

Tarheel Talk

FALL 2023



Focus

Inside Talk

Fall 2023

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Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina is a missions organization whose purpose is to challenge, prepare and equip Christian believers to be radically involved in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

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Renewing Our Focus

I've always loved autumn, and not just because of pumpkin spice everything. After hot, lethargic days and summer vacations, the cooler temperatures and return to routine inspire me each year to refocus my energy. I'm encouraged by the freshness in the air and the excitement of new beginnings at school, church, and work.

Even as my soul meets autumn with a desire to focus, there are distractions all around me that don't ebb with the change of seasons. Technology, my to-do list, an overfull schedule, and a thousand other interferences often steal my energy. I walk into a room only to wonder why I'm there. I respond to a text message or email, forgetting to hit "send" because something else pops up requiring my attention. I blindly walk past people who need to hear about Jesus, because they aren't on my calendar or my to-do list.

In a world full of distractions, this season's issue of *Tar Heel Talk* is truly a call to focus.

- Focus on missions.
- Focus on pushing forward in light of God's past faithfulness.
- Focus on the people who need Jesus that we tend to overlook.
- Focus on relationships over to-do lists.
- Focus on serving in the roles to which God calls us.
- Focus on Jesus.

In this season, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2, NIV).

— Allison Markwood, *Editor*

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Focus on Missions. Focus on WMU.



In February, many churches host a “Focus on WMU” Sunday. On this special day:

- WMU members of all ages often participate in the service,
- A member of the church’s WMU or an invited guest speaks about WMU NC and missions, and
- The Heck-Jones Offering is emphasized and given.

Though many churches celebrate “Focus on WMU” Sunday in February, the blessing of this emphasis is that it can happen at *any time* during the year! The WMU of the church, while planning with the pastor, can set the date, the program, and all that will happen during the service.

This year, I was invited to speak at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, FBC Raeford, and Mt Pisgah Baptist Church. I loved each one of my visits as the programs were so special! In each service, the ladies led by providing:

- special music or a ladies' choir,
- a Missions Moment and special prayer time,
- recognition of WMU groups and updates about their mission projects, and
- opportunities for the children to participate. In one church, the Children in Action group provided music, while the children in another church took up the offering.

At Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Willow Springs, the Children in Action and Youth on Mission hosted a missions fair, at which we could see what they had been learning. Each child had a table with a poster on it that featured the missionary they had learned about, and we had food and artifacts from that region. It was very impressive. Whenever I see this, I am so thankful for the adults that lead them week after week!

WHAT DOES “TO FOCUS” MEAN?

To focus on something means to pay particular attention or give effort to, or to produce a clear visual definition. Having a focus in our life means that something has become central to who we are and that we

intentionally live out our beliefs. To focus on something means to build momentum and increase productivity. “To focus means to make the necessary adjustments in order to see my goals clearly and to shine a light on them.”¹

When we focus on missions in our daily life, we are focusing on the Great Commission. We are saying we believe it and it is central to who we are. We are saying that if people don’t know the Lord Jesus, they are lost in their sins. We are saying that Jesus is the only way. We are saying the lostness of this world breaks the Lord’s heart. We are saying that it breaks our hearts.

Each Sunday should be a focus on missions. We can pray for missionaries, have a missions moment, and give so that the whole world will hear.

But once a year, it is also good to focus on WMU. Since 1886, WMU has prayed, given, learned, and gone so that we can make disciples of all nations. Show your church the clear goals WMU has and shine a light on them. Remember it can happen *any time* of the year! Call our office and we will be glad to help you!

Amy Pardue Boone,

WMU NC Executive Director/Treasurer

¹Albergottie, Y. (2019, December 16). *What does focus mean to you?* - *LinkedIn*.

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Reflect, Refocus, Rededicate



What a blessing to see many of you in person at our Ignite! Missions Conference in April! In May, our new Executive Board began planning for 2024. We celebrated the 135th birthday of National WMU, and we

reflected on the founding of WMU NC in 1886. It has been said that “If you celebrate your history more than your present or future, you will soon fail.” Thankfully, WMU NC has always found a way to continue our legacy, focusing on our purpose in the decade we currently serve while preparing for the decade to come.

Mrs. Bea McRae served as president when we celebrated our 100th birthday in 1986. At that time, WMU NC released a 100-day prayer guide. Though they are now 37 years old, the prayers are as relevant to us today as they were then.



Here are a few highlights to help us reflect, refocus, and rededicate ourselves to challenging, preparing, and equipping Christian believers to be radically involved in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.



■ The Centennial logo, as does the WMU emblem, includes a torch which symbolizes Jesus, the Light of the World. We have inherited a brightly lit torch to pass on to coming generations. The future depends on us. Our challenge is to keep the flame glowing brightly and to pass the torch to the light bearers of tomorrow. PRAY for one young person, by name, asking that (s)he will carry the torch high and share the light with others.

■ Ephesians 5:16 reads: “Making the most of every opportunity...” As North Carolina Baptist women come to celebrate one hundred years of witness and service, we must face the fact that we have no assurance of another hundred years of

opportunity. We must hasten to make the most of every opportunity to share the Gospel with our lost, bleeding, and dying world. PRAY that we may make the most of today's opportunities.

- The first impression is often lasting. Woman's Missionary Union stands as an organization to which many people have given their lives. As people look at and hear about those who are Woman's Missionary Union members, what is the impression they get? Is it Excitement...Enthusiasm... Loyalty.... Boredom... Lethargy... What does Woman's Missionary Union really mean to you? PRAY that the impressions you give about WMU will be appealing to those with whom you come in contact.
- Mrs. R. Knolan Benfield, the eighth president of Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (1965-1971), said at the close of her term, "What we do NOW will make a difference in the world of tomorrow. God needs women with strong faith." Someone said that the measure of our faith will determine the measure of our possession by the Holy Spirit. PRAY that we daily submit to God's leadership.
- “Missions begins in the heart that has been awakened to the needs of others” This quote from Mrs. Gilmer Cross, President 1971-76, encourages us to consider: Is anyone developing a sense of the needs of others because of my efforts and example? PRAY that your heart is awake to the needs of others and you are helping others to see those needs too.
- From Day 97: “This centennial year encourages the recall of past leaders, past progress and past joys as God's work has been done through WMU, but we must not dwell on the past to the point we fail to do today's tasks well. As another century of WMU in North Carolina begins, what are you doing today? What is your church and association involved in that will create a climate of continued effective mission endeavors?”

