



The Connecting Link

SMOKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT UNITED METHODIST

Holston
Conference

Smoky
Mountain
District

Local
Unit

SEPTEMBER 2021

Upcoming Events

Conference Call to Prayer and †
Self Denial
September 17, 2021
Zoom

Conference Annual Meeting
September 18, 2021
Zoom

Smoky Mountain District
UMW Annual Meeting
November 6, 2021
Sevierville First UMC



THE JOURNEY

Of all the many things I love about being a United Methodist Woman, there is one that is very special. Several months ago, I learned of a dear UMW Sister who was struggling with illness. Her Unit President had emailed and called me to ask that we lift her up in prayer for healing. Well, as United Methodist Women, you know what happened. Immediately, an email went out to all the Smoky Mountain District United Methodist Women Unit Presidents and the Leadership Team asking for special prayers for this dear sister. We continued to receive updates and continued praying for healing for her since that initial request. I received a sweet note from her the other day thanking us for our prayers and saying how God truly provided a miracle for her body to be healed. Her life has been restored. This is just one example, but there are many more similar stories I could share. Sometimes we don't think much about prayer; we are quick to say I'll pray for you or I'll pray about this or that. Lately, I've been thinking about prayer; how powerful it is and sometimes, how quickly the answer comes. What a privilege it is to be able to communicate with our Maker who knows what we need even before we ask! I find it amazing that God has the time to be concerned with every detail of our lives. We have jokingly said throughout the years that when United Methodist Women pray, change happens. But it is true; when we join our hearts and prayers, we can change obstacles that otherwise seem impossible to change. What an honor to be a part of United Methodist Women!

On August 14, 2021, the Smoky Mountain District UMW joined with Tennessee Valley District UMW for the Climate Justice Social Action Event. Speakers for Climate Justice were Heather Bennett Co-Founder of Blessed Earth Southeast; Dale Kaiser, ORNL Climate Research Scientist, Retired; and Sandi Byrd, Resource Development Director of Loudon Count Habitat for Humanity.

I hope you will join us for our in person Smoky Mountain District UMW Annual Meeting on November 6, 2021. It will be held at Sevierville First UMC and Rev. Sandra Johnson will be our speaker.

I encourage you, as you share with God in your prayer time, to lift up the Smoky Mountain District UMW Leadership Team, local Unit Officers and members, the Holston Conference UMW Leadership Team and all District UMW in the Holston Conference as well as all United Methodist Women around the world. Together let us live out the Holston Conference UMW logo, *One Body, One Spirit*, from Ephesians 4:4-6, **One God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all**. Thank you for your prayers!

Blessings,
Susan

The † symbol denotes a
Conference or Jurisdiction event.
For more information or to
register for conference events,
visit our website:
<http://holstonumw.org/>

The Connecting Link

OFFICER TRAINING AND ANNUAL MEETING 2021

It is so exciting to finally be able to meet together in person again! We will continue to monitor the situation and certainly follow CDC and Holston Conference Guidelines for the health and safety of all of our members.

Currently, plans are to meet on Saturday, November 6th, at Sevierville 1st United Methodist Church. We will begin our day with registration at 9:30 am and officer training to begin at 10 am. Afterwards, we will gather for our business meeting and speaker. We anticipate this will begin at 11 am, and we are so excited to have Rev. Sandra Johnson as our speaker. Our meeting will be followed by a delicious lunch provided by the ladies at Sevierville 1st.

We certainly hope that you will consider joining us for a day of learning, praising, and fellowship. Be looking for a registration form coming to you soon.

Margaret Denney
Vice President

2nd Annual Social Action Co-Event with TN Valley District

On August 14th sixty-one United Methodist Women, either in person or virtually, were blessed, enlightened and most importantly encouraged by hearing from three wonderful speakers covering the topic of "Climate Justice". We were motivated to action by these knowledgeable speakers – Dale Kaiser, ORNL Climate Research Scientist – retired; Sandi Byrd, Resource Development Director of Loudon County Habitat for Humanity; and Heather Bennett – Co-Founder of Blessed Earth Tennessee – all speaking on the importance of caring for God's creation.

