

*The Voice of the
Harpeth River District UWF
Newsletter*



“Carrying Our Faith Forward”

Happy New Year !

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From the President

Dear Sisters in Christ,

I hope that you and your families had a wonderful Christmas season and wish you the best for 2025. I am looking forward to this year and all of our events. We have made some changes to events in order to increase attendance and decrease the number of travel days.

Our district saw two women step up at last year's Annual Meeting to volunteer for Vice President and Education & Interpretation Coordinator. Thank you to Conni Shabram-Beach from Franklin FUMC who will serve as the Vice President and Beverly Duke from Lawrenceburg FUMC who will serve as E&I Coordinator. Both ladies will be a magnificent addition to the Leadership Team.

Conni grew up in the United Methodist Church; her mother is currently a pastor in the Great Plains Conference. Conni was raised in the Cleveland, Ohio area and attended Ohio Northern University, a Methodist college in Northwest Ohio. After a move to Nebraska, she became active in UMW. She was the local Circle President; while attending a District fall meeting, she was nominated as the VP. During the first year the president passed away, and she became the District President. While serving as president of the Great West District, she attended Mission u as well as the UMW Leadership Development in Phoenix, AZ, where she met UMW ladies from across the United States. She then moved to Fairbanks, Alaska where she was very active in her local church. In July 2023 she moved to Middle Tennessee and found a home at Franklin First UMC. She added, "I am excited to be active in my local church, circle and now district!"

Many of you know Beverly, who has been a member of Lawrenceburg First United Methodist Church since 1969. She has served in several positions in her church and in the United Methodist Women/United Women in Faith. She was president of the Pulaski District UMW for several years and Tennessee Conference Mission Coordinator of Education and Interpretation, as well as serving as Program Resource Coordinator. She told me, "My heart is missions, and Education and Interpretation Coordinator is where I can serve best."

The office of Membership, Nurture and Outreach remains unfilled; should any of your Unit members have an interest, please have them contact me. We are all sisters in Christ and officers have the support of a fabulous team on the district and conference level. The positions do not entail a lot of "work"; but the officer will need to attend two Leadership Team meetings throughout the year.

The Faith Lift will now be "Woven in Faith", which will combine elements of the Faith Lift with the Campaign for Children and Partners in Mission (which are held on alternate years). This year's Woven in Faith will be held on March 22nd at Brentwood UMC. We are delighted to be visiting Brentwood UMC as they offer magnificent hospitality as evident by the Bishop's Reception held last September. Thank you to Stacey Hagewood and Marina Rawls for organizing this program.

Our District Officer training will be held on February 1st via Zoom. It is optional and more details will be forthcoming.

The District Unit President's Roundtable will remain in June at Thompson's Station UMC; the District Mission Study will remain in August at Columbia FUMC; and the District Annual Meeting will remain in September at Nolensville UMC. I greatly appreciate these host Units for their willingness to welcome us.

The annual Mission u event at Scarritt-Bennett in Nashville has been moved to June 12-14, which hopefully will offer weather that is not so hot. Thank you to Mission u Dean Peggy Owen for once again organizing the event which I know takes many months of work. I will be handling the crafts again and have already started thinking of ideas! If you have never attended Mission u, it is a must on your bucket list!

Our budget remains the same for 2025; as a District we continue to meet our Pledge to Mission. You are a most generous group of women – thank you! *John 3:16-18: Our generosity should model the selflessness of Jesus, who gave his life for us.*

Many thanks for all that each and every one of you do to support the mission and vision of United Women in Faith.

"Our work is not just about service, it's about worship, it's about standing up, stepping up making our voices heard." Harriett Jane Olson, Chief Executive Report, October 2013

Blessings,
Beth
bethstockwell7534@gmail.com

From the Vice President

Hi everyone! I'm Conni Shabram-Beach, your Harpeth River UWF Vice President.

