

Conference Gram

United Women in Faith, Western North Carolina



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

*WNCC United Women in Faith
2024 Spiritual Growth Retreat
Thursday June 13 – Saturday June 15
Lake Junaluska, NC*



Registration: www.wnccumw.org

Hands-On Mission Project: [UMCOR Hygiene Kits](#)

Our Spiritual Growth Retreat Leaders



Retreat Leader
Rev. Marilyn Weiler
Retired Elder, WNCC



Music Leader
Rev. Dr. Mark Barden
Retired Elder, WNCC



Music Leader
Catherine Ritch
Circuit Riding Musician Ministry
Metro District

2024 Calendar of Events

June 13-15
Spiritual Growth
Retreat
Lake Junaluska

August 2-3
Mission u
Catholic Conference
Center, Hickory, NC

September 6-8
Annual Celebration
Lake Junaluska

October 5, 12, 26
Ubuntu Days of
Service
Various Locations

October 19
Leadership
Development Day for
District Officers
(Virtual)

2024 WNCC UW Faith Officers

President - Joanie Strohm
(828) 707-8928 ssjsmars@charter.net

Vice President - Lynn Alexander
(336) 456-6686 lynn.alexander@qorvo.com

Secretary - Albertina McGirt
(919) 914-1826 hefavorsme7@triad.rr.com

Treasurer - Bess Redmond
(828) 231-7625 bessRed17@gmail.com

Spiritual Growth Coordinator - Betty Durham
(336) 542-8077 betty.durham50@yahoo.com

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(336) 596-5523 vickiebrown961@gmail.com

Membership, Nurture & Outreach Coord. - Kim Eller
(336) 457-0424 kimelleryobev21@gmail.com

Social Action Coordinator - Laquetta Barbee
(336) 580-5879 Laquetta16@gmail.com

Communications Coordinator - Amy Cochran
(828) 429-6922 commcoorwnccuwf@gmail.com

Program Resources Secretary - Cathy McCauley
(704) 965-6566 cathymc855@yahoo.com

Nominations Chair - Brenda Steadman
(336) 509-4043 bsteadman@triad.rr.com

Mission u Dean - LaDonna Butts
(704) 652-1994 ladonna.butts@windstream.net

Parliamentarian - Martha Phillips
(828) 467-3167 mcwphillips@gmail.com

Historian - Sandra Williamson
(336) 681-7258 stbw1948@gmail.com

Scholarship Chair - Jatana Royster
(704) 451-3816 jatanaroyster@gmail.com

Program Advisory Group - Sherry Sink
(336) 880-2663 sherrysink@gmail.com

Webmaster/Legacy Liaison - Lynne Gilbert
(336) 207-3479 lynnegilbert2@gmail.com



Spiritual Growth Retreat Details

Online Registration:

- Register online through June 10 at <https://wnccumw.org/events/spiritual-growth-retreat-2024/>. One person may do multiple individual registrations using the same email address to assist those who do not use a computer.

There will be no onsite registration. Registration will close on June 10.

Housing Reservations:

- By phone: Call the Lake Junaluska reservations department Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., at 1-800-222-4930.
- Online: Visit the Lake Junaluska online reservations system's UW Faith page [here](#).
- A special group rate is available through May 13. Rates are listed on our [conference website](#).

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

Retreat Schedule:

- **Thursday, June 13**
 - 2:00pm - Retreat check-in opens, Harrell Center
 - 7:00 - 8:15pm - Opening session, Harrell Auditorium
- **Friday, June 14**
 - 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 15**
 - 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-2024/>.



Love in Action: Hands-On Mission

Our 2024 Spiritual Growth Retreat Hands-On Mission Project is UMCOR 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 \$12. Complete details, including assembly and packing instructions, can be found at umcmmission.org > [UMCOR](#) > [Relief Supplies](#) > [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://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xihy6cwD2Xs&t=6s>. A downloadable and printable PDF is available [here](#).

Donations will be picked up at our Spiritual Growth Retreat. 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 2023, YOU gave \$40,934 and YOU have given a total of \$514,488 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.brtaapp.com/MissionGivingUMW>.



Your Input is Needed...

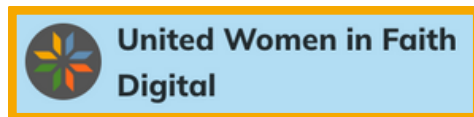
We need your input on the dedication of the 2024 Annual Report Book.

Each year, the Western North Carolina Conference United Women in Faith Annual Report Book is dedicated to a special woman who is honored at our Annual Celebration in September at Lake Junaluska. A nominee must meet the following criteria.

