

# Voices of Purpose

March 2022

Quarterly Newsletter of the Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith

## President's Message

Greetings on these warming says of Spring! The birds are singing and the flowers are blooming. Easter is just around the corner. God is good and the people are praising!

We, as members of United Women of Faith, formerly known as United Methodist Women, have come through a winter of many challenges. I hope and pray that you have all made it through these difficult times with grace.

First, it was COVID-19's continuation and the challenge of virtual meetings on Zoom. Now we are mustering the courage to gradually return to meeting in person. The "Turn it Up" Assembly 2022 is the first and largest meeting of United Methodists to occur since our Assembly in Columbus, Ohio in 2018. Ordinarily, there would have been a General Conference meeting (the governing body of the United Methodist Church) since we last met as United Methodist Women. But that has been postponed three times, due to the pandemic and the difficulty of international travel.

Then we had to navigate the re-districting in Greater New Jersey. I am pleased to report that many of our districts have handled this with grace and aplomb and are moving forward in mission. Thank you to those who have been working on these changes and elections and lists for the re-formation of our districts.

Lastly, our national organization, in anticipation of the pending upheaval and changes of General Conference, has been preparing for change for the last two quadrennium (eight years!). Their years of study and research and testing has finally brought forth a vision for a re-branded form of United Methodist Women,

*(Continued on page 4)*

## March Highlights

- United Women in Faith new name for United Methodist Women
- Mission u 2022 explores Luke 3 with a live and hybrid option
- Breaking the Barriers in NJ Schools
- Camden Neighborhood Center returns to full Urban Farming



United  
Women  
in Faith

March 2022

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**United  
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Editor: Joyce Pratt  
GNJUWF Communications Coordinator

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**We are women with a purpose.**

We connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.



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## **President's Message (continued from page 1)**

that shall henceforth be called United Women in Faith. If you think back to the days of the "Ladies Aid Society" (before our time) or "Women's Society of Christian Service" (in some of our memories, but it was 50 years ago!), we can be grateful for the new name and the effort that went into its formation.

All of these changes could have brought a spirit of fear. But "there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18)." "Finally, all of you should agree and have concern and love for each other. You should be kind and humble... Can anyone really harm you for being eager to do good deeds? Even if you have to suffer for doing good things, God will bless you. So, stop being afraid and don't worry about what people might do. Honor Christ and let him be the Lord of your life (1 Peter 3:8,13-15 CEV)."

These scriptures may have been among the beliefs that guided my mother, Deaconess Helen McCahill, during her 87 years of service to the last, the least and the lost. Her words appear later in this newsletter, in a story she wrote entitled, "Meeting Several Mr. Cooks." This story, read by my husband, Steve, at Mom's memorial service on March 26<sup>th</sup>, was one of the most-mentioned highlights of the evening. Thank you to all who have offered words of condolence and support in this difficult time.

Sue Zahorbenski, President  
Greater New Jersey United Women  
in Faith (GNJUWF)

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**United Women in Faith**

**2022 Assembly**



United Methodist Women 2022 Assembly **TURN IT UP! May 20-22, 2022** for spiritual healing and renewal, women leaders making an impact, and justice for women, children, and youth. Join women ready to worship, act, and celebrate our sisterhood, reflect on today's challenges and together find comfort and strength to move forward.

Registration closes **April 11, 2022**.

<https://assembly2022.org>

# **MISSION U - 2022**

**Adults, Youth and Children (entering K - 12th grade) All are welcome**

## **3-Day School Hybrid**

**July 14-15, 2022 virtual 6:45 pm - 9:15 pm**

**July 16, 2022 in-person 9:00 am - 3:30 pm**

**Aldersgate UMC, 568 Ryders Lane, East Brunswick, NJ**

**\$40.00 (includes lunch)**

## **3-Day School Virtual**

**July 14-15, 2022, virtual 6:45 pm - 9:15 pm**

**July 16, 2022 virtual 9:00 am - 3:30 pm**

**\$25.00**

## **1-Day Korean School**

**July 16, 2022 in person 9:00 am - 3:30 pm**

**Aldersgate UMC, 568 Ryders Lane, East Brunswick, NJ**

**\$30.00 (includes lunch)**

## **1-Day School Virtual**

**July 23, 2022, virtual 9:00 am - 3:30 pm**

**\$15.00**

**Lay servant Re-Certification is available for 3 DAY SCHOOL ONLY**

**Registration Details Shared at**

**<https://gnjumw.org>**

## **Topic is Luke 13**

**A Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Adults, Youth, and Children**

These are tumultuous times. Chaos dots our history, including those days of Jesus' earthly life. What are the lessons we can take from his teaching, especially found in Luke 13? The chapter opens and closes with a community trying to make sense of and navigate their way through times of turmoil and tragedy. What can be learned as we discover what type of community we can build together?

