

Conference Gram



Volume 56, Number 1 Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women February 2007

President-Amy Johnson

Happy New Year! Most of us as we look ahead to a new year think of ways in which we can improve ourselves. We make resolutions and set personal goals. In looking ahead to 2007, the Conference Executive Committee decided upon a special priority for the year, as well as setting goals to improve our work as United Methodist

Conference Priority for 2007

To make the **PURPOSE** come alive!!! With special emphasis on.. "To expand concepts of mission through **PARTICIPATION** in the global ministries of the church."

Women.

There are four words in this phrase that I want to call to your attention. **Expand** means to enlarge, amplify, or swell. **Concepts** are our thoughts and ideas. **Participation** denotes *ACTION*, to take part in an activity. **Global** means that our mission work takes us outside the four walls of our church and even outside of our community. We call special attention to the word **PARTICIPATION**. How can you expand your concepts of mission through your participation in the global ministries of the church? Listed below is my "Top Ten" list that will enable a UMW local unit to be a vital mission organization.

1. **Pray.** Purchase a *Prayer Calendar* and pray for our mission personnel and mission projects daily. Pray for the leaders of your local unit, as well as your district and conference officers, Women's Division directors and staff.

2. **Increase your local unit's Mission Giving.** Give in all five

channels. Our gifts enable mission work to be done throughout the world. Women's Division directors are good stewards of UMW funds. They do not spend what they do not have. So, when giving is down, programs and projects have to be cut and then the least and the lost of the world are left hurting again.

3. **Participate in a mission study.** Make plans to attend your district study and/or the Conference School of Christian Mission in July. Perhaps your local unit can host their own study.

4. **Participate in hands-on mission projects.** Prepare UMCOR health kits, flood buckets, layettes or school kits. Save Campbell Soup UPC codes for the Bethlehem Centers in Charlotte and Winston-Salem.

5. **Take a field trip!** Visit the Bethlehem Centers in Charlotte and Winston-Salem. Spend a day with our retired mission personnel at Brooks-Howell Home in Asheville. See your mission dollars at work!

6. **Participate in the Reading Program.** These books help us to grow spiritually, teach us about social issues, help us to be more supportive of our family and friends, and enlarge our vision of mission.

7. **Subscribe to Response magazine.** Learn more about the work of United Methodist Women. Every unit should subscribe to this official UMW publication. Learn how YOU are making a difference in the lives of women, children, and youth all around the world.

8. **Attend District and Conference events.** Each district holds a prayer breakfast and annual meeting. The Conference hosts the Spiritual Growth Retreats in June and Annual Meeting in Sep-

tember at Lake Junaluska. **One of our conference goals is to increase attendance at our Conference events by 2% over 2006.** You have the opportunity to make new friends and renew old acquaintances, as well as learning more about the work going on in our Conference. Scholarships are available from each district for first-time attendees to the School of Christian Mission and Annual Meeting. Check with your District President for more details.

9. **Implement the Charter for Racial Justice** in your local unit. There is a new resource available, "Resources for Racial Justice," that provides Bible studies, programs, and action ideas.

10. Do you have a question about United Methodist Women? **Invite your district and conference officers to visit your unit.** We are always willing to answer any questions you may have about United Methodist Women.

Is there something listed in the Top Ten List that your unit has not participated in? If the answer is "Yes," then it is my prayer that you will choose at least one area to work on this year in which you can expand your concepts of mission.

You say you've already been there and done it all??? There is always room for improvement and growth. Choose one of the items and take it to the next level!

As always, I am just a phone call or e-mail away. Please let me know if I can be of help to you and your local unit.

Vice President Sandy Hieronymus

Planning is a key at the beginning of each year. Plan programs and events that will help United Methodist Women grow spiritually, increase education to serve others

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.

Spiritual Growth Retreats

“Faith, Fears, and Dandelions”

Lake Junaluska, North Carolina

“June 15-16/ 16-17, 2007”

1st session: 3:45 pm, 2nd session: 7:15 pm,
3rd session: 9:00 am, 4th session: 10:30 am

Retreat Leader: M. Garlinda Burton

Music Team:

Mary Green — Song Leader

Ronnie Wise — Organist / Pianist

In planning for 2007, emphasize conference events as well as district events. Encourage everyone to make plans NOW to attend one of the Spiritual Growth Retreats in June, School of Christian Mission in July, and Conference Annual Meeting in September. Many program ideas are given at these events and the information you'll take home is very valuable. My fellowship with other UMW members is very important and much fun. Lasting friendships are made at these events.

