



The Clarion Call

Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference

United Women in Faith Newsletter

February 2026

~~A Word from the President~~

Happy New Year!

It's time to look back at 2025 and evaluate what we did well, what we want to continue, and what might be paused or laid aside. Now is the time to move forward—to try something new, to reach out to someone, and to invite them into our circle of United Women in Faith.

As I stepped into the role of president one year ago, my biggest fear was this: *How am I going to write a "Letter from the President" four times each year?* That fear resurfaced recently with the reminder that articles for *The Clarion Call* were due.

But perhaps it isn't just the president's letter that stirs anxiety in me. Perhaps it's also what is happening in our world—in our country, our states, and our towns. Phrases related to fear, such as "do not be afraid" or "fear not," appear in the Bible nearly 100 times. Did Mary's fear subside when the angel said to her, "*Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God*" (Luke 1:30, NIV)?

Today, when I read Isaiah 41:10—"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God"—I choose to rest in this promise. I will try to let go of my fears, to praise God, and to trust that God is with me.

In closing, I would like to share this prayer written by Rabbi Irwin Keller in 2016:



A Prayer Before Reading the News

Elohai neshamah shenatata bi tehorah hi

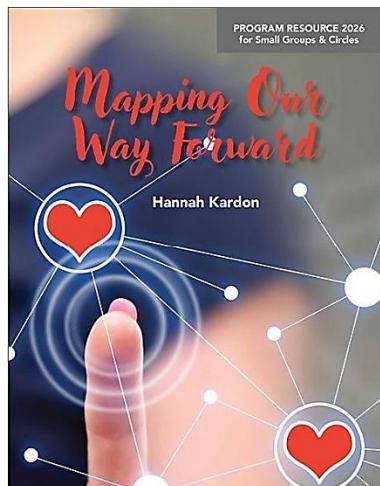
My God, the soul you have placed in me is pure and vulnerable. I am afraid that looking at today's news will be painful. Encircle me in a robe of light so that I can witness the wounds of the world without being wounded myself.

Let me learn what I need to know in order to be of my greatest use, without being overwhelmed by despair. I feel your protective light now as I open myself to the world's suffering and the world's joys. Amen.

Karen Saunders
TWK UWF President

~~A Word from the Program Coordinator/Vice-President~~

Good news, TWK United Women in Faith! Planning is already underway for our **2026 TWK UWF Annual Meeting**, and we hope you'll start getting excited and mark your calendars now.



We're planning to gather on **Saturday, September 26, 2026**, at **South Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church in Hazel, Kentucky**, which is along the most southeastern border of the Purchase District. Our theme will be "**Mapping Our Way Forward**," based on the 2026 United Women in Faith Program Resource.

This theme is all about how we move ahead together—making plans, finding our direction, and learning how to stay grounded while still being open to where God is leading us. In uncertain times, it reminds us that we don't walk alone. When we hold tightly to God and our core values, we can face whatever comes next with confidence and hope.

I'll be sharing more details in the next newsletter, but for now, please go ahead and **mark that date on your calendar!** We would love to see every district and every unit represented.

Thank you for all you do as United Women in Faith—living out your call to know God, grow together in supportive fellowship, and serve in mission. Because of your faithfulness, women, children, and youth around the world continue to find hope and new possibilities.

Penny Story
Vice President
penpenstory@gmail.com



Click on **Unstoppable** to learn more!

~~A Word from the Treasurer~~

Thank You and Welcome!

I truly love my role as Conference Treasurer! During my tenure, I've had the privilege of working with some remarkable and dedicated district treasurers. As their terms come to an end, we joyfully welcome new treasurers into the fold.

I offer a sincere thank you to our retiring treasurers — Valerie Lavery (Red River), Michelle Martin (Stones River), Beverly Mintmire (Cumberland River), Jan Nutter (Purchase), and Stephanie Terry (Caney Fork River). Your diligence, patience, and heart work in support of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference United Women in Faith have made a lasting impact. I wish you all the best as you continue serving women, children, and youth in new and meaningful ways.



As we bid farewell to our retiring treasurers, we warmly welcome our 5 new district treasurers: Jerlean Bass (Red River), Pam Nelson (Cumberland River), May Ann Peters (Stones River), Shelly Stigall (Purchase), and Chris Thayer (Caney Fork). Thank you for stepping into this important role of service. I look forward to working alongside you in the ministry we share.

Welcome aboard!

*Geralyn J. Seals
Conference Treasurer*

~~A Word from the Spiritual Growth Coordinator~~

Staying Close to the Light

TWK United Women in Faith

A new year has begun, and with it, we begin the holy work of United Women in Faith. As we step into this season together, I invite us to pause and reflect on what we have just celebrated—the birth of Christ, the Light of the world, and the season of Epiphany.

