



Blue Ridge District Newsletter 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.

Called to this Moment to Pray

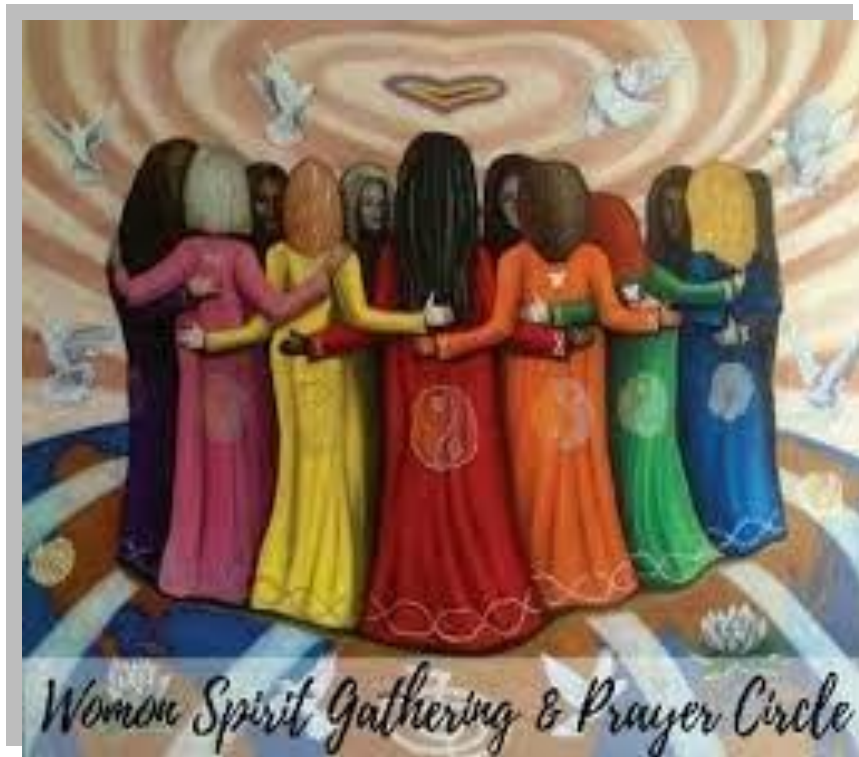
Blue Ridge District Prayer Breakfast
On Zoom

Saturday, May 1, 9:00 am

Special Speaker: Leah Wandera (soon to be welcomed into the UMW Deaconess Program)

Register at the <https://wnccumw.org/>

Go the Districts drop-down menu and click on District Events 2021, **NOT Blue Ridge**



**BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
2021 OFFICERS**

<p><u>President:</u> Gwen Harris (Windom) 215 Grand View Lane Burnsville, NC 28714 (828) 682-4589 gwenaharris68@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>Vice President:</u> Lucy Earls (Oak Grove) 913 Race Path Church Rd. Ellenboro, NC 28040 (828) 453-8566 jlearls@att.net</p>	<p><u>Secretary:</u> Jo Pyatt (East Marion) PO Box 1621 Marion, NC 28752 (828) 652-2530 pyattjo@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>Treasurer:</u> Linda Johns (Skyland) 22 North Oak Terrace Arden, NC 28704 H:(828) 684-9366 C: (828) 712-9266 ljturtle58@gmail.com</p>
<p><u>Spiritual Growth, MC:</u> Jennie Greenway (Oak Grove) 164 Emma Drive, Ellenboro, NC. 28040. (828)453-9637 or (828) 289-1642 jengreenway@bellsouth.net</p>	<p><u>MC, Education & Interpretation</u> Tracey Owens (Marion First) 249 Fleming Ave. Marion, NC 28752 (828) 246-6006 traceybhh@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>Social Action MC.</u> Kathy Kennedy (Grace) PO Box 2556 Leicester, NC 28748 H: (828) 683-4678 C: (828) 231-3229 kenkat12003@yahoo.com</p>	<p><u>Membership Nurture & Outreach:</u> Martha Phillips (Concord) PO Box 49 Linville Falls, NC 28647 (828) 467-3167 mcwphillips@gmail.com</p>
<p><u>Secretary of Program Resources:</u> Jeannette Byrd (St. Paul's) 203 Aurora Dr. Asheville, NC 28805 (828) 230-5308 jbyrdasheville@aol.com</p>	<p><u>Communications Coordinator:</u> Tammy Long (Moore's Grove) 240 Seasons Circle Apt. 102 Fletcher, NC 28732 (828) 774-6010 lynntb79@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>Data Processing:</u> Carol Bryson (Grace) 14 Buckner Road Leicester, NC 28748 (828) 776-0678 csbryson64@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>Parliamentarian:</u> Betty J. Letzig (St. Paul's) 266 Merrimon Ave. Asheville, NC 28801 (828) 225-0414 MoHar1926@outlook.com</p>
<p><u>Historian:</u> Barbara E. Campbell (St. Paul's) 266 Merrimon Ave. Asheville, NC 28801 (828) 225-0414 ernestm1138@outlook.com</p>			

