreat	10,000.00	10,000.00
Conference Annual Meeting	12,000.00	12,000.00
Multicultural Programming	3,000.00	3,000.00
Children's Advocacy & CWU	2,000.00	2,000.00
Scholarships to Retreat and Conf. Annual meeting	5,000.00	5,000.00
SMR, GTM, GIM	500.00	500.00
Genesis Newsletter	4,000.00	2,500.00
Conference Directories	500.00	500.00
Committee Meetings	14,000.00	10,000.00
Annual Sampler / Handbooks	800.00	1,100.00
Technology Expenses		600.00
Operating Expenses	1,500.00	1,200.00
Audit	500.00	500.00
Contingency	1,000.00	1,000.00
Assembly / SEJ	5,000.00 *	5,000.00 *
Assembly Offering	-	-
 TOTAL Administration & Membership Development	 197,625.00	 181,824.50
 TOTAL BUDGET	 576,375.00	 510,074.50

* Balance carries over to following year

Approved by Conference Finance Committee 8/8/2020

Approved by Conference Leadership Team 8/15/2020

Approved by Conference Annual Meeting

Florida Conference United Methodist Women

Goals for 2020-2021

Mid-Term Evaluation: October 3, 2020

FOCUS ON COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Goal: The Conference Chair and the members of the Conference Committee on Nominations will provide opportunities for training throughout the Conference by December 2021. **NOT STARTED**

Objectives: Increase the understanding of the Conference wide impact of the Committee on Nominations.

Strategies:

1. Twice during 2020, the Conference Committee on Nominations will dedicate one half of its meetings to review the role of the Committee as delineated in the Committee on Nominations Handbook and the organization Bylaws and discuss their understanding of their work.
2. Florida Conference UMW Committee on Nomination members will provide district trainings for all Committee on Nomination members by July 2021.

Training will be scheduled between January and March.

FOCUS ON YOUNG WOMEN

Goal: The Conference Leadership Team will provide opportunities for young women to participate in the UMW purpose by encouraging their participation at conference and district events and, by April 4, 2020, selecting an 18-24 age group coordinator to facilitate an Action Day in 2021. **PENDING**

Strategies

1. Create a young women's task force to develop a job description/skill set for the coordinator and recommend names to the Leadership Team by March 21, 2020. **COMPLETED**
2. Advertise the position throughout the Districts, by notices in Genesis, by e-mail from the Conference and District Presidents, by announcements at district meetings. **COMPLETED**

FOCUS ON WAYS TO INCLUDE YOUNG WOMEN AND WORKING WOMEN AT MISSION U

Goal: The Mission u committee will create a program approach, to be implemented in 2021, that would address the needs those who find it difficult to attend the current Thursday – Sunday event. **NOT STARTED**

Strategies :

1. The Mission u Committee will appoint a small group to work on scheduling and logistics.
2. The registrar will keep records on details of registration concerns, joint lunches, housing, and on the evaluations of both groups as to their experiences for similarities or differences.
3. Data on attendance will be saved for future comparison.

The 2021 Mission u Team will focus on this goal

FOCUS ON IMPROVING MEMBERS' TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS

Goal: The Program Committee will provide opportunities at all Conference events for members to improve their competencies in obtaining information from the Conference and National UMW websites. **ON GOING**

Strategies:

1. Volunteers will bring their technological tools (smart phone, tablet, laptop computer) to conference events. A designated time and place will be set where the volunteer will work individually with those who want to learn how to use technology and how to reach resources at the National, Conference and District levels.
2. A handout will be available with websites and resources for learners to take home. The trainer will provide contact information and be available to answer questions after the training.
3. Evaluation will be done at the end of the training session. Records will be obtained on number of “hits” made to the conference website.

While we did not meet face to face for conference events due to COVID-19, the Conference Leadership Team as well as the Districts are engaged in providing technology training opportunities to the membership and encourage the local groups to use technologies for their events as well.

FOCUS ON GENESIS

Goal: The Program Committee will conduct a survey to determine whether the current version of the Genesis is an effective means of disseminating information. **COMPLETED IN 2020**

Strategies:

1. A survey will be included in the winter 2020 Genesis.
2. Results will be reported to the leadership team by May 2020.

The membership does want the Conference to continue disseminating information via the GENESIS Newsletters in addition to emails communication and the website.

**Save
the
Date**



**Assembly 2022 Orlando, Florida
May 20-22, 2022**

Florida Conference United Methodist Women

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December 2020 *Genesis*



Make It Happen!

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