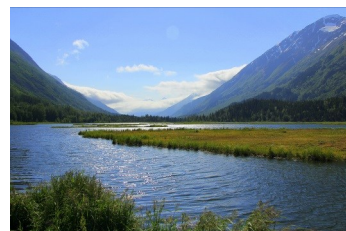


# Columbia Explorer



United Women in Faith

May 2022



## Mark your Calendars

**July 14– 16** Mission u

**July 28—30** Mission u

**September 5** - Quarterly Pledges Due

**September 10**—Columbia District Annual Meeting.

Place: TBA

**October 21** OR/ID Conference  
United Women in Faith Leadership Development for Everyone.

**October 22** OR/ID Conference  
United Women in Faith Annual Celebration - *Be Joyful!*

Place: Boise ID.

# Recognitions

## Healthy Vital Unit 2021

**Congratulations** to the following Units for their work during the pandemic. We acknowledge all the units who sent reports and furthered the work of the UMW.

**Montavilla UMW "HOPE Unit"**

**Gresham UMW "FAITH Unit"**



## 2021 Reading Program Certificates

**Congratulations** to these women who have completed these Reading Plans for 2021!

### Montavilla UMW

Emmy Lou Johnson	Plan 1
Clarice Kruschwitz	Plan 3
Janice Stevens	Plan 3
Turella Woods	Plan 4

### Gresham UMW

Sue Anderson	Plan 2
Carol Potter	Plan 2

### Great Spirit UMW

Loretta Milton	Plan 1
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## Purpose of

## United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith 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.

## President's Message

Columbia District Explorer - May 2022

Lydia Henry

### What makes a community?

I love to read. I remember the first time I realized that those signs along the highway had words on them – and I KNEW WHAT THEY SAID! It was a moment of revelation for me – opening a window to a bigger world that became the dinosaur section in the children's library and microfiche copies of newspaper articles from 1864 for a research paper.



The ability to read opened up a new community – of people who read labels on EVERYTHING – the ketchup bottle to the tiny signs in the museum of natural history. As I've grown, I've expanded my community of friends who shared common interests including a love of books. As I think about all the women for the last 153 years who studied together and prayed together – raised money to build hospitals and send teachers, doctors, and nurses into the world in response to Jesus' call to ministry in Matthew 25 – it is a bit overwhelming and intimidating. And yet humbling. I imagine there were few of these women who set out to influence and change the world, but they did.

And the world each of us changes can be as small as another woman we meet and invite to join us; or being part of a call that stretches around the world – and we pray the Lord's prayer in our heart language. In my life, my communities of women have varied widely. In thinking about this today, I thought of my friend who stopped at her father's farm on our way to a meeting and helped deliver a litter of piglets while I waited in her parent's house. Or the women who rescued a soup and pie fund raiser when the planner (21-year-old me) used dried beans. Community is stepping in to get it done with nothing said to embarrass or belittle. Community is writing cards to shut ins and caring for a grieving family who have no church affiliation but found their way to the United Methodist Church and were welcomed. It is the history of name changes this community was called, and the mission that expanded as our world changed.

It is a history of speaking up, standing up, and being a voice for social justice, racial equity, and many other issues which would be ignored without us. It is a history of reading and learning together. We stretch, we challenge, we laugh, pray, and cry together. We hug each other in joy and cling to one another in hard times. We are community – each unit, each circle, each church, each friend, each stranger on a zoom call.

When I light the candles in my sacred space, I pray for each one of you and the journey we have been on and what will lie ahead as Women United in Faith. What an adventure!



### Columbia District United Women in Faith Election Of Officers

Election of Officers will be held at our September Annual Meeting. We have 2 members leaving the Leadership Team this year, our **Treasurer, Communications Coordinator** and **Resource Room Manager**

In addition to these 3 positions we have these vacancies that need to be filled.

**Vice President**

**Secretary**

**Nominations Committee (2)**

I found that being on the District Leadership Team was a great experience and I learned a lot about UMW. I enjoyed working with you in several offices. Now it is time for someone else to fill these shoes. Please consider taking one of these positions, or referring one of your members that might be interested. Please contact Loretta Milton with any possible names. (503-287-3992). Thank You!

*Submitted by Clarice Kruschwitz*





### **“Make me an Instrument of your Peace”**

We have had a disastrous outbreak of war in Ukraine as Russia brutally kills and destroys a brave and heroic people. We layer that over the multitude of people struggling with hunger, poverty and conflict and the millions of refugees and displaced persons trying to find a safe harbor in this uncertain world...We see so much accepted violence and lack of caring in our very own culture.

Where is our peace? How can we be instruments of peace in response to Jesus' call on our lives? How can we bring peace into such a disrupted world? Can we really make a difference? All hard questions...