Committee of Nominations

<p>Chairperson: Thelma McGraw (Skyland UMC) 90 White Pine Drive Fletcher, NC 28732 (828)684-7106 vtmcmgraw@broadriverrehab.com Class of 2022</p>	<p>Vennie Abrams (Tryon Comm. Interdenominational Church) 630 Blackwood Road Columbus, NC 28722 (828) 863-4274 aluvnia@yahoo.com Class of 2021</p>	<p>Bess Redmond (Biltmore UMC) 19 Wright's Cove Trail Fairview, NC 28730 (828) 231-7625 missbess@charter.net Class of 2021</p>	<p>Donna Anderson (Central UMC) Weaverville, NC 28787 danderson45@charter.net Class of 2022 (828) 484-8763</p>
<p>Dorothy Johnson (Addie's Chapel) 63 Tomahawk Trail Marion, NC 28752 (828) 738-8148 (828) 460-3778 dot.johnson47@gmail.com Class of 2023</p>	<p>Leith Tate (Black Mtn. UMC) PO Box 208, Montreat, NC 28757 (828) 301-6028 tateleith@gmail.com Class of 2023</p>		

Member at Large

Dixie Liggett, (Skyland), 8 Springside Park, Asheville, NC 28803, (828) 684-1831, liliggett3@charter.net

Western North Carolina Conference District Advisor for the Blue Ridge District

Joanie Strohm, (Weaverville), 111 Collins Road, Marshall, NC 28753, (828) 649-1156, ssjsmars@charter.net

**The Blue Ridge District Newsletter is published quarterly. Send any information you would like to have included to Editor, Tammy Long
(Acceptance of articles will depend on space available and interest to the entire District.)**

2021 NURTURING PARTNERS (SHEPHERDESSES)

PLEASE ASK YOUR NURTURING PARTNER TO COME VISIT YOUR UNIT

Nurturing Partner7	Church	Nurturing Partner	Church
Carol Bryson (828) 776-0678	Avery's Creek Emma Reeves Chapel	Jeanette Byrd (828) 230-5308	Montmorenci St. Paul Trinity- Asheville
Vennie Abrams (828) 863-4274	Caroleen Spindale	Barbara E. Campbell (828) 225-0414	Abernethy Biltmore Asbury Memorial
Lucy Earls (828) 453-8566 (828) 223-1325	First Forest City Providence Saluda	Gwen Harris (828) 682-4589	Bald Creek Higgins Memorial Mars Hill Weaverville
Dorothy Johnson (828) 738-8148	Clinchfield Ebenezer Marion First	Kathy Kennedy (828) 231-3229 (828) 683-4678	Grace Oakley Salem
Betty J. Letzig (828) 225-0414	Balfour Fletcher Mills River	Thelma McGraw (828) 684-7106	Skyland Windom
Tracey Owens (828) 246-6006	Black Mountain Snow Hill (Morganton)	Martha Phillips (828) 765-7009	Concord Spruce Pine East Marion Addie's Chapel
Joanie Strohm (828) 649-1156	Alexander Clark's Hope Wells Spring Piney Mountain	Donna Anderson (828) 484-8763	Central
Jennie Greenway (828) 453-9637	Edneyville Hendersonville First Moore's Grove	Jo Pyatt (828) 652-2530	First Rutherfordton Gilkey Kistler's Chapel Nebo Oak Grove Pleasant Grove Pleasant Hill-Marion
Bess Redmond (828) 231-7625	Bethel Groce Sardis		

President

To begin, I want to thank all of you who attended the virtual Mission Study led by Barbara Campbell. She did a remarkable job of providing an abbreviated but very meaningful history of United Methodist Women from its beginning in 1869 until today.

