

Conference Gram



Volume 55, Number 1

Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women

February 2006

President's Message

Greetings to each of you!! With joyous anticipation, I look forward to serving with each of you as we strive to fulfill the Purpose of United Methodist Women in 2006.



It has been my privilege to serve on the local, district, and conference levels of United Methodist Women. I have been challenged with each new responsibility that I have undertaken. I have developed many new friendships. I have grown closer in my walk with the Lord and my concepts of mission have certainly been expanded. I covet your prayers as I begin this journey as your Conference President.

"All of you together (in the church) are Christ's body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it." (1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT)

I am a believer of the connectional system of The United Methodist Church. I grew up attending a small, rural church and we did not have the financial resources or human ability to do a lot of mission work by ourselves. But when you combine the financial resources and the mission resources of ALL of the churches, then great things are accomplished to spread the Gospel and to help others. The same is true for United Methodist Women. Whether it be our financial gifts or a hands-on mission opportunity, when combined with the gifts from all of the local units, great things are accomplished and God is glorified. Our Conference needs each and every United Methodist Woman to be involved. There is something for everyone.

Prayer is such an important part of our daily walk with the Lord. I invite you to join with the Conference Mission Team in our covenant to pray

each day for our Conference team, for the Conference events that are being planned for you, and for the work of United Methodist Women throughout the world.

We have many opportunities to grow through United Methodist Women in 2006. Plans are being made for our Spiritual Growth Retreats in June, the School of Christian Mission in July, and Annual Meeting in September. You will find more information on these events elsewhere in this publication. Mark the dates on your calendar and plan to attend.

In May, Western North Carolina will be well represented as we travel to Anaheim, California, to attend our National Assembly which meets every four years. The theme is "Rise! Shine! Glorify God!" What an experience it is to share in the fellowship of 10,000 women from around the world as we celebrate the work of United Methodist Women.

The Conference team has set the following goals for 2006. Only with the participation of every local unit will we be able to achieve these goals:

Financial Goal – To encourage each local unit to increase their Pledge to Mission by \$1/member (i.e., a local unit with 10 members would give \$10 over their 2005 pledge). **Membership Goal** – Encourage each local unit to add at least one new member. **Mission Today Goal** – Increase the number of Mission Today local units by 2% over 2005.

In Rick Warren's book, The Purpose-Driven Life, he states that "Knowing your purpose gives meaning to your life." I thought about that phrase in the context of our UMW Purpose. Knowing the Purpose of UMW gives meaning to our membership in the organization - to know God, to experience freedom as whole persons, to share in the supportive fellowship of each other, and to be involved in mission. How blessed we are to be a part

of an organization that helps each of us to grow spiritually and to reach out to others all around the world, whether it be through prayer, financial giving, being involved to right social injustice, or participating in a hands-on mission opportunity. May 2006 bring renewed commitment to our UMW Purpose.

Amy Johnson, President

Vice President's Message

Each new year brings new opportunities for United Methodist Women. There are many ways to grow spiritually and serve in mission through the UMW. By working together, the WNCC of United Methodist Women will continue to be strong as we fulfill our PURPOSE.

Hopefully each unit and district has begun program planning for the year. We as UMW members have a wealth of resources from which to glean helpful programming ideas. Many good books and resources may be ordered from Service Center, 1-800-305-9857 or scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Three "must have" resources are the **2006 Women's Division Program Book – Building Peace, Piece by Piece** (Stock #3651, \$3.75), the **2006 Prayer Calendar** (Stock #3655, \$9.50), and **Response Magazine** (\$18 per year, call toll-free 1-877-881-2385). I have saved all three of these resources from many previous years. I combine the old and new for interesting programs. Be creative in having inspiring programs! Plans are being made for our 2006 Annual Meeting at Lake Junaluska, September 8, 9, & 10. The theme will be **Rise! Shine! Glorify God!** This is the theme for Assembly in Anaheim, California, May 4-7, 2006. Your program committee wants to bring a little of Assembly home to WNCC. Please promote Annual Meeting and bring a friend or two or three.

