

faith

action

sisterhood

# UW Faith Appalachian District News Second Quarter 2026

## AppaLadies in Mission



**United Women in Faith 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.**



**President**

It always amazes me how fast time flies (I've always been told that the older you get the faster time goes – such a true statement!) By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have completed two of our District events for 2026 – our Mission Study and Prayer Breakfast. Our joint Mission Study with Catawba Valley on March 12 was hosted by First Hickory UW Faith – such a lovely group of ladies who made us feel welcome and loved (and provided a wonderful array of snacks.) Sandra Williamson's husband was rushed to the ER the night before our study, so she was not able to attend and lead our study, but she did a lot of work putting together slides which she had sent to me, and with help from Linda Greer and Tanya Lunsford, we were able to facilitate the study (with the support and participation of all attendees!) Our Prayer Breakfast on April 18, was hosted by First Taylorsville UW Faith who, again, made us feel welcome and loved; their UMM group cooked and served a wonderful breakfast, followed by an inspiring and meaningful worship and memorial service. Thank you to all who attended these events – I hope you will spread the word and encourage others to attend future events. A collage of photos from these events are included in this newsletter – such a great time of fellowship and reflection.

Our next couple of events are National and Conference level gatherings. Assembly 2026 will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana in May. I plan to attend this event and hope to bring home lots of inspiring stories and information to share. Our WNCC Spiritual Growth Retreat will be held at Lake Junaluska in June (see Sherry Summerlin and Jean Stetler's articles and our WNCC UW Faith website for more info.) In August we have our District Annual Celebration and Mission u. We have so many opportunities to join together in fellowship and learning environments. I hope each of you will sincerely try to join us in attending one or more of these events.

I encourage you to take a look at the Nurturing Partner chart included in this newsletter and invite your Nurturing Partner to a unit meeting – this checks off an item on the Mission Today checklist for your unit, and it gives you an opportunity to ask questions about UW Faith missions, where our money goes, our reading program, our social action priorities, etc. The full district officer list with contact information is also included in this newsletter – again, notice there are a few vacancies that need to be filled. Please contact a member of our nominations team, or any district officer, if you or someone you know may be interested in filling one of these vacant positions.



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I was browsing through the UWFaith.org website and came across a recap of the spring meeting of the UWFaith Program Advisory Group (PAG); the meeting focused on achieving UWFaith’s vision and strategic goals by influencing through storytelling, emphasizing how one voice can have a ripple effect that makes a big difference. The meeting started with a worship message about being salt and light, or in the words of Deaconess Caitlyn Hansen, “bringing out the God-flavors.” After using the analogy of a spark to encourage sharing stories and influencing others, she quoted, “We have no idea which little moment will be the critical one, which small action will be the tipping point, which 10 seconds might make all the difference. So, we have to keep trying, keep speaking out, and keep making connections.” She noted that spreading the vision of peace and justice “can set the whole world ablaze.” President Jana Jones reported that we have much good news to share: we exceeded our pledge in 2025; membership is growing; we are making a difference in the lives of women, children, and youth both nationally and abroad through scholarships, grants, National Mission Institutions, our missionaries, and so much more! We need to continue being influencers – influencing media, membership, advocacy, with the UMC, internationally, and communities. We need to never underestimate the kind of power we hold when we raise our voices together!

Feel free to contact me whenever you have questions. If I don’t know the answer, I can always find someone who does. Go tell stories and influence!

Love and Blessings

Jan Taylor



**Vice President**

Greetings!

I hope this newsletter finds each of you renewed and refreshed after dealing with so much ice and snow! Hopefully, warm weather and sunshine lie ahead. I would like to give a quick shout out to Jan Taylor, Tanya Lunsford and Linda Greer for doing an amazing job at the “Practicing Hope” mission study held at Hickory First UMC in March. When Sandra Williamson, our study leader, was called away at the last minute, these ladies stepped up and did a fabulous job! Sandra, kudos to you, it took three very capable women to take your place!

Okay, now let’s talk programs. Don’t forget to use your program resource book, Mapping Our Way Forward - good info and ideas for your unit programs. Why not do a program for your nurturing partner’s unit or have your nurturing partner visit yours! There are many ways to be creative with your programs.

NOW... what is God calling us to study this season? Let me think? I love Lake Junaluska! The early morning spiritual walks with God, the flowers, the geese, and the Christian fellowship that helps us grow in our faith! All in one place; what more could you ask for? I will be looking for you, June 11-13, for our WNCC UWFaith Spiritual Growth Retreat there! Check our WNCC UWFaith website for more information! I will walk around that lake with you as many times as you would like, discuss the sessions that you attend, and eat ice cream! So, when the time is right, sign up, June 11-13, 2026! Hope to see you there!