I also want to encourage more of you to attend the virtual meetings because they are really good. Your next opportunity is the May 1 virtual prayer breakfast. Jennie Greenway is planning a memorial service that honors the memory of those who passed in 2019 and 2020, since we were unable to have last year's breakfast. Also, you will have the opportunity to meet Leah Wandera, our guest speaker. She is preparing to become the first deaconess in Kenya. I'm eager to hear her because those who know her are so impressed. Don't miss the prayer breakfast!

I remind you again of our Blue Ridge District theme for the year—"Called to This Moment." For the past twelve months, COVID-19 seems to have dominated **ALL** the moments of our lives. Our United Methodist Women units have focused on keeping our local units as active as possible, even though we could not meet in person. I think our call is shifting slightly. As more and more Americans are vaccinated, we see light at the end of the tunnel: Now, we have to concentrate on getting back to normal.

What does this mean for our units and us? Are we called to this moment simply to pick up where we left off? That's certainly a good goal, but I think we can aim higher. I pray we'll return to our meetings and activities refreshed and renewed. This is the season of renewal. It's everywhere. Creation is undergoing its annual spring renewal with flowers, new leaves, and birds everywhere. In the Christian year, we're moving from the painful self-examination of Lent into the spiritual renewal of Easter.

As we move beyond the COVID year, let's insist that United Methodist Women Units be better than we were. After all, we've learned quite a bit, and those we serve need us more than ever. We even have some brand new tools, like Zoom! Let's be called to this moment renewed in our commitment to serve God as individuals, as local units, and as the Blue Ridge District.

Gwen Harris, Blue Ridge District, President

Vice President

Greetings to all of you. I hope that you all are enjoying the beautiful signs of spring all around us. My daffodils are blooming and I always consider them as a sign of renewal and the promise of good days ahead. We are beginning to see the signs of renewal to a return to our "normal" world.

I was so excited to join with other United Methodist Women from my unit last night for our first meeting in a year. We combined our Pledge and Call to Prayer and Self Denial Services. We did have to forgo any hugs or close conversations, but it was so good to be able to gather (safely) again.

It was so great to meet with our sisters from the Smoky Mountain District the past two Saturdays for our Mission Study. Barbara Campbell did a wonderful job. Thanks to all who helped coordinate that event.

Make your plans now to attend the virtual annual Prayer Breakfast on May 1. We will have a wonderful speaker and also remember our United Methodist Women who passed away in 2019 and 2020. Register on the www.wncumw.org website. Nothing compares with our in-person meetings, but we need to continue to utilize the opportunities that ZOOM gives us to gather. If you have not been able to navigate a computer meeting, please reach out to someone to help you. It is a fairly easy process. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Love and blessings.

Lucy Earls, Blue Ridge District, Vice President

Treasurer

Hello to everyone! Our time continues with taking precautions against the Covid-19. As a result, units have been creative in finding ways to communicate with each other. Blue Ridge District and Smoky Mountain Districts used Zoom to do a Mission Study about United Methodist Women. We had the good fortune to have Barbara Campbell as our speaker. Many units have sent in a pledge amount; however, there are several who have not. I encourage each unit to submit an amount. It is required to be a Mission Today Unit. As meetings have been changed to virtual or have not been held at all, in-person offerings have not been received, which affects Love Offerings. If you have missed sending in a Gift to Mission, you can mail it to your local unit treasurer, mail it to me, or go on wncumw.org or unitedmethodistwomen.org. Both sites have a place at the top to give your gift.

Love Offerings are needed for our missions to continue to survive. You all supported our Missions well last year despite the Covid 19 issues. The total Undesignated Giving from the eight districts was \$604,339, and Special Offerings totaled \$18,927. The result was the WNC Conference United Methodist Women sending a total of \$530,817 in Undesignated Giving to the National Office to support Missions. This amount was \$5,817 over the Conference 2020 pledge of \$525,000. We led the nation in Mission Giving in 2020. Fantastic job from all the ladies who helped make this possible! In addition, a total \$55,905 of Designated Giving was received and forwarded to those Missions and a total of \$3,335 was received and distributed in support of Local Missions in the Conference. Ladies, you are utterly amazing! Let's do it again. Enjoy this spring weather and stay safe.

