PASS IT ON WITH PURPOSE

Fall 2026

Shenandoah River District United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith

SAVE THE DATE

October 24 – Conference UWF Annual Meeting, 10 am, Shady Grove UMC, Mechanicsville, VA

October 31 – All zones meeting (NORTH), 9:30-12 Noon, Kernstown UMC

November 1 – Deadline to send unit officers to incoming District President

December 7 & 8 – UWF Christmas Luncheon at 12 Noon in Blessings Lodge at Camp Overlook, Keezletown

FROM THE CO-VICE PRESIDENT (SOUTH)



As the acting UWF District President, I had prepared my thoughts to share at our recent annual meeting. However, since I was unable to attend, I am sharing these thoughts in the newsletter.

This has been a year of challenges. Our President, Mary Preston, continues to face medical challenges. Please remember her in your prayers. Many of you know my husband, Wayne, is also facing medical challenges. Your prayers are so appreciated.

There have also been challenges as the Shenandoah River District United Women in Faith. Several units decided to become inactive. We continue to face obstacles, traveling long distances. We have been able to communicate through our Zoom meetings. But the joy I have to share with you and the conference now is that we are active! The reports and awards tell the story!! Regardless of unit size the desire to serve is very evident. The desire to learn became a reality through district and conference events. I have been overjoyed at the desire for fellowship. Our Prayer Breakfasts, "Evening Together," Zone meetings, and the August Gathering have all been well attended.

We are women of faith willing to connect. Some of my best memories revolve around conversations shared during trips to the VA General Assembly, Mission U, and Spiritual Life Retreats. Those are the times we get to know each other in a more personal way. We laugh, we share our experiences, we care, and we connect!

My hope for the coming year is to always remember how Mary Preston encouraged us to be the hands and feet of Christ. I also hope that we will work together to support and encourage our new President, Sharon Harold.

Our relationships are the core to our success - **Together!** We have so much to offer! God will equip us to serve. You are very special women! Women of Faith!

"Lord, help us to continue discovering your greatness, your love, care, and compassion in Your Word. May we live your message to be a hope for another person. Amen.

Blessings,

Barbara Phillips
District Co-Vice President (SOUTH)
Email: grammybp@gmail.com
Cell: 540-383-9972



FROM THE TREASURER

3rd Quarter Reporting for the United Women in Faith

Thank you all for sending in your remittances for the third quarter of 2026. We have achieved 68% of the budgeted $40,000 for Pledge to Missions this year.

The 2027 budget was approved at Annual Meeting, so let's continue doing the work that God has given us to do.

The following forms will be in the treasurer's packet that will be distributed at the October 31 meeting (NORTH): Pledge to Missions, remittance form for the quarter, Rainbow Giver form and the SMR form. Please review the dates on the forms and submit them to me accordingly.

I will be remitting $11,066.75 for this quarter to our conference treasurer. Without your commitment we would not have been able to send off this amount. The remittance included:

Pledge to Missions	$6,890.25
Candle Burning	1,489.00
SMR	640.00
Gift to Mission	75.00
Gift in Memory	185.00
World Thank Offering	705.00
Call to Prayer & Self-Denial	230.00
National Projects	320.00
Virginia Projects	507.50
Legacy Fund	25.00

The balance in our A&MD is $5,558.58.
We are $12,799.25 from reaching our current budget of $40,000 for Pledge to Missions. We have the 4th quarter remittance remaining - I'm praying and believing that we can do it. Let's work together to reach our goal!

Please continue to do the work that has been placed before us. Ladies, you are great workers.

Patti Brown
District Treasurer
Email: pbrown8291@gmail.com
Cell: 315-415-4803

SPIRITUAL GROWTH



As we cozy into Fall, it is a good time to grow your spirit with a book from the Reading Program. Here are a few new books in the Spiritual Growth category that look interesting.

Black Woman Grief: A Guide to Hope and Wholeness by Natasha Smith

Whether you are a Black woman or wanting to know more about Black women's experiences in the United States, this book will help. Smith acknowledges the painful reality of trauma, loss, and grief. Using biblical truths, she encourages Black women to live a God-filled life in a grief-filled world.

Into History? Read Night Flyer: Harriet Tubman and the Faith Dreams of a Free People by Tiya Miles.