As I look at the beloved “Peace prayer” attributed to St. Francis, I see by small acts of kindness, by sowing small seeds of change, we see ways we can change our everyday life and world and move the needle towards peace.

I'm reading “Make me an Instrument of your Peace” by Oregon writer, Native American activist, Kent Nerburn and when he writes about words like “where there is hatred, let me sow love...” He relates to Native experiences when he worked on an Indian reservation. One involved an elder working with youth, guiding them, offering them strength from their traditions and native heritage. When the elder thought the youth was ready, he would walk over to the wall in his living room and take down a Y-shaped stick. One of the forking branches was painted red and the other was painted black. He would grasp the single end of the stick and hold the forked end toward the young person.

“There are two roads in life,” the elder would say, “the red road and the black road. The red road is the way of helping and caring. The back road is the way of selfishness and hatred. The red road leads to life and light and black road leads to death and darkness....you must choose. “

Fortunately the youth usually chose red. “Good,” he would tell them. “Now, remember this, these branches are like the red road and the black road. The farther you travel down the road, the farther you get from the road you rejected. Now go out and start walking the red road.” The elder knew one of the great secrets of life and it is the same secret that lies beneath the deep wisdom of the prayer of St. Francis. The further we travel down a certain path in life, the more that path shapes us and affects our heart and spirit. Every step counts...When we want peace, we walk peace.

When Francis tells us to sow love where there is hatred, he is invoking the same law. He is not telling us we have to manifest love in full flower, only we must sow a seed of love, because he knows that if we plant a seed---whether it be a seed of love, pardon, faith, hope, light or joy—it will grow, if it is tended, and will soon become strong enough to stand in witness against the dark forces against which it is arrayed. We are not called on to “end the war” or “feed all the hungry” but to just take a step in the right direction, sow a seed of caring and let it grow as God's creation directs.

This is no small challenge. It asks us to overcome our fear and to have faith in the power of goodness. It asks us to believe that our own halting love is strong enough to take root in a field that seems choked with the weeds of hate. We are called to stand up for our belief that we can make a difference. Francis reminds us that love is a habit of the heart, an inclination of the spirit. Each day, a thousand times in a thousand ways, we are called upon to make choices that incline us towards the darkness or the light, towards peace or conflict. They are not all significant choices: some of them may hardly seem like choices at all. But each of them moves our heart a little further along the red road or the black.

So don't despair, just take that step, sow that seed, serve the one in front of you, offer that cup of water, and you are an instrument of God's peace moving us ever closer to God's Kingdom on earth. Your presence does change the world...

## Looking Ahead— September 10th Annual Meeting—The Story of Us - Lydia Henry

Do you love a good story? I do. I come from a family of story tellers. My father would calm down two wiggly, wide awake girls by telling us stories of growing up in South Dakota or places he saw on his travels for work.

I believe stories shared build a common bond – a shared community and humanity. That is why I am making a special request to the units and circles of the Columbia District. Over the summer, I would ask that you put together a “story” of your church and your unit and circles. We will use them during our Annual Meeting on September 10th as our program.

We are beginning to plan a gathering that is both in-person and online. Our team is still in the vision state and details are being discussed, but we wanted to tell you now, in May, so you have time to choose what you want to share. We will begin to ask for items in August.

I can envision a picture of your unit – and a short history of your unit. Help me stretch our story imagination. Do you have a story that is part of the culture of your group? An event that happened for years that you want to celebrate with us? Is there a ministry that grew out of the pandemic and is growing?

The story of us will be a celebration! I can hardly wait to see what you send.



### MISSION U

**OREGON/IDAHO WOMEN UNITED IN FAITH**

**Dates: July 14 - 16 and/or July 29 - 31**

Mission u is an important, vital part of Women United in Faith (United Methodist Women). Mission u will be different this year with the study theme based on **Luke 13**.

#### **WHO CAN WE BE TOGETHER? BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF HOPE AND JOY**

You are invited to join together as we reflect on the COMMUNITY that Jesus is calling us to be. In the midst of a devastating pandemic, divisive political climate, unaddressed systemic racism, ecological crises, and economic turmoil, we turn to the stories of Jesus in Luke 13 that have anchored Christian communities for two millennia. What would be possible if we tended to the needs of our communities in small yet radical ways as Jesus did?

Each attendee is encouraged to read Luke 13 in several translations and begin to discern the ways Jesus reacted and interacted with people in unexpected ways.

Mission u will be virtual

Registration and additional information will be coming soon!

Study Leaders: Sheryl Aydelott, Crater Lake District and Janessa Chastain, Sage District.

Save the Date, put together a group of women at church or in your home so you can participate together. Worship, singing, scripture, prayer, sharing, learning - all are part of Mission u. We look forward to seeing you.