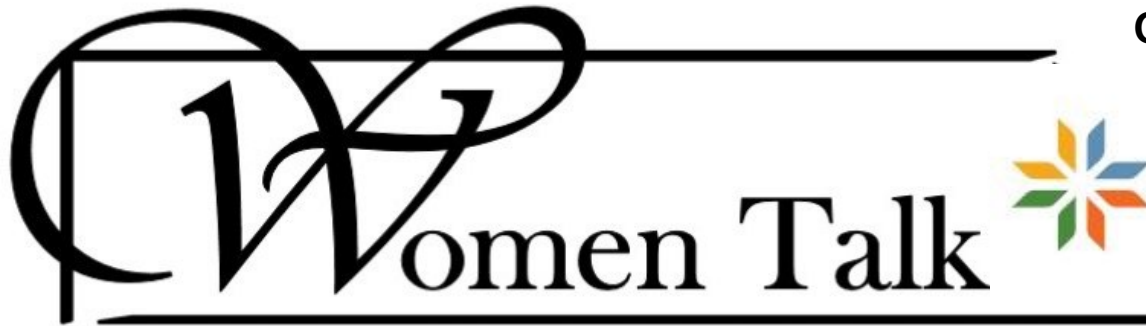


October 2025



United
Women
in Faith

Smoky Mountain District † United Methodist Women † Western North Carolina Conference

WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

Remembering our Mission Roots

Four short years after a civil war ripped apart the nation, our United Women in Faith foremothers looked beyond US borders and saw devastating need in India. As our origin story tells, on a dark and stormy night in 1869, Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Butler shared the urgent medical and educational needs of women and girls in India with six women in Boston. Within months, those women had recruited other members and raised enough money to send Isabella Thoburn and Clara Swain to India as the first missionaries of our predecessor organization.

UWFaith members continue to support Isabella Thoburn Degree College and Clara Swain Mission Hospital, which are still improving the lives of women, children, and youth 156 years after their bold beginnings.

We're blessed to be members of an organization with a "both/and" vision—we seek to put our faith into action both locally and globally. Locally, we show our love through hands-on projects, volunteering, and supporting local missions that serve women, children, and youth. Globally, we most often send mission money to support local mission partners. In both cases, we are joining in God's economy of abundance.

One of our district goals for 2025 was for local units to choose an international mission project from the pages of **response** magazine or the Daily Prayer Guide and learn more about that project. At our Mission Festival from 9:30 until noon at Love's Chapel UMC (Sylva) on November 1, we will share what we've learned with each other. Local units are encouraged to have fun with this—bring a paper or cloth flag, share a song, game, or snack from "your" country, etc. If your unit hasn't chosen a project, come anyway and enjoy learning about our money in mission.

A second district goal was for local unit members to read "Braiding Sweetgrass," by Robin Wall Kimmerer. This is one of our UWFaith Reading Program selections. We chose this book because it is widely available in public libraries, has digital editions, and is available in both adult and young adult editions. Themes include reciprocity and gratitude, environmental stewardship, and the interconnectedness of all living beings. Even if you don't have the opportunity to read the book ahead of our gathering, you can join the discussion.

Our hands-on project will be items for exam bags to be distributed on campus by the Wesley Foundation at Western Carolina University. Suggested items: ramen noodles, hot chocolate packets, individual tea packets, stress relievers (fidget toys, stress balls, etc.), small Kleenex packs, chapsticks.

In order that we may better plan for our gathering, registration is requested but not required. Registration link: <https://bit.ly/SMDFestivalReg>

Lisa Bacon, SMD President

lisabacon304@gmail.com / 828-586-8399 (home) / 828-226-2433 (cell)



WHAT'S IN THIS NEWSLETTER THAT I'D BE INTERESTED IN?

Page 1— Words From Our President.

Page 2—A Table of Contents...so you can find the things you really want to find first!...plus our Mission Statement and a special thought.

Page 3—**Parade of Nations: Tour the World thru United Women in Faith**; Mission u First-Timer

Page 4—**THE PRIVILEGE OF VOTING**

Page 5—Thank You! from Our Treasurer, Notes from Debbie Ray, and First-Timer Scholarships for Conference Events

Page 6—District Love Offerings and Local Unit Visitations (LUV)

Page 7—Nurturing Partners 2025 and Ways to Give to the Legacy Fund

Page 8—North Carolina Community Resolves for Fully Funded Public Education

Page 9—The 2025 SMD UWFaith Executive Team and PAG Listing.

