



United  
Women  
in Faith

VOLUME 77, ISSUE 4, FALL 2025

# TEL A Woman

VOICE OF SOUTH GEORGIA UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

## S. Ga. Conference UWFaith President's Message

### Making it to the Top with a Sister

Once every 4 years, women from all over gather to celebrate sisterhood and the work of United Women in Faith and its predecessor organizations. Whereas the jurisdiction quadrennial meetings (also held every 4 years, but not in the same year) are to elect leadership, the Assembly is purely a time of celebration, inspiration, and rejuvenation. Exciting workshops and town halls are planned to produce a memorable weekend for attendees. I have been blessed to attend two Assemblies - the most recent one in Orlando and way back in the day in Cincinnati, Ohio. I promise that the occasion will not disappoint. You will be sure to return with wonderful stories. My Cincinnati trip involved helping a woman on her first escalator ride. She was at the foot of the escalator looking bewildered. In her stilted English, she said she had never ridden such a contraption. I took her hand and, fortunately, we made it to the top.

Early bird registration of \$365 continues through November 29. After that time, the price increases. We are working on bus transportation with North Georgia. Conference Treasurer Diane James is serving as Assembly liaison. A block of rooms has been reserved. Please contact Diane if you are attending and especially, if you want to secure a seat on the bus. We need to determine interest, so if there might be a remote possibility, please let Diane know. Southeastern Jurisdiction has funds available for one scholarship per conference. The scholarship, up to \$500, should be used to cover the cost of Early Bird registration. The following criteria will be used:

- First time attendee to Assembly, or
- A woman under the age of 40, or
- A woman who has joined United Women in Faith in the last year

The SEJ will reimburse the recipient at the end of Assembly when they present their registration receipt, an expense voucher, and a brief report of their Assembly activities. Please send names of possible scholarship recipients to [sgaumw@gmail.com](mailto:sgaumw@gmail.com).

Longtime United Methodists Stacey Abrams and her mother, Rev. Carolyn Abrams (retired United Methodist pastor) will take part in conversations as Assembly Inspiration Speakers. As part of their appearance, the two have offered to take questions from members and/or attendees. You should submit your questions to [AssemblyKeynote@uwfaith.org](mailto:AssemblyKeynote@uwfaith.org) by January 15, 2026, for consideration. In order to celebrate our Mother-Daughter speakers, all attendees are invited to bring their daughters, nieces, mentees, church friends, community sisters, neighbors, or other women of the next generation.

At Assembly 2026, each attendee will be able to attend one town hall and one workshop each day. The list of workshops with the descriptions and leader bios will be posted on the Assembly website ([uwfaith.org/assembly](http://uwfaith.org/assembly)).

A special 1-day Soul Care Retreat will be offered on Thursday, May 14 from 10 AM to 4 PM. This retreat will nurture your mind, body, and spirit. For additional info, visit the website. We look forward to hearing the special stories that you bring back.

*Sara Jones, President*  
South Georgia Conference United Women in Faith

# SGA UWFaith Annual Meeting 2025

The SGA Conference UWFaith 2025 Annual meeting was opened with greetings from Rev. Christy Bandy, the minister of Hawkinsville FUMC (meeting location), and Lynn Harper, UWFaith President of the NC and NW districts. SGA Conference President Tara Jones presided over the meeting. Special guests included the SGA Conference District Superintendents, Rev. Dr. Scott Hagan and Rev. Jeff Cook.

Bishop Robin Dease gave a motivating speech on women in leadership and having faith that God can do all things. She recited names of women in the bible and around the world who have been/are leaders. And she encouraged us to lead with fire, speak with wisdom and act with courage.

During the business meeting,:

- ◆ Treasurer Diane James presented the proposed budget and pledge for 2026 which was approved by the membership.
- ◆ Becky Britton presented recognition pins to the outgoing officers.
- ◆ Committee on Nominations presented the slate of new officers who were then duly elected and were installed by Historian and former President Sara Bankhead.
- ◆ Tara Jones passed the gavel to Jeanne Lindsey.



