

faith

action

sisterhood

UWFaith Appalachian District News

Third Quarter 2026

AppaLadies in Mission



President

Well, I believe summer has officially arrived (at least my thermometer sure thinks so!) As I mentioned last quarter, I attended Assembly 2026 in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 14-17. I traveled with Linda Greer, Martha Phillips, and Nancy Litton, so some great fellowship started before the Assembly started! On the 14th, I attended the Soul Care Retreat where we focused on the Assembly theme **“Dream it! Believe it! Do it!”** **“Dream it!”** focused on John 16:13, which was explained as Jesus saying, “I owe you truth; the Holy Spirit will help you digest it!” We enjoyed music, storytelling, and essential oils. **“Believe it!”** focused on not losing our joy - how joy is a spiritual discipline and Rev. Lizzie McManus-Dail (Father Lizzie) made several references to her book, *God Didn’t Make Us to Hate Us* - 40 devotions to liberate your faith from fear and reconnect with joy. **“Do it!”** referenced Corinthians and Philippians, quoting that “All things are possible with and through God.” Two quotes from Rev. Gail Song Bantum, I liked were: “We can only believe what we can imagine and only do what we believe,” and “A bird doesn’t sing because it has an answer; a bird sings because it has a song.” She emphasized that we should all sing our song. Bishop Tracy Malone (President, Council of Bishops - 2024-2026) shared a benediction. Friday officially started our 21st Assembly (quadrennial gathering of UWFaith). There were approximately 3000 in attendance, 22 Deaconesses and Home Missioners were consecrated, and we celebrated mission (missionaries attended from Sierra Leone, the Philippines, Mozambique, and Peru) – many women and country representatives were not able to attend due to current visa restrictions. The primary message for the weekend was “When women unite to carry out God’s mission, they are ‘UNSTOPPABLE.’” Our Assembly theologian was Rev. Stephanie York Arnold, top executive of the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women for the Methodist Church. Her sermons focused on Jesus’ promise of ‘abundant life’ – in opening worship, she quoted, “We are meant to be bearers of the light who dream a different way of being, a more abundant life for all, and we are meant to be the workers who build it!” She went on to say, “Can you imagine the light we could shine if we all agreed to shine it in a way that creates abundant life for all people?” Saturday’s focus was on Social Justice Issues – we heard from leadership panels about how their Christian faith inspires them to act and from voting rights champion, author, and political leader Stacey Abrams and her mother, retired pastor Carolyn Abrams. Carolyn Abrams, who holds a Master of Divinity degree from Candler School of Theology, credits United Women in Faith for “whetting her appetite” to serve. When she heard a United Methodist woman talk about social justice, she began attending UMW meetings, even though she was still a Baptist at the time. So, it was service that drew her to join the UMC and, later, to add a divinity



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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degree to the master's degree she already held in library science. "My Parents were 40 years old when they decided to go to divinity school, and they could not type," Stacey Abrams said. "I became their typist." She and her five siblings also became young social activists, watching and joining with their parents as they championed for justice. "Occasionally people don't like me," Stacey said as the audience laughed. "One of the ways I learned to navigate was watching my mother as a Black woman pastor in the Deep South. I watched men of God tell her she was not allowed in the pulpit." Instead of expressing anger, Carolyn Abrams stayed grounded, her daughter explained. "My mother made sure that people understood the choices that they were making, and she did it with this civility and politeness, but also a courage that said, 'You will not take from me what the Lord has called me to do.' You're not mad at me; you're mad at the justice that I'm trying to fight for. ... But courage isn't belief; courage is action." Stacey Abrams credited her parents for teaching that whatever power they may have, there are some with less and that her job is to serve those people. "What resilience looks like is sitting next to me," she added, talking about her mother's accomplishments, among them raising six children and merging three churches, then building a new one, all while battling racism in southern Mississippi and in the Church. "My mom said you meet people where they are, not where you want them to be, but she also said, once you meet them there, move them to where you want them to be," Stacey Abrams said. At one of our general sessions, Sally Vonner, CEO & General Secretary said: "Today, we are already a powerful movement, about 300,000 women strong in the U.S. alone. But imagine this. If every one of us invited just one woman, just one, we would grow to over 500,000, meeting our goal for 2029! ... We are UNSTOPPABLE!" Civil Rights activist Elizabeth Eckford of the Little Rock Nine and Stacey Abrams spoke at the Legacy Banquet Saturday evening, and WNCC UWFaith received an award for a 3-way tie for Legacy Fund participation. In our closing worship on Sunday, Rev. Stephanie York left us with the thought that we should use our God-given 'saltiness' to do our part. Jesus never asked us to be his admirers; he asked us to be his followers." The Next SEJ Quadrennial Celebration will be in Mobile, Alabama, April 28-30, 2028, and the next UWFaith Assembly will be in Richmond, Virginia, May 17-19, 2030. I encourage all who are able to consider planning to attend one or both of these events – we have 2 and 4 years to save and plan!



