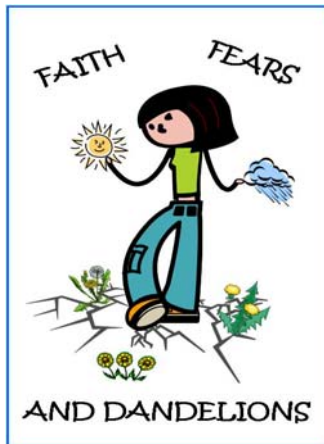


Conference Gram



Volume 56, Number 2 Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women

April 2007



Spiritual Growth Retreats

Western North Carolina Conference
United Methodist Women

June 15-16 & June 16-17, 2007
Stuart Auditorium, Lake Junaluska

Retreat Leader: M. Garlinda Burton

Music Team:

Mary Green—Song Leader Ronnie Wise—Organist / Pianist

The Spiritual Growth Retreats for the United Methodist Women of the Western North Carolina Conference will be held at Lake Junaluska on June 15-16 and June 16-17, 2007. Our theme for the retreats this year is **Faith, Fears and Dandelions**. We all have faith, but sometimes we allow our faith to take a back seat to the demands of our daily lives. We don't take time to nourish ourselves through God's Word and just as our bodies become weak for lack of food, so also does our faith falter for lack of a closeness with God. As a result, we allow our fears to creep in where our faith should be. But God wants us to remain strong in our faith and put down strong roots so that our faith will not falter. We must be in relationship with God each day. Take some time out of your busy life and join with sisters and brothers in Christ at beautiful Lake Junaluska - a place which calls you to spend some quiet time in reflection, study, and prayer with your UMW sisters. We trust that your retreat will be a special time of renewal and spiritual growth.

The first session will begin at 3:45pm in Stuart Auditorium with singing under the direction of Mary Greene and Ronnie Wise. There will also be special music provided by Javier Perez, oboist. We are excited to have M. Garlinda Burton, General Secretary of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, as our Retreat leader. The schedule and the

sermon topics are as follows:

Session One, 3:45pm: Extreme Makeover (from the inside out)—Romans 11:33-12:2 (Petersen) **Session Two, 7:15pm: Citizens of Heaven**—Philippians 3:12-14, 20. *Following the evening session, there will be a concert by the Junaluska Singers, which is always a highlight of the retreats.* **Session Three, 9:00am: When You Can't Be Superwoman**—Mark 10:46-52 **Session Four, 10:30am: Returning To Our UMW Roots**—Matthew 5:14-16

REGISTRATION will be downstairs in Harrell Center from 12:30 to 3:45pm. As soon as you arrive at Lake Junaluska, look for the yellow UMW Registration signs. Stuart Auditorium and Harrell Center are right next to each other on Lakeshore Drive. Parking surrounds the auditorium. We recommend that you register first before checking into your room if you are staying on the retreat grounds.

Check in time for the Lake facilities is 3:00pm. PLEASE NOTE: If you are staying at the Lambuth Hotel or Terrace Hotel, you check in/out at that hotel. Check in/out for the Lakeside Lodge, Junaluska Apts., Mountainview Lodge or Sunnyside Lodge will be in the building which houses Jones Cafeteria. There will be an information booth set up at Harrell Center for any questions you might have.

Housing request forms were sent to each district president. The forms

were to be returned in February. If you have not requested housing, please do so right away. Available space on the assembly grounds fills up very quickly, especially for the Friday/Saturday session. If lodging is not available on the assembly grounds, you will be advised of other possible accommodations nearby. You may request availability by calling 1-800-222-4930. If you secure lodging off the assembly grounds, you do not have to send in the Reservation Form, just make your arrangements with the facility off the grounds and then come register with us at Harrell Center when you arrive at the Lake. **It is very important for you to register at Harrell Center so that we will have a record of your attendance.** If you need child care, you may make arrangements by calling Lake Junaluska at 1-828-452-2881.

The retreats promise to be a time for spiritual growth as we explore the theme **Faith, Fears, and Dandelions**. Please be in prayer for the retreats and the retreat leaders.

