



## Florida Conference United Methodist Women



# Genesis

January 2020; vol. 47 no. 1

Website: [www.flconfumw.org](http://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 God!

I am exalted among the nations,

I am exalted in the earth.” Psalm 46:10

This is my humble privilege to serve as your Conference President the next two years. I wish you all and your family a healthy Year in 2020 and a fruitful time in the service of our Lord Jesus-Christ, in your congregations, your local United Methodist Women’s Groups, in your Community and beyond.

We are a community of women with a Purpose. A pastor invited me to a District United Methodist Women 30 years ago and I have been a member since. Please continue to invite others to experience that Sisterhood of Grace. You can count on the sisterhood of the Conference Leadership Team to assist you in all and any possible ways in fulfilling the United Methodist Women Purpose.

We thank those of you who shared your dreams and hopes for the Conference with us at the Conference Annual Meeting last November. Based on your dreams and hopes, we generated the 2020-2021 goals. Our program planning will include innovative ways to encourage more younger women to engage in the mission work of United Methodist Women and to participate in Conference and District events; we will focus on establishing better communication with the membership and on educating our members on ways to stay abreast of opportunities offered by the districts, the conference and the National Office to be in mission; we will train the districts and conference committee on nominations members to enable them to reach out to our diverse membership for service on the districts and conference leadership team. Your Conference Leadership Team is counting on your prayers as we seek to implement our goals. Do let us know ways you believe we can improve.

One of the many ways United Methodist Women remain relevant to its membership through the years is Education for Mission. We serve the world by putting our faith in Christ in actions. I would invite you to participate in the monthly spiritual growth “Faith Talk Podcast” sponsored by the National office to educate us on current issues and find together ways we can provide a faith response to such issues. In 2020 Faith Talk will be livestreamed every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 6:00 PM Eastern Time. You can also listen to previous Podcast episodes from the United Methodist Women website <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/faithtalks>

Let us open our mind and heart to listen, to learn, and to respond, by putting our faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

In Christ’s Service,

*Judith P. Okerson*

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

**President: Judith Pierre-Okerson**  
[judithpierreokerson.umw@gmail.com](mailto:judithpierreokerson.umw@gmail.com)

**Vice President:**  
**Shelley Davidson**  
[Shelleydavidson.umw@gmail.com](mailto:Shelleydavidson.umw@gmail.com)

**Secretary: Jackie Brooks**  
[jbrooks.umw@gmail.com](mailto:jbrooks.umw@gmail.com)

**Treasurer: Donna Spear**  
[donnaspear.umw@gmail.com](mailto:donnaspear.umw@gmail.com)

**Program Resources:**  
**Jannett Hawley**  
[Jannethhawley.umw@gmail.com](mailto:Jannethhawley.umw@gmail.com)

**CHair, Committee on Nominations: Kenya Monroe**  
[Kenyammonroe.umw@gmail.com](mailto:Kenyammonroe.umw@gmail.com)

**Dean, Mission u: Sharyn Ladner**  
[sharynladner.umw@gmail.com](mailto:sharynladner.umw@gmail.com)

# Welcome to the New Year!

Happy 2020 my Sisters in Christ! Let me welcome you to the new year and introduce myself to those who may not be familiar with who I am. My name is Shelley Davidson and I previously held the conference position of Secretary of Program Resources and it is now my honor to be serving you as your Florida Conference Vice President.

2020 is not just a new year full of possibilities, but it is a year that our conference will be full of possibilities as well. I look forward in sharing those with each of you! As you prepare your calendars for the New Year, please make sure to note the following dates and do make plans to participate in some wonderful opportunities for learning and spiritual Growth which United Methodist Women will be providing throughout the year.

**January 26-28** will be our **Children Advocacy Week** held in Tallahassee. I know this is a long drive for most, but why not take your church bus (if your church has one) or rent one? This is an experience I know you will not want to miss!

If you are in the Atlantic Central, Gulf Central, South West and the South East districts, why not attend the **Haitian Convocation March 14<sup>th</sup>** at Hallandale Haitian UMC. This event is for all United Methodist Women not just Haitians.

**April 17-19** brings the **Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) United Methodist Women's Quadrennial Meeting** in Mobile, Alabama. I hope and pray most of you have made plans to attend this awesome event! If you've never attended SEJ, why not make this your first.