June 11-13, I attended our WNCC UWFaith Spiritual Growth retreat. As always, this was a spirit-filled/inspirational 2-1/2 days. Our theme was Winds of Change, and our retreat leader, Rev. Dr. Lucy Robbins, lead pastor of the Biltmore Village Cooperative Parish, delivered three messages focusing on Winds of Change – Disruption – Reflection – Transformation, based on Scripture from Matthew 14.



Alterscape by Sherry Summerlin

Our mission speaker was Rev. Holly McKim, who spoke "firsthand" about Hurricane Helene as the pastor of Spruce Pine UMC. We enjoyed wonderful music, led by Deaconess Tracey Owens and pianist Howard Smith, inspiring worship, meaningful breakout sessions, and all-around great fellowship. Our next events are Mission u at the Catholic Retreat Center in Hickory and our Appalachian District Annual Celebration at Union Grove UMC (see our events page in the newsletter for more specifics.) Feel free to contact me whenever you have questions. If I don't know the answer, I can always find someone who does. Go sing your song, shine your light, and follow Jesus!

Love and Blessings,
Jan Taylor



Vice President

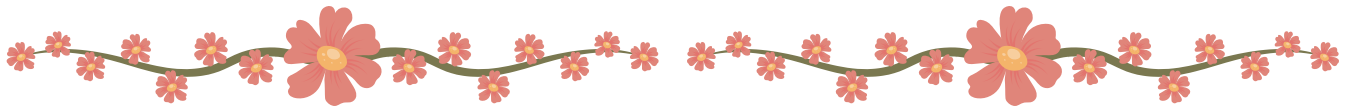
Greetings!

Here we are at the beginning of summer! I hope each of you is sitting in air conditioning or relaxing outside in a cool breeze! I continue to pray that our fellowship will draw us closer to God, help us to remember we are not alone, and that our mission will continue to thrive. It's wonderful to have a group of like-minded women working for Christ! So, let's celebrate all of this together! It's been a bit since I've gotten to see each of you! It was probably our Prayer Breakfast, which was so amazing. So, let's do it again!

Union Grove UMC will host our 2026 Appalachian District Annual Celebration. Ladies, mark your calendars for Saturday, August 15, 2026. Registration will begin at 9:00 a.m. Light snacks will be provided for your enjoyment. The program will start at 9:30 a.m. and end at noon. Why not go out on a limb and invite a friend to attend with you? This person does not need to be a UWFaith member, just someone you feel who might enjoy our company. Our theme for our celebration is "Unstoppable-Called to Serve." Please give prayerful thought to attending. Food, fun, and most importantly, fellowship with our sisters in Christ is essential to our spiritual health and growth. I miss seeing all of your smiling faces!

Ladies, I'm certain you are getting good use out of your program materials that assist you with your 2026 mission, vision, and purpose of the UWFaith. Several requirements on the Mission Today checklist can be completed by using these resources. If you have recommendations, suggestions, or comments, please feel free to reach out to me. Text #828-964-1396 or email jstetler52@gmail.com. Stay safe and cool.