Kris Peurifoy, Spiritual Growth
Krispeurifoy@aol.com

Please remember that registration for the Spiritual Growth Retreats will be held downstairs in the Harrell Center Auditorium where the Program Resources Room will be set up.

School of Christian Mission

“Singing Across the Walls”

Greensboro College, Greensboro, North Carolina

“July 12-15, 2007”

*Spiritual Growth Study: “Music & Mission”

*Geographic Study: “Israel / Palestine”

*General Issue Study: “Globalization: Its Impact on People’s Lives”

Youth Mission Day—Saturday, July 14th

Registration: May 1-June 22, 2007

Registration brochures are available from your District Presidents

Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women

ANNUAL MEETING

“Through the Eyes of a Child”

September 7, 8, & 9, 2007
Lake Junaluska Assembly

Hands-on Mission Project: Gift to Mission Cards

Mark Your Calendar!!!

RETREAT REGISTRATION

Registration for each retreat will begin at 12:30pm to 3:45pm downstairs in Harrell Center. An information booth will be set up to assist you.

After you register, please take time to browse in the **Program Resources Room** also in Harrell Center. Hours of operation for **Program Resources** will be: Friday: 12:30-3:45pm, 5:30pm-7:00pm and after the last session on Friday. Saturday: 8:00-8:45am, 12:00-3:45pm, 5:30-6:45pm.

Rooms on the assembly grounds may not be available until 3pm. We share the facilities with others. Check-out time is 11am.

The Memorial Chapel will be open at all times for your personal quiet time. You may place prayer requests in a basket in the Chapel. We will lift up those requests during our retreat sessions.

The Susanna Wesley Gardens, the International Prayer Room, and the Junaluska Cross are other places to visit during free time. You will also want to take a walk by the lake and enjoy the roses. Be sure to dress comfortably, wear good walking shoes, bring a warm sweater and rain gear in case the weather is cool or rainy.

Emergency Telephone Number

The Assembly’s switchboard number is 828-452-2881. Please leave this number with your family in case of an emergency.

RETREAT LEADER

M. Garlinda Burton is a journalist, editor, speaker, advocate, and motivator. As General Secretary to the Gen-

eral Commission on the Status and Role of Women, she works to ensure



full participation of women in all levels of church life and helps the church to confront and address sexism in its institutions, policies, and practices. A native of Durham, NC, Ms. Burton earned a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Tennessee, a master’s degree in magazine journalism from Northwestern University, and did additional graduate work in Spanish at Puebla, Mexico through Wichita (KS) State University. She has traveled through Africa, Latin America, and Europe to cover issues as vast as the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, the establishment of the United Methodist-supported four year university in Zimbabwe, and economic empowerment of Nicaragua’s poor. Garlinda is a specialist in racial and gender issues in the media, academia, church, and corporate life, and she frequently conducts training for media professionals, educators, businesses, and church leaders on combating sexism, classism, and racism. Author of several books, her first, *Never Say Nigger Again*, is a study guide for schools, colleges, and corporations.

She is a member of Hobson UMC in Nashville, TN, an interracial fellowship, where she chairs the communications committee, directs a choir for teen-age girls, and is co-director of an anti-bias ministry called “The Living Lab.”

MUSIC TEAM

ORGANIST Ronald D. Wise joined the Boone United Methodist Church staff in March 2002 as organist and



choirmaster. Since September 2002, Ronnie has held the position of Director of Worship and the Arts and Senior Church Organist. He oversees a program of five singing choirs, four handbell choirs, a television and

radio broadcast, as well as both Sunday morning worship services. He is the proud conductor of a concert handbell choir which tours each summer. His handbell choirs have concertized and performed at churches, community events and festivals throughout the state.

Ronnie is a member of the American Guild of Organists, the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers and the Académie André Marchal of France. He has studied with several distinguished organists including Dr. Andrew Unsworth, Ralph Tilden, Dr. Brian Bailey and Florence Jowers.

He attended Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory, NC, and Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ. He has also studied handbell ringing with Kathleen Ebling-Thorne and Robert Ivey. In his spare time, Ronnie is a part-time citizen of New York City.

