

Conference Gram



Volume 58, Number 1

Western North Carolina Conference United Methodist Women

February 2009

2009 Conference Priority

To implement the “For Christ’s Sake, Turn the World Upside Down Initiative” in the area of Public Education

2009 Conference Goals

Goal #1: Conference Financial Goal: To increase TOTAL Mission Giving through the Five Channels by 1%

Goal #2: Mission Today Goal: Increase the number of local Mission Today units by 5% over 2008

Goal #3: Increase attendance at Conference events by 2%.

Goal #4: Add 7 new United Methodist Women units in the Conference.

Goal #5: Nurture and grow by one new member in each local unit.

President - Amy Johnson

Happy Birthday, United Methodist Women! On March 23, United Methodist Women will celebrate 140 years of being in mission. Eight women came together that day at Tremont Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston to learn more about the experiences of Clementina Butler and Lois Parker, wives of missionaries. Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Parker had accompanied their husbands to India and witnessed the need for young girls to receive an education and for women to receive medical treatment. These women set to work and, in just a few months, they were able to raise the needed funds to send Isabella Thoburn and Clara Swain to India.

Let’s make 2009 a year of celebration! Won’t your local unit join the Conference organization in celebrating our birthday? Listed below are some ways in which you can celebrate.

1. Have a birthday party! Invite all the women of your church to attend. Ask them to bring “gifts” for a local mission project or Campbell Soup UPC codes for the Bethlehem Centers in Charlotte and Winston-Salem.

2. Increase your unit’s Mission Giving. Our gifts enable mission work throughout the world. Send Gift to Mission cards to mission personnel each month. Honor the memory of one of your unit’s saints with a Gift in Memory. Give a Special Mission Recognition pin to a deserving member of your local unit for their years of faithful service.

3. Take a field trip to Brooks-Howell Home in Asheville. Spend the day visiting with retired mission personnel and have them share their stories of mission service.

4. Create a “Faces of Mission” bulletin board. Clip pictures from articles in “Response” magazines and create a collage depicting the faces of women, children, and youth whose lives have been touched by our mission dollars. (Remember that the interlocking globe denotes the mission project is supported by UMW Mission Giving.) A bulletin board is a good way to share our heritage with the whole church. Who knows? This may spark an interest in someone who could become a new UMW member.

5. Sponsor hands-on mission projects throughout the year.

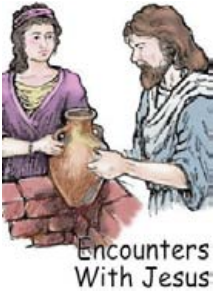
Prepare UMCOR health kits, school kits, layettes, or flood buckets.

6. Become involved in your local public school. Education is still as important in 2009 as it was in 1869. Our Conference priority of Public Education is continuing in 2009.

7. Make an extra effort to attend District and Conference events. Each district sponsors a mission study, prayer breakfast and an annual meeting. The Conference Executive team has been working to plan the 2009 Conference events. 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.

Just as our foremothers prayed for the work they wanted to achieve, continue to pray for the work of United Methodist Women and for those in need around the world. Pray also for the leaders of your local unit, as well as your district and conference officers, Women’s Division directors and staff.

Have fun in planning your birthday bash!



2009 Conference Events...Join Us!

**Spiritual Growth Retreats
June 19/20-20/21, Lake Junaluska
Theme: "Encounters with Jesus"
Retreat Leader: Rev. Dr. Mary John Dye**

Registration forms available from District Presidents or online at conference website.

Vice President - Sandy Hieronymus

Opportunities and challenges to fulfill the PURPOSE are key in planning programs and events. Look for new and exciting ways to make your programs meaningful, educational and spiritually uplifting. Keep in mind the goals set by the conference and your district. Try to emphasize Mission Today criteria, Charter Club, and public education priority set by the conference. Don't forget to plan a celebration of our 140th UMW birthday.