If you are wondering what would be possible if we tend to the needs of our communities in small and often disruptive ways as Jesus did in Luke 13, this is a must study for individuals and churches!



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**Who Can We Be Together?**  
Building Communities  
of Hope and Joy

## FLAG BURNING AT THE SPARTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

On the evening of January 1<sup>st</sup>, an unidentified individual drove onto the grounds of the Sparta United Methodist Church, 71 Sparta Avenue, and burned the rainbow flag that was suspended from a flagpole in front of the church. Two of the church's LGBTQIA+ members found it lying on the front lawn the following morning as they arrived for the Sunday worship service. Unfortunately, this hate crime was discovered by the very people the flag is meant to welcome.

The Sparta United Methodist Church has been flying the rainbow flag for approximately seven years since the congregation voted overwhelmingly to become a member of the Reconciling Ministries Network in the fall of 2015. As "Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors" is the message of the United Methodist Church, the Sparta UMC congregation values the inclusion of all who come through its doors. The young people of the church are especially appreciative of the welcoming message that affirms the inherent dignity and worth of all individuals. Upon hearing about the desecration of the flag, one member of SUMC's youth group made the following comment:

"Seeing the Pride flag outside of the church encourages youth to be themselves and lets us know that we are accepted at the church even though others may not accept us. It means inclusivity and love. It lets us know that we will be loved at the church no matter what. It's nice to see when you pass it knowing that there are people who are willing to accept and love you no matter what."

Since the flag burning occurred, the pastor of the church, Reverend Dr. Steven Bechtold, has received calls of support, as well as unsolicited donations to replace the flag, from Sparta citizens and members of surrounding communities. Because the congregation is committed to welcoming their LGBTQIA+ brothers and sisters, as well as all who wish to take part in the life of the church, SUMC will continue to fly the rainbow flag and display signs of welcome to all. The people of Sparta United Methodist Church extend thanks and gratitude to all who have expressed encouragement.

Submitted by Pat Schutz, Sparta UMC  
January 26, 2022



Rainbow Flag



**Greater New Jersey Conference  
United Women in Faith**

**Spring Celebration  
With Hearts and Healing Let Us Sit Together**

On April 9, 2022, the Greater New Jersey Conference United Women in Faith (GNJUWF) gathered for their virtual 2022 Spring Conference and included district celebrations.

Before the Spring business meetings, the main celebration featured a conversation with Shirley Hager, gkisedtanamoogk, and Shirley Bowen on a series of gatherings that brought together settlers and indigenous people from throughout Wabanaki territory (Maine and Atlantic Canada), the healing this group found, and what that experience offers us all.

Participants were given the opportunity to purchase The Gatherings book by Shirley Hager and offerings are to be split between UMW Pledge to Mission and Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness.

**In God's hand is the life of every living thing  
And the breath of all humankind.**

**Job 12:7-10**

**For guest bios and Spring celebration recordings and slides, visit the GNJUWF website at [www.gnjumw.org](http://www.gnjumw.org).**



Sherri Shumate  
GNJUWF Social Action Coordinator

**The Greater New Jersey Conference  
United Women in Faith**

**applaud the historic confirmation of  
Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson**

**as**

**Associate Justice for the U.S. Supreme Court.**

GNJ United Women in Faith especially appreciate Judge Brown Jackson, the first Black woman to be approved to the highest court in the land, for her dedication to fighting for human rights, and embrace her quote:

*There are also women I have never met but who are recorded  
in the pages of history and whose lives and struggles inspire me  
and thousands of other working women to  
keep putting one foot in the front of another every day.”*



# **United Women in Faith**

## ***More Open and Inclusive***

by Sherri Shumate, Social Action Coordinator

We are now United Women in Faith, choosing a new name and brand to embrace our desire to be more open and inclusive. In one of my conversations with other conference Social Action Coordinators, someone asked, even with these exciting changes:

"Who still is not yet welcome here?"