Did you know Harriet Tubman was less than five feet tall, did not know how to read, and suffered from a brain injury? She escaped her own enslavement and led a military raid that freed over 700 people. This book looks beyond the myths and focuses on Harriet's spirituality, principles, and tactics.

With God in Every Breath by Whitney R. Simpson

Do you yearn to find rest for your soul and peace that only God can give? This book of prayers and meditations will help you quiet your heart and enter into God's presence.

Season's Greetings: Christmas Letters from Those Who Were There by Ruth L. Bowling

This book imagines what the birth experience might have been like for Mary, Joseph, the inn keeper, shepherds, etc. Each character tells the story from a personal perspective. This sounds like a fun Christmas read.

Rita Biggs
District Spiritual Growth Coordinator
Email: Biggs40@gmail.com
Cell: 540-749-2278

Think back over your last week, and ask yourself:

- How have I loved the Lord my God this week?
- How have I loved my neighbor (both human and nonhuman) this week?
- How have I loved myself this week?
- Have I "missed" any opportunities to love God, neighbor, and self this week?

SOCIAL ACTION

United Women in Faith

AN OPPORTUNTY TO SHOW LOVE AND SUPPORT TO YOUTH INCARCERATED AT THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER IN VERONA ALONG WITH THE STAFF

UWF 2025-2028 Focus Area - Racial Justice – School to Prison Pipeline

- Phyllis Geoghegan, Mission Coordinator for Social Action for the Virginia Annual Conference, coordinated the 2026 *Mission u* project that produced donations of notebooks as well as cards enabling women at the Virginia Correctional Center for Women in Goochland along with other locations to communicate with their families. In addition, members of the Valley Ridge District have delivered treat bags throughout the year to residents and staff at the juvenile detention center in their district.
- Our opportunity on the Shenandoah River District is to offer similar treat bags and other items to the residents and staff at The Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center in Verona. I have been in conversation with Paula Ford of Kingsway Prison Ministries, who has a relationship with the staff, has the clearance and is able to deliver the treat bags throughout the year. Although Kingsway relates to women, men, and children of those incarcerated through the Christmas "Apple Tree Project," this joint initiative would add incarcerated youth and their staff to this mission. Mr. Kristopher Kann, Deputy Director, Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center, has offered appreciation and information as follows:
- There are 20-35 youth, ages 12-21, plus approximately 15 staff members.
- Each of the youth would receive a simple card or note and the following treats with each bag containing identical items.
    1. Approved items are chocolate, licorice, taffy, tootsie rolls, pop tarts, bags of potato chips, or cheez-its
    2. These items are also shared with staff members.
    3. No peanuts/nuts/peanut butter of any kind or hard candy are allowed.

Mr. Kann has suggested the following items in addition to those above:

1. card games (but none associated with gambling)
2. basketballs (for group sports, not individuals)

He also mentioned that the youth need the following for when they leave the facility:

1. cheap duffle bags or canvas/nylon drawstring backpacks
2. travel-size hygiene items - deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and shampoo

The first treat bags will be delivered in time for Thanksgiving. Please prayerfully consider ways your unit can support this project and contact me for additional details.

Laura Douglass
District Social Action Coordinator
Email: lauradouglass@vaumc.org
Cell: 540-271-1558



HISTORIAN'S CORNER

Ladies,

In 2010, Bishop Charlene Kammerer said, " I get comments and letters asking why I - and United Methodists - are 'wasting our time' in politics. I believe it has everything to do with our faith and certainly our heritage as United Methodists. The church has always exerted a strong moral and ethical influence on the state. There is no social holiness apart from our expression of it. I am amazed at the corporate impact we have as a United Methodist group."

Janice Webb
District Historian (NORTH)
Email: webbjshw@verizon.net
Home: 703-777-3116

October Zone Meeting (NORTH)



October is here! Fall is upon us. That means it is time for those of us in the northern part of the Shenandoah River District United Women in Faith to gather for our annual sharing, learning, and fellowship event. A chance to catch up with long-time friends and meet new ones.

Please join us on October 31 from 9:30 until noon at Kernstown UMC. Our guest speaker (via Zoom) will be Marty Bickford, our Conference Treasurer. She will share information about our pledge dollars and what happens after we mail our District pledge check to the conference.

