



UNITY

The Official Voice of

Church Women United in New Jersey

“ Agreed to differ, Resolved to love, United to serve”

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Since 1941, the women of the Church Women United movement have held a vision of Christian unity and prayerful action. CWU was founded as a racially, culturally, and theologically inclusive Christian women’s movement to celebrate unity and diversity and work for peace in the world.

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE “Journeying Together in Love, Hope and Peace”
by CWU-NJ President Sara Joslin**

Greetings to my Sisters in Christ !

I reflect upon my experience at the 2024 Assembly in Oak Park IL – a journey gathering together of women from across the country and across the generations uniting in celebration and community, exchanging hopes and plans, engaging in story-telling, prayer and praise, and moving into our new 2024-2028 Quadrennium under the leadership of CWU National President Margaret B. Rushing. Under the direction of Wendy Hood (CWU-KY), I represented NJ among the 13 states in the CWU Assembly Choir as we sang “The Gospel Light”, “Child of the King”, “Call Down a Blessing” and “Rejoice”. I gave away all of the CWU-NJ love gifts “Seeds of Hope, Joy, Mercy, Peace, Kindness, etc ” prepared by church women from the Garden State on the first day. The second day when our speakers were from the League of Women Voters of Illinois, my give-aways were from the Alice Paul Institute in Mt Laurel NJ (“VOTER” magnets, postcards, etc). President Sheila Louder (CWU-Atlanta) shared with me over breakfast about their “Rites of Passage” program for middle school girls including social media awareness, etiquette, financial literacy, and advocacy including letter

writing and meeting the Mayor of Atlanta. Reverend Dr. Carolyn Boyd led a workshop BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY and invited us to advocate / take action for one of the top ten states based on the highest % of people living in poverty. President Janice Durr and VP Joanne Compton (CWU-Montgomery AL) shared their issues and concerns with me. Janice and I discussed issues of rural health care, lack of public transportation, and the need for certified midwives for maternal and infant health. Joanne's focus was voter rights, voter registration, and the issues of voter suppression. Dr. Jennifer Buntin led WALK WITH ME, a refugee simulation game where we had individual roles in a group of extended family members. Each member individually chose 6 items to carry when we needed to flee from the outbreak of war to the relative safety of a neighboring country across the river. We encountered challenges on our journey, made decisions about what to jettison when we faced unexpected obstacles during our "escape". A child in my extended family lost everything and we each chose what we were willing to share to comfort, address trauma and meet needs. We could not all fit in the same boat when we reached the river so we had to divide our group to cross separately in two boats. Our future was uncertain but we were thankful that we had escaped from the violence of war. In the closing Assembly worship. the sermon by Reverend Dr Carolyn Scalan-Holmes was "CWU - Are You Ready for New Beginnings and New Perspectives?" She shared her exciting story about being a passenger on a plane that lost cabin pressure and needed to return to the airport. It was a bumpy ride but the emergency oxygen worked, and pilot landed the plane safely. Despite this experience, she made a decision to get on the replacement plane that was brought to the gate. God is in control. We may be tempted to play it safe, but God is calling us to do a New Thing. Hope is our belief that our future will be better than today and that we and God can make it possible. It may be a bumpy ride, but we are church women called by God and together, we are Church Women United called to act in Love, Hope, and Peace to impact the world !

Psalm 72:4 NKJV "He will bring justice to the poor of the people, He will save the children of the needy and break into pieces the oppressor."

ECUMENICAL REPORT

Church Women United in NJ thank our churches, denominations, units, and women for their actions and advocacy. We spotlighted on our CWU-NJ FACEBOOK page the ecumenical and denominational women leading daily worship sessions at the Church Center of the United Nations during CSW68, the Commission of the Status of Women and actions to address gender discrimination, violence, and the poverty of women by strengthening institutions. CSW69 on March 10-21 2025 is the 30th anniversary review of the Beijing Declaration and

Platform for Action on the status of gender equality and empowerment of women. NGO CSW/ NY is planning to focus is on Women in Leadership and Women and the Economy.

The Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of the Highlands held their Spring Gathering at the Parish House of the Presbyterian Church in Morristown on April 13. Marianne Montero spoke about her 2023 Presbyterian Women USA Mission Experience at the Arizona border with a focus on immigration and refugee issues, violence against women and children during the immigration process, and challenges facing indigenous peoples.

Reverend Carol Lakota Eastin was the keynote speaker at the Greater New Jersey Conference United Women in Faith Spring Conference meeting “Native American Resilience and Healing” at Medford UMC on April 27th. Native Americans bring diverse gifts and talents to churches and society. Reverend Eastin of the Illinois Great Rivers Area spoke about actions to build self-esteem of women and youth, to protect the land and drinking water, provide trauma-informed care and to seek justice/raise awareness of missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW). A staggering 84% of indigenous girls and women have experienced violence, more than twice that of other demographic groups.

CWU-NJ Coordinator of Ecumenical Development Pat Jones, Union County Director Patricia Nira Smith and local unit presidents Jackie Lynch, Martha Turner Riddick, Cheryl J. Walker, and Cindy Williams presented appreciation awards to our NJ denominational representatives at our 2024 HATS OFF luncheon to:

- Louise Haynes Ballard – Christian Methodist Church
- Maxine Husbands Brown – Progressive National Baptist Convention
- Rosalia Clegg – Episcopal Church Women Diocese of Newark
- Emma Enoch - American Baptist Churches
- Ernestine “Tina” Harrield - African Methodist Episcopal Zion
- Coleen Williams Lewis - African Methodist Episcopal
- Marilyn Russell – United Church of Christ
- Pat Schutz – United Women in Faith
- Mae Trebing – Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

CWU-NJ officers wore white CWU pins.

The Episcopal sisters of the Community of St John Baptist (CSJB) celebrated 150 years of service in the USA on June 15th. We donated a love gift \$150 to the CSJB as the sisters continue their faith journey of witness and service in love. Church Women United in NJ have held our annual retreat at their St Marguerite Retreat House in Mendham for 48 years.

NATURE FOR ALL: A 2050 Vision for New Jersey We are created to be caretakers of the earth. We need high biodiversity of the land and seas to survive. NJ has preserved 33% and developed 38% of its lands. Preserving 50% of our land area will protect safe drinking water supplies, protect natural flood barriers and biodiversity, & improve public health/ quality of life. We pay respect to the Lenape and generations of indigenous caretakers of these lands and waters, & seek to protect our earth and its habitats today for the generations to come.

RETREAT POEM 2024 BY MARILYN RUSSELL

**We gathered at St. John Baptist
All were carrying “to do” list
This retreat has happened for over 40 years
We get work done as summer nears.**

**Our numbers this time, very small-Only twelve;
But into our work we quickly delved.
Armelia led us to explore a scripture
Then we all had a clearer picture.**

**Marilyn led us in our devotions
We even did some “hokey pokey” motions.
But then it was time to get to work
The beautiful sunroom was a definite perk.**

**At our break time we found the “cookies!”
Homemade ones-a little gooky!
We worked much faster after the sugar boost,
All our thoughts were ready to roost.**

**We now have a calendar for the coming year.
All good things-nothing to fear.
Our next year’s projects have all been set,
Our support of them will cheerfully be met.**

**We did have some problems with the plumbing
Luckily fixed with a little fumbling.
Our President, Sara, we have all learned
Has many gifts-all of them well earned.**

**The food was good-and Brad so helpful
Kept us moving-oh so very useful.
And so our work was totally done
We worshipped together-in unity-as one!**

**This might have been our last retreat.
If it was-it was very sweet.
(Next year we will have a one day meeting)**

Remembering Dr Thelma Davidson Adair

August 29 1920 to August 21 2024

Church Women United in New Jersey celebrates the life and legacy of educator, church leader, and human rights activist Dr. Thelma Cornelia Davidson Adair:

“As an educator, I believe that the early years are most important for the development of character and skills. Helping children from the very beginning is important and it helps make them more inquisitive. We want them to be more aware of the world so they are able to solve problems and issues that will make them vital and valuable at home, the workplace, school, and church. Concern for the child begins before birth.”

