



The Connecting Link

SMOKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT UNITED METHODIST

Holston
Conference

Smoky
Mountain
District

Local
Unit

JUNE 2020

Upcoming Events

SOCIAL ACTION EVENT
JOINT EVENT WITH
TENNESSEE VALLEY
DISTRICT UMW
AUGUST 22, 2020
CENTRAL UMC
LENOIR CITY

SMOKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT
UMW ANNUAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 7, 2020
GREEN MEADOW UMC
ALCOA



THE JOURNEY

This year has turned out to be a year so different from any of our past years! In our last newsletter, I was so excited to share all the events and activities planned for the Smoky Mountain District United Methodist Women. Now, looking back, nothing went as planned. COVID-19 entered our lives and we have been forever changed. Social distancing became a household word and something we all continue to practice. Who would have ever believed that our churches would be empty on Easter? How many of us had even heard of Zoom meetings? Many of our annual events have been cancelled; such as Tablesapes, Day Apart, RISE and Mission u to name a few. However, as the saying goes, in every dark cloud there is a silver lining. Smoky Mountain District United Methodist Women have been busy rising to the call for help by making much needed face masks, gathering donations and providing financial help for those most affected by the pandemic. What blessings we have experienced as we attend online worship services and UMW Zoom meetings in our own homes through our computers or phones. This season has brought to life our logo, *One Body, One Spirit*, from Ephesians 4:4-6, **One God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.** God is certainly above COVID-19 and will see us through these unsettling times.

Many of us were planning to attend SEJ in Mobile, Alabama, in April. However, SEJ has been postponed due to the pandemic. As soon as the rescheduling information is available, I will let you all know the new dates.

We are hopeful that our Social Action event will go on as planned. This will be a joint event with the Tennessee Valley District United Methodist Women and will be on the subject of Human Trafficking. It will be held at Central United Methodist Church in Lenoir City on August 22, 2020.

Our Smoky Mountain District UMW Annual Meeting will be held at Green Meadow United Methodist Church in Alcoa on November 7, 2020. Registration will begin at 12:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 1 p.m. Light refreshments will follow.

Blessings,

Susan

The † symbol denotes a
Conference or Jurisdiction event.
For more information or to
register for conference events,
visit our website:
<http://holstonumw.org/>

The Connecting Link

2020 MISSION u CANCELLED

Due to the COVID-19 virus and the need to socially distance ourselves in order to prevent the spread of this virus, per guidance from the National UMW Organization, Mission u is cancelled for 2020.

We know what an important event this is to many of you every year, and your Mission u team is so sorry that this event will not take place as it had been planned. If there is ever a time to “find peace in an anxious world,” that time is now. This does not mean, however, that we will forego these important and timely studies.

What does this mean for 2021 Mission u? The studies are being planned for 2021 Mission u with more information to follow later this year. The 2021 studies will be:

- Moral Witness of the Church
- Pushout
- Children’s and Youth Studies on Violence
- Luke 13: New Biblically-based Curriculum

If you have any questions or concerns at this time, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at donaldphillips07@comcast.net or 865-453-6436.

Kay Phillips, Dean

TREASURER’S REPORT

Boy, do I miss seeing all of you. I pray that you are well and staying safe. Hopefully in the very near future we will be able to start gathering in our churches again. Besides watching our own Pastor’s message online, I have occasionally checked out other churches. That’s been kind of neat and something I wouldn’t have thought to do prior to this. Still, it is quite weird to not be “going” to church on Sunday mornings. (Although getting to sleep in just a little is kind of nice.)

I have wonderful First Quarter news to share with you (First Quarter was November 21 – February 20). We received \$15,841.06 in undesignated funds and another \$1,056 in designated funds for a total of \$16,897.06! The undesignated funds are what count towards our Pledge to Mission. So praise God and a big Thank You to all of you for supporting the mission of United Methodist Women.

As I write this, we are still about a week away from the deadline to turn money in for the second quarter (Feb 21 – May 20). I have received a few reports so far, but I expect most will come in next week. So, prayers for a full mailbox next week! And let me just add that in these uncertain times, those who depend upon the support of United Methodist Women need us more than ever. So please continue to give generously.

God Bless you all,
Kim Henry

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

At our recent district officer teleconference meeting, I shared a song that our congregation sang during our final worship service in March. It was new to me, and I obtained a copy of it from our pianist. Fast forward 11 weeks. The words of “Give Me Jesus” have been my morning prayer as I have risen each day to the unpredictable times in which we find ourselves. Another short prayer/song I have learned in our online services is “I Cast All My Cares Upon You”. Its words, “when I don’t know what else to do,” have also provided me with assurance because I literally don’t know how or what to pray when I hear and read of the uncertainty facing us all.