Many resources are available to aid in programming. The new Handbook 2009-2012 (M3032, \$17.00) is a must-have resource. In reading the handbook, I found several program ideas. You can have a meaningful program and learn much about UMW. Three other very important resources are the Program Book, "Who's at the Table?" (Stock #M3020, \$7.00), 2009 Prayer Calendar (#M3040, \$11.00), and Response Magazine (\$24 per year, call toll-free 1-877-881-2385). Order books and other items from the Mission Resource Center in Dallas, Texas. The toll-free number is 1-800-305-9857 or go to www.missionresourcecenter.org

Being with United Methodist Women is always a rewarding experience. Our supportive fellowship is priceless. Make plans now to attend upcoming district and conference events. I have made friendships all over our conference because of UMW. I thank God for YOU!

Plans are underway for our 2009 Annual Meeting at Lake Junaluska, September 11, 12, & 13. The theme will be "Sisters With a PURPOSE." Our guest

speaker will be Harriett Jane Olson, Deputy General Secretary of Women's Division. Our music team will be Catherine Rich Guess and Rev. Mark Barden. Check the conference website www.wncumw.org and click on Annual Meeting for valuable information updated as plans become firm.

I am passionate about the UMW ministry. We make a difference in many lives as we work together. Contact me if I may help you in any way. May our 140th year in ministry be full of blessings for you.

Secretary - Ann Aldridge

How exciting it is to be part of an organization that is celebrating 140 years in mission for women, children, and youth! How awesome to think that you and I can make a difference in the lives of others by being a part of the wonderful organization we call United Methodist Women.

Sometimes we think that the office of secretary may not be very exciting because our responsibility is to do things like keep minutes of the meetings and keep up with records and official papers. We have to keep an accurate and up-to-date roll of our membership, and district secretaries have to send a list of the elected leaders in their districts including addresses, zip codes, phone numbers, and email addresses to the Conference secretary. A secretary has to remember to whom she provides copies of minutes and how the president wants her to handle things.

It is of utmost importance for a good secretary to realize that being secretary is a great opportunity to be of service. In 1 Corinthians 12: 4-6 we see, "There are different kinds of gifts, but the



**Annual Meeting
September 11, 12 & 13
Lake Junaluska
Theme: "Sisters with a PURPOSE"**



**School of Christian Mission
July 16-19
Greensboro College
Theme: "Together at the Table"**

same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men [women]." (NIV) God will take a willing servant and provide training for her and mold her to do His will as a secretary of her local unit or of her district. Being a secretary means that we have an opportunity to learn new things, to meet new people, and to find new ways to serve.

We have a duty to be the best we can be at whatever office we accept. We have a duty to ask questions when we do not know the answers. We have a responsibility to live our lives as "Sisters with a PURPOSE." If I may be of service to any of you, please do not hesitate to contact me at 828-433-0988 or through email at ahaldridge@

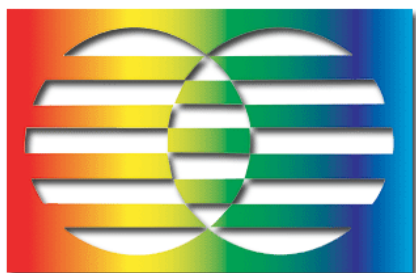
Nominations Chair - Patsy Baker

The holidays are over and God has given us a brand new year to serve Him in UMW. I hope your talent banks are full of prospective leaders as you now look into 2010 and see the vacancies to be filled. In 1998, Joyce Sohl wrote in "Response" magazine, "All of us are called to be good leaders and good members within United Methodist Women, to be women who understand what it means to be hopeful, to affirm the diversity within the organization, to be community-centered. In this way, we can more effectively participate in God's mission in our troubled world."

