



# United Methodist Women Commonwealth West District Spring 2022 Newsletter

## Letter from our President

Hello to all my fellow UMW ladies,

I hope you have all had a chance to enjoy the warm weather that we've had lately. Our Spring meeting is coming up on Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> in Charlton at Charlton City United Methodist Church. The theme is Living with Gratitude and we have a wonderful speaker lined up; Nora Cunningham who does a great job on the Faith Talks podcasts. So keep that Saturday open for a great meeting which will be in person and on zoom. More information to come.

Assembly is fast approaching, May 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> so save the dates. We will be in Orlando, Florida and I look forward to seeing lots of you there. Registration is still open for in person and zoom options. It is a wonderful time to meet new friends and greet old ones from around the world. Assembly happens every 4 years so if you miss this one the next is in 2026.

We still have a number of openings in different positions so if you've ever wanted to be part of the planning of our meetings feel free to talk to me or any of the other ladies on our team. Everyone is welcome.

Yours in Christ,

Belinda Scott

President

## Spring District Meeting

# Save the Date

## April 2, 2022

Our district meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2022 hosted by Charlton City UMC.

This will be a hybrid meeting. You can attend either via zoom or in person.

This is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

We will provide updated information as soon as we receive it.

## Purpose

**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.**

## Social Actions

March 8 is INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYodeGhrjosGtNwhKE2ijhR9YbsPuJq3ovt>

Voices from the Field: Our Giving at Work in the World

### Voices from the Field - Deaconess and Home Missioner Ministry

Love, Justice, Service: The Ministries of Deaconesses and Home Missioners - March 8, 7:30 pm ET



Join us Tuesday, March 8, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. Eastern Time (U.S. and Canada).

Register in advance for this virtual meeting:

▶ [Register here](#)

On March 8, 2022, Voices from the Field will be highlighting the ministries of deaconesses and home missioners. On this International Women's Day, you will hear from three deaconesses working in diverse ministry contexts. Melba McCallum of North Carolina, Susan Silhan of Upper New York and Leah Wandera of Kenya will

be sharing about their work with women, children and youth around the world. Mission Giving dollars help support the professional training and education of deaconesses and home missioners, equipping them to do the work God has called them to do.

### The Future of UMW

<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/member-resources>

### The Future of United Methodist Women

Big changes are on the horizon for United Methodist Women in 2022.



 [FAQs: Upcoming Changes for United Methodist Women](#)

 [Let's Talk About Change](#)

 [New Wineskins Course: Time to Grow - Positioning United Methodist Women for the Future](#)

 [Video: The Future of United Methodist Women](#)

## H.R. 2248 Ending PUSHOUT Act of 2021

Introduced in the House 3/26/21 by Rep Ayanna Pressley (MA-7)

Referred to House Comm on Education. and Labor

Has 10 co-sponsors. No further action

UMW Action Alert info: <https://p2a.co/lMYo6cz>

### District Officers

#### Current Officers

President	Belinda Scott
Vice President	Fay Flanary
Secretary	Sherry Seklecki
Treasurer	Virginia Ahart
Nominating Chair	Roxie Pin
Membership, Nuture & Outreach	Carol Stidger
Education & Interpretation	Barbara Ingrassia
Social Action	Barbara Ingrassia
Communications	Jamie Filteau
Program Committee Chair	Arlene Mackie

### A word from our Treasurer

Please remember to send in funds as you receive them. The end of the first quarter of the year is approaching. A \$7,000 pledge was made to the Conference UMW and it is never to soon to start receiving funds toward it.

Commonwealth West District will honour the Five Star Giving Units of 2021 at our May meeting. They will be announced then. However, if you did not send funds in all five areas you still have helped our district meet its pledge and you've been a valuable part of UMW mission work.

There still seems to be problems obtain the Gift to Mission cards. I do have some Gift in Memory cards if your unit needs those.

Thank you all for being involved in local and in worldwide mission work.

Virginia Ahart

This newsletter is our primary means of communication with you. We prefer email, but do mail many copies – if that works best for you. Make sure we have your correct contact information.

Jamie Filteau 16 Litchfield Street Fitchburg, MA 01420 [jrfilteau@gmail.com](mailto:jrfilteau@gmail.com) (978) 751-1562

## Greetings from our Secretary

There has been a lot of hard work going on in the Commonwealth West District. Monthly meetings, discussions and prayer, on how to bring the United Methodist Women together in growth and spirit.

Plans are under way for our next spring gathering. The theme is “Living with Gratitude”, to be hosted by the Charlton City Church, Charlton Ma. To be held on April 2, 2022. Both in person and on zoom.

Mark your calendars. This should be a very interesting meeting for all. Guest speaker to be announced.

As I was preparing to write my note, I was thinking of the word Gratitude. So I decided to look up the definition of this word.

The quality of being thankful; the readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

“she expressed her gratitude to the committee for their support”

How fitting, for during this time of the year and all that is going on in the world with covid, the economy, dealing with the weather. A pending snowstorm in the area. Family stressors, no family is without. War in the Ukraine. We have the unity of our UMW. Praying for each other, and for peace.

Please keep this Spring Meeting on your calendar. We look forward to seeing you, either in person or on the screen.

Sherry Seklecki, Secretary



In May 2022 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 our communities and the world. We will recommit to our purpose, but also more. For such a time as this we will **TURN IT UP!**

**TURN IT UP!** for spiritual healing and renewal

**TURN IT UP!** for rebirth in a new time

**TURN IT UP!** for women leaders

**TURN IT UP!** for justice for women, children and youth

Come to Orlando to care for your spirit, worship with your sisters and celebrate the positive impact women create in the world.



