



The Metro Messenger

The voice for the United Women in Faith of the Metro District,
Western North Carolina Conference

President's Message

Dear UWF Sisters,

Much like the ladies in Boston in 1869 who organized the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) in response to the spiritual and physical needs of poor women in India, the Alliance Center for Education, formerly known as Bethlehem Center of Charlotte, was founded in 1940 by the United Methodist Women in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Charlotte to provide much-needed childcare and support to mothers during WWII.

Today, the Alliance Center for Education, affectionately called the AC4Ed, serves over 800 families in the Charlotte area with pre-school education classes and Out of School Time activities, including after-school enrichment programs and summer camping opportunities. Many of our local United Women in Faith units make it a priority to support the Alliance Center for Education, and that support is greatly appreciated. Out-of-School-Time (OST) is a program for which funds can be designated, and your donation will go directly to camp scholarships and other activities to help students keep up with their peers in class and experience outdoor camping during the summer. Please remember that your local unit and you personally can designate your AC4Ed gift to the OST programs.

As always, thanks for caring and thanks for giving.

Affectionately,

Diann

Diann P. Back
Metro District President
dback@carolina.rr.com



United
Women
in Faith

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response Podcast

 Tune in to audio versions of some of the top articles from each issue of **response** magazine, the award-winning official magazine of United Women in Faith. Topics cover everything from spiritual growth and living our faith to reports on local, national and international work.

<https://uwfaith.org/resources/podcasts>

Vice President

Hello Sisters in Christ,

Spring brings our District Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, April 25th at Central UMC – 30 Union Street, North, Concord, NC 28025.

Sandy Hieronymus will be our speaker. Sandy is a lifelong Methodist who enjoys teaching all ages, especially children. She is a retired preK teacher. Serving in United Methodist Women, now UWFaith, on the local, district, and conference levels was a blessing in her life.

Peace and blessings,

Earonita F. Strong
Metro District Vice President
stronge@carolina.rr.com

Treasurer

The first quarter giving for the Metro District was great!!! Let's continue this level of giving throughout 2026. Here's a breakdown of what we reported to the conference for the first quarter:

Special Mission Recognition	\$ 260.00
The Legacy Fund	\$ 893.50
Designated Supplementary Giving	\$ 8,440.93

THANK YOU, Metro, for your giving!!!

If you are an online giver, I encourage you to give through our conference website:

wnccumw.org/online-mission-giving/ . Giving through the website sends a notification to the district treasurer and credits the unit.

March 23rd was United Women in Faith **Day of Giving**! This was an opportunity to gather as one sisterhood in faith to thank God for the continued grace shown to United Women in Faith. If you missed giving on the **Day of Giving**, you can show your appreciation by giving through your local unit. Contact your local unit treasurer for ways to give through Pledges, Special Mission Recognition, Gifts to Mission, Gifts in Memory, Call to Prayer, World Thank Offering, and Legacy Fund. Your giving funds the work of United Women in Faith for women, children, and youth nationally and internationally. You can always contact me if you have questions.

The Metro District 2026 Prayer Breakfast is on April 25th at Central UMC in Concord. The registration deadline is April 11th. Detailed information is in this newsletter.

THANK YOU all for continuing to be faithful in support of the mission work of United Women in Faith.

Sylvia Casey
District Treasurer
sil1casey@gmail.com

Social Action

As we enter a new quarter in our ongoing advocacy for all God's children, the Charter for Racial Justice reminds us why United Women in Faith's work remains *crucial*. We must continue to act as individuals, units, districts, and conferences. This quarter, we highlight:

"Because we believe:

3. That racism denies the redemption and reconciliation of Jesus Christ;
4. That racism robs all human beings of their wholeness and is used as a justification for social, economic, environmental, and political exploitation;

Therefore, as United Methodists in every place across the land, we will unite our efforts within the church to take the following actions:

3. Increase efforts to recruit people of all races into the membership of The United Methodist Church and provide leadership development opportunities without discrimination.
4. Establish workshops and seminars in local churches to study, understand, and appreciate the historical and cultural contributions of each race to the church and community."

What can we do to impact change? Talk about it in your unit!

If your unit has not yet discussed the North Carolina Community Resolves for Fully Funded Public Education, sponsored by the League of Women Voters, the time is now! Make your voice heard and learn more at: [Sign the "North Carolina Community Resolves": Support NC Public School Students, Teachers, Staff, and Families](#). There will be no racial justice until each child of God gets the education and future they deserve.