I keep thinking about a quiet but powerful moment from our Christmas Eve candlelight service—just before we sing *Silent Night*. We are always given instructions on how to light our candles. This year, the words landed differently for me.

We were told that the person with the unlit candle should **lean toward the light**—not the other way around. We move toward the light.

That simple instruction has stayed with me—lean toward the light.



It makes me wonder: *Do I stay close enough to the Light?*

I cannot be ignited if I do not draw near—or allow God to draw near to me.

As members, leaders, and discerners, we often carry light for others. As United Women in Faith, we grow as disciples and help others—especially women and children—name and affirm their gifts. But before we can reflect Christ’s light, we must stay close to it ourselves.

Jesus reminds us, "*I am the light of the world.*"

Not a borrowed light.

Not a temporary spark.

But a steady, life-giving flame.

As we begin this new year, I invite you to designate a candle or other light in your home—not just as a reminder of Christmas or Epiphany, but as a symbol of Christ's light and love. Let it remind you to draw close.

May Christ's light guide our conversations, our decisions, and our care for others.

And as the song says:

This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine.

May we let it shine in our circles, in our units, in our churches, and in our communities—shining it everywhere we go. This year, may we stay close enough to the Light that our own candles are always lit. And as we do, may we light the way for others, until before we know it, we can close our eyes and once again see candlelight flooding the sanctuary—many lights born from the One Light, the Christ Candle.

Prayer



Loving God,

Draw us close to the Light of Christ as we begin this new year and this holy work of United Women in Faith. Guide our listening, our discernment, and our care, that our candles may stay lit and your light may shine through us for others.

We offer ourselves to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

Amen.

Holly Neal

TKW Conference Spiritual Growth Coordinator

~ ~ A Word from the Social Action Coordinator ~ ~



Greetings and Happy New Year, my Dear Sisters in Christ,

The holidays are now behind us, and I hope that you all had a wonderful time with your families. As always, my family and I had another grand ole time. It's always good to fellowship with our family.

We are now planning our next Conference Social Action Event that will be held in Lexington, TN, on Saturday, April 18, 2026, at Lexington First United Methodist Church. Registration will begin at 9:30 am, and our program will begin at 10 am. We will be focusing on Human Trafficking.

Our facilitator for this event will be Mrs. Lindia Speer of Alamo, TN.

Lunch will be provided by the women at Lexington First UMC.

Please plan to attend -- bring a friend and your Bible with you!

If you are planning to attend, we will need a headcount for lunch. Please RSVP to Delores Smith at Smithumw@gmail.com or text her at 731-487-0084.

I look forward to seeing all of you there.

Grace and Peace,

Melba Mitchell
Social Action Coordinator

~~A Word from the Communication Coordinator~~

Hello Everyone and Happy New Year!!

To those of you receiving the TWK Conference UWF newsletter for the first time – Welcome! I'm Janet Pierce, the TWK Conference Communications Coordinator. I am a member of the Centerville UMC in Centerville, which is in the Harpeth River District. This newsletter is published 4 times a year: February, May, August, and November. The deadlines for submissions are in the calendar at the end of this newsletter. If you submit something, be sure to include pictures!

This is a **Very Important Reminder**. To quote the Standing Rules of Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference Section IV. Communications B. Conference Newsletter:

3. It will be the responsibility of the **district president** to send the newsletter electronically to the district officers, unit presidents, and district superintendent.
4. The **unit president** is responsible for sending the newsletter to the members of her unit and pastor(s).

District Presidents: please forward the 2026 TWK Conference Directory to your unit presidents as well.

The following is a list of important contact/resource information. As you will see, the TWK Conference has a **new email address**! If you have any questions regarding TWK Conference UWF or need to connect with an officer, just send an email, and it will be forwarded to that officer. We are trying to limit the exposure of personal contact information of the officers because of spam, spoofs, hacks, etc.

I look forward to communicating with each and every one of you!

With blessings,
Janet Pierce
pdj1169@gmail.com

Important Email Addresses & Websites

New! TWK Conference Email Address – twkuwfaith@gmail.com

Harpeth River District United Women in Faith - hrumw.weebly.com
(This website has easy-to-find information regarding the Reading Program.)

Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference United Women in Faith website - twkuwf.org

Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference Facebook -
<https://www.facebook.com/tennesseewesternconferenceunitedwomeninfaith/>

United Women in Faith – uわfaith.org

United Women in Faith Digital - uわfaith.mn.co

Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference United Methodist Church - twkumc.org

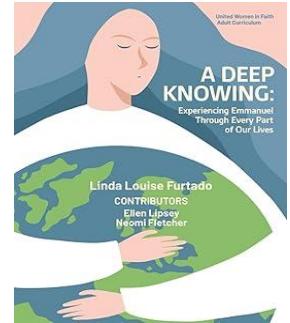
~~A Word from the Mission u Dean~~



Save The Date!