SONG LEADER Mary Greene

brings a variety of musical skills and perspectives to her work as a worship leader and young children's choir director at Boone



United Methodist Church in Boone, North Carolina. She earned a B.A. in music and an M.A. in Appalachian Studies from Appalachian State University and just recently completed requirements for a teacher's certificate in music.

She has provided performances, educational sessions, and residencies for organizations as diverse as the North Carolina Writer's Network, the Merle Watson Festival, John C. Campbell Folk School, the Swanannoa Gathering, and the Smithsonian Institute's Festival of American Folklife. Her musical journey has been influenced by shape-note music; traditional Appalachian ballads and folk songs; Celtic music; Appalachian and New England dance tunes; classical music studies; and contemporary worship music and practices. She often utilizes a variety of folk instruments in the church worship environment including the hammered dulcimer, mountain dulcimer, and pennywhistles.

OBOIST Javier Perez, a native of Venezuela, has made Kannapolis, NC his home for the last four years. A professional oboe player, Javier has participated in special events in the area and has played in over 70 churches.



Music has been a part of the Perez family for several years now. Javier Perez played oboe in the National Philharmonic Orchestra in Venezuela before moving here. His brother Jonas, father Samuel and son Daniel all play musical instruments.

RETREAT COMMITTEE

Members of the Spiritual Growth Retreat Committee are Kris Peurifoy,

chair; Amy Johnson, Sandy Hieronymus, Sharon Smith, Sherry Sink, Linda Young, Linda Baity, Bettie Sharpe Rowe, Dr. Lillie Jones, Bess Redmond and Betty Swarhout.

A retreat is a time to reflect upon your relationship with God. It is a time to be attentive as God speaks to us. The committee has worked hard to plan an inspirational retreat. We anticipate a wonderful time together. We hope you will meet us by the lake in June.

Directions To Lake Junaluska

From the East: Travel west on I-40 to Exit 27, US-23/US-74. Go 1.5 miles. Bear right on US-19/US-23/US-74 and go 2.5 miles. Continue on ramp at sign reading "US-19 to Maggie/Cherokee/Junaluska Assembly" and go for 0.2 miles. Bear right on US-19 and watch for the signs.

From the West: Travel east on US-19 and watch for the signs.

From the Southwest: Travel northeast on US-23/US-441. Turn right on ramp at sign reading "US-76 East/US-23 North to Waynesville/Asheville." Go 20 miles. Exit 102B, sign reads "US-276 North to Maggie Valley/Junaluska Assembly." Turn right on US-276, Dellwood Ave. and go north 1.4 miles. Turn right on US-19 and watch for the signs. Upon your arrival at the retreat center, remember to look for the yellow signs.

NEW FOR 2007!!!!

There will be a registration fee collected from all persons attending the SG Retreats and Annual Meeting. Fees are as follows and will be collected downstairs at Harrell Center at time of registration. If possible, please pay with cash. Checks will be accepted as a second option.

The registration fee is **\$5.00** for those staying in Conference owned facilities: Terrace Inn, Lambuth Inn, Lakeside Lodge, Sunnyside Lodge, Junaluska Apts. and for those renting or staying in a private home on the grounds.

\$10.00 is the registration fee for those staying in Providence Lodge, Sunset Inn and off the grounds of Lake Junaluska.

President-Amy Johnson

"I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." -II Timothy 2:6-7 (NIV)

Have you ever witnessed what happens when a fire is fanned by the wind? Several years ago on a windy, Saturday afternoon in March, I looked out my window and saw that the woods across the street from my home were on fire.

I immediately called 911, gave them my name and address, and help was on the way. I ran back to the window and, much to my disbelief, there was no fire! Not even any smoke! The wind had died down and so had the fire. My first thought was that I would be charged with calling in a false alarm! This would have been very embarrassing because, at the time, I was the daughter of the fire chief. (It would still be embarrassing if this happened today because my husband is the fire chief!) But, within the few minutes it took for the fire department to arrive, the wind had picked back up and fanned the embers and the woods were on fire again. The firefighters were able to get the fire out in a short amount of time.