Other events and their dates are:

**Mission u: July 9-12** in Lakeland at Florida Southern College

**Spiritual Enrichment Retreat: September 11-13** in Fruitland Park at the LEC

**Conference Annual Meeting (CAM): November 14** in Lakeland.

Please attach this article to your refrigerator door as a reminder of upcoming Conference events. You can also visit our Conference website at: <https://flconfumw.org> for additional information and up-to-date news regarding these and other activities.

Again, I look forward to our time together. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Blessings to each of you,

Shelley Davidson

Vice-President

863-599-9070

[Shelleydavidson.umw@gmail.com](mailto:Shelleydavidson.umw@gmail.com)



-flumc-

*We are...*



the legacy and accomplishments of United Methodist Women in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, **April 17-19, 2020**, in a city that is "Born to Celebrate!", Mobile, AL.

It's not too late, but you don't have many more days left to register. Registration closes March 15, 2020. So register today by going to the SEJ website ([umwsej.org](http://umwsej.org)) and clicking on **REGISTRATION**, or the Florida Conference UMW website ([flconfumw.org](http://flconfumw.org)) and clicking on **SEJ**. Don't be left out!

***"Join the Celebration!"***

## Donna Spear FCUMW Treasurer

Hi everyone! I'm the new FCUMW Treasurer. As I'm sure you know, I have "big shoes to fill"! I'm taking over for Ethel Ewing, who's done an amazing job, and is handing it off to me in impeccable order. As United Methodist Women celebrated our 150<sup>th</sup> year in 2019, I celebrated my 25<sup>th</sup> year as a member of United Methodist Women. What a joy to be part of our awesome organization! What a blessing to get to know so many incredible women from all over Florida!

Some of you may know me as the 2019 Assistant Dean for Mission u. I'll be continuing in this role through our 2020 Mission u event in July. For many years I was invited to Mission u and never seemed to find the time to attend. Around 10 years ago, I finally decided to give it a try. I loved it and haven't missed a Mission u since. It's fun, incredibly inspiring and educational, and a great way to meet women from all over the state. It's also an opportunity to invite friends, both women and men. No prior knowledge of United Methodist Women is required.

Back to my responsibilities as treasurer... In 2019, our Florida Conference UMW Pledge to Mission was \$410,000. At last count, our Mission Giving total for 2019 was \$292,933.88, for a shortfall of \$117,066.12. For this reason, **our Pledge for 2020** has been reduced to **\$375,000**. Wouldn't it be fun to not only meet our Pledge, but to exceed it? Please encourage your ladies and local units to make, meet, and exceed their Pledges to Mission in the coming year. Buy your Gift to Mission cards, remember those who've passed away with a Gift in Memory card, and honor those who work on behalf of women, children, and youth with a Special Mission Recognition pin. While these don't count toward your local unit's Pledge to Mission, they do count for our Conference Pledge. And you'll bless someone in the process.

If you ever have a question you think I can help you with, don't hesitate to contact me at [donnaspear.umw@gmail.com](mailto:donnaspear.umw@gmail.com) or 813-293-4281. I'm looking forward to serving you. Thank you for all you do in mission!

## Florida Conference United Methodist Women Budget for 2020

PLEDGE TO NATIONAL UMW.....	375,000
PLEDGE TO SEJ.....	3,750
Church Women United.....	500
Florida Impact.....	500
Districts' Administration & Membership Development.....	53,925
Goals and Evaluation.....	7,000
Leadership/District Training.....	7,500
Committee on Nominations.....	900
Annual Conference.....	2,500
Florida Conference Mission u.....	60,000
Mission u Officers (Update & Travel).....	5,000
Spiritual Enrichment Retreat.....	10,000
Conference Annual Meeting.....	12,000
Multicultural Programming.....	3,000
Children's Advocacy & CWU.....	2,000
Scholarships Retreat & CAM.....	5,000
SMR, GTM, GIM.....	500
Genesis Newsletter.....	4,000
Conference Directories.....	500
Committee Meetings.....	14,000
Literature/Mission Mailing.....	800
Operating Expenses.....	1,500
Audit.....	500
Contingency.....	1,000
Assembly/SEJ.....	5,000