Deborah Taylor

Deborah Taylor
WMU NC President

Hearts Ignited at Ignite! Missions Conference



The world is full of darkness, but there is hope!

John 1:5 says, *“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness shall not overcome it (ESV).”*

We celebrated this hope at **Ignite! Missions Conference** in April, and we prayed that the light of Jesus would IGNITE our missions passions so we could influence the world with His love. We may never know the full impact of the weekend, but God was definitely present, and He answered our prayers! Here are just a few ways God moved at this year’s conference:

- **Key Note Speaker, Julie Busler**, struck a chord as she brought the conversation about Mental Health and Christianity into the light. Julie’s testimony was filled with hope, showing how God’s light cannot be overcome even in the darkest places. She reminded us all that our identity isn’t in our achievements, failures, or diagnoses, but in Christ. “The most fruitful, spirited ministry,” Julie said, “happens when you understand your weaknesses and let God work through them.”



“I felt connected to her in so many ways,” said one attendee, who has struggled with depression throughout her adult life. *“Her story reminded me that God can use even me.”*

- **WMU NC’s traditional flag ceremony** was extra special this year as those involved were personally connected to the countries represented by the flags they carried. A solid red flag honored Christian martyrs, while a solid black flag represented unreached people groups around the world. There is no other ceremony that so beautifully illustrates our purpose – to carry the light of Jesus to every nation, tribe, and tongue.

- Over 400 journals were collected for CareNet, a counseling organization affiliated with Wake Forest Baptist Health. The CareNet representative was overwhelmed and excited to be able to gift these journals to those they serve.

- **23 Breakout Sessions** challenged, prepared, and equipped attendees for missions by featuring topics like mental health, adoption, caring for special needs children, spiritual development, age-level leadership, and missions around the world, among many others.

- Over \$6,000 was given to the **Heck-Jones Offering** to continue the mission and ministries of WMU NC.

- This year featured a **Youth Camp**, where middle and high school students led a Bible Day Camp for local refugee children. Elementary school children participated in a Kids’ Camp where they had the opportunity to talk to real, live missionaries and learn how they can tell others about Jesus. Ariel and Lacey, of Elrod Baptist, prayed to become Christians while at the conference. They have since been baptized in their church and have already started spreading the Good News of Jesus to their family and friends. This is what it’s all about!



God did all this and more at **Ignite! Missions Conference!** For those who attended, we pray He continues to encourage you and ignite your heart for missions.

Save the Date: If you missed it this year, save the date for next year’s conference: **April 19-20, 2024, at Parkwood Baptist Church in Concord, NC.** The keynote speaker will be **Nicki Koziarz** and worship will be led by **Cindy Morgan.**

Back to School Missions Project: Supplies for Teens



It is hard to believe it is time for another school year to start! As churches prepare Backpack Blessings, end-of-summer parties, and deliveries of hundreds of brand-new boxes of crayons to schools, we don't want to

forget our teenagers!

Anxiety levels in teenagers are the highest they have ever been. Between hormonal changes, peer pressure, relationships with their parents, sleep deprivation, and the pressure to succeed, teens need our help to make their school year the best it can be!


So, when you are collecting back-to-school items and cheerfully buying pencils and glue sticks, make sure to include items specific to teenagers.



PROJECT HELP: MENTAL HEALTH

And the Church

+ + +
 + + +
 + +



Invite WMU NC's Sara Lamkin
to speak with your church about:
What is mental health?
How can the church respond?
What's going on with youth and mental health?

Contact slamkin@wmunc.org for more information.

+ + +
 + + +
 + +

What can you do once you've bought all these supplies?

- Create a back-to-school gift bag for each youth in your church.
- Donate the items to a local high school.
- Stock a school store at your church all year long where students can get what they need for free! (Or ask your local high school if you can help keep theirs stocked.)

Churches collect a lot of school supplies at the beginning of the year, but schools inevitably run out of supplies as the year goes on. So have your school supply drive now, and schedule a second one in January so that teens have what they need to feel good and successful at school throughout the whole school year.

— Sara Lamkin

Consultant for Students and Ministry Involvement

WMU Focuses on Engaging Students

Involving teens in missions is easier said than done. So how is WMU NC working to make missions accessible to youth? By developing teen leaders, of course! (It is not unlike missionaries raising up ministry leaders from among the people they serve.)

Last year WMU NC hosted our first, co-ed Youth Advisory Council. Four teens from across the state were selected to be part of this inaugural group (pictured at right): Andrew "Brice" Chavis of Mt. Airy Baptist Church, Pembroke; Laken Callahan of Fairmont First Baptist, Fairmont; Hannah Klingenberg of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Willow Springs; and Alyssa McMillon of Dudley Shoals Baptist Church, Granite Falls. All these youth serve in their churches, attending youth groups, participating in missions, and helping lead other age-level mission groups like Children in Action.

"The Panel is beneficial to me (and to all of WMUNC!) because they give a first-hand account of what is going on in teens' lives right now, how we can reach them, and what they are looking for from a church and in their missions life," says Sara Lamkin, WMU NC's Consultant for Students. The Youth Panel has helped Lamkin plan the upcoming Youth Retreat at Ridgecrest, the first of its kind hosted by WMU NC.

In addition to event planning, students on the Panel get practice with public speaking, writing their testimonies, and working with a team toward God-sized goals. Leading a breakout conference at this year's Ignite! Missions Conference was a highlight for Alyssa McMillon, who also represented NC as a National Acteens Panelist. She says God has used the Panel to help her recognize her spiritual gifts. "I am a teacher and being able to speak as a panel [member] helped show me this. He has helped me grow in my spiritual gifts and my overall faith." Brice Chavis has also grown through his involvement on the Panel. "I have learned how to talk freely about how I think we should involve youth in the church. I needed help with getting out of my comfort zone and this was really a step in the right direction."

