

Conference Gram

April 2017 ~ Volume 66, Issue 2



My two cents worth...



Wikipedia defines a miracle as “an event not explained by natural or scientific laws. Such an occurrence may be attributed to a supernatural being, magic, miracle worker, saint or a religious leader.” With that being said, have you seen a miracle today? Many of us have read the bible, which contains incredible stories: Jesus walking on water... parting of the Red Sea...driving demons out of people...raising the dead...feeding 5000 plus people! Not sure if you are aware, but God

is still in the miracle making business. Things are happening each and every day. Maybe they are not the visible jaw-dropping, earth shattering, aha moment kind of things, but stuff is happening.

I actually saw a miracle today. No, really, I did! In all honesty, when I glanced into the mirror there was a miracle staring at me. As I look back over my life, it was nothing but HIS grace and mercy (and miracles) that has got me thru. With all of my traveling, He has kept me. With all my heartaches, He has comforted me. With all life’s up and downs, He has sustained me. There have been

the near misses, close calls and even hair-raising phenomenons that were more than coincidences. If that is not a miracle, I don’t know what is.

So, as we prepare to S.M.I.L.E at our Spiritual Growth Retreat at Lake Junaluska, I challenge you to examine your life and see if you have experienced a miracle. See if something has happened that you cannot really explain, but be willing to give credit where credit is due.

*Tonya Lanier,
President*

VICE PRESIDENT— JULIA WILLIS

Quadrennial Issue Priorities

- ◆ Mass Incarceration
- ◆ Maternal & Child Health
- ◆ Climate Justice
- ◆ Economic Inequality

Our Program Book features programs on each of these topics for use in your local circle or unit meeting;

- ✚ New Beginnings: A Community of Women Empowered for Economic Justice
- ✚ A Time of Hope: Communities Challenging Mass Incarceration
- ✚ Mothers in Action (Maternal & Child Health)
- ✚ A Community for Climate Justice
- ✚ A Call to Prayer & Self Denial: Maternal & Child Health

Looking Forward —Annual Celebration at Lake Junaluska,

Read the March **response** article, *Leading Into the Next 150 Years*, about our weekend speaker, Shannon Priddy, new National United Methodist Women President. In 20 short years Shannon has had a variety of experiences equipping her for leadership within our organization. Be sure you have this date on your calendar!



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SECRETARY — LINDA YOUNG



Since 1869 the UMW organization has expanded from sending two missionaries to India to work in more than 100 countries and grown from \$300 dollars to millions of dollars for the program of United Methodist Women and grown from 8 women to approx. 800,000 in membership.

How does the organized unit of United Methodist Women know the information above? I'm glad you asked! It was recorded in hope that nearly 150 years later, we could still be telling the story that the work of United Methodist Women is mission. Accurate recorded information provides history that can, and will, be used for generations to come.

Secretaries in our local units have the responsibility to keep accurate and useful minutes of

all meetings of the Executive Team. This is crucial to your District Team as well as in the Local unit. Remember, the minutes are used to assist the President in forming an agenda for the next meeting. Therefore, send first draft of minutes to the President within 15 days for approval and mail/email to Executive Team and the Committee on Nominations within 30 days after the meeting. Don't delay-the sooner the minutes are drafted, the better. As time passes, important items that you heard but did not write down are forgotten and the less accurate the minutes will become. Besides the President, designate others to proofread the minutes for accuracy. The secretary serves as custodian of all records and official documents. The secretary must sign all official, legal and financial documents, making certain they are properly dated. Much history has been written from the art of taking minutes. Accurate minutes!

TREASURER — NANCY REIGEL



I write this with prayers of thanksgiving....humble thanksgiving. We, Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women are Blessed...Blessed to be a Blessing.

The 2016 giving report from the National Office indicates that you, Western North Carolina United Methodist Women, led the nation in the following four areas of giving for the 16th consecutive year:

- Gift to Mission
- Gift in Memory
- World Thank Offering
- Total Designated Giving

Our 2016 Total Giving of \$735,297.08 was sent to United Methodist Women National Office. Even though we did not meet our Pledge, this is cause to celebrate because we are making mission possible, locally, nationally and internationally!

Our 2017 Financial Goal is: **“To increase Mission Giving in the Gift in Memory Channel by 20%.”** What a quiet yet powerful way to pay tribute to those who have touched our lives...with a gift to help

change...transform..lives of women, children and youth around the world.

