

APRIL 2023

VOLUME 72, ISSUE 2

Conference Gram

United Women in Faith, Western North Carolina



*WNCC United Women in Faith
2023 Spiritual Growth Retreat
Thursday June 8 – Saturday June 10*

Darlene Gardner, Spiritual Growth Coordinator

Our annual [Spiritual Growth Retreat](#) is getting closer every day! Be sure to make your room reservations if you want to stay on the grounds at Lake Junaluska.

Our retreat begins on Thursday evening, June 8. On Friday morning, there will be several breakout sessions that you can sign up for when you make your online reservations. Breakout sessions will be 9:00 until 10:15 a.m. and 10:30 until 11:45 a.m. Session options will include a boat ride around the lake; the trolley garden tour; a book study on [The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek](#); "Uniting for Justice Today: Interaction and Creativity for Justice Today," an interactive session led by Joanie Strohm in which participants will design a display; the United Women in Faith Choir, led by Rev. Mark Barden and Catherine Ritch; chair yoga with LaDonna Butts; and the Kristal Bells with Donna Ireland. (Both the boat ride and the garden tour have capacity limits.)

Take advantage of this time to relax and learn. [Online registration](#) is open NOW through June 5! (additional details on pg. 2)

Musician
Catherine Ritch



Retreat Leader
Rev. Jan Brittain



Song Leader
Rev. Mark Barden



**We believe love in action
can change the world.**
Faith. Action. Sisterhood.

2023 Calendar of Events

June 8-10
**Spiritual Growth
Retreat**
Lake Junaluska

July 13-15
Mission u
Pfeiffer University

September 8-10
Annual Celebration
Lake Junaluska

October 7, 14, or 28
Ubuntu Days of
Service
Various Locations

2023 WNCC UWF Officers

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Spiritual Growth Retreat Details

Online Registration:

- Now through May 8: Early Bird registration of \$25.00.
- May 11 through June 5: Registration increases to \$40.00.

There will be no onsite registration.

Housing Reservations: Call the Lake Junaluska reservations department at 1-800-222-4930. Rates will increase after May 9, so make your reservation early and save! Rates are listed in the February 2023 *Conference Gram* and on our conference website (wnccumw.org).

Childcare: Request in advance as part of the registration process. Childcare will follow all CDC guidelines and Safe Sanctuary practices.

Hands-on Mission: [UMCOR Menstrual Hygiene Kits](#) (see details, [next page](#))

Retreat Schedule:

- **Thursday, June 8**
 - 2:00pm – Retreat check-in opens, Harrell Center
 - 7:00 – 8:15pm – Opening session, Harrell Auditorium
- **Friday, June 9**
 - 9:00 to 10:15am and 10:30 to 11:45am – Breakout sessions
 - 2:00 – 3:15pm – Second session, Harrell Auditorium
 - 7:00 – 8:15pm – Third session, Harrell Auditorium
- **Saturday, June 10**
 - 10:00 – 11:30am – Closing worship with Holy Communion, Harrell Auditorium

Online registration and complete information, including instructions for making housing reservations, is available on the retreat page of our conference website at <https://wnccumw.org/events/spiritual-growth-retreat-2023/>.



Love in Action: Hands-On Mission

Our 2023 Conference Hands-On Mission Project is UMCOR Menstrual Hygiene Kits. These kits are distributed during disasters, whether socio-economic or as the result of a natural occurrence. The kits provide basic necessities to vulnerable populations. Each kit is valued at \$24. Complete details, including assembly and packing instructions, can be found at umcmmission.org > [UMCOR](#) > [Relief Supplies](#) > [Menstrual Hygiene Kit Instructions](#). Please carefully follow the current instructions and contents list.

Watch a video about the kits and how to assemble them at <https://vimeo.com/731436539>.

Donations will be picked up at our Spiritual Growth Retreat and Annual Celebration. Donations can also be dropped off by appointment throughout the year at the [Mission Response Center](#), 8973 Greenwood Rd, Terrell, NC. MRC Contact: Ben Rogers, Mission Response Associate, 828-478-1019.

Together, we are building our legacy.

Thank you, Western North Carolina, for your strong support of The Legacy Endowment Fund! In 2022, YOU gave \$44,576.26 and YOU have given a total of \$473,554.31 since the fund began! Thank you, YOU are building our Legacy!