Linda Johns, Blue Ridge District, Treasurer

District Secretary

Greetings, everyone! During these unusual and confusing days, I have found that my responsibilities in my local unit have evolved into different areas—I am vice president at East Marion. In addition to the “normal” responsibilities of secretary, we have always been encouraged to be available to assist the rest of the officers, and I have found these past months that this is truer than ever.

Continue to keep those records, which is your most important responsibility, but you might be the person who becomes the “cheerleader” to encourage creative programming for those special programs in which offerings are made, such as A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial and World Thank. Last year, I wrote short programs for the two and mailed them to each member. For A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial, I also included a stamped envelope addressed to our treasurer. Doing the programs this way, we got a better response than we had before.

I know there are very creative ladies out there who might have better ideas than I do, and I would encourage you to put those great ideas to work, not only for those two programs but for all the others, also. This will help us continue our mission work with women, children, and youth.

Jo Pyatt, Blue Ridge District Secretary

Spiritual Growth Coordinator

Greetings to all of you! Hope you are well. When I woke up this past Saturday morning the first thing I heard was the voice of a singing bird outside of the window. My first thought: Spring is in the air!

Why is it that we love spring so much? Could it be that it is a light at the end of the tunnel after a long hard winter?

Perhaps we love the longer days that give us brighter evenings to spend outside. Or, maybe we love all the new life we see around us: flower blossoms and baby animals.

Spring is a perfect time to rededicate ourselves to grow in our spiritual walk with our Lord and Savior. We open our eyes to the beauty of the world around us that is coming back to life. In truth, maybe we are coming back to life as well after winter's dark days. Jesus is the light that will bring renewal in our heart. See what the scriptures say:

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (NIV)

Ephesians 4: 22 - 24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (NIV)

Psalms 51:10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (NIV)

Another sign that spring is coming is our Prayer Breakfast. We are very excited about this year's Virtual Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, May 1 at 9:00 am. Please visit <https://wnccumw.org/districtevents/> You will find the link to register for the Virtual Prayer Breakfast (See the front page for registration details). Our speaker for the event will be Leah Wandera, who will be welcomed into the deaconess program this year. When she finishes the program, she plans to return to Kenya as that country's first deaconess!

Jennie Greenway, Blue Ridge District, Spiritual Growth Coordinator



Social Justice Coordinator

March is Women's History Month! During this we honor and celebrate all the women who have helped shape our history. Since the Woman's Missionary Society was formed 1869, members of United Methodist Women have championed women and children all over the world. We have been at the forefront of leadership development, social justice advocacy, and fostering spiritual growth.

Celebrate Women's History Month. Take advantage of the resources available on the unitedmethodistwomen.org/women's-history-month page. Some resources include:

Reading Program Books:

- One Dress. One Year: One Girl's Stand Against Human Trafficking, Bethany Winz
- Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All, Martha S. Jones
- Global Girlfriends: How One Mom Made It Her Business to Help Women in Poverty Worldwide, Stacey Edgar
- #Not Your Princess: Voices of Native American Women, Lisa Charleyboy and Mary Beth Leatherdale (editors)
- Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in School, Monique W. Morris
- Women Rise Up!, Cindy Jacobs
- Sally Ride: America's First Woman in Space, Lynn Sherr

Women's History Month Resources:



Join the Faith Talks on Soul Care, March 18, 2 p.m. ET.



Women United for Change Is the first in a two-year study commemorating United Methodist Women's 150th anniversary.

- Racial Justice Timeline
 - Legacy Stories - portraits of United Methodist Women leaders and members.
 - "A Response to the Need: Carol Marie Herb" Carol Marie Herb was the first and longest editor of response.
 - "Prioritizing Just Energy for All"
 - "United Methodist Women Attend Training for Transformation in South Africa"
- Celebrating each of you for the work you do to benefit others!

Kathy Kennedy, Blue Ridge District, Social Justice Coordinator

Mission Education & Interpretation

If you did not get an opportunity to participate in the Mission study “Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission” on March 6th & 13th , you certainly missed out on two informative and thought-provoking sessions. Thanks go out to Lisa Bacon for being our Zoom host and to the Smoky Mountain District UMW (especially Beverly Bard, their Mission Education & Interpretation Coordinator) for inviting our district UMW to be part of this study with them.