United  
Methodist  
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

## From Your Nurture and Outreach Coordinator

Greetings from sunny Florida. We are so fortunate to be able to enjoy the warmth and sun for a few more weeks. I know all of you are experiencing cold and snow. Be safe. Spring is coming!

You have heard talk about the changes and new branding for UMW. I have included information from the National Organization about the changes we can expect. There will be more information coming and if you are attending Assembly in person or on zoom you will hear more about this.

### Frequently Asked Questions On Upcoming Changes for United Methodist Women

#### Exactly what changes will we be seeing and when?

Big changes are on the horizon for United Methodist Women in 2022. The changes will include:

- A new look with updated and exciting ways of sharing our mission story
- A new easier-to-navigate website that will have:
  - o A homepage designed to pique new women's interest in our organization and start them on a journey to membership, and
  - o A special portal on the homepage where members can log in to access resources specially designed for them.
- Soul Care Retreats with templates. This is a pilot member-recruitment program through which current members invite nonmember friends to themed retreats specially designed to nurture our bodies, minds and souls. The retreats end with an invitation to join and/or learn more about turning your love into action through United Methodist Women.
- Mission u innovations. In response to today's increased demands on women's time and conference United Methodist Women's stretched capacities, the Mission u program is being updated. Beginning in 2022, Mission u will introduce three new curricula each year—one for children, one for youth and one for adults—all focusing on a shared biblical theme. The new Mission u curricula will be more accessible and adaptable for use in small groups, local churches, vacation Bible schools, retreats and other settings. Through these vibrant, relevant, justice-oriented and biblically centered curricula, Mission u will continue its commitment to learning together for the transformation of the world and expand its impact.
- A new national membership option. This will enable women to join our sisterhood via our new website. They will learn about and be able to participate in programs and events online or connect in person to local units if they so choose.
- More targeted giving options. Members and nonmembers alike want more options to target their financial gifts to specific program areas, such as Spiritual Growth or our priority justice issues.
- New tools for treasurers. New tools, like Vanco Faith, will be available to enable treasurers to collect and manage giving and registrations electronically.
- Innovations in the Leadership Development Days programs.
- New and innovative resources, including:
  - o Mighty Networks, an exciting new online platform where members can connect, and engage new resources like the Program Resource and Mission u curricula.
  - o The Daily Prayer Guide, an updated replacement of The Prayer Calendar, which offers opportunities for daily devotion and connection.

#### How is this going to affect me and my unit?

The structure and operations of United Methodist Women on the local, district and conference levels will continue as they are, but new and improved tools and programs will be available to help each level nurture current members and reach out to new women.

## I've heard about changes coming to United Methodist Women and something about New Wineskins. What's all this about?

New Wineskins refers to Jesus' metaphor in Mark 2:21-22 where he prepares people for big changes that are coming by explaining that new times require ways of doing things.

"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins." Mark 2:21-22 (NIV)

United Methodist Women is again saying "yes" to being part of what God is doing in the 21st century by creating new and improved ways for women today to gather for faith, sisterhood and action to improve life for women, children and youth.

For United Methodist Women at this time, New Wineskins refers to:

1. The exciting changes on the horizon for United Methodist Women, and
2. Sharing this great news with members.
3. Preparing members for these changes and launch of this rebranding of our organization

## I'm hearing United Methodist Women is rebranding. What does it mean?

"Brand" is just a term to describe what people can expect you to consistently deliver. "Branding" includes the things we do—our look, our actions, and our messages— that let people know who we are and what we consistently deliver.

Rebranding United Methodist Women means we are changing the way we tell our story and our look as well as updating our programs, resources and outreach efforts so that we are more nurturing to current members and are more welcoming to new women and those of diverse backgrounds and life stages.

## I heard there's a New Wineskins online course. May I take it?

The New Wineskins online courses are available now to Program Advisory Group members, conference officers and district presidents. However, in January, a PPT version will be available for use in conference, districts, and local units.

These are exciting times for UMW. Let's embrace the changes to make UMW more relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Be blessed sisters,  
Carol Stidger  
[ctstidger@gmail.com](mailto:ctstidger@gmail.com)

## Spiritual Growth

# How Do You Shine?

As I am writing this message we are coming upon Transfiguration Sunday. We have heard many times of the story of the Transfiguration. So truly how do you shine? Is it your kindness? Are you bold, and the voice of those who have none? Are you a quiet person who is contemplative, and then speaks with confidence? We are United Methodist Women! (When I was preparing this and made an error and wrote – We are United Methodist Women? – I think that is a message there!) Let us look at the message from 2 Corinthians, 3:12-4:2. Let us read this with the joyful strength that is ours as we continue to join our voices in small, and large gatherings, in our home churches, and when alone, knowing that we truly will never walk alone.

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

3:12 Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness,

3:13 not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside.

3:14 But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside.

3:15 Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds;

3:16 but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.

3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

3:18 And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

4:1 Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart.

4:2 We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.



We are leaving the Epiphany season to begin our Lenten journey. Each day offers many ways to hear, feel, and get caught in the feeling of “hopelessness”. These same days offer many ways to share love, hope, kindness, joy and compassion. We all can share many experiences about “how terrible things are now”. Are they truly terrible? Yes, some truly are. Could we use other adjectives like difficult, challenging, or frustrating? There are other words that are used as well. (Yes, some that should not be written.) We know this is the time to walk even more closely with our Savior. It is a time that we can put aside all that is not beneficial to wellness, for ourselves and other persons. I have a request. Although we need technology to communicate these days, please allow a good deal of time for you. Yes, to be quiet, silly, any emotions that you need to get out. Even at times a good scream feels great. You know what it is. Then “Let your light so shine before all persons, that they may see you and your good works, and glorify our Triune God in heaven.

Let us always be in prayer also for all humankind throughout the world. May there be peace.

Blessings and Peace,  
Maureen (Reeny) Genholt