



United
Women
in Faith

Western North Carolina

Blue Ridge District Newsletter United Women in Faith

Purpose: UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH is a community of women whose purpose is to know God and 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.

Welcome Home

Mission Study with the Smoky Mountain District on Zoom
March 8th-10 am to Noon and
March 10th 6:30-8:30 pm, 2025



To register for zoom events, go to wnccumw.org, click on Districts and then District Events 2025, find the Blue Ridge pink box, click on Zoom choice and then Zoom Registration Link. Or click here: [District Events | WNCC United Women in Faith](#)

Blue Ridge District United Women in Faith 2025 OFFICERS

<p><u>President:</u> Lucy Earls (Oak Grove) 913 Race Path Church Rd. Ellenboro, NC 28040 (828) 453-8566 (h) (828) 223-1325 (c) jearls@att.net</p>	<p><u>Vice President:</u> Stephanie Goudreau (Marion First) 320 S. Garden Street Marion, NC 28752 (828)460-2463 segoudreau@yahoo.com</p>	<p><u>Secretary:</u> Glenda Fuhrmann (Central) 10 Dustin Drive Swannanoa, NC 28778 (828) 337-2617 glendafuhrmann@yahoo.com</p>	<p><u>Treasurer:</u> Martha Phillips (Pine Grove) P. O. Box 49, Linville Falls, NC 28647 (828) 467-3167, mcwphillips@gmail.com</p>
<p><u>MC, Spiritual Growth:</u> Gwen Harris (Windom) 215 Grand View Lane Burnsville, NC 28714 (828) 682-4589 gwenaharris68@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>MC, Education & Interpretation:</u> Sandra Wells (Central) 219 Aurora Drive Asheville, NC 28804 828-273-0726 sandracwells@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>MC, Social Action:</u> Beverly Hill (Black Mountain) 202 Border Street Black Mountain, NC 28711 828-778-9309 Beverlyhill19@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>MC, Membership Nurture & Outreach:</u> Tracey Owens (Marion First) 310 S. Garden Street Marion, NC 28752 (828) 246-6006 traceybh@gmail.com</p>
<p><u>Secretary of Program Resources:</u> Jennie Greenway (Oak Grove) 164 Emma Drive Ellenboro, NC 28040 (828) 289-1642 jengreenway@bellsouth.net</p>	<p><u>Communications Coordinator:</u> Kathy Woods (Skyland) 11 Azalea Road Arden, 28704 (828) 777-8617 mysumcemail@gmail.com</p>	<p><u>Parliamentarian:</u> Jo Pyatt (East Marion) P. O. Box 1621 Marion, NC 28040 (828) 803-0363 pyattjo@gmail.com</p>	
<p><u>Historian:</u> To be named.</p>			
<u>Committee On Nominations</u>			
<p>Jackie Rio, Co-chair (Black Mountain) 101 Second Street Black Mountain, NC 28711 (828) 669-2885 jackierio@charter.net Class of 2025</p>	<p>Karen Anderson, Co-chair (Skyland) 9 Chestnut Mtn. Ridge Asheville, NC 28803 (828) 628-9385 kanderson95@gmail.com Class of 2025</p>	<p>Jeannette Byrd (St. Paul's) 203 Aurora Dr. Asheville, NC 28805 (828) 230-5308 jbyrdasheville@aol.com Class of 2028</p>	<p>Susan Snell (Central) 30 Sunflower Lane Fletcher, NC 28732 (828) 551-0736 ssnell123@bellsouth.net Class of 2023</p>
<p>Eva Farren (Piney Mountain) 14 St. Matthews Drive Candler, NC 28715-6207 (828) 231-3820 evafarren@icloud.com Class of 2025</p>			
<p><u>Members at Large</u> Dixie Liggett, (Skyland), 8 Springside Park, Asheville, NC 28803, (828) 684-1831, liggett3@charter.net Martha Phillips, (Pine Grove) P. O. Box 49, Linville Falls, NC 28647 (828) 467-3167, mcwphillips@gmail.com</p>			
<p><u>Conference Advisor</u> Joanie Strohm (Weaverville), 111 Collins Road, Marshall, NC 28753, (828) 707-8928, ssjsmars@charter.net</p>			