I encourage you to think of a favorite hymn or praise song that can become your daily prayer. I keep a copy of our UMC hymnal and my all time favorite Cokesbury hymnal with my devotionals. For as long as I can remember I have turned to their songs to express my joys, sorrows, and thanksgiving. Perhaps the choruses you learned long ago in Sunday School, such as “I’ve got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy down in my heart”, “Jesus Loves Me”, or “Jesus Loves the Little Children” will lift your spirit and put a smile in your heart and on your face. All of these songs were written for a reason. They expressed and continue to express our hearts’ desire and devotion to our God. Not sure where this proclamation originated, but it is the perfect way to sum up my thoughts. “Sing a little louder, my weapon is a melody. Raise a halleluiah! AMEN!!

Glenda Eastridge
Spiritual Growth



SOCIAL ACTION

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Mark your calendars for August 22, 2020 and plan to attend the first-ever joint Social Action Event. We will be sponsoring a joint event with the Tennessee Valley District. Our topic this year is Human Trafficking, and our hands-on missions will go towards "Raising A Voice" in Knoxville. Their agency is our keynote speaker. A panel of speakers include Community Coalition Against Human Trafficking, Homeland Security, local law enforcement agents and possibly a TBI agent. This "crime" is local, federal and global. The more people trained and knowledgeable means less victims and more victims identified. You are in for a real enlightening and knowledgeable day. Please plan to attend and show support for our joint event as well as support to all the agencies and speakers who will be volunteering their time. Watch for details in the coming months.

Alice Nichols
Social Action Event Coordinator

DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

Our Second Annual Smoky Mountain District UMW meeting will be held on November 7, 2020 at Green Meadow UMC in Alcoa. Our Spiritual Leader will be Reverend Sandra Johnson from the Clinch Mountain District. Reverend Johnson is a retired pastor and District Superintendent. She is a strong, mighty woman of God and you will certainly be blessed by her message.

Our meeting will begin with registration at 12:30 and the program will begin at 1:00 pm. Light refreshments will be served after the meeting. We will look at other times to hold local unit officer training. We look forward to seeing everyone in November.

Blessings,

Margaret Denney
Vice President

NEWS FROM OUR SECRETARY

Once again, thank you for serving as your Local Unit Secretary, even if our meeting-in-person opportunities have been severely curtailed in recent weeks.

I hope your units are keeping in touch whether it is by phone, email, ZOOM meetings, or even letters and cards through postal mail! Communication is critical to our District's success during the year, and it is also critical during these times of isolation for maintaining connections between people. If you live alone and not in a community, it can be very lonely. An integral part of our purpose is "...to develop a creative, supportive fellowship ...", and each member can contribute to that whether meetings are being held or not! Keep up the good work!

It is also important to maintain your Local Unit contact information. This contact information is used for the Smoky Mountain District *Connecting Link*, which is sent to ALL Local Unit officers, and the Holston Conference *Holstonian*, which is sent to ALL Local Unit Presidents.

It is a pleasure to be able to talk about our annual meeting because our opportunities to meet this year have been thwarted.

If there have been changes in your officer contact information, it is important to notify me. And please notify me if any new officers are appointed. We want YOU to know what is going on in the Smoky Mountain District UMW.

Sandra Guinn
Smoky Mountain District UMW Secretary
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sjguinn336@charter.net



The Connecting Link

NEWS FROM SUSANNAH'S HOUSE

Friends:

Addiction doesn't take a sabbatical during a pandemic. So, as long as it is possible, Susannah's House will continue its essential recovery services. We will do all we can to protect our moms, babies, and staff using best practices from the CDC with smaller group size, sanitizing, and online distance treatment. We believe this is a critical service inspired by God's love and guided by evidenced-based recovery therapies. We ask for your prayers for the people of Susannah's House, our city, state, nation and world as we journey through this difficult season.

Among the many disruptions that this novel coronavirus has caused is a severe interruption of our fundraising. Group events, donor dinners, informational gatherings, races, etc., are off the table for the foreseeable future. Susannah's House operates as a 501 (c)3 nonprofit. Since our income is from grants and individual donations, about 50% of our resources are at risk. I remind you that no mom is charged for the services that we provide.

So, in light of this emergency, as your Board Chair, I am asking that you consider making a donation right now if you can. Those of us who, thankfully, can weather the financial uncertainty of this time, and who also have a passion for God's work at Susannah's House, can be of great help. In addition to our monthly pledge to Susannah's House, Patti and I are committed to sharing \$1000 from our tax refund. Any amount will help us weather the storm. Thank you for your generosity!