How can you be involved? First, pray for teens and for the Youth Retreat at Ridgecrest in October. Secondly, volunteer with youth groups or high schools in your community. Mentor a teenager, be present, and point him or her to Jesus. Thirdly, if you know a teen who is passionate about missions, nominate him or her to be a Panelist next year! Visit www.wmunc.org for the application and due dates.



Co-Ed Youth
Missions Retreat
at Ridgecrest
October 20-22, 2023

Join WMU NC for a
two night getaway featuring
Missions projects,
S'mores,
Fun and
Fellowship.

\$140 per person,
includes meals and lodging.

Rooms sleep 6,
so bring 5 friends
or make new ones here!

REGISTER AT WMUNC.ORG
STARTING JULY 17TH

LOST BOYS



Lost boys. That's what my friend Krista calls the young men we see walking, biking, or skateboarding in our community in the middle of the day during the workweek. But these boys are not in Neverland battling Captain Hook. They are likely skipping school, maybe dabbling in alcohol or drugs. One thing is for sure: they have lost their sense of direction.

Some of these lost boys and girls come from households with one or more parent who is experiencing drug or alcohol addiction, but some are from stable families with working parents who cannot monitor their kids 24/7 because they have to work. They have to trust that when they walk out the door in the morning, their sons or daughters will get on the bus or drive themselves to school as expected. Phone calls and letters from school are easily intercepted leaving parents with little way of knowing if their child is where they are expected to be. Perhaps you love a lost boy or girl in your family.

Dabbling leads to addiction and addiction leads to dark places. Lost boys and girls do grow up, but like the "Lost Boys of Neverland," they will be frozen in time in their addiction and development unless someone steps into the fray with them and gives them hope for recovery.

I can't help but think about the parable of "The Lost Sheep" in Luke 15:1-7, in which the good shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to find the one lost sheep. These lost boys and girls, in addition to the opioid and methamphetamine-addicted lost souls in my community, are part of a greater national crisis that has been hitting rural America with the same ruthlessness as the big cities for decades, and yet, too few churches are leaving the comfort of the ninety-nine to reach the one lost and addicted soul.

Kevin O'Brien, Counseling Pastor at Apex Baptist Church and Director of their One Step Healing Ministries summed up the "church with blinders on" mentality well in an article for The North Carolina Baptist State Convention online. "As much as we like to think our flocks are obedient, compliant and without blemish, sheep wander. And at times they wander into very dark, dangerous places."

Jeremy Smith of Key Ministries, a ministry whose mission is to "serve churches seeking to become more intentional and effective in ministry with children, teens and adults impacted by mental illness, trauma,

and developmental disabilities and their families” says, “The Church has a spotty past with working alongside people who have substance misuse issues. We blame people for relapsing when alcoholism is part of the disorder that has altered the way the brain functions. We are starting to understand that depression is a medical illness, but continue to treat misusing drugs as a moral failing, though little thought is put into the similarities.”

- As of 1999, 9.2 million people have both a mental health and substance misuse diagnosis. (That number has grown exponentially since the pandemic.)
- That compares to 47.6 million adults that have a mental health diagnosis (1 in 5 individuals in the United States) and 19.3 million adults with a substance use disorder (1 in 12 individuals in the United States).
- 89.8% of people with a substance misuse disorder are not seeking treatment and 90.4% of people with both a mental health and substance use disorder are not seeking treatment. These rates are significantly higher than those seeking only mental health treatment, at 56.7% because of the shame and stigma that come with substance abuse.

Long story short, some people turn to drugs because they’re young and prone to more risk-taking recreational behaviors, some use it as a coping mechanism for stress or abuse, and some people self-medicate for their mental health disorders with drugs and alcohol.

So how do we minister to the lost and addicted? First of all, know your local resources:

- North Carolina has an excellent mental health and substance abuse services page. Here you can access crisis care and find out treatment options near you. The QR code at the top of this article will take you to the website. Simply take your phone camera and hold it up to the code and click the link that pops up.
- Celebrate Recovery, a Christ-centered, 12-step program, has hundreds of recovery sites in local churches in North Carolina. Simply go to <https://www.celebraterecovery.com> to find a site near you, learn how to start a site at your church, or JOIN an online celebrate recovery group. The site also has a plethora of FREE resources about addiction and recovery.
- RU Recovery, “a Faith-Based Recovery Program bringing transformation to hurting people & communities everywhere” also has sites from Salisbury to Jacksonville and many places in between. Go to <https://rurecovery.com/> to find a site near you and to access their resources as well.

Second, just making the resources available to the addict in your life or church is not enough. Give them something to show up for. Schedule a time for you to go to an online Celebrate Recovery group together or take them to a local group. Find ways to overcome their excuses and delays.

Finally, prayerfully approach the leadership in your church about how to help. Know your resources and be prepared to answer their questions. It could help to contact a state or local recovery group leader to pick their brains about recovery ministry. Be brave and know that almost every person in your church has been personally affected by addiction or the addiction of a loved one. Your bravery might just be the answer to their prayers.



One Time
NOVEMBER 10-12

One Place
CAMP MUNDO VISTA

One Theme
BURN BRIGHT

TWO AMAZING RETREATS

MILITARY WIVES RETREAT

Lay down your "duties" and immerse yourself in a weekend of hope as you enjoy worship and fellowship with other wives in various stages of their military journey. Get pampered, enjoy camp activities, or just REST.

MOM CAMP

Take a break and seek answers to questions like: How do we raise children to love the Lord and missions? How do we prioritize the "least of these" when life is already crazy? And, Am I doing this mom thing right?"

Enjoy Together:

Worship
Camp Activities
Pampering
Meal Times

Enjoy Separately:

Small Groups
Breakout Sessions
Fellowship
Prayer Times



KEYNOTE: HOLLY H. MYERS **SPEAKER, AUTHOR, & PODCASTER**

After years of struggling with self-image, food addiction, and understanding who she was in Christ, Holly surrendered her past to Christ and began to walk in freedom. Now she speaks into the lives of other women who are enslaved to so many things.