School of Christian Mission

“Harvesting Peace”

Greensboro College, Greensboro, North Carolina

“July 13-16, 2006”

*Spiritual Growth Study: “Shalom-Salaam-Peace: Peace in the Bible and in Our Time”

*Geographic Study: “India & Pakistan”

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

Registration: May 1-June 23, 2006

Registration brochures are available from your District Presidents.

Spiritual Growth Retreats

“Help! My Light is Under A Bushel”

Lake Junaluska, North Carolina

“June 16-17/ 17-18 2006”

1st session: 3:45pm, 2nd session: 7:15pm,
3rd session: 8:45am, 4th session: 10:30am

Retreat Leader: Rev. Veranita Alvord

Music Team:

Fernando Little, Tiffany Little

You will be blessed by coming to **beautiful** Lake Junaluska in September.

As your new conference vice president, please know that I am available to help you in any way. Call me! It is my joy and privilege to serve God through United Methodist Women.

Sandy Hieronymus, Vice-President



UMW 2006 Assembly
May 4-7, 2006
Anaheim CA

Women from all over the world will be attending this meeting.

Please remember these women and this meeting in your prayers.

Secretary of Program Resources
Welcome to all new Secretaries of Program Resources and welcome

back to those returning. If you are new as a local unit SPR, check with your secretary to ensure that your name has been sent to Service Center to receive important mailings.

The Reading Program has always provided much excitement for me and the 2006 books continue to do so. I know we all have busy schedules, but making a concerted effort to do some reading each day assures your participation in the Reading Program. Once you get “the reading fever,” I promise you, it’ll be one fever you’ll want to keep! One book I’d like to recommend is *My Indian Jatra*, written by Frances Major, missionary and resident at Brooks Howell Home in Asheville. This is larger-than-average print and a BONUS BOOK, which counts as two books in this category. I have it in my personal library and look forward to reading it. It also serves as a resource for the 2005-2006 study on India and Pakistan. Another book to recommend is *The Betrayal of Work*, another BONUS BOOK and resource for the 2006-2007 mission study on Globalization with larger-than-average print. This is a must read! Also, I have read *Ashes Transformed* and can highly recommend that. Settle in on these cold days and enjoy a cup of tea and a book! Remember also regular reading of *Response Magazine* and *New World Outlook*.

I have been thrilled by the response to our Children’s Reading Program! If your unit has been active in this program, I know you can attest to the joy

of a child upon receiving a certificate. I would be very interested in hearing some of the stories relative to this. In 2005, 175 children participated in the Children’s Reading Program. WOW! If you need information regarding this, the District Secretaries of Program Resources or I can supply same. Certificates are issued in a timely manner when received, so there’s no deadline for submitting names. Begin 2006 reading for the children and let me hear from you. Children will benefit greatly from the new selection of books, and may also select from the years 2000-2005.

You may purchase resources at district or conference events, or by calling Service Center at 1-800-305-9857, by email: scorders@gbgm-umc.org or from the e-store at www.scorders.org. Let me know if you have questions or need help in any way.

Bettie Sharpe Rowe, Secretary
of Program Resources

Think Undesignated Giving!
It makes mission possible!!

5 Channels of Undesignated
Giving

Pledge to Mission
Special Mission Recognition
Gift to Mission
Gift in Memory
World Thank Offering

Education and Interpretation

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything is new!” (II Corinthians 5:17) As we take Christ with us into this new year, we leave the old behind and start fresh with new people, new goals, and a new beginning.

It doesn't matter if you are new to this position or not, we need tools to help us to tell the story of Mission, Education and Interpretation. We have several such tools available to us. Our UMW web site for our conference and the Women's Division of Global Ministries web site will give you plenty of information and articles that you can copy and share with your districts and local units. There you will find Mission Today criteria, information on all conference events and housing forms that can be downloaded to pass on to others. There is information on officers, hands-on mission opportunities, and articles about projects and programs helping women, children and youth around the world that are funded by UMW Undesignated Giving.