According to Public Schools First NC, "What makes this year's budget cycle for districts even worse—beyond not having a state budget—is the widely-reported threat of a looming state fiscal cliff. The fiscal cliff will be caused by the state bringing in less revenue than it needs for required spending, resulting in severe economic problems statewide. Over the last decade, the legislature has prioritized tax cuts for the wealthy and funding private school vouchers, leaving less and less money for other programs."

Another opportunity to advocate for education, as shared by the Metro District UMC: People of Faith for Public Schools and Pastors for NC Children invite you to join us at the NC Legislature on Tuesday, April 21st, for a Public Education Advocacy Day. Inform yourself and others by reading, "Why is our Advocacy Needed Now?" [April 21 Public Education Advocacy Day - Pastors for North Carolina Children](#)

As Earth Day approaches, act and speak to honor and protect God's creation! Share with your unit and congregation:

- "Working to keep water safe, clean, and available to all is a sacred trust." [April 2026 Tips: Sacred Waters | UMC Creation Justice](#)
- Observe Earth Day! Consider these ideas: [Earth Day Tips: 50 Easy Ways to Help the Planet Every Day](#)
- Be a leader and attend the WNCC Bishop's Climate Summit is on April 18th, Register by April 10th [Bishop's Climate Summit](#)

Lisa Delano
Metro District Social Action Chair
mybrowneyedgirls@msn.com



Program Resources

In challenging times filled with uncertainty, many of us find ourselves nervous and anxious, searching for peace and hope. And others are searching for a deeper relationship with God. Two books on the UWF Reading list offer insight and lots of practical suggestions for said searching.

Spiritual Practices for Soul Care: 40 Ways to Deepen Your Faith by Barbara L. Peacock (Spiritual Growth, 2025 UWF reading list) offers 40 chapters to help you journey through this busy world for a deeper experience of and with God. From traditional practices such as prayer, meditation, and scripture reading to journaling, nature walks, and artistic expression, the author covers a range of methods for exploration. Each chapter includes a Scripture Focus and Inspirational Quotes. The prompts and questions are helpful and encourage reflection and personal growth. The author acknowledges a sense of community and how sharing personal explorations supports and benefits the group as a whole. Personally, I enjoyed the author's fun acrostics used in her writings, such as ING (added to a noun gives it action— care + ing= caring). Also, Barbara Peacock has a Charlotte connection, serving with True Value of a Woman Ministry, BraveWorks, and the Charlotte Prayer Network. She founded Peacock Soul Care and lives in NC.

Another Spiritual Growth book from the 2026 UWF reading list is *Sacred Self-Care: Daily Practices for Nurturing Our Whole Selves* by Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes. It is a 7-week guide to help your whole self — mind, body, and soul. The writing for each day includes a story, a scripture passage, and sample prompts to help you create lifelong habits of caring for yourself. The topics for each week are Mastering Self-Care Fundamentals, Practicing Self-Compassion, Setting Healthy Boundaries, Caring for Our Emotional Selves, Caring for Our Minds, and Practicing Self-Care as a Way of Life. The author, Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes, is a clinical psychologist, pastor, and activist. She has written an interactive devotional that meets us where we are, helps us realize we are beautiful and wonderful creations of God, and takes these affirmations into our daily lives as we grow closer to God and do His work.

Please check out these books, perhaps as a daily devotional, and see where it takes you.

Sharon Lasher

Metro District Program Resources

sharonllasher@gmail.com



Remember the Bring-a-Book, Take-a-Book Table at the Metro District Prayer Breakfast on April 25, 2026, at Central UMC in Concord. Let's share and recycle our resources, so that we can "Keep Reading"!

Membership Nurture and Outreach

With it being Holy Week, it seemed appropriate to lift our devotion from this section of scripture. During the course of the week we will be thinking what this time means for us individually and how we can share the good news of God. There are many wonderful texts that I'm sure we all recognize. The foot washing scene where Jesus demonstrates servanthood. The broken heartedness of betrayal as Judas sells out the Savior. The olive garden experience, where our Lord prays so earnestly, he either literally or figuratively sweats blood. All of these are moving moments, but let me draw our attention to perhaps an under-appreciated text.

John 17:20-24 NSV

20 'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.'

Let us have unity in our fellowship, oneness with our God and integrity of witness.

Fill our hearts with joy so that when others see us we radiate the light of Christ.

Thank the Lord for Holy Week and Easter.