Blessings to each of you,
Jean



Parliamentarian

Sisters in Faith,

This Quarter, it is time for deciding who will be the ones who will honor us in serving at our local unit levels, as well as in our Appalachian District, for the upcoming year of 2027. The process for election of officers follows Robert's Rules of Order. The election and installation will take place at our August Annual District meeting. Local units will need to have officers elected and names sent to the District president, Janice Taylor, by December. We appreciate your action on this very important item of business. Thank you to all who serve.

Blessings, Sherry



United Women in Faith Legacy Endowment Fund update

A Legacy within reach - the following was sourced from the May/June 2026 response magazine:

Each year, on the day before Valentine's Day, a virtual event is held to thank the 1869 Society members for their selfless planned gifts. The event is called "Legacy of Love," and each year it has been a pure celebration of generosity and love in action.

This year, on February 13, women who have mentioned United Women in Faith in their estate plans were in attendance and enjoyed an evening that included fun, gratitude, and sharing why they chose to leave a legacy of love.

As part of her address to the gathering, Sally Vonner, United Women in Faith's general secretary and CEO, stated, "Our gifts are ones that will keep on giving far beyond our lifespan. I don't know about you, but that brings a smile to my face and my heart knowing that the commitments we have made will last far into the future. Now that's leaving a legacy!"

With a drumroll felt in the hearts of everyone listening, Vonner was pleased to announce the total of The Legacy Endowment Fund, which, as of the date of writing this article, was \$54,598,812!

Knowing that we have less than \$6 million to go to reach our \$60 million dollar goal does inspire each of us to give God the glory and keep asking others to join us in securing the future of our vital work as United Women in Faith. We are so close. And those gifts will continue to multiply as part of the permanently invested endowment so that future generations will be equipped to put their faith and love into action to change the world.

Speaking at the Legacy of Love event, Vonner added, "We are rolling full speed ahead to exceed the \$60 million goal by 2029. You, me, and everyone who has donated to The Legacy Endowment Fund are trendsetters, preparing the way for future generations to sustain United Women in Faith for a bright future. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

If you would like to join me, Vonner, and many others in making a planned gift, please e-mail ccampos@uwfaith.org or visit our estate planning resource pages at uwfgift.org. If you have already put United Women in Faith in your final plans, please let me know so that we can thank you and you can be included in the 1869 Society and the special events held for members. Together, we are building our legacy!





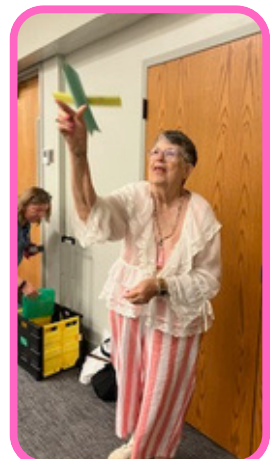
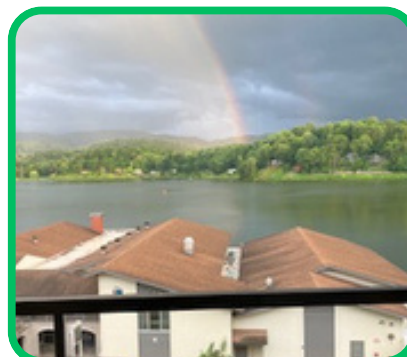
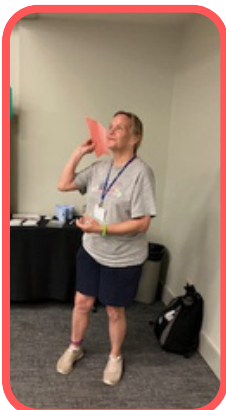
Spiritual Growth Coordinator

It is well with my Soul! Warm greetings to all of those who are a part of United Women in Faith in the Appalachian District. Ginger Harrington, in "**Is Your Soul Healthy, 10 Bible Verses to Nurture a Healthy Soul**", states that health is more than our physical well-being. If our bodies are in excellent condition but we neglect our souls, we may find ourselves agitated, lacking focus, and weary. Spiritual well-being is a necessity in our world today. Start now on checking out just how healthy your soul is. As Women in Faith, we are offering sessions at meetings and conferences on recognizing and understanding how to nurture our souls. 3 John 2 says in The Message translation, "The Pastor, to my good friend Gaius: How truly I love you! We're the best of friends, and I pray for good fortune in everything you do, and for your good health—that your everyday affairs prosper, as well as your soul!" Harrington also says that if we only give the time left over in our busy schedules to soul care, we probably are in need of rethinking our priorities. Dr. Seuss has a quote: "Today you are you, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is you-er than you! (5 Lessons in Life from Dr. Seuss) Let's start right now. Soul care and Spiritual Growth. Ask yourself, "Is it well with my soul?"

