



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.



Proclaiming Our Hope through Prayer

The Blue Ridge District cordially invites you to attend the Prayer Breakfast.

When: Saturday, April 12, 2025

Where: Skyland United Methodist Church, Arden, NC

Breakfast will be served from 8:30 am – 9:15 am

Service Time: 10:00 am (service)

Cost \$10 (includes breakfast)

Guest Speaker: Rev. Veranita Alvord of Brevard Methodist Church.

Unit Presidents have received registration forms in the mail, and we ask that you respond to those as soon as possible so we can get a correct count for food.

In order to make food preparations, we have set **Tuesday, April 1 as the deadline** for registration and payment. **We cannot accept onsite registration.**

Our hands-on project this year is **gift cards for Brooks Howell**. We ask for cards from Lowe's, Walmart, and Home Depot.

We will take a **love offering** in honor of all the workers who have been involved in relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Helene. This offering goes toward our district pledge.

If any unit has UMCOR kits, you **may** bring them to the meeting. No items for Project Agape can be accepted at this time

**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 28805 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) 279-9658 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 <u>Conference Advisor</u> Joanie Strohm (Weaverville), 111 Collins Road, Marshall, NC 28753, (828) 707-8928, ssjstars@charter.net</p>			

2025 Calendar of Events

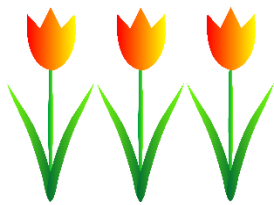
Events for All Members	District and Conference Officers
March 23 Giving Day All UWFaith Members	
April 12 District Prayer Breakfast, Skyland UMC, Arden (South Asheville), 9:30 AM	
May 24 Zoom BR District Book Study-10:00 AM-11:30 AM, <i>Pauli Murray: The Life of a Pioneering Feminist and Civil Rights Activist</i>	
June 12-14 Spiritual Growth Retreat, Lake Junaluska All UWFaith 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: Williamson’s Chapel UMC, Mooresville	
Sept. 13 Zoom BR District Book Club-10:00 AM-11:30 AM	
	<i>Sept. 27 District Executive Committee Meeting (TBD)</i>
	Oct. 18 Conference Leadership Development Day, LDD All District Officers (Virtual)
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

What a glorious few days of weather we have been having! Spring is certainly just around the corner and I am sure most of us will gladly welcome it.

We had a great District Book Study on February 22. Thank you, Jennie, for leading us in the study of “*The Lucky Ones*.” If you haven’t read this book, try to read it soon. Our next study will be on May 24 and we will be discussing “*Pauli Murray: The Life of a Pioneering Feminist and Civil Rights Activist*.”

Thanks to all of you that attended the ZOOM District Mission Study along with friends from the Smoky Mountain District. Sandra Wells did a great job organizing the study. Lisa Bacon and Debbie Ray from Smoky Mountain District led two explorations. Martha Phillips and I facilitated the other two explorations. Thanks for all the hard work.



We are excited to be planning the Blue Ridge District Prayer Breakfast scheduled for April 12 at Skyland United Methodist Church. I am personally very thankful to Dixie Liggett for stepping in to help organize the Prayer Breakfast in Gwen’s absence. We have a great morning of worship and fellowship planned. Our guest speaker is Rev. Vernita Alvord. An added feature will be an opportunity to view and purchase some treasures from our own Betty Letzig’s collection. Our resource room will be open and Gift to Mission cards will be available for purchase. Please plan on being there and bringing a group from your unit. As always, please invite your pastor to attend with your group. As our hands-on-mission we are asking for the donation of gift cards from Lowe’s, Home Depot, or Walmart for Brooks-Howell Home. This will help them as they recover from Hurricane Helene and continue with their building endeavors.

Pray for all our units and churches. Please continue to pray for our immediate past President and current Spiritual Growth Coordinator, Gwen Harris, as she recovers from her surgery. We all know the power of praying United Women in Faith.



Lucy Earls, President

Useful Links:

- UWFaith 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](#)

Vice President's Message

Happy spring, everyone! Spring means longer days, daffodils, warm afternoons, and the Blue Ridge District Prayer Breakfast! I hope that many of you plan to join us on Saturday, April 12 at Skyland United Methodist Church for this year's event.

Recently I was inspired by a piece written by Audrey Stanton-Smith, editor of Response, in the January/February 2025 issue. In the article, she writes about the Micah 6:8 Pledge: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. Stanton-Smith goes on to remind us that United Women in Faith (UWFaith) are committed to racial justice, climate justice, gender justice, environmental protections, women's health, immigrants' rights, and human rights.