We learned about our call for stewardship of our earth and ways to preserve creation which is God's command.

Serving God, Saving the Planet was the title of Heather's talk. It challenged us to think biblically and critically about creation care. Everything God created should be cared for and protected. We can show our love for God and neighbors by caring for his creation. We ALL need to become better stewards of all GOD entrusts to our care on this earth – now and for all generations to follow.

Alice Nichols
Social Action Chair

MISSION u 2021 REPORT

Many thanks to those who attended and helped with the Holston Conference United Methodist Women first virtual Mission u which was held on July 23 – 24, 2021. There were 66 in attendance on July 23 and 64 on July 24. Of those, 12 were affiliated with the Smoky Mountain District UMW. The theme was ***There's Far More Here Than Meets the Eye***, based on 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. All three of the adult studies were offered.

Recordings of the Opening and Closing worship services are available on our website—www.smokymountainumw.org under the Related Links tab. Recordings of the youth and children's studies and the worship services are available at www.holston.org/missionu.

Mission u 2022 will be a hybrid event on July 22 – 23, 2022, at Cokesbury UMC in Knoxville. Our Study will be Luke Chapter 13. I hope you will make plans to be with us either in person or virtually.

Blessings,

Susan Daffron, Dean of Mission u
Holston Conference UMW



LOCAL UNIT SECRETARY - HAS YOUR UNIT SENT NEXT YEAR'S OFFICERS TO SANDRA GUINN??



IS YOUR LOCAL UNIT MEETING AGAIN??

A lot of units do not meet during the summer, but most begin again in September, and officers for the next year are usually elected in the fall.

As a Local Unit Secretary, your main job is to assist your Officers in handling the mission business of the unit – keeping accurate minutes (finished as soon as possible after a meeting, at least for me, while my memory is still good!).

Your other important duty is to send your list of Local Unit officers with **Local Unit Office, Name, Mailing Address, Phone, Email if available** to Smoky Mountain District Secretary Sandra Guinn **immediately** after they are elected for the coming year. Even if you have vacant offices to be filled, send the ones you have elected. When you fill the vacant offices, please forward that information to the District Secretary. Once I have your officer contact information, it is also important to notify me of any changes during the year, such as a new email or an address change. And, of course, notify me if any new officers are appointed. I will personally contact the units I have not heard from in early December so I can finalize the entire contact list for our District Officers and send the Local Unit President list to the Conference so you can receive the Smoky Mountain District *Connecting Link*, which is sent to ALL Local Unit officers, and the Holston Conference *Holstonian*, which is sent to ALL Local Unit Presidents.

We greatly appreciate your willingness to serve as a Local Unit Secretary. Please contact me at any time if you have questions! We could not carry on our business of mission to women, children, and youth around the world without you!!!

Blessings!

Sandra Guinn
Smoky Mountain District UMW Secretary
408 E 3rd Ave.
Lenoir City, TN 37771 sjuinn336@charter.net

TREASURER'S REPORT

Hello Ladies,

It was wonderful to attend the Social Action event in person and see many of you that I have not seen since the "before times". I found the event to be so meaningful; the subject of Climate change is very important to me. We must all do our part to be good stewards of this beautiful world.

Money is still being sent in by some Units for the Mission Giving Offering taken up at this event, but I am please to report that it looks like we will collect around \$300! This money is sent to the Conference and will help us to meet our Pledge to Mission.

Let me remind all the units that November is the end of our District financial year. I will need all 2021 remittances before November 20th. Please let me know if you have any questions!

Take care and God Bless,

Kim Henry
Treasurer

WESLEY HOUSE WALK-A-THON

Hello ladies! It is my pleasure to write to you regarding our recent district-wide fundraiser – the Wesley House walk-a-thon on July 31, 2021. As I shared in my first video, this event was perfect timing for my own personal goal to run a 5K. I hadn't run in over 40 years and have had a desire to do so for a while now. Due to family and work demands, I never found the time. In May, I "bit the bullet" and joined a running club with the goal of running a 5K on July 31st. Thank goodness the club had others who had never run a 5K either. We committed to sweat together, encourage each other, and press towards our goal together.