2025 Calendar of Events

Events for All Members	District and Conference Officers
	<i>Feb. 8 Conference Finance Committee Meeting (Mt Shepherd Retreat Center)</i>
	<i>Feb. 9 Conference Executive Committee Meeting (Mt Shepherd Retreat Center)</i>
Feb. 22 - Zoom BR District Book Study- <i>The Lucky Ones</i> by Linda Williams Jackson. 10:00 AM-11:30 AM	
March 8, 10 - Zoom District Mission Study with Smoky Mountain- <i>Welcome Home</i>	
	<i>March 15 District Executive Committee Meeting-9:30 AM (Location TBD)</i>
	<i>March 15 Conference Scholarship Committee Meeting at 1:00pm (Virtual)</i>
March 23 Giving Day All UWFaith Members	
April 12 District Prayer Breakfast, Skyland UMC, Arden (South Asheville), 9:30 AM	
May 24 Zoom BR District Book Study-10:00 AM-11:30 AM	
June 12-14 Spiritual Growth Retreat, Lake Junaluska All UMFaith Members	
June 20-22 UMC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska	
	<i>June 28 District Executive Committee Meeting-9:30 AM (Location TBA)</i>
July 18-19 Mission u, Catholic Conference Center, All UWFaith Members	
Aug. 2 Zoom BR District Book Club-10:00 AM-11:30 AM	
	<i>Aug. 9 Conference Finance Committee (TBD)</i>
	<i>Aug. 10 Conference Executive Committee (TBD)</i>
Aug. 16 District Annual Celebration 9:30 AM (TBD)	
Sept. 6, Conference Annual Celebration, Sally Vonner, CEO of UWFaith, Speaker, Location TBD	
Sept. 13 Zoom BR District Book Club-10:00 AM-11:30 AM	
	<i>Sept. 27 District Executive Committee Meeting (TBD)</i>
	<i>Oct. 18 Conference Leadership Development Day, LDD All District Officers (Virtual)</i>
Oct.11, 25 Ubuntu Days of Service (various locations) All UWFaith Members	
Nov. 1 District Leadership Development Day (TBA)	
	<i>Nov. 7 Orientation for new Conference Officers Nov. 8 Conference Committee Meetings Nov. 9 Conference Executive Committee meeting</i>

A Message from Your President

I find it hard to believe that it is February. The month of January has flown by and I haven't even wished all of you a Happy New Year!

I am so excited about our United Women in Faith upcoming year and I hope you are. We have a great calendar of events planned both at the District and Conference levels. Our first event is the ZOOM Book study with the Smoky Mtn. District, Saturday, Feb. 22. See page 7 for more information. I hope this will be the year that your unit can participate in many of these events. I want to remind you that every local unit may not be exactly like the one in your neighboring church, but every unit is important.

Our overall theme for 2025 is "Proclaiming Our Hope." We all need hope in our world today and can proclaim that hope through prayer, study, celebration, learning, and action.

The District Executive Committee met recently and set two goals for 2025:

- 1) Building relationships in our local units by supporting opportunities to meet and serve together.
- 2) Building relationships with and supporting the UW Faith mission institutions in our Conference.

I hope you are getting excited about 2025. Let's make this a great year!

Lucy Earls, President



Vice President's Message

Greetings! Thank you for this opportunity to serve as your vice president. I am here to serve you and ask that you contact me any time I can be of assistance.

At our recent District Executive Committee meeting, we selected "Proclaiming our Hope" as our theme for 2025. Coincidentally, my devotion today from *A Little God Time for Women* was titled "Hope". To paraphrase, the author for this particular day says that hope is the strong desire for something good to happen partnered with a reason to believe it will. Hope brings joy, expectancy, and peace. I especially like this quote, "When we put our hope in Christ, he becomes our reason to believe good things will happen. He is our hope."