## 2020 READING PROGRAM

Jannett S. Hawley - Florida Conference Secretary Program Resources

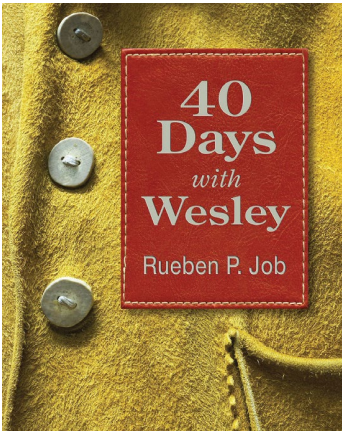


As we all know the mind cannot be wasted. Reading is one way to keep that wonderful brain working by being informed and educated in so many fields. The power of knowledge is awesome and United Methodist Women has chosen books that will entertain, educate, inspire and keep you wanting to read more. We must remember one of the best informational magazines printed today is *response*. I'm sure your local unit has a copy available but If you don't personally subscribe to this, please consider doing so. That way you will always have it read and ready for your Unit's monthly *response* moments. Let's make reading one of the enjoyable parts of our day. Get Excited! Some recent books I've enjoyed: *Eleanor, A Spiritual Biography*; *The Feathered Bone*; *When Did Everyone Else Get So Old?*..just to name a few. I am doing the *40 Days with Wesley* now. Don't forget to turn in your number of books info to your District Secretary Program Resources or your District President. Start a book club, that's always a learning experience.

There are four (4) Reading Program Plans:

- 1)** • five (5) books each year •one (1) from each category •selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports. Regular reading of *response* magazine.
- 2)** • ten (10) books each year •two (2) from each category •Selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports • Regular reading of *response* magazine
- 3)** •fifteen (15) books each year •two (2) from each category •PLUS five (5) additional books from any category •Selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports • Regular reading of *response* magazine
- 4)** •Twenty (20) books each year •two (2) from each category •PLUS ten (10) additional books from any category. Regular reading of *response*.

### EXERPT FROM INTRODUCTION



Every now and then we see splendid examples of what it means to follow God as made known in Jesus. These persons, both young and old, live out the gospel in such clear ways that their lives can be explained only by God's dwelling within them.....we can live like that.

Through spiritual reading we can become connected to the saints who have gone before us. They can become for us companions on our journey and we can learn from them, be guided and directed by their experience and witness. Their voices can address our lives with insight and wisdom gained by faithful living and rested by centuries.

O begin! Fix some part of every day for private exercises. You may acquire the taste for which you have not: What is tedious at first will afterwards be pleasant. Whether you like it or no, read and pray daily. It is for your life: there is no other way... Do justice to your own soul: give it time and means to grow.

“Letter to John Trembath,” Works 12:254  
-Rueban Job

Jannett S. Hawley

15550 Burnt Store Rd. #174'  
Punta Gorda, FL 33955  
941 661-4611

# Our Language Coordinators

## Two of three are new – “meet” them here

Creole... Bonjou, ke lapè e la gras de Dye avèk nou.

Non mwen se **Natacha Etienne Joseph**, e mwen ta renmen di Bondye mèsi pou privilèj sa a ke l' ban mwen pou m ka fè pati de yon si bèl gwoup fanm poum ka kontribye nan avansman wayòm Bondye a.

Antan ke langaj kreyòl kowòdinatè pou UMW konferans la, pou ane 2020- 2021 plan mwen pou 2 pwemye mwa yo, se poum ka fè tout posib poum vizite maksimom nan distri kreyol langaj kowodinate yo, poum ka entwodui m e fè yo konnen ke mwen disponib pou yo, pou ofwi èd avèk sipò m nan akitivite yap òganize pou ane kap vini an.

Mwen ta renmen kreye yon liv kominiasyon nan telefòn pou pèmèt nou konekte o mwen yon fwa pa mwa. Nan apèl sa yo nou ka pataje ide nou e konnen kisa kap mache byen e kisa ki bezwen chanjman.

Priyè m pandan peryòd sa, se pou tout distri langaj kreyòl kowòdinatè yo, patisipe plis nan tout aktivite, Kofèrans la ofri epi engaje yo e pou gen plis lòt lokal gwoup ki vinn nan konferans la.

Mwen kwè avèk sipò e priyè, nou ka fè bèl bagay pou ane a, yon lòt fwa ankò mwen byen kontan poum ka komanse nan tach nou konfyè m nan.

Rete avèk lapè Bondye.

English... Greetings! Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

My name is **Natacha Etienne Joseph**, and I would like to thank God for this opportunity to be part of this wonderful group of Women contributing for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

As the 2020 and 2021 Creole Language Coordinator for UMW Conference; my plans for the first couple of months is to visit as many of the District Creole Language coordinators in order to introduce myself and be better acquainted and to offer my help and support for any events/meetings or plans they are having for the upcoming year. I would also like to create a conference call line and meet at least once a month in order to stay better connected. During these conference calls, we can share ideas and find out what is working and where we can improve. My prayers and goals during my term are to get all District Creole Language Coordinators to be more involved and engage with UMW Conferences and have more Creole

peoples/churches participating in the conferences. Believe with your prayers and support we will be able to do great things in the coming year. Once again, I am thankful for the opportunity and excited to start this journey.

