

# Conference Gram



*Conference President – Mildred Carter*  
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## **Flexibility is the word for year 2013.**

We have new goals, new districts, new opportunities to be in ministry! And we have many new names:

- Women's Division is now United Methodist Women National Office
- School of Christian Mission is now Mission u
- Charter Club is now Justice Today
- Shepherdess program is now Nurturing Partners
- And, even in my local unit, the General Meeting is now a UMW Gathering.

Added flexibility in our structure -- how we organize local, district, and conference teams -- is simplified.

But our PURPOSE remains the same. Mission is and has been at the heart of United Methodist Women for over 140 years.

Members of local units continue to make mission possible through United Methodist Women. The journey of the mission dollar begins with you. When we combine the resources of all of our local units, great things are accomplished as we respond to God's call to take care of the less fortunate (Matthew 25:31-46), especially women, children, and youth next door and around the world.

Through United Methodist Women, we develop new friendships, grow closer to God, increase our knowledge of missions, and experience joy in service to our God.

We have many opportunities to grow through United Methodist Women in 2013. Plans are being made for our Spiritual Growth Retreat in June, Mission u in July, and Annual Meeting in September. You will find more information on these events elsewhere in this publication. Mark the dates on your calendar and plan to attend.

The Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women finished 2012 with wonderful news of again overpaying our pledge to mission. Thank you for helping to make that happen. Please see Treasurer Julia Willis' article for specific information.

This year, may we renew our commitment to the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. Please let me know if I can be of help to you and your local unit.

**Goal: Move mission forward through Faith, Hope, Love in Action by strengthening communication.**



*Vice-President – Tonya Lanier*  
[Sonshiners@lexcominc.net](mailto:Sonshiners@lexcominc.net)

This is our year! It is the year of transformational transitions. With the new dynamics that we have embraced, the Western North Carolina women can begin to work on many new goals, dreams and aspirations. We will build upon opportunities to evolve as sisters in Christ. If your ideas are worthy of your energy, then do not hold them back ... share them.

We have experienced change at all levels, but one emphasis that remains the same or that will not change, is the need for proper planning. We should always be prepared. Continue to properly plan. We have resources for that!

- ❖ Our great conference website: [www.wnccumw.org](http://www.wnccumw.org)
- ❖ Program Book
- ❖ Prayer Calendar
- ❖ Mission Today emphasis
- ❖ Action Alerts
- ❖ Mission u Leadership Training
- ❖ The Social Principles
- ❖ Justice Today
- ❖ Membership packet
- ❖ UMW Purpose
- ❖ *Response* Magazine
- ❖ The UMW Handbook 2013-2016 ... just to name a few

The work of UMW is played vividly in the story of Ruth and Naomi. Not only is the idea that we should stand and respond to one another’s need as Ruth did for Naomi, but we journey together, going where we must go for the sake of the mission we have agreed upon, “Your God is my God and your people are my people.” This is the kind of solidarity we hope for in our districts, in our conferences and across our UMW nation. Will you take your sister’s hand and move on? Will you plan ahead?

Our 2013 Annual Meeting theme is: Moving On. We have made great strides and should continue to march forward. Our steps do not have to be long or rapid. They can be short and deliberate. Save the dates of September 6–8 to journey to Lake Junaluska. Let us have the audacity to meet God there. We cannot fail because He has promised to be present, every step of the way. Come ... move ... with me!

*Chair, Committee on Nominations – Lisa Bacon*  
[Lbbacon@yahoo.com](mailto:Lbbacon@yahoo.com)



The Committee on Nominations walks on holy ground, seeking leadership for today and potential leaders for tomorrow. Begin always with prayer for discernment, not only for the committee but also in the hearts of those who will be asked to serve. In this year of “new” districts, take a moment to examine the composition of your mission team. Does it reflect the current membership in terms of age, ethnicity, employment status, marital status, geography and other categories? Does it reflect the **desired** make-up of the membership? As always, please let your Conference Nominations Committee know how we may be in partnership with you.



**Secretary of Program Resources – Ann Aldridge**

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Greetings, my Sisters in Christ,

We are told that United Methodist Women is changing, and we are wondering what that means to us in Program Resources. We have a new UMW Handbook 2013 – 2016. Although it is not yet available to order, I have seen a draft, and it is organized to provide us with guidelines and policies, but at the same time, to allow us to equip groups to organize in ways that make the most sense to them. Our PURPOSE remains the same, but we have more flexibility in living God’s mission. The bylaws will be separate from the handbook and will be available at a later time.

Our United Methodist Resources has moved from Texas to Georgia, and ordering may be done at the e-store at <http://www.umwmissionresources.org/>. As with any large move, it will take time to “get the bugs worked out,” but we are told that ordering will be easier and materials will arrive faster once everything is completed. My experience with my one order is that many of the materials were not available and are on backorder. My advice is to order early and allow plenty of time. All changes take time, and the organization of the web page will take some time for you to become acclimated. We can continue to order online or through fax, snail mail, or email.