Page 10—SMD & WNCC Calendar of Events

MISSION STATEMENT OF UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

United Women in Faith seeks 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.

**People may doubt what you say,
but they will always believe what you do.**

* * * * *

...for the tree is known and recognized

And judged by its fruit.

Matthew 12:33 AMP

Parade of Nations: Tour the World through United Women in Faith

Date: November 1, 2025

Time: 9:30 AM - Noon

Place: Love's Chapel UMC, 41 Lovedale Rd, Sylva, NC 28779

9:30 - 10:00 Check in, drop off hands-on items, and enjoy light refreshments.

Hands-on items: Our hands-on project will be items for exam bags to be distributed on campus by the Wesley Foundation at Western Carolina University.

Suggested items: ramen noodles, hot chocolate packets, individual tea packets, stress relievers (fidget toys, stress balls, etc.), small Kleenex packs, chapsticks.

10:00 - Noon Parade of Nations: sharing about international ministries
Postcard Campaign: addressing the school - to - prison pipeline
Braiding Sweetgrass: book club discussion

Register here: <https://bit.ly/SMDFestivalReg>



Mission u First-Timer

Danielle Treadway, Education & Interpretation Mission Coordinator for First UMC in Waynesville, was our first-timer stipend recipient at Mission u. Mission u was held in July at the Catholic Conference Center in Hickory, where participants studied “Practicing Hope.”

(Photo; left to right: Lisa Bacon, Debbie Ray, Danielle Treadway)



The Privilege of Voting

As we approach election day.... the following article with a short history lesson on the struggle for women's right to vote is one that we all need to read and share. It includes an account of an incident that is a shocking part of our history. Our right to vote is a privilege that we must not take for granted....some courageous women fought very hard for us to have that right. Register to vote, and exercise your precious right on election day...**VOTE!**

The Privilege of Voting...

(Written in 2004, Author Unknown)

We don't always consider what a privilege it is to be able to vote...particularly for women... A short history lesson on the privilege of voting...

The women were innocent and defenseless. And by the end of the night, they were barely alive. Forty prison guards wielding clubs and their warden's blessing went on a rampage against the 33 women wrongly convicted of "obstructing sidewalk traffic."

They beat Lucy Burn, chained her hands to the cell bars above her head and left her hanging for the night, bleeding and gasping for air. They hurled Dora Lewis into a dark cell, smashed her head against an iron bed and knocked her out cold. Her cellmate, Alice Cosu, thought Lewis was dead and suffered a heart attack. Additional affidavits describe the guards grabbing, dragging, beating, choking, slamming, pinching, twisting and kicking the women.

Thus unfolded the "Night of Terror" on November 15th, 1917, when the warden at the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia ordered his guards to teach a lesson to the suffragists imprisoned there because they dared to picket Woodrow Wilson's White House for the right to vote.

For weeks, the women's only water came from an open pail. Their food...all of it colorless slop...was infested with worms. When one of the leaders, Alice Paul, embarked on a hunger strike, they tied her to a chair, forced a tube down her throat and poured liquid into her until she vomited. She was tortured like this for weeks until word was smuggled out to the press.

So, refresh my memory. Some women won't vote this year because....why, exactly? We have carpool duties? We have to get to work? Our vote doesn't matter? It's raining?

Last week, I went to a sparsely attended screening of HBO's new movie "Iron Jawed Angels." It is a graphic depiction of the battle these women waged so that I could pull the curtain at the polling booth and have my say.

I am ashamed to say I needed the reminder. There was a time when I knew these women well. I met them in college....not in my required American history courses, which barely mentioned them, but in women's history class. That's where I found the irrepressibly brave Alice Paul. Her large, brooding eyes seemed fixed on my own as she stared out from the page. Remember, she silently beckoned. Remember. I thought I always would.

All these years later, voter registration is still my passion. But the actual act of voting had become less personal for me, more rote. Frankly, voting often felt more like an obligation than a privilege. Sometimes, it was even inconvenient.

My friend Wendy, who is my age and studied women's history, saw the HBO movie, too. When she stopped by my desk to talk about it, she looked angry. She was....with herself. "One thought kept coming back to me as I watched that movie," she said. "What would those women think of the way I use....or don't use....my right to vote? All of us take it for granted now, not just younger women, but those of us who did seek to learn." The right to vote, she said, had become valuable to her "all over again."

