



The Metro Messenger

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

President's Message

Dear United Women in Faith Friends,

As Americans, most of us are used to measuring the health of something by looking at charts and graphs with lots of numbers. We record our blood pressure; we track our calories, and we check our screen time almost every day to see how we're doing. We even track the health of organizations with numbers, so why don't we pay more attention to the health of United Women in Faith? This task might sound a bit daunting at first, but tracking the health of our local and district UWF is really quite easy. Each year, the local units are asked to complete the "end-of-year reports" sharing the membership numbers, mission projects, justice today activities, and reading program participants. Your Metro District Board uses the numbers in these reports to assess the district's health. The Board would like to urge you to complete the annual reports using the information available to you. It's fine to submit a report where not all offices are filled yet; it's OK if your unit didn't earn a star rating this year. (Things beyond our control sometimes happen.) The board needs any information that will help give a complete picture of UWFaith activities going on in the Metro District. So, when December rolls around this year, please share whatever information you have with the Board by completing your annual reports. As of 2025, you can complete your reports online! Directions for completing the online forms will be provided in a later newsletter. Send your end-of-year reports to help verify that the Metro District UWF is alive and well and looking forward to serving others with love and compassion! Wishing you good numbers and good health,

Peace,

Diann

Diann P. Back
President, Metro District UWF
Email: diann.back@carolina.rr.com



United
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In This Issue

Vice President...p.2
Annual Celebration...p. 2 & 3
Treasurer's Report...p.4
Nominations ... p. 5
Social Action...p.6
Member Nurture and
Outreach...p.7
Program Resources ... p. 8
Events...p 9
2026 Officers...p.10
Nurturing Partners...p.11
Calendar...p. 12

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



Metro District 2026 Annual Celebration "Well with Our Souls"

Saturday, August 29, 8:30 – 11:30 am
Cokesbury UM Church
6701 Idlewild Rd., Charlotte, NC 28212



Featured Speaker: Reverend Suzanne E. Dornsmith, Pastor

Join us for a morning of fellowship, collective worship, inspirational music, and an uplifting message. Again, breakfast is optional for in-person attendees this year. Attendees may select in-person or in-person with breakfast. Breakfast will be a treat!

Registration Fees:
\$4.50 – In person with no breakfast.
\$10.50 – In person with breakfast.

Grace and peace,
Earonita F. Strong
Metro District Vice President
stronge@carolina.rr.com

Annual Celebration Hands-on Project

Here is a partial list of supplies that Alliance Center for Education (AC4Ed) is requesting, a longer list can be found at [Sign-up Genius link](#). Please use the link to indicate what items your unit will be purchasing. All items will be collected at Annual Celebration.

Beginners Pencils – 12/Bx	Colored Pencils – 12/Bx	Multicultural Crayons – 24/Bx
Sidewalk Chalk – 52/Ct	Lg Chart Tablet – Ruled 24 X 32	Sm Chart Tablet – Ruled 24 X 16
Laminating Pouches – 200 Ct 3mil	Washable Markers – 200/Bx	Jumbo Crayons – 200/Bx
9 X 12 Construction Paper – 50pk	12 X 18 Construction Paper – 50/Pk	9 X 12 Manila Drawing Paper – 500/Pk
Gorilla Tape – Double Sided – 140/Ct	Glue Dot Dispenser-3ct – W/200 Dots	Jumbo Pipe Cleaners – Asstd 200/Pk
Cotton Balls – 1000/Ct	Pom Poms – Asstd – 1" 300/Ct	Wiggly Eyes – 500/Ct
Primary Playdough – 6ct – 1lb Tub	Washable Markers – 200 Bx	Jumbo Crayons – 200/Bx



Please make note of the number and value of items donated from the Hands-On Project to add to your Unit's project expenditures for end-of-year mission dollar reporting.

**Metro District United Women In Faith Annual Celebration
Registration Form**

Saturday, August 29, 8:30 – 11:30 am
Cokesbury UM Church
6701 Idlewild Rd., Charlotte, NC 28212

A full breakfast will be served for \$10.50 per person. The cost for non-breakfast participants is \$4.50 per person.

Registration and Breakfast – 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Program 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Name of Church				
Name	Breakfast	No breakfast	Office	Email

Complete the **Registration Form** ([you can access an editable/printable form here](#)) and mail it with **one check per unit**, payable to “**Metro District UWF.**” Send to **Sylvia Casey, 7009 Summer Pl. Charlotte, NC 28213**, postmarked by **August 15th**. Please note any dietary restrictions.

Treasurer

The second quarter giving for the Metro District was very generous!!! I look forward to continuing this level of giving throughout 2026. Here's a breakdown of what we reported to the conference for the second quarter:

Designated and Undesignated Mission Giving	\$ 18,130.72
Special Mission Recognition	\$1,260.00
The Legacy Fund	\$536.75

GREAT JOB METRO!!! THANK-YOU!!!