In Christian love, Sherry



Assembly / Spiritual Growth Retreat





Interim Treasurer
Giving is Always Good! Always!

Mission Giving generates Mission and Mission Giving. As I mulled over the thoughts I wanted to share through this article, two thoughts kept muddling through my head:

1. That Mission Giving can be proactive giving - sending a message about Mission by how you give - channels tell stories - people to whom you give get a message about Mission; how we each have many opportunities to spread our messages of Mission when we give to Mission by sending Gift to Mission/Gift in Memory cards or a Special Recognition pin. Yes, they each require that we make a donation to Mission Giving, but beyond that, by sending them, they tell of our belief in the importance of our Missions, doubling or more than doubling their value. You are participating in and taking a leadership role in creating a community of giving by sending a message of your personal support of UWFaith Mission - Women in Mission.

2. That consideration leads me to the other thought. What a significant impact our missions make in the world... how quietly, yet powerfully, they change lives. The following comes to mind:

The fish it never cackles 'bout
It's million eggs or so,
The hen is quite a different bird,
One egg – and hear her crow,
The fish we spurn, but crown the hen
Which leads me to surmise,
Don't hide your light, but blow your horn
It pays to advertise

In our case, we look not at that noisy chicken and her one egg, but at the quiet prolific fish, going about her business, creating fish for many. In that same vein, our UWFaith missions are quietly fostering programs and projects that change lives through empowerment, education, encouragement, and shared love. Remember, with each life our missions change many, and those changed lives in turn change others - an outcome far better than advertising; it is DEMONSTRATING, SHARING, and MODELING behavior. Never underestimate the power of a role model.

Nancy Reigel
Interim District Treasurer





Social Action Coordinator

The School-to-Prison Pipeline in North Carolina: Awareness & Action

Understanding the Issue and How You Can Help

Understanding the Issue in North Carolina: Black students are arrested at six times the rate of their white peers within NC schools, despite making up just 24.7% of the student population. Over half of all youth justice referrals in NC originate from schools, mostly for minor, non-violent incidents, and disproportionately affect students of color.

Why It Matters: Exclusionary discipline, like suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests, disconnects students from education and guides them toward justice involvement. These responses often fail to address root causes and instead accelerate the path to juvenile and adult criminal referrals.

How to Become More Aware:

- Study Local Data: Investigate suspension, arrest, and referral data for your district.
- Engage with Advocacy Groups: Connect with organizations like Carolina Justice Policy Center and NC Justice Center.
- Participate in Community Discussions: Attend school board and community meetings.
- Listen to Student Voices: Support platforms where students share experiences and lead workshops.

Take Action: How You Can Help:

- Policy & School Reform: Advocate for ending zero-tolerance policies and implementing restorative justice.
- Promote School–Justice Partnerships: Ensure referrals are the last option.
- Support ‘Raise the Age’ Funding: Help close loopholes and fully fund reforms.
- Community Training & Engagement: Organize or attend ‘Know Your Rights’ workshops.
- Amplify Student-Led Advocacy: Support youth empowerment initiatives.

Every North Carolina resident, whether parent, educator, policymaker, or community member, has a role in identifying systemic disparities and pushing for reform. By staying informed, supporting youth voices, and advocating for policy change, we help ensure schools are places of learning, not launching pads for justice system involvement.



Key Websites and Resources

1. Carolina Justice Policy Center – Youth & Children

Focuses on school-to-prison disparities in North Carolina, advocating for school–justice partnerships, youth leadership programs, and full funding of the “Raise the Age” law.