Our 2017 Love Offering theme is : **“A Gift to Mission In Celebration and Gratitude for our Mission Giving Leadership. 15 Years and Counting.”** Indeed, we do need to kneel in gratitude that we have been blessed with the wherewithal to support Mission in such a way year after year. But, it is not the leadership that counts, it is the Mission...only the Mission, that counts.

I do look forward to seeing you at the Spiritual Growth Retreat. There will be a good supply of the new designs of the Gift to Mission Cards and Gift in Memory Cards for your selection. And your local unit will receive credit for any cards you purchase. I LOVE these cards...they give you a message about Mission as you choose and purchase them, they send the recipient a message about Mission and they put Mission in action in the world through the funds they bring in. Win! Win! Win! Your participation in using these cards over the past years shows that Western North Carolina United Methodist Women understand that!! Send the cards...spread the word and Mission. Peace, Be Peace.

CAROLYN PAYNE — HISTORIAN

How Dare They! Sarah Crosby — (1729-1804)

Sarah Crosby was the first female Methodist Preacher. She was born in Leeds and was converted to Methodism by John Wesley in 1750. He gave her permission to lead prayers and exhort the congregation though asked her not to preach from a text as women preachers were controversial. She subsequently became a class leader in his first Chapel in London.



SOCIAL ACTION — RENEE HAYES



Serving as your Mission Coordinator for Social Action has been a learning experience for me that rivals my four years in college many years ago.

Anyone who has participated in Mission u, district mission studies, and social action workshops has learned the value of women being organized for mission and partnering with advocacy groups to bring about change. As overwhelming as many of our social issues seem, educating and building awareness improves our ability to make real differences in our world by working alongside those who speak truth to power.

Issues that seem global are also found in our own communities – supporting the health needs of mothers and children, taking a stand for those impacted by the damage to our environment worsened by human activity, the criminalization of communities of color and mass incarceration that disrupts families in our neighborhoods, and the economic inequality that is one of the most significant push-pull factors leading to human migration.

“Interrupting Indifference,” the theme of our 2015 National Seminar, challenged us to take what we learned and put that knowledge to work, creating communities on earth that resemble the Kingdom of Heaven. It is my prayer that our Legislative Advocacy Day on April 1, will inspire and equip all UM Women in our conference to engage in a social justice issue that touches our hearts.



Some of those in power to whom truth must be spoken are in our national and state capitals. Some are on our city councils and our county boards of commissioners and education. And some are in the pews next to us on Sundays. We must choose our words and actions prayerfully and deliver them lovingly, but we cannot be indifferent to injustices once we become aware, even when those conversations are difficult and stepping out is unfamiliar and uncomfortable. Please join us at First UMC in Mocksville, on April 1, 9:30-3:30. You may preregister on the conference website or by contacting me at (336)434-3582. I look forward to being foolish for God with you!

MEMBERSHIP NURTURE AND OUTREACH — JATANA ROYSTER



The Spiritual Growth Retreat is a wonderful opportunity to invite someone to a conference event. Or perhaps come for the first time yourself. Check out the information in this newsletter and register today!

Remember to invite others to join you at your unit and district events. Be waiting for your guests and greet them when they arrive. Or better yet, offer to pick them up. We all know what it is like to walk into a new place or event alone.

Are you having a membership event at your church each year? Plan a time when those who are not members yet can come for a gathering to fellowship and learn more about who we are. Tell your story!

Be new and creative in your meetings, gatherings and events. We don't have to do things the way they have always been done! If we want new members (young women, mothers with small children, recently retired women, etc.) we need to find out what

works for them. We can't expect to fit everyone into our existing models. We keep hearing 'young women what to DO something, not just meet.' Well, let's find out what they want to DO! Then let them DO IT! To quote our Annual Celebration theme "Change is Good."

But remember to always keep our PURPOSE as the base for everything that we do! We need to still remain true to United Methodist Women's mission with women, children and youth. We may need to find new ways to reach others to join us on this journey.

Finally, I have a challenge for our 2017 Walk for Mission! **I would like to challenge every member to WALK, DONATE or do BOTH!** Have a district walk or a walk for your unit. Invite potential members to join you. Have a Prayer Walk for your neighborhood schools as a part of your Walk for Mission. Based on 2015 membership numbers, if every member gave \$1, we would collect \$23,114!