Conference events are a tool which we can use. Encourage attendance at Spiritual Growth Retreat, School of Christian Mission and our Annual Meeting. We all need a little retreat once in a while and what better tool for education than our School of Christian Mission. At the SCM in July, we learn about the lives of women in other countries, issues that affect our everyday living and learn about God and ourselves through Bible study. At Annual Meeting we have some business to take care of, but it is interwoven with fun times and meaningful worship. Encourage your group to come and then they can help you spread the news on your return. Enter the world of knowledge about spiritual growth, mission, social action, and nurture through our reading program and *Response* and *New World Outlook* magazines. Take part in the reading program by completing Plan I, and there will be no stopping you from completing Plan II or III. At all meetings try to include *Response* Moments and share the stories.

We have Conference goals that help us to stay the course. This year the goals are: **Financial Goal:** To encourage each local unit to increase their Pledge to Mission by \$1/member (a local unit with 10 members would increase their Pledge to Mission by \$10 over 2005 pledge). **Membership Goal:** Encourage each local unit to add at least 1 new member. One strategy is to have a membership emphasis at each district event. **Mission Today Goal:** Increase the number of Mission Today local units by 2% over 2005.

If there is any way I can be of assistance to you please call or email me. If you don't have a way to get information from a computer, I will get it for you. District ME&I's need to get information to your counterparts in the local units, and local unit ME&I's need to share all information with their units. If you hadn't noticed, this Conference Gram and your district newsletter are some of the greatest tools you have. Use them to help you inform others and tell the story. Have a great new beginning!!!

Sherry Sink, Mission Coordinator
of Education and Interpretation

Secretary

Greetings to all! I am very excited to begin our work together in the Lord's year 2006!!

As Secretary, your unique task is to document the continuing history of your district and local meetings. Here are a few helpful hints to guide us as we prepare to record the history of your United Methodist Women.

1) The minutes of your meetings are very important. 2) They are a written summary of what occurred during each meeting. 3) Through the minutes of your meetings, you **Preserve the Past, Present the Present, and Project the Future.**

Local units who have a new President and/or Secretary of Program Resources need to send their names to the Service Center along with the names of the persons they are replacing. The address is 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, Ohio 45222-1800. This is very important as the Service Center sends

occasional mailings to them.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at all the conference events for 2006! Mark your calendars as we begin the journey together.

Dixie Sheff, Secretary

Leader Development

Greetings to the Western North Carolina Conference UMW: 2005 was a great year for the Western North Carolina Conference UMW! Plans for 2006 conference events are already underway.

As you plan your calendar, be sure to mark October 14th for District Officer Training. This year's training will be held at First United Methodist Church in Gastonia. Watch for more information as the plans progress.

“LUV” visits to the local units continue to spread the news of United Methodist Women. It is a wonderful time when United Methodist Women meet and greet one another. During these visits, District Officers need to be sure to lift up program resources, district and conference events, and communicate your support of their local unit.

Great things happen when United Methodist Women are together!

Virginia Robinson, Chair
Leader Development

Treasurer

Thank YOU! Every Mission Dollar makes a difference. The United Methodist Women of the Western North Carolina Conference continue to honor Jesus Christ through their support of ministries to women, children, and youth throughout the world.

WE DID IT AGAIN!!!...total giving from the local units went over the \$1,000,000 mark. Total giving reached \$1,088,282.65 in 2005, an increase of \$3,054.50 over 2004!

Total giving sent to Women's Division was \$964,285.11 - \$828,099.43 in Undesignated Funds (\$827,500 pledge and \$599.43 135th anniversary offering, overpaying our pledge by \$599.43). The total received for the Conference Love Offering was \$34,439.65 – a very substantial amount, but a decrease of \$2,643.51 over 2004. The Spiritual Growth

Love Offering totaled \$5,359.67, an increase of \$578.41 over 2004. Also, we gave \$136,185.68 in designated gifts for programs of the General Board of Global Ministries. \$44,229.93 was sent to UMCOR – an increase of \$34,164.78 over 2004. And, we gave \$24,678.43 to other projects, including \$3,010 in contributions to the WNCC UMW General Scholarship Funds. Even if we did not meet all of our goals or surpass giving in some areas, we can still hold our heads high and be proud of our accomplishments. Thank you for all you have done to interpret where the money goes.