There are many resources available to aid in programming and they all can be ordered through the Service Center, now called the Mission Resource Center. Three of these very important resources are **The 2007 Program Book – Rise! Shine! Glorify God!** (Stock #3733, \$3.75), **2007 Prayer Calendar** (#3707, \$9.50), and **Response Magazine** (\$21 per year, call toll-free 1-877-881-2385). As well as a new name, they have a new location. The Mission Resource Center is located in Dallas, Texas. The toll-free number is still 1-800-305-9857 and the e-store is on the Women's Division's website www.umwmission.org or cs@missionresourcecenter.org.

Plans are underway for our 2007 Annual Meeting at Lake Junaluska, September 7, 8, & 9. The theme will be **Through the**

Eyes of a Child with the Reverend Angela Pleasants as guest speaker. Check the conference website www.wncumw.org and click on Annual Meeting for valuable information updated as plans become firm.

It is my joy and privilege to serve God through UMW. I am available to help you in any way. Call me! Blessings to each one of you as we further this ministry together.

Secretary-Program Resources **Bettie Sharpe Rowe**

Are you reading out there???? I know you are since in 2005, adult readers totaled 1196. WOW, that's wonderful! I don't have the 2006 totals yet, but I know you may just top that figure. Wouldn't it be marvelous if in 2007 we could have 1300 readers? You know, this is one of the best things you can do for yourself since reading is: An individual act, a fulfilling process, and an awareness of new words, thoughts and ideas. So, make the weather work for you in your reading process, i.e., a cup of tea and a book on a cold day, a glass of iced tea and a book on the beach.

Don't forget to keep a book in the car. One never knows when you might be delayed and there are many books designed to provide short writings just for that. *52 Hymn Story Devotions* is one such book and if you were at Annual Meeting, you will remember Lucy did a book signing for that book.

Along the lines of short writings, I can heartily recommend *Words of Fire, Spirit of Grace*. These are powerful sermons by R. Grace Imathiu. Also consider *Miriam, Mary and Me*. I'm reading *Barefoot Heart* and will be more mindful of migrant workers now each time I eat hand picked food.

On the 2007 list I can certainly recommend *But Lord, I Was Happy Shallow*. At the present time I'm reading *God's Politics*. This is a BONUS book and I recommend it to you also.

Thank you for your participation in the Children's Reading Program since its' inception in 2005. In 2005, we had 208 children participating with the Albemarle District having the most readers. Keep up the good work. It's never too late to submit a name for a certificate. Send those names to me and certificates will be issued in a timely manner.

Thank you for your support of the Reading Program. Remember keep reading and ask others to read. Let's reach the 1300 reader mark this year.

For your next **Mission Moment**, consider excerpts or even the short article on page 42 of the November-December 2006 issue of **Response** about *Mary's Place*, a congregation's day care center in Seattle.

Education and Interpretation Sherry Sink

Looking for a good program to use at your next meeting? Why not use the *2007 Prayer Calendar*? What a great and handy tool to have in your hands! You could start by going to the page that has your own birthday on it. At the top of this page is a devotional written by mission personnel to represent all categories of service.

I would start by using the devotional. Maybe you could get someone to act it out, and show the place on a map where the person is located. Then I would tell the names of the mission personnel that have the same birthday as mine. Read where they're in mission and what service they are providing. There are also mission projects listed across from the names. These are GBGM funded mission projects. The UMW Pledge to Mission is part of this funding.

I would then proceed to take prayer requests and have a prayer time. Don't forget to include the people and places that you've read out of the *Prayer Calendar*.

It would be good to have five Gift to Mission cards in your hands. Get members of your group to pick five people out of the *Prayer Calendar*. Have them look in the back of the *Prayer Calendar*. There you will find the information you need to send them the Gift to Mission cards.

If you continue to use the *Prayer Calendar* at each unit meeting, you will take care of Mission Today criteria # 1. (It has an asterisk). If you sent those five Gift to Mission Cards, Mission Today criteria # 6 was taken care of. By sending the Gift to Mission cards, you have given in **one** of the five channels of Mission Giving as stated in Mission Today criteria # 11. Only four more to go!!