[Carolina Justice Policy Center – Youth & Children \[cjpcenter.org\]](https://cjpcenter.org)

2. North Carolina Justice Center – School Discipline

Details of legislative work addressing zero-tolerance policies and school policing, including Wake County’s complaint against discriminatory practices.

[NC Justice Center – School Discipline \[ncjustice.org\]](https://ncjustice.org)

3. Southern Coalition for Social Justice (SCSJ) – School-to-Prison Pipeline

Highlights youth-led advocacy, “Know Your Rights” workshops, and student experiences to dismantle systemic discipline issues.

[SCSJ – Durham School Students & School-to-Prison Pipeline \[southerncoalition.org\]](https://southerncoalition.org/)

4. NC Courts – School Justice Partnerships (SJPs)

Details local community-led partnerships among schools, law enforcement, and courts aimed at reducing school-based arrests and referrals. Provides tools, dashboards, and data for stakeholders.

[NC Courts – School Justice Partnership Toolkit & Data \[nccourts.gov\]](https://nccourts.gov/), [\[ncdrc.gov\]](https://ncdrc.gov/)

5. “From Push Out to Lock Up” – Action for Children NC

Comprehensive 2013 report examining structural factors, suspensions, and expulsions, with policy recommendations to break the pipeline.

[From Push Out to Lock Up \(PDF\) \[ncchild.org\]](https://ncchild.org/)



How You Can Use These Resources

- **Review Local Data & Policies** via the NC Courts and Justice Center to track school-based arrests, referrals and disciplinary disparities.
- **Engage in Advocacy** by joining or supporting groups like Carolina Justice Policy Center and SCSJ, which often offer workshops, youth programs, and “Know Your Rights” training.
- **Support Restorative and Legislative Reform** by advocating for funding of restorative practices and comprehensive alternatives to zero-tolerance school policies.

These resources equip you to understand the scope of the issue in NC, connect with community advocates, and take meaningful action to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline.





Secretary of Program Resources

Greetings,

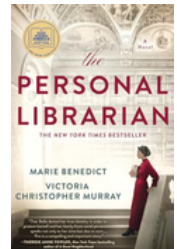
I hope things are going well for everyone as we enter the halfway point of our UWFaith year. It's a good time to take a breath and evaluate where we are in our goals for the year, especially in the Reading Program. Are you making progress? Are you finding materials that challenge and inform? United Women in Faith issued this statement about the importance of the Reading Program:

"With so much to process in the world and everything asking us to move faster, putting a strong emphasis on reading is practically countercultural — and that's exactly what we need. Our Reading Program gives us relevant, important works that allows us to slow down and think, and it prepares us to carry out our mission more faithfully."

I recently read *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict. This is a fictional account of Belle da Costa Greene, who was the personal librarian for J. P. Morgan. She became a very powerful woman, but spent her life hiding the fact she was black. She lived in a time when women had few opportunities, and black women had none. Because of her light skin she was able to pass as white. Her story serves as an example of the opportunities that have been denied so many in the past and should make us mindful of the need to stay vigilant in the fight for all women's rights, which is one of UWFaith's main missions.

Enjoy your summer and include some reading!

Margaret Cooper



Committee on Nominations Members

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the proposed slate of officers for the upcoming term. The individuals listed on the following page have agreed to serve and bring a variety of gifts, talents, and experience to these leadership roles. We are grateful for their willingness to serve and ask that you review the slate prior to the election.

If you would like more information about the duties of any unfilled position, believe God is calling you to serve in a leadership role, or would like to recommend someone who may be called to serve, please contact Brenda Kimberlin (828-728-0371), Donna Parks Hill (336-466-1230), Jean Stetler (828-964-1396), or Jan Taylor (336-468-0313).