I was raised in the Cleveland area of Ohio and attended Ohio Northern University, a Methodist college in Northwest Ohio. I grew up in the United Methodist Church and have been very active in the churches where I have lived. As a side note, my mom is a pastor currently in the Great Plains Conference.

In 2011, we moved to Sidney, Nebraska. While at Sidney First UMC, I served as the local circle president and the District Vice President. During the first year, the president passed away and I became the District President. While president of the Great West District, I was able to attend Mission U as well as the UMW Leadership Development in Phoenix, AZ, where I met UMW ladies from across the United States!

After Nebraska, I moved to Fairbanks, Alaska. The 8 years I lived in Alaska were amazing! If you are ever planning a visit, please let me know and I can help you see everything local!! At Fairbanks First UMC, I played my cello and sang in our Praise Band; helped with Sunday School and VBS; and was active in our UWF circle.

I moved to Middle Tennessee in July 2023 to be closer to my sister, brother-in-law and niece. I found my new church home at Franklin First UMC. It took me a little while to find the Sisters Circle and get back into UMF; but I am excited to be active in the church, the Sisters Circle and now the district!

Conni Shabram-Beach

ohiotonebraskagirl@gmail.com

From the Treasurer

I hope you all had a great Christmas! As we go into this new year, I want to thank each of you for your support and love for the missions of the United Women in Faith. I am excited to say that the Harpeth River District surpassed our 2024 Pledge for Missions to the Tennessee Western Kentucky Conference. There are many good works being done with your help!

Thank you!

Have a very blessed new year!

Debbie Miller

Harpeth River District Treasurer

From the Spiritual Growth Coordinator

“New every morning is your love, great God of light, and all day long you are working for good in the world. Stir up in us desire to serve you, to live peacefully with our neighbors, and to devote each day to your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen” (UM hymnal p. 877)

I am looking forward to the New Year and our first event, Woven in Faith, hosted by Brentwood UWF, on March 22, at 9am with our program featuring our new District Superintendent Brack, along with a guest speaker from Redbird Mission in Ky.

My advent study this year has been Three Wise Women by Dandi Daley Mackall. It's not on our reading program, but should be. Mary, Elizabeth, and Anna give their perspective during this Holy season with pondering questions after each devotion. I must admit this year Christmas has been a challenge with all my activities, coming back to family and the importance of celebrating each other. I wish each of you the experience of that clarity moving forward into this New Year.

“Creator God, we give you thanks. We thank you for the community that we have with one another. We thank you for the opportunity and the space to gather. We give thanks for all that you have provided for us and for all that we have shared with one another. We pray that our gifts and offerings to one another would be given and received with your abundant love. May what we share with one another, be it a meal, our time, our gifts, or simply our presence, be honoring and loving gifts to you as well. Teach us to better love ourselves. And may our acts of kindness and love be received as our acts of worship to you, our loving God. Amen” (Food, Faith and Fellowship, Program Resource book, World Thank offering closing prayer, published in the Nov. Dec. *response* magazine)

Marina Rawls
Spiritual Growth Coordinator
Harpeth River District

From the Social Action Coordinator

On Saturday, March 22, the UWF of the Harpeth River District will have Woven in Faith at Brentwood United Methodist. This event will combine the Faith Lift and Campaign for Children events. The special speakers will be our District Superintendent, Rev. B.J. Brack, and the Executive Director of Red Bird Mission, Kari Collins. More details are coming soon, so please save the date and plan to donate to a love offering we'll take for Red Bird.

More about Red Bird Mission: Based in Beverly, Kentucky, Red Bird Mission is committed to building healthy, sustainable communities in the mountains of Southeastern Kentucky. The need remains critical in this isolated, rural distressed area. Chronic poverty, lack of jobs, poor housing, and rugged mountainous terrain provide obstacles to a fuller life for residents of this area. Red Bird Mission and Clinic strives to meet these needs through five program areas: education, health, housing improvement, outreach, and economic opportunity. More here: <https://www.redbirdky.org/>

Stacey Hagewood
shagewood@gmail.com

From the Program Resources Secretary

Happy New Year United Women of Faith!