I am one of many people who hoped this new branding would be a more bold and non-gendered approach to faith, hope, and love in action. Perhaps this could have been the season where we defined ourselves as more than just one gender and truly opened this community to invite anyone and everyone to find a place here.

One of our members expressed similar frustrations:

*"Right now, I am just super angry. My granddaughter, age 15 is gay. She has attended Mission U since she was 5... I can tell you she, and kids like her are watching us. They see the lack of care and compassion given to them by the church and also UMW. They know that they are unseen and unrepresented and are overlooked, to keep peace in the organization. Our lack of care is noticed. Our lack of care creates harm. Our lack of care is driving these kids from churches and will be the last nail in someone's coffin. When do they MATTER?"*

Even before taking our new name, this organization made an effort to be open and inclusive to people who identify in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Categories (LGBTQ). If you've attended an event hosted by our national organization, you've probably noticed they invite us to share our preferred pronouns. This is one small way of acknowledging the science that now proves gender and sexuality are a complex spectrum. Naming our pronouns is a small effort at making space to include and welcome all. In 2019, United Women in Faith also gave a substantial financial gift to the Trevor Project and Tyler Clementi Foundation, organizations advocating for young people who identify as LGBTQ and working for suicide prevention.

Still, we haven't yet done enough to make it clear in our national organization that we include and welcome everyone unconditionally. An advocate had this to say:

"At times I have been soul destroyed by their lack of willingness to say out loud, in public, where they stand on LGBTQ inclusion in regards the UMC. I felt it mostly strongly at the end of the last Assembly back in 2018. I was devastated that the question of inclusion was hinted at, but never named clearly...I am frustrated and sad and sometimes angry too. UMW has done a lot, but I believe has failed in taking the BOLD step they could take."

We also haven't really taken the next steps to openly include everyone in Greater New Jersey yet. We've listened to and learned from our diverse neighbors including some who identify as Muslim, Indigenous, Black, and Asian Americans. It's time to also listen and learn from our neighbors who identify as Gay, Transgender, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer. This year we will be adding an LGBTQ representative to our leadership team to help us do a better job of including, welcoming, and listening to neighbors who identify in these communities. I'll also be expanding our Social Action Resources to include some ways for us to learn and grow in our abilities to understand the intersectional justice issues experienced by individuals who identify as LGBTQ.

It's time to start acting on the commitment we made in our Intersectional Peace with Justice Resolution passed by our GNJ Annual Conference and submitted by GNJ UMW in 2020:

*"The Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church makes a bold choice to work for intersectional peace with justice and to create inclusive communities that respect the dignity and sacred worth of all God's children, and honor our shared, common humanity."*

Even while the United Methodist Churches continues to struggle with what it means to truly welcome all, even as United Women in Faith still cling to our gender-based labels for a little bit longer, we here in this Greater New Jersey Conference of United Women in Faith are working to create a community that includes and welcomes all without exception. We will keep asking,

"Who still is not yet welcome here?" until the day that there truly is no one excluded from our love in action.

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## **Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith (GNJ UWF)**

### **Statement of Welcome**

GNJ United Women in Faith affirms that the grace of God is extended to all God's children without exception.

We are committed to the inclusion of people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, as well as people of every age, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status.

We make a bold choice to work for intersectional peace with justice and to create inclusive communities that respect the dignity and sacred worth of all God's children and honor our shared common humanity.

## **Meeting Several Mr. Cooks**

### **In Memoriam Deaconess Helen McCahill**

In December 2018, my friend and her three teenage children were delighted to finally move into their first home since Storm Sandy in 2012 forced them into homelessness. The church in Ocean Grove loaned us the van to move the contents of their storage unit into their four-bedroom home. I was asked to pick up a young friend "Cook" at the train station in Asbury Park and bring him to help with the remaining stuff to be moved. He was described to me as a black male with an afro and gray sweat suit.