Not many days later, I learned of the walk-a-thon fundraiser for the Wesley House, which was also on July 31st. I knew that it was meant for me to participate and to be a blessing. When I spoke to the Smoky Mountain District UMW leadership team, they agreed and adopted the event as a district-wide fundraiser. We set a goal to raise \$2,200. At that point I rolled up my sleeves, and began to reach out to my circle of friends for financial support for the fundraiser. (Continued on page 4)

The Connecting Link

WESLEY HOUSE—CONTINUED

I am thrilled to announce that I met my personal goal by completing the 5K race; but more importantly, as a district, we surpassed our fundraising goal! Funds were raised in various ways. Some individuals sent checks directly to the Wesley House; others donated online or sent funds to their UMW unit treasurers. We are still waiting for a final total from the Wesley House, but to date we have raised \$2,625!!! Woo Hoo! What a blessing! Thank you so much for your participation and support. May the Lord reward each of you for your kindness.

As a result of your ministry, I am sure the Wesley House is giving glory to God. Isn't He good?! Let us rejoice together for surpassing our goal! Can't you see the smiles on the faces of the children and the seniors who are ministered to by the Wesley House? Ladies, let us continue to look out for one another, care for one another and minister to each other's needs for we are one body, called in one hope, serving one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

God Bless You!

Belinda Kenny



LOCAL UNIT NEWS

GREEN MEADOW ELIZABETH FRANKLIN UNIT

We will be beginning a book study on Zoom. We will select one of the books from the 2021-2022 Reading list to discuss. We will have an afternoon group and an evening group.

Please share suggestions for books that you'd like to read and discuss together. You can email me your interest and suggestions: ginny.w.case@gmail.com

This is your special invitation to join the Elizabeth Franklin Circle of Green Meadow as we expand our concepts of mission through the global ministries of the church. For the past several months, we have "visited" with folks in mission as far away as Willow, Alaska and San Francisco, and as close to home as Pennington Gap, Sneedville, and Knoxville. Guided by Ginny West Case, our "ZOOM leader" and Carol Green, our vice president, we have had the opportunity to learn firsthand from the leaders of mission projects that we as United Methodist Women support.

Our meetings are the third Monday of the month at 6:00 and include a short business session, sharing from the UMW Prayer Calendar, and our guest speaker. It's easy to join us. Just log in at ginny.w.case@gmail.com. Ginny will take care of the rest!

Our programs through the remainder of the year are as follows:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Sept. 20 | Persistence in Mission: 150 Legacy Fund
Barbara Campbell
Brooks-Howell Home, Asheville |
| Oct. 17 | UMW Sunday—Tabitha Damron, Director
New Hope Children's Advocacy Center |
| Nov. 15 | World Thank Offering |
| Dec. 20 | Pledge Service |

Spiritual Growth Devotional Summer to Autumn 2021 – Love One Another

Dear UMW Sisters,

To find inspiration in writing this I only had to look outside and view God's creation. Beyond the windows and doors, where I don't venture enough, are the summer colors and floral scents that abound! Very soon it will be beautiful harvest colors and fall planting time. Those things are easy to love but often, in contrast, we struggle with loving certain circumstances and those around us.

I am reminded of a devotional by Patricia Raybon about the tulip bulbs she begrudgingly received from her daughter who had brought them all the way home to the U.S. after a visit to Amsterdam one early summer. She put on quite a show of excitement so her daughter never knew tulips were her least favorite flower, since they bloom early and fade fast. She also begrudged the July weather being too hot to plant them. By September she planted what she called "my daughter's bulbs" with love. With each turn of the rocky soil, her concern for the bulbs grew. Giving their plant bed a final pat, she offered the bulbs a blessing "sleep well" hoping to see blooming tulips in the spring. Pat said, *"My little project became a humble reminder of God's call for us to love one another, even if we're not each other's 'favorites.' Looking past each other's faulty 'weeds' we're enabled by God to extend love to others, even in temperamental seasons. Over time mutual love blooms in spite of ourselves."* "By this" Jesus said, "everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:35). One weekend Patricia's daughter arrived for a visit just as the tulips showed themselves. She said, *"Look what's blooming! Finally, me."* *"Dear Jesus, prune my heart so I can learn to love others in Christ."* – Patricia Raybon (Excerpts from Our Daily Bread Devotion July 2021)