With each new year comes new challenges and the need for undesignated funds is greater than ever. Our 2006 Financial Goal is to challenge each local unit to increase their Pledge to Mission by one dollar per member. If this goal is achieved, we would have an additional \$39,000 for undesignated giving.

The **2006 Conference Love Offering** will be an *Undesignated Gift to Mission Celebrating the Diversity and Gifts of Young Women*. See the December 2005 issue of *Response Magazine* about our own Joy Prim. Your monetary gifts will help to relieve suffering and improve the quality of life for women, children and youth by providing food, clothing health care, education, missionary support, and funds for many other mission projects. As United Methodist Women, we pledge our prayers, our time, and our gifts as we seek to fulfill our PURPOSE. Thank you for your continued commitment to mission. **YOUR GIFTS make mission possible throughout the world.**

Sharon Smith,
Treasurer



Committee on Nominations

The task of the Nominating Committee is a most important one. The committee has an opportunity to discover new leaders for our district and local teams...an opportunity to un-

cover the talents and gifts and graces of persons who are capable of becoming leaders who share the passion for mission. It is not too early for nominating committees to begin to think about potential leaders for 2007... persons who are committed to our purpose and are willing to work to continue the ideals that were put into place more than 135 years ago. Your responsibility is to carefully select women who will be effective, dedicated leaders. If I can answer questions concerning tenure or other questions about the nomination and election process, please feel free to contact me.

Irma Ellwanger, Chair,
Committee on Nominations

Social Action

Friends in Mission: Greetings! To God be the glory for this opportunity to serve as your new Mission Coordinator for Social Action. I am in awe of the challenge ahead of United Methodist Women in mission at home and globally. Mrs. E. C. Chandler, Women's Foreign Missionary Society President (1915-1918) once stated that we "Get a vision of the needs so that you may go forth with wings outspread." The heritage of United Methodist Women, rooted in our commitment to social justice, provides the foundation from which we will "expand concepts of mission" and help others break through barriers caused by alienation, pain, and social paralysis. We are concerned for people and the social, political, and economic conditions and systems affecting them. Prayerfully, opportunities will be initiated to enhance understanding among people of diverse views and experiences.

The Conference Executive Committee recently selected and approved the following priority issues for 2006 on which to focus prayer, study, and action:

CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN:
PUBLIC EDUCATION
VIOLENCE: IT AFFECTS US ALL
HEALTH: QUALITY CARE
FOR ALL

We encourage the Districts and Local units to join forces with us to combat these deep concerns and issues. We are constantly reminded that social justice issues affecting the lives of women, children, and youth globally are numerous. Violence, poverty, "isms-sex, gender, race, class, age, etc.," pollution, education, trafficking, Medicaid, Social Security, healthcare, and gender wage gap, just to mention a few.

I conclude with a statement from my Women's Division counterpart, Glory E. Dharmaraj Ph.D., that "Many of God's suffering children around the world cry in despair and ask, 'Is there life before death?' Social Action as mission is an affirmative response to that question. Yes, there is life and we will strive to make it possible for everybody to realize that abundant life could be experienced even here on earth. This is our Mission."

Linda Young, Mission Coordinator
Social Action

Charter for Racial Justice

It has been 25 years since the current Charter for Racial Justice was adopted by the whole Church at the 1980 General Conference. Women were instrumental in getting this charter adopted. As we celebrate this milestone, it is also an opportunity to assess the significant changes in our organization, our church, and our national demographics over the past 25 years in terms of the realities of race and ethnicity. **Charter 2006** will be a year-long opportunity to revisit the Charter and consider what it means for the present.

We would like to hear from the local units their ideas on the following questions:

- 1) What are the critical racial justice issues within our organization, church, and society?
- 2) How does the charter help us respond?
- 3) What changes might be useful in updating the Charter in the future, to respond to current realities?