I pulled up to the door of the train station and saw three men talking. I called out for Mr. Cook. One gentleman came to the car window and introduced himself as "Cook." I asked him to get in and commented on his different clothing than I expected. He told me how willing he was to help with my project and how pleased he was to meet me. As we drove toward my friend's home, I explained their need for a dustpan and broom, and some breakfast food. We solved that at the hardware store and the food store.

He helped me carry the purchases into the house and suddenly I saw fear in my friend's face. "This is not our "Cook," they said. I said their "Cook" was not at the train station, but I thought this might be him. Everyone agreed that I should return this Mr. Cook to the train, but I wanted more directions for my transportation offer.

Suddenly there was a call for help and "Get an ambulance" from the upstairs. A friend who had helped the preceding day was having chest pains and trouble breathing. Two persons helped the sick man down the stairs, and I was asked to drive him to the nearby hospital. (It was not spoken, but we all knew that an ambulance would cost \$200.) My Mr. Cook said he had medical training from his military experience and wanted to sit beside the sick friend on the way to the hospital. Son Sean sat in the front with me in my Dodge Caravan. We traveled as fast as was safe to the Emergency Room at Jersey Shore Hospital in Neptune. A nurse joined our group as we went through the door. As soon as we saw he was being taken care of, we left for the train station. Shortly after we pulled away, I called out to the back seat and asked for Sean to respond. (He seldom participates in small talk, but Mr. Cook told me he stayed with his friend in the hospital.) A phone call told me Sean had been left behind. I said I would come back, but not until I had returned "Mr. Cook" to the train station. I stopped at the bank and got \$15 to give Mr. Cook. We agreed that this day had been in God's hands, not ours. He thanked me for being the nicest person he had ever met, and could we marry? It was a day to remember. We said goodbye.

## **Meeting Several Mr. Cooks**

**(continued)**

I returned Sean to his mother, and we all took a deep breath. I asked for my friend to make me a bologna sandwich for energy to continue the day. She said she had no dishes or silverware but made me a sandwich of the items I bought at the store earlier. I suggested she wash her hands and use her finger to spread the mayonnaise and mustard. It was delicious! I suggested the others have a similar sandwich and then we would have the energy to empty out the remaining staff from the storage unit. All agreed that that chore could wait for another day. I did finally succeed with Sean in the car, to find "Cook" and bring him to help work on sorting and shelving many belongings.

As I told my story, many wondered why I was not afraid or more careful. My life has included so many people from all walks of life that fear is not my way of interacting with strangers. It was a very special day. I spent the afternoon resting. God is good. All the time.

What a hoot!

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### **Global Ministries Statement on Giving to Support the People of Ukraine**

United Methodists and others wishing to provide humanitarian assistance to the Ukrainian people in the wake of the Russian invasion of their country may contribute to **Advance #982450, UMCOR International Disaster Response and Recovery**. This fund will provide direct assistance to those in Ukraine as well as assistance to Ukrainians fleeing to neighboring countries.

Gifts to support the people of Ukraine can be made in the following ways:

- Online at <https://umcmission.org/advance-project/982450>
- By toll free telephone: 888-252-6174
- By check with "Advance #982450-Ukraine" written on the memo line, either mailed and addressed to Global Ministries/UMCOR, GPO, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY, 10087-9068 or given at or through any United Methodist church



**One hundred percent of all Advance contributions go to the designated cause.** The United Methodist community in Ukraine, though quite small, is actively engaged in assisting neighbors in need. Global Ministries is in touch with the church's leadership as well as with church leaders in countries welcoming those who are fleeing from violence in Ukraine.

Submitted by Sherri Shumate

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# Black History Month Celebrations

Black history month, celebrated each year during February, is a chance for Americans to learn details of their nation's history that, unfortunately, are far too often neglected and pushed to the wayside. As the saying goes, black history is American history and it's a varied and rich history.

This issue celebrates just one of the Black inventors you Probably didn't know about, Marian R. Croak, Senior Vice President (SVP), AT&T Labs. Croak holds over 135 patents, primarily in voice-over Internet protocol (VoIP) and another 100 patents currently under review. As SVP, Croak serves as a mentor for women in AT&T labs, and sits on the board for the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Education Center.