PS – Appalachian District Annual Celebration will take place in August, and Conference Annual Celebration will be in September. Stay tuned for more info on both!

Blessings to each of you,

Jean



**Spiritual Growth Coordinator**



Hello from your Spiritual Growth Coordinator for the Appalachian District!

Coming in June is the Annual Western North Carolina United Women in Faith Spiritual Growth Retreat at Lake Junaluska. This will be our only yearly gathering at the Lake. Dates are June 11-13, 2026, Thursday evening through Saturday noon. Our theme is “Winds of Change”. The speaker for the weekend will be Rev. Lucy Robbins from Asheville. The opening session will be on Thursday evening. The Friday morning session speaker will be Rev. Holly Cobb McKim. She will share her experience during Hurricane Helene and the role her community has had in helping with rebuilding those areas hardest hit in September of 2024. Breakout sessions on Friday morning will include Kim Eller with “Move for Mission” and Jenny Greenway with a Book Club discussion. Following the mission session, we will have lunch with our missionaries.

We will have Origami with Cindy Carter and Creative Care with Judy Ogletree, as well as a session on Soul Care with Rita Newcomb, on Friday afternoon.

Those wishing to sing in the choir will meet on Friday afternoon at 1:30 PM. Friday afternoon will also include an UBUNTU activity from 2-5:30 PM. This will be at a local site in the Lake Junaluska area.

Friday evening we will have our second worship service led by Rev. Lucy Robbins.

The closing session will be on Saturday with the Memorial Service and worship led by Rev. Lucy Robbins, followed by Holy Communion for all participants.

Please plan to attend if at all possible. We always enjoy our time away, renewing ourselves at the Lake.

Blessings and peace,  
Sherry Summerlin





Save the Date:

*Winds of Change*

Western North Carolina Conference  
United Women in Faith

Spiritual Growth Retreat

June 11-13, 2026

Lake Junaluska, NC



Session Leader:  
Rev. Lucy Robbins



Mission Session Leader:  
Rev. Holly McKim



**Interim Treasurer**  
**Giving is Always Good! Always!**

Appalachian District Sisters,  
Mission: It ALL matters

We are now in that time of the year when, weather-wise, we just have to take it as it comes. Here in Boone, we know we can expect it to be mild and moderate one day and the next we find ourselves pulling out the winter coat. “Layer weather” is what some call it. I find that it is that final layer that makes the difference. It takes them all. “Many-layers weather.”

When I consider UWFaith, it is the same thing; each one matters well beyond the direct recipient, because each helps build and strengthen the communities they impact.

UWFaith Mission Giving is especially powerful because in many cases it supports missions that otherwise would have been overlooked. Missions that are unspectacular but which really undergird a system of missions that, in concert, deliver mighty results, create hope and build community.

For instance, UWFaith funds help support the Deaconess and Home Missioner (DHM) ministry program. An example is Home Missioner Helen Ryde (Sept. 11, 1965-Sept. 2, 2025,) who was consecrated as a home missioner at General Conference in 2016. At that time, her ministry was serving as a regional organizer for the Southeast Jurisdiction of the Reconciling Ministries Network, whose work eventually led to the removal of harmful anti-LGBTQ+ language from our Book of Discipline. Ryde also believed that we cannot move forward as an inclusive denomination without committing ourselves to antiracism and anticolonialism. A visionary, Ryde thought beyond the education of DHMs and invited us to consider our role in shaping the education and formation of all laity across the denomination. For those who knew her, you probably also knew that Ryde was drawn to the margins. Ryde believed deeply in the power of transformation—that everyone is capable of growth and renewal. This conviction led Ryde into spaces that many of us might avoid, building genuine relationships and community, recognizing that what often presents as hate, rejection, or condemnation is often rooted in fear. By being willing to listen, engage, and stay present, Ryde literally changed hearts and minds. Ryde’s legacy reminds us that relationships, trust, dialogue, and steadfast commitment to those whom society, and even the church, have left behind, are at the heart of transformation. Through example, Ryde’s light rose brilliantly in the darkness. It will continue to shine for generations to come.\* It is these kinds of un-heralded but powerful missions that our Mission Giving fosters and allows to flourish.

\*Read the entire article about Helen Ryde in the January/February edition of *response*.





**Social Action Coordinator**



### Supporting Bees in North Carolina: What You Can Do

Eco Justice can be realized and actioned against in many ways. One simple way to help is to help make sure that the environment is taken care of. It is especially important to do this in areas where they may not have the funding to take these actions.