- Has served at local unit, district, and conference levels
- Demonstrates leadership abilities
- Works well with her fellow UW Faith members



To make a nomination for the dedication, request a nomination form by contacting Lisa Bacon at lisabacon304@gmail.com or 828-226-2433. Completed nomination forms must be submitted by June 1.



Do YOU Digital?

There's a world of connection at your fingertips on United Women in Faith Digital. Sign up and take your UW Faith membership to the next level! Just go to <https://www.uwfaith.org/digital> and create an account. And for on-the-go access, be sure to install the Mighty Networks app on your mobile phone and look for the United Women in Faith Digital network in the app!

What can you do on United Women in Faith Digital? You can...

...keep up with the calendar of national events! (Hint: Many are virtual, so you can attend from anywhere!)

...explore and join discussion groups, like the Reading Enthusiasts that discuss Reading Program books!

...connect with other members near and far. Hey, there's Martha! Hi, Martha!

...and SO much more! Check it out at <https://www.uwfaith.org/digital>.



History in the Making

Betty Durham, Spiritual Growth Coordinator

It was a cold, rainy, and stormy night. No, it wasn't 1869; it was November 21, 2023. Two women had gathered a group of like-minded friends to discuss missions and how to keep mission alive. No, it wasn't Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Parker; it was Patricia Shoffner and Nancy Fisher. It wasn't in Boston. It was in Julian, North Carolina in the southeast Guilford part of the Northern Piedmont District of the Western North Carolina Conference. And it wasn't in a church building; it was in the Julian Lions Club. The men of the Lions club had generously offered for the women to use their building for free. (I should probably mention that some of these women are wives of the Lions). A good United Women in Faith member always has an idea on how to make something work!

These ladies had all been displaced by the disaffiliation of their former churches but were determined to not let that hold them back from being United Women in Faith. The 12 ladies in attendance, from three different churches, were looking for new church homes. They all had a strong desire to continue to be members of United Women in Faith and didn't want to wait until they had new church homes. Joining the 12 local members at the meeting were Lynne Gilbert and Betty Durham from the conference UW Faith officers team and Rev. Andrew Baten, the Southeast Guilford Emerging Community pastor. The group talked about the interest in remaining a unit as they transitioned into different UMC churches.

Everybody came with different ways of being United Methodist Women, now United Women in Faith, and different ways their previous local units had operated. There was so much excitement for a new unit, how it could look, and what they could do by sharing new ideas. Coming out of a time of uneasiness, it was like a breath of fresh air. They still had a strong desire to serve their communities. Starting a new unit gave them hope. Born out of sadness for the loss of things past was excitement for something new.

That night a slate of officers was elected and goals were discussed. They came with empty coffers, so they talked about ideas for fundraisers to keep their missions going. They decided on a name for their unit: the Southeast Guilford United Women in Faith. That was a lot for the first meeting but most of these women already knew each other, which facilitated the accomplishments of the meeting.

Since that first meeting in November, the group made a Pledge to Mission and decided on a meeting time and place for the winter months. Some attended the Northern Piedmont District United Methodist Women in Faith virtual book study on February 3. They've served at their local community fellowship meal. On February 10th they met to put together flower vases to deliver to shut-ins from their former churches and to others in the community.

Their follow-up to the first meeting was Tuesday, February 20th, when they shared in the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial program, "Come and Learn," another step in their new unit's mission giving. The ladies of this group graciously allowed the men (husbands, friends, and Lions Club members) to meet in the kitchen of their new community-based location, the Lion's Club building, while the ladies used the meeting hall. This is just another way of becoming a new community of faith.

Even as these women sought out new church homes, they found an outlet in their community for their determination to remain United Women in Faith and United Methodist and to serve their community. They hit the ground running. Let's pray for their success and hold them up as an example of what women strong in their faith can do.

No, this is not old history. This is new history in the making.



The new Southeast Guilford United Women in Faith



We Read to Connect

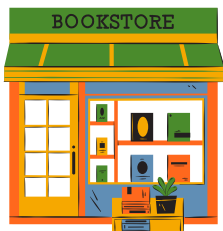
Amy Cochran, Communications
Coordinator

Connection: It has been researched and written about and has become a frequently discussed topic with regard to our wellbeing. It is one of the levels of basic human needs identified in Maslow's seminal hierarchy of needs. It is even part of the United Women in Faith mission statement (see [LaDonna's article](#) on the next page). Our UW Faith Reading Program is one avenue to living into that mission statement by connecting with one another.