As a permanently invested endowment, the Legacy Fund will be an ongoing source of income, providing the assurance that our important work can always continue. Giving to the Legacy Fund will support **United Women in Faith** in perpetuity. That's why gifts to the endowment fund are such a vital way to sustain and grow our capacity to serve and advocate. Every single gift to The Legacy Endowment Fund, of any size, will make a difference!

You can give to the Legacy Fund:

- Through your local unit United Women in Faith treasurer;
- Online on the national office website at <https://uwfaith.org/give/legacy-fund/>;
- By phone: 800-278-7771 (8 am-5pm EST, M-F);
- Via text message "GIVE" to 20503;
- By check: note "Legacy Fund" in memo and mail to: United Women in Faith, Attn: Legacy, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10115;
- By becoming a Legacy Builder with a gift of at least \$18.69 per month;
- Or through other methods including gifts of stock, life insurance, bequests, and other forms of planned giving. If you are interested in making a gift like this, contact the national office at 800-278-7771.

Learn more on our website at <https://wnccumw.org/legacyfund/>. We also accept Legacy Fund gifts on our conference website through our online giving page at <https://wnc-reg.brtapp.com/MissionGivingUMW>.



TREASURY NOTES

Bess Redmond, Treasurer

The months ahead hold wonderful opportunities for us to engage in our sisterhood. I look forward to seeing you at the Spiritual Growth Retreat in June and at Mission u at Pfeiffer University in July. If you can't attend these events in person, you can still participate in online or mail-in mission giving options.

Our 2023 Conference Love Offering is a Gift to Undesignated Mission Giving...A Gift to Mission in honor of faithful leadership throughout the conference, district, and local units. We are excited to make online giving available for our **Conference Love Offering** so that you can make gifts at any time. You will receive an email receipt for your contribution. You may make your online contribution to the UNCC UWF Conference Love Offering [HERE](#).

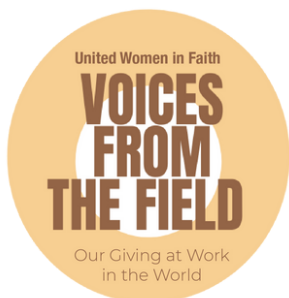
If you prefer to mail in your Conference Love Offering, you may do so by making your check payable to Treasurer, WNCC UMW and mailing it to the address below.

Bess Redmond, Conference Treasurer

19 Wright's Cove Trail

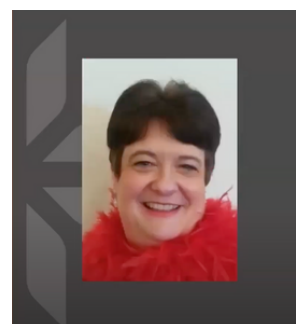
Fairview, NC 28730

Every single day you are turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world! Thank you for your giving through United Women in Faith!



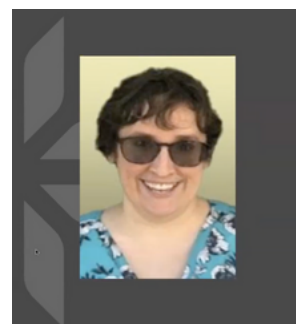
In Case You Missed it...

Our very own Tracey Owens and Joy Prim, both of whom hold the office of Deaconess, were featured in UWF's March *Voices from the Field* webinar! Fortunately, you can still catch the great conversations with them on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/LlI1ZBP-Fm8> in the episode titled "Love, Justice, Service: The Order of Deaconess and Home Missioner." While you're there, be sure to subscribe to the [United Women in Faith Youtube channel](#)!



Deaconess Tracey Owens

Director of Activities
Brooks-Howell Home
Asheville, NC



Deaconess Joy Prim

United Methodist Missionary serving
as a welfare case officer with migrant
workers in Hong Kong and convener
of International Coalition for Human
Rights in the Philippines-Hong Kong





Skyland UWF Put Love into Action

Betty L. Thompson, Communications Coordinator,
Skyland Unit UWF

Grace Circle United Women in Faith, Skyland, and the Skyland Unit held their first Climate Justice Social Action Event on February 4, 2023. On behalf of Grace Circle members, Circle Chair Betty L. Thompson asked Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer to sign a proclamation naming Saturday, February 4, Rosa Parks Transit Equity Day in celebration of Rosa Parks' birthday.