This will also be your chance to share the wonderful things you have accomplished this year and announce any upcoming events. As in past years, if you are feeling creative, feel free to present your accomplishments in the form of a skit, song, or poem. If you are more like me (not so creative), you are also welcome to list your accomplishments and read them during sharing time or just tell us what you did.

We look forward to seeing you there. We promise all treats, no tricks! Help us plan for refreshments by letting us know how many are coming from your unit by October 24.

RSVP to Rita Biggs at biggs40@gmail.com.

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."
Colossians 3:17 (NIV)



EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION

Greetings,

Fall is here and the time of the year when we as United Women in Faith gather all our unit information, look at our accomplishments, celebrate our work, and then prepare for the new year. I want to thank everyone for submitting your Living Into Our Purpose form. This year you have accomplished so much and have shown the many ways you have lived into our purpose. You are to be congratulated for your hard work and dedication regardless of whether a LIOP form was submitted. Working together you have shown Christ's love for your church, community, nation, and women, children and youth all around the world.

I am happy to announce that 16 units achieved the Living Into Our Purpose Gold Award and 2 who achieved the Silver Award. At our October 1 Annual Meeting, these awards were announced and units congratulated. Corrections to these awards include Keezletown UWF, achieving the Gold Award and Stephen's City UWF, achieving the Silver Award. I apologize to these units and want you to know that your work is critical to our mission and is recognized.

Mission Giving Awards included the 5- and 6-Star Units and our Rainbow Givers. To qualify as a 5-Star Unit, contributions to Mission Giving are made through 1 – Pledge to Mission, 2 – Special Mission Recognition (pin honoring someone), 3 – Gift to Mission, 4 – Gift in Memory, and 5 – World Thank Offering. To achieve the 6-Star award units participate in Candle Burning also. This giving is from September 1 to August 31 of the following year and monies are remitted to the District Treasurer.

We are grateful to have 19 Rainbow Givers this year. Just one Rainbow Giver entitles a unit to achieve 5-Star Unit status. Add Candle Burning then the unit achieves 6-Star status. We celebrated five 6-Star Units and one 5-Star Unit during our Annual Meeting. After further review, five additional 6-Star Units and one 5-Star Unit were omitted from the lists. So, I will officially congratulate Asbury UWF, Greenwood UWF, Manor Memorial UWF, McGaheysville UWF, and Otterbein UWF for attaining a 6-Star Unit Award and Stephen's City UWF for earning the 5-Star Unit Award. These names have been added to the annual report and are included in this newsletter. I deeply regret all who were omitted during the Annual Meeting report and express my sincere appreciation for each unit's work and contributions.

This has been a very difficult year in many ways with sickness, deaths, caring for loved ones, and the daily challenges of life. I ask for your grace and forgiveness for mistakes made. Juggling multiple jobs at once with other life obligations can be a lot to handle at times.

Going into the new year I have accepted the office of UWF District President. I have always loved UMW/UWF and all the work that is completed from the time my grandmother introduced it to me many years ago. The Harrisonburg District has been very important to me and now the Shenandoah River District also. Please know I can't do it alone. There are several vacancies in our Executive Committee and Officers. I would greatly benefit from someone from the northern part of the district taking the Vice President – North. If the Northern Zone leaders could possibly consider working together in this position? (We can talk.)

There are two other important positions to be filled. Laura Douglass, our Social Action Coordinator, has now accepted this position at the conference level, but is willing to work with anyone who might step into this position at the district level. She is willing to act as a consultant. The second position is the Education & Interpretation Coordinator, which I am leaving. I also will work closely with anyone fulfilling this position. I hope to provide some needed training for all our new officers in 2027. Please be in prayer for this work. Working together we can make a difference!

Your unit officers list for 2027 is due to me by November 1. Please complete the form included in this newsletter. Please provide all unit officer information since I am new in the position of president.

A packet with unit certificates and 2027 UWF information will be available by the Northern Zone meeting on October 31. I look forward to joining you then. Southern units will also receive this packet soon.

I offer my hope and prayer for a bright new year as we work together in service and love.

Your sister in Christ,

Sharon Harold
District Education & Interpretation Coordinator
sharold714@aol.com
Home: 540-879-2270 or Cell: 540-246-4940

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together. . .but encouraging one another"
Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

At our Shenandoah River District Annual Meeting on October 1, several Executive Committee District Officer positions remained unfilled for 2027. With the beginning of a new year quickly approaching, we still have **five positions that need to be filled**.