The scripture Romans 15:13 is included in the devotion: *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

We have a wonderful reason to believe that good things will happen as we allow Christ to lead us into 2025.

Stephanie Goudreau

Membership, Nurture, and Outreach

Hello Fellow UWFaith,

I am Tracey Owens. Many of you know me since I have been on the Blue Ridge District UWFaith team in many roles since 2013. I'm also a Deaconess serving at Brooks-Howell Home. Now I am the new Membership, Nurture, and Outreach Coordinator. My main role is to assist the district UWFaith in increasing and nurturing their unit. One way is to invite your Nurturing Partner to visit your unit. Each unit is assigned one of the district officers.

Listed below are reasons and ways to invite your Nurturing Partner. Your unit President should be hearing from them in the near future. Also, a list of the Nurturing Partners is in this newsletter. Together let us fulfill our mission of enhancing the lives of women, children, and youth around the world!

Local Unit Visitations (LUV)

A few reasons to invite a district or conference officer to your local unit:

- Gain information and resources.
- Build stronger relationships between your unit and the district and conference.
- Share any thoughts or concerns you may have—this is a chance to have your voice heard.
- Fulfill criterion #22 on Mission Today.
- Enjoy fellowship.



How do I invite an officer to come to my local unit?

- Contact your Nurturing Partner. Each local unit has a district officer who is a Nurturing Partner. You should hear from your Nurturing Partner throughout the year. Invite them to come to a local unit event, a unit meeting, United Women in Faith Sunday, etc. *(see the next page in the newsletter for list).*
- To invite an officer who is not your Nurturing Partner, check your district or conference newsletter for contact information. You may also find contact information on the WNCC UWFaith website under Districts (district officers).
- Check your district newsletters for a list of the Nurturing Partners and their local units.

If you can't find your Nurturing Partner information (see next page in newsletter) or have any additional questions about how to invite an officer to your local unit, contact Tracey Owens (828-246-6006) traceybhh@gmail.com.

Tracey Owens, Coordinator

2025 NURTURING PARTNERS for BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT
 - PLEASE ASK YOUR NURTURING PARTNER TO COME VISIT

Nurturing Partner	Church	Nurturing Partner	Church
Lucy Earls (828) 453-8566 (828) 223-1325	First Forest City Spindale Edneyville	Jeannette Byrd (828) 230-5308	Central Mills River
Stephanie Goudreau (828) 460-2463	Pleasant Hill-Marion Concord Clinchfield	Gwen Harris (828) 682-4589	Bald Creek Mars Hill Weaverville
Beverly Hill (828) 778-9309	Biltmore East Marion	Sandra Wells (828) 273-0726	Asbury Memorial Skyland Hendersonville First
Glenda Fuhrmann (828) 337-2617	Montmorenci	Jackie Rio (828) 669-2885	Addie's Chapel
Tracey Owens (828) 246-6006	Black Mountain Groce Oak Grove	Martha Phillips (828) 467-3167	Spruce Pine Windom Marion First
Joanie Strohm (828) 707-8928	Piney Mountain Salem	Karen Anderson (828) 628-9385	St. Paul's Abernethy
Jennie Greenway (828) 289-1642	First Rutherfordton Gilkey Moore's Grove	Eva Farren (828) 231-3820	Grace Balfour
Susan Snell (828) 551-0736	S.O.W. in Faith (Oakley/Sardis)	Kathy Woods (828) 777-8617	Saluda



Nominations Committee

We appreciate everyone who is serving in a new or continuing term on the Blue Ridge District Executive Committee (see the list in this newsletter). The year ahead is promising as we work to support missions that serve women, children and youth.