Member Jan Whiteman and Skyland Unit President Kathy Woods attended the Asheville City Council meeting where Mayor Manheimer's proclamation was read and presented to the Council. In the proclamation, the mayor urged "the city of Asheville to remember and celebrate the work of Rosa Parks and be inspired to find ways and means to create better conditions for all people to live in our community, country, and world" by securing ways for all persons to have equal access to public transit.

Through this local action, Grace Circle joined other United Women in Faith across the country, civic and labor organizations, and cities in observing [Transit Equity Day](#). The circle tapped into resources provided by Kisha Nicolas, [Just Energy 4 All](#) Coordination Consultant with the national United Women in Faith's Office of Economic and Environmental Justice. The circle also provided an educational display at Givens Gerber Park, where Grace Circle members live, so that residents, visitors, and staff could learn about this national day of action that commemorates Rosa Parks' birthday and declares that public transit is a civil right. This is love taking ACTION!



Above: Jan Whiteman and Kathy Woods attend the Asheville City Council meeting.

For further information, contact Betty Thompson at BettyT.3726@gmail.com or (828)424-8087.



Pictured with the Grace Circle display are (above left) Elaine Price and Jan Whiteman and (above right) Betty Thompson.

Learn more about how United Women in Faith serve and advocate
at <https://uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/>.



ENJOYMENT AND ENRICHMENT: THE GIFTS OF OUR UWF READING PROGRAM

Kathy Chadwell, Secretary of Program Resources

When you are getting ready to embark on a much-anticipated trip, what do you do to prepare yourself to enjoy the trip to its fullest? Yes, you plan your wardrobe and pack your bags; many of us also spend a considerable amount of time reading about the places we're going. Lush photographs and vivid descriptions of accommodations, restaurants, and tourist attractions whet our wanderer's appetite for what lies ahead. Perhaps we read nonfiction books about the places and cultures we will experience or novels set in our travel destination. For many of us, this becomes not just preface but prologue to our journey, making the experience all the richer before we even leave home. We depart with a deeper interest in and understanding of what we will see and do, a greater connection with the people and places we will encounter.

The same can be true of our journey with United Women in Faith. One of our best and most enjoyable resources for this journey is our [UWF Reading Program](#). The Reading Program can be far more than an "oh by the way" perk of UWF; it can deepen our *faith*, give richer meaning to our *action*, and enliven our precious times among this *sisterhood*.

As you engage with [this year's reading list](#), open your mind and heart to experience all that our authors have offered us. Stop and wonder, lingering with perspectives and experiences outside your usual go-to list. Read the books that seem right up your alley and perhaps one or two that are beyond your comfort zone. If you usually lean toward social action titles, you might give spiritual growth a try for a change of pace. Add a young adult novel to your list and see what you make of it. Expand your reading experience by reading with others: family members, friends, or colleagues. Share some selections with your children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren. Read with your ears using audiobooks while out on your walk. May the Reading Program nourish your soul, add enjoyment to your life, and enrich your journey.

Reading Program Categories

- Education For Mission
- Leadership Development
- Nurturing For Community
- Social Action
- Spiritual Growth

Additional Reading Program Options

- [Faith Talks](#) podcast (listening to at least two episodes counts as the equivalent of one book in the Spiritual Growth category)
- Movies (see pg. 3 of the [2023 Reading Program Catalog](#) for details)
- [Past years' reading lists](#)
- Bonus books (see pg. 22 of the [2023 Reading Program Catalog](#))

Reading Program Plans

All plans include regular reading of [response](#) magazine plus:

- Plan 1: 5 books, 1 from each category above
- Plan 2: 10 books, 2 from each category above
- Plan 3: 15 books, 2 each category plus 5 additional books from any category
- Plan 4: 20 books, 2 from each category plus 10 additional books from any category

Enjoy keeping a history of your reading and earn a Reading Program certificate each year by keeping track on the [Reading Program Reporting Form!](#)

Kathy Recommends...

I recommend [Right Here Right Now](#) by Amy G. Oden. Many Christians practice mindfulness and don't consider it part of their faith tradition. However, Christians have always practiced mindfulness. This book reveals the Christian roots of mindfulness and the actual practices that, when reclaimed, can deepen the life of faith and the power of our mission of love in the world.



Join a virtual chat about favorite books in the UWF Reading Enthusiasts Group on the Mighty Networks platform.