Appalachian District United Women in Faith
Committee on Nominations Proposed Slate of Officers for 2027
District Annual Meeting – August 15, 2026

The Appalachian District Nominating Committee presents the following slate of officers:

Office	Term	Nominee	Nominee Church Home
President - continuing	2026-2027	Janice Taylor	Wilkesboro
Vice President - continuing	2026-2027	Jean Stetler	Wilkesboro
Secretary	2027-2028		
Treasurer	2027-2028	*	
Spiritual Growth	2027-2028	**	
Mission Education & Interpretation - continuing	2026-2027	Terri Williams	New Beginnings
Membership Nurture & Outreach	2027-2028		
Social Action	2027-2028		
Communications	2027-2028	Traci Snyder	Taylorsville
Program Resources - continuing	2026-2027	Margaret Cooper	Wilkesboro
Nominations Chair	2027-2028		
Nominations Committee - ongoing	2027	Brenda Kimberlin	Littejohn
Nominations Committee - ongoing	2027	Donna Parks Hill	Wilkesboro
Nominations Committee -ongoing	2028	Rhonda Waters	Hiddenite/Stony Pt Parish
Nominations Committee - ongoing	2028	Annette Echard	New Covenant
Nominations Committee - ongoing	2028	Marcia Faw	Millers Creek
Nominations Committee	2029		

Appointed Officers (2026 –2027)

Parliamentarian
Historian
Legacy Fund Energizer/Web Manager

Sherry Summerlin
Terri Clark
Nancy Reigel

***Interim Treasurer: Nancy Reigel**

**** Interim Spiritual Growth: Sherry Summerlin**



**Mission, Education,
and Interpretation Coordinator**

Greetings all!

In the June subscription of Response magazine, we find much to celebrate. This month, we reflect on an incredible milestone of 125 years of mission study and the faithful women whose dedication has shaped generations of ministry, service, and spiritual growth. As I read Celebrating 125 Years of Mission Study, I could not help but see how deeply this history reflects the mission of United Women in Faith which is 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.

From the beginning, women came together in faith with a shared purpose. They connected with one another through prayer, service, and a desire to respond to God's call. That connection became the foundation of a sisterhood rooted in Christ.

The article shows that for 125 years, mission studies has provided Christian spiritual formation by helping women grow deeper in their faith and understanding of God's mission in the world. Through studying scripture, social issues, and global concerns, women were not only learning facts, they were being spiritually shaped. They learned to see the world through the eyes of Christ, with compassion, justice, and love. Mission studies also became a powerful tool for education. Women have learned about poverty, racial injustice, immigration, healthcare, restorative justice, and the challenges faced by communities both near and far. This knowledge equipped them to move beyond awareness into meaningful service. Through this learning came leadership development. For generations, women stepped into leadership roles in churches, communities, and mission fields. They became teachers, organizers, advocates, and servants, all examples of women who inspired others to act boldly in faith. Mission studies gave women confidence, knowledge, and a voice.

Along the way, creative fellowship flourished. Whether through Mission u, local unit meetings, summer gatherings, storytelling, skits, discussion, or shared worship, women found community in learning together. They encouraged one another, prayed together, and built lasting bonds of sisterhood. When we look back over these 125 years, we see the mission statement of United Women in Faith woven into every chapter. Women were connected, nurtured, formed spiritually, leaders, found fellowship, and received education, and because of all of this, they were able to inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

The article reminds us that a mission is not just about going somewhere, it is about becoming someone. It is about allowing God to transform our hearts so we can better serve others. The work of United Women in Faith continues because we are women of faith, action, and sisterhood. We are connected by God's love and called to serve with courage. We are part of an unstoppable mission, one that has endured for generations and continues through each of us. As we celebrate 125 years of mission study, may we honor the women who came before us by continuing their work. May we keep learning, keep growing, keep leading, and keep serving. Because when women of faith come together in love and action, God does amazing things and through His grace, our sisterhood remains strong, our faith remains rooted, and our mission remains unstoppable.