Dedication of Annual Report Book

Each year the Annual Report Book is dedicated to a special woman who has served on the local, district, and conference level of United Methodist Women. She has demonstrated leadership abilities and works well with her peers. The recipient will be honored at Conference Annual Meeting in September at Lake Junaluska. Nomination forms must be completed and returned by June 1, 2017. Request forms by contacting Linda Young, 828-241-2343, lmyou2253@aol.com.

MISSION EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION — LINDA GREER



Hopefully, your local unit is working toward attaining Mission Today status for 2017! I have heard from many small units that attaining 12 of the criteria items is very difficult; therefore, our Mission Today Committee has looked at the criteria and we are in the process of making some changes that make Mission Today more attainable for small units. Watch for new criteria to be published on our website soon!

There is a wealth of information about our numerous mission projects in the US and throughout the world by using our Prayer Calendar, response Magazine, and UMW websites: www.wnccumw.org and www.unitedmethodistwomen.org. Remember to look for the Mission Giving logo at the end of articles to indicate those are projects that we support through our Mission Giving.



Are you gathering items for Layette Mission Giving Kits to bring to the Lake? Our hands-on mission projects for this year include Layette Kits for Spiritual Growth Retreat, School Kits for Mission u, and Health Kits for Annual Celebration. Gift to Mission and Gift in Memory cards will also be part of our Mission Projects at Annual Celebration. Let's fill that Mission

Response truck again at all three events this year! It has been brought to my attention that UMCOR also needs Bedding Kits and I urge you to collect those this year at your district and local events. If your local unit or district takes kits directly to the Mission Response Center in Terrell, NC, please let me know about the number and type of kits so that we can include those gifts in our year-end reports. Teams are always needed to work at the MRC, so if your unit or church or youth group is looking for a hands-on mission project, call Dwaine Morgan at 828-478-2106 or email him at dmorgan@wnccumc.org.

You are urged to use your Prayer Calendar and communicate with our Mission Personnel and Staff. National staff members whom I have met are truly in mission through their work with UMW. To help you with this, the Prayer Calendar contacts are posted on our conference website each week. Doing this will help you to learn about Mission work as well as to meet a criteria on your Mission Today list. In addition, using the Prayer Calendar at each meeting enables your unit to meet an additional criteria. Coming soon is one item that every unit can accomplish: The UMW Purpose will be recited at each general and/or circle meeting.

I am enjoying this year working in Mission Together with YOU!

SECRETARY PROGRAM RESOURCES — SIBYL LONG



Happy Spring!!!! I hope you are taking this opportunity to sit outside enjoying the gorgeous spring weather and read a book on the UMW 2017 reading list.

This year's books offers an excellent opportunity to deepen your spirituality and to broaden your understanding of our mission work. One of the Spiritual Growth 2017 books that is on my radar to read is Femmevangelical by Jennifer D Crumpton. The information that Mission Resources gives about the book: The Modern Girl's Guide to the Good News This book is for all women who have searched for themselves in the Bible and taken on an ill-fitting, soul

-killing role to be included; it is for anyone who seeks a devotional companion not written to prove a theological statement or uphold a religious institution, but to prove and uphold one's individual experience, potential and worth. Femmevangelical is meant to support the risk, hope and faith it takes to follow your instincts and fulfill the real gospel—using our lives to create the world in which we were truly made to live.

Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions about the reading program or you can check out the Mission Resource Center on-line by using the link below

www.missionresourcecenter.org

Did You Know?

- ✠ DID YOU KNOW... The 150th Year of United Methodist Women will be celebrated at Assembly which will be held on May 18 – 20, 2018 in Columbus, Ohio. The theme is: The Power of Bold. When women unite, bold and courageous actions happen. Can we count on you!
- ✠ Many problems faced by the women at the turn of the century have reemerged in our own time with a new and demanding urgency: new waves of immigration, homelessness, racial divisions, threats to the environment, substance abuse and addiction, lack of affordable health care, concerns for the well-being of children and the elderly, public education, questions about women's roles in society, and world peace.



2017 Spiritual Growth Retreat

S.M.I.L.E – See Miracles in Life Everyday. Are you S.M.I.L.E.ing? I pray, that your hearts, minds and eyes are open to the miracles happening all around us. As a popular fundraising commercial for children says: “When you look at everyday things differently, they become miracles”. Join us at Lake Junaluska Friday, June 16th-17th for our annual Spiritual Growth Retreat and you will S.M.I.L.E. The retreat that will provide a rich opportunity for



S.M.I.L.E.