#### Why Bees Matter in NC

Bees play a critical role in pollinating roughly 80% of flowering plants, including many fruits and vegetables essential to North Carolina's agriculture and ecosystem health.

#### Ways You Can Help

- **Plant Native, Pollinator-Friendly Landscapes:** Use native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees adapted to NC's regions. Include blooms for spring, summer, and fall.
- **Create Safe Nesting Spots:** Add bee condos or nesting blocks for cavity-nesting species and maintain bare-soil patches for ground-nesting bees.
- **Minimize Chemical Use:** Avoid synthetic pesticides and herbicides. If necessary, apply in early evening and notify local beekeepers.
- **Support Local Beekeepers:** Buy local honey and hive products. Volunteer with pollinator conservation groups.
- **Learn, Share & Connect:** Explore NC State's Beekeeper Education programs and join initiatives like the Butterfly Highway.

#### Take Action Today

By planting native species, creating safe nesting environments, reducing pesticide use, and engaging with your community, you can make a meaningful difference for bees in North Carolina.

Blessings,  
Elizabeth Conrad





## Committee on Nominations Member



Our district committee is searching for a few special ladies to fill some important roles. We are still in need of the following positions:

- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership, Nurture and Outreach Coordinator (MN&O)
- Two - Nominations Committee members for the class of 2029.

Please continue to be in prayer that we find the ladies for these positions, as well as having active conversations as you meet those who you feel might be a good fit for any of these positions. Reach out to me at 336-466-1230, or anyone on the Nominations Committee, if you or someone you know may be interested.

Blessings,  
Donna Parks Hill



## Secretary of Program Resources

In the last newsletter, I shared news about the reading program in our local unit. By sharing a children's book from each of the five categories during our regular meetings, we were able to increase the number of participants in the reading program drastically and increase the number of books read for some already in the program. This year I told the group that last year we bottle-fed them, so this year we are going to wean them a little bit. We started the reading program for the year by reading a children's book to get everyone started. This year I am encouraging members to move up to young adult books, which have great content but are a little shorter and easier to read than most of the adult selections. Two of the ones I have added to our library that I recommend are *The Lucky Ones* by Linda Williams Jackson and *Red, White, and Whole* by Rajani LaRocca. *Red, White, and Whole* is about a young girl, Reha, whose family has immigrated from India. She is trying to fit into two worlds, the culture of her parents' homeland and her new home in America. Her mother works in a lab testing blood, so Reha learns all about blood. Later, her mother is diagnosed with a blood disease. Through these experiences, Reha learns to be red, white, and whole. *The Lucky Ones* is about an eleven-year-old boy, Ellis Earl Brown, growing up in 1967 in Mississippi. He is inspired by the book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and great men like Thurgood Marshall and Robert Kennedy who he gets to meet on his southern 'poverty tour.' There is so much insight to be gained from these stories of young people.

HAPPY READING  
Margaret Cooper





## Parliamentarian

Spring Greetings from your Appalachian District United Women in Faith Parliamentarian. I am sharing information with local unit parliamentarians from Martha Phillips, the WNCC UWFaith Parliamentarian. The Conference Standing Rules state: A quorum shall be a simple majority of the delegates registered for the meeting.

Four basic principles of Parliamentary Law are:

1. Courtesy and justice for all
2. Consider one thing at a time
3. The minority must be heard
4. The majority must prevail

More information will be in the third quarter newsletter.

Have a blessed and beautiful spring. I hope to see you at the Lake in June for the Spiritual Growth Retreat.

Peace and grace,  
Sherry Summerlin

## A WORD OF GRATITUDE

Dear Ladies of the Appalachian District of United Women in Faith,



I want to thank you so very much for all your support during my presidency of our district. I am especially grateful to our unit presidents and unit contacts for helping me submit the 2025 reports to our Western North Carolina Conference UWFaith President. The year 2025 was the first year of my presidency in which every **single unit reported**. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

And thank you to every unit member who participated in your local unit's activities and helped make this possible. **You are UWFaith**. The Local Unit is the heart of our organization, and without you, there is no UWaith and no Mission.

As of January 1, 2026, we have 25 active units with 632 members in our district, and we welcomed 38 new members in 2025. We also celebrate:

- 12 units who gave in all Five Channels of Mission Giving
- 16 units who achieved Mission Today status
- 11 units who participated in Mission Studies
- 6 units who achieved Justice Today status
- 10 units who donated to the Legacy Endowment Fund
- 8 units with a total of 32 readers participating in our UWFaith Reading Program

Keep up the good work, AppaLadies in Mission, and let's continue to grow in all these areas in 2026.