You can give online at www.susannahshouse.org or by mailing your check to:

Susannah's House
923 Dameron Ave
Knoxville, TN 37921

Be well!

Gratefully yours,
Rev. Richard P. Richards
Chair, Board of Directors of Susannah's House

HURRAY FOR BANANAS

I know many of you may spend your time browsing the internet and find all kinds of fascinating facts. But, it's rare that I sit down and just type in a topic, and even rarer to read on that topic for any length of time.

But a while back on my biweekly trip to Food City I purchased a bag of FYFFES bananas. I normally pick out a bunch of loose bananas; but on this day, being a label reader, I noticed the programs this company provides. I saved the bag to research their company and today I finally got around to it.

WOW! As a United Methodist Woman, I discovered that this company supports so many of our values and practices. I was amazed to learn how much effort they are putting into their everyday business to make a difference in the lives of people and the environment.

So, if you have a little time on your hands, I encourage you to check out their website FYFFES.com. If that seems to be too much effort, then a simpler thing would be to look for the FYFFES brand and pick up a bag when you are at the store. Not sure who else stocks this brand because I always go to Food City in Alcoa.

To view the FYFFES Principles, go to

[https://www.fyffes.com/resource-centre/download/Fyffes Principles Doc English A4.pdf](https://www.fyffes.com/resource-centre/download/Fyffes%20Principles%20Doc%20English%20A4.pdf)

Fresh Yellow Fruit For Every Shop

Thanks to Glenda Eastridge for this information.



LOCAL UNIT NEWS

GREEN MEADOW UMW

Members of the Elizabeth Franklin Circle of Green Meadow have found ways to reach out to others during our time of confinement. Face masks have been “stitched up” and shared with local health facilities, neighbors, and other area agencies. The latest edition of The Upper Room was distributed to friends and members of our congregation. Meals were prepared for some of our shut-ins. Some continued to volunteer with the Salvation Army for the regular lunch date on Fridays at Broadway UMC. One of our members plans to coordinate our upcoming monthly meeting through Zoom so that we can touch base with one another, share a program, and conduct some business. Most importantly, our members have held up one another through their prayers in their daily devotions. It is one thing that doesn’t require effort, pre-planning, or sanitizing in the world of COVID-19!

BROADWAY UMW

Members of the Square One Circle of Broadway have continued to meet each month via ZOOM. This gives a chance to “see” each other, catch up on what everyone’s been doing (or not doing), and conduct business.

Some members from our unit have sewn masks to be distributed to the community and to members—red masks for a Pentecostal Baptism were presented to the family members present for the baptism.

We have organized cards and letters to be sent to our members who are missing the personal connection of Sunday worship services.

Members have helped our Brown Food Pantry food distributions and the Salvation Army Friday lunches continue despite COVID-19. A limited number of volunteers pack the food or meals in our kitchen and other volunteers deliver them to recipients in their cars.

BEACON OF HOPE DONATIONS

Ladies, thank you so much for all the wonderful items and monetary donations for Beacon of Hope! I wish we could have had our scheduled Day Apart, and you could have seen all the donations yourself; but instead I’m attaching pictures for you to see. On May 17th, Glenda Eastridge and I unloaded your donations and staged them at Green Meadow UMC until we could make arrangements to get them to Beacon of Hope.

On Tuesday, June 2, we were able to deliver them to Beacon of Hope. Dona was so excited and appreciative. She told us that very day she had given the last pack of diapers out. Your generosity arrived just in time!

I hope each of you are doing well and staying safe. Maybe it won’t be too long until we are able to gather together again. Thanks for all you do for UMW and please continue to pray for our church and our world.

Blessings,
Susan





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Smoky Mountain District United Methodist Women

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The emblem is the emblem of the United Methodist Women, as well as the emblem of the church. It affirms our continuity as women organized for mission and its symbolism affirms our continuous growth and renewal.

The Cross and Flame are ancient symbols of the church, dating back to the days of Christ and Pentecost. Each evokes images of sacrifice, witness and service. This symbol reminds us of our purpose of helping women grow as persons and in community in their understanding of and willingness to participate in the global mission of the church. It reminds us of our heritage, women who pioneered in service for the church at home and abroad and in organization of women for mission service and support in many areas of need.

The shape of the emblem is fluid and free flowing, suggesting change and mobility. As organized groups of women, this has been our heritage, often at the forefront of movements for change, aware always of the times and striving to move them rather than be overwhelmed by them. The emblem, and what it represents to us as well as the individual women, is part of the United Methodist Women today..