After getting snowed out in January, the women of my unit brainstormed at our February meeting about what these topics mean to us and how we can learn more about each of them. As a result, my unit will focus on one of these issues at each of our meetings in 2025. We emphasized women's health in March by using the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial program for 2025 that discussed how the UWFaith are improving the lives of women in Peru. We also put together twenty hygiene kits for the United Methodist Committee on Relief. In April, we are planning a program on climate justice to coincide with Earth Day and will be sending used Bibles and Christian literature to the organization Love Packages for dispersal around the world – recycling! (See <https://lovepackages.org> for more information.)

I would be interested to hear about the creative ways your unit has and is exploring these topics. Please email me at segoudreau@yahoo.com to share your ideas and continue the conversation. We can learn so much from each other!

Stephanie Goudreau

Nominations Committee

Thanks to all the officers on our Blue Ridge District Executive Committee!

We have several positions to fill beginning in 2026, and with installation coming soon in August at our district annual meeting, we are looking for your suggestions of women to fill a number positions, including our Committee on Nominations. Please consider expanding your role as a member of United Women in Faith. 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. And thanks again to those who said “yes” when we asked you to join the team.

Co-Chairs

Jackie Rio (jackierio@charter.net)

Karen Anderson (ksanderson95@gmail.com)

2025 NURTURING PARTNERS for BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT

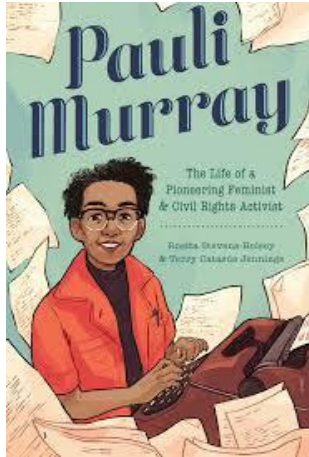
- PLEASE ASK YOUR NURTURING PARTNER TO COME VISIT

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



Program Resources

Hello to everyone! Hope you are having a wonderful start to your spring! Thanks to everyone who attended our book club on *The Lucky Ones*. We had a great discussion and I look forward to our next one.



We will be discussing the book *Pauli Murray: The Life of a Pioneering Feminist & Civil Rights Activist*. This book is in the Leadership Development category. Pauli Murray was a queer civil rights and women's rights activist before any movement advocated for either. In 1944, she conceptualized the arguments that would win *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, and in 1964, the arguments that won women equality in the workplace. Throughout her life, she fought for the oppressed, not only through changing laws but by using her prose to influence those who could affect change. Her goal was human rights and dignity for all. This biography of Pauli Murray is a groundbreaking new nonfiction book intended for the middle-grade audience written in verse (book description from the UWF Book Program

Catalog). Our book club will be held via Zoom. Registration will be available soon at <https://wnccumw.org/> under district events.

Hope to see you there!

Jennie Greenway, Secretary of Program Resources

Mission Education and Interpretation

The Blue Ridge District paired with the Smoky Mountain District for a four hour online Mission U study of *Welcome Home*, by Parker Roberts and Shandrea Williamson. We enjoyed conversations around the topics of, Who's In charge? Understanding God's Sovereignty, Understanding Personal Tensions, Receiving the Kingdom at Hand, and Presenting Home to One Another.

Many thanks to Lisa Bacon, president of the Smoky Mountain District for her expert technical support and content development. Thanks also to Lucy Earls, Martha Phillips, and Debbie Ray for their leadership in the different components. Mission U is an amazing part of Women in Faith. Please consider participating anytime you can.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at our Prayer Breakfast, April 12, at Skyland Methodist. Please remember to bring gift cards for Brook Howell. Suggested businesses are Lowe's, Home Depot and Walmart. The donations will be used to repair the damaged done to the grounds by Helene.

Sandra Wells, Mission Education and Interpretation

Social Action

Did you know that United Women of Faith has 87 National Mission Institutions in the US? And 5 of them are close to home. National Mission Institutions are community-based organizations and social service agencies that were almost exclusively founded by women in the 19th century to serve marginalized communities and populations across the United States. Today, United Women in Faith remains connected to these community centers, colleges, and residences providing vital services in vulnerable communities.

The ones closest to us are Bennett College in Greensboro, Pfeiffer College in Misenheimer, Bethlehem Center in Winston- Salem, Alliance Center in Charlotte (formerly Bethlehem Center in Charlotte) and Partners in Ministry, Laurinburg. All of these community organizations exemplify the purpose of United Women in Faith and supported by them. Find a way your unit can be supportive. Take a trip to visit, give a program about them, send a donation, and serve on a board or committee. Find out more and take ACTION.

Beverly Hill, Social Action



Spiritual Growth

If you watch Family Feud, you know that Steve Harvey begins every show by welcoming viewers, telling them his name, and saying about the upcoming episode, “We’ve got a good one for you today!” To invite you to attend this year’s prayer breakfast, I’m paraphrasing Mr. Harvey, “We got a great prayer breakfast for you this year!”