Dr Adair was elected as the first African American woman moderator of the Presbyterian Church USA in 1976 at the 188th General Assembly in Baltimore. She later served as the National President of Church Women United (1980-1984). The 15th Ecumenical Assembly in 1980 “The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me” was preceded by global prayer and a spirit walk beginning on the Atlantic City NJ Boardwalk on World Day of Prayer.

CWU National President Thelma C. Adair presented the keynote address at the 40th Anniversary Celebration of Church Women United Inc on Dec 6, 1981 at St John the Divine in NYC. Dr Adair spoke broadly about the dire human consequence of a nuclear war, the need for nuclear disarmament, and peace among nations including at the 1982 CWU-NJ Assembly in Bloomingdale. “Peace begins as personal peace of mind and spirit but demands elimination of injustices such as poverty, sexism and racism.” CWU-NJ adopted three symbols of peace: the dove of peace, the crane associated with Hiroshima, and a purple ribbon symbol of mourning for the transgressions which lead to war. The 1984 CWU Ecumenical Assembly “Come! Build a New Earth: Pieces to Peace” was held at Purdue University in West Lafayette IN. Church Women United state and local units were among those who prepared the Peace Ribbon segments to tie together and encircle the Pentagon, the White House, and the US Capitol on August 4 1985, the 40th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Former National President of CWU Dr. Thelma Davidson Adair was our keynote speaker for the CWU-NJ 50th Assembly at the Holiday Inn in Tinton Falls on May 19 2000. The theme was “Church Women United: Celebrating the Past, Envisioning the Future”. Reverend Naomi L. Fuller of Red Bank was the CWU-NJ state President and First Vice President June Stoll was the State Assembly Chair. “Be strong and of good courage, be not afraid, neither be dismayed for the Lord thy God is with thee, wither so ever thou goest.” Joshua 1:9. Dr Adair, organizer of Harlem's HeadStart program, was the keynote speaker for the 2009 CWU-NJ Assembly “Women Called to Defend + Maintain + Rescue + Deliver” was held at Mt Olive Baptist Church in Hackensack. Sister Carla Barr of the St Barnabas Catholic Church Community was the worship leader.

In 2022 CWU- NJ recognized Dr. Thelma C. Adair with the Church Women United SISTER award.

“When peacemakers plant seeds of peace. They will harvest justice” - James 3:18 CEV

CWU-NJ State Projects for 2024-2025

Church Women United in New Jersey selected our 2024-2025 state projects at our annual retreat held at St Marguerite Retreat House, Community of St. John Baptist, in Mendham NJ on June 4 & 5, 2024. The retreat theme was “I Beg of You - Bear One Another in Love”

Care n’ Share thrift Shop- Cherry Hill- Proceeds from sale of quality donated clothing, housewares, toys and books support local mission projects such as Urban Promise Ministries, Cherry Hill Food & Outreach Council, Interfaith Hospitality Outreach Council (IHOC), and Volunteers of America.

FULFILL, NJ- Neptune- The Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties celebrates 40 years of fighting hunger and building food security at the NJ shore.

Good News for Women- Flemington- Butterfly House Christian sober living residential facility and Mommy and Me House for mothers with young children, supporting survivors of domestic violence.

North Porch Women and Infant Center- Dover- Filling the gap for infants and toddlers in emergency situations when needy families are displaced or have budget shortfalls by providing diapers, wipes, baby food, powdered baby formula, and toiletry items.

St. Joseph’s Indian School -Chamberlain SD- Providing education, safety, hope and love and love for Native American children from dysfunctional homes. They live on-site with one adult for every eight children.

Saint Prison Ministry -Moorestown- Reaching out to those in prison walls to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through athletics and to mentor them towards spiritual maturity as they successfully transition to family and community.

She Has a Name(SHAN)- Camden -outreach ministry of faith and unconditional love for ladies who find themselves in bondage to drugs and prostitution.

We thank units and individuals for their donations to support our CWU-NJ state projects and their continued outreach and engagement with state and local projects. Please submit recommendations for CWU-NJ state projects to CWU-NJ Project Chair Effie Taft. Effie is our point of contact. She prepares a Project Board display with information at state meetings.

CWU partners with Bread for the World, Church World Service, National Farmer Worker Ministry, The YWCA, Ecumenical Women, the United Nations, and Shared Hope International.