HBO will run the movie periodically before releasing it on video and DVD. I wish all history, social studies and government teachers would include the movie in their curriculum. I want it shown on Bunco night, too, and anywhere else women gather. I realize this isn't our usual idea of socializing, but we are not voting in the numbers that we should be, and I think a little shock therapy is in order. It is jarring to watch Woodrow Wilson and his cronies try to persuade a psychiatrist to declare Alice Paul insane so that she could be permanently institutionalized. And it is inspiring to watch the doctor refuse. Alice Paul was strong, he said, and brave. That didn't make her crazy. The doctor admonished the men: "Courage in women is often mistaken for insanity."

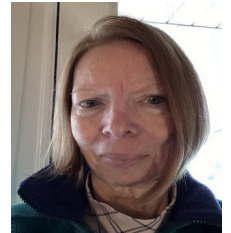
Please pass this on to all the women you know. We need to get out and vote and use this right that was fought so hard for by these very courageous women.

THANK YOU...

for giving to United Women in Faith. Our total giving for Quarter 3 was \$5,219.74 representing an increase of \$1,258 over 2024. Included in that giving is \$342.22 received for Love Offering. Giving is a privilege – a gift of God’s grace. ...from United Women in Faith for Mission. Our Conference Love Offering theme is A Gift of Mission in honor of future generations of women, children, and youth. I look forward to seeing many of you at our November Smoky Mountain District Mission Festival. Friendly reminder that the **mail date** deadline for your remittance for Quarter 4 will be **November 24th**. Any later will be posted to 2026 especially due to Thanksgiving weekend holiday mail slowdown. It is a pleasure to be a member of the Smoky Mountain District United Women in Faith team! Thank you!

Kim Shafer, SMD District Treasurer

Cell: 704-965-2022 Email: kimshaferuwfsm@outlook.com



NOTES FROM DEBBIE RAY

As the incoming conference chair of nominations, I will be doing the training for district nomination members on October 18th in Taylorsville. I encourage **all** district officers or anyone who has considered serving as a district officer to attend this officer training. I don't have all the answers but no one person does. That is why we are a team. Lisa and I will be carpooling so come and get your questions answered.

I hope to see you all at the district festival on November 1st at Love's Chapel. Should be great fun and we will learn about our world-wide missions as well as having a tasting table. Learn about an international mission and come and share with the rest of us. Also, if you enjoy book studies then come and be part of our discussion about "Braiding Sweetgrass". You can read the youth version and share something you learned from reading this book. Pick up some friends and come to be together.

Debbie Ray, Nurturing Partner Coordinator & Conference Liaison



Reminder: First-Timer Scholarships for Conference Events

A woman who attends a Conference United Women in Faith event for the first time can apply for a scholarship to cover expenses. A first-time attendee can apply to be reimbursed for such fees as registration fee, mileage, and lodging. Eligible conference events: Spiritual Growth Retreat (June), Mission u (July), and Annual Celebration (September).

To request the brief application form, contact Lisa Bacon at lisabacon304@gmail.com / 828-586-8399 (home) / 828-226-2433 (cell)



District Love Offerings:

We invite you to give generously to your district love offering. Your Mission Giving continues the work of United Women in Faith, making a difference, every day, in the lives of women, children and youth around the world. Thank you for your support of Mission Giving! Every single dollar makes a difference!

You may give to your district love offering in a couple of ways:

- Make an online donation using the special link for your district found on the District Events 2024/2025 page at wnccumw.org. Each district has a unique link so that we can give your district credit for your gift.
- Mail a check to your District Treasurer (Kim Shafer), made payable to United Women in Faith, and designated as District Love Offering. We will share those addresses during the meetings, and you will also be able to find them in a recent newsletter for your district on your district's page of our website.



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 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.
- 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 website under About Us (conference officers) or Districts (district officers).
- Check your district newsletters for a list of the Nurturing Partners and their local units.
- Contact your district president if you can't find Nurturing Partner information.