Above: Pres. Tara Jones

Left/Below: Bishop Robin Dease, Keynote Speaker



Left:  
Outgoing officers were recognized:  
Tara Jones, President  
Paula Shaw-Powell, Nominations Chair  
Sylvia Copp, Social Action Coordinator  
Below (L to R):  
Congregation;  
Alter Worship Table;  
Sara Bankhead installing  
new elected officers.



## 2026 Budget

The South Georgia Conference UWFaith budget for 2026 was presented by Treasurer Diane James, and was approved by the members present at the meeting.

### **South Georgia United Women in Faith - 2026 Budget**

#### **Administrative & Membership Development**

##### **A & MD Funds**

Travel	500
Lodging & meals	300
Special gifts & pins	360
	<b>\$1,160.00</b>

**Resources & Literature / Books** **\$1,000.00**

**District A&MD Funds** **\$2,000.00**

**SGJ Jurisdictional A&MD** **\$1,100.00**

##### **Mission u**

Conference Team/District officers	\$3,000.00
Conference Mission u Contribution	\$2,000.00
	<b>\$5,000.00</b>

##### **Conference Programs and Events**

Annual Meeting	\$2,000.00
Leadership Training	\$700.00
Spiritual Growth retreat	\$4,500.00
Hands on Mission	0
Social Issues / Book Study	\$2,500.00
	<b>\$9,700.00</b>

**Assembly 2026** **\$4,454.00**

**Media - Zoom** **\$210.00**

##### **Executive Committee**

Travel	\$500.00
Annual South Georgia UMC conference	\$600.00
	<b>\$1,100.00</b>

**Insurance** **\$450.00**

**Audits** **\$1,000.00**

**Author J. Moore Museum** **\$200.00**

**Miscellaneous** **\$200.00**

**Total A & MD** **\$27,574.00**

**Conference Pledge 2026** **\$33,000.00**

**Total Budget and Pledge** **\$60,574.00**

# Annual Meeting

The Committee on Nominations report on proposed officers for 2026 was presented and approved by the membership. The Committee on Nominations members were Paula Shaw-Powell (Chairperson), Shirley Johnson, Helen Smith, and Laurie Jo Upchurch.

## Newly Elected Officers

President	Jeanne Lindsey	Valdosta / SC
Secretary	Paula Shaw-Powell	Columbus / NW
Communications	Shelley Mitchell	Valdosta / SC
Social Action	Sonya Aldridge	Pavo / SW
Chair, Nominations	Denise Rooks	Baxley / SC
Member, CoN	Janice Ramsey	Columbus / NW
Member, CoN	Connie Boole	Savannah / Coastal

## Continuing Officers

Treasurer	Diane James	Blakely / SW
Ed. & Interpretation	Becky Britton	Columbus / NW
Spiritual Growth	Martha Ray	Statesboro / NE
Member, CoN	Helen Smith	Sylvester / SW

## District Presidents

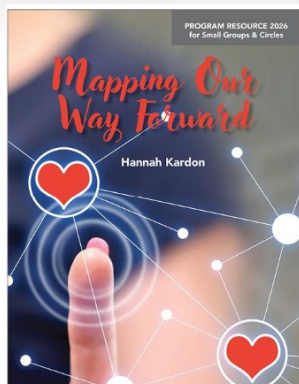
Coastal/Northeast	Kathy Harrell
N Central/Northwest	Lynn Harper
S Central/Southwest	Nell Calhoun

**Director** Patsy Thomas  
Elected by SEJ, serving 2025-2028

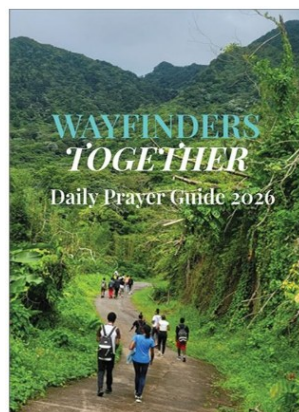
Do you want to serve in a leadership role - or know someone who would? Please fill out a Talent/Resource Information Sheet located on our conference website at <https://www.sgaumc.org> under Reporting Forms or follow this link: [Talent Bank](#)



## 2026 UWFaith Resources



**2026 Program Resource Book.** The 2026 program book is about finding our way, mapping our plans, and holding on to the balance of grounding and flowing as we do it. In the midst of uncertainties that surround us, we can map our way forward into the unknown by holding on to God and our core values, letting them keep us grounded as we face each challenge. Monthly programs feature a thematic reading from the Bible, a map to explore, a group activity with discussion questions to share, and a prayer. Available from UWFaith program resources for \$14.99.