The [UW Faith Reading Program web page](#) tells us that "The Reading Program is not meant to be completed alone or in a vacuum." The page offers a number of ideas for connecting around the Reading Program, including by reading and discussing Reading Program books in groups. Such groups can be in person at specific times and places or virtual in online chat groups.

A great in-person opportunity to connect over a good book is coming up in June at the Spiritual Growth Retreat. One of the Friday breakout sessions will be a book study led by Jennie Greenway, Blue Ridge District Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth. This study will be about the Reading Program book [Other Words for Home](#) by [Jasmine Warga](#). This *New York Times* bestseller is described on our online bookshop as, "A gorgeously written, hopeful middle grade novel in verse about a young girl who must leave Syria to move to the United States...This lyrical, life-affirming story is about losing and finding home and, most importantly, finding yourself." About the book and the upcoming book study, Jennie says, "I'm looking forward to sharing this book with everyone because it shows us that home is truly where your heart is and how life can sometimes not be easy, but that it will all be okay."

In preparation for the book study, order your copy of [Other Words from Home](#) from the UW Faith online bookshop at <https://bookshop.org/shop/uwfaith> (and earn 10% back for UW Faith!).



Click Here to
Shop Now

Reading Program Categories

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

Reading Program Plans

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

More Great Ways to Earn Reading Program Credit

- [Faith Talks](#) podcast (one credit in the Spiritual Growth category for listening to 2+ episodes)
- [Voices from the Field](#) webinar (one credit in the Education for Mission category for listening to 2+ episodes)
- **Movies** (see pg. 3 of the [2024 Reading Program Catalog](#) for details)
- [Past years' reading lists](#) (Books from the 2019-2023 lists still count!)
- **Bonus books** (see pg. 2 of the [2024 Reading Program Catalog](#))
- **Mission u** (1 credit in Spiritual Growth for reading a Mission u study on your own, 2 credits in Spiritual Growth for joining a Mission u study with others, as a leader or participant)
- [response](#) magazine (1 credit in the Nurturing for Community category for reading one year/6 issues)

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



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

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



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH MISSION (AND MISSION u!)

LaDonna Butts, Mission u Dean

United Women in Faith mission statement: We seek to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

Did you happen to notice the word *education* in our mission? Since our organization's inception in 1869, education has been a strong pillar in our mission. By November of that year, the newly formed organization had raised funds and sent educator Isabella Thoburn and Dr. Clara Swain to India. Starting with just six young girls, Ms. Thoburn began a school that went on to become Isabella Thoburn College, Asia's first women's college. Education is not just rooted in our history; it is our present and our future.

Each year, United Women in Faith gather to learn more about missions and about being in mission. In a United Methodist News Service commentary, Schools of Christian Mission--now known as [Mission u](#)--were described as some of the very best lay faith education being offered in the United Methodist Church. The United Women in Faith website describes Mission u as "a transformative educational program that encompasses both Bible-based curricula and events."

The Mission u theme for 2024 is "The Kin-dom Is Among You: Drawing Closer to God and One Another." The adult curriculum is titled, "Welcome Home." Our conference Mission u event is scheduled for August 2 and 3 and will be held at the Catholic Conference Center in Hickory, NC. More information will be forthcoming in future conference newsletters and on the [WNCC UW Faith website's Mission u page](#).

I encourage everyone to attend Mission u and to also consider enrolling in [lay servant ministries](#) training prior to Mission u. Why? Because once you have completed Basic Lay Servant training, you can apply for Advanced Lay Servant training by attending Mission u! We are all called to serve; it is our mission. Let us "inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities." See u at Mission u!



Learn more about the mission, vision, and action of United Women in faith at <https://uwfaith.org/who-we-are/>!



Amy Cochran
381 Weeks Road
Rutherfordton, NC 28139

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*WNCC United Women in Faith
2024 Spiritual Growth Retreat
Thursday June 13 – Saturday June 15*

Register online at wnccumw.org!

Lake Junaluska Accommodations

For reservations, call 1-800-222-4930, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Prices below are per room, per night and do not include tax. Meal package includes Thursday dinner, Friday b/l/d, and Saturday breakfast but does not include tax or service fee.

Hotel Lodging	Single	Double	Triple	Quad	Meal Pkg/Person (5 meals)
Terrace Hotel	\$142.00	\$142.00	\$162.00	\$182.00	\$89.00
Lambuth Inn	\$142.00	\$142.00	\$157.00	\$172.00	\$89.00
Lake Junaluska Apartments	\$129.00	\$129.00	\$139.00	\$149.00	Not Included