Following are a few facts on Black History Month and the resources below provide a minuscule collection of additional information and reviews on famous Black contributors and contributions to America and other countries.

**Origin of Black History Month.** Black History Month was established in 1926 by American historian Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black History. This annual observance originating in the United States has received official recognition from other governments such as Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.

**Why February as Black History Month?** Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History declared the second week of February "Negro History Week." The week was chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, two significant figures in the fight to abolish slavery. The civil rights movement propelled Negro Week to evolve into Black History Month, which was officially recognized by President Gerald Ford in 1976.

**Importance of Black History Month.** Black History Month is a chance to better learn African Americans' histories, highlight their achievement, understand the historical perspective and struggles of African Americans past and present, and prepare us to recognize where systemic racism still exists, and identify a more equitable path forward.

## Related Resources:

[14 Black Inventors You Probably Didn't Know About](#), by Pamela Rosario Perez, Feb. 26, 2017, ThinkGrowth.org.



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## **Black History Month Celebrations**

**(continued)**

### **Related Resources (continued)**

[10 Most Famous Black Inventors and Their Inventions \[10 Most Famous Black Inventors and Their Inventions \(famousinventors.org\)\]](#)

Black History Month, [www.Wikipedia.org](#).

Black History Month 2022: Facts, Origins & More, <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-month>.

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### **Frequently Asked Questions on United Women in Faith**

The March/April issue of Response magazine has a free online version for the grand occasion of United Women in Faith. CEO of United Women in Faith explains the name and expansion of efforts by the former United Methodist Women of faith, action and sisterhood and our new logo to reflect our forward-looking faith and diversity of the organization and God's world.

In addition, the "Frequently Asked Questions on United Women in Faith" responds to such questions as:

- ***Are we still a part of The United Methodist Church?*** Yes.
- ***What do we call ourselves now?*** United Women in Faith.
- ***How were these decisions made?*** United Methodist Women board of directors, program advisory group, surveys, focus groups, and interviews with more than 24,000 United Methodists and women of other denominations and Christian traditions.
- ***Will these changes impact me and my local unit?*** All traditional structures remain intact with new tools and programs available to you and your unit.
- ***Can we be members if our church leaves The United Methodist Church?*** Yes.
- ***Where can I learn about all of the changes underway?*** New Wineskins resources on [www.uwfaith.org](#).
- ***What is the New Wineskins Campaign?*** Making new wine and new wineskins to fulfill our role in God's mission today.
- ***Why the rebranding?*** We are refreshing our story and updating our resources to better nurture current members and welcome women of diverse backgrounds.

**Source:** <https://uwfaith.org/resource/response-magazine/>. Scroll down to click on "Read March/April 2022 edition.



# Women's History Month

March 2022 Women's History Month was celebrated by:

- The Library of Congress
- National Archives and Records Administration
- National Endowment for the Humanities
- National Gallery of Art
- National Park Service
- Smithsonian Institution and the
- U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum



Women's March on  
Washington/January 21, 2017

to commemorate and encourage the study, observance, and celebration of the vital role of women in American history. The following roundtable discussions were hosted by the Library of Congress.

## **March 2. Women of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress: Diverse Voices**

The 117<sup>th</sup> Congress set a new record high for women's representation in the legislature. This event highlighted the achievements of women in Congress, and women members of Congress shared their thoughts on the importance of their voices in the practice of policymaking.

## **March 3. Women's Directors Roundtable at the 2022 Mother Tongue Film Festival**

Every year, Mother Tongue presents a roundtable with women directors to honor the role of women in language transmission. This year, Smithsonian Folklife brought together filmmakers from communities in Canada, the United States, and Mexico to discuss the power of language in their films.

## **March 8. Female Genius: Eliza Harriot and George Washington at the Dawn of the Constitution.**

National Archives hosted Author Mary Sarah Bilder's look to the 1780s, the age of the Constitution, to investigate the rise of a radical new idea in the English-speaking world: female genius.

## **March 11, 16, and 21. Her Story: How women and Girls Transformed the World!**

Smithsonian Institution American Women's History Initiative virtual workshops for children ages 3-6 and their adult companions. Viewers learned about art, history, and more!

