



A MESSAGE FROM MARGARET

Someone just posted on Facebook that Spring is less than 30 days away and a comment on that was how fast this winter has gone. I do feel we are getting a late start on our United Women in Faith this year and January has gotten away from us but the weather in January has been very unpredictable, and it seems like we have had church canceled two different Sundays and our UWF meetings have had to be postponed and canceled for the safety of our members.

My fall and winter have seemed to pass rather quickly but also really slowed me down with the death of my daughter in September and the reverse shoulder replacement on December 13 that didn't go as planned and had to be changed in the middle of the surgery with rehab being moved from one week following surgery to seven weeks before I could even start therapy. There are many of my friends and many others that have lost loved ones, are grieving, have had tests come back with not so good results, diagnosis of cancer, sickness, health issues, loss of jobs, and many other things in their lives, loss of homes due to hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, fire, and so much more.

Our choir sang the Christmas Cantata, "Peace Has Come" and one of the songs was called "Peace in the Midst of the Storm" which really spoke to me and then reading the scripture John 16:33 – "I have told you these things, so that you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Jesus hasn't forsaken us. He is always with us through our trials and tribulations, and we must hang on and live into that hope and faith in Christ.

Our program book for this year is "Carrying Our Faith Forward" and I took the workshop on Mission for 2025 at Leadership Development Days and found out that the adult book for the study this year is "Practicing Hope" and scripture is Luke 24:13-24, and I was asked to write about hope in advance and what it means to me.



Hope is a positive spiritual practice with the power to pull us through difficult times. It is usually described with light-- a ray, a beam, a glimmer of hope; the break in the clouds; the light at the end of the dark tunnel. It is often discovered in unexpected places.

Hope can be learned with practice. Certain attitudes support it. One is patience, an ability to tolerate delays, a willingness to let events unfold in their own time. The other is courage, an attitude of confidence even when facing the unknown. Third is persistence, the determination to keep going no matter what happens. We have hope when we can say, all will be well, and we mean it. Hope is the basic ingredient of optimism, a tendency to dwell on the best possibilities. It is a frequent companion of another spiritual practice — enthusiasm which is also energizing.

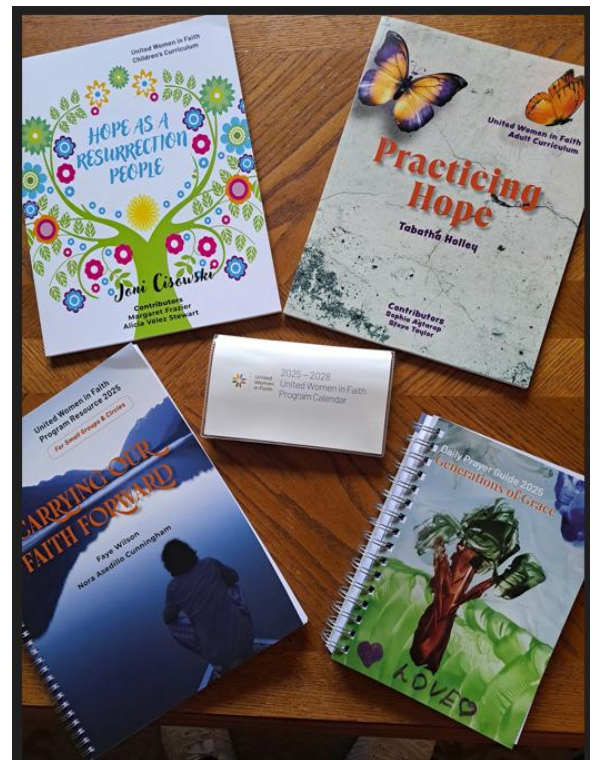
But a more common expression is "Hope for the best but expect the worst." The more likely outcome, it implies, is the worst. When we are without hope, we easily fall victim to such negativism. When the light of hope is absent, we are overcome by gloom and doom, despair and defeatism. In terms of personal style, without hope, we find it difficult to be patient and are easily frustrated. We may lack the courage to continue struggling against adversity. We are faint-hearted and quickly discouraged. We really do expect the worst. Christian hope is and should be radical hope. Christian hope is a hope that does not rest on humankind...but on God and God alone. This hope rests on the living God who is known by His loving deeds...

The God who raised Christ from the dead and gave Him glory, so that our faith and hope can be in Him. Christ is the only One who offers us this hope which is incorruptible and undefiled and will never fade away!