We are always interested in meeting or hearing from ladies who would like to expand their UWFaith roles and serve in one of the many leadership positions. If that is you, or if you know of someone with a special talent, ability or interest, please let us know! There are always positions to fill as most of the positions are for two-year terms.

We would be happy to share information and job descriptions, or put you in touch with someone who knows details of what each job involves. Thank you, and we look forward to another great year.

Co-Chairs

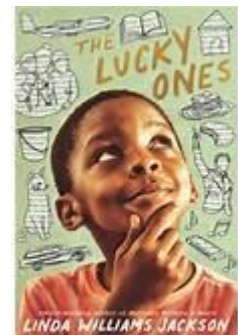
Jackie Rio (jackierio@charter.net)

Karen Anderson (ksanderson95@gmail.com)

Program Resources

Happy 2025 to everyone! I am so excited to be taking on the role of Program Resource this year!

Our first event will be on February 22, via Zoom and we will be talking about the book *The Lucky Ones* by Linda Williams Jackson. This book takes place in 1967 in the Mississippi Delta. Ellis Earl is an 11-year-old boy who dreams of becoming a teacher or a lawyer, but most of all he wants a big, brick house in town and wants there to be enough food for him and all his family. Ellis' teachers see potential in him and work hard to encourage him. Ellis is encouraged by a book his teacher gives him, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, by seeing a poor family who has a happy ending. After his mama tells him that he may have to quit school and get a job, he wonders if he'll get his happy ending.



We hope to “see” you on the Zoom on February 22 to talk about this wonderful book. You may register at <https://wncumw.org/districtevents/>

Jennie Greenway, Secretary of Program Resources

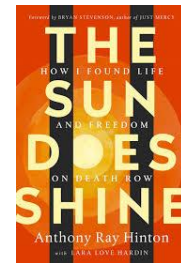
Social Action

Greetings from your newest Social Action Coordinator! As we hopefully leave much of the stress and problems of 2024 in the past, we do continue to carry the Social Action initiatives into the New Year.

This year we continue to focus on Ending Mass Incarceration, Criminalization of Communities of Color and Just Energy for All. There is still much to learn and ways to act under these initiatives.



I encourage you to continue to work within your units to lift these up. One way is to encourage reading under the Social Action section of the UWF reading program. Currently I am reading 2 excellent books to help me. The first is a novel by Celeste Ng entitled Our Missing Hearts. It is an old story made new, of the ways supposedly civilized communities can ignore the most searing injustices. It promises to leave us with thoughts as to what we pass on to our children and the power to create change. Also, The Sun Does Shine, How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row by Anthony Ray Hinton deals with the power of the human spirit to rise above complete injustice as he was exonerated after spending 30 years on death row. A powerful part of the book is the list of every person listed by name and state who is currently on death row entitled "Pray for them by Name".



And as we also continue to fight for justice for children everywhere, I encourage you to write your support for the CARE (Create Accountable Respectful Environments for Children) act currently in the Ways and Means committee of Congress. Congressman Chuck Edwards was a sponsor of this act which would address or assist for the safe and funded homes and resources for foster children- including keeping siblings together. To learn more about House Bill 3852 you can go to <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/3852>. To contact your congressional representative: <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>.

CONGRESS.GOV

Please feel free to contact me if you need resources or encouragement for your units. There is important work to be done and I am so grateful you are right here with me!

Beverly Hill, Social Action

Spiritual Growth

For the next two years, I will be your spiritual growth coordinator. Spiritual growth is so important to United Women in Faith that it permeates our purpose. The very first goal is “to know God,” while the second is “to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ.”

The question becomes, “How do we accomplish that?” For most of us prayer and the Bible are the bedrock of spiritual growth. But as we mature in faith, we seek outside resources to help us better understand Scriptures.

I want to ask you in this first 2025 newsletter to share some of the written resources that have resulted in your spiritual growth. What resource or article has helped you understand a difficult Bible passage or Christian concept? Email your titles and authors to me at gwenaharris68@gmail.com and I will share some of them in future newsletters.