## **March 30. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg "Great Americans" Medal Posthumous Presentation.**

The late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, recognized for her groundbreaking commitment to gender equity and human rights, posthumously received the National Museum of American History's signature honor, the "Great Americans" medal.

## **Women's History Month (continued)**

### **Related resources:**

[Library of Congress Event Calendar](https://womenshistorymonth.gov/legal/legal) (<https://womenshistorymonth.gov/legal/legal>),  
[www.loc.gov/loc/events](http://www.loc.gov/loc/events))

[The National Archives Event Calendar](https://www.archive.gov/calendar) (<https://www.archive.gov/calendar>)

[National Endowment of the Humanities Events Calendar](https://www.neh.gov/events) (<https://www.neh.gov/events>)

[National Gallery of Art Events Calendar](http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/calendar.html) (<http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/calendar.html>)

[National Park Service Events Calendar](https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/event-search.htm) (<https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/event-search.htm>)

[Smithsonian Institution Event Calendar](http://www.si.edu/events/HeritageMonth) (<http://www.si.edu/events/HeritageMonth>)

[United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](https://www.ushmm.org/online-calendar) (<https://www.ushmm.org/online-calendar>)

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## **Rally to #BreakTheBarriers**

On March 31, 2022, a coalition of New Jersey youth, faith leaders, and social justice and civil rights organizations held a Rally to #BreakTheBarriers at the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton, NJ.

Speakers included:

**Bishop John R. Schol and Rev. Sammy Arroyo**

Bishop Schol is the Resident Bishop of the Greater New Jersey area which includes the Greater New Jersey Conference in the Northeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church and Interim Bishop for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. Rev. Sammy Arroyo, Phd, is the United Methodist Church Pastor in Hightstown, NJ.

New Jersey has some of the best schools in the nation, yet its schools are also among the most segregated. No child should ever be hurt by bad policy, but that is exactly what is happening in our schools because of segregation.

New Jersey has a chance to end school segregation, give millions of public school students the benefits of an integrated education, and set an example for the entire country. This was the message of the March rally in Trenton, NJ as state leaders were called on to end segregation in public schools across the state and finally #IntegrateNJ.

**Excerpts from Rev. Arroyo's announcement to friends.**

*No child's zip code should determine their destiny.*

# **CHURCH WOMEN UNITED in NEW JERSEY**

**“Agreed to Differ, Resolved to Love, United to Serve”**



## **SPRING 2022 virtual ASSEMBLY**

**WE WILL NOT BE SILENT ABOUT  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**“So let us do everything we can to live in peace  
And let us work hard to build each other up.”  
ROMANS 14:19**

**virtual SPEAKER: Reverend Susan Kramer-Mills**  
Executive Director of the Town Clock CDC – New Brunswick

**MISSION:** to provide permanent affordable safe housing & supportive services  
for domestic violence survivors & their children

**VISION:** to end the cycle of domestic violence by giving survivors time

**Saturday, April 23 2022  
9:30 gathering & 9:45 ice breaker  
10 am program**

**Please send registration/ \$10 donation to CWU-NJ Treasurer Evelyn Jacobson  
PO Box 174, Scotch Plains NJ 07076-0174  
(Please write check to “Church Women United in NJ”)**

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Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

Contact (email/telephone)\_\_\_\_\_

Church/ unit/affiliation\_\_\_\_\_

## The Neighborhood Center in Camden

The mission of the Neighborhood Center in Camden is to break the cycle of childhood poverty by honoring the individual, holding them as precious and loving them dearly. To that end we are embarking on a new journey at the Center, and I am inviting you to share in that work. As I write this note today, we have demolished the baseball field, the children and teenagers were simply not interested in playing baseball. Instead, we are installing a water well for irrigation, and are planting grass sod along with football goal posts, soccer and lacrosse nets. We are building a multi-purpose sports facility at the Center. Why? Because we know that it takes just one spark to change the direction of a child living in Camden.

Over the past two years we have learned a great deal from our basketball program which operates nearly every evening and weekend for one hundred children and teenagers. These same children with their parents then join us for our programs in the arts and academics. Our plan is to establish sports camps for football, soccer, and lacrosse at the Center to become a hub of sports activity that will lift all programs. We are so pleased to have John Martin on board as our volunteer Project Manager for this big project!