We will carry our faith forward and practice hope moving forward this year.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Margaret Fisher, Red River District President
mfisher0844@gmail.com



Plan to Attend Spiritual Day Apart on Mar 29



United Women in Faith **Spiritual Day Apart**

"Carrying Our Faith Forward"

2 Timothy 1:5

Join us for a morning of reflection and renewal with speaker Holly Neal. This will be an opportunity to pause, reflect, and deepen your connection with God and with other United Women in Faith.

Date: March 29, 2025

Location: Mt. Carmel UMC

5050 Pickering Road

Clarksville, TN 37043

Time: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Light Snacks Provided



Ashland City Hosted Reverend Becca Stevens

Ashland City United Methodist Church was honored to host A CONVERSATION WITH BECCA on Friday, November 1, 2024. The Reverend Becca Stevens is an author, speaker, Episcopal priest, social entrepreneur, founder and president of Thistle Farms in Nashville, Tennessee. She is notable for founding Magdalene in 1997, now called Thistle Farms, to heal, empower, and employ female survivors of human trafficking, prostitution, and addiction.

Becca and friends came to share her work, her story and her hope for women with the Ashland City UMC folks and guests. We were inspired and surrounded by a time of loving fellowship as we shared food and conversation.



From left to right Martha Lynn Newton, Rev. Becca Stevens, ACUMC pastor Rev Allison Gilliam, Lucille Downs



Members of Ashland City United Methodist Women gather for A CONVERSATION WITH BECCA

Allison Gilliam, Ashland City UMW



Let's Fight Hunger Together

Empty Bowls Clarksville is a community-driven initiative dedicated to raising awareness about hunger and supporting local nonprofits that serve individuals and families facing food insecurity. Through fellowship, art, and the generosity of our community, we bring people together to enjoy a simple meal of soup and bread served in handcrafted bowls, symbolizing the empty bowls of those in need. All proceeds from our events go directly to local organizations working to provide food and hope to those who need it most. Together, we fill bowls and hearts across Clarksville.



Hilldale United Women in Faith held a “paint a bowl” at the church January 25 in the church fellowship hall and paid for the bowls and the firing for people today to come paint. They ended up having more people than bowls. Hilldale will be serving their meal on February 22 from 11:00 am until 1:00pm and you can purchase your tickets online. Come support our churches and help feed the hungry.

The Empty Bowls of Clarksville is sponsored by Urban Ministries, Loaves and Fishes, Manna Café and others. There are twelve different churches and organizations holding the meals at \$15 each starting on February 9, 2025 @ 11:00am through February 23, 2025 @ 7:00pm CST. Tickets are available online under Empty Bowls Clarksville and at whichever church and at the time you choose.

Judy Cloud, President Hilldale UWF



St. Bethlehem Christmas Brunch

The St. Bethlehem UWF gathered on December 7 for a Christmas Brunch. Everyone brought soup, candies, cookies, crackers, fruit, warm fuzzy socks, and a lap blanket. We filled goody bags for our 90 plus members, homebound, and those in rehab and nursing facilities. Later these goody bags were delivered by teams. Christmas music was enjoyed by all.

Margaret Fisher, Red River District President



Call for Volunteer Evaluators for 2025 Reading Program

There is an exciting volunteer opportunity with United Women in Faith's Reading Program.

Did you ever wonder what goes into shaping the [United Women in Faith Reading Program](#) each year? At the heart of the Reading Program is the work of numerous volunteer evaluators who read and review a list of assigned books, offering careful and candid feedback regarding the books' overall quality and alignment with our mission. In 2025, we will be evaluating potential books for the 2027 Reading Program, again relying on the extraordinary work of a great team of volunteer evaluators.

2025
Reading Program
Programa De Lectura
독서 프로그램



United
Women
in Faith

If you are interested in serving as a volunteer evaluator for the Reading Program this year, please take 10 minutes to complete the [2025 interest form](#). Both new and returning volunteers should use this form.

UWF will consider interest forms on a rolling basis throughout the year, but **completion by February 15th is preferred.**

Emily Jones, Executive for Racial Justice
United Women in Faith



February 2025

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Message for United Women in Faith Readers

Happy New Year United Women of Faith!

The 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 would read at least 5 books for 2025 it would be no problem to reach 2000.

You can also receive Reading Program reporting credit for:

- 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 would only have to read two actual books – one in Leadership Development and one in Social Action. And you have 12 months to read the books.