A new year brings a new title to Program Resources – we are now called Resource Coordinators.

As a conference, we read 1200 books this past year and I have been challenged to get all of the units to help get us to 2000 books this year. If each member read at least 5 books for 2025, it would be no problem for our conference to reach 2000.

You can receive Reading Program reporting credits by:

- Listening to the Faith Talks podcast: 1 credit in Spiritual Growth for 2+ episodes
- Listening to the Voices from the Field podcast: 1 credit in Education for Mission for 2+ episodes
- Reading response magazine: 1 credit in Nurturing for Community for reading one year (6 issues)
- Being part of a Mission u study, including Mission u 2024 (Living the Kin-dom) and Mission u 2025 (Hope as a Resurrection People):
 - 1 credit in Spiritual Growth for reading a Mission u study on your own
 - 2 credits in Spiritual Growth for joining a Mission u study together with others, as a leader or participant

- Movies and television programs based on current Reading Program books are also eligible for credit. In determining the category for credit, identify the category of the original book and apply credit for the film to the same category.

If you do this, you will have to read only two books – one in Leadership Development and one in Social Action; and you have 12 months to read the books!

I would also encourage everyone to attend Mission u. It is a fun and enlightening experience. I love meeting people from all the districts.

Keep Reading!

Bobbi Toombs

Crazy Book Lady/ Resource Coordinator

bobbitoombs@att.net

From the Communication Coordinator

Happy New Year!

I just wanted to say "Hello!"

From a communication point of view, we have a lot going on.

First, the Newsletters. They are published in January, March, June, and August. They are not only for the officers to write articles. They are for everyone! I encourage you to submit articles for the "Unit News" section. Pictures are a bonus and add a lot to your article. If you would like to submit something, please send it to me by the 15th of the prior month.

Second, the website. I am the web master for the Harpeth River District website. I mention this because the Reading Program is the highlight of the website. If you read a book that you believe everyone should read, let me know. For example, *The Four Winds* or *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*. We will write something about the book and put it on the website.

Also, speaking of the Reading Program, look on the navigation bar of the website and you will see "BookReport". This is where you can find suggested books to read and what they are about. They are arranged by year and category.

Another feature of the website regarding the Reading Program involves the book lists. Under "Books", you will find:

Alphabetical List – This is an alphabetical list of all the books listed by title. With each book title, the year and category are included. This list is handy if you have read a book and forgot the year and category it is in.

Bonus Books – Bonus books count for 2 credits. This list is categorized by category then the year.

Categories:

Education for Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Social Action, and Spiritual Growth

In each category, you will find books listed by year. Under the year, the books are listed alphabetically with the name of the book, the author and a synopsis.

One more thing, on the navigation bar is "News". This is where you will find all the forms you will need for Events and Reports. For example, Annual Meeting Registration, scholarships, Mission Study Participation, Memorial Report, etc.

Boo! That was A LOT of communicating!! Questions? Just email me: pdj1169a@gmail.com

Janet Pierce

Harpeth River Communication Coordinator

From the Committee on Nominations Chairperson

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe we're already in 2025. I'm excited to see what our organization will accomplish this year. I believe that we should resolve to become more active in the United Women of Faith. The first step would be to increase attendance at district and local events and meetings. Secondly, the more women we get on board for volunteer opportunities, the more things we can get done. I propose that we also use this new year to publicize our organization and make it a household name. We need to step up our game, make some noise, and show that we are in this together, making the world a better place.

Judy Davis
jldavis71391@att.net



Prayer Requests

We are going to start the year fresh.

All prayer requests are important.

Let your sisters lift you in prayer when you are in need.

Please email your first name or someone you know to: pdj1169@gmail.com

We do not need last names, the reason why the person needs prayer or where they are from.

Just the first name.