REGISTER ONLINE AT WMUNC.ORG

Is Jesus on My To-Do List? *By Kristin Trick*

Ministry leaders, pastors, and missionaries make many appointments—lunch meetings, evening trainings, speaking engagements, coffee chats. In the US, we are sure to be five minutes early in an effort not to be disrespectfully late. **I had a teacher who drilled into my head that “to be early was to be on time and to be on time was to be late.”** So, imagine my surprise when I entered a new culture as a missionary to an unreached people group in north-eastern Brazil. I was convinced that Brazilian clocks and watches must keep time differently than mine. People came to dinner 30, 40, 50 minutes late. Church services started late. Friends showed up to our daughter’s birthday party two hours late. I was beyond confused and often, beyond angry. I could not wrap my head around why people would be so disrespectful.

After spending much time with these same people, I began to see a trend. Being late was not always a show of disrespect. During our early time in Brazil, we did not have a vehicle and relied on others to take us places. I realized our friends would allow themselves to be late to their own scheduled engagements in order to take us to a church service or the grocery store. People would stop to chat with a friend on the street with no regard for time. Relationships were first. People came before appointments. Sometimes tardiness was a result of someone just following custom and coming whenever they chose, but there was never an attitude of disrespect. It was merely cultural.

In John 4, Jesus met the woman at the well at an hour unusual for women to frequent the well. However, it was an appointed hour set by God. Jesus was there for a reason, to speak with a specific lady. **Through this encounter, her town heard the Good News of Jesus.** I can imagine the conversations among the disciples. Surely, they knew that this route, this rest at the well, would change their schedule. I wonder what they had to say to Jesus about this delay. Certainly, they shook their heads in wonder. How often do we get caught up in daily, set schedules, and miss opportunities to share the love of Jesus? How often do we stay tight to our routines and allow relationships to get swept away in to-do lists and reminders?

In our village context, the Gospel is shared through story-telling in homes. Appointments are verbally made and never written on a yellow, sticky note. One Sunday, our leaders scheduled a time to story-tell in the home of two nonbelievers. We all headed to the back of the village at the appointed time. We noticed a man walking down the road toward us. It was the gentleman with whom we were to meet. He was headed out somewhere, not our meeting. He told us his wife had something else to do, and we would have to meet another time. Though this is a common, cultural practice that didn’t take us by surprise, we are always frustrated and disheartened

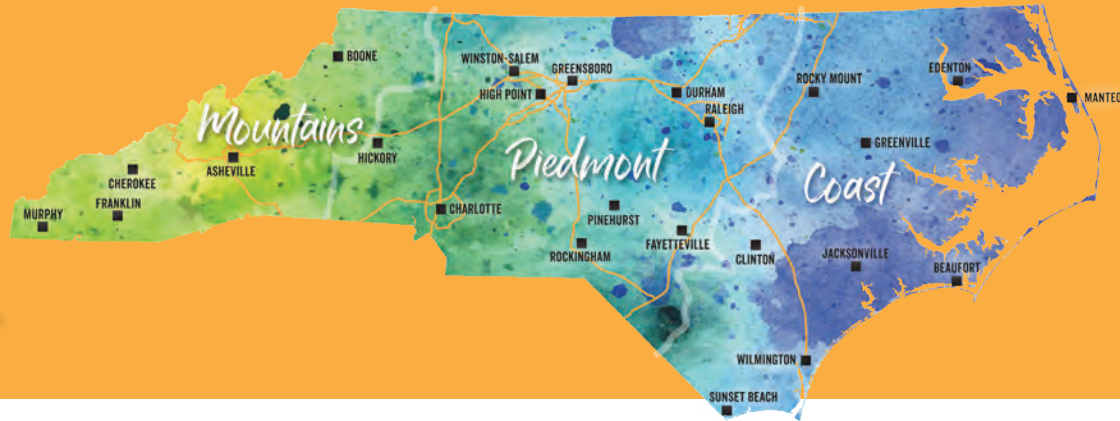
when this happens. However, relationships are first. Our leader did not become angry with the gentleman, but casually chatted with him about life. I felt we had missed an opportunity to share the gospel. We had missed an opportunity to tell someone the Good News of Jesus Christ. But our native leader continued building a friendship and relationship with this nonbeliever.

Instead of turning around and heading home, we did what we planned to do. Our leader suggested we go back to another house and share the stories we had prepared. Probably similar to some of the disciples, I shook my head and wondered if it was even worth deviating from our set schedule. We shared the gospel with two other nonbelievers that night. Was this the appointed hour God had set for their ears to hear the Good News? Was I allowing man’s schedule to dictate God’s timing? Was one man’s tardiness and cancellation leading us to the open heart of another?

Of course, Jesus knew that the woman would be at the well at the sixth hour. I did not know who else we may encounter that evening. What I do know is that God’s timing often does not align with my iPhone calendar. His timing is just that, His timing. Our eyes must be looking for the next open heart searching for a Savior. Isn’t that what we are charged with in The Great Commission? Go, tell, and make disciples. It doesn’t say, “Go at 8:00 on Friday. Tell at 9:30 on Saturday. Make disciples at 10:30 on Monday.” We must go, tell, and make disciples when He gives us the opportunity. I do not suggest showing up two hours late to a birthday party in the US. I don’t even suggest trashing our sticky notes. But, **I do wonder where sharing the Good News is on my daily to-do list.** Does God allow tardiness and cancellations to write His name back on our list of things to do? That friend stuck in traffic could allow us an extra few minutes with a colleague who needed gentle words of encouragement. Being five minutes late to coffee (or maybe just right on time) allows us an opportunity to support a frightened college student entering his first interview. The cancellation of storytelling in one home may lead to salvations in the next home. Let’s take a page out of the Brazilian playbook and build relationships, encourage friendships, and support one another in the unexpected moments. **Maybe that is the appointed hour God has allowed for someone to hear the Good News of Jesus!**

*Matthew and Kristin Trick are missionaries with LINC-UP Missions and serve an under-reached people group in northeastern Brazil. They have two children, Anna (13) and Andrew (20). They are sent from Parkwood Baptist Church in Concord, NC where they reside when they are stateside. Follow the Tricks on social media at **LINC-UP Missions Trick** and updates at **trickfamily.epistle.org**.*





Piedmont Region

College Park Baptist, Winston-Salem

God moves mightily when we open our eyes to the needs around us. “It broke our hearts when we learned how many children in our area are facing homelessness,” said Bet Matthews of College Park Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. In response, the Kathy Phillips WMU group packed Night Night Bags for two agencies in their area that work with homeless children. A consignment store gifted brand new children’s books to include in the bags along with hygiene items, blankets, and stuffed animals. The ladies handwrote encouraging notes and prayed over each bag.