We have some great new books, and I encourage you to read, read, read!!! I challenge every one of you to complete at least Plan I in the Reading Program. Please contact me if I may be of assistance in any way.



**Mission Coordinator for Social Action – Martha Phillips**

[mwphillips@wildblue.net](mailto:mwphillips@wildblue.net)

Greetings, Ladies:

JUSTICE TODAY! That is the new name for the Charter Club. Same purpose, same criteria but we think it is more inclusive and fits right with being a Mission Today unit. The United Methodist Women “Racial Justice Time Line,” a new publication from the Mission Resource Center, tells the history of the Charter for Racial Justice. This document, combined with the Charter for Racial Justice brochure, provides material for an excellent program for your unit. In addition, give each member a copy of the Charter and you have met two of the criteria for being a Justice Today unit!

Our Social Action Priorities for 2013 are:

1. The number of units becoming Justice Today units will increase by 10% above the number of Charter Club units in 2012.
2. Continue educating our members about Domestic Violence, focusing on the effects of Domestic Violence on the children living in this situation.
3. To increase understanding of the scope of Human Trafficking in North Carolina, nationally, and internationally.

On May 4, 2013, Western North Carolina UMW will gather at First Conover UMC for Legislative Day. This event will be dedicated to learning more about Human Trafficking in North Carolina. Victims of this modern day slavery could be landscaping and agricultural workers, panhandlers, day laborers, factory and sweatshop workers, hotel workers and housekeepers, in addition to the women, children and men trafficked in the commercial sex industry. We will also learn how to advocate for victims and work for a justice system that restores victims and punishes perpetrators.

Legislative Day will begin at 9 AM and end at 3 PM. Online registration begins March 1. The cost is \$10 and this includes a boxed lunch. I hope you will join us for this informative and important time together. Faith, Hope, Love in Action! It is who we are. Peace.



**Treasurer – Julia Willis**  
[jawillis1@aol.com](mailto:jawillis1@aol.com)

### TREASURER’S REPORT

Year 2012 in Review:

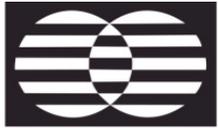
**Total Giving** from the 15 Districts \$992,895.02

**Conference Love Offering** \$25,085.69\*

**7th Walk for Mission** \$9,886.32

**Spiritual Growth Retreat Love Offering** \$7,871.52\*

**School of Christian Mission Love Offering** \$1,749.00



Mission Giving

**Mission Giving** sent to United Methodist Women National Office \$820,274.50  
(exceeding our Pledge to Mission of \$820,250)  
(includes \$53,375 in **Special Mission Recognitions!!!**)

**Designated Giving** to United Methodist Women National Office \$98,025.15\*  
(includes Call to Prayer and Self Denial Offering, national, international and UMCOR projects)

**Donations to other designated projects** \$7,998.00  
(includes \$2,571\* for WNCC UMW General Scholarship Fund)

\*indicates an increase over previous year

Your generous giving, good stewardship of Administrative & Membership Development funds, and the closing of seven district bank accounts in late December gave us the funds to meet AND exceed our 2012 PLEDGE. This is quite an accomplishment because we did incur sizeable extra expenses for the Transition Team and Districts Organizational Meetings.

### 2013 Financial Goal

“To exceed our total Conference Pledge to Mission Giving”



### 2013 Conference Love Offering

“A Gift to Mission in Honor of the 8 New Districts of the WNCC”



**Historian – Patricia Settle**  
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The Western North Conference of United Methodist Women began 2012 with some historical changes. It began by celebrating the accomplishments of 15 districts during our annual meeting. Then plans were made to elect officers for the 8 newly-named districts that would begin their work January 1, 2013, with our PURPOSE remaining the same. There is much excitement and work to do. Let’s begin by reviewing, our Mission Today Criteria, reading *Response* and *New World Outlook* magazines, using Mission Today Criteria and these magazines to offer historical moments at local and district events. Now would be an excellent time to get to know your district and conference teams, by planning to attend as many events as you can. Now as we begin 2013, let’s start by visiting our Conference Web Site at: [www.wnccumw.org](http://www.wnccumw.org) . I look forward to meeting you.



**Mission Coordinator Spiritual Growth – Sandy Hieronymus**  
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The first criteria in the PURPOSE is to know God. Every day offers opportunities to work toward knowing God and His plan for us. Spend time in study, worship and quiet time. There are many events, programs, and books that will help each of us grow spiritually. Encourage the members of your unit to start reading a book in the UMW Reading Program in the Spiritual Growth category. Start each meeting by using the Prayer Calendar. Pray often and listen!

*Faithful Living* is the theme for the Spiritual Growth Retreat. Make plans now to attend the Retreat on June 14-15 at Lake Junaluska (see registration information in this newsletter). Rev. Amy Coles will be our retreat leader. Amy is the Smoky Mountain District Superintendent. Crossfire, a praise team, will lead the music. They are members of First United Methodist Church, Gastonia. Birthing Kits will be the hands-on project. Reservations began February 1. More information will be in the next Conference Gram. Information is also available on our website at [www.wnccumw.org](http://www.wnccumw.org). Check our website often for new information. Note: There is no on-line room reservation for Lake Junaluska this year. Call 1-800-222-4930. Room rates for 2013 are the same as 2012.