Ladies, we are getting ready for an **amazing** Mission u 2026. We will meet at Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville June 25-27.

Plans are still coming together, and registration will be out soon.



Sneak preview: Our very own, Rev. Linda Furtado is the author of this year's study and will be teaching for us. You will not want to miss this year's Mission u! We plan to keep registration as low as possible, so everyone has a chance to attend. Remember, there are scholarships available through your district. Contact your district president early.

See you in June,

Delores Smith
Mission u Dean

This just in: "The Bible Study I wrote for United Women in Faith's 2026 Mission u just arrived in my mail today! If purchasing via Amazon, use my affiliate link: <https://amzn.to/45yH56X> It's the #1 New Release on Amazon in Christian Ecumenism." ~ Rev. Linda Furtado

Congratulations, Rev. Furtado!!

~~A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Program~~

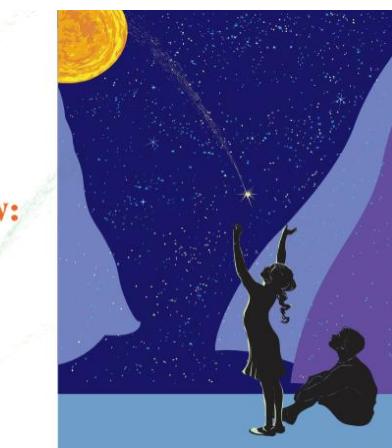
The 2026 “A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial” program focuses on our children and the National Mission Institutes (NMI). This is a great time to take a look at the three NMI in our state that provide needed services to the residents of the communities they serve.

The oldest of these is **Bethlehem Centers of Nashville**. This organization was formed in 1894 when two ladies merged the programs they individually had started to aid over 30,000 impoverished immigrants to the North Nashville area. Sallie Fisher, a black graduate of Fisk University, and Estelle Hawkins, a Caucasian, opened an organization that provided a kindergarten, a well-baby clinic, a sewing circle, and a recreation program. In doing so, the ladies broke both racial and gender barriers. The Center is still thriving and growing in the North Nashville community, where 94% of those they serve live at or below the federal poverty level. Crime rates are high, and many families are considered “at-risk”. Today, Bethlehem Centers

of Nashville offers child development, youth empowerment, and “at-risk” outreach to children and youth. They also offer senior services to the elderly residents. Many of the Center's employees come from the area, including the Executive Director, who came to the Center at the age of 4 to take part in the childcare program while his mother worked. Bethlehem Centers of Nashville is within the TWK conference and is well known to those churches in that area.



The second is **Wesley House Community Center** in Knoxville. This organization was founded in 1907 by Methodist women who were members of churches in 3 communities within the city of Knoxville. The women in those churches became aware that the young mothers in their neighborhoods had no childcare for their children. While the women went to work in the local cotton mills, they simply left their children at home alone. The newly formed Center met the need for safe child care for the children and also provided services to the mothers. Wesley House Community Center now provides a children's after-school program, summer enrichment experiences, an emergent needs program providing food and clothing, and also offers a senior wellness program. This Center is in the Holston Conference.



The third NMI is **United Neighborhood Methodist Center** in Chattanooga. This organization operates through Bethlehem Center. In 1920, Miriam Brock started a Bible study in the basement of Phillip's Memorial Methodist Church, and in 1926, received a charter for a formal mission known as the Wesley House. The Bible study grew to include a daycare and kindergarten. In 1947, Rev. Sallie Crenshaw commissioned the owner of a beer tavern to use the facility on Sundays for Bible studies. She soon noticed a need to take care of children left at home while their parents worked. In 1948, she opened the Good Shepherd Fold Daycare. In 1960, Crenshaw and Brock partnered their ministries, which became the Sallie Crenshaw Bethlehem Center. This organization, now known as Bethlehem Center, received national recognition during COVID with a program to aid the children they served who needed a place with computer access to do their daily school lessons. Not only did the Center provide computers and a safe space, but it also had certified

teachers present to assist the children who might have difficulties with the lessons. The United Neighborhood Methodist Center is also in the Holston Conference.

Our Call to Prayer and Self-Denial offering this year will support children and youth through the work of these National Mission Institutes and the other 81 NMIs around the United States and Puerto Rico. For more information on the NMIs in Tennessee, go to their websites: bethlehemcenters.org wesleyhouseknox.org thebeth.org

Susan King
Fairfield Glade E & I Coordinator



~ ~ *Save the Date* ~ ~

May 1-3, 2026

Women's Retreat

Gather and Grow, Together We Flourish

Speaker: Rebecca Gwunn-Dixon

Pastor of Outreach & Pastoral Care @ Lebanon First UMC

Beersheba Springs Assembly

More Information and Registration Form Coming Soon!