**2026 Daily Prayer Guide.** This year's prayer guide focuses on how we, as God's people, are forging a new path as wayfinders in "these unprecedented times." Uncertainty continually increases, and the metaphor of being in the wilderness feels all too clear; therefore, we must find our way forward as a people of faith, oriented toward Christ, and rooted in our communities to chart a path for a better world. Available at [uwfaith.org](http://uwfaith.org) for \$19.99. You can add the digital version for an extra \$5.

There are also eCards that can be downloaded for free.

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### Podcasts & Webinars

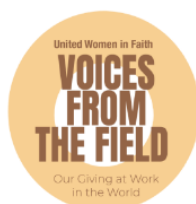
Visit [uwfaith.org/resources/podcasts](http://uwfaith.org/resources/podcasts)



**Faith Talks** Join for monthly conversations with United Women in Faith, hosted by Jennifer R Farmer. Each month, we'll explore timely themes and resources, from expert insights on ways to live your faith to inspiring interviews with spiritual leaders. Visit [Calendar | United Women in Faith](#) to join the live podcasts.



**response Podcast** Tune in to audio versions of some of the top articles from each issue of response magazine, the award-winning official magazine of United Women in Faith. Topics cover everything from spiritual growth and living our faith to reports on local, national and international work.



**Voices from the Field.** Learn about the national and international initiatives that benefit from Mission Giving, directly through the voices "from the field." You'll hear firsthand from program leaders about their work, daily challenges, hopes, and dreams. Visit [Podcasts | United Women in Faith](#) to join the live webinars.

## Assembly 2026

A promotional graphic for Assembly 2026. The background is a teal-tinted photograph of two women in the foreground, both wearing blue t-shirts that say "SISTERHOOD Team". They have their hands raised in a gesture of praise or prayer. The text "Assembly 2026" is prominently displayed in white at the top. Below it, the dates "May 15-17, 2026" and the location "Indianapolis, Indiana" are listed. A yellow starburst graphic in the center contains the text "Dream it! Believe it! Do it!". At the bottom, a white text box contains an inspirational message.

**Assembly 2026**

**May 15-17, 2026**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana**

**Dream it!  
Believe it!  
Do it!**

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

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

Early Bird Pricing through November 30, 2025. A scholarship is available from the SE Jurisdiction (see President's message, pg 1)– contact us at [sgaumw@gmail.com](mailto:sgaumw@gmail.com) if you are interested.

## District News (North Central/Northwest)

### NORTH CENTRAL/NORTHWEST DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

“Where two or more are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst”

(Matthew 18:20)

The first combined North Central/Northwest District United Women in Faith Annual Meeting was held on September 20, 2025 at Epworth United Methodist Church, Columbus, GA. What a wonderful way to emphasize the significance of UWF’s purpose of being a community of women. The theme for the meeting was “Carrying Our Faith Forward.” Thirty-five attended the gathering, to include members from seven of our units, plus DS Rev. Jeff Cook and his wife Sandra, Rev. Christy Bandy (pastor of Hawkinsville, FUMC), and Conference Officers Tara Jones, Diane James, and Sylvia Copp.

This meeting afforded our members to fellowship with each other and to share ideas. Yes, this meeting involved change; but remember, change is the only thing in life that is constant. Without change, things would be boring. However, one thing that has not changed is our mission of providing faith, hope, and love to women, children, and youth. That’s something we’ve been doing since 1879.

A special THANKS to Becky Britton and all the ladies of Epworth UWF. They were the “hostesses with the mostess.” They made sure our every need was met.