There is a "fire" in each of us – something that warms our hearts, something that we have a passion for. As United Methodist Women, we have a fire burning in each of us *to know God; to experience freedom as a whole person through Jesus Christ; to share in a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand our concepts of mission through PARTICIPATION in the global ministries of the church.* In order to keep our fire burning, we must fan our flame from time to time. What better way to fan our flame than to make some time for spiritual renewal by attending the Conference Spiritual Growth Retreats? The retreats offer us an opportunity to study the scripture, have time for personal reflection about what God is calling each of us to do, as well as renew old acquaintances and make new friends.

"Faith, Fears, and Dandelions" is our theme. Often, when God is calling us to go in a new direction, we go in faith knowing that God will lead us and provide us with what we need to do His will. And yet there are times when God is calling us to do new things and our fears keep us from acting. This

could also be true about plans your local unit has been discussing. Perhaps you want to start a new circle. Is there a new mission project you want to undertake, one that may stretch your limits? Or maybe God is nudging you to say "yes" and assume a leadership position in the organization. I invite you to come and join us at the Lake. Come, seeking to fan your flame so your fire will burn brighter wherever God is leading you.

jdeere620@aol.com

Treasurer-Sharon Smith

For the **SIXTH** consecutive year, the Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women led the nation in:

- Special Mission Recognition
- Gift to Mission
- Gift in Memory
- World Thank Offering
- Total Undesignated Giving
- TOTAL GIVING!!

We were 3rd in Pledge to Mission, even though we did not meet our 2006 pledge. Our mission giving was down over \$30,598.65 from 2005.

Facts about **Mission Giving**:

- Undesignated Mission Giving makes mission possible by supporting mission projects and personnel around the world. The need for undesignated mission funds is greater than ever. The 2007 Women's Division Budget is \$16,842,050, a decrease of \$1,387,739 from 2006.
- In 2007, the funds available for doing mission work through United Methodist Women will be \$46,142.60/day, \$1,922.61/hour, \$160.22 for five minutes, \$32.04 for one minute and 53 cents for one second. How much mission work did your local unit provide through their Mission Giving?
- Our **2007 Financial Goal** is to **increase giving in the Gift to Mission channel by 10%**. A Gift to Mission honors someone in her/his name with an undesignated Gift to Mission of at least \$5.00. Gift to Mission is one of the five channels of Mission Giving. **Mission Giving** supports the total program of mission carried out by United Methodist Women. With your gift, you honor someone, and you

make a difference in the lives of women, children, and youth...around the world.

The **2007 Love Offering** will be a Gift to Mission "**Celebrating Mission Giving to Promote World Peace.**" Bring your unit's Love Offering to Annual Meeting or mail it to me.

It is in telling the stories of mission that we pass on to others how important undesignated **Mission Giving** is. If you want to know where your money goes, all you have to do is read **RESPONSE** Magazine. Watch for this symbol of interlocking circles. You will be reading about a program and/or person supported by undesignated **Mission Giving**.



kitty5255@yahoo.com

Program Resources
Bettie Sharpe Rowe

I know how important you feel it is for the children in your life to continue their reading. That manifests itself in the participation in the Children's Reading Program that you have reported. I am still receiving reports of 2006 reading and at this writing, 245 children have read in the program and received certificates. That's an increase over 2005 and that's fantastic! One youth also received a certificate for reading in the Youth Reading Program.

We have wonderful children and youth books. *The Blue Ribbon Day* was written by Katie Couric; others are *Hurty Feelings*, *Thanks To The Animals*, *Let's Talk About Race*, *Yes- We Can*, *The Tree*, *Conversations With Kids*, *Dreambirds* and *God Created*. These should be available at events, but don't forget to check your local public library. Many could be available to you there.

You may continue to send me names of children who have read 5 books or had 5 books read to them throughout the year and I'll issue certificates as I receive their names.

A must read for all United Methodists is *Traditional Beliefs of United Methodists*, a small, easy read book. Two books that have been recommended are: *The Kite Runner* and *Just Wives*. Again check your local library for availability.