CWU-NJ 2024-2025 Calendar

2024: What Does the Lord Require of CW-You?

September 20th Executive Board Meeting – in person

October 19th Fall Gathering (statewide)

November 1-2 World Community Day (local)

December or by March 1 Human Rights Celebration (local)

2025: God’s Daughters Leading Powerful Lives

January 10th Executive Board Meeting on Zoom
26th Church Women United Sunday (local churches/ units)
The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is January 18-25
“You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbor as yourself”

February Share the Love Month (local/ individual)

March 7th-8th World Day of Prayer (local and state)- Cook Islands
8th International Women’s Day
14th Executive Board Meeting

April 26th Spring Assembly (statewide)

May 2nd- 3rd May Friendship Day Celebration (local)

June 12th All day Executive Board Meeting

September 13th Hats off to CWU (statewide)- tentative
19th Executive Board Meeting

October 25th Fall Gathering (statewide)

November 7th-8th World Community Day (local)

December Human Rights Celebration (local)

**Cranford Township Dedication of Reading Garden
In honor of Reverend Dr. Deborah Cannon Partridge Wolfe**

Cranford Township recognized the many accomplishments of Reverend Dr. Deborah Wolfe as “Teacher and Preacher” during the dedication of a reading garden in her honor at Lincoln Park on May 13, 2024.



Reverend Dr Deborah Cannon Partridge Wolfe (1916-2004) was a noted African American educator, minister, and served as Education Chief of the US House of Representatives’ Committee on Labor and Education. Between her junior and senior year at the Jersey City Teacher’s College, Dr Wolfe had a summer internship with the Federated Council of Churches teaching pre-school and school-age children of migrant workers on the eastern shore of Maryland, an experience that led to her later work in the area of rural education. After completing her Masters degree at the Teachers College of Columbia University, she accepted a job at Tuskegee Institute (1938) to develop their rural elementary education and laboratory schools. The D.C Wolfe Elementary School in Shorter AL was opened by her in December 1938 where she was both principal and teacher. Her PhD dissertation was “A Plan for Redesigning the Curriculum of Rural Laboratory Schools of Tuskegee Institute” (1945). She then returned to Tuskegee where she established their education graduate program.

Dr Wolfe was the first African American professor on the Queens College faculty (1951), later taking a leave of absence in 1962 to serve as the Education Chief for the Committee on Education and Labor of the US House of Representatives and successfully guided 35 pieces of legislation through Congress including the Economic Opportunity Act (War on Poverty), the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, among others. Dr Wolfe was the first person to serve concurrently on the NJ State Boards of Education and Higher Education and served as educational advisor to both President Kennedy and President Johnson.

Ordained in 1970, she served as Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Cranford NJ and was the first women elected as the President of the New Jersey Convention of Progressive Baptists. Throughout her life as an academic, social activist, educator, and public

servant, Dr Deborah Cannon Partridge Wolfe taught respect for all people and tried to inspire in her students a willingness to recognize the equality of each individu

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED IN NEW JERSEY
2024 Hat's OFF Luncheon - 80th Celebration



Piscataway Mayor Brian C. Wahlers, CWU-NJ President Dr. Sara Joslin, Co-Chairs Gerry Harvey and Coleen Williams Lewis welcomed over 80 members and supporters on June 1, 2024. It was held at the Piscataway Community Center to celebrate **80 years of faith**, service, education, advocacy, diversity and social justice. Proclamations, resolutions and recognitions were received from the NJ State Senate and Assembly and the communities of Cherry Hill, Cranford, Piscataway, Plainfield, and Newark celebrating bold and beautiful women of Faith cultivating Love, Hope and Peace for all Creation. Guests enjoyed music, flag and liturgical dancers, a hot buffet lunch and beverages prepared by JA & M caterers, affiliated with North Stelton AME. Fruit, coffee or tea and a decorated 80th Anniversary cake was enjoyed by all.