Take your profile sheets with you to UMW events and ask persons of interest to complete them. Women who love UMW and are devoted to the PURPOSE want to serve. They should be women of different ages, race, marital status, employed and unemployed and different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Executive committee members must be team players. There is no "I" in Team! We all work together.

It's also time to evaluate your officers who have served two years. If they are doing their job you should ask them to serve another two years. If not, the committee should decide if they should be replaced. Please keep these and all discussions at Nominating Committee meetings confidential. Ask those you talk with about taking an office to do the same until the slate of officers is approved.

You are welcome to email or call me at any time. I am your contact for Nominations and I can contact Women's Division if we need answers I don't have.



Mission Giving

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 local units went over the \$1,000,000 mark. Total giving reached \$1,058,908.30 – a decrease of \$34,994.92 over 2007. Total giving sent to Women's Division totaled \$928,994.37 (a decrease of \$32,867.47) - \$812,000.43 in undesignated funds (a decrease of \$28,594.57 over 2007) and \$116,993.94 in designated funds (a decrease of \$4,272.90 over 2007). A total of \$14,239.90 was given to other projects, which includes \$3,727.95 in contributions to the WNCC UMW General Scholarship Fund.

The total received for the Conference Love Offering was \$31,099.11 – a decrease of \$2,064.70 over 2007. The 3rd Walk to Mission totaled \$8,274.80, an increase of \$1,945.55 over 2007. The Spiritual Growth Retreats offering totaled \$5,228.58, a decrease of \$510.98 over 2007.

We surpassed our \$811,000 pledge to Mission by \$1,000.43. Our 2008 Financial Goal was to increase total mission giving in the Five Channels by 1%. We did not meet our financial goal.

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 2009 Financial Goal is to increase total Mission Giving through the Five Channels by 1%. We need to work on interpreting where the money goes and the importance of giving undesignated

through our five channels of mission giving.

The 2009 Conference Love Offering will be a Gift to Mission Giving "Sisters with a PURPOSE– Celebrating 140 Years Together in Mission." We need to find ways to interpret this Love Offering.

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.

Historian - Margie Knight

What a great organization the United Methodist Women is. This year we will celebrate our 140th anniversary. We have much to be proud of and a great deal to celebrate as we continue the journey begun so many years ago by our faithful and courageous foremothers.

United Methodist Women are inheritors of the vision and toil of women's societies of eight denominations.

Many of the members remember when this organization was called the Wesleyan Service Guild. In 1972 the Women's organization in the United Methodist Church merged to form one inclusive organization with the name, United Methodist Women.

As we look back in history we know someone was recording the events. There will probably be a day when the future generation will look back to the history we are making today. Preserve the history by taking pictures and store them in an acid free album, make CD's or write stories on events. We all like to hear the mission story. Let's do something special for the 140th anniversary and record it for future UMW.

Go to the conference webpage to sign up for online version of conference gram to help save mission money. (wnccumw.org)

Membership, Nurture and Outreach - Linda Baity

As Mission Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach our responsibility is to encourage the officers in the local units to determine the needs of the membership and to keep in touch with all the women in the unit. We are to “help members of the unit to see membership as a great opportunity for spiritual growth, leader development, involvement in mission, personal growth and meaningful participation in study and action.” (District and Local Handbook) Each member has the responsibility of helping this great organization to grow.

While attending the North Wilkesboro District Executive meeting recently, Taffy Jordan, chair of the Committee on Nominations made the comment: “If we want younger women to join UMW we need to tell our story. We need to let them know the great mission work that is done by United Methodist Women.”