Now for important news: Skyland United Women in Faith is hosting this year’s prayer breakfast on April 12 at Skyland United Methodist Church in Asheville. The speaker will be Reverend Veranita Alvord, the pastor at Brevard UMC. She was our mission speaker at the conference annual celebration in 2024. Veranita is a happy Christian and an inspiring speaker. She incorporated her experience in Zimbabwe, Africa, with her missionary parents, Alec and Dot Alvord. The second newsletter will give you much more information about Veranita AND the prayer breakfast.



This year we’re also having a special hands on project that benefits our district: We are bringing gift cards for Brooks Howell Home to help them as they recover from Hurricane Helene. Their grounds sustained quite a bit of damage. A staff member has suggested that gift cards from Lowe’s, Walmart, and Home Depot are always appreciated.

You can also bring your UMCOR Menstrual Kits or Hygiene Kits to the meeting, and ME&I Sandra Wells will get them to Lake Junaluska in June.

Mark your calendars. I can’t think of a better way to kick off your spring than attending our prayer breakfast!

Gwen Harris, Coordinator

Mission Education and Interpretation

Hi, my name is Sandra Wells, your new MEI. This is my first district coordinator position and my first newsletter.



I am a member of Central UMC Asheville, my hometown. I am looking forward to meeting many of you on Zoom and in person at district and conference events.

During Helene, Brooks-Howell Home suffered significant damage to their grounds. Therefore, at our prayer breakfast on April 12 at Skyland UMC, we will be collecting a Special Project to help in their recovery; gift cards to Lowe's, Home Depot, and Walmart will be received.

We will also collect Hygiene and Menstrual Kits, as usual.

I am excited to be in this position and look forward to meeting you.

Sandra Wells, Mission Education and Interpretation

Useful Links:

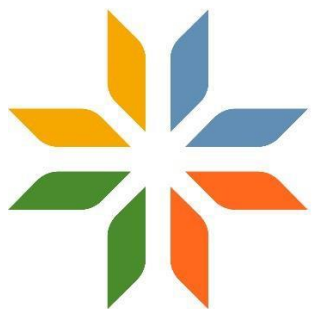
UW Faith Reading Program: [Reading Program | United Women in Faith](#)

response Magazine: [response magazine | United Women in Faith](#)

WNC Conference Newsletter: [Conference Gram | WNCC United Women in Faith](#)

Brookes Howell Connection: [Brooks-Howell Serendipitor | WNCC United Women in Faith](#)

Resources: [United Women in Faith - Shop](#)



United
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WNCC United Women in Faith SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Do you know a student who is a member of one of the WNCC United Methodist Churches?

Will they attend one of the United Methodist supported institutions in our conference (Bennett College, Brevard College, Greensboro College, High Point University, Pfeiffer University) for the fall semester 2025?

Then they are eligible to apply for a WNCC United Women in Faith scholarship!

Applications should be requested by contacting the scholarship committee

chairperson:

Jatana Royster

8227 Laurel Oak Court Harrisburg, NC 28075

704-451-3816 (cell)

Email: jatanaroyster@gmail.com

Applications are due by March 1, 2025. Interviews will be conducted in March 15, 2025. YOU can support our scholarship program by:

Referring students.

Praying for our students and UM supported institutions.

Contributing to the general scholarship fund as districts, units, circles and individuals.

Please contact me if you need additional information.