District Annual Meeting Report

On September 21, Franklin First UMC hosted the Harpeth River District Annual Meeting and luncheon. Rev. Dr. Bryan Brooks opened with a warm welcome and prayer. Unit awards were presented and District Treasurer, Debbie Miller, shared that we had met 89% of our pledge to mission...so hopefully it's safe to assume we made 100% or more by year's end. Our district pledge to mission for 2025 is \$16,000. We welcomed our new Vice-President, Conni Shabram-Beach of Franklin First UMC and our new E & I Coordinator, Beverly Duke of First UMC Lawrenceburg!

We enjoyed a wonderful presentation by Courtney Aldrich Lawson, the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference Connect & Discover/Send Ministry Associate. Courtney was a founder of Project Transformation Tennessee. She led that organization for ten years, engaging more than 400 college-age young adults in summer and year-round internships. More about her at this link: <https://twkumc.org/news/lawson-hired-as-ministry-associate-connect-discover-send/>

Rev. Sarah Carty led communion; we enjoyed a wonderful lunch together, provided by the catering group at Franklin First UMC.



OUR LOCAL PURPOSE

To 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.



Trivia

Genesis 1

- 1 – There were 2 things that existed before God began the creation. What were they?
- 2 – What was the first creation?
- 3 – What was created on Day 3?
- 4 – On the 6th day, God created 2 things. What were they?
- 5 – What was created to rule over day and night?
- 6 – What is considered the first appearance of life on earth?
- 7 – What separated the “waters from the waters”?
- 8 – Was the creation “light” the sun?

9 – On Day 3, God saw something else “that was good” he created, aside from the answer for 3, what was it?

10 – What was written after each creation?



Have you ever heard:

If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans for tomorrow?

Well, I came across a verse when the Lord laughs:

“... but the LORD laughs at the wicked,
for he sees that their day is coming.” Psalm 37:13 (NRSV)



Check these out!

[UWF Website](#)

[TWK Conference Website](#)

[Harpeth River District Website](#)

Two priorities of Focus for 2025:

[Ending Mass Incarceration/Criminalization of Communities of Color, with a focus on Interrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline](#)

[Climate Justice, with a focus on Just Energy for All](#)

[Facebook](#)

[UWF Faith Talks](#)

[UWF Podcasts & Webinars](#)

Book Report

Suggested Reading for 2020

Education for Mission

When Others Shuddered: Eight Women Who Refused to Give Up - Jamie Janosz

Learn about eight women (Fanny Crosby, Mary McLeod Bethune, Nettie McCormick, Sarah Dunn Clarke, Emma Dryer, Virginia Asher, Evangeline Booth, and Amanda Berry Smith) who were called to serve God and change the world. Their stories inspire us to follow God's calling in our own lives and teach us that each individual person can make a difference.

Leadership Development

Which Way Lord? - Rob Fuquay

Through many detours, adversity, and time spent thinking about his life, Paul completely reoriented his understanding of faith and God's purpose for his life. God placed Paul in a community that shared God's love with him, and Paul underwent several years of training in preparation for his ministry.

Discover how to discern and follow God's leading, explore ways God can use you and your life experience, respond to God's signals, endure hardships and doubts, and persevere with hope and faith. Rediscover the truths that you are wonderfully made, created for purpose, and equipped to live a life of significance. Join us in traveling together to find your purpose.

Nurturing for Community

Tilly and the Crazy Eights - Monique Gray Smith

Tilly impulsively agrees to drive eight elders on their ultimate bucket-list road trip. This adventure with "the Crazy Eights" will transform them all in ways they could not predict. The Crazy Eights each choose a stop on the way to their ultimate destination, the Gathering of Nations Pow Wow in Albuquerque. The trip proves to be powerful medicine as they laugh, heal, argue, and dream along the way.

Social Action

What Comes with the Dust - Gharbi M. Mustafa

This slim, profound novel illuminates the plight of those living under the Islamic State as well as the spirit of the Yazidi people--similar to how *The Kite Runner* and *The Swallows of Kabul* shed light on the Taliban regime. It tells the story of Yazidi women Nazo and Soz as they fight to survive.