Then later, I picked up the new winter edition of News UMW and read the article “Tap the Power of Storytelling,” by Harriett Jane Olson, the deputy general secretary of the Women’s Division. Ms. Olson says, “Stop doubting the importance of our story. Our work as United Methodist Women is part of a continuing story of the work of the community that God calls.” Our foremothers answered the call to advocate for women, children and youth, both global and local. To begin with, they organized and together fought against the lack of education and health care for women and children in India. They began with a purpose in mission with social action. What began with six women has increased to almost a million. Some issues have been

“fixed”, but others are still “broken”. As long as there is child labor, inequality in education, poverty, hunger, homelessness, job losses and lack of health care, the women and children will continue to suffer the greatest and the work of United Methodist Women will continue to grow. The nurturing and outreach is the “tie that binds” the community together. Take a few minutes and think about the women you come in contact with each day. Which one can you tell your story to? Who can you offer the opportunity to become a part of this nurturing community of women with a PURPOSE? We really do not need to wait any longer. Today, ask one of these women or teens to become a part of this great story.

If I can assist you in any way, please call.

Check out the conference website (wncumw.org) for all the latest information on conference events. Help your unit stay informed!



Campaign for Children continues in 2009.

Women’s Division Director - Lynne Gilbert

It is my honor to represent the United Methodist Women of our conference as a member of the Women’s Division Board of Directors for the 2008-2012 quadrennium. As a way to share information from our meetings, I have added a Women’s Division page to our website (www.wncumw.org). I hope you will check it out, and share information with your local unit...just look for the link on our home page for News & Resources from the Women’s Division. One resource there already is the 2009 budget for the Women’s Division, which shows the plan for how your Mission Giving will be used this year.

Thank you for your commitment to mission, for your service as a leader, and for the difference you are making, every day, in the lives of women, children, and youth around the world. YOU make mission possible!



Secretary Program Resources - Kim Keyse

READ YE! READ YE!
PUBLISH GLAD TIDINGS!

2009...can you believe it!?...another year of opportunity for the WNCC UMW to toil in the fields, harvesting souls! To be best equipped for this mission is to be well read and informed and do I have the books just for you:

*UMW Handbook (2009-2012), organized into six sections: local and district units; district; finance; constitution and bylaws; program planning; tools, tips, and forms. It is available spiral bound or three-hole punched for \$17.00.

*2009 Prayer Calendar for \$11.00

*Program Book, "Who's at the Table?" for \$7.00

*2009-2012 Program Calendar for \$10.00

*and of course, the 2009 Reading Program Books.

Please accept my apology, ladies, for mistakenly telling you at our Officer's Training in October about not receiving credit for the Reading Program for the mission study books...you can indeed get credit and the category each one falls into is listed in the catalog (which, by the way, is in a new format, so be sure that your ladies are aware of that at your district events, please). Remember, titles read from the 2004 list will be credited through December 31, 2009.

A wealth of information concerning Program Resources ranging from all printed materials available to contact information to the Mission Resource Center and Women's Division is online through our conference website. If you are not a member of the Women's Division Reading Program Online Community, I would encourage you to join.

Women's Division also publishes THE SPR CONNECTION, a newsletter for SPR's. If you are not receiving this newsworthy publication, let Women's Division know because the better informed we are, the better we can serve our ladies and thus help turn the world upside down!

I so look forward to bringing our PURPOSE alive in 2009 with you ladies through program resources. Please, let me know how I can ever be of service to you. Continue to publish glad tidings...and READ YE! READ YE! READ YE!

Education and Interpretation - Virginia Robinson

2009 is the start of a new journey for me as the Western North Carolina Conference Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation. I am excited about these new beginnings. I know with God's help I can fulfill the position you have entrusted to me.

One goal for the conference in 2009 is to increase the number of Mission Today units by 5% over 2008. There are 23 criteria to help you reach Mission Today status. A unit must complete twelve of the criteria, including six marked with an asterisk. Strive to complete one more criterion in 2009 and if every unit in the conference completed that extra one, the conference would reach that goal of 5% over 2008. But remember, you must complete number one on the list, "The Unit will make and meet its Pledge to Mission" It is not an option. Start today and be a Mission Today unit.

Several districts will soon be having their mission studies. Take advantage of these learning tools and complete #4 of the criteria. Using the Prayer Calendar and the Program Book are other resources

included in the criteria (#2 and #3).