What a great start for 2007! Use the *Prayer Calendar* at your meetings to tell the stories of mission and keep in touch with those serving that are listed there. They all

appreciate your prayers and support!!!

Secretary—Dixie Sheff

It was very nice to meet all of you at Officers Training and to share ways of being a good secretary and custodian of all records and minutes of our Executive Committee meetings. I would like to invite all district and local unit secretaries to join me as I read for the UMW Reading Program. It is very easy to complete plan one. All that you have to do is read *Response Magazine* (as I'm sure that you already do) and read one book from each category.

Let me know how YOU are doing with the reading program. If you need some suggestions for books to begin with, just e-mail or send me a note. Thank you for all of the work that you do as United Methodist Women.

Leader Development Virginia Robinson

Greetings to the Western North Carolina Conference UMW!!!

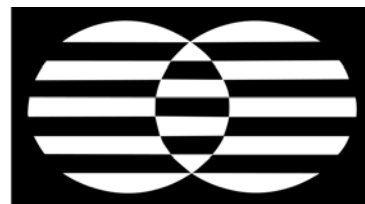
Where did 2006 go? If you are like me, it passed by too fast and now we are already into 2007. Don't forget to mark Saturday, October 13th as you plan your district's calendar for 2007. District Officer Training will take place on this date at First United Methodist Church in Conover. Watch for more information as our plans develop.

Reports have not come in on the LUV visits for 2006. As district officers, if you feel you didn't visit as many of the local units last year that you would have liked to, begin now to make plans to visit many more in 2007. Call the local units and excite them about UMW. Your "LUV" visit to the units spreads the news of United Methodist Women.

If as a local unit you did not receive a LUV visit, just call your District President and she will schedule one for you.

It is a wonderful time when United Methodist Women meet and greet one another. During

your visit, be sure to lift up program resources, district and conference events, and communicating your support of their unit.



Mission Giving **New Name, Same Great Opportunity**

Treasurer—Sharon Smith

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 \$1,077,715.88 in 2006, a decrease of \$10,566.97 over 2005. Total giving sent to Women's Division was \$920,394.39 - \$797,500.80 in undesignated funds, a decrease of \$30,598.63 over 2005. (We did not meet our \$828,000 pledge.)

The total received for the Conference Love Offering was \$32,894.33 - a very substantial amount, but a decrease of \$1,545.32 over 2005. The Walk for Mission totaled \$8,499.90. The Spiritual Growth Love Offering totaled \$6,313.53, an increase of \$953.86 over 2005. Also, we gave \$122,893.59 in designated gifts for programs of the General Board of Global Ministries. And, we gave \$17,630.90 to other projects, including \$3,590 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 2007 Financial Goal is to increase giving in the Gift to Mission channel by 10%.** We need to work on interpreting where the money goes and the importance of giving undesignated through our five channels of mission giving.

The **2007 Conference Love Offering** will be a *Gift to Mission Giving* “*Celebrating Mission Giving by promoting World Peace.*” We need to find new and interesting ways to interpret this Love Offering. Our 2006 Spiritual Growth Study “Shalom, Shalaam Peace” provides an opportunity to look at many aspects of peace.

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.**

Nominations Chair **Irma Ellwanger**

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 uncover the talents, gifts and graces of persons who are capable of becoming leaders who share the passion for mission...persons who can guide us in expanding our concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

It is time now to begin to think about potential leaders for 2008... 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 and prayerfully 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.

Social Action—Linda Young

Happy New Year to each of you!

I recently was reviewing some materials I had gotten while at the 2006 United Methodist Women Assembly in Anaheim, Ca. As many of you may remember the theme was “RISE! SHINE! GLORIFY GOD.” It was a glorious time of fellowship, amazing speakers, bible study, music, and exhibits.

One speaker reminded us that “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.” She said not to put our light under a bushel but to let our light shine. As United Methodist Women, we are called to do all we can to meet the most important and basic spiritual and practical needs of God’s people, and to brighten the dark corners of our world, not just with charity but also with justice and mercy.