A Song To Sing, A Life To Live on the reading list can be used as a resource for the upcoming study on

God's Mission, God's Song.

Remember also regular reading of *Response* and *New World Outlook*. The current issue of *New World Outlook* on Israel and Palestine is especially fascinating and informative.

A complete 5 year adult list, as well as youth and children's lists are available on the conference web site at www.wncumw.org. In addition, you will find a new brochure you may print and use for the Children's Reading Program.

Resources now can be ordered from the **Mission Resource Center**, 1221 Profit Drive, Dallas, Texas 75247-3191. The telephone number is 1-800-305- 9857 and the fax number is 1-214-630-0079.

You may also order on line from the E Store at www.missionresourcecenter.org

It's early in the year, plenty of time to get started on Plan I,II,III or IV. I encourage you to continue to read and encourage others in your unit to join you in reading, reminding each other that **READING IS** a fulfilling process and a sensitizing to the needs, interests and concerns of others.

I invite you to attend the Spiritual Growth Retreat in June to be inspired, a time for you to reflect, relax, pray, sing and to be with your sisters in Christ. This will be your time.

Make the **Program Resources Room** a must stop to look for yourself and see firsthand the many, many resources that are available for United Methodist Women in the areas of programming, membership emphasis, history and of course Reading Program books, for children, youth and adults.

Remember to keep a book handy at all times.....in the car and in your pocketbook. I even know someone who reads in the grocery line!!

See you in the Program Resources Room at the Lake!

cnbsrowe@northstate.net

For your next **Response Moment** at unit or circle / group meeting, turn to page 11 in the January 2007 issue of *Response Magazine*. It gives an account of a young mission intern from North Carolina serving in Nairobi, Kenya.

Vice President
Sandy Hieronymus

Spending time with fellow UMW members is very meaningful. The first of our conference summer events is the Spiritual Growth Retreat in June at Lake Junaluska. In July, the School of Christian Mission takes place at Greensboro College. In early September, we go back to Lake Junaluska for Annual Meeting. Each district also has meaningful events. Program ideas can be gleaned from all these events. Make plans now to attend all events. Talk about UMW district and conference events in your circles, units and districts. Invite others to come with you.

More program ideas are in every issue of *Response Magazine* and the *2007 Program Book*. Books on the reading program are great for programs. Be creative! Use portions or all of the books you read and ideas from *Response*. Remember that your district and conference officers are available to do a program which also counts in the LUV (Local Unit Visitation) program. This, too, counts toward a unit becoming a Mission Today Unit.

"*Through the Eyes of a Child*" is the theme for Annual Meeting. It's not too early to make plans for attending this September event. Reservation forms may be received from your District President or from the conference website www.wnccumw.org and clicking on Annual Meeting. Send in reservations after July 2. Much information about our Conference UMW is found on this site. If you do not have access to a computer, go to your public library and check out our site.

I am passionate about the ministry of UMW. I am available to help in any way. May we be richly blessed by working together.

sandyh46aol.com

The **Conference Gram** is published four times per year by the Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women. It is mailed, free of charge, to all district and conference officers, and to local unit presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, treasurers, and circle chairs. If you hold one of these offices and have not received your copy, please send your name, address, local unit name, office, and district name to Karen Wilkerson,

WNCC UMW Communications Coordinator, 2829 17th Avenue SE, Newton, NC 28658. Any other persons may use the subscription form on page 8. You may also receive the **Conference Gram** via email. That information is also on page 8.

Conference Priority

To make our Purpose come alive!!! With special emphasis on... "to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church."

Conference Goal #2

To increase participation at conference events by 2% over 2006.

Dedication of the Annual Report Book

If you know of a United Methodist Woman that has served on the local, district and conference levels of United Methodist Women, you could nominate her for the dedication of the Annual Report Book. This person will be honored at our Conference Annual Meeting in September.

Remember that they must have served on all three levels of United Methodist Women.