Remember, your conference and district officers love to visit. Include them when planning your calendar for the year and fulfill #21 of the Mission Today criteria.

Challenge your unit to undertake those more difficult criteria. For example #6*, "The Unit will implement the Charter for Racial Justice in at least two ways during the year". You will find them enlightening! Work together to bring our PURPOSE alive...expand our concepts of mission...develop and create a supportive fellowship. What a way to begin 2009!

If you have any questions regarding Mission Today or anything else, let me know or contact your district coordinator. Let 2009 be the best year yet!

Leader Development - Betty Swarthout

GREETINGS, Co-leaders in Western North Carolina United Methodist Women. Officers training for the District Officers will be Saturday, October 10, 2009 at the Broad Street United Methodist Church, Statesville, NC. The training will start with gathering at 9:00 am and finish from each class by 12:30 pm.

Hands-On project at the 2008 district UMW officers' training netted a total of 320 seat covers (underpants) and 336 toe covers (socks) for boys and girls. These were divided between the Bethlehem Centers in Charlotte and Winston-Salem. Thank you to all contributors.

LEADERSHIP TIP: "Empower others to lead."



Social Action - Linda Young

I write this article on the eve of the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America. On Inauguration Day, January 20, 2009, history was made in America like never before. The 35-word oath and the transfer of power grants a responsibility to generations of Americans who have fought, bled, and died for our citizenship. The event offered a celebration of our country's past, a focus on its present, and a glimpse of what the future might possibly hold.

This sounds a lot like the mission work of the United Methodist Women. As women in mission, our journey hasn't been a flowerbed of ease. Our foremothers also shed some blood, sweat, and tears as they responded to issues and concerns facing women, children, and youth locally and around the world. Like Martin Luther King, Jr., United Methodist Women believe that 'right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant.'

Harriett Olson, Women's Division President, wrote recently that "Mission projects and advocacy campaigns we support make knowing God's love and joy possible for those who are at the margins." Mobilizing women for mission and service so that they may completely live out their baptism and more fully share and experience Christ's work is important.

The year-end reports will reflect our accomplishments. The reports will also show areas where more effort and attention need to be focused. In 2008 every unit in the conference was asked to focus on PUBLIC EDUCATION as a single priority. Facts and figures were gathered and sent to Washington. When one starts looking at information on paper, reality sets in. The results were outstanding. Public Education will continue to be our priority in 2009. The use of the Campaign for Children, Phase III and Public School Education booklet are great resources.

I encourage you to visit our website

www.wnccumw.org and log on to the social action webpage. Sign up for the UMW's Action Network. Press toward becoming a Charter Club unit and Mission Today unit. Put forth the effort and as the Nike commercial says: 'JUST DO IT.'

PURPOSE *of United Methodist Women*



The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

2009 WNCC UMW District Presidents

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2009 WNCC United Methodist Women Executive Committee Roster

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Conference Gram
WNC Conference United Methodist Women
Janice Lentz, 336 Midway Park Lane, Taylorsville, NC 28681

2009 Calendar of Events for WNC Conference United Methodist Women

June 11-14	Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska, Regional School for Conference Officers and Study Leaders
June 19-20/20-21	Spiritual Growth Retreats, Lake Junaluska
July 16-19	School of Christian Mission, Greensboro College
September 11-13	Annual Meeting, Lake Junaluska
October 10	Officer's Training

Mark Calendar for April 30-May 2, 2010: Assembly in St. Louis, MO

Web Site Address: www.wnccumw.org. Lynne Gilbert maintains the web site and you are invited to send her articles and photos. 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 and updates, the Conference Gram, etc., send an email to Lynne Gilbert (lynnegilbert@bellsouth.net), giving your name, email address, and district name. Join Now!!

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. Anyone can sign up to receive it online.