**We are United Women in Faith. We are UNSTOPPABLE!**

Love, Joy, Peace,  
LindaLu



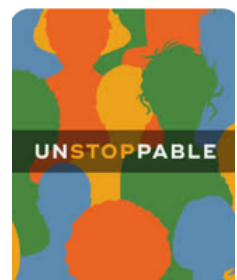
**Mission, Education,  
and Interpretation Coordinator**

Greeting my sisters, this is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it, Amen!

In the March/April issue of response magazine, we find a beautiful reminder of what it means to live in God's grace and to give from a place of abundance. Rooted in 2 Corinthians 9:8, we are reminded that God provides us with every blessing so that we may share abundantly in every good work. It is a message that speaks directly to both our hearts and our calling. We see that within United Women in Faith, this calling is reflected in the mission to seek "to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities." Giving Day becomes a living expression of this mission in action, and as we reflect on the article, we are reminded that God's abundance is already present in our lives, in our health, in the air we breathe, and in the simple gift of a new day. These blessings are not meant to be held tightly, but to be shared freely. Giving Day invites us to do just that: to respond with grateful hearts and open hands.

When we give, we are doing more than contributing; in reality, we are nurturing connections, strengthening leadership, and supporting education and mission work that transforms lives. We are helping create opportunities for women, children, and youth to experience hope and stability. In this way, our giving directly supports the mission of United Women in Faith, allowing it to grow and reach far beyond what we can see. Think about it, there is something deeply powerful about coming together as a sisterhood on any day, but especially on Giving Day. It reminds us that we are not alone in this work. We are connected through each gift, each prayer, each act of generosity, weaving us together in purpose. Together, we inspire and uplift one another, and through that unity, we extend God's love into the world. As we hold onto the message of grace in abundance, may we also embrace the responsibility and joy that come with it. Giving Day is our opportunity to live out our mission to connect, nurture, inspire, and impact through simple yet meaningful acts of generosity. Because when we give from a place of faith and gratitude, we are not just supporting a mission, we are becoming part of it, and by giving, it shows evidence that we truly are better together, and love in action is unstoppable.

Blessings,  
Terri Williams



## Appalachian District UWFaith 2026 Nurturing Partners

<b>Jan Taylor</b> <b>336-468-0313</b>	<b>Jean Stetler</b> <b>828-264-6629</b>	<b>Terri Williams</b> <b>336-426-2250</b>	<b>Nancy Reigel</b> <b>828-268-0637</b>
<b>First North Wilkesboro Sparta</b> Watauga Coop Parish *Henson Chapel *Mabel *Valle Crucis-Banner Elk *Smethport - West Jefferson *Warrensville Grassy Creek - State Road	<b>Banner Elk Deerfield</b> FaithBridge - Blowing Rock West Jefferson *Altamont - Newland *Jonas Ridge	<b>New River Coop Parish</b> *Piney Creek *Mount Zion-Piney Creek  <b>West - Mooresville</b> *Ebenezer - Elkin *Maple Springs - Ronda Charity - Elkin	<b>First Taylorsville Millers Creek</b>  *New River Coop Parish *Shiloh - Sparta *Cox's Chapel-MofWilson, VA <b>Yadkinville Clifton - Warrensville</b>
<b>Traci Snyder</b> <b>828-308-3452</b>	<b>Brenda Kimberlin</b> <b>828-728-0371</b>	<b>Sherry Summerlin</b> <b>828-728-4936</b>	<b>Elizabeth Conrad</b> <b>704-223-7877</b>
<b>Hiddenite/StPt Parish Fair View - Mooresville</b> *Faith - Mooresville Breath of Life-Mooresville McKendree Chapel-Mooresville	<b>Colliers - Lenoir First Granite Falls</b> Asbury - Hamptonville Linville First Lenoir	<b>Union Grove Wilkesboro</b> *Cedar Valley - Lenoir *Mount Herman - Lenoir  Jefferson	<b>Hudson</b> Union - North Wilkesboro *Hanes Grove - Hamptonville * St. Paul - Hamptonville
<b>Terri Clark</b> <b>828-612-2637</b>	<b>Donna Parks Hill</b> <b>336-466-1230</b>	<b>Marcia Faw</b> <b>336-667-6181</b>	<b>Rhonda Waters</b> <b>828-320-6260</b>
<b>New Covenant - Lenoir</b> Wesley Memorial - States Bethany - West Jefferson New Salem - Statesville	<b>Boone</b> Crossfire-NorthWilkesboro Sutherland - Creston *Elk Park *Pine Grove - Spruce Pine	<b>Central - Mooresville</b> *First Elkin  *White Rock Thurmond	<b>New Beginnings</b> *Philadelphia-Stony Point • Bethel - Statesville *Elmwood - Statesville *Chapel Hill - Statesville
<b>Annette Echard</b> <b>828-754-5526</b>	<b>Linda Greer</b> <b>828-244-2251</b>	<b>Martha Phillips</b> <b>828-467-3167 M</b>	
*Baton - Granite Falls  *Littlejohn - Lenoir  Newland	Broad Street (Statesville)  *First Troutman *Scotts Chapel-Statesville Wesley Chape -Troutman Mosaic - Statesville	<b>Williamsons Chapel-Mooresville</b>	