The agenda was full. It included the President’s Address, the election and installation of 2026 officers, and the recognition of outgoing officers Margaret Wheeler, Barbara Wolfe, and Agnes McKinney. The 2026 officers were elected and installed by Sara Bankhead, former Conference President and current Conference Historian are:

District Officers		Nominations Committee
President	Lynn Harper	Merita Evans (NC)
Secretary	Shirley Butler	Colleen Mahaney (NC)
Treasurer	Pamela Shaw-Grant	Karen Clements (NW)
E&I Coordinator	Karen Hartin	Sandi Hortman (NW)

You will note we are still looking for a Chair, Committee on Nominations. If you are in the NC/NW district and are interested, please contact Lynn or Shirley.



Left: Becky Britton and Karen Hartin

Right: Sheryl King and Patsy Thomas



(Report continued on next page)



## District News (North Central/Northwest)

### NORTH CENTRAL/NORTHWEST DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING (Continued)

The district's 2026 Pledge of \$5,000 and \$800.00 were presented and approved.

Two significant agenda items were the Memorial Service and the message delivered by the guest speaker. During the Memorial Service, 10 of our Sisters in Christ who had passed away since the 2024 District Annual Meetings were memorialized during a moving ceremony.

We were blessed to have Rev. Ernestine Campbell, pastor of Epworth UMC, as our guest speaker. What a powerful message she delivered that centered on the relationship between Ruth and Naomi, drawing parallels to the lives and experiences of United Women in Faith. Her message highlighted the value of sisterhood and the power of women supporting one another and encouraging all to strive for self-sufficiency while nurturing meaningful relationships.

Rev. Campbell and Rev. Cook led the congregation in the sacrament of Holy Communion. Rev. Christy Bandy then offered the benediction and blessing for the meal.

Everyone enjoyed a bountiful meal provide by Epworth United Women in Faith.

Breaking with tradition, District-Local Leadership Training was held following lunch for all attendees. This was the norm at all the 2025 District Annual Meetings. Conference officers Tara Jones, Diane James, and Becky Britton conducted the training.



Above: Speaker, Rev. Ernestine Campbell

Lynn Harper—President NC/NW District UWFaith



Above: General Congregation

Right: Lunch provided by the ladies of Epworth UMC





## District News

On October 21, the circle at Jesup First did a holiday cake project that was taken to their local food bank to give out over the holidays. The kits contained a box of cake mix, a tub of icing, and a can of Sprite with instructions to produce a tasty treat for the holidays.



Members of the Jesup First Circle at work filling Ziplock bags with cake ingredients. Above, bags of cake kits ready to bring to the local food bank. They prepared 120 cake kits to distribute.



SEJ Director Patsy Thomas spoke at Pierce Chapel Legacy of the Eight circle in Columbus.



*Love in Action*

## Spiritual Growth Retreat and FaithWorks

Mark your calendars for the **2026 Spiritual Growth Retreat on March 20th to 22nd** at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island. Our retreat leader will be Rev. Jenna Kennedy who serves as the Minister of Operations for FaithWorks, a ministry based in Brunswick, Georgia. The retreat will be held at Epworth by the Sea on March 20th—22nd.

FaithWorks ministry is currently featured in an article on the South Georgia UMC Conference website to advertise the launching of their **“Love Thy Neighbor”** campaign in response to the growing needs in the Brunswick, Georgia community.

Among the people FaithWorks serves are those facing chronic illness, poverty, and homelessness. According to the article, during the first 9 months of 2025, community support has helped FaithWorks to:

- Provide food or utility assistance to 2,400 families
- Help 170 people move out of homelessness
- Serve over 3,200 patients and families at Southeast Georgia Health System
- Provide \$2,600 in meal vouchers for cancer patients at Nunnally House
- Offer over \$30,000 in benevolent aid for medicine, IDs, and utility bills
- Deliver food monthly to 1,132 children and 325 seniors
- Make 570 home visits to those who are shut in and alone

Spiritual Growth Coordinator, Martha Ray, is working hard on pulling together a wonderful retreat experience. More details about the retreat will be coming out in January. We are looking forward to Rev. Jenna Kennedy's leadership!



**To read the full article:** [SGAUMC | FaithWorks Launches “Love Thy Neighbor” Campaign to Meet Growing Community Needs](#)

**To learn more about FaithWorks:** <https://faithworksministry.org>.

*FaithWorks began in 1995 as a ministry of the United Methodist Church to identify, study, and create models for ministry beyond the walls of the local church.*

*From its early years, FaithWorks has evolved into a community-focused ecumenical ministry that focuses on – but is not limited to – community healthcare services and poverty needs in Glynn County, GA and the surrounding Southeast Georgia area.*

## Treasurer's Report

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be". Matthew 6:21.