Forms for nominations must be filled out and received by June 1, 2007. You can request forms by contacting **Dixie Sheff** at

336.767.3567 or email her at dedeesmom@aol.com

Education & Interpretation

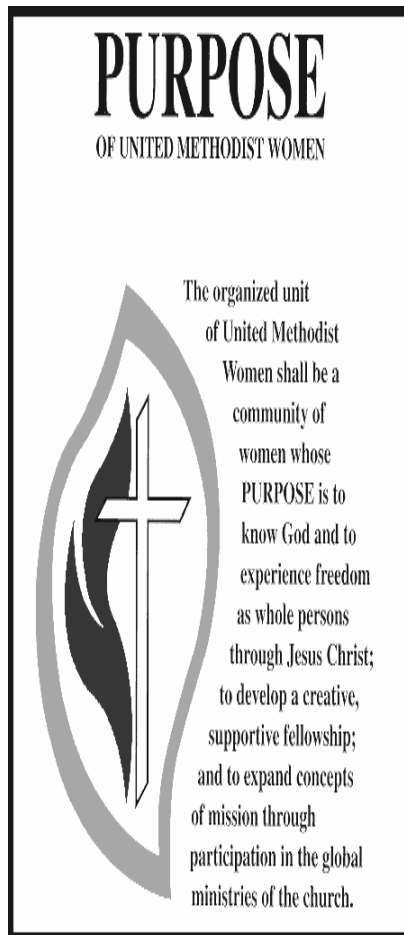
Sherry Sink

There is a nice little book on our reading list called Breakfast Epiphanies. Finding Wonder In the Everyday by David Anderson. It is a quick read and most of the time funny. Here is a devotion based on one of the "epiphanies" from this charming book. You can use this at your next unit/circle meeting.

David is a pastor of an Episcopal church and they decided to assess the work of the staff and all of the volunteers. Each person was asked to keep track of everything they did and how long it took them to do it for a month. It sounded simple, but David was in his second day and could not remember to keep his time sheet and could not reconstruct all his time as he relived the day. It was no use trying, and he would just start the next day.

The basic problem with keeping track of time was that it demanded a kind of hyper-consciousness. As he was opening his mail, he became aware of his task and stopped and wrote it down. It's not normal to be conscious of all the little things, but it is in fact critical. The obvious but overlooked fact of life is, it's all little stuff.

David reminds us of how mindlessly we live life. We need some spiritual practice to keep us focused



on the present moment. We are taught to see life falsely as a succession of big events and miss the life we are actually living.

"Wake up," Jesus said, "and stay awake." We are called to be mindful of whatever we are doing in the moment. Something as simple as washing dishes is a sacred moment if we do it fully awake and aware.

It doesn't matter if you are copying papers on the copier, sending email reminders of an upcoming event, or picking up your child from school, this is your job description for the moment. Sometimes we get frustrated with these little distractions as we head toward the bigger things. But if God is in the details, what's wrong with these?

David tells us that keeping this time sheet reminds him that every task is holy and that things take as long as they take. We can "get more done" only by refusing to be mindful of the one thing that you are doing right now.

In my case, that is writing this article and getting it emailed to Karen. It took me a while to figure out what I wanted to say and how. But the simple fact is, it took me as long as it took me and in this sacred moment I know, that God is in it!

Make a time table for yourself and try keeping it for a week. See what "little things" you are doing during the course of a day. I bet you will find yourself more aware of life itself and in those awakening moments when you are "mindful" of the moment, in that sacred moment, you will find God!

Sherika12754@aol.com

Social Action-Linda Young

There are 2,269 words in our church's Social Principles on "The Nurturing Community." Jesus said it in three. LOVE ONE ANOTHER. Jesus was hardly naïve. And so, we are called to bear not just in our words, but in our lives the proclamation that we choose to serve God, not fear and not death. We choose love amid violence, immigration, global warming, mercury poisoning, child labor, child soldiers, war, and poverty, to name a few.