Special thanks to Barbara Campbell, our study leader. As Gwen Harris said, “Hearing Barbara talk about our (UMW) history and heritage is like hearing Benjamin Franklin talk about the formation of the United States!” We hope to be able to do more events with the Smoky Mountain UMW.

Reminder: One of the goals this year is for each unit to send Gift in Mission cards in honor of someone in the Prayer Calendar or in *response* magazine. Any card can be used, including e-cards, and \$5 per card sent to our district treasurer Linda Johns. Be sure to write a note inside the card so that the recipient will know you’ve made a Gift in Mission contribution!

I have not received any information concerning drop-off sites for hygiene or school kits. If I receive any news about the kits, I will send it out to the unit presidents.

Spring Blessings!

Tracey Owens, Blue Ridge District Coordinator for Mission Education & Interpretation

Membership Nurture and Outreach

Greetings, Ladies!

I hope you have heard from your Nurturing Partner by now. Please contact her if you have any questions or need help with a program. Although we are still restricted to some degree, many units have found ways to meet together. My unit is meeting in the Fellowship Hall where we wear masks and can easily sit 6 feet apart. We are not having homemade refreshments yet but do have packaged snacks and canned or bottled drinks. As more and more of us are getting vaccinations, this seems to work well. Of course, being Methodist women we look forward to bringing homemade refreshments!

If I can assist you please, do not hesitate to contact me. I can provide program suggestions and resources for your unit.

Martha Phillips, Membership Nurture and Outreach Coordinator

Program Resources

My interest or sympathy or indignation is not aroused by an abstract cause but by the plight of a single person who I have seen with my own eyes.”

“Faith gives us a sense of obligation to live with a deeper interest in the welfare of one’s neighbor.”

Quotes by Eleanor Roosevelt

As I write this article on March 27, I have just come from a wonderful Zoom meeting of the Blue Ridge District’s first “Book Group” led by Dr. Margaret Whitt who, some of you will remember, led a group of UMW members on a Civil Rights tour to Alabama in 2015. We had 25 persons attending, including two from Smoky Mountain District, plus Lynn Gilbert, our technology guru, and Conference President, Julia Willis.

Because March is Women’s History Month, we chose the book **Eleanor, A Spiritual Biography**. Dr. Whitt did an excellent job leading us in a lively discussion of Eleanor Roosevelt and how her spiritual life led her to a life of dedication and service.

The author says in the book’s last chapter: “Reading about Eleanor’s spirituality has, I hope, offered insight into how a justice-driven spirituality changes a life and the lives of those touched by that life. Hopefully, as a result of thinking about Eleanor’s spirituality, readers will see that grace can work in and through their lives in the confluence of social, economic, religious, financial, or political opportunities often disguised as messes or catastrophes.”

If you have not yet read the book, I highly recommend that you do so. I have read it twice and found even more insight during the second reading. It is on the 2019 Reading Program list under the Leadership Category.

For our next “Book Group” meeting (date and time to be announced), we will review Gum Moon. It is very appropriate reading at this time with the racial injustice our Asian-American neighbors are experiencing. From this year’s reading program, Gum Moon is listed under Education for Mission. It is a novel, the coming-of-age story of a Chinese-American girl, but it is based on the life of the author’s wife’s grandmother. It highlights the beginnings of Gum Moon, a UMW national mission institution. I have read the book and really enjoyed it. Read the book yourselves and join us for the next “Book Group” discussion.

And don’t forget to watch “Faith Matters” on the UMW website. Watching three videos counts for reading two program reading books.

Jeanette Byrd, Blue Ridge District Program Resources

Communications Coordinator

Psalm 36: 5-7

Lord, Your faithful love (reaches) to heaven, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the highest mountain, your judgements like the deepest sea. Lord, you preserve man and beast. God, your faithful love is so valuable that people take refuge in the shadows of Your Wings.

These words make me think about our world today, and I would like to show things that we as an organization take for granted. I would like to challenge us as United Methodist Women to show to each other and other women in our units and circles what God has blessed us with.

For me, it's the years or experience around us through all the women who have been great teachers to us. One of the questions asked in a breakout session at our Mission Study was how many combined years members of our group had been involved with UMW. Well, I have only been involved for 7 years and my group had only 50 years total. As I listened to the other group amounts of 150, 165, even 202 years, I was just in awe of these women who have worked in this group and are making this organization an amazing part of my life today.