We are pleased to be returning to full Urban Farming at the Neighborhood Center under the direction of Farmer Chris. We are in the process of putting mushroom compost on our beds. We are once again hiring teen farmers to work with Chris. They will learn how to farm, nutrition, and important job skills. Additionally, we are adding a Kitchen Apprentice program to teach young adult the skills to become a chef and caterer. The Center will be returning to catering after a hiatus of five years. The program will be a source of income for young adults in Camden and any additional profits will support the evening teen program.

The Summer Camp will be bigger and better than ever this year. We are planning new content academically and field trips that engage the children in a broader world. We are seeking sponsorships of our children, the cost for an entire season is \$1,400 per child and we can expect one hundred campers. During this past winter we have remodeled our classrooms with new floors and addressed the foundation of the historic building.

Additionally, we are looking for opportunities to teach the children something new, so if you have a skill, craft, or talent and wish to share, we are all ears!

Stay tuned for a Baby Shower for our young moms on May 14th from 11 am to 1 pm. We are collecting everything a new mom needs plus diapers.

And a grand open house when the Multi-Purpose Athletic Field is inaugurated!

Mike Landis, Executive Director  
The Neighborhood Center in Camden  
March 25, 2022

## **District and Area NEWS**

### **Delaware Bay District**

Eloise Sulzman and Staci Sheetz, Co-Presidents

At their February 2022 meeting, members of the new (due to redistricting) Delaware Bay District welcomed new members from Gateway South along with regrets for losing members assigned to the Cape Atlantic District. The district has a new Facebook group and approved a proposal to share the duties of the position of President of Delaware Bay District between the current President Eloise Sulzman and Staci Sheetz from Pitman as Co-Presidents. The new expanded district hosted its first event on February 24, 2022 with the theme “Reaching for the Garments of Healing,” and many are enjoying virtual interactions despite missing the personal contact. The next District Mission Team meeting was held March 24, 2022 on Zoom. For more Delaware Bay District activities, visit GNJUWF website at [www.gnjumw.org](http://www.gnjumw.org) under “Districts” for their February 2022 newsletter.

### **Gateway South/Delaware Bay District**

Virgil Williams, President

The District is planning participation in the “Servicing the Meal Program” as a dual opportunity to provide necessary meals and to reach churches that have been transferred due to the GNJ redistricting plan. The District plans to partner with the Ronald McDonald House SNJ and provides the following Volunteer Meals Activity Program policies submitted by Jill Clement, Family services Associate for the Ronald McDonald House SNJ:

1. No one under the age of 12 may volunteer to cook. No one under the age of 8 may volunteer to conduct an activity.
2. 6 volunteers total are permitted to sign up to cook. This number includes chaperones for minors.
3. 6 volunteers total are permitted to conduct an activity. This number includes chaperones for minors.
4. Masks are required for all who enter RMHSNJ.
5. If anyone has any cold or covid symptoms, they should refrain from visiting the house.
6. All meals must be prepared in a commercial kitchen. (Nothing can be pre-made at home)
7. No at home pre-made casseroles can be served due to local health and safety guidelines.
8. Volunteers are permitted to serve the families food but must be wearing gloves.
9. For groups who would like to sign up for dinner, but would rather not cook, you can order from a local restaurant, and have it delivered, or you can drop it off. (Or), you can choose the option to pay for a meal and we will order it for you (\$200.00 minimum).

## District and Area News

(continued)

### Church Women United in New Jersey (CWU-NJ)

CWU-NJ attended the CWU Northeastern Regional Assembly February 18-19, 2022. This was the first virtual NE Regional Assembly with representation from the CT, MA/RI, NJ and NY state and local units. CWU-NJ gave special mention to two youth participants, Coordinator Gianni Daniels-Staley who led the planning and CWU National Board representative Tanasia McLaurin. The NE Regional Assembly theme was "**It Starts with Unity,**" based on 1 Peter 3:8-9.