November is the month United Women in Faith pause and give thanks for the many blessings God has showered us with this year. Our treasure has been our desire to serve the local needs of women, children and youth and to go the second mile by financially giving to the missions funded through United Women in Faith grants.

As of November, South Georgia units have given \$25,554.05 toward our pledge of \$30,200. In addition we have given \$4,044 to support specific missions agencies. I encourage each unit to participate in the World Thank offering and to go that extra mile to meet and maybe exceed our pledge. Because of all the government cuts, many of our mission agencies that serve women, children and youth are hurting. I pray your heart is in missions.

Each unit needs to have their mission giving to the District treasurer by December 5th so I can send in our pledge and our support for Wesley Community Center, Open Door Community Center and Vashti Center by December 20. This way our three South Georgia mission agencies will receive their gifts by January. What a great way to start 2026!

Remember 4th quarter supplementary giving will go to our three South Georgia mission agencies.

*Diane James*, Treasurer

**South Georgia Conference UWFaith**



Wesley  
Community  
Centers of  
Savannah, Inc.

## UWFaith Mission Giving

Information on UWFaith mission projects in the US and throughout the world are available on the [uwfaith.org](http://uwfaith.org) website. You can use this link to access the most recent maps:

[United Women in Faith 2024 Mission Maps](#)





## Other News

### In Loving Memory

On Monday, November 10, 2025, Rev. Christy Bandy went to dwell in the home of our Lord.

Rev. Bandy has been a long-time supporter and advocate for United Women in Faith. In 2024, she led Mission u with the theme of "Coming Home" as we studied the nature of God, and dealing with hurt in relationships within our family, church, or other groups.

She was most recently serving as pastor of Hawkinsville UMC and provided a warm welcome to UWFaith members who met at the church for their 2025 Annual Meeting this past October.




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**Celebration of Life service will be held on Saturday, November 22, 2025 at 11:00 am at Hawkinsville First United Methodist Church, 44 Merritt Street.**

### New Circle

In October, 18 women attended the Surrency UWFaith Circle kick-off meeting. They were introduced to Prayer Shawl/Blanket ministry and two blankets were blessed and sent forth. They also learned about Called by Name candle burning. Officers for the new circle will be elected at the November meeting.

**Congratulations to the new circle!**

Right: Four members of the Surrency UWFaith Circle



## SGC UWFaith 2025 Leadership Team ~ Upcoming Events

### *Upcoming Events*

#### **Spiritual Growth Retreat**

- March 20 - 22
- Epworth by the Sea

#### **UWFaith Assembly**

- May 15 - 17
- Indianapolis, IN
- See [uwfaith.org/assembly](http://uwfaith.org/assembly)

#### **Mission u**

- July 17 - 19
- Epworth by the Sea

#### **Book Study**

- The Color of Compromise
- Leader Rev Ernestine Cambell
- January - March 2026
- Meeting times TBD

**President**

**Tara Jones**

**Secretary**

**Open**

**Treasurer**

**Diane James**

**Program Resources**

**Open**

**Communications Coordinator**

**Jeanne Lindsey**

**Chairperson, Committee on Nominations**

**Paula Shaw-Powell**

**Director**

**Patsy Thomas**

### **MISSION COORDINATORS**

**Education / Interpretation**

**Becky Britton**

**Spiritual Growth**

**Martha Ray**

**Social Action**

**Sylvia Copp**

### **DISTRICT PRESIDENTS**

**Coastal/Northeast**

**Kathy Harrell**

**North Central/Northwest**

**Lynn Harper**

**Southwest/South Central**

**Sonya Aldridge**

**Contact South Georgia UWFaith**

**Email: [sgaumw@gmail.com](mailto:sgaumw@gmail.com)**

**Website: [www.sgaumc.org/uwf](http://www.sgaumc.org/uwf)**

[SGAUMC](http://SGAUMC) | [United Women In Faith](http://United Women In Faith)



**Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

**-APOSTLE PAUL**