You may be newly elected or continuing in your office of Social Action. Let your light shine. Be strong and courageous. Arm yourself with all the human and written resources needed to lead your district in challenging the current local, national, international and global social issues in our midst today. You are to work actively with the executive mission team to fulfill the Purpose and to select several priority issues on which to focus district prayer, study and action. Please consider the conference priorities which are 1) The Children’s Campaign: Public Education, 2) Quality Health Care for All, and 3) Violence: It affects Us All. You shall promote and utilize the Reading Program, *Response* and *New World Outlook* magazines, the *Prayer Calendar*, the *Program Book* and other printed or audiovisual resources. You are to coordinate the public policy and legislative activities of the district; promote and interpret the biblical

basis for social action and the position of the church on social issues; serve as a member of the district committee on Church and Society; serve as the contact person for local unit mission coordinators for social action; serve on the Executive Committee and the Committees of Program and Finance.

I encourage you to include in every district newsletter the ACTION NETWORK registration form. Make copies to put on the free resource table and/or use as an insert in the bulletins at each district event. Register each member of the Executive Mission Team, including members of the Nominating Committee. The Action Network is a powerful tool to assist members of our organization in being informed and prepared to act on public policy issues affecting women, children, and youth. As issues are brought to our attention, we are committed to acting for social change. Any member of The United Methodist Women can join.

Social Action is about listening, learning, discerning, and acting. It is about growing in our faith and commitment. Thank you for standing ready to respond to God’s call to be in mission and to make Mission Possible as you Rise! Shine! Glorify God! in 2007.

Spiritual Growth—Kris Puerifoy

Warm greetings are offered to all sisters in Christ who have accepted the responsibilities which come with the office of Spiritual Growth Coordinator. Some of the ways in which we can help our UMW to experience personal growth and spiritual renewal is through encouraging them to participate in Bible Studies and the Reading Program. We also keep our members informed of upcoming district and conference events and other opportunities for growth.

Our next issue of the Conference Gram will have full details about the Spiritual Growth Retreats at Lake Junaluska. *However, those planning to go who*

want to stay in conference lodging on the grounds must send in their registration forms postmarked between Feb. 12-16th. Forms may be obtained from your district president, district newsletter, or may be downloaded at www.wnccumw.org.

This is the time of the year when we are to promote the **Call to Prayer and Self-Denial** service. The theme for 2007 is *Simply Loving*, and the Quiet Day Service (which is found in the 2007 Program Book **Rise! Shine! Glorify God**) is entitled *The Fruits of Love*. All offerings collected will be allocated for pensions and health-care for retired deaconesses and missionaries for whom the Women's Division is responsible.

Below is a meditation/devotion written by Mary Lou Edens, retired deaconess, that may be used at your next unit or circle meeting.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE—Galatians 6: 1-10

A year ago I had the opportunity to learn how to juggle. I started by just tossing a beanbag back and forth, trying to make each throw the same. It was a lot harder than it had appeared. I struggled with the lesson. When the lesson ended, I bought my own beanbags and started to practice. Every day I tried to throw and catch in the juggle pattern as I had been taught. I kept a record. At first I could only do two or three tosses. Then, weeks later I was recording seven to ten tosses. Months later it became thirty to fifty tosses. I could juggle! Now, if I stop for awhile or feel ill, I go back to only a few tosses. I can measure my well-being by how easily I can juggle.

Our faith is like this. If we don't rekindle, pray, read scripture, worship, share, and serve others, we lose our ability and become less able, until we once again practice our faith.

Prayer: *Jesus, you who were tempted as we are, give us grace to rekindle, practice, and not tire of*

our spiritual journey. Amen

Thought for the day: *Juggle your schedule in the presence of the Lord.*

New in 2007 for Conference Events Held at Lake Junaluska!!!

There will be a registration fee collected from all persons attending the Spiritual Growth Retreats and Conference Annual Meeting. Fees are as follows and will be collected at Harrell Center at time of registration:

\$5.00 for those staying in Conference owned facilities (Terrace, Lambuth Inn, Lakeside Lodge, Sunnyside Lodge, Junaluska Apartments) or for those renting or staying in a private home on the grounds.

\$10.00 for those staying in Providence Lodge, Sunset Inn, or off the grounds of Lake Junaluska.