Some special bags were also packed specifically for teens and donated to Project Hope through Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. Those bags included journals, puzzle books, and writing utensils. At the suggestion of a young lady working



Coastal Region

Snyder Memorial Baptist, Fayetteville

In May, Snyder Memorial Baptist Church hosted a Round Table for Missions. Colorful dishes, vibrant flower arrangements, and beautiful centerpieces adorned each unique table, reflecting a specific Bible verse theme and representing different aspects of missions. The tables were individually designed and hosted by church members, who also invited friends to fill their seats and hear about missions.

The program featured Paula Matthis, who performed a monologue as beloved WMU missionary, Lottie Moon. Altogether, the event raised over \$18,000 for local, state, and foreign missions!

An event like this is fun to attend, but also provides opportunities for lots of people to serve, no matter their giftings. Love to cook? Have an eye for beauty? Enjoy hosting parties? Like to perform or speak on stage? Prefer to work in the background? You and your church can plan and host a Round Table Banquet for missions!



REGIONS RECALL MOUNTAINS TO THE COAST

at the Dollar Store who had once been a homeless teen, the ladies added a deck of cards to each bag, for playing Solitaire. After talking to this young woman, Matthews knew this was the right missions project for their church. “We will make this a continual project with our entire WMU,” Matthews stated.

Mountain Region

Fruitland Baptist Church, Hendersonville

Sometimes God calls us to one place, just to lead us to another. That’s what happened when three women from Fruitland Baptist Church in Hendersonville went on a mission trip to Kenya. Also on the trip was Pauline Warutere, a native Kenyan who, with her husband Patrick, planted a church in North Raleigh when their hearts were broken for the refugee community there. Candi Mains from Fruitland connected with Pauline and began a friendship that led to an amazing partnership between their two churches.

Since 2019, Fruitland Baptist Church has been a partner of the North Raleigh International Baptist Church (NRIBC). Through countless prayers, generous giving, and hours of volunteer work, Fruitland has helped Pastor Patrick and Pauline share the Gospel and minister to the needs of the refugee community. They have sponsored leadership training, camp opportunities (see page 22), medical and dental clinics in apartment complexes, and more!

One of the intergenerational, hands-on ways Fruitland helps is through Community Outreach Events. The

members of the church start by collecting everything from housewares to toys and clothes. The Youth on Mission group sorts and packs the items. From there, volunteers travel to Raleigh where they meet up with the team from NRIBC and host an event in a community or apartment complex to hand out items, serve pizza, and share the Gospel.

God called us to the nations, and then He brought the nations to us! Learn more about how you can partner with NRIBC at www.nrIBC.org, or look for ways to help groups that are ministering to refugees in your community.

Is God moving through your church WMU? We’d love to share it with others! Send pictures and descriptions of your events or ministries to allisonmarkwood@gmail.com.



Having a Heart of Servanthood



Many of us probably consider the most influential leaders to be the ones who command a stage and speak from a microphone. While there are many influential leaders like this, I have found some of the most influential leaders are the ones who serve in the background. Like Ashley.

Ashley greets my family with a warm and friendly smile each Sunday. She knows my children's names and takes time to ask them about school and how their day is going while we get them checked in for children's church and the nursery. If problems come up, she's right there to handle them. It's a big job coordinating all the pieces of the children's ministry, but she does it because she's passionate about children and their families having a relationship with Jesus. Ashley is essential to our church. She serves in the trenches of ministry, but you won't find her on a stage or in the spotlight. She's happy to be in the background serving. That's what she loves doing, and that's where her heart is.

Mark is another person I think of. He gets to church early every week, gets the welcome table set up, the coffee pots turned on, makes sure everything in the church's facilities is running smoothly, and is one of the first people to welcome you when you walk into church that day. I've never seen Mark in the spotlight. He is always content to be serving in the background.

I'm willing to bet some of you are Ashleys and Marks. You show up to things early or you stay late, always prepared to lend a helping hand. You are willing to serve where you are needed because you care about people, you care about the Church, and being a part of the Body of Christ.

If no one has told you lately, let me be the one to say it to you now. **What you do makes a Kingdom impact.** It may not seem like it at the time, but your obedience and willingness to serve is a driving force for the Kingdom.

We often think doing big things for God as leaders looks a lot like stages, platforms, and social media followers. But what if it looks more like holding babies in the church nursery, cleaning up the fellowship hall, and being a prayer partner?

A leader doesn't need a stage to lead. They need a servant's heart.

As a leader, the greatest example you can set for your family, your team, your coworkers, etc. is to have a heart of service. Service is biblical. We see Jesus model servanthood for us throughout scripture.

Servanthood is countercultural. We live in a world that tells us to focus on ourselves, and having a heart for service makes it not about us. When we adopt a posture of service as leaders, we are adopting a posture of empathy, compassion, humility, and ultimately trying our best to love and

serve others in the way Jesus would want us to.

We all have a sphere of influence. Whether it is people within our families, friend groups, workplaces, or churches, we are women of influence. People are watching how we lead, and most importantly, how we are serving others.

You do not need to hold a microphone or stand on a stage to make an impact for the Kingdom of God. God has uniquely designed you with gifts and talents to serve Him and others, and whatever you do, do it to glorify Him. **It's not how you serve Him; it's your willingness to serve Him and to serve others that matters.**

— Amanda Martinsen

*WMU NC Leadership Development Consultant
and Resource Coordinator*

“Our job is not to train leaders, but to train servants.”

— Dr. V Raymond Edman

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Jesus Christ.” — Colossians 3:23-24



Women's Leadership Cohort

God has called you to lead. You don't have to do it alone.

Join us for a 6-week women's ministry leadership cohort to grow in your leadership skills, gain clarity on your purpose, and learn ways you can be on mission with God right where you are.

Dates:

Next cohort group will begin September 12th!

The cohort is held virtually via Zoom

Cost: \$35.00

Who is the cohort for?