Blessing to you all.

-flumw-

-flumw-

**IRIS M. RODRIGUEZ** I was born August 11, 1952 in Utuado, P.R. I came to the United States as a teenager thus today I am totally bi-lingual in English and Spanish.

I am married to Jose Rodriguez, am the mother of 4 children, grandmother to 15 children and great-grandmother of 5 children.

I have been a member of Christ Hispanic Methodist Church in Orlando for the last fifteen (15) years, which is part of the East Central District.

During that time, I have been a Lay Person from the beginning, and I have had the pleasure of overseeing various ministries. For various years I oversaw recruiting, training and monitoring of the ushers. I headed the Senior Citizens group, which we call the “Doraditos” or “Golden Oldies”. I presided over the Methodist Women group for three years until this past December and same will be reorganizing this coming February under their new leadership. I presently have the responsibility of preparing everything for our Communion the first week of the month. I have been a member of our Security Staff since its inception.

Away from church I have been involved and presently preside over a cancer support group named “Creando Conciencia Con Tu Salud - Sobre el Cancer”. Translated the name is Creating Conscience with Your Health – Against Cancer.

And other than that, I just love the game of bowling and participate quite a bit in leagues and tournaments with my husband as we are both retired.

As this will be my first year as Language Coordinator, I will do my utmost to serve and fulfill my responsibility.

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**Julie Yo** is the Korean Language Coordinator and she is continuing. She lives in Tampa.

From a few of our Districts...

It is my privilege to have assumed the presidency of the North West District after the untimely and sad death of Rosemary Oliver. I'm grateful for all the support shown to me, and I am working hard to "learn the ropes." I look forward to getting to know many of you and promise to do my best to support the wonderful work of United Methodist Women.

Lynn Lovallo, NW District President

Greetings from the North East District United Methodist Women

My name is Lib Creech and I am the new president of the North East District. I was treasurer for two years, then vice president for one and a half years, so I am moving up the ladder!!

All of our officers are new this year and we are excited about the coming year. We are already planning for the Local Units Training and of course our Spiritual Enrichment Event (S.E.E.) which is held every year in March at Epworth by the Sea. Marylou Whittlesey is back helping to plan a great weekend.



This is me on  
my favorite  
mode of  
transportation

**Vareem!!!**

# *“Celebrating the Beloved Community”*

*is the theme of the South East District’s Annual Christmas Party.*

On Saturday, December 14, we celebrated our beloved community at **Grace Haitian United Methodist Mission** in Miami where we enjoyed the many talents—singing, dancing, skits—as well as the culinary tastes, fellowship and fun from the diverse cultures represented by South East District United Methodist Women.



Our SE District Haitian Choir is comprised of members from Bethesda, Grace, and Hallandale churches.

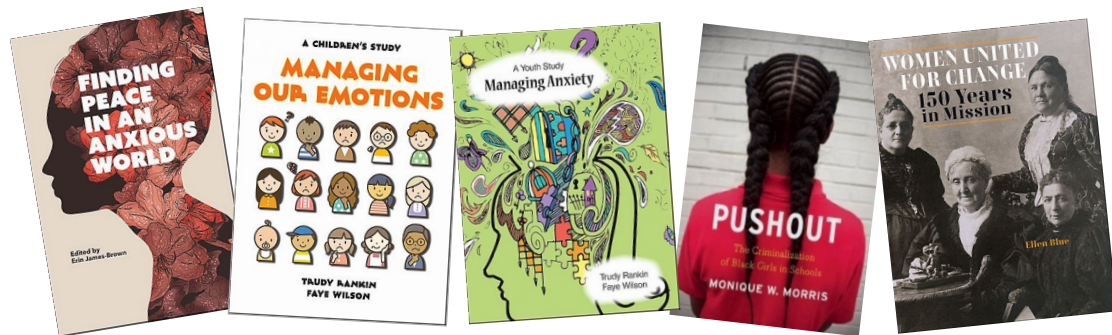


Our SE District Hispanic Choir has members from Kendall, Miami Lakes and Iglesia Cristiana Juan Wesley units.