**SMD United Women in Faith
Nurturing Partners 2025**

Nurturing Partner	NP Contact Info	UW Faith Unit
Lisa Bacon	Lisabacon304@gmail.com 828-226-2433	Bryson City, Love's Chapel, Sylva First, Webster
Debbie Ray	wrray@charter.net + 828-400-3499	Beaverdam, Canton First, Canton Central, Fincher's Chapel, Rockwood, Shady Grove
Laurel Bevill	laurelbev@icloud.com 828-456-5528	Clyde Central, Maple Grove
Velma Zeek	Vzeek56@frontier.com 828-369-5782	Andrews, Franklin First
Esther Manchester	Ehm1@yahoo.com 828-226-7481	Oak Forest, Ranger, Robbinsville, Tomotla
Ellynn Stonebraker	Jumperlady21@gmail.com 828-524-8787	Cullowhee, Hayesville First, Murphy First
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Judy Starnes	Starnes.judy@gmail.com 828-452-3548	Cruso, Elizabeth Chapel
Kim Shafer	kimshaferuwfsm@outlook.com 704-965-2022	Crabtree UMC

Ways to Give to the Legacy Fund

- ◇ Make a gift to the Legacy Fund through your local unit United Women in Faith treasurer.
- ◇ Make a one time donation or consider becoming a Legacy Builder by giving a monthly gift of \$18.69 or more.
- ◇ Use our Western North Carolina Conference Legacy Commitment Form, available on our website at www.wnccumw.org/legacyfund.
- ◇ Online on the national office website at <https://uwfaith.org/give/legacy-fund/>
- ◇ **By phone:** 800-278-7771 (8 am—6 pm EST, M-F)
- ◇ **By check:** note "Legacy Fund" in memo line & mail to: United Women in Faith, Attn: Legacy, Church Center for the United Nations, 777 United Nations Plaza, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10017.
- ◇ **Other methods** include 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.



North Carolina Community Resolves for Fully Funded Public Education

Whereas the North Carolina General Assembly is **legally** required by our state constitution to fund a sound, basic public education for **every child**;

Whereas North Carolina public schools educate 84% of K-12 students, serving 1.5M students annually and welcomes all children regardless of ability, special needs, zip code, income or family background;

Whereas successful public education provides productive citizens who are caring and contributing members of our democracy;

Whereas public schools serve as community centers and drive local economies. In 82 of 100 North Carolina counties public schools are one of the top 3 employers.

Whereas NC public schools are struggling to fully staff classrooms and meet basic needs due to chronic underfunding and rising costs;

- Teachers are the #1 school-related factor that impacts student outcomes, yet North Carolina ranks 43rd in the nation for average teacher pay —**\$13,738 below the national average and five spots lower than last year**—and is losing teachers to neighboring states due to uncompetitive salaries;
- North Carolina ranks 48th in the nation for per-pupil spending, \$5000 less per student than the national average;

Whereas our state's long-term economic competitiveness and #1 business ranking depends on a strong K-12 public education system that prepares students to be effective members of the growing North Carolina workforce;

Whereas billions in public funds have been allocated to private school vouchers and divert funding for public education. In rural counties the vast majority of students attend public schools and there are few if any private school options;

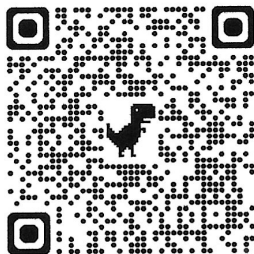
Whereas state tax cuts for individuals and corporations have shifted more responsibility of funding education to local governments, which disproportionately hurts rural counties with smaller populations and lower tax bases.

- Boards of County Commissioners are asked to close the public education funding gap despite critical demands for other vital community services;

We, the residents of North Carolina, strongly urge the North Carolina General Assembly to stop the chronic underfunding of our public schools.

Public education is the foundation of a strong, inclusive, and thriving North Carolina. Defunding schools defunds our children's futures.

*Our children deserve better. Our educators deserve better. **North Carolina deserves better. Legislators: Do the right thing and fully fund public education.***



Read and sign the Resolves *by using this link or the QR code.*

Copies will be presented to the NC Legislators, demanding that they do the right thing for NC children and fully fund public education.

DON'T HESITATE TO CONTACT US IF YOU NEED ANYTHING!

United Women in Faith 2025 Smoky Mtn. District Exec. Team & Program Advisory Group

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TO:



United
Women
in Faith

2025 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH CONFERENCE & DISTRICT EVENTS

WNCC UWFaith CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Oct. 11 or 25 | Ubuntu Days of Service—various locations |
| Oct. 18 | WNCC LDD for All District Officers, Taylorsville First UMC |

SMD UWFaith CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Nov. 1 | SMD Missions Event—Love's Chapel UMC, Sylva |
|--------|---|