The WNCC UWF financial goal for 2026 is: Each unit will make and meet their pledge to missions. I pray that each of you will prayerfully consider this and support the conference in meeting this goal. Meeting a pledge to missions is also one of the criteria for becoming a Mission Today Unit.

The WNCC UWF Love Offering Theme for 2026 is: Gift to Missions in honor of those who are dreaming, believing, and doing on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world. There will be opportunities to give at missionU and at the WNCC UWF Annual Celebration in September. When giving online, please give through the conference website: www.wnccumw.org. I will have brochures available at district events with detailed information.

I look forward to seeing you at the Metro Annual Celebration on August 29th. Additional information is in this newsletter.

May God continue to bless us because we believe that love in action can change the world.

Sylvia Casey, Metro District Treasurer
sil1casey@gmail.com



Mission u 2026

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!



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(click to learn more and register)

Nominations

The slate of 2027 Metro District Executive Committee Officers will be voted on during our Annual Celebration on August 29. All nominees have agreed to further the goals of the United Women in Faith.

2027 Proposed Slate of Metro District Officers

In accordance with the Standing Rules and Constitution of the United Women in Faith, the Committee on Nominations submits the nominees below for office on the Metro District Executive Committee for 2027.

Position	Name	Church	Term
President	Diann Back	St. Stephen	2027
Secretary	Debbie Eudy	Memorial UMC	2027
Treasurer	Sylvia Casey	Simpson-Gillespie	2027-2028
Spiritual Growth	Marilyn Morris	North Davidson	2027-2028
Social Action	Lisa Delano	Davidson	2027-2028
MN&O	Shauna Stroud	St. Marks	2027-2028
Communications	Amanda Dyer	Forest Hill	2027-2028
Program Resources	Sharon Lasher	Memorial, Charlotte	2027-2028
Nominations	TBD		Class of 2028
Nominations	TBD		Class of 2029
Nominations	TBD		Class of 2030

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

Friends, we are pleased that many of our officers have agreed to continue serving for another year. However, we still have several important leadership needs, including four vacancies on next year's Nominations Committee. We are committed to having broad representation from churches across the Metro District Board and invite you to prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you to serve in this important ministry. We are also compiling a list of women who may be interested in district leadership opportunities, either next year or as future openings arise.

If you are interested in serving, or if you know someone in your Unit who would be a good fit for district leadership, please contact Louise Woods at 704-604-0430. She would be happy to answer questions about the various leadership roles and responsibilities.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration and for your willingness to support the mission and ministry of United Women in Faith.



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Social Action

As I write this in 2026 on the afternoon of John Wesley's birthday (6/28/1703...yes, that is 323 years ago), let us find inspiration in how Wesley preached that "works of piety and mercy as inseparable. Charity is a gift, but social action helps change systems that keep people oppressed and dispossessed. As *United Women in Faith* members, we believe that these are inseparable." And for roughly half that time, over 150 years, United Women in Faith has believed and worked for change to happen. We cannot let up or stop now!

We continue to highlight the Charter for Racial Justice to open our eyes and remind us:

Because we believe:

5. That we must declare before God and before one another that we have sinned against our sisters and brothers of other races in thought, in word, and in deed;

6. That in our common humanity in creation, all women and men are made in God's image, and all persons are equally valuable in the sight of God;

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

5. Raise local churches' awareness of the continuing needs for equal education, housing, employment, medical care, and environmental justice for all members of the community, and to create opportunities to work for these things across racial lines.

6. Work for the development and implementation of national and international policies to protect the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of all people, such as through support of the ratification of United Nations covenants on human rights.

Finally, I share the following on justice from a book I recently studied at my church called *The Common Rule, Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction* by Justin Whitmel Earley. In discussing curating what media we consume, and how much, he writes, "When the fabric of justice is torn, people fall through the holes-usually the vulnerable people. Weaving the fabric of justice means mending the holes for the sake of the vulnerable." And I love this: "Justice as a tapestry reminds us that justice is beautiful."

"True understanding of the world's brokenness and real compassion for the oppressed will not come from the firehose of online anger but from a careful curation of the love of real justice. We must resist becoming people who talk of justice out of rage and work on becoming people who talk of justice out of love."

"This endless stream of media will drown out the quiet cries of the vulnerable unless we curate specifically to hear them, to love them, and at some point, to close our screens and walk out our doors to where they are."

After 157 years, United Women in Faith invites each unit in the Metro district to add to the legacy of love, to faith in action, and to not stop our work for justice. If your unit is not actively doing at least ONE Justice Today opportunity, please consider taking the first step on the walk toward justice, toward love!

Lisa Delano
Metro District Social Action Chair



(click to explore more Social Action Campaign Resources)

Membership Nurture and Outreach

A Soft Devotional on Radical Hospitality

Romans 12:13 (NIV)

“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”

Hebrews 13:2 (NIV)

“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing.”