FOR WOMEN WHO...

- want more clarity on your purpose and calling.
- feel God is calling you to lead but you are unsure of the direction you should take.
- desire to know more about your strengths, spiritual gifts, and leadership skills.
- want to connect with other women who share similar passions.
- want to feel better equipped in your leadership role.

The details:

The cohort group will meet virtually through Zoom for one hour once a week. **Space is limited** to allow leaders to connect and network together in a closer format.

All sessions are recorded for leaders to download and rewatch.

For more information contact:

Amanda Martinsen

Leadership Development Consultant

amartinsen@wmunc.org

(919) 882-2344 ext. 208

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE NEXT GROUP!
VISIT **WMUNC.ORG/LEADERSHIP-COHORT** FOR DETAILS



When you give to the Baptist Children's Homes Annual Offering

LIVES ARE FOREVER CHANGED!



The lives of children, families and individuals across NC, SC and Guatemala are transformed when you and your church give to the Annual Offering:

- Number of lives impacted in 2022 through Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) many ministries: 167,619
- Number of NC foster care children served to date through the EVERY CHILD Foster & Adopt partnership with NC Baptists: 715
- Number of Christian couples to date who have become EVERY CHILD foster families: 344
- Number of children in 2022 adopted by EVERY CHILD families: 61
- Number of expectant mothers counseled: 243
- Number of professions of faith made in the past five years: 661
- Number of children, families, expectant mothers, single mothers – *anybody we directly serve* – who hear the Gospel through Baptist Children's Homes: **Everyone!**

ANNUAL OFFERING

Week of Prayer: November 5-12, 2023

OFFERING GOAL \$1.5 MILLION

You can give through your church's offering efforts or by going to bchoffering.org



SHARING HOPE...CHANGING LIVES

Baptist Children's Homes
of NORTH CAROLINA

336.474.1209 | BCHOFFERING.ORG

Ministry Partner Talk

■ North Carolina Baptist Nursing Fellowship

November 3-5, 2023: BNF National Meeting at First Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi.

March 1-2, 2024: Annual NC BNF Meeting at Camp Caraway

BNF has scholarships available for Student Nurses. Applications are due by May 1 each year. If interested, please send a request to Rowena Mante at rowenamante@yahoo.com or Penny Jones at penjones@wakehealth.edu

Are you a Nurse or Medical Professional? **Join** online at www.wmunc.org/nc-baptist-nursing-fellowship or contact Penny Jones for more information. penjones@wakehealth.edu

■ Christian Women's Job Corps

Pivot Ministry in Winston Salem celebrated its 5th Anniversary on June 10 with its 6th Graduation. All seven of the participants who started with this class graduated. LifeWorks in Waynesville also held a graduation ceremony on June 19.

The life-change experienced by the Pivot and LifeWorks graduates is needed by so many other women across North Carolina. Pray for new sites to open across the state and for coordinators, mentors, donors, and other volunteers to answer God's call into this ministry.

Are you interested in learning more about CWJC, coordinating a site, or working as a mentor? Check out <https://christianjobcorps.com/training/> for self-guided courses to get you started! North Carolina is also planning to host Level I and II training in August. Visit www.cwjc.org or contact Cara Lynn Vogel for more information at cwjc@gmail.com.

Photo top: CWJC Tour—LifeWorks CWJC took recent graduates and their mentors to tour the Ark in Kentucky; bottom: CWJC Meeting—CWJC Board and site coordinators meeting at Ahsokie at the new building for Chowan CWJC



■ Hispanic WMU

August 18-20: La Union Femenil la Misionera Retreat at Camp Mundo Vista. Check wmunc.org for registration updates.

November 11: International Day of Prayer for the Baptist Women of the World. UFM will host prayer events in the coastal and mountain regions.

January 20-29: Mission Trip to Costa Rica.

Contact Raquel Garcia for more information at raquelgarcia.09121975@gmail.com

■ Sisters Who Care

August 5: SWC Lunch & Learn. Meet and fellowship with missionaries and learn about life as a missionary.

September 8-9: Mission Trip to laeger, West Virginia.

October 5-6: Preacher & Teachers C.A.M.P (Creatively Advancing Ministry Preparation) Hosted and facilitated by Reverend Dr. Jerome Lee, Baptist General Association of Virginia. This event will be held at Martin Street Baptist Church in Raleigh and is open to both men and women.

October 14: SWC Community Outreach.

November 4: Neighborhood and Community Prayer Walk.

November 11: SWC Annual Conference in Raleigh.

Contact Elder Lisa D. Jacobs for more information or to get involved! ljsevent@gmail.com

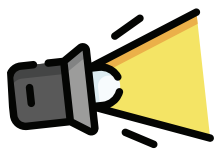
■ North Carolina Baptist Ministers' Wives

November 6, 2023: NCBMW Annual Meeting at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. Our annual meeting is a little bit of meeting and a lot of worship and fellowship! The annual conference is in conjunction with the Pastor's Conference and the Baptist State Convention of NC Annual Meeting.

Visit the NCBMW website: <https://ncbminwives.wixsite.com/ncbmw>

Connect on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NCBMW>





Ministry Spotlight: Sister's Who Care

In a world that is often divided, it is an honor and an inspiration to work alongside Sisters Who Care. With a mission to challenge, prepare, and equip Black American women and other women of color to fulfill the Great Commission, Sisters Who Care is a special, diverse group that allows women to grow spiritually, serve their communities, nurture their leadership skills, and most importantly, share the gospel. Through their active online community, impactful outreach events, leadership development opportunities, and recent Spring retreat, Sisters Who Care is making disciples of Jesus who live on mission, helping the women of WMU NC work toward racial reconciliation, and broadening the mission and ministries of WMU NC.

Building a Strong Community

At the heart of Sisters Who Care is a vibrant community that fosters faith discussions, spiritual growth, missions involvement, and prayer. Through their Facebook page, Sisters Who Care creates a space for women to discuss big faith questions, support one another through challenges, and pray together for each other and for the nations. This virtual gathering place cultivates unity and sisterhood and encourages members to be involved in missions alongside Sisters Who Care and in their daily lives.