Linda Baity
Membership, Nurture & Outreach

2007 is going to be an exciting year for United Methodist Women in the Western North Carolina Conference as we watch our **PURPOSE** come alive! It is our hope that each district and local unit will be very intentional in recruitment for new members and keeping our Purpose alive in new and creative ways. Some very positive plans are being developed by our conference Membership Nurture and Outreach committee and will be shared in the near future.

We are encouraged with the enthusiasm of the members of the new Pfeiffer University unit. In December, some of us were able to meet in an informal setting with the unit and Courtney Jones, the new Genie Bank Intern for teen and college women. Courtney is a junior at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Ga. She will be working with us to encourage and recruit teen and college women.

We would like to start a new unit in each of the United Methodist Colleges; High Point, Brevard, and

Greensboro, and reorganize a unit at Bennett College. Perhaps some of you would be interested in helping to make this become a reality or you might know of someone. Please let me or your district president know.

It's back! Due to public demand, a one day class "just for teens" will be held at School of Christian Mission July 14. Spread the word and encourage the teens in your church to attend, whether you have a teen circle or not. This will be a great way to create interest in United Methodist Women.

We welcome any ideas or input that you may have to help our Purpose come alive in Membership, Nurture and Outreach.

Scholarship-Louise Jones

It's that time of the year again. The Western North Carolina Conference Scholarship Committee will have the opportunity to meet and interview applicants for scholarships to the five United Methodist colleges or universities, Bennett College, Brevard College Greensboro College, Pfeiffer University, and High Point University.

All Applicants must apply in writing to the Chair of the Scholarship Committee. They must be members of the United Methodist Church and must reside within the bounds of the Western North Carolina Conference. All recipients shall pursue, in the Methodist college chosen, an academic course of study leading to a church-related vocation, such as Christian Education.

Application deadline for 2007 is **March 1, 2007**. All applicants are to appear each year before the Scholarship Committee, which will be held at Pfeiffer University on March 31, 2007.

If you have questions, wish to contribute to or endow a scholarship, or need an application, please call me.

Make our UMW **PURPOSE** come alive!! Be a Mission Today Unit in 2007!!!!

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 15-16 &
16-17
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.

We Have A New Web Address!!!!!!

www.wnccumw.org

**Western North Carolina
Conference United
Methodist Women**

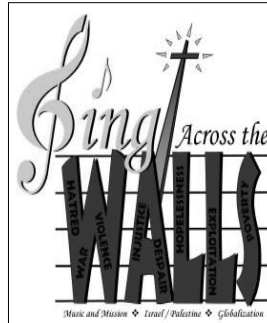
Hands-on Mission
Opportunity for the for the
School of Christian
Mission

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

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

Remember **YOU** make
mission possible!!!

School of
Christian
Mission
July 12-15
at
Greensboro
College



Conference
Annual Meeting
September 7-9
at Lake
Junaluska

Wanted All District Officers
to attend....

District Officers Training

When:
Saturday, October 13,
2007

Where:
First UMC in Conover
Mark your calendars now
and make plans to
attend!!!

The 14 WNCC UMW DISTRICT PRESIDENTS—2007

Omitted for Web Site Purposes

**Officer Names and Email Addresses
Are available on Conference Officer page of our website.**

2007 WNCC UNITED METHODIST WOMEN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ROSTER

Omitted for Web Site Purposes

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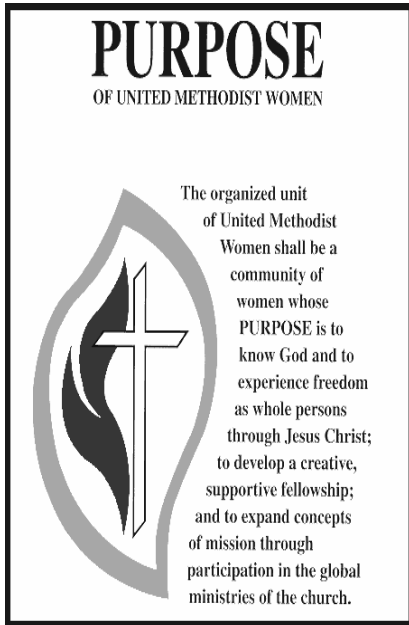
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CONFERENCE GRAM

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



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

2007

- March 1 Application Deadline for WNCC UMW Scholarship
- 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

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.

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!!