*Christian Financial Responsibility* is this year's theme for celebrating a Call to Prayer and Self-Denial. The offering in 2013 will help provide avenues to alleviate some of the pain and stress of debt, job loss and fear. The program is in the new Program Book entitled, *Living the Heart of God*.

*I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me*, based on Matthew 25, is the World Day of Prayer theme which is celebrated the first Friday in March each year. The program is prepared this year by the women of France. For more information, go to [www.wdp-usa.org](http://www.wdp-usa.org). Check for an observance on March 1 in your area.

To order reading books, the Program Book, Prayer Calendar, Call to Prayer and Self-Denial posters and prayer cards, call 1-800-305-9857 or go to [www.missionresourcecenter.org/estore](http://www.missionresourcecenter.org/estore).

Let me know how I can help you. May God's Spirit guide us during 2013 as we glorify Him.

**Secretary – Elizabeth Lookabill**  
[elookabill@tyroumc.org](mailto:elookabill@tyroumc.org)



Happy New Year to all of you! At Annual Meeting last September, we heard how United Methodist Women has gone through many changes over the years and these changes were good. Lots of new things are going on now. New year, new districts, new officers, new friends, etc. Yet, we are all working together toward the same goal.

Coming home from Annual Meeting, I was very excited about all these new things that are going on. Remember the words we heard there **"It's All About Mission."**

As your Conference Secretary, please let me know if there is any way that I can help you. I am just an e-mail away.



*Mission Coordinator Membership Nurture and Outreach - Sherry Sink*  
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New year, new districts, new beginnings...new word: **proactive**. If you break down the word proactive, it's easy to understand the word's meaning. "Pro" is a Latin prefix that means "forward." When you couple "pro" with "active" then "proactive" means you are being "active" about the future. Now that sounds like United Methodist Women in the Western North Carolina Conference.

If we want more women to participate in UMW, we need to be **proactive** in our approach. We need to create opportunities for others to participate such as hands on projects, community building, spiritual renewal, and flexible times and meeting spaces. Maybe we need to change the way we perform certain tasks to be more efficient and to include others.

As we begin to create events in our new districts, let's be **proactive** in making it happen. Let's design our events with new energy and programming. Let's share the history of United Methodist Women, but don't forget to share "your story" with others.

As we go from planning events to putting plans into action, let's stay **proactive** in our approach. We cannot assume participation in events by UMW members or those who are in our communities. There is a relationship- building process that must take place. Ask someone to lunch, to a movie, or for a walk. Get to know that person, and let them get to know you.

Let's not sit around and wait for something to happen. Let's be **proactive** and see what needs to be done and do it! That's United Methodist Women!

*Mission Coordinator Education and Interpretation – Rebecca Wright*  
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Greetings, Co-Workers of the Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women. 2013 brings about changes for all of us with the new restructuring of the districts, and with me starting a new journey as the Western North Carolina Conference Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation. I am excited about these new beginnings. I know that with God's help, I can fulfill the position you have entrusted to me.

One goal for the conference in 2013 is to **Move mission forward through Faith, Hope, Love in Action by strengthening communications**. We want to continue stressing our call to increase the Mission Today units. Our goal is to gain 5% over 2012. There are 23 criteria to help you reach Mission Today status. A unit must complete twelve of the criteria, including six marked with an asterisk. Strive to complete one more criterion in 2013, and if every unit in the conference completed that extra one, the conference would reach that goal of 5% over 2012. But remember, you must complete number one on the list, "The Unit will make and meet its Pledge to Mission." It is not an option. Start today and be a Mission Today unit.

Some of our districts will be having their mission studies soon. Take advantage of these learning tools and complete #4 of the criteria. Using the Prayer Calendar and the Program Book are other resources included in the criteria (#2 and #3). Remember, your conference and district officers love to visit. Include them when planning your calendar for the year and fulfill #21 of the Mission Today criteria. Let's challenge our units to take the more difficult criteria. For example #6, "The unit will implement the Charter for Racial Justice in at least two ways during the year." With all of us working, we can really bring our PURPOSE alive as we expand our concepts of mission, develop and create a supportive fellowship. If you have any questions regarding Mission Today or anything else, let me know or contact your district coordinator as we work together to make 2013 the best year yet!

## 2013 Officers of Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women

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**Conference Gram  
WNC Conference  
United Methodist Women**

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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.

***2013 Upcoming Dates:***

***May 4***

*Legislative Day, First – Conover*

***June 14-15***

*Spiritual Growth Retreat, Lake Junaluska*

***June 20-23***

*Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska*

***July 18-21***

*Mission u, Pfeiffer University*

***September 6-8***

*Annual Meeting, Lake Junaluska*

***October 12***

*Leader Development, St. Luke's – Hickory*