Our newsletter has become a wonderful teaching guide and outreach for women who are still quarantined in their homes and not able to get out to enjoy their church families and churches. I pray that this little newsletter helps our women to feel a little bit closer to normal for the duration of this pandemic.

If you feel like sharing any special thoughts of our units/circles who are changing our world, please email me a short description of the unit and its story and a small picture, and I will share them in the Community Outreach section.

God Bless each and every one!

Tammy Long, Blue Ridge District, Communications Coordinator

Nomination Committee

Members of the Blue Ridge District UMW are a vibrant group of women to work with in mission. While each member has specific responsibilities, we work together as a team serving locally and beyond to reach our goals. Positions that will become open in the coming year are listed below with very brief descriptions. Secretary – keeps accurate records of minutes of the district and the executive committee meetings. Mission Coordinator for Social Action – coordinates the district's program of study and action relating to current local, national, international, and global social issues. Mission Coordinator Membership, Nurture and Outreach – works with the executive committee to determine needs of the membership. Committee on Nominations – responsible for the nominations of elected leaders of the organization.

This is a large and important slate. Please give these positions prayerful consideration for God's leading to fill the openings. Feel free to contact me or any member of the committee on nominations with questions and suggestions.

Thelma McGraw, Chairperson of the Committee on Nominations



**Leah
Wandera:
*Our 2021
Annual
Prayer
Breakfast
Guest Speaker***

Jennie Greenway, our new Spiritual Growth Coordinator, is delighted to announce that Leah Wandera will be the guest speaker at our virtual Annual Prayer Breakfast on May 1. A native of Kenya, Leah will be or-

dainied a deaconess at next year's UMW Assembly in Orlando, Florida. Leah is a second-year seminary student at Drew University, where she has a 4.0 GPA. Her plan is to complete her degree in two years, rather than the usual three, so that she can return to Kenya as the first deaconess in the history of that country.

In addition to being an excellent student, she works part time to help with her college expenses, is active at Livingston United Methodist Church in Madison, NJ, and chairs the New Jersey UMC Conference Chapter of the Methodist Federation for Social Action.

Leah's interest in social justice is not new. In her native Kenya, she received her B.S. in Project Planning and Management in 2016 from Moi University. After graduation, she worked for many companies but said that she was always more interested in social issues than in supervising construction. She found herself more concerned about what had happened to the people displaced by the project! She left her job to become a Global Mission Fellow in Zimbabwe and later Chief Executive Officer with the Hope Foundation for African Women in Kenya. In 2019, she founded Mama's Smile Health Foundation, which focuses on health and education for women, children, and youth. She still directs the foundation. You can learn more about Leah by Googling her name. She will inspire us on **May 1!**

Community Outreach Unit Projects

Ubuntu in Time of Pandemic

Since we were not able to do our Ubuntu Day at Brooks Howell as Cline and I always did before, we decided we would still have such a day but here in our own community. For many years I have been president of the board of New HOPE of McDowell, which is the domestic violence and sexual abuse agency here in Marion. We chose that agency for our Ubuntu project. The agency is housed in a lovely older home down (I cannot furnish a picture for obvious security reasons).

For four evenings Cline and I cut down trees, trimmed bushes, added new mulch, bought new hanging baskets and solar lights for the walkways, carried off many bags of leaves and limbs, and hung new decorative flags. We were happy with the finished results, which made for a more pleasant atmosphere for the clients we serve but also for the dedicated staff who work there.

New HOPE stands for Healing, Outreach, Prevention, and Empowerment, which speaks to me in a special way because it also reminds me of the work we as United Methodist Women are involved in.

Jo Pyatt, Secretary

Working Women Working Together



Why Should I give to the Legacy Fund?

Think back on your personal awe of those 8 women who came together in Boston and started this audacious undertaking...a small beginning that became a movement that has changed thousands of lives for the better.

If only we could do something so momentous??

The Legacy Fund is an opportunity for each of us to step into the shoes of one of those original 8 ladies in Boston...to BE one of them...who decided something needed to be done and did it.

This is our opportunity to take those same steps, this time to **assure** that the ongoing mission they started and others have furthered will continue and prosper well into the future

This is something we should rush to do, to provide gladly...to celebrate the opportunity and thank those who conceived of it.