Shauna Avery Stroud
Membership Nurture and Outreach
954-329-5121



Metro District 2026 Prayer Breakfast - What Are You Waiting For?

April 25, Central UMC, 30 Union St. N, Concord, NC 28025

Speaker: Sandy Hieronymus



Metro District Prayer Breakfast Registration Form

Check-in begins at 8:30 am: with breakfast at 8:45 am

The worship service will begin at 10:00 am

A full breakfast will be served for \$10.50 per person. Non-breakfast participants cost \$5.00 per person.

The program will be recorded, and the link will be emailed to the unit Presidents.

The Love Offering will be in honor of the Alliance Center for Education.

Name of Church				
Name	Breakfast	No breakfast	Office	Email

Registrations should be postmarked by April 11, 2026. Please send one check per unit/church. Make checks payable to "Metro District UWF" and mail to Sylvia Casey, 7009 Summer Pl., Charlotte, NC 28213.

Hands-On Mission Project - Diapers and wipes for the Alliance Center for Education
Diaper Sizes: 1-5 for Boys and Girls and Pull-Ups sizes 2T-5T for Boys and Girls, and Baby Wipes



United
Women
in Faith

ASSEMBLY 2026

May 15-17, 2026

Indianapolis, Indiana

uwfaith.org/assembly

**Dream it!
Believe it!
Do it!**

What's Assembly 2026 all about?

It's a celebration of who we are and what we can achieve together.

Assembly is our chance to unite, recharge, deepen our faith, and make a difference.

What awaits you at this empowering event?

OPPORTUNITIES TO:

Be nurtured by deep Soul Care experiences.

Be equipped through cutting-edge workshops.

Be inspired by top women experts in their field.

Become influencers through networking connections.

Make an impact through action for justice.

It's time to talk, time to dream, and time to build because when women of faith put our love into action, we are unstoppable.

Come be transformed at Assembly 2026!

Stacey Abrams



Keynote Speaker

Carolyn Abrams



Keynote Speaker

We are thrilled to share that Assembly 2026 will host longtime United Methodists Stacey Abrams and longtime UWFaith member Rev. Carolyn Abrams in conversation as our Inspiration Speakers.

[Register Now!](#)

Examining Immigrant Justice

**Presented by Central UMC
United Women In Faith**

April 21, 2026 | 6:30 pm

Coltrane Room

Central United Methodist Church
30 Union St N, Concord, NC 28205

Speakers

- **Natalie Marles**, Strategic Program Director, Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, a Latina immigrant, community advocate, and Co-Founder of El Puente Hispano in Cabarrus County
- **Sandra Torres**, Co-Founder of El Puente Hispano in Cabarrus County, Latina immigrant
- **Gena Thomas**, author, activist for immigrant rights, and foster parent to a child separated at the border
- **Rev Dr. In-Yong Lee**, United Methodist Clergy/District Superintendent and immigrant

Please join us!

District and WNCC UWFaith Events Calendar

April 25

Metro District Prayer Breakfast
Central United Methodist Church
30 Union Street North
Concord, NC 28025
Hands on Project: Diapers & Wipes for AC4Ed

May 15-15

Assembly 2026
Indianapolis, Indiana

June 11- 13

WNCC UWF Spiritual Growth Retreat
91 North Lakeshore Dr.
Lake Junaluska, NC 28745

June 19 – 21

Annual Conference
91 North Lakeshore Dr.
Lake Junaluska, NC 28745

August 21-22

WNCC UWF Mission u
Catholic Conference Center
1551 Trinity Lane
Hickory, NC 28602

August 29

Metro District Annual Celebration
TBD
Hands on Project: School Supplies for AC4Ed

September 12

WNCC UWF Annual Celebration
TBD

October 17

Leadership Development Day
LDD All District Officers (Virtual)

October 24

Metro District Leadership Development Day
All Unit Officers (Virtual)