You may send ideas and/or suggestions to Amy Johnson, 4920 Belgrove Drive, Tobaccoville, NC 27050 (jdeere620@aol.com) or to Linda Young, PO Box 404, Catawba, NC 28609 (lmyou2253@aol.com).

To order copies of the Charter for Racial Justice FREE of charge, except for postage and handling in quantity, contact Service Center, Stock # 5297

Spiritual Growth

WELCOME to all of you who have agreed to accept the office of Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth. You have a *wonderful* opportunity to help foster the spiritual nurture and growth of the women in your district and unit. This can be done in many ways, some of which include promoting the Reading Program and perhaps reviewing a book from it, having a spiritual growth event or having a Spiritual Growth corner in your church newsletter. Encourage the women to spend some time each day in prayer. Prayer should be at the center of all we do as UMW. Remember to have the **Prayer Calendar** (#3655/\$9.50) read at each of your unit and circle meetings. The missionaries and institutions mentioned in the Prayer Calendar need our support not only through our giving, but also through prayer. In lifting up those in the Prayer Calendar, you are also fulfilling requirement #1 for Mission Today.

This is the time of year that we are to promote the ***Call to Prayer and Self-Denial*** service in our districts and in our local units. The theme for 2006 is *Preserving Property; Serving People*, and the Quiet Day Service for this is in the 2006 Program Book on page 69. The offering given at this service will provide for capital expenditures at mission institutions related to the General Board of Global Ministries. In the U.S., these institutions include community centers, women's residences, schools, colleges and residential treatment centers. Outside the U.S., they include hostels/residences, hospitals/clinics, schools, and community centers/day-care centers. When you have this service in your unit, you have completed half of the

#4 requirement for **Mission Today**. Your Secretary of Program Resources, if you have one, should have a packet with additional information for 2006.

We all pray for peace in these difficult times. The Program Book for 2006 (#3651/\$3.75) is entitled ***Building Peace, Piece By Piece*** and is a *wonderful* resource for you and your unit. As United Methodist Women, our advocating for others and our mission outreach throughout the world offers us many opportunities for building peace, piece by piece!

Plan to attend one of the **Spiritual Growth Retreats at Lake Junaluska** June 16-17/17-18. The theme is "Help! My Light Is Under a Bushel." Our retreat leader is Rev. Veranita Alvord, and along with Fernando Little as our organist and Tiffany Little as our song leader, you are promised an exciting event! *Encourage* your ladies to come. Sometimes several churches will get together and come in a bus or van. Advance reservations for lodging on the grounds should be postmarked between Feb. 13th - Feb. 17th. After that date, please call Lake Junaluska for room availability. Registration forms are available on the UMW website (www.gb-gm-umc.org/wncumw), from your district UMW officers or from your unit president. If you would like to have a better opportunity of getting the lodging of your choice on the grounds, consider coming to the second retreat, June 17-18. Lines will also be much shorter!

All resources mentioned in this newsletter can be ordered through the Service Center (1-800-305-9857/Scorders@gb-gm-umc.org). If you ever have questions about your office, please contact your District Spiritual Growth coordinator or you may contact me. We are always glad to help in any way we can.

Kris Peurifoy, Mission Coordinator
Spiritual Growth

Membership, Nurture & Outreach

As Mission Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach, we have the responsibility to seek out potential new members and invite them to join

United Methodist Women. Sounds so simple! Our challenge is to find creative and effective ways to accomplish this. The good news is that we are not in this alone. Actually, it's the responsibility of each member of United Methodist Women to invite members to join. Our job is to help energize members in their efforts to recruit. We have a story to tell and it needs to be told with pride and enthusiasm! One very good way to share our story and to help interpret our PURPOSE is by encouraging attendance to District and Conference events. If each Coordinator of Membership Nurture and Outreach will invite and bring one person, member or non-member, that has never attended the Spiritual Growth Retreat in June, there is no doubt our membership would increase. This one event can define the whole PURPOSE of what United Methodist Women is about better than any amount of words spoken. When those persons are asked to stand, as first timers, we need to be very intentional in making them feel welcome. They will then return to their local unit and encourage someone else to attend with them next year, and hopefully, choose to join this wonderful organization!