Outreach and Engagement

Sisters Who Care goes beyond virtual interactions to make a tangible impact in communities. Through various outreach events, drives, and prayer walks, these dedicated women actively engage with those in need. One of their ministries is providing personal hygiene products for youth and adults, a response to the statistic that one in five girls in the United States miss school each month because they don't have

sanitary pads (*Business Wire*). Not only does this meet a practical need and make a positive difference in these girls' lives, it becomes a vehicle for spreading the love of Christ.

Sisters Who Care also partners with churches to help with outreach events. Recently, they have worked alongside Trinity Baptist in Raleigh and the North Raleigh International Baptist Church.

This fall, Sisters Who Care will work to spread their love of Jesus and missions even further through a series of guest appearances on the *Fresh Anointing Show*, a podcast hosted by Reverend Dr. Jae Richardson. By sharing their stories and experiences on this platform, Sisters Who Care will extend their outreach, invite others to join them and the larger WMU NC family, and encourage listeners to grow in their faith, work toward racial reconciliation, and live missionally.

Leadership Development

Sisters Who Care also recognizes the importance of empowering women to become leaders in their communities. To do this, they provide and participate in numerous leadership development opportunities. Through workshops, training sessions, and retreats, they equip women with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to step into leadership roles and effect change. By investing in the growth of women of color, Sisters Who Care strengthens the overall impact of WMU NC and ensures diverse voices are heard, valued, and incorporated into the mission.





The Spring Retreat

A recent highlight of Sisters Who Care’s calendar was their Spring retreat, held at Caraway Conference Center. Rooted in the theme of John 8:12, “*I am the light of the world,*” and packed with praise and worship, inspiring guest speakers,



engaging workshops, and even a vendor marketplace, the retreat served as a source of spiritual rejuvenation. A special Mary Kay spa party also provided a fun opportunity for self-care.

One particularly impactful activity at the retreat involved attendees discussing the challenges or issues they face and symbolically “leaving” them on the mountain. This powerful act of surrender

and trust in God’s guidance enabled women to find solace, release burdens, and step into their God-defined identity.

Expanding the Great Commission

Sisters Who Care’s unwavering commitment to the Great Commission is instrumental in broadening WMU NC’s impact. By creating opportunities for Black American women and women of color to LEARN about missions, PRAY for missions, GIVE to missions, and DO missions, Sisters Who Care dismantles barriers, fosters a more inclusive and diverse community of faith, and empowers all women to radically be involved in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

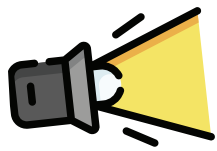
Want to involve your community in missions like the Sisters Who Care do? **Check out the great Mission Project below!**

Christmas
In
August

Christmas can never come too early!

Participate in Christmas in August by collecting and sending needed supplies to North American missionaries.

Visit wmu.com/ChristmasinAugust for details.



Ministry Spotlight: The Hispanic WMU La Union Femenil la Misionera (UFM)

Women in God’s Plan

By Raquel Garcia

In the Bible, there are many stories of women who were greatly used by God. Some are mentioned by name like Sarah, Ruth, Esther, and Mary. Others are not, like the Canaanite woman, a slave girl who served Naaman’s wife, and the Samaritan woman. None of them was perfect, but they were all ordinary women just like us. They became extraordinary, not because of their abilities, but because of God’s intervention in their lives. Each of them experienced a transformation in their encounter with the God of Israel. This is what made the difference. They let their lives be transformed and used by Him.

The story of Ruth emphasizes God’s love for His people through a woman who would later become the great-grandmother of the Savior of the world. God did not look at Ruth as a fragile vessel in his hands, but He saw her as strong. She is an example to women of this century who are capable of carrying out His purpose in our world. In Ruth’s life, we see God’s unmerited favor for mankind. Like Ruth, we come as sinners, and we extend our hands of faith to the One who blesses us with His wonderful grace. He saves us, makes us part of His people, and involves us in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

In our congregations today we see women who are wondering, “How can I carry out the Great Commission?” or, “How can I know God’s plan for my life?” Thank God for WMU, which is the channel for women to get involved in and carry out the Great Commission. Simply speaking it challenges all believers in Christ to live a missionary lifestyle.

WMU provides organizations for all ages, in which we can be involved in fulfilling the Great Commission. At the same time, it provides us with the resources we need to learn more about missionaries, and what God is doing through them all over the world.

As Hispanic churches, we are happy to be part of this Great Legacy as more and more hearts are encouraged by the work of WMU.

UFM members are utilizing various WMU resources to facilitate missions in their churches. Here’s what one church has seen after implementing WMU Missions Journey, a curriculum for kids and youth:

“Today’s healthy church requires clarity and focus on the word of Jesus and his mission. The WMU Missions Journey program, implemented in our church, has allowed the development of a missionary culture that teaches, models, and reproduces service to others with that focus (Jesus and His word as the Center) and allows us to get more involved with the needs of the community.”

— Ligia Contreras
Cristo Vive Baptist Church, Forest City, NC



Mission Trip to Reynosa Tamaulipas, Mexico



On April 26, UFM sent a missionary team to Reynosa Tamaulipas, Mexico to serve children and share the gospel. The team was made up of Sara Vargas, Ligia Contreras, Linda Treviño, Josefina Moore, Ana Cristina Moncayo, Ariadna Gonzalez, and Ashley Villanueva. Our Mission trip has



sensitized the hearts of many sisters to continue learning, praying, giving, and doing missionary work.

Trip Recap

Day 1: We greeted about 90 children from Children's Haven International with a Bible study and a fun activity.

Days 2-4: We visited Big Heart Orphanage, Casa Hogar Melody's, and Enviado para Amar where we led praise and worship, did arts and crafts, and spent quality time with the children. We also had an opportunity to teach the word of God to a youth group of young ladies.

We ended our visit at CHI with an activity for the caretakers, whom the children call "Tias" (aunts), teaching them about Queen Esther and giving them words of encouragement for the honorable job that they do.



Day 5: What a blessed way to end this mission trip! The last day we began by dedicating a church in Colonia Vamos in Tamaulipas. Next, over 300 people gathered to celebrate the Day of the Child at the La Nopalera Community Center. While the food outreach took place, we shared God's word with about 100 children at which time.