United
Women
in Faith

United Women In Faith Metro District 2026 Executive Committee

Office	Name	Address	Phone	Email
President	Diann P. Back (St. Stephen)	9301 Whitethorn Dr. Charlotte, NC 28277	704-846-8875 h 704-517-5436 c	dback@carolina.rr.com
Vice President	Earonita Strong (Simpson-Gillespie)	1929 Crestdale Dr. Charlotte, NC 28216	704-534-4387	stronge@carolina.rr.com
Secretary	Debbie Eudy (Memorial/Charlotte)	806 Eaglewood Ave. Charlotte, NC 28212	704-759-4477	snakcak3655@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sylvia Casey (Simpson-Gillespie)	700 Summer Pl. Charlotte, NC 28213	704-596-3578	sil1casey@gmail.com
ME&I	Sylvia Sekle-Dueh (Hickory Grove)	212 Hunslet Circle Charlotte, NC 28206	704-606-5557	dueh1409@gmail.com
Spiritual Growth	Marilyn Morris (North Davidson)	3400 Winterfield Pl. Charlotte, NC 28205	704-807-5551	1circleofgrace@gmail.com
Social Action	Lisa Delano (Davidson UMC)	116 Webbed Foot Rd Mooresville NC 28117	704-957-8035	mybrowneyedgirls@msn.com
MN&O	Shauna Stroud (St. Mark's)	7711 Park Vista Circle Charlotte NC 28226	954-329-5121	shauna.stroud@gmail.com
Program Resources	Sharon Lasher (Memorial, Charlotte)	1836 Graybark Ave. Charlotte, NC 28205	704-661-5268	sharonllasher@gmail.com
Communications	Amanda Dyer (Forest Hill)	701 Wingard Rd. Concord, NC 28025	704-201-8672	adyer0813@gmail.com
Parliamentarian	Lynda Morris (St. Stephen)	737 Pavilion View Dr. Apt. F305 Matthews, NC 28105	704-847-2521 h 704-619-2013 c	lfmorrisap@aol.com
Historian	Nancy Ward (Matthews)	4003 Colton Ridge Drive Indian Trail, NC 28079	704-681-4779	Nward001@carolina.rr.com
Nominations	Louise Woods (Central Charlotte)	1327 Cedarwood Ln. Charlotte, NC 28212	704-536-0335	lwoods@BellSouth.net
Member-at-Large	Sybil Long (Central Charlotte)	8238 Terra Linda Ln. Charlotte, NC 28215	704-773-8678	sibyl.long@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Linda Davidson, Ch. (Simpson-Gillespie)	6201 Spring Garden Ln. Charlotte, NC 28213	704-281-9565	lad6201@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Tonja Schult (St. Marks)	134 Oasis Dr. Mooresville, NC 28117	404-290-2690	tonjaschult50@gmail.com
Conference Advisor	Cathy McCauley (St. Stephen)	6835-A Farmington Dr. Charlotte, NC 28212	704-965-6566	cathymc855@yahoo.com

2026 Metro District Nurturing Partner List

CHURCH	PARTNER	CHURCH	PARTNER
Aldersgate	Sylvia Casey	Matthews	Tanja Schult
Bethpage	Lynda Morris	Memorial (Charlotte)	Linda Davidson
Center (Concord)	Amanda Dyer	Midway	Sybil Long
Central (Charlotte)	Lynda Morris	Mount Olivet	Sybil Long
Central (Concord)	Amanda Dyer	Myers Park	Louise Woods
Christ	Sylvia Sekle-Dueh	North Davidson	Sylvia Sdkle-Deuh
Cokesbury	Diann Back	Pineville	Diann Back
Commonwealth	Earonita Strong	Pleasant Grove	Earonita Strong
Davidson	Lynda Morris	Providence	Debbie Eudy
Dilworth	Nancy Ward	Simpson-Gillespie	Sylvia Sekle-Dueh
Epworth	Amanda Dyer	SouthPark	Shauna Stroud
First (Charlotte)	Shauna Stroud	St. Francis	Nancy Ward
Forest Hill	Earonita Strong	St. Marks	Sylvia Casey
Harrisburg	Diann Back	St. Stephen	Debbie Eudy
Hickory Grove	Debbie Eudy	Thrift	Sylvia Sekle-Dueh
Hunters Chapel	Earonita Strong	Trinity (Charlotte)	Sylvia Casey
Huntersville	Lisa Delano	Trinity (Kannapolis)	Sharon Lasher
Indian Trail	Nancy Ward	Woodlawn	Earonita Strong

Your Metro Nurturing Partner is the point of contact and liaison with our local churches. Please welcome them when they contact you. Even with a designated Nurture Partner, the entire team is here to support you. Contact your Partner or any Metro Team Officer with your questions, ideas, or concerns

United Women in Faith
Metro District of the WNCC UMW
701 Wingard Rd.
Concord, NC 28025



United
Women
in Faith

United Women in Faith

Vision

Turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world.

Mission

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.

Purpose

To 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.