**Units in Bold Font are active units.**

\* Indicates churches are in same charge.



**2026 APPALACHIAN DISTRICT OFFICERS**

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>	<b>PHONE #</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>
<b>PRESIDENT</b>	Jan Taylor	Wilkesboro	336-468-0313	j.kay.tay@gmail.com
<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	Jean Stetler	Wilkesboro	828-264-6629 H 828 964-1396 M	Jstetler52@gmail.com
<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	
<b>TREASURER</b>	Nancy Reigel	Boone	828-268-0637	nancy@reigelridge.com
<b>SPIRITUAL GROWTH COORDINATOR</b>	Sherry Summerlin	Hudson	828-728-4936 H	sherrysummer@charter.net
<b>MISSION EDUCATION &amp; INTERPRETATION COORD.</b>	Terri Williams	New Beginnings	336-426-2250	simplyme3075@yahoo.com
<b>MEMBERSHIP NURTURE &amp; OUTREACH COORD.</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	
<b>SOCIAL ACTION COORD.</b>	Elizabeth Conrad	Wilkesboro	704-223-7877	elizconrad82@gmail.com
<b>COMMUNICATION COORD.</b>	Traci Snyder	First Taylorsville	828-308-3452	tsnyder@caldwellschools.com
<b>SEC. PROG RESOURCES</b>	Margaret Cooper	Wilkesboro	336-292-6971 M	margaretwcooper@icloud.com
<b>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE</b>				
<b>CHAIRWOMAN</b>	<b>TBD</b>			
<b>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE Class of 2026</b>	Brenda Kimberlin	Littlejohn	828-728-0371	bjkimberlin22@gmail.com
<b>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE Class of 2027</b>	Donna Hill	Wilkesboro	336-466-1230	donnaparkshill@gmail.com
<b>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE Class of 2028</b>	Rhonda Waters	South River Hidd/StPt Parish	828-320-6260	rwaters5748@gmail.com
<b>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE Class of 2028</b>	Marcia Faw	Millers Creek	336-667-6181	fawmarcia@gmail.com
<b>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE Class of 2028</b>	Annette Echerd	New Covenant	828-754-5526	awechard@gmail.com
<b>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE Class of 2028</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	
<b>HISTORIAN</b>	Terri Clark	Hudson	828-612-2637	rockyknobnana@gmail.com
<b>PARLIAMENTARIAN</b>	Sherry Summerlin	Hudson	828-728-4936 H	sherrysummer@charter.net
<b>LEGACY FUND ENERGIZER &amp; WEBSITE MANAGER</b>	Nancy Reigel	Boone	828-268-0637	nancy@reigelridge.com



## 2026 Calendar of District Events



**Please mark your calendars and avoid scheduling other events on these dates.**

**Saturday, August 15 - Annual Celebration – Union Grove UMC,  
Speaker – Rev. Mary John Dye, Retired**

**Saturday, November 7 - Membership and Leadership  
Development Day (MLDD) Site – TBD Speaker - TBD**

## 2026 Calendar of Conference Events

**May 14 -17 - UWFaith Assembly 2026, Indianapolis, IN All UWFaith Members**

**June 11-13 - Spiritual Growth Retreat, Lake Junaluska All UWFaith Members**

**June 18 – 21 - WNCC UMC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska**

**Aug. 21-22 - Mission u, Catholic Conference Center, All UWFaith Members**

**Sept. 12 - Annual Celebration, (location TBD) All UWFaith Members**

**Oct. 17 - Leadership Development Day, LDD All District Officers (Virtual & Location TBD)**

**Dates TBD - Ubuntu Days of Service (various locations) All UWFaith Members**

# MISSION STUDY



# Prayer Breakfast

Historian Terri Clark