~ ~ *An Opportunity to Serve* ~ ~

The Tennessee UWF conference, now TWK UWF conference, has had a website for the last 20 years or so. I started it when I was a district officer as a fun project, as I did not have time to serve as a conference officer.

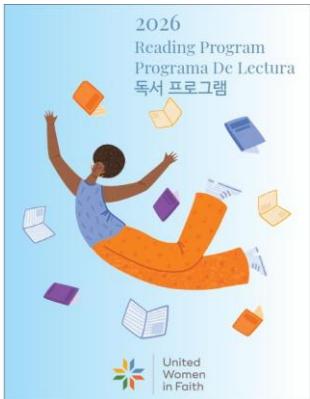
Like all things, it's now time to let someone else take this on. So, if anyone out there has a little experience with web pages (I know it can be done better--art design is *not* my strong point), I'd be happy to let someone else have fun!

I do enjoy reading the newsletters from the districts and seeing all the great work being done.

You can contact me through the website, the email below, or let any of the conference officers know.

Here's hoping all of you are warm and safe and that spring comes early!

Theo Wellington
tennesseeconfumw@gmail.com
Cumberland River District, Matthews Memorial UMC



Apply to Serve as a

Reading Program Volunteer Evaluator

Reading is rewarding.

Reading is connecting.

Are you interested in serving as a volunteer evaluator for the Reading Program? If so, please take 10 minutes to [complete the 2026 interest form](#). Both new and returning volunteers should use this form.

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## Assembly 2026 Dream it! Believe it! Do it!



There has never been a more important time for women of faith to come together, tap into our strength and unite to change the world.

**Assembly 2026** is a once-every-four-years gathering of women committed to faith, empowerment, and making a difference. Picture a weekend that uplifts your soul, strengthens your faith, and brings you together with an unstoppable sisterhood.

We are thrilled to share that Assembly 2026 will host longtime United Methodists Stacey Abrams and longtime UWFaith member Rev. Carolyn Abrams in conversation as our Inspiration Speakers.

### Community Gatherings

Experience moments of reflection, renewal, and connection in faith.

### Workshops

Gain tools to create meaningful change in your life and your community.

### Experience Hall

Connect with women from around the world who share your commitment to justice and spiritual growth.

**Register Now!**

## Speaking of Assembly 2026...

Do we have 50 people willing to meet a bus in Nashville or Clarksville to go to Assembly 2026? If so, we can rent a bus for about \$125/person.

A better way may be to carpool. If you are willing to drive **OR** if you want to ride with someone, please email Karen Saunders ([karenasaunders76@gmail.com](mailto:karenasaunders76@gmail.com)). All riders would be expected to share in the expense, which would include gas and parking fees (\$35/ night currently at SpringHill Suites.)

How far is the Indianapolis Convention Center? Not very far ... at all!



Clarksville – 295 miles

Memphis – 464 miles

Columbia – 333 miles

Murfreesboro – 306 miles

Cookeville – 285 miles

Murray, KY – 307 miles

Crossville – 324 miles

Nashville – 318 miles

Lebanon – 291 miles

Trenton – 360 miles

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**Faith. Love.
Action.
Unleashed.**



United Women in Faith is a place for every woman. There's a place for your wisdom, voice, and spirit here. We've seen the world change, and, maybe, we've been a part of that change. Now is the time to share your passion! The national membership goal is to increase membership this year by 30,000.

How do we do that? For units currently having fewer than ten members, invite 2 new women to join. For units currently having fewer than fifty members, invite 3-4 new women to join. How does one become a member? A woman becomes a member by indicating her desire to belong and to participate in the global mission of the Church through United Methodist Women dba United Women in Faith.

All current and future members should sign up online [United Women in Faith Digital](#).

Use the QR code here to sign up.



~~ Book Report ~~

Suggestions for 2021-2022

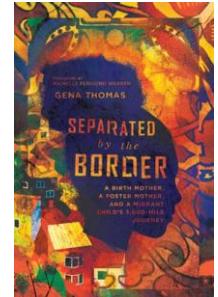
Education for Mission



Separated by the Border: A Birth Mother, a Foster Mother, and a Migrant Child's 3,000-Mile Journey - Gena Thomas

In 2017 five-year-old Julia traveled with her mother, Guadalupe, from Honduras to the United States. Her harrowing journey took her through Mexico in the cargo section of a tractor trailer. Then she was separated from her mother, who was held hostage by smugglers who exploited her physically and financially. At the United States border, Julia came through the processing center as an unaccompanied minor after being separated from her stepdad who was deported.

Gena Thomas tells the story of how Julia came to the United States, what she experienced in the system, and what it took to reunite her with her family. A Spanish-speaking former missionary, Gena became Julia's foster mother and witnessed firsthand the ways migrant children experience trauma. Weaving together the stories of birth mother and foster mother, this book shows the human face of the immigrant and refugee, the challenges of the immigration and foster care systems, and the tenacious power of motherly love.