Birthdays: We are honoring servants in the Mission field for each month this Fall from the UMW Prayer Calendar: August 1: Martha Lundgren-Deaconess Home Missioner (DHMR) from Tucson, AZ serving the Desert Southwest martha@aztec506.net; September 21: Fatuma Kutela-Missionary from West Angola serving in Luanda, Angola fkutela@umcmmission.org; October 12: Juarez Goncalves-Racial Ethnic Planning Missionary (REPM) from Brazil serving in Saugus, MA jgoncalves@umcmmission.org. These missionaries will be emailed our birthday wishes. Feel free to send them your own!

Wishing you many prayers and blessings! Cassie Sylvester, Mission Coordinator- Spiritual Growth

The Connecting Link

LOCAL UNIT NEWS

BROADWAY UMW

As we plan to gather this fall in the midst of a new virus surge, it makes us even more aware of how our future is in God's hands. We've all heard the expression, "We plan; God laughs!"

Nevertheless, here is Broadway's Fall calendar:

On Sunday, September 26th, we have the privilege of hosting Donna Mosby, President of the Holston Conference UMW, as our speaker for our annual UMW Sunday. We invite any members from other UMW groups to join us for our 10:30 service.

On Sunday, November 21, we will hold our annual Country Store and Luncheon after our 10:30 service. It is our principal fund raiser each year. Our members contribute handmade/homemade goods to be sold at the Country Store.

On Monday, December 6, we will bring ladies to our fellowship hall, decorated for Christmas, for our annual Advent Gathering. We are excited to continue this relatively "new" tradition which puts attendees in a joyful Christmas mood!

We pray that God will guide our hearts and our intentions!

EASY MISSION PROJECT IDEA

Remember the hundreds of bras our district and conference collected 10 or so years ago? They found their way to markets across Africa and helped supplement women's income in various ways. Surprisingly, in some areas, they even reduced the risk of rape because the woman wearing a bra was thought to be representative of a higher social class.

I was recently reminded that Monte Vista Baptist Church in Maryville has an ongoing collection for gently used or new bras. The bras are shipped to a processing center and then sent to women around the globe. If you or your unit are interested in launching a project that doesn't require making or selling something, a bra collection (can't think of another way to put it!) may be worth considering. If you desire specific information, Monte Vista's number is 865-982-6070.

REMINDER

A NEW Virtual United Methodist Women Unit Being Formed!

Are you looking for a UMW unit to join? Perhaps you know of someone looking for a unit to join?

There is a place for you! Meetings will take place over ZOOM and will use BASE-CAMP as a platform for documents and resources. More information to come!

Organized by Lori Sluder - if you are interested contact her at LoriLSluder@gmail.com with your name, email address, church, and district.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITES

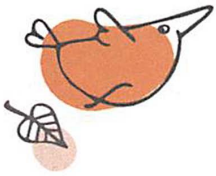
Join us for the first ever conference sponsored Call to Prayer and Self Denial to be held via Zoom on September 17 at 7pm There will be a Mission Giving Opportunity to support programs that promote leadership development and foster the well-being of underserved women, children, and families.

Even if you can't join us on Zoom, you can still help by mailing your gift to Karen Adair, Conference Treasurer, 204 Malboro Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37411. Write Call to Prayer/Self Denial in the memo.

On Saturday, September 18, the Holston Conference United Methodist Women Annual Meeting will be held from 10am—12 noon via Zoom.

More information can be found in this newsletter and at our website - <https://smokymountainumw.org/> or our Facebook page.