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66) was held March 14-25, 2022 – UN Women/United Nations. The priority theme was: *Achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policy and programmes.*

### American Jewish Committee (AJC New Jersey)

AJC New Jersey connects our community with American Jewish Committee's global advocacy work to enhance the well-being of the Jewish people and Israel under the direction of Regional Director Rabbi David Levy. On February 3, 2022, AJC New Jersey hosted a free virtual panel discussion for community leaders in the Jewish and Black communities throughout New Jersey entitled **Targeted Communities: Hate + Bias Crimes in New Jersey.** The program shared information on hate/bias crimes and why reporting these crimes is so critical to helping fight them.

Invited speakers were Holly Huffnagle, AJC U.S.; Patricia Williamson, NJ Division on Civil Rights; Denalerie Johnson-Faniel, NJ Division on Civil Rights; and Jenny Presswala, U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The premier global Jewish event of the year is scheduled for June 12-14 in New York City. For more information and scheduled events, visit [www.ajc.org/newjersey](http://www.ajc.org/newjersey).

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*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord,  
Plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
Plans to give you hope and a future.  
Jeremiah 29:11*

# **Central District United Women in Faith**

ANNUAL

## ***NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER***

### ***TEA PARTY***

Saturday APRIL 23, 2022

11-1 PM



**“GIVE LIFE MORE FLAVORS”**

**JOIN US**

at

EPWORTH UMC

5TH AND MORGAN STS., PALMYRA, NJ 08065

**“EACH ONE BRING ONE!”**

**(DAUGHTER, GRANDDAUGHTER ETC.)**

**TEA, ITS AS SIMPLE AS THAT!!!**

Hats are encouraged!

**RSVP by April 18, 2022**

Debbie- 856-786-4656 or Anne- 609-315-289

## **GNJUMW Calendar of Events 2022-2023**

March 5	Leadership Team, 9-11:30am, Zoom
April 9	Spring Meeting, Location or Virtual TBD
May 20-22	Assembly in Orlando, FL, “Turn it Up!” including Leadership Development Day <a href="https://assembly2022.org/">https://assembly2022.org/</a>
May 24	Executive Committee/Planning Committee for “Recipes for Success,” Tuesday, 6pm.
June 4	Officer Training, “Recipes for Success” followed by Leadership Team, in-person!
July 14-16	Mission U 3-day, Virtual with Live/Hybrid Option on Saturday.
July 23	Mission U 1-day, Virtual
August 6	Treasurer’s Meeting 9:30-11, Leadership Team Meeting 12-1:30.
September 20	Exec. Comm./Planning Committee, Tuesday, 6pm.
October 15	GNJUMW Annual Fall Meeting, 9:30-12:30



## ***Voices of Purpose*** **Newsletter Distribution**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Deadline for Articles</b>	<b>Newsletter Distribution</b>
Spring 2022 (Jan – Mar)	April 4, 2022	April 8, 2022
Summer 2022 (Apr – Jun)	July 4, 2022	July 8, 2022
Fall 2022 (Jul – Sep)	October 3, 2022	October 7, 2022
Winter 2022 (Oct – Dec)	January 3, 2022	January 6, 2022

Visit GNJUWF website for published newsletters: [www.gnjumw.org/news](http://www.gnjumw.org/news).

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## **Change & Spiritual Renewal**

### **Isaiah 41:18**

“I will open rivers on the bare heights  
And springs in the midst of the valleys;  
I will make the wilderness a pool of water  
And the dry land fountains of water.

Source: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Change-And-Growth>





United  
Women  
in Faith

## Our Heritage

United Women in Faith celebrates 150 years of service and still counting. Where did we come from and where are we going? What are our stories? Check out our Legacy at: <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/150/home>.

### Find Us



**Greater New Jersey United Methodist Women (GNJUMW) Website**  
<https://www.gnjumw.org>



**GNJUMW Facebook**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/111312445595999>



**United Methodist Women (UMW)**  
[www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org)

**UMWOnline:** Role or responsibility information for UMW leaders.  
<https://www.umwonline.org/home>



**UMW Facebook**  
<https://www.facebook.com/UMWomen>



**UMW Twitter**  
<https://twitter.com/UMWomen>



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**UMW YouTube**  
<https://youtube.com/UMWomen>



**UMW Instagram**  
<https://www.instagram.com/umwomen/>



**UMW Flicker – Photo Pool**  
<https://www.flickr.com/groups/umwomen>

## Connections!

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[www.gnjumw.org](https://www.gnjumw.org)*