<https://bit.ly/reading-enthusiasts>



YOU? AT MISSION u?

LaDonna Butts, Historian

For two years I declined a friend's invitation, but I knew she would never stop asking. My thoughts were screaming, "NO, I DO NOT WANT TO GO TO THE SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION!" I mean, really? I didn't know anyone, and why would I want to go to school in the hottest part of summer: sleep in a hot dorm room, sit for hours in a hot classroom, and eat school cafeteria food? That was NOT what I considered fun. I had no desire to go on a mission trip so I considered the School of Christian Mission to be irrelevant to my life. Mostly so I could get off the hook the next year with the standard "Been there, done that; not doing it again," I finally relented and said, "Okay." I haven't missed a year since!

My first School of Christian Mission experience was at Greensboro College. The following year, Mission u as we now call it returned to Pfeiffer University where it originally began. As conference historian I should offer dates and some historical stuff, but instead I want to offer a few challenges.

- Don't know anyone? This is the perfect opportunity to get to know your sisters in faith! This is a conference event where you can sit with a small group and exchange ideas, brainstorm, laugh, and learn. I would never have met some of my favorite people if not for Mission u.
- HOT? NO! In fact you will probably need to bring a sweater. And you will definitely want to bring a blanket along with your extra long twin bedsheets. Pfeiffer University adjusts the indoor temperature to accommodate even the most hot-blooded among us. And for those of you who, like me, suffer from bad knees, feet, backs, hips or whatever ailment, there are golf carts to take you from one location to another.

- Cafeteria food? My college never offered a pizza bar and soft serve ice cream! From meat and three to pizza, deli, salads, and desserts, Pfeiffer offers it all. If you have dietary restrictions they will accommodate with advance notice.
- Not going on a mission? Guess again! Every day of your life can be a mission; we must educate ourselves on how to combat injustices, help solve everyday community problems, and work together to participate in the global ministries of the church. Additionally, in the small group setting you have an opportunity to learn how a church of any size, from small to large, can be effective in mission; a veritable plethora of ideas abounds. As I have been reminded, we will never change the world to the way we want it, but we can pray and ask God how we can help to change it to the way God wants it!

As we thankfully return to an in-person Mission u this summer, I am begging, pleading, beseeching you: Please, please register and attend Mission u 2023, whether for a one-day overview or a weekend getaway. The price is reasonable and the in-person experience is absolutely PRICELESS!!!

I ❤️ Mission u!



TIP: Order your study book for Mission u when you register online for the [Spiritual Growth Retreat](#) so that your book will be available for advance pick-up at the Retreat!

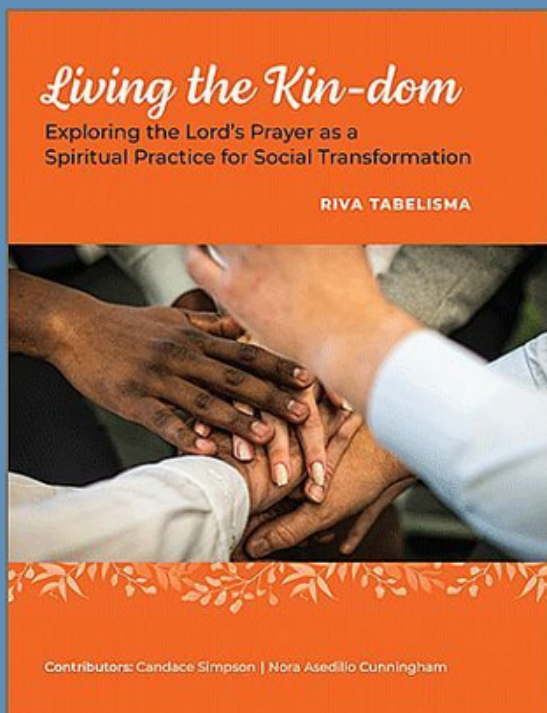




WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE
UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Amy Cochran
381 Weeks Road
Rutherfordton, NC 28139

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



WNCC United Women in Faith
2023 Mission u
Thursday July 13 – Saturday July 15
Pfeiffer University, Meisenheimer, NC

Love to learn?
Passionate about mission?
Want to engage with others who are?
Then Mission u is right for you!

More information coming soon on the [WNCC UWF website](https://www.wnccumw.org/) and in the next *Conference Gram*!