Leadership Development

Hidden Figures: The American Dream & the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race - Margot Lee Shetterly



** Watch the movie as the program for your unit/circle meeting!

The phenomenal true story of the black female mathematicians at NASA whose calculations helped fuel some of America's greatest achievements in space. It is a major motion picture starring Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, Janelle Monae, Kirsten Dunst, and Kevin Costner.

Before John Glenn orbited the earth, or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female mathematicians known as "human computers" used pencils, slide rules and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space.

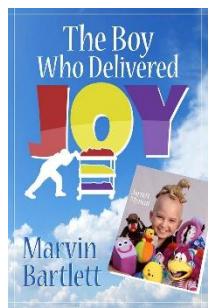
Among these problem-solvers were a group of exceptionally talented African American women, some of the brightest minds of their generation. Originally relegated to teaching math in the South's segregated public schools, they were called into service during the labor shortages of World War II, when America's aeronautics industry was in dire need of anyone who had the right stuff. Suddenly, these overlooked math whizzes had a shot at jobs worthy of their skills, and they answered Uncle Sam's call, moving to Hampton, Virginia and the fascinating, high-energy world of the Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory.

Even as Virginia's Jim Crow laws required them to be segregated from their white counterparts, the women of Langley's all-black "West Computing" group helped America achieve one of the things it desired most: a decisive victory over the Soviet Union in the Cold War, and complete domination of the heavens.

Starting in World War II and moving through to the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement and the Space Race, *Hidden Figures* follows the interwoven accounts of Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson and Christine Darden, four African American women who participated in some of NASA's greatest successes. It chronicles their careers over nearly three decades they faced challenges, forged alliances and used their intellect to change their own lives, and their country's future.

Nurturing for Community

The Boy Who Delivered Joy - Marvin Bartlett

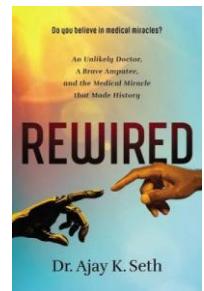


A rare bone cancer robbed Jarrett Mynear of a normal childhood when he was two years old, but it didn't steal his spirit. This extraordinary boy captivated crowds with his courage, faith, and humor in the face of adversity. Instead of feeling sorry for himself, Jarrett got busy. By delivering thousands of toys to sick children, the pint-sized Santa Claus traveled a path that led to national television appearances, prestigious awards, and a chance meeting with the President of the United States. This is the true story of a little boy's legacy and how, nearly two decades after his death, he continues to inspire small acts of kindness and huge acts of philanthropy. About the Author Marvin Bartlett is an Emmy award-winning journalist with 30 years' experience. He holds degrees in journalism from Marshall University and Ohio University. Since 1995, the West Virginia native has anchored the news for WDKY-TV, the Fox affiliate in Lexington, Kentucky. He is well-known for producing "The Spirit of the Bluegrass," a weekly segment featuring unique people and places in Kentucky.

Social Action

Rewired: An Unlikely Doctor, a Brave Amputee, and the Medical Miracle that Made History - Dr. Ajay K. Seth

A raccoon bite on the arm doesn't seem that serious, but it soon becomes a life-or-death medical crisis for Melissa Loomis. After days of treatment for recurring infection, it becomes obvious that her arm must be amputated. Dr. Ajay Seth, the son of immigrant parents from India and a local orthopaedic surgeon in private practice, performs his first-ever amputation procedure. In the months that follow, divine intervention, combined with Melissa's determination and Dr. Seth's disciplined commitment and dedication to his patients, brings about the opportunity for a medical breakthrough that will potentially transform the lives of amputees around the world.



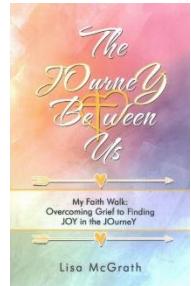
Rewired is the inspirational, miraculous story of Dr. Seth's revolutionary surgery that allows Melissa to not just move a prosthetic arm simply by thinking, but to actually feel with the prosthetic hand, just as she would with her natural arm. This resulted in what others have recognized as the world's most advanced amputee, all done from Dr. Seth's private practice in a community hospital, using a local staff, and with no special training or extensive research funding.

Spiritual Growth

The JOurneY Between Us: My Faith Walk: Overcoming Grief to Finding JOY in the Journey - Lisa McGrath

Author Lisa McGrath is passionate about her faith, and it has been her lifeline through all the trials and tragedies she and her family have endured.

