

**NOV-DEC  
2016**

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# SOUTH WEST

# DISTRICT SOJOURNER

## UMW Publication Florida Conference

Holiday Greetings my Sisters in Christ!

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*

*- Luke 2:13-14*

With the most popular holiday just around the corner, it seems like everyone is trying to get into the Christmas spirit. Stores are lining their aisles with Christmas goodies and decor, TV shows have switched to the theme of giving and love, radio stations are already playing "Santa Baby" and my three grandsons know that Santa will soon be on his way! And why shouldn't they, it was the meaning of the season, right?

Yet, the very first Christmas seemed to do without all of these. The very first Christmas somehow started a frenzy without the power of TV, without Candy Canes, without Santa, and without Christmas sales. Even more amazingly, the very first Christmas involved a poor couple, nobodies, who would lay the most precious child of all in a manger.

Looking back on Black Friday, I am constantly reminded how far we have come from the true meaning of Christmas. Christmas wasn't just about giving, or feeling loved, but it was about true love. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, the Savior who came into this world to die... for everyone, even those who crucified him.

Yet on Black Friday, a Walmart worker was killed because people couldn't wait to save a few dollars here and there. Another person was killed over a toy. And just a few years back, the Tickle Me Elmo fiasco brought out the worst in people. People who seem to have forgot that love isn't hurting another to give your child what they want, but rather to do what is right and moral. And they seem to have forgotten that Christmas isn't just about showing love for those you care for, but for those who are undeserving, and those you do not even know. Just as God came to die, for those who were undeserving, and those who He did not know in a spiritual relationship.

### United Methodist Women's PURPOSE

The organized unit of 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.



So as United Methodist Women, let us remember the true meaning of Christmas... Peace on Earth, Good will toward Men (women, children and youth), for the Savior has come to show us how to love, and to give us the greatest gift of love. Instead of buying fancy toys, think of how you can give to those who would normally go without. Ask yourself how you can help out others who are not as fortunate as you. Show them the true meaning of Christmas, the gift of God's love, and love others as God first loved you.

I wish each and every one of you a wonderful, blessed and very Merry Christmas and I look forward to seeing you again in January!

Merry Christmas,




Shelley Davidson, President

### A Note from your Vice President

As we enter this holiday season, I just wish to thank all the Units who have sent in articles for the Sojourner. As your communication coordinator, I feel the more we share with each other the stronger we become as a District and a United Methodist Women. A special thanks to the women of Venice Christ UMW who welcomed us in October for our 11th Annual Meeting which was well attended by 118 women! We were blessed with guest speaker Deaconess Nan Gordon who spoke about how everyone needs a respite and renewal in whatever endeavor they perform in life, including those who we look to for our spiritual guidance and biblical knowledge. Being able to commune with others doing the same work as you refreshes our minds, body and souls. As she shared her experience in Brazil with other Deaconesses and Deacons, I thought of all the women sitting in the sanctuary who took the time to gather and share not only their achievements and accomplishments, but to share how UMW has touched their lives in more ways than they ever thought it would.

As you view the photos from the event, look at the faces and see if you can feel the good will and fellowship of sharing this joy together. Many thanks to Pamela Freeland, Venice Christ UMW president and her team of hard workers who provided us with yummy favors, delicious breakfast snacks and lunch! We were also blessed by Pastors Glen Lashway and Denvil Farley who took the time out of their busy schedules to pray for us and help us celebrate communion. Special thanks to Arlene Callihan-Wilson and Nancy Vanderwall as they presented the 2017 Budget and Pledge Service and to Bobby Allen who coordinated the music to go with our theme for the day of "Women in Mission."

Blessings & Joy,

Mary Van Tol

District Vice President/Communication Coordinator



# Nominations

Dear Ladies of the South West District,

Please be aware that the district is in immediate need of a secretary. Also in 2017 we will be in need of a Treasurer. By 2018 all positions! Prayerfully consider these positions. We want to keep our district strong and fulfill our PURPOSE. Contact any member of the Committee on Nominations (CON). Please take the time to fill out the Talent Survey in this issue and return it to me either at our January Officer's Training or by mail.



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# Talent Bank Survey

## Talent Bank Survey

In an effort to fill vacancies in our District and possibly Conference, we are asking that every officer of your unit complete one of these forms and return it to: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ETHNIC/CULTURAL HERITAGE: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE GROUP:     20-35     36-50     51-60     61 & ABOVE

CONFERENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH: \_\_\_\_\_

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN EXPERIENCE:

LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CONFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

JURISDICTION \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

GENERAL CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL TALENTS, SKILLS, AND INTERESTS:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*How many years did you serve?*

# Eleventh Annual Meeting



Jewell Weaver receiving SMR



Deaconess Nan Gordon



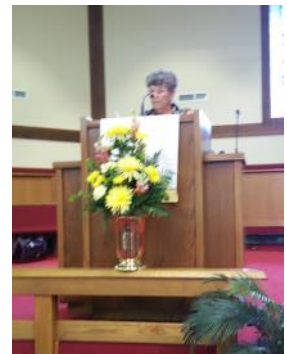
Nancy Vanderwaal



President Shelley Davidson



Christ Venice Sanctuary



Sharon Wilson, Interim Secretary



Happy Hostesses wearing sunflowers!