Recently, at the 2007 Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington DC, these issues, and many more, were covered in tracks (workshops). The theme was "...and How are the Children?" As Christians, we are grounded in a Biblical tradition that pro-

claims God's abundant love for all people and that calls us to be witnesses to this love by caring for our neighbors and creation and pursuing justice and peace in the world. Throughout the prophetic tradition and in the words of Jesus, the measure of our faithfulness to this call is always how "the least of these" are faring. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, reminds us that "the test of the morality of a society is how it treats its children." The question, then, before us is, "What do our children tell us about the moral standing of the United States?" How we value and respect our children, and whether we shape our public policies to bless their present and future, reflects who we are and the kind of world in which we want to live. Despite the great wealth of our nation, 13 million children live in poverty in this country, the highest rate among industrialized nations. Some 9 million lack health insurance and too many are subject to abuse and neglect. Violence, addiction, poor quality education, and advertising-fueled consumerism also plague the lives of too many children. Yet federal investments in quality childcare, mental health, youth development, and addiction and violence prevention are on the decline. In Proverbs 31:8, we are called to speak out for those who cannot speak. As United Methodist Women, we have proclaimed Christ's promise of abundant life for marginalized people, especially women, children, and youth whose voices are ignored. We must continue to listen, pray, and advocate on behalf of the "least of these."

While in Washington, it was awesome to be in the midst of so many ecumenical advocates who were as committed to the same issues and concerns United Methodists have. All denominations represented were on one accord in asking Congress and the President to take positive action in 2007 to enact quality health care coverage for all children living in the United States. Children's health care should be comprehensive, affordable, accessible, and equitable for all children and their families. One proposal to address the children's health care crisis is the reauthorization and expansion of SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program).

A second asking was that Congress must use our nation's resources for peace, not war! Thus embracing new spending priorities, transforming from current U.S. allocation of its resources to policies which better promote a safe

and secure world.

Lastly, we ask Congress to pass legislation necessary to ensure that God's people and planet are protected from the catastrophic effects that may occur if we fail to significantly curb our carbon emissions. Global warming is the observed increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans. Scientists warn us if it continues there would be lower agriculture yields, glacier retreat, species extinction, the spread of infectious diseases, and an increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather, such as floods, droughts, heat waves, hurricanes, and tornadoes.

Hundreds, of the nearly one thousand advocates, had appointments on Capitol Hill talking to their Senators and House members about these three issues. Fifteen from North Carolina met with Senator Dole and Senator Burr's legislative assistant. I had a very productive meeting with my Congressman Patrick McHenry's assistant. Boldness replaced trepidation as I opened my mouth and God spoke.

We must write, call, fax, email, telephone our elected officials and address vital legislation affecting the lives and well being of 'the least of these'. We, the voters and strong United Methodist Women, must make our voice heard regularly and consistently with our elected leaders, the media, and our community.

It's when the soloist and the choir sing together that the rafters begin to shake.

Imyou2253@aol.com

Making Our Purpose Come Alive Through Mission Today!!!

Mission Today Resources include:

The Prayer Calendar, Retreats/Prayer Breakfasts, Mission Studies, Response Magazine, Program Book, Charter for Racial Justice, Reading Program, Annual Meetings, Membership-inviting others to join, UMW's Action Network, LUV Visits, Children's Sabbath, Material Resources for Mission Catalog and our Mission Giving,

When living out our UMW PURPOSE, you are helping your unit to become a MISSION TODAY UNIT!!!

Membership, Nurture & Outreach—Linda Baity

Friends and co-workers for Christ through United Methodist Women. Take a moment to slow down or stop and see where you are in 2007. The evaluations are completed and behind us now, but the results are still fresh in our minds. We have a pretty clear picture of the strength and weakness in our units and district. It may be tempting to get discouraged with the continuous drop in members and mission giving. Where do we go from here?

The responsibility of the MNO committee is to encourage, assist, and revitalize struggling units. How do we do this? Look again at the reports. What are some of the success stories in the local units? Some are willing to take risks and try something different. In the Lexington District, a minister was concerned that younger women were not joining the unit. He discussed this with the MNO person. They contacted a conference officer for a visit. The members are anxious to try different things to attract the younger women and may try to organize another circle.

In the North Wilkesboro District, a unit has started two new circles. One is called the "Lunch Bunch," which is a good fit for those who cannot or prefer not to drive at night. The other one is a dinner meeting, in a restaurant, which is very appealing to professional women and young mothers. They try to keep the meeting time within one hour. Of course the fellowship can last as long as they want to stay.