I also want to personally acknowledge that, after experiencing several close family deaths this summer, I have not been as reliable in this position as I would have wanted or as the position deserves. I am grateful for your patience, prayers, and understanding during this difficult season.

As we look toward 2027, I am asking you to prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you to serve our District in one of these important roles.

CO-VICE PRESIDENT - NORTH

The **Vice Presidents** shall:

1. With the help of the District Executive Committee members: Plan District-wide training events for local units, officers and members, the Annual Meeting, and such other events which are deemed necessary to fulfill the Purpose of the United Women in Faith.
2. Perform duties of the President in her absence.
3. A Vice President shall be elected from both the Northern Region and Southern Region to assist and coordinate events and activities in their region with their Zone leaders and communicate information from district and conference UWF.
4. Coordinate activities and trainings that are pertinent to their respective regions and to communicate information to units from the District President.

EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION COORDINATOR

The **Education and Interpretation Coordinator** shall:

1. Empower women to understand, interpret and participate in the mission giving and outreach of the church.
2. Promote the UWF Purpose to encourage the use of the "Living Into Our Purpose" form with each unit. Gather information from these forms to be used at the District and Conference Annual Meeting, create award certificates from this information.
3. Encourage the use of the UWF Prayer Guide and Support of the Missionaries, UMC Deaconesses, Home Mission Nurses and Mission Institutions.

SOCIAL ACTION COORDINATOR

The **Mission Coordinator for Social Action** shall:

1. Promote current mission focus to district officers and local units by sharing local, conference and national information as it pertains to social action.
2. Chair a racial justice committee in accordance with National UMW guidelines.
3. With the help of the Executive Committee, coordinate and promote United Methodist Day at Assembly Day at Richmond.

HISTORIAN – SOUTH
HISTORIAN – NORTH

The Historian shall:

1. Be responsible for keeping items of historical interest, such as newspaper clippings, photos, bulletins, etc.
2. Be appointed by the President, in consultation with the vice president from the represented region, with the approval of the Executive Committee, or the Committee on Nomination may make a recommendation at the request of the president.
3. Serve as a voting member of the Executive Committee.

Please contact me if you are interested in any of these positions.

Debbie Creech
Chair, Nominations Committee
Email: debbiecreech@vaumc.org
Cell: 617-285-1312

FROM ANGELA SOKOLOWSKI
MISSION COORDINATOR FOR EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION
VA CONFERENCE UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Witnessing God's Love in Vietnam

Hello, Beautiful Friends and Ministry Partners!

The Vietnam Vision Team – Ann Klotz, Rev. Glenn Rowley, Rev. Hieu Phan, Cong Tran and Angela Sokolowski

Our team recently returned from an unforgettable trip to Vietnam, where we witnessed firsthand the powerful, transformative work of God's love in action. From joyful children learning in bright classrooms at Charis Academy to vibrant neighborhood gatherings, rural farms, and home churches, the Holy Spirit is moving deeply across every community we visited.

Everywhere we traveled, we met devoted pastors, leaders, and believers who are boldly sharing the Gospel, caring for the vulnerable, and nurturing the next generation with gentle faith and untiring hope. The warmth, resilience, and faith of the Vietnamese people left our hearts full and inspired.

We invite you to be part of this continuing story! T & J Parks will be visiting Virginia from October 31 through November 8. Please take this special opportunity to meet them, hear their first-hand stories, and learn more about what God is doing through ministry in Vietnam. Mark your calendars—you will not want to miss hearing about all they have witnessed!

Sunday, November 1 – 10:00am English service Greater Washington Korean UMC
1219 Swinks Mill Rd, McLean, VA 22102

Tuesday, November 3 – 7:00pm Zoom Call hosted by Angela Sokolowski and UWF
👉click here to register! or go to vauwf.org/education-and-interpretation

Wednesday, November 4 – 12:00pm Shady Grove UMC Luncheon
8209 Shady Grove Rd, Mechanicsville, VA

Thursday, November 5 – 9:30am meeting with Conference leadership, Richmond
– 12:00pm Oakwood UMC,1291 Columbia Rd, Columbia, VA
– 7:00pm Duncan Memorial with Randolph Macon,
201 Henry St, Ashland, VA