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

Bobbi Toombs, Tennessee Western Kentucky Conference Resource Coordinator

bobbitoombs@att.net

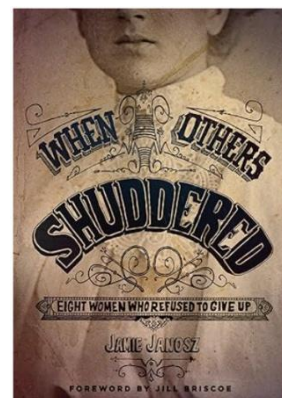


Book Report January 2025

Suggested Reading from 2020

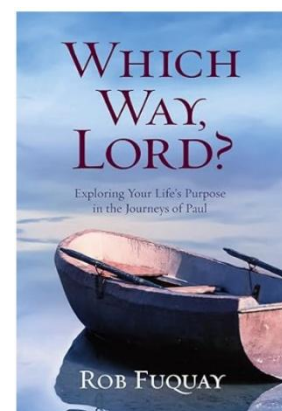
Education for Mission

When Others Shuddered: Eight Women Who Refused to Give Up by 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.



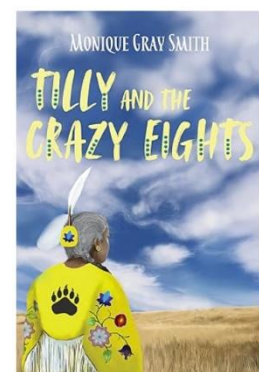
Leadership Development

Which Way Lord? by 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.



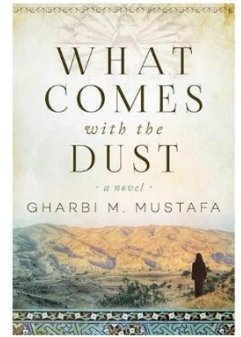
Nurturing for Community

Tilly and the Crazy Eights by 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.



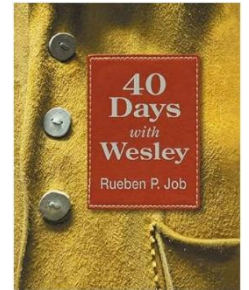
Social Action

What Comes with the Dust by 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.



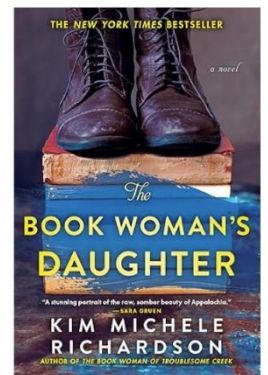
Spiritual Growth

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.



BONUS: 2025 Education for Mission

The Bookwoman's Daughter: A Novel by 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.



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Red River District Treasurer's Report

Thank you to all UWF units for pledges remitted last year in such a timely manner!

As a district we pledged \$15,000 for the year, and we exceeded our pledge by sending \$19,575.16 to the Tennessee Western Kentucky (TWK) Conference as follows:

- 4th qtr -- \$6721.16
- 3rd qtr -- \$5286.00
- 2nd qtr -- \$4447.00
- 1st qtr -- \$3121.00.

We did not change our pledge for 2025; it remains at \$15,000.

Please note that first quarter pledges are due by March 1, NOT April 1 as printed in the directory/handbook. If you have any questions about your pledges or treasurer's responsibilities, please do not hesitate to text, email, or call me and I will find the answer if possible. Our conference treasurer, Geralyn Seals, is always a wonderful resource for my questions.

Valerie Lavery, Red River District Treasurer
vwlavery@hotmail.com



Red River District Calendar of Events 2025

United Women in Faith Red River District Calendar of Events 2025

Date	Event	Location
22-Feb	District Executive Meeting	TBD
Mar 21-23	Beersheba Women's Retreat	Beersheba Springs
22-Mar	Conference Charter for Racial Justice	TBD
29-Mar	District Spiritual Day Apart	Mount Carmel UMC
1-Apr	Pledge Remittance Due to District Treasurer	
17-May	District Mission U Study (East)	TBD
1-Jun	Pledge Remittance Due to District Treasurer	
Jun 4-6	TWK Annual Conference	Collierville
Jun 12-14	TWK Conference Mission U	Scarritt Bennett
12-Jul	District Mission U Study (West)	Hustburg-Ebenezer
19-Jul	District Intergenerational Meeting and/or Social Action Event	TBD
13-Aug	District Reports Due to Conference Officers	
1-Sep	Pledge Remittance Due to District Treasurer	
Sep 5-7	United Women of Faith Women's Fall Retreat	Lakeshore
27-Sep	Conference Annual Meeting	TBD
18-Oct	Red River District Annual Meeting	Belle Meade UMC / Bellevue UMC
Nov	Officer Training will be conducted via Zoom with each District	
1-Dec	Pledge Remittance Due to District Treasurer	

TBD - This means place to be determined. If your Church can host, please advise which date you would be willing to host so we can have, before the newsletters go out, directions to the Church.