Spiritual Growth

40 Days with Wesley - Rueben P. Job

This engaging daily devotional weaves quotes and excerpts from John Wesley, the father of Methodism, with inspirational readings on faith and prayer from Rueben P. Job, well-known leader in spiritual formation. Each selection offers a simple daily pattern of reflection with a prayer, Scripture, and short readings that make this daily devotional an easy read. You'll also find that this book makes a wonderful gift or award for anyone who needs reassurance and inspiration.

Keep going ... one more book suggested....

BONUS: 2025 Education for Mission*The Bookwoman's Daughter: A Novel* - Kim Michelle Richardson

Bestselling historical fiction author Kim Michele Richardson is back with the perfect book club read following Honey Lovett, the daughter of the beloved Troublesome book woman, who must fight for her own independence with the help of the women who guide her and the books that set her free.

In the ruggedness of the beautiful Kentucky mountains, Honey Lovett has always known that the old ways can make a hard life harder. As the daughter of the famed blue-skinned, Troublesome Creek packhorse librarian, Honey and her family have been hiding from the law all her life. But when her mother and father are imprisoned, Honey realizes she must fight to stay free, or risk being sent away for good.

Picking up her mother's old packhorse library route, Honey begins to deliver books to the remote hollers of Appalachia. Honey is looking to prove that she doesn't need anyone telling her how to survive. But the route can be treacherous, and some folks aren't as keen to let a woman pave her own way.

If Honey wants to bring the freedom books provide to the families who need it most, she's going to have to fight for her place, and along the way, learn that the extraordinary women who run the hills and hollers can make all the difference in the world.

*~ ~ Unit News ~ ~**Christ ~ ~*

The United Women in Faith at Christ UMC Franklin studied, “The Kin-dom is Among You” together in October, which was led by Christ UMC’s Lead Pastor, Rev. Dr. Chris Haynes. The study emphasized how to draw closer to God and to one another.



Then on November 24th, Christ UMC’s UWF hosted a bake sale to benefit Red Bird Mission in Beverly, KY. It was an all-church activity. With the combined help of the wonderful bakers and buyers, the church raised nearly \$2,000 for Red Bird!

In December, the United Women in Faith at Christ UMC hosted their annual Cookies and Cocoa event. Christ UMC’s Children’s Ministry Director and Duke Divinity student, Aimee Cox, shared some self-care tips and ways to manage stress during the holidays and beyond.

Self-Care tips include:

- * Say NO
- * Prioritize What Matters
- * Nurture Your Spirit
- * Take Care of Your Body
- * Pursue Creativity
- * Digital Awareness
- * Set Goals
- * Practice Gratitude & Loving Your Neighbor

Ways to Manage Stress include:

- * The 5-4-3-2-1 Method
- * Practice Gratitude
- * Mini Retreats
- * Breath Prayers (Pray-Dough)
- * Quiet Time Station

We’ll be making our program plans for 2025 soon. Stay tuned!

Submitted by Stacey Hagewood

Columbia First ~ ~

Social chairperson Sandy Steinkamp and her committee Kate Howard worked with the Magnolia Nursing Home in Columbia worked with their Social Director Diane Polk collected 30 plus flannel shirts and gowns for patients that would not have a gift under their Christmas tree at their party .

Submitted by Sandy Steinkamp



Do you have a favorite verse, a quote, or a footnote that speaks to you?

Send it to me.

pdj1169@gmail.com

I'll randomly select 1 or 2 to share in a newsletter and on Facebook.