See Miracles in Life Everyday

you to experience miracles through song and word, through listening and sharing, and through being still. Bring your friends or your husband as men are always welcome. I look forward to the miracle of at least 1,000 attendees! Make the Miracle happen! The retreat flyer with important information is on the web-site or by following this link <http://wnccumw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2017-WNCC-UMW-Spiritual-Growth-Retreat-Info-Sheet-FINAL.pdf>

Reverend Ashley Thomas, Pastor of Stokesdale UMC, will lead our retreat sessions presenting enriching messages exploring our theme S.M.I.L.E. In more ways than one, her message will make you see and be part experience miracles. Joyce Brooks, Gary Chapin and Matt Stafford, very accomplished musicians from Mouzon UMC in Charlotte, will lead our music throughout the retreat. And, as always anticipated, the Lake Junaluska Singers perform following our Friday evening session.

Online Retreat Registration is \$15.00 and On-Site registration is \$25.00. Upon arrival at the Lake, retreat attendees must check in on the lower level of the Harrell Center (1:00 – 6:30 pm Friday) where they will receive the program book and other materials. Late arrivals may check- in in the lobby of Stuart Auditorium.

Room Reservations may be made on-line through Lake Junaluska or by calling 1-800-222-4930. All information is available at www.wnccumw.org. When communicating with the Lake for reservations, use the group attendee code 28810108130. Check-in at the Bethea Welcome Center for your room and at the Harrell Center for the retreat. The check-in time for Lake Junaluska rooms is 4:00 p.m. If you need child care, you can make arrangements by calling Lake Junaluska at 828-452-2881.

Our retreat opens Friday evening, June 16th evening at 6:45 p.m. and concludes around noon on Saturday, June 17th. Sessions open with “Gathering and Praise”- a time joyous singing. The Saturday sessions begin at 8:45 a.m. During the first Saturday session you will have an opportunity to share your financial gifts in the Love Offering to support Mission Giving and during the second Saturday session we will celebrate the miracle of communion. We need six communion helpers from each district. Contact your district president or me if you want to help. You must attend communion practice which starts at 4:30 p.m. Friday afternoon.

Participate in the retreat HANDS-ON MISSION PROJECT by bringing assembled Layette Kits. Information regarding proper assembly of the Health Kits may be found on our web-site www.wnccumw.org or <http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies/Relief-Supply-Kits/Layette>. The Mission Response truck will be on-site waiting to be filled with your kits for distribution worldwide. When you deliver your kits, remember to also deliver, in **a separate envelope**, \$1.00/kit to help defray the cost of distributing the kits. And of course, we will joyfully receive any other kits that your units or ladies have assembled. This is a great time to volunteer too! Help is always needed to receive, count and load the kits. This is a perfect time to fellowship and give first-timers the opportunity to have their “hands-on”. Contact Linda Greer, Mission Coordinator – Education & Interpretation jacklindagreer@bellsouth.net.

The Memorial Chapel will be open for prayer, meditation and quiet time Friday afternoon through noon on Saturday. Prayer request cards and a basket will be available so that you can leave a prayer and take a prayer to lift in support of another. A separate basket will be available for you to leave a card where you share a miracle that you have seen in everyday life.

Yellow WNCC UMW signage will be guide you around the Lake Junaluska Grounds. Conference leaders will greet you as you arrive at the Bethea Welcome Center. The signage is especially helpful for first-timers. Program Resources, Social Action displays and other important UMW information will be located with retreat registration in the lower level of the Harrell Center. Shopping and browsing hours for purchasing Program Resource, Gift to Mission Cards and viewing displays are: Friday 1:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. and Saturday 7:30 a.m. -8:30 a.m. Program Resource closes during the retreat sessions.

June is a beautiful time at Lake Junaluska. Dress comfortably. Stuart Auditorium is air conditioned, so bring a sweater. Bring walking shoes if you want to walk around the lake, which is almost 3 miles, with benches along the way. Or stroll the gardens and the Rose Walk to enjoy the array of color and fragrance. The June weather could be very warm or it could be cool and/or rainy. Regardless of the weather, be prepared to rejoice in the fellowship and blessing of the WNCC 2017 Spiritual Growth Retreat. **S.M.I.L.E -See Miracles in Life Everyday!**

NOMINATIONS — BETTY DURHAM

The Committee on is working very hard to find those "special women" to serve for 2018 and beyond. We are excited that we now have a link on the UMW website you can go to <http://www.wnccumw.org>, click on Mission Resources and you will find us on the drop down. There you will find:

- ✝ Tenure Sheets,
- ✝ Recommendation forms,
- ✝ job descriptions and more...(including picture of Nominations Team)

If there is ever anything we can do for you or if you would like for us to come to one of your meetings please contact us.