We will be celebrating at Skyland UMC on April 12, beginning at 8:30 AM with sign-in and breakfast in the fellowship hall at 8:30 AM and 9:15 AM. Breakfast will cost \$10.00 per person. We are requesting each unit issue one check, if possible, to cover registration fees for all members attending. Make checks payable to Skyland United Methodist Women to reduce handling and paperwork. We cannot accept onsite registration.

The worship service begins at 10:00 AM with Veranita Alvord as the guest speaker. Veranita was born in Zimbabwe to missionary parents, Dot and Alec Alvord. She is currently the lead pastor at Brevard UMC, while her husband Joe Tarpley is lead pastor at Skyland.

At the memorial service, we will honor members who passed away in 2024. Be sure to include the names of your members to be honored in the space provided on the registration form.

Childcare will be provided if it is requested on the registration form.

We are providing a hands-on project at the Prayer Breakfast: We are asking for gift cards for Brooks-Howell from Wal-mart, Home Depot, and Lowe’s. We are also taking a love offering that will count toward our pledge.

If you have questions, contact Dixie Liggett at (828) 215-2114 or lliggett3@charter.net.

Gwen Harris, Coordinator

Prayer for complete healing for our friend Gwen Harris ...



Treasurer

Greetings Ladies,

I have never been one to “reinvent the wheel” and so read what other treasurers write in their district newsletters. Nancy Reigel, Appalachian District Treasurer, recently wrote in her District newsletter these words which I could not say any better and want to share them with you. “As United Women in Faith we are fortunate to have member leaders who have committed time and resources ... who help direct our UWFaith Mission Giving toward the missions that best fulfill our Mission and Vision, to nourish and support the well-being of women, children, and youth. In other words, by continuing and increasing our commitment to UWFaith Mission Giving, we are indeed really directing our funds in the best way, the most effective way to help. So what should we do in these challenging and very troubling times when we are continually bombarded with the crisis de’ jour? **STAY THE COURSE.**”

If you and your units are directing the majority of your funds into undesignated UWFaith Mission Giving (Pledge, SMR, Gift to Mission, Gift in Memory, World Thank Offering) you just cannot go wrong. Your response is effective, efficient, and constructive. And what better time than now to **STAY THE COURSE**, when there is so much turmoil, so much conflict? In the words of Sally Vonner, our General Secretary and CEO of United Women in Faith, it is in times of great uncertainty we can make the most difference. She encourages us, members, to seize the opportunity to stand together in our giving. Now is the time to act, now is the time to **GIVE.**

Looking at the calendar, I see that you should be reading this article at the beginning of the second half of our giving year. What better time to take stock of where you and your unit are in your giving and make a plan for the rest of the year? This is our time to “seize the opportunity” to stand together whether it be your unit deciding to plan and hold a fundraiser for Mission, or you personally setting more aside for Mission by giving up a small indulgence, it all matters and makes a difference. I close with a segment from the Pledge to Mission Service in the 2024 Program Resource: We have a legacy of more than 150 years in mission giving, mission service, and mission advocacy. Why do we continue to give?

All: We pledge to give because of God’s blessings in our lives. We believe in the parable of the boy who gave two fish and five loaves of bread. What we have may not seem like much, but when we yield it to Jesus’ touch, our financial gifts multiply over and over to change the world.”

Martha Phillips



We believe love in
action can change the
world.

Faith. Action.
Sisterhood.



United
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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.

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A Fresh Wind is Blowing!



Retreat Leader:
Rev. Aryn
Williams - Ruebel

Spiritual Growth Retreat - "My Name is: God"

June 12 - 14, Lake Junaluska

Program highlights:

- Recognition of missionaries/deaconesses/mission workers
- Memorial Service remembering deceased members
- Ubuntu project breakout session
- Move 4 Mission breakout sessions (including a treasure hunt)
- Late Night: Kranking It Up with Kim!
- Hands-on mission: gift cards for Brooks - Howell Home

Annual Celebration - Celebrate Change!

September 6, 10 AM - 5 PM

Williamson's Chapel UMC, Mooresville

Program highlights:

- Election of officers and approval of 2026 budget
- Afternoon workshops
- Hands-on mission: items for The Bethlehem Center of Winston-Salem



Keynote Speaker:
Sally Vonner
UW Faith
General Secretary
& CEO

More information at wnccumw.org

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

Mark Your Calendars for 2025

April 12 - District Prayer Breakfast, Skyland UMC, Arden-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 UWFaith Members
June 20-22 UMC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska

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

Aug. 2 Zoom BR District Book Club-10:00 AM-11:30 AM
Aug. 16 District Annual Celebration 9:30 AM (TBD)

Sept. 6, Conference Annual Celebration, Sally Vonner, CEO of UWFaith, Speaker,
Location: Williamson's Chapel UMC, Mooresville
Sept. 13 Zoom BR District Book Club-10:00 AM-11:30 AM

Oct.11, 25 Ubuntu Days of Service (various locations) All UWFaith Members

Nov. 1 District Leadership Development Day (TBA)

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.