The JOurneY Between Us tells the inspiring story of how Lisa's faith guided her through several unthinkable events that shook her world to its core. That same faith allowed her to grow as she learned to trust God's plan and perfect timing. In their darkest hours, she and her family turned to God, and that has made all the difference on their path together. Now she recalls the experiences of her life and reveals the ways that she has been blessed through friends and family with the support and strength she needed to persevere and find hope, peace, love, and especially joy in her journey.



Be sure to check out more recommendations on the Harpeth River District website under "Book Report" and on the TWK UWF Facebook page.

Remember: It is no longer required to read 10 books before reading a Children's or Youth book.



Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you.

~ 1 Peter 5:7 (RSV)



Share Your Craft: Support Mission Giving



TWK United Women in Faith has been asked to donate three (3) handcrafted items to the Folk Art Auction at Assembly 2026. We are inviting our talented crafters to participate. From quilts to crochet or knitted items to original artwork and beyond, your handmade piece can bless others while supporting mission giving. Space is limited, so no extra-large items.



If you feel called to create or donate an item, please contact Karen Saunders (karenasaunders@gmail.com). Together, we can make something beautiful for a greater purpose. Your creativity will truly make a difference!



Join United Women in Faith members and friends for a small group discussion on **#SayHerName: Black Women's Stories of Police Violence and Public Silence** by Kimberlé Crenshaw and the African American Policy Forum. #SayHerName is a 2026 United Women in Faith Reading Program **bonus** book selection in the Social Action category.

This is a small group book discussion, and reading the book in advance of the discussion is a requirement. Participants will join facilitated small groups to discuss the book with other United Women in Faith members and friends. In order to ensure a meaningful experience for all participants, we require that registrants commit to reading the book prior to the discussion. All are welcome. There is no cost to participate. Space is limited, and registration is accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. [Register Here](#). Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 7PM-8PM ET/6PM-7PM CDT

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*~ ~ From the TWK UMC Newsletter ~ ~*

## SEJ Disaster Academy to be in Nashville

The 2026 SEJ Disaster Academy will be held at Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville on February 25-27. Staff and volunteers who are involved in our conference disaster ministry (as well as those interested in becoming involved) are encouraged to attend. [More information and registration](#)

## Applications Now Open for United Methodist Scholarships

The United Methodist Higher Education Foundation has opened applications for scholarships to help fund the 2026-2027 school year for United Methodist students hoping to attend a United Methodist-related college or seminary. Every year, the foundation awards up to \$2 million in scholarships. [Learn more and apply](#)

## BE Retreat 2026: Won't You Be My Neighbor?

Cedar Crest Camp invites 3rd–5th grade students to the 2026 BE Retreat, taking place February 28–March 1. This spiritual life retreat will explore what it means to BE a good neighbor like Jesus through engaging worship, meaningful sessions, and plenty of camp fun. Participants will enjoy games, zip line time, small-group discussions, night activities, a bonfire, and free time to connect with friends old and new. All participants receive a retreat t-shirt. Full price registration is \$130. Space is limited, so [register today](#) to guarantee your spot!

For more TWK United Methodist Church information and events, subscribe to the weekly [newsletter](#).

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PURPOSE

United Women in Faith is a community of women whose purpose is to know God and 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.

~ ~ District News ~ ~

Caney Fork River ~

Howdy, Y'all,

This is Heidi Eber, President of the Caney Fork District that runs along I-40 east of Nashville. I am happy to begin my service to the UWF women in our community. I began serving with UMW in the Baltimore-Washington Conference, where my husband and I raised three children before retiring to TN. I have my own part-time business, but since I work remotely, I will try to be as available as I can for our gatherings.

This year, I hope to see many of you at Assembly! This will be my third time I have been able to attend, and it is always an energizing and renewing time for me. We have wonderful resources for education, worship, and spiritual growth through UWF, and I pray our time together remains blessed throughout 2026.

Heidi Eber
Caney Fork River District President

Cumberland River ~

Cumberland River District UWF is looking forward to 2026! We started our year in January with a Zoom training session with our Units, which took place on January 17.

Our theme for 2026 is “Living Hope Together”. We feel that where there is Hope, there is Faith and where there is Faith, Miracles happen. This theme was introduced to our units at our Annual Meeting last October. Our featured speaker was Dr. Cynthia Bond Hopson whose message mirrored our theme. Gwynn Brynes of the Hermitage Unit was voted by the district as our District Woman of the Year for 2025 and received an award at our Annual Meeting.

We have a full slate of officers for 2026. We recognized our outgoing officers: Gloria Johnson, Beverly Mintmire, and Mary Helen Marigza for the outstanding job they did as officers. We welcome the following new officers: Pamela Nelson, Treasurer; Renee Hunter, Secretary; Mary Swafford, Nominations Chair; and Deborah Matheson, Spiritual Growth Coordinator.