Members of the Coral Gables First unit, reestablished in January 2019, with guest Judith Pierre Okerson.

*What's happen' in your district?*



## Mission u 2020

***Save the Date!*** Plan to attend **Mission u 2020 July 9 – 12 at Florida Southern College, Lakeland, FL**

Mission u offers opportunities of learning and spiritual growth for adults, youth, and children. As in prior years, classes will be offered in English, Creole, Spanish, and Korean.

The new mission studies for 2020 are:

### ***Spiritual Growth***

#### ***Adult Study: Finding Peace in the Midst of Anxiety***

The 2020 Adult Spiritual Growth Study uses the book of Proverbs and *The Serenity Prayer* as a guide to help Christians find their way through anxiety, worry, and fear and move towards God's peace that passes all understanding.

#### ***Youth Study: Walking with Jesus in Anxious Times: Managing Anxiety***

This study helps youth to understand how anxiety shows up in their lives and to enable them to experience God through spiritual practices so they are effective followers of Christ in their areas of influence.

#### ***Children's Study: Growing in Peace instead of Fear: Understanding Emotions***

The purpose of this study is to help children learn about various emotions and empower them to understand their feelings through a faith lens so that they can thrive as Christians.

### ***Issue Study***

#### **Mass Incarceration: School-to-Prison Pipeline**

Our 2020 issue study focuses on the school-to-prison pipeline, using the text, *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, by Monique Morris. This is a powerful book and an important opportunity to dive deeper into the issues of school pushout, mass incarceration and the criminalization of children of color.

#### **The repeat study for 2020 is the 2019 adult geographic study: Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission**

Explore and celebrate the history of United Methodist Women and its predecessor organizations in Women United for Change! United Methodist Women's ability to address the needs of women, children, and youth has grown tremendously in its 150 years of existence. Step out with creative ministries because the women who came before us laid such a strong foundation.

You will not want to miss out on these studies, the focus groups, music, enhanced plenary and worship experiences, district fellowships to meet and greet, children's and youth events, and more.

So, mark your calendars for **Mission u 2020**. Registration information will be available in February.

I look forward to seeing you at Florida Southern College next July!

Sharyn Ladner, 2020 Mission u Dean, [sharynladner.umw@gmail.com](mailto:sharynladner.umw@gmail.com)



# We need your input concerning *Genesis*!

The conference is conducting a short survey concerning the *Genesis*. We would really appreciate your response to the questions below.

You may submit responses in a variety of ways:

- electronically by going to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DTT2HQN>
- send by e-mail to [lindaparrish.umw@gmail.com](mailto:lindaparrish.umw@gmail.com)
- send a letter or postcard to Linda Parrish, 2054 Cherrywood Dr., Melbourne, FL 32935
- call Linda at 321-242-3372 and leave a voice mail message

Please submit your response no later than Feb. 1.

1. Do you find the information in the *Genesis* useful?  
Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never



2. Does the *Genesis* come in a timely manner?  
Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never

3. Would you prefer more frequent communication?  
Yes No

4. How do you receive the *Genesis*?
- a. Someone in my district sends a link in an email.
  - b. Someone in my unit sends a link in an email.
  - c. My unit president has a paper copy to share.
  - d. Someone in my unit has a paper copy to share.
  - e. Someone in the conference sends a link in an email.
  - f. A paper copy comes in the U.S. mail.



*Thank you for your help with this survey -  
And reading Genesis!*

# Florida Conference United Methodist Women

United Methodist Women of  
The United Methodist Church  
450 Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Ave Lakeland, FL 33801

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage Paid  
Permit #1  
Lakeland, FL

Contact: Leah Pittard  
United Methodist Women's  
Communications Committee  
rockpitt2@verizon.net

January 2020 *Genesis*



**Make It Happen!**

## FLORIDA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

### Calendar of Events - 2020

January 10 - 11	Conference/District Leadership Development	Life Enrichment Center Fruitland Park
January 26 - 28	Children Advocacy Week	Tallahassee
February 15	Leadership Team/Charter For Racial Justice	Lakeland
March 14	Haitian United Methodist Women Convocation	Hallandale Haitian UMC
April 4	Leadership Team/Membership Emphasis	Life Enrichment Center Fruitland Park
April 17 – 19	Southeastern Jurisdiction United Methodist Women Quadrennial Meeting	Mobile, AL
April 21 – 23	Church Women United State Assembly	Life Enrichment Center Fruitland Park
May 5 – 15	General Conference of the United Methodist Church	Minneapolis, MN