Sunday, November 8 – Fort Hill UMC, 106 Oakridge Blvd, Lynchburg, VA

(Photo of Charis Academy by J Park)



Angela Sokolowski
Mission Coordinator for Education & Interpretation
Virginia Conference United Women of Faith
sokolowski.angela@gmail.com

All Knowing God,

We are women of action. We like to get the job done. Grant us the grace to know that we never work alone for you said you'd be with us always. Grant us the wisdom to know that you know the end from the beginning. Grant us the faith to trust your promise. Help us to know that you alone give growth and change hearts. Remind us that falling fully into your embrace is strength and not weakness.

We praise you for your steadfast love and presence as it is expressed in the lovely mystery of your ways. Our trust is in you alone.

In Christ,
Amen

From *Response,* February 2015

5 & 6-Star Mission Giving Units

6-Star Units
Asbury
Bridgewater
Brucetown
Front Royal
Greenwood
Harmony
Kernstown
Leesburg
Manor Memorial
McGaheysville
Montague
Otterbein

5-Star Units
Agape
Stephens City

Rainbow Givers

Angela Lane - Agape
Ann Knicely – Asbury
Johna McFarland – Bridgewater
Sharon Harold – Bridgewater
Kathy Gum – Brucetown
Teresa Lee – Brucetown
Pat Dudley – Brucetown
Ruth Ann Curtis – Brucetown
Maggie Frazer – Brucetown
Charlotte Childress – Brucetown
Lillian Sloane – Front Royal
Joyce Jenkins-Wimmer – Front Royal
Mary Preston – Harmony
Nancy Tisinger - Kernstown
Vicky Weaver - Leesburg
Caroll Douglass – Manor Memorial
Linda Whitmore – Montegue/John Mann
Pauline Skiles – Montegue/John Mann
Debbie Jones – Stephens City

Shenandoah River District
United Women in Faith
Living into Our Purpose Awards 2025-2026

GOLD

Asbury UWF
Braddock Street UWF
Bridgewater UWF
Brucetown UWF
Front Royal UWF
Greenwood UWF
Harmony UWF
Keezletown UWF
Kernstown UWF
Leesburg UWF
Manor Memorial UWF
McGaheysville UWF
Montague Avenue UWF
Mountain Valley UWF
Mt. Zion UWF
Otterbein UWF

SILVER

Market St UWF
Stephen City UWF

Congratulations on your hard work and dedication to serving others as you put your faith, hope, and love into action!!

Celebrate the Season

UWF Christmas at Overlook in the Blessings Lodge
Lunch Dec. 7th & 8th, 2026 at Noon

The Blessings Lodge offers a warm and inviting dining room to come together for a wonderful lunch of fun and fellowship. You'll want to spend time around the fireplace and enjoy the Christmas atmosphere after your meal.



Menu

Cheese, Crackers, & Punch
Garden Salad
Honey Roasted Ham
Sweet Potato Casserole
Vegetable Side
Hot Rolls
Assorted Fruit Pies & Cobblers
Iced Tea, Lemonade, Water
and Hot Beverages

$18.00
per person
Includes all menu items, taxes, and gratuity.

We are prepared to serve groups ranging in size from 20 to 50.

Please contact Sharon Harold (540)246-4940 (cell) or sharold714@aol.com
by November 23 to make your Group's Reservation.
Contact the Camp Office, (540)269-2267, for inquiries about other arrangements.

SHENANDOAH RIVER DISTRICT UUNITED WOMEN IN FAITH
UNIT OFFICERS 2027

Due November 1, 2026 to Incoming District President, Sharon Harold
4580 Ottobine Rd., Dayton, VA 22821 or sharold714@aol.com

UNIT NAME _____

OFFICERS

*President _____ Email_____
Address _____ Phone # _____

Vice President _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone # _____

*Secretary _____ Email_____
Address _____ Phone # _____

*Treasurer _____ Email_____
Address _____ Phone _____

*Nominations Chair _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone # _____

*only required officers

COORDINATORS

Program Resources _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone # _____

Membership, Nuture & Outreach _____
Address _____ Email _____
Phone # _____

Spiritual Growth _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone # _____

Social Action _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone # _____

Communications _____ Email _____
Address _____ Phone # _____