COUNTRY STORE



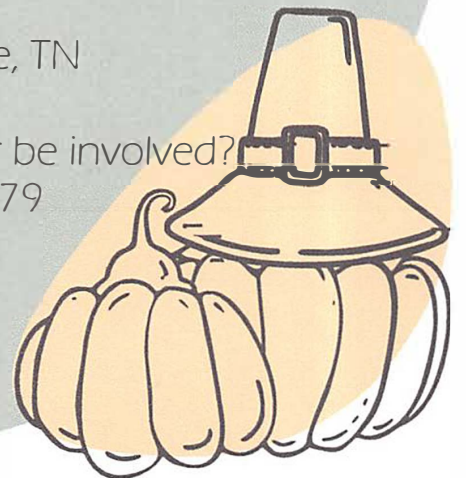
WE'RE THANKFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Join the UMW in raising funds for missions including: Camp in the Community, Raising a Voice, Jubilee Project, Wesley House, Mission Trip, Summer Camp Scholarships, and more!

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2021
FROM 11 -4

Fairview Church
2508 Old Niles Ferry Rd. Maryville, TN

Questions about how to shop, donate, or be involved?
Contact Mollianne 865-607-4379
or Marykate 865-742-0618



Holston Conference United Methodist Women

Virtual Zoom Meeting or Dial-in by Phone Event

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/95856424716>

Dial by phone

+1 301 715 8592 Meeting ID: 958 5642 4716

Call to Prayer & Self-Denial Spiritual Enrichment She Leads: Empowering Women to Make a Difference

Friday, September 17, 2021

Gathering 6:45 PM

Program 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Featured Speaker Reverend Sharon Bowers



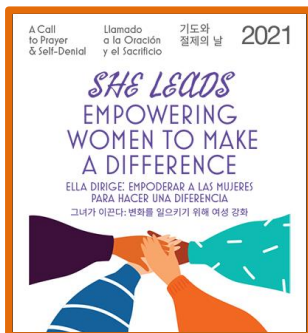
Rev. Bowers is the Director of Inclusion & Dialogue Center in the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Emory & Henry College, Emory, Virginia. She has over 30 years of experience in full-time ministry and has a long-established history of being a champion of diversity. She is the founder and CEO of Character Based Leadership Institute, Inc., an innovative leadership, and personal development ministry helping Christians and others lead and live with character.

Rev. Bowers most recently served at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville as the Executive Director of the Wesley Foundation.

Partaking of Holy Communion

During this special time together, we will be partaking in a virtual Lord's Supper. You are asked to be prepared by having a morsel of bread or cracker, and a sip of juice or water to participate. Rev. Sharon Bowers will officiate via Zoom. The table is open and the invitation to participate is extended to all who love Christ, who earnestly repent of their sin, and seek to be at peace with one another. Whosoever can say they do, or have done these three things are welcome to receive.

Mission Giving Opportunity



The Call to Prayer & Self-Denial offering provides the means for women to be able to gain control of their lives and futures. It supports the programs offered by National Mission Institutions and international partner organizations that promote leadership development and foster the well-being of underserved women, children, and families. Projects include, but are not limited to: GED and ESL, job readiness, life skills and livelihood training, scholarships, and microenterprise programs. Through your Call to Prayer & Self-Denial offering, you are witness to God at work, empowering women to make a difference. One hundred percent of the offering will go directly to fund these projects. **Please mail your Mission Giving check or money order to: Karen Adair,**

Conference Treasurer, 204 Marlboro Ave., Chattanooga, TN 37411. Write Call to Prayer/Self Denial in the memo.

Create Your Own Worship Space

You are invited to create a personalized worship space to center yourself during the "Call to Prayer & Self Denial" worship service. Things you may want to consider as a part of your altar include: a cloth covering, Bible, candle(s), cross, photographs of woman who have played significant roles or influenced your life, etc. **Please share your worship space with other attendees by sending a photo via email with the subject line "Worship Space" to patbellinrath@gmail.com.** We will share photos received by Friday, September 10th as a part of the worship service. **NO REGISTRATION IS NEEDED FOR THIS EVENT.**

Holston Conference United Methodist Women



Holston Conference United Methodist Women

48th Annual (Virtual) Meeting

Saturday, September 18, 2021

10:00 – 12:00 Noon

The Holston Conference United Methodist Women will convene its 48th Annual Meeting (virtually) on Saturday, September 18, 2021, beginning at 10:00 AM through 12:00 Noon. The link to join the annual meeting is listed here. https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Ou3iOgNJRTWaZISXX1bHEw

You should expect to participate in a **Business Session** (including a Roll Call, presentation of the proposed 2022 Budget and Slate of Nominees, Reports, President Message, and other matters of business).