Blessings to you all,

Terri Williams

Appalachian District UWFaith 2026 Nurturing Partners

Jan Taylor 336-468-0313	Jean Stetler 828-264-6629	Terri Williams 336-426-2250	Nancy Reigel 828-268-0637
First North Wilkesboro Sparta Watauga Coop Parish *Henson Chapel *Mabel *Valle Crucis-Banner Elk *Smethport - West Jefferson *Warrensville Grassy Creek - State Road	Banner Elk Deerfield FaithBridge - Blowing Rock West Jefferson *Altamont - Newland *Jonas Ridge	New River Coop Parish *Piney Creek *Mount Zion-Piney Creek West - Mooresville *Ebenezer - Elkin *Maple Springs - Ronda Charity - Elkin	First Taylorsville Millers Creek *New River Coop Parish *Shiloh - Sparta *Cox's Chapel-MofWilson, VA Yadkinville Clifton - Warrensville
Traci Snyder 828-308-3452	Brenda Kimberlin 828-728-0371	Sherry Summerlin 828-728-4936	Elizabeth Conrad 704-223-7877
Hiddenite/StPt Parish Fair View - Mooresville *Faith - Mooresville Breath of Life-Mooresville McKendree Chapel-Mooresville	Colliers - Lenoir First Granite Falls Asbury - Hamptonville Linville First Lenoir	Union Grove Wilkesboro *Cedar Valley - Lenoir *Mount Herman - Lenoir Jefferson	Hudson Union - North Wilkesboro *Hanes Grove - Hamptonville * St. Paul - Hamptonville
Terri Clark 828-612-2637	Donna Parks Hill 336-466-1230	Marcia Faw 336-667-6181	Rhonda Waters 828-320-6260
New Covenant - Lenoir Wesley Memorial - States Bethany - West Jefferson New Salem - Statesville	Boone Crossfire-NorthWilkesboro Sutherland - Creston *Elk Park *Pine Grove - Spruce Pine	Central - Mooresville *First Elkin *White Rock Thurmond	New Beginnings *Philadelphia-Stony Point • Bethel - Statesville *Elmwood - Statesville *Chapel Hill - Statesville
Annette Echard 828-754-5526	Linda Greer 828-244-2251	Martha Phillips 828-467-3167 M	
*Baton - Granite Falls *Littlejohn - Lenoir Newland	Broad Street (Statesville) *First Troutman *Scotts Chapel-Statesville Wesley Chape -Troutman Mosaic - Statesville	Williamsons Chapel-Mooresville	

Units in Bold Font are active units.

* Indicates churches are in same charge.





2026 Calendar of District Events



Please mark your calendars and avoid scheduling other events on these dates.

**Saturday, August 15 - Annual Celebration – Union Grove UMC,
Speaker – Reverend Dr. Mary John Dye, Retired**

**Saturday, November 7 - Membership and Leadership
Development Day (MLDD) Site – TBD Speaker - TBD**

2026 Calendar of Conference Events

Aug. 21-22 - Mission u, Catholic Conference Center, All UWFaith Members

Sept. 12 - Annual Celebration, (location TBD) All UWFaith Members

Oct. 17 - Leadership Development Day, LDD All District Officers (Virtual & Location TBD)

Dates TBD - Ubuntu Days of Service (various locations) All UWFaith Members



Appalachian District Annual Celebration

Unstoppable: Called to Serve

Saturday, August 15, 2026

Registration & Light refreshments -9:00AM Registration
Meeting 9:30-Noon

Location: Union Grove UMC -1331 Sloans Mill Road, Union Grove,
NC 28689

Speaker: Reverend Dr. Mary John Dye (Retired)

District Officer Installation: Linda Greer, Conference Vice-President

Hands-on Mission Project: Local Mission – Food for Veterans &
Community Food Market (Peanut butter & healthy cereals are needed)

Love Offering: All who have heeded and answered God's call!

There is no charge: request RSVP with number of attendees no later than August 5th to Jean Stetler,
jstetler52@gmail.com.



Directions to Union Grove UMC:

From Sparta/Elkin areas: Take I-77 South to Exit 65 and keep right to NC-901 North. In 2.1 miles, turn left onto Sloan Mills Road. The church will be on the right.

From Statesville, Hickory, Granite Falls areas: Take I-40 West to I-77 North. In 14 miles, take Exit 65 and keep left to NC-901 North. In 2.3 miles, turn left onto Sloans Mill Road. The church will be on the right.

From Taylorsville/Stony Point/Hiddenite: Take NC-115 North (toward Wilkesboro); turn right onto NC-901 South. In 5.2 miles, turn right onto Sloans Mill Road. The church is on the right. Or take I-40 & follow directions from Statesville.