Nancy Reigel
Conference Treasurer,
Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women



Legacy Fund Information:

- Visit our website- www.wnccumw.org/legacyfund/
- Visit the national office website- www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/150/

Ways to Give

- Make a Legacy Fund gift through your local unit UMW treasurer, directly to your district treasurer, or at district or conference events.
- By phone- 1-800-278-7771
- Text- Legacy150 to 41444
- By Check-note "Legacy Fund" in memo and mail to:
UMW Treasurer's Office 15th floor, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY, 10115
- Other methods includes gifts in stocks, life insurance, bequests, and other forms of giving, contact the National office at the website or phone number above.



Mission Today 2021 – Reduced criteria due to COVID-19
United Methodist Women Western North Carolina Conference
MAKE A DIFFERENCE! Become a Mission Today Unit!!

NEW IN 2020 and continuing in 2021:

Mission Today Gold – Complete 10 criteria: 6 with asterisks (*) and 4 other.**

Mission Today Silver – Complete 8 criteria: 4 with asterisks (*) and 4 other.**

Mission Today Bronze – Complete 6 criteria: 4 with asterisks (*) and 2 other.**

**Note: "Other" may also include items with asterisks (*).

The purpose of promoting a Mission Today Unit is to:

Energize United Methodist Women to be more involved in mission through prayer, study and action. Increase contacts between units and mission personnel and mission projects so the United Methodist Women understand where their money goes. Encourage the use of mission resources through United Methodist Women. Expand concepts of mission, including social justice as mission.

What is a Unit?

A unit is any organized group of United Methodist Women within a church or district. Some units are composed of several circles, which periodically get together for a unit meeting.

How Do We Become a Mission Today Unit?

In order to be recognized as a Mission Today Unit, (Gold, Silver or Bronze) UMW units must complete a number of the following criteria as indicated above. Activities conducted between January 1-December 31, 2021, will be recognized at annual meetings in 2022. This is an ongoing program, so strive to become a Mission Today Unit!

CRITERIA:

- *1. The Unit will make a Pledge to Mission.
- *2. The unit will use the Prayer Calendar at each general meeting or circle meeting of the unit to pray for persons in mission and our mission work with women, children and youth. A new Prayer Calendar is printed annually and may be ordered from the Mission Resource Center. Prayer Calendar entries are posted on our UMW website and FaceBook page.
- *3. The unit will use at least two programs from the Program Book during the year. A new Program Book is printed every year and may be ordered from the Mission Resource Center.
- *4. The unit or circle will conduct or participate in at least one mission study each year. Contact your district or conference Mission Coordinator for Education & Interpretation to learn what the studies are for each year. (If members of your unit attend all 4 sessions of the virtual conference Mission u or your District Mission Study and your unit takes an action growing out of the study, Gift to Mission, ministry related to the study, etc., your unit will meet this criteria.)
- *5. The unit will have at least two members subscribing to **response** (1 member subscribing with units less than 15 members; Local unit subscription may count as one.) Order information is printed at bottom of page 2. \$24.00 for a one-year print subscription (includes digital subscription); \$20 for a one-year digital only subscription.
- *6. The unit will implement the Charter for Racial Justice in at least two ways during the year. Possibilities are:
 - a. Have members read and discuss books and articles about other races and cultures;
 - b. Sponsor or attend an interethnic event between two or more units;
 - c. Intentionally recruit women of other ethnic groups to be members and officers of the unit;
 - d. Use the Resources for Racial Justice Available on our conference website on the "Downloads Available" page under "Mission Resources."
 - e. Write to elected representatives to support legislation affecting issues such as immigration, affirmative action, low-income programs, civil rights, etc.If you are a "Justice Today" unit, you have met this criteria. See "Downloads Available" on conference website.
- *7. The unit will have a program and/or complete an action addressing one of the Issue Priorities for 2021-2024. These are 1. Climate Justice; and 2. Criminalization of Communities of Color and Mass Incarceration. You may find information at www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/focus-issues.
- *8. The unit will add at least two new members (one member for units with less than 15 members) to its roll.