Nine children accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior! Lastly, we visited the immigrant shelter Senda de Vida.

We thank God for giving us the opportunity to serve in Reynosa Tamaulipas, Mexico.



Prayer Requests for UFM

- Pray that our retreat in August may be a blessing for the sisters and teens and that God may greatly utilize all the invited speakers.
- Pray for more Hispanic churches to implement UFM in their Local Church
- Pray for God to guide the Administrative Committee: Raquel Garcia, Ligia Contreras, Gabriela Retana, Linda Treviño and Yaneth Funes
- Pray for our Missionary, Clara Huff, that God may help her at all times.

A Space Between: International Camp

“Toto, I don’t think we’re at Mundo Vista anymore.” That’s what went through my head the first time I participated in the International Children’s Camp. I wasn’t at Mundo. I wasn’t in America. I was somewhere in between. I was in a special place made up of children from Burundi, The Congo, Sudan, Myanmar, Thailand, Kenya, Tanzania, and more countries that I wish I could remember. The smiles of these children will stay with me for a lifetime.

These are refugee children, some of whom don’t know their birthdays because there are no birth certificates in refugee camps across the globe. These children are survivors, and though they have little, they share everything. I saw some of them literally run the soles off of their shoes only to be lent a pair by another child, even if it was two sizes too big. The older girls shared clothing and toiletries, patiently treating the little girls like their own children. The knowledge that these older girls imparted to the younger ones will stay with them and benefit them for a lifetime. I heard a high school girl named Elsie quietly explaining to a middle school girl every step of the personal care and hygiene process right down to changing your washcloth regularly. This was a gift to the little girl who simply did not know how to properly care for herself because standards are different when your parents and role models lived without running water for years.

The average refugee family waits twelve years for their “lottery” number to be called to be able to come to the United States. One little boy, Manzi, didn’t even know what country he was from. When you asked, he simply said, “Africa.”

Some of these children have lost parents. All have lost someone. And yet, they praise. A middle school boy named Osea (pronounced like Hosea) led worship, and as he shouted and sang the words to the song, his whole body followed suit in dance. It left me truly joyful to catch this glimpse of what worship in heaven must be like! I witnessed Muslim children, uncertain of where they fit in at the beginning of the week, stand and sing God’s praises by the end of the week.

Another special part of camp for me was that my husband and daughters joined me. Phoebe, my seven-year-old, made quick friends with Radika, Maggie, Gabby, and Sanowyn. Her first night, the youngest of the girls all gathered in Phoebe’s

bed and peppered her with questions, testing to see all that they had in common. I texted my best friend and said, “There’s a little United Nations gathering in the bunk above me!” Gavin led game time, and Jozie, my thirteen-year-old, and I led crafts. It was special to see Jozie show the children her bracelet-making techniques. Each girl went home with bracelets up to their elbows, and Jozie learned a lot about gratitude.

For all of the good, there were hard things too. Many of these children have grown up having to be guarded and defensive for survival and that spills over into camp too. At almost every turn we had to play referee, but at night when they showed off their talents of dancing, singing, gymnastics, and drama, they transported me to their countries and cultures.

Again and again, I reflected on how in America we have so much, but often we have mindsets of scarcity. These children know and have known true poverty and scarcity, and yet their mindset is to share everything. My mom has a saying: “If I have a penny, you have a penny.” That is the mindset of the refugee as well. I couldn’t help but think of Acts 4:32-35. *“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.”*

I want to thank everyone who came and lent a hand, a smile, and a watchful eye as volunteers. Thank you to Janice Sharpe for working so hard to line up churches in the Caldwell and Alexander association, and to Hiddenite Baptist, Sulphur Springs Baptist, and Stony Point Baptist for answering the call to come and minister! Thank you to Linda Todd Phelps for bringing art supplies and buying more beads and thread when we literally ran completely out twice and for staying each day. And thank you to everyone who gave so this camp could happen. You helped make something magical and missional happen and I hope to see you at camp in 2024!

— Rebecca Lindhout
Consultant for Adults And Children and Ministry Involvement



August 2023

- 4-6 Mother-Daughter Retreat, Camp Mundo Vista
- 12 Abound Leadership Training, Sylva
- 16 Leadership Luncheon
- 18-20 WMU Hispanic Women's Conference, Camp Mundo Vista

September 2023

- 4 Labor Day Holiday (*Office closed*)
- 9 Abound Leadership Training, Rockingham
- 16 Children's Mission Day, National & NC
- 16 Executive Board Meeting, WMU NC Office, Cary
- 20 Leadership Luncheon
- 23 Abound Leadership Training, Granite Falls

October 2023

- 18 Leadership Luncheon
- 20-22 Youth Missions Retreat, Ridgecrest

November 2023

- 6 Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer*
- 6-7 BSCNC Annual Meeting
- 10-12 Military Wives Retreat, Camp Mundo Vista
- 10-12 Mom Camp, Camp Mundo Vista
- 15 Leadership Luncheon
- 22-23 Thanksgiving Holidays (*Office closed*)

**Not a WMU NC sponsored event*



Red Box Update

Greetings,

My name is Heather. I'm an inmate at NCCIW Canary Unit. I'm writing this letter on behalf of all the women incarcerated. I'm sure all of our hearts are touched by you all's selflessness and generosity. This year is my very first "Red Box" experience. I want you all to know that we sincerely appreciate everything. Most of us feel unworthy of such kindness, but thankfully the merciful God we serve has instilled compassion into each and every one of your hearts. Once again, I want to say thank you, and may God bless you all and keep you all in his favor.

Happy Holidays with the Love of Jesus Christ!

Heather

GET INVOLVED

- Sign Up:** www.wmunc.org
- Drop Off Items:** November 13-17*
FBC Asheboro
- Pack Boxes:** Please call the WMU office if you would like to help.

*To honor the time and resources of the staff at FBC Asheboro, drop offs are just one week this year.



Woman's Missionary Union NC

205 Convention Dr | Cary NC 27511

PO Box 4249 | Cary NC 27519-4249

Tarheel Talk

Woman's Missionary Union

(866) 210-8602 • (919) 882-2344

www.wmunc.org

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