

## **2023 Woman's Missionary Union Report**

"Hope in Christ" continues to be our theme as we move into this ministry year. WMU groups across the state put action to their faith as they have demonstrated their hope in our Savior.

During the week of August 1-6, 2022, Alabama WMU was honored to host the MK Re-Entry Retreat at WorldSong Missions Place. Working alongside the IMB, we welcomed 53 MKs from all over the world. What a blessing to be a part of helping these MKs transition well into living and attending school in the United States! Alabama Baptist churches and mission groups were generous in helping cover the cost of funding this week at camp.

At the end of September, WorldSong was once again host to the International Friends Retreat. Typically, this gathering is around 100 students. In 2022, there were nearly 200 participants from more than 15 nations. Women on Mission groups rallied to make sure enough gift bags were available for each student. This was a remarkable sight. These gift bags are often the first touch of Jesus international students encounter as they begin their education in the states.

Christmas Backpack collection hit an all-time high with 14,336 backpacks filled by Alabama Baptists across the state! This far exceeded the goal of 12,000. Twenty-six partners were connected, including both churches and associations. In addition to the Mississippi River Delta and the Appalachian regions, eight Alabama Baptist church plants as well as Arcadia, FL, received backpacks. To date, 414 SALVATIONS have been recorded.

With the assistance of a consultant with the National WMU Hispanic Leadership team, Alabama WMU was able to name their first Hispanic WMU Leadership team in November 2022. This team is made up of Yadira Robayna of Hoover, Team Leader; Ramonita Rodriguez of Fairhope, Assistant Team Leader; Zuly Lemus of Clanton, Secretary/Missions Leader; Claren Dease of Carrollton, Missions Leader; Cathy Villanueva of Lineville, Missions Education Leader. To date, this team has sponsored three gatherings: Ft. Payne, Jemison, and Foley. Nearly 150 leaders have been trained.

Pak Prayer celebrated its fifth year of ministry. While nearly 2,000 have engaged in this ministry since its existence, more than 750 people continue to pray daily for the salvation of the people of Pak through a daily texting ministry. As we look back over these five years, there is no doubt there is a strong movement of the Holy Spirit in this area of the world. Monthly prayer meetings via Zoom continue to be a vital source of encouragement and WMU seeks others who wish to join in this prayer movement.

Missions Adventure Camp at WorldSong during the summer 2023 rose to 300 campers. In addition, the WorldSong Travel Teams offered one day camps in four locations. Student Missions Weekend also returned this year with students demonstrating their heart for the nations.

Mission events Complete, for teen girls and Renew for women were powerful as they spoke into the hearts of participants. Both groups left, challenged to a deeper walk with Christ as well as living out the Great Commission.

During the 2023 Biennial Meeting, Alabama WMU elected new officers and trustees. Shirley Smith of Andalusia was elected to a second term as president and Lanell Smith of Lapine to a second term as vice president. Janet Estis of Ethelsville was elected as recording secretary.

We continue to be grateful for the generosity of Alabama Baptists as they support the work of missions through the Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.