A video produced by Coleen William, Gerry Harvey and a potential member, Deidre McIntyre was presented to all highlighting the past, present and future directions of this Christian movement. Dr. Sara Joslin provided the history of the CWU-NJ, the birth place of the CWU, and remarks about CWU leaders. She was presented with a beautiful bouquet of flowers for her continued leadership and service. Door prizes and purchases from the Tricky/Trade table gave everyone an opportunity to be “a winner.” Feedback from those in attendance was extremely positive.

On behalf of the entire luncheon planning committee, we thank you for all your support:

Gerry Harvey & Coleen Williams-Lewis-Co-Chairs **VP Reverend Vivian D. Cook – Journal**
Dr. Sara Joslin-President **Lorraine Cuffie, Secretary** **Tina Harrield, Treasurer/Registrar**
Patricia Nira Smith & Gerry Harvey, Outreach **Pat Jones, Ecumenical Recognitions** **Cindy Williams & Effie Taft, Table Decorations/Greeters** **Martha Turner Riddick, Entertainment**

Marilyn Russell & Tami Williams- Media/Facebook Armelia Adams & Judy Hood, Favors
Maine Husbands Brown – Ads Susan McLaughlin and Tina Harrield , Tricky Tray/Trade
Cheryl J Walker- Door Prizes



Global Prayer Around The World

Fellowship of the Least Coin

<https://www.fellowshipoftheleastcoin.org>

**An End to Hunger & Poverty , Justice For Farm Workers
Eradicate Human Trafficking Violence and Femicide**

**Peace-building & World Peace Mental, Physical & Spiritual Health and
Well being Trauma-informed Care and Healing**

Prayer Concerning Gender-based Violence

Dear Heavenly Father,

In these days of uncertainty, dissension, anger, and turmoil, we ask you to help us, Lord, to be a source of calmness, fairness, and justice for all people. Be with us and guide us to bring understanding and kindness where there is intolerance, and healing to all who have been mistreated. Help us to speak up for the disenfranchised, protect the frail and fearful, encourage the timid and unsure, and stand up for our sisters and brothers around the world who have been harmed by gender violence.

Help us to advocate for change so we can make this world what You envision it should be A place filled with all that is good and wholesome, beautiful and sacred. As we seek to promote equality and respect for every individual no matter what gender, ethnicity, background, race or nationality, help us to remember that what we want for ourselves is what we should want for others.

We ask these things in the name of your son, Jesus, whose kindness, goodness, respect and compassion for all people provide us a role model for our behavior toward others. Thank you, Lord, for giving us your son, the greatest gift of all, and for sharing him with us. In Christ's precious name. Amen.

Phyllis Lee Vicellio- Church Women Unit



Fellowship of the Least Coin

Here is where some of the funds from the Fellowship of the Least Coin went in 2023:

In the US: End the Cycle-Stop the Violence, Angels of Mercy. This group tries to prevent domestic violence and Human trafficking against women and children in the first place, as well as to help victims out of abusive situations and achieve a healthy and safe life away from abuse by providing referrals to women leaving abusive situations through the Survivor Resettlement program.

In Europe: Empowering Learning of Women with Women for Peace Building, International Academy for Diakonia and Christian Social Practice in the Czech Republic. This is to empower the women and communities which are affected by different kinds of conflict(personal organizational, and geographical).

Africa: Zarya Gardens, Cannon Wambugu, Kenya. To bring Christian women together for prayers, family teachings, encouragement and counseling.

Please continue your prayers for peace and reconciliation.

Submit FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN donations to:
CWU-NJ State Treasurer Tina Harrield, 40 Broad St in Summit NJ 07901

CWU-NJ FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/cwunj/>

GIVING FROM THE HEART (2023-2024)

Please submit donations for the CWU Inc. "Giving from the Heart" campaign:

Church Women United Inc
475 Riverside Drive Suite 1374
New York, New York

CWU Inc. website <https://www.churchwomenunited.net/>
CWU Inc. FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/churchwmunited>

CWU MISSION

Church Women United is an inclusive ecumenical Christian women's movement
celebrating unity in diversity and
empowering women to work toward a world of peace and justice.

CWU VISION

Women of Faith cultivating Love Hope and Peace for All Creation

CWU CORE VALUES

FAITH * SERVICE * EDUCATION * ADVOCACY * DIVERSITY * SOCIAL JUSTICE