Evelyn Tade Finch
Cumberland River District President

Harpeth River ~

Hello! I’m Conni Shabram-Beach, the Harpeth River District President. I have been a member of Franklin First UMC since I moved to Tennessee in July 2023. I have been active in UWF since I lived in Nebraska (2011) and served as the President of the Great West District in 2014. I lived in Fairbanks, Alaska, for 8 years.

The Harpeth River District’s first event, Woven in Faith, will be on April 11 at Christ UMC. This event allows members to be renewed in the spiritual mission aspect of United Women in Faith and to focus on women, children, and youth issues.

I look forward to getting to know more UWF ladies here in Tennessee and Western Kentucky!

Conni Shabram-Beach
Harpeth River District President

Metro ~

Have a Cup of Joe with the Metro (District that is)

(The history behind “A Cup of Joe”: It is Common American Slang, which dates back to a 1914 U.S. Navy Secretary who banned alcohol on ships and coffee became the strongest drink leading to calls for “a cup of Joe” in protest - a fun fact!)



We hope that each of you has had some time to reflect, relax, and recuperate after Celebrating Jesus’ Birthday! It was a very busy season, but it was a Joyful time to be together with our family and friends in our homes and our Churches.

Our Metro District Team met via Zoom on Saturday, January 25th, due to the “crazy weather event”... We are a group of United Women in Faith ready to make a difference for Women, Children, and Youth in our “western corner of the TWK Conference and beyond.

The meeting began with a Prayer and a reading of the 23rd Psalm. The former and new members of the Metro Team shared a little about themselves and their plans for 2026. Then we got down to business, old and new, and began planning our upcoming events.

We are excited to be hosting a District Spiritual Growth Event at Centenary United Methodist Church at 9:00 am to Noon on April 25, 2026. Several team members are planning and preparing for a Wonderful morning of Growing in Christ! *More to come...Check out the Metro Messenger Newsletter for those details!*

We would love to have you attend, so mark your calendars! After registering, there will be goodies to eat and of course a “cup of Joe”, as we fellowship with friends old and new. This is a very special part of our PURPOSE as United Women in Faith: “we shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ....” We, as women, give and give and give so much of ourselves, let’s take some time out of our busy schedules to care for our spiritual well-being. Our hopes are that after this day apart, you feel equipped and refreshed, ready to go and serve, knowing that you are the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus Christ in our hurting and broken communities. Hope to see you there, please take time to RSVP to: Geralyn Seals at #901-603-5820 or Gwendolyn Gibson at #920-221-5314.

To quote author Sharon Jaynes, “*Even the weakest knees in the hands of the great I AM can become a mighty force*”. Moses at age 80, felt inadequate to be the leader God called him to be. However, God, the Great I AM, assured him that indeed he could and would be a great leader. Moses was ENOUGH! Each of us has been called, equipped, and we are also ENOUGH! Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 12: 9 (NLT): “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weakness, so that the power of Christ can work through me. These are Encouraging words from GOD for each of us....



Deborah Poole
Metro District Secretary

Purchase ~

Greetings United Women in Faith from the Purchase District! I hope this finds you warm and cozy in your homes as we experience this Bitter Cold Snap. Me...I prefer lying on a beach somewhere enjoying 85 degrees, but this too shall pass. I want to offer prayers to all who are affected by this unusual weather, especially our friends in the Nashville area.

The Purchase District had our first Leadership Meeting on January 10th, with our newly elected officers. All were upbeat and excited about the upcoming events for 2026. We enjoyed our fellowship and laughter, along with getting down to business. Our Spiritual Growth Event will be on April 25th at Lone Oak UMC. Also, we are excited to be hosting Conference Annual Day in the Purchase District in September!!

There are so many wonderful events coming up throughout the Purchase District and TWK Conference that I say 2026 is going to be the greatest year for women to fellowship and worship while praising our Lord, Christ Jesus!! So, get out there and attend all the events you can. There is no better way to be advocating for women, children, and youth while being the hands, feet, and light of Jesus. I just can't wait to jump into action with this great group of WOMEN.

I leave you with a verse from 1 Samuel 2:2 (KJV) "There is none holy as the LORD: For there is none beside thee: Neither is there any rock like our God."

Hope to see y'all soon!!

Jennifer Rose
Purchase District President

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*Stones River ~*

Hello from the Stones River District. I'm Michelle Martin, newly installed President of the district after serving six years as Treasurer. Our district team met via Zoom the morning of the recent snow & ice festivities! We are excited to have a full team of officers and got off to a great start planning our Faith Lift event in March to be hosted by our Normandy unit. We have fourteen active units with many long-time servant leaders at the district and conference level. I look forward to meeting those of you I have not met and seeing all of you at our Conference events!

Michelle Martin  
Stones River District President

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The moment you bow your head to pray is the moment God lifts his hand to help.