A Gentle Reflection

Radical hospitality begins quietly—often in the small, tender ways we choose to make space for one another. Its earliest meaning pointed to caring for those who needed shelter and comfort, reminding us that hospitality has always been an act of compassion.

The word *radical* may sound bold, but at its heart it simply invites us to welcome others in a way that gently reshapes us. It asks us to open our hearts a little wider, soften our expectations, and let love guide our response.

Our communities are always changing. Churches merge, ministries shift, and new faces appear in familiar places. These changes can stir uncertainty, yet they also offer opportunities for grace to bloom.

A Soft Invitation

My hope is that in every transition, we choose kindness.

That we greet new people with warmth.

That we listen with patience.

That we make room for one another with a spirit that reflects Christ’s gentle love.

Radical hospitality doesn’t require grand gestures.

It begins with a softened heart, an open hand, and a willingness to see Christ in each person who walks through our doors.

May we welcome them in—
with tenderness, with compassion,
with radical hospitality.

Blessings,
Shauna Avery Stroud

District MN&O



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Program Resources

Happy Summer! I hope that you are reading, exploring, and finding the books on the 2026 UWFaith Reading List inspiring, interesting, and hopeful.

The Happiest Man on Earth: The Beautiful Life of an Auschwitz Survivor by Eddie Jaku is an uplifting memoir in the Education For Mission category. Eddie Jaku tells his story as a Holocaust survivor and reflects on his friendships, family, work ethic, and beliefs that have helped him find his best possible life. Amid unspeakable horrors, Eddie chooses to embrace gratitude and kindness. It's a short read, and his quotes are simple, beautiful, and inspiring.

Here are some of his quotes:

"Happiness does not fall from the sky; it is in your hands. Happiness comes from inside yourself and from the people you love."

"This is the most important thing that I have ever learned: the greatest thing you will ever do is be loved by another person."

"Small acts of kindness and generosity and faith in your fellow men are more important than money; it is the first lesson my father ever taught me."

"What I have to share is not my pain. What I share is my hope."

"A friend is someone who reminds you to feel alive."

"Even for me, it took many years to realize that as long as I still hold fear and pain in my heart, I would not truly be free. It does no good to hold onto anger. Anger leads to fear, which leads to hate, which leads to death."

I'm certain that you will find more quotes that reach out and grab your attention. I love that Eddie Jaku refers to me as his friend at the very end of this book. What an honor!

Sharon Lasher
Metro District Program Resources



Remember the Bring-a-Book, Take-a-Book Table at the Annual Celebration on August 29, 2026, at Cokesbury UMC. Let's share and recycle our resources, so that we can "Keep Reading"!



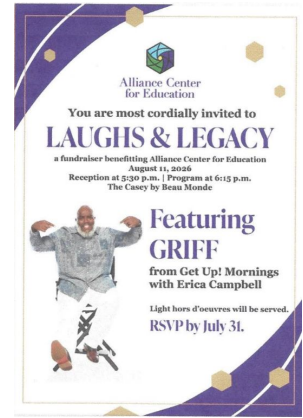
United
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You're Invited

Laughs & Legacy
Tuesday, August 11, 2026
5:30–7:00 p.m.
The Casey by Beau Monde
1837 N. Tryon St., #102, Charlotte, NC 28206

[Registration Link](#)

RSVP by July 31



Everyone is invited to this evening of fellowship and fun, while learning more about the important work of the Alliance Center for Education and its impact on the communities it serves.

Please share this invitation with your unit members and encourage anyone interested to attend.

Thank you for helping us support and celebrate one of our National Mission Institutions.

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

SAVE THE
DATE!

GUEST SPEAKER

Emily Jones

**National UWFaith
Executive for
Racial Justice**





United Women In Faith Metro District 2026 Executive Committee

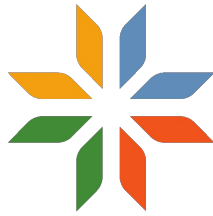
Office	Name	Address	Phone	Email
President	Diann P. Back (St. Stephen)	9301 Whitethorn Dr. Charlotte, NC 28277	704-846-8875 h 704-517-5436 c	dback@carolina.rr.com
Vice President	Earonita Strong (Simpson-Gillespie)	1929 Crestdale Dr. Charlotte, NC 28216	704-534-4387	stronge@carolina.rr.com
Secretary	Debbie 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



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District and WNCC UWFaith Events Calendar

August 21-22

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

August 29

Metro District Annual Celebration
Cokesbury UMC
6701 Idlewild Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28212

September 12

WNCC UWF Annual Celebration
St. Luke's UMC, Hickory, NC

October 17

Leadership Development Day
LDD All District Officers (Virtual)

October 24

Metro District Leadership Development Day
All Unit Officers (Virtual)

Hands on Project: School Supplies for AC4Ed