In the Winston-Salem District a unit is interested in starting a teen circle. It seems they have teens "ripe" for mission! Amy, conference president, and I will be meeting with them in the near future. This are just some of the exciting things our members are doing to encourage membership in the different districts.

Some ways to offer encouragement are with our visitation, helping with programs, and sharing their stories. Please let me know what is happening in your district and I will pass along to other districts. Call me if I can be of any assistance to you at any time.

lindabaity@wnireland.com

Your conference officers ask you to covenant with us to pray for all the conference events for 2007. Prayer is a vital part in the life of a United Methodist Woman. Please pray that God will touch and change lives through these events.

Wanted All District Officers To Attend....

District Officers Training

When:

Saturday, October 13, 2007

Where:

First UMC in Conover

Time:

9:00am-2:00pm

All district officers should make plans to attend!!!!

Any questions???
Contact Virginia Robinson at
828-443-0679
varobinson55@yahoo.com



School of Christian Mission
July 12-15
at Greensboro College

Conference Annual Meeting September 7-9 at Lake Junaluska



Hands-on Mission Opportunity for the for the School of Christian Mission

School Kits for the Bethlehem Centers in Charlotte and Winston-Salem

Two types of School Kits Needed For Our Bethlehem Centers:

Elementary Kit:

- 1- pair Blunt Scissors
- 1- pack of Glue Sticks
- 1- pack of Pencils & Sharpener
- 1- pack of 24 Crayons
- 1- pack of 8 Washable Markers
- 1- 1" 3 Ring Binder
- 1- pack 150ct Wide Rule Notebook Paper
- 1- pack of 12 Colored Pencils
- 1- pack of 50ct-Construction Paper (9 x 12 sheets)

Middle/School Kit:

- 1- 2" 3 Ring Binder
- 1- pack 150ct College Ruled Notebook Paper
- 3- 70pg College Ruled Composition Books
- 1- pack of Glue Sticks
- 1- pack of Pencils & Sharpener
- 1- pack of Ballpoint Pens
- 1- pack of 12 Markers
- 1- pack of 4 Highlighters
- 3- Folders
- 1- pack of Divider Tabs

Place all supplies in a two gallon Ziploc bag and label the bag *Elementary or Middle/High School*. If you bring multiple kits, it would be helpful if you could bring them in a box for easier handling.

Remember to involve your whole church in this Hands-on Mission Project.

Each kit will make a difference in the life of a child at our Bethlehem Centers!! Remember YOU make mission possible!!!!

CONFERENCE GRAM
 The official newsletter of the
WNC Conference United Methodist Women
 Karen Wilkerson, 2829 17th Avenue SE, Newton, NC 28658



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR WNC CONFERENCE
 UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

2007

June 7-10 UMC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska
 June 15-16/16-17 Spiritual Growth Retreats, Lake Junaluska
 July 12-15 WNCC UMW School of Christian Mission, Greensboro College
 September 7-9 WNCC UMW Annual Meeting, Lake Junaluska
 October 13 WNCC UMW Officer Training for District Officers, First UMC in Conover

2008

April 4-6 Southeastern Jurisdiction Meeting—Hampton VA “Called By Name”
 April 22-May 2 General Conference, Fort Worth TX

Web Site Address: www.wnccumw.org—Lynne Gilbert maintains the web site. You are invited to send her articles and photos for the web site. Just remember our initials!! **W**estern **N**orth **C**arolina **C**onference **U**nited **M**ethodist **W**omen

Join Our Conference Email List!! To receive conference event information & updates, the Conference Gram, etc: send an email to Lynne Gilbert (lynnegilbert@bellsouth.net) or Karen Wilkerson (kwilkerson@charter.net), giving your name, email address, and district name. Join Now!!

2007 Conference Gram Subscription

Name _____ Address _____
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Make \$2.00 check payable to WNCC UMW & mail to: Karen Wilkerson, 2829 17th Avenue SE, Newton, NC 28658