SAVE
THE DATE!
MARCH 23

3rd Annual
UNITED
METHODIST
WOMEN
DAY OF
GIVING

Join United Methodist Women members around the country on **March 23** for the Third Annual Day of Giving to The **Legacy Fund**, part of our five-year 150th anniversary celebration!

The **Legacy Fund** is a permanent endowment to support the work of future generations of United Methodist Women.

It's easy to give!

- Online at www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/legacyfund.
- By phone: 800-278-7771 (8 am-6pm EST, Monday-Friday).
- Text Legacy150 to 41444.
- By check to:

Office of the Treasurer,
United Methodist Women,
475 Riverside Drive,
New York, NY 10115.



Write "**The Legacy Fund**" in the memo section.

Each 2017 Day of Giving gift will be matched, dollar for dollar!

Our Western North Carolina Every Member Legacy Fund Goal: That every member of United Methodist Women make a gift to The Legacy Fund of at least \$18.69 per year, over and above her Pledge to Mission, for five years (2015-2019).

THE LEGACY FUND...Turning Faith, Hope and Love into Action on behalf of Women, Children and Youth...for the NEXT 150 years! Learn more at www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/150 and on our conference website at www.wnccumw.org/legacyfund.

Legacy Fund

Feel the...



We offer to share our passion for:

- **United Methodist Women**
- **Our Purpose**
- **Reading Program**
- **Social Action**
- **Mission Giving**
- **ANYTHING Your Unit would like us to share...LUV!**

... From United Methodist Women

Invite a District or Conference Officer to your unit gathering starting August 25, 2016 through August 24, 2017. You will then be entered for a chance to win a C.P.R. "Feel the LUV" care package, which includes:

- **Program Book**
- **Copy of Response Magazine**
- **Prayer Calendar**
- **Reading Program Book**
- **A Few Other Surprises**

Committed to Purposeful Renewal



2017 CONFERENCE OFFICER LIST — WNCC UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

OFFICE	NAME	PHONE	E-MAIL
President	Tonya Lanier	336-243-1361 (h) 336-470-1100 (c)	sonshiners@lexcominc.net
Vice President	Julia Willis	336-685-4857	jawillis1@aol.com
Secretary	Linda Young	828-241-2343	lmyou2253@aol.com
Treasurer	Nancy Reigel	828-268-0637	nancy@reigelridge.com
MC—Mission Educ. & Interpretation	Linda Greer	704-585-6263	jacklindagreer@bellsouth.net
MC—Memb. Nurture & Outreach	Jatana Royster	704-454-5333	jatanaroyster@gmail.com
MC—Social Action	Renee Hayes	336-434-3582	renee.hayes1956@gmail.com
MC—Spiritual Growth	Martha Efird	704-875-0065	mjefird@bellsouth.net
Communications Coordinator	Dianne Beam	704-274-9183	diannebeam@roadrunner.com
Sec. of Program Resources	Sibyl Long	704-535-9240	sibyl.long@gmail.com
Nominations (Chair)	Betty Durham	336-542-8077	betty.durham50@yahoo.com
Mission u (Dean)	Lisa Bacon	828-586-8399	lisabacon304@gmail.com
Parliamentarian	Irish Spencer	336-681-2424	irish@spencergroup.us
Historian	Carolyn Payne	366-766-5568	reginaldtpayne@bellsouth.net
Scholarship (Chair)	Sherry Sink	336-880-2663	sherrysink@gmail.com
UMW Program Advisory Group (PAG)	Dixie Liggett	828-684-1831	lliggett3@charter.net
Webmaster, Social Media	Lynne Gilbert	336-207-3479	lynnegilbert2@gmail.com

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PURPOSE of United Methodist Women

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.

2017 Upcoming Dates:

April 1, 2017	Legislative Advocacy Day, First UMC, Mocksville
June 16-17, 2017	Spiritual Growth Retreat, Lake Junaluska, NC
July 13-16, 2017	Mission u, Pfeiffer University, Misenheimer, NC
Sept.29-Oct.1, 2017	Annual Celebration, Lake Junaluska, NC
October 14, 2017	Ubuntu Day of Service
October 21, 2017	Leader Development Day for District Officers

For more information, visit: www.wnccumw.org