Blessings,

Jatana Royster

**We believe love in
action can change the
world.**

**Faith. Action.
Sisterhood.**



**United
Women
in Faith**

Western North Carolina

Conference 2025 VISION & GOALS

- ◆ Model our **Purpose** as United Women in Faith (UW Faith) who come together in unity, loving, and serving.
- ◆ Raise awareness and promote personal advocacy and action for our two United Women in Faith priority issues: *Just Energy 4 All*, and *Ending Mass Incarceration and Criminalization of Communities of Color*
- ◆ Build relationships with our local units, members, and potential members in living out the **Purpose**, leaning in to and supporting opportunities to meet and serve together.
- ◆ Build relationships with and support the United Women in Faith mission institutions in our conference: Alliance Center for Education Charlotte, Bethlehem Center Winston-Salem, Brooks-Howell Home, Bennett College, and Pfeiffer University
- ◆ Achieve our 2025 Conference Financial Goal: Each unit will increase their Gift in Memory giving by 10%.
- ◆ Turn faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world as we live out our **Purpose** as United Women in Faith!

Our Purpose:

The organized unit of **United Women in Faith** 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.

wnccumw.org • facebook.com/wnccumw • uwfaith.org

Treasurer

Greetings Blue Ridge District Ladies,

We are ready to start a new year in our lifting up the mission work of Blue Ridge District United Women in Faith. But first let me share with you how well we did in 2024. Remember our Pledge for 2024 was \$82,100.00.

Pledge to Mission (total of all undesignated giving)

\$71,172.83

Special Mission Recognition

\$2,250.00

Gift to Mission

\$1,675.00

Gift in Memory

\$2,685.00

World Thank Offering

\$10,841.30

Walk for Mission

\$7,530.00

Call to Prayer and Self Denial

\$6,191.60

Other Designated Giving

\$5,078.00

Legacy Fund

\$2,317.81



We missed our District Goal this year by \$10,927.17. We decided to keep the same goal of \$82,100.00 for 2025 last July when that decision was made. We are setting our sights high and have our work cut out for the District. Together we can meet this goal, remembering the women, children, and youth who depend on us as we plan our giving this year.

Peace and every good,

Martha Phillips

Sweet Friendship *written by Jan Whiteman*

Christmas time is such a special season for our church and for friends and family. In December I was honored to be part of a gathering where two friends, Aubyn Adams and Berty Shuford, were able to gather together. This is not an easy task, Aubyn turned 99 on 12/4 and Berty is not far behind her. I was able to get Berty into the car and drive her to Aubyn's house and we spent some time together. They have been friends for over 65 years and the best part of their friendship took place because they were both members of Skyland UMC and UWFaith Good Morning Circle. During this time together they talked about things they remembered doing together, like bowling and doing things around the church, and just having fun times as good friends do. They have such a special friendship. I was so happy to see the joy the conversation brought them.



The photos of Aubyn and Berty were taken by Aubyn's caregiver and the one of their hands together tells a complete story of what their friendship means. Hopefully this story of friendship of two of our more mature members will encourage the connection each of us have in our small groups and in the gatherings that still go on in our church family today.

Speaking from my years in our church, I know that I cherish the friendships that I have made and remember that God brings us all together to be not only example in our community on what a Church family means, but can bring so much more meaning to the purpose we have to spread God's word to everyone.



Written by Jan Whiteman
Skyland UWFaith Unit Treasurer

Save the date:

Prayer Breakfast – April 12, 2025
Skyland United Methodist Church, Asheville



Blue Ridge District United Women in Faith
Kathy Woods
11 Azalea Rd
Arden, NC 28704

Mark Your Calendars for 1st half of 2025

Feb. 22 - Zoom BR District Book Study-The Lucky Ones by Linda Williams Jackson.
10:00 AM-11:30 AM

March 8, 10 - Zoom District Mission Study with Smoky Mountain- Welcome Home
March 23 - Giving Day All UWFaith Members

April 12 - District Prayer Breakfast, Skyland UMC, Arden-9:30 AM

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June 12-14 Spiritual Growth Retreat, Lake Junaluska All UWFaith Members

June 20-22 UMC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska

July 18-19 Mission u, Catholic Conference Center, All UWFaith Members

To register for zoom events, go to wnccumw.org, click on Districts and then District Events 2025, find the Blue Ridge pink box, click on Zoom choice and then Zoom Registration Link.