From Boone & Wilkesboro areas: Take US-421 South to Exit 282 (NC-115 South); keep right toward Statesville. In 12 miles, turn left onto NC-901 South. In 5.2 miles, turn right onto Sloans Mill Road. The church will be on the right.

From Lenoir/Hudson: Take NC-18 to Moravian Falls NC. Turn left on NC-16 North (toward Wilkesboro) and at the 1st traffic light (Country Club Road), turn right. Follow Country Club Road to NC-115 (approx. 4.8 miles.) Turn right onto NC-115 South (toward Statesville.) In 12 miles, turn left onto NC-901 South. In 5.2 miles, turn right onto Sloans Mill Road. The church will be on the right.

From Yadkinville areas: Head toward S State St. Turn left onto State St. In 1 mile Turn right onto the US-421 N ramp to Wilkesboro. Merge onto US-421 N. In 8.5 miles take exit 265B for I-77 S toward Statesville/Charlotte. In 8.3 miles take exit 65 for NC-901 toward Harmony/Union Grove. In 0.2 miles turnright onto NC-901 N. in 2.1 miles Sharp left onto Sloans Mill Rd. The church will be on the right.

From Mooresville area: Take I-77N toward Statesville; take exit 65 toward Union Grove. Keep left, follow signs for Union Grove. In 50 feet turn left onto NC-901 N. In 2.3 miles, take a sharp left onto Sloans Mill Rd. The church will be on the right.



August 21-22, 2026

The Catholic Conference Center, Hickory, North Carolina

Passionate about mission?

Love to learn?

Want to engage with others who are?

Then Mission u is right for you!

Online registration is OPEN!

Registration is [ONLINE only](#), thru August 10. (There is no onsite registration.)

Registration costs vary with housing and student type. Fees for full-time students range from \$100 (non-resident with meals) to \$260 (all meals and private room with private bath), depending on type of accommodations. Housing is first come first served to stay on site.

Dates: Friday, August 21 through Saturday, August 22

Location: [The Catholic Conference Center](#), Hickory, North Carolina

Childcare will be NOT be available.

Study books should be ordered in advance; they will not be available for sale at the event. You may order a study book for pickup at Mission u as part of the registration process, if you register by August 10. If you choose to order a book to be delivered to you (which will increase your shipping costs), you may do so at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1952501407>

- **Adult Study:** In *A Deep Knowing: Experiencing Emmanuel through Every Part of Our Lives*, author Linda Furtado invites you to encounter “God with us” in powerful, personal, and transformative ways. This eight-session curriculum opens a path to explore how Emmanuel is revealed throughout Scripture—and how that same divine presence continues to walk with us today. Each session encourages you to pause, reflect, and take a closer look at the stories of faith found in the Bible. Through thoughtful readings, meaningful discussions, and personal reflection, you’ll uncover connections between those ancient stories and your own life. As you journey with others, you’ll explore how God is present amid justice struggles, adversity, community heritage, and deep spiritual relationships. Whether the stories are familiar or new, each encounter offers the opportunity to see Scripture with fresh eyes and gain a deeper understanding. This curriculum creates sacred space for spiritual growth, shared insight, and mutual support.

Kindle version of the adult study is available at [Amazon](#).

Hands-on Mission: UMCOR Menstrual Hygiene Kits

CEU/Advanced Lay Servant Credit: Participants can apply to receive CEU’s and Advanced Lay Servant credit. Forms will be available at Mission u.

Schedule outline: Check-in will begin at 9:00 AM on Friday, August 21st. Mission u will open with worship Friday at 10:00 AM. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon and the next session will begin at 1:30 PM. Dinner will be served at 6:00. Breakfast Saturday will be served at 8:00 AM. The study should conclude by about 4:00 pm on Saturday.



Western North Carolina Conference

United Women in Faith

53rd Annual Celebration

Celebrating 157 Years in Mission

**Saturday, September 12, 2026
St. Luke's UMC, Hickory, NC**



GUEST SPEAKER
Emily Jones
National UWFaith
Executive for
Racial Justice