I look forward to meeting each of you and hope to see you at Lake Junaluska. If I can assist you in any way, please let me know.

Linda Baity, Mission Coordinator
Membership, Nurture and Outreach

Scholarship

The application deadline for the WNCC Scholarships is March 1st. Applicants must be pursuing a church-related vocation at one of the five United Methodist Colleges and Universities in Western North Carolina Conference. They are Bennett, Brevard, Greensboro, High Point, and Pfeiffer. All applicants must be members of the United Methodist Church and reside within the bounds of the WNCC. If you have any questions or for more information please contact me.

Louise Jones, Scholarship Chair

Wanted All District Officers
to attend....

District Officers Training

When:

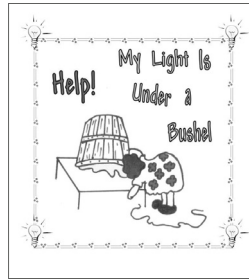
Saturday, October 14, 2006

Where:

First UMC in Gastonia

Mark your calendars now and
make plans to attend!!!

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 7. You may also receive the **Conference Gram** via email. See the information regarding this on page 8.



Spiritual
Growth
Retreats
June 16-17/
17-18
at
Lake
Junaluska

Your conference officers ask you to covenant with us to pray for all the conference events coming up this year. Prayer is a vital part in the life of a United Methodist Woman. Please pray along with us each day that God will use us and these events to touch the lives of all those who attend.

School of
Christian
Mission
July 13-16
at
Greensboro
College



Hands-on
Mission Opportunity
for the
School of Christian Mission

Health Kits for UMCOR

UMCOR has expressed an urgent need for Health Kits. Health Kits provide basic necessities to people who have been forced to leave their homes because of human conflict or natural disaster.

Please involve your whole church in this Hands-on Mission Project. More information to come later.

Remember YOU make mission possible!!!



Conference Annual Meeting
September 8-10
at
Lake Junaluska

The 14 WNCC UMW DISTRICT PRESIDENTS—2006

**Omitted for Web Site Purposes
Email Addresses Available
On Conference Officer Page**

2006 WNCC UNITED METHODIST WOMEN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ROSTER

**Omitted for Web Site Purposes
Email Addresses Available
On Conference Officer Page**

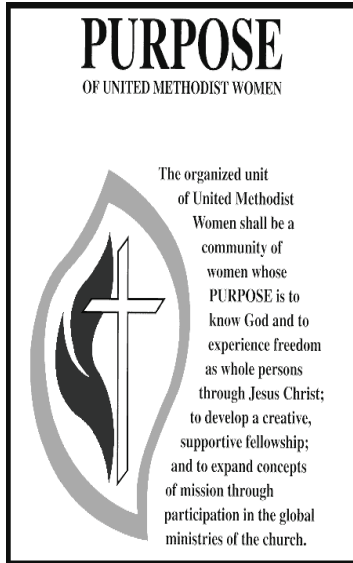
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CONFERENCE GRAM

WNC Conference United Methodist Women
Karen Wilkerson, 2829 17th Avenue SE, Newton NC 28658



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR WNC CONFERENCE
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN 2006**

- March 1 Application Deadline for WNCC UMW Scholarship
- May 4-7 UMW Assembly 2006, Anaheim, CA
- June 8-11 UMC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska
- June 16-17/17-18 Spiritual Growth Retreats, Lake Junaluska
- July 13-16 WNCC UMW School of Christian Mission, Greensboro College
- September 8-10 WNCC UMW Annual Meeting, Lake Junaluska
- October 14 WNCC UMW Officer Training for District Officers

Web Site Address: www.gb-gm-umc.org/wncumw

Lynne Gilbert maintains the web site. You are invited to send her articles and photos for the web site.

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!!