- *9. The unit will have one program from the [Social Principles of the United Methodist Church 2017-2020](#). Available at www.Cokesbury.com for \$2.59 plus tax and shipping. A newer version is not yet available.
- *10. The unit will contribute to all Five Channels of Mission Giving.
- *11. The UMW Purpose will be recited at each general and/or circle meeting, including virtual meetings.
- *12. The unit will contribute \$186.90 or more to the Legacy Fund in 2021.
13. At least one member of the unit will attend Mission u and report back to the unit on classes and events they experienced. **Virtual participation qualifies as attending.**
14. At least two members (one member for units with less than 15 members) will attend the district or conference annual meeting and report back to the unit about the event and what they experienced. **Virtual participation qualifies.**
15. The unit will have at least one person joining the United Methodist Women's Action Network to receive and respond to legislative information at least three (3) times a year. To join, contact Carol Barton, United Methodist Women, 475 Riverside Dr., 15th Floor, New York, NY 10115 Phone #: 202-488-5660 or Visit: www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/action Attach the issue and action that was taken to Mission Today report.
16. Members will correspond with five persons listed in the Prayer Calendar at least once a year.
17. The unit will co-sponsor, with the local church, a Children's Sabbath. (This is a worship service highlighting the needs of children.) The United Methodist Women National Office and the Council of Bishops support this effort. Children's Sabbath materials are on our national website: www.unitedmethodistwomen.org Type "Children's Sabbath" in the search box.
18. Each unit or circle meeting will include a "**response** Moment" where an item from **response** magazine will be lifted up as a way to tell the mission story.
19. The unit will sponsor one teen member (ages 12 to 17) and/or one young woman member (ages 18 to 39) to at least one conference event during the year.
20. At least two members (one member for units with less than 15 members) will attend a district Prayer Breakfast, district Day Apart, conference Spiritual Growth Retreat, or any other special district or conference event other than Ubuntu Day. **Virtual participation in any of these events qualify as attending.**
21. At least two members (one member for units with less than 15 members) will participate in an Ubuntu Day Event. **Units may develop their own UBUNTU event in their communities.**
22. At least two members (one member for units with less than 15 members) will complete Plan 1 of the Reading Program and give a report to the unit on one of the books read. Type "Reading Program" in search box on website.
23. The unit will invite a district or conference officer, other than a member of the unit, to one of the unit meetings during the year and/or for their United Methodist Women's Sunday. May be Virtual This Qualifies as a Local Unit Visit (LUV).
24. The unit will add one new teen (ages 12 to 17) and/or one young woman (ages 18 to 39) circle during the year, or one new teen member (ages 12 to 17) or one new young woman member (ages 18 to 39) during the year.
25. 100% of the unit's active members will make a gift of at least \$18.69 to the Legacy Fund
26. The 2021 Conference Financial Goal is: Each unit will make at least one Gift to Mission, of at least \$5.00, using any cards they have, in honor of one person in Mission listed in either the **Prayer Calendar** or **response** magazine article. The unit will help accomplish the goal by sending at least one Gift to Mission in 2021 as stated above.
27. Each unit will be responsible for supporting at least one local mission project and participate in one Conference Hands-on Mission Project during the year. The local project should be listed on your Mission Today report.

Be a Mission Today Unit!

UMW Mission Resources, Website: www.umwmissionresources.org PO Box 742349, Atlanta, GA 30374-2349;
Phone: 1-800-305-9857 (toll-free); Fax: (770)280-0061; e-mail: cs@umwmissionresources.org
Magazine Circulation (For response Toll Free 1-877-881-2385 • FAX: 1-845-267-3478
Magazines with a Mission • PO Box 395 • Congers, NY 10920-0395

Conference Website: www.wncumw.org

Updated February 2021

Blue Ridge District United Methodist Women
Central United Methodist Church
27 Church Street
Asheville, NC 28801-1218

Mark Your Calendars for 2021

Conference Events 2021

June 18-19 – Spiritual Growth Retreat – ZOOM

July 15-18 – Mission u – ZOOM

September 11-12 – Annual Celebration – ZOOM

October 2 & 9 – Unbuntu Days of Service – Various Locations

October 23 – Leadership Development Day

District Events - 2021

May 1 – Prayer Breakfast – ZOOM – 10:00 A.M.

June 26 – District Book Club – ZOOM – 9:30 A.M.

August 14 – District Annual Celebration – Zoom – 10:00 AM

November 20 – District Leadership Development Day – 10:00 AM