~ Max Lucado
From the Study of Esther
You Were Made for This Moment, p. 86

Officers

2026 Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference United Women in Faith Officers

President	Karen Saunders	Caney Fork River District
Program Coordinator/Vice President	Penny Story	Purchase District
Secretary	Beth Stockwell	Harpeth River District
Treasurer	Geralyn Seals	Metro District
Mission Coordinators:		
Spiritual Growth	Holly Neal	Caney Fork River District
Membership, Nurture and Outreach	* Needed	
Social Action	Melba Mitchell	Mississippi River District
Education & Interpretation	* Needed	
Communications Coordinator	Janet Pierce	Harpeth River District
Resources Coordinator/Management	Bobbi Toombs	Harpeth River District
Nominations Chairperson	Mozell Starks	Metro District
Committee on Nominations:		
	Susan King	Caney Fork River District
	Kimberly Henry	Cumberland River District
	Pam Nelson	Cumberland River District
	Gail Norman	Harpeth River District
	* Needed	Metro
	Delores Smith	Mississippi River District
	* Needed	Purchase District
	Holly Plump	Red River District
	Caroline Martin	Stones River District
	* Needed	Tennessee River District
Mission u Dean	Delores Smith	Mississippi River District
Mission u Assistant Dean	Beth Adams	Mississippi River District
Program Advisory Group	Deaconess Garlinda Burton	Cumberland River District
SEJ Conference Member	Holly Neal	Caney Fork River District
Bishop	Rev. David Graves	
District Presidents:		
Caney Fork River	Heidi Eber	
Cumberland River	Evelyn Tade	
Harpeth River	Conni Shabram-Beach	
Metro	Ellen Martin	
Mississippi River	Marilyn Ramsey	
Purchase	Jennifer Rose	
Red River	Margaret Fisher	
Stones River	Michelle Martin	
Tennessee River	Beverly Mueller	

* As you can see, there are several empty spots. We need **you!** Please be in prayer about joining the TWK UWF Conference Leadership **Team**. It takes a **team** to turn faith, hope, and love into action.

Calendar of Events

February		American Heart Month	
		Black History Month	
Feb. 6 (Fri.)		National Wear Red Day - Awareness day for American Women re: Heart Disease	
Feb. 16 (Mon.)		President's Day	
Feb. 18 (Wed.)		Ash Wednesday	
March		Women's History Month	
		National Irish American Heritage Month	
Mar. 2 (Mon.)		Read Across America Day - Promotes reading to children	
Mar. 8 (Sun.)		Daylight Saving Time begins – Spring forward	
Mar. 20 (Fri.)		First Day of Spring	
Mar. 28 (Sat.)	9 am	Conference Leadership Team Meeting	Zoom
Mar. 29 (Sun.)		Palm Sunday	
April		Keep America Beautiful Month	
Apr. 2 (Thurs.)		Maundy Thursday	
Apr. 5 (Sun.)		Easter	
Apr. 18 (Sat.)	9:30 am	Social Action: Criminalization of Communities of Color	Lexington First UMC
		Human Trafficking	
Apr. 22 (Wed.)		Earth Day	
May 1-3 (Fri.-Sun.)		Women's Retreat	Beersheba
May 15-17 (Fri.-Sun.)		Assembly 2026	Indianapolis
May 23 (Sat.)	9 am	Conference Leadership Team Meeting	Zoom
June 7-10 (Sun.-Wed.)		TWK UMC Annual Conference	Murfreesboro First
June 25-27 (Thurs.-Sat.)		Mission u	Scarritt Bennett
Aug. 1 (Sat.)	9 am	Conference Leadership Team Meeting	Zoom
Aug. 22 (Sat.)	9 am-3 pm	Rise Against Hunger food packing-Intergenerational Event	TBD
Sept. 26 (Sat.)	9 am	Conference Annual Meeting	S. Pleasant Grove
Oct. 24 (Sat.)	9 am	Conference Leadership Team Meeting	Zoom
November		Officer Training will be conducted with each District	Zoom
Deadlines			
Mar. 15 (Sun.)		District Treasurers' report due to Conference Treasurer	
Apr. 17 (Fri.)		Women's Retreat Registration due	
Apr. 23 (Thurs.)		Clarion Call submission deadline to Communications Coordinator	
June 1 (Mon.)		Mission u Registration due	
June 15 (Mon.)		District Treasurers' report due to Conference Treasurer	
July 24 (Fri.)		Clarion Call submission deadline to Communications Coordinator	
Aug. 15 (Sat.)		District Reports due to Conference Officers	
Sept. 15 (Tues.)		District Treasurers' report due to Conference Treasurer	
Oct. 24 (Sat.)		Clarion Call submission deadline to Communications Coordinator	
Dec. 15 (Tues.)		District Treasurers' report due to Conference Treasurer	