District Officers

President	Beth Stockwell	bethstockwell7534@gmail.com	All Access Member
Vice President	Conni Shabram-Beach	ohiotonebraskagirl@gmail.com	Franklin First
Secretary	Marilyn Smith	momamia1959@gmail.com	St. Andrew Community
Treasurer	Debbie Miller	debbie.miller718@gmail.com	Franklin First UMC
E & I Coordinator	Beverly Duke	bebetennessee43@outlook.com	First UMC Lawrenceburg
MNO Coordinator	Vacant		
Social Action Coor.	Stacey Hagewood	shagewood@gmail.com	Christ UMC
Spiritual Growth Coor.	Marina Rawls	anient@att.net	Franklin First UMC
Program Resources	Bobbi Toombs	bobbitoombs@att.net	Nolensville First UMC
Communication Coor.	Janet Pierce	pdj1169@gmail.com	Centerville UMC
Nominations Chair	Judy Davis	jldavis71391@att.net	Thompson’s Station UMC
Nominations Committee:			
	Peggy Owen	owenpeggy@gmail.com	Centerville UMC
	Frances Warpool	bwarpool@bellsouth.net	Bethesda UMC

Won’t you join us? If you would like information about what the MNO Coordinator or Nominations Committee person does, please contact Judy Davis @ jldavis71391@att.net



Join the Micah 6:8 pledge as we move into 2025 and the years to come.

“... and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Calendar

District Events in Red

Jan. 1 (Wed.)		New Year's Day	
Jan. 3 (Fri.)		Festival of Sleep Day	
Jan. 10 (Fri.)		Houseplant Appreciation Day	
Jan. 17 (Fri.)		Ditch New Year's Resolution Day	
Jan. 24 (Fri.)		Compliment Day	
Jan. 27 (Mon.)		Chocolate Cake Day	
Feb. 1 (Sat.)	10 am	District Training for Local Officers ~ As Needed	Zoom
Feb. 2 (Sun.)		Groundhog Day	
Feb. 7 (Fri.)		Send Card to a Friend Day	
Feb. 14 (Fri.)		St. Valentine Day	
Feb. 17 (Mon.)		President's Day	
Feb. 17 (Mon.)		Randon Act of Kindness Day	
Mar. 5 (Wed.)		Ash Wednesday - Lent Begins	
Mar. 8 (Sat.)		International Women's Day	
Mar. 17 (Mon.)		St. Patrick's Day	
Mar. 20 (Thurs.)		Spring Equinox	
Mar. 22 (Sat.)	9 am	Woven in Faith	Brentwood UMC
		(This event combines the Faith Lift with Campaign for Children)	
		District Leadership Team Meeting to follow	
Mar. 22 (Sat.)	10 am	Charter for Racial Justice Event	TBD
		Conference Executive Team Meeting	
May 2 (Fri.)		TEK Conference Mission u Scholarship Deadline	
Jun. 4-6m (Wed.-Thurs.)		Annual Conference	Collierville UMC
Jun. 12-14 (Thurs.-Sat.)		Mission u	Scarritt Bennett, Nashville
Jun. 21 (Sat.)	9 am	President's Roundtable	Thompson's Station UMC
Aug. 8 (Fri.)		5 Star Giving Award Deadline	
Aug. 8 (Fri.)		District Mission Study Registration Deadline	
Aug. 15 (Fri.)		Memorial Report Deadline	
Aug. 15 (Fri.)		Reading Program Report Deadline	
Aug. 15 (Fri.)		TWK Conference Fall Retreat Scholarship Deadline	
Aug. 23 (Sat.)	9 am	District Mission Study	Columbia First UMC
		District Leadership Team Meeting to follow	
Aug. 29 (Fri.)		Unit Mission Study Participation Report Deadline	
Sept. 5 (Fri.)		Annual Meeting Registration Form Deadline	
Sept. 5-7 (Fri.-Sun.)		Women's Fall Retreat	Lakeshore
Sept. 20 (Sat.)	8:30 am	DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING	Nolensville First UMC
	9 am	Registration	
		Meeting Begins	
Sept. 27 (Sat.)	10 am	Conference Annual Meeting	Gordon Memorial UMC
Nov. 7 (Fri.)		Local Unit Officers Reporting Form Deadline	