Information you need to know. Each person attending **must register to participate and receive access to the 2021 Annual Meeting Program Book**. Attached to this email is a paper registration to be completed and returned by mail **OR** you may register online at <https://holston-reg.brtapp.com/UMWAnnualMeeting>.

Voting Members at Annual Meeting. The description of a Holston Conference UMW delegate is stated in the 2020 Directory, Standing Rules, District UMW, page 35, Item 15, Representation. In addition, all members of the Conference team are delegates (including ex-officio members).

Each unit of up to 99 members may have two voting delegates attending Conference Annual Meeting. **Units of 100 or more may have three voting delegates.** District officers shall be seated with local delegates and shall have voting privileges.

Special Guest Speaker



Rev. Dr. Angela Hardy Cross, Mountain View District Superintendent, will be the speaker of the hour and will serve to install the newly elected officers for 2022. Rev. Cross is an Elder in Full Connection in Holston Conference who has served local churches from Radford, Virginia to Chattanooga, Tennessee. She also served on several District and Conference committees throughout her tenure.

The Reverend Hardy Cross tells us she stands on the Word of God. She studies the Word and then follows what the Word says. She enjoys cooking, gardening, fishing, interior decorating, horseback riding, biking, and dancing with Rev. Walter H. Cross Jr.

Music Leaders

The musical group “A Chord of Three” will provide musical selections during the annual meeting. The trio has sung together for over 25 years. Jana Wills, Donna Grubb, and Amy Harrison are all members of Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, Greeneville, Tennessee! Amy also serves as the music director for the church.

For more information regarding the annual meeting contact:
Margaret Forby, Vice President, Program Coordination Chair
margaretforby@yahoo.com





Ephesians 4:4

Holston Conference United Methodist Women

Annual Meeting • Live on ZOOM

September 17 at 7:00 p.m. &
September 18 from 10:00 – 12:00 p.m.

Register today!!

The PURPOSE of United Methodist Women

The Purpose is adopted by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church as the official mission statement of United Methodist Women.

United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to 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.

Out of the Purpose are four mission foci that relate to the mission initiatives and priorities of United Methodist Women.

- To be a community of women
- To know God
- To develop a creative and supportive fellowship
- To expand concepts of mission

Register on-line at: <https://holston-reg.brtaapp.com/UMWAnnualMeeting> OR

Mail, or e-mail, the registration form below to:

Lori Sluder, Holston UMW, P. O. Box 850, Alcoa, TN 37701-0850 • LoriSluder@holston.org

FIRST & LAST NAME _____

CELL PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CHURCH _____ DISTRICT _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

If you are a voting delegate we must have your e-mail address

VOTING DELEGATE: YES NO

FIRST TIMER: YES NO



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Smoky Mountain District United Methodist Women

Communications Coordinator
Kim Hill
1504 Aberdeen Drive
Alcoa, TN 37701

Email:
kimhillumw@gmail.com



ASSEMBLY 2022

You are personally invited to ASSEMBLY 2022 May 20-22 in Orlando, Florida. We will reflect on today's challenges and together find comfort and strength to move forward, building new ways for faith-filled women to make a difference in their communities and the world. We will recommit to our purpose, but also more.

For such a time as this, we will TURN IT UP! At ASSEMBLY 2022. We will TURN IT UP! for spiritual healing and renewal. We will TURN IT UP! for rebirth in a new time. We will TURN IT UP! for women leaders. We will TURN IT UP! for justice for women, children and youth. This is our chance to continue building on our more than 150-year heritage as women leaders who know how to organize and serve. We are women who are willing to be challenged to grow in our faith as we build deeper connections with one another, community leaders and partners in the work of justice for all of God's children.