Pamela Freeland, Christ Venice UMW president on left



# Eleventh Annual Meeting



# Eleventh Annual Meeting



## FROM DESK OF SHARON WILSON, DISTRICT M,N & O COORDINATOR

Happy Holidays to Everyone!

Sherrill Carr, President of Trinity United Methodist Church invited me to speak at her unit meeting on October 10, 2016. Trinity not only invited me to speak but also wanted to honor the District Officers of the District. This was a wonderful surprise for the District Officers. I was so happy that so many of our officers were able to attend. Those that traveled to Sarasota were: President Shelley Davidson, Sharon Wilson, Interim Secretary and MN&O Coordinator, Jewell Weaver Nominations, Diane Killmaier Chairman of Nominations, Jannett Hawley, Conference Committee on Nominations, Lori Perkins, Betty Mayberry, Social Action Coordinator, Sandy Segur, Secretary of Program Resources, Roberta Swords, Spiritual Growth Coordinator, Marti Daltry, Education & Interpretation Coordinator.

The fellowship hall was beautiful with fall decorations and the tables were adorned with center pieces and the name cards were gorgeous. Special music was provided by Sherrill and Bev Packer who played "The Entertainer" 4 hands, 1 piano. It was awesome!!! We all helped with their purse ministry. There were tables with eight ladies at each table and we each were given several items to put in the purse that was started around the table. The purses were then collected to be taken on the following Wednesday to SPARCC and SELAH FREEDOM; the information on the agencies was on the purses table. They served wonderful desserts and punch. We all had a GREAT time and thank you again to the Ladies of Trinity Sarasota!!!





# Member News

## SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

We want to welcome back to the South West District the United Methodist Women's unit of Port Charlotte. Sandy Segur, South West District Program Resources coordinator was instrumental in bringing the Port Charlotte unit together for reorganization.

October 23, 2016 at their 11:00 service Pastor Moore and the congregation welcomed South West District President Shelley Davidson, Sharon Wilson, Interim Secretary/Membership Nurture & Outreach Coordinator, Conference Nomination member Jannette Hawley, Lori Ann and Scott Perkins. President Shelley conducted the reorganizational and installation service. She presented the unit with their new charter, PURPOSE cards and UMW Blue Ribbons.

Jessica McNally is the new president of the unit and is also the youngest president in our South West District. Their unit and church were so gracious to us and provided refreshments after the service where Sandy gave President Shelley a lovely pot of mums to take home.

We want to again thank Sandy for all her months of hard work to get this unit viable again. We welcome them to the South West unit and hope to see them at our District Meetings.

Sharon Wilson  
Interim Secretary/MN&O Coordinator



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# 2017 Reading Program:

The Reading Program encourages you to think critically about current issues through an annual selection of member-reviewed books. It offers an excellent opportunity to deepen your spirituality and to broaden your understanding of our mission work.

**The Reading Program Leads to Action!** For 140 years, United Methodist Women have been involved in mission that includes prayer, study and action. The Reading Program is a study opportunity, but it should also lead to action. The purpose of the program is to encourage United Methodist Women members to:

- Expand understanding of and participation in God's mission.
- Increase sensitivity to all human beings—their needs, interests and concerns.
- Encourage critical thinking about issues facing humanity today.
- Grow in understanding of Scripture as it relates to Christian faith in contemporary life.
- Enhance self-knowledge and act from that knowledge.
- Strengthen involvement in local and global Christian mission.

**Bonus Books:** Bonus books count as two books – either as two books in one category or as one book in two categories. For example *Just Mercy* and *We Shall Not Be Moved* count as two books in Social Action. *Unbound* and *Uprising* both count as two books in Education for Mission.

**2017 Mission Studies:** Reading the 2017 United Methodist Women mission study books – and attending the class – will earn you credit in the following categories:

- Spiritual growth study for Spiritual Growth. *A Covenantal Community* (Part 1)
- Geographic study for Education for Mission. *The Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church*
- Issue study for Social Action. *Climate Justice*

**Extended Reading List!** While supplies last, 2011 books can be used to fill requirements for the Reading Program. PLUS - 2011 titles are on sale for \$2.00 - \$5.00. (up to \$35.00)

Blessings and Peace be with you, Sandy Segur, District Secretary Program Resources

## READ ON!



**December 9, 2016**  
**4th Quarter pledge due**

Send to District Treasurer,  
Dorris Ann Wasson  
1430 Oak Street  
Nokomis, FL 34275  
941-412-0847

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**December 10, 2016**  
**Christmas MTM Luncheon**  
**11:30am—1:30pm**  
Fishermen Seafood Restaurant  
13021 N. Cleveland Ave., N. Ft. Myers

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**January 14, 2017**  
**Officer Training Event**  
Reg. 9:00 am, Program: 10:00 am  
Venice Grace UMC  
Lunch \$8.00



If at anytime throughout the year you or anyone in your unit have updates to contact listings for your ladies, please forward that information to Interim District Secretary, Sharon Wilson. She will update the database, which will then be forwarded to your district counterparts so they know how you can be reached.

Sharon Wilson

golfpro613@embarqmail.com

561-313-3641 (c)



## **Article Deadline**

The Sojourner is YOUR newsletter to let others in the District know about your challenges and triumphs working to help those women and children in need. Please **send** me anything you wish to share with the District Units by the **20th of the month.**

Mary Van Tol

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Communications Coordinator  
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