

Greetings Sisters in Faith,

I hope you and your families had a happy and healthy Christmas. I wish for you many blessings in 2023!

I am honored by your faith in me to lead the Harpeth River District as your President. I will humbly serve all the units and members to the best of my ability, but more importantly, I will serve God in this important leadership position. I cannot thank Peggy Owen enough for her dedication and service to our district for the past 10 years; and for being a special friend and mentor to me. In addition, I want to thank Patsy Elliott and Marion Sengstacke for their leadership and willingness to serve the district. These women embody everything UWF represents.

As we incorporate the new United Women in Faith mission and vision into our communities of women, I encourage you to visit the website at <https://uwfaith.org/>. The new website is very easy to navigate. New information is added on a regular basis. I would like to share Our Action, which is listed on the "Who We Are" page.

"Bold action, like faith, takes courage. Our bravery is inspired by God's love and our powerful commitment to improve the lives of women, children, and youth. United Women in Faith works for justice through compassionate service and advocacy to change unfair policies and systems that harm women, children, and youth—from racial and gender injustice to economic inequality, climate issues and more."

I plan to incorporate these principles into our district meetings while concentrating on the two justice campaigns designated by the national organization: **Just Energy 4 All** and **Ending Mass Incarceration and Criminalization of Communities of Color**. Information on these campaigns can be found on the UWF website.

Our Faith Lift, the first district event of the year, is set for Saturday, February 4th at Bethesda UMC in Thompson's Station. The day also includes Local Unit Officer Training, which will be helpful to many of you. The Officer Training will begin at 1 PM in the sanctuary (treasurers will meet in a separate room) followed by the Faith Lift service at 2 PM, also in the sanctuary. We will have a guest speaker from **Free Hearts**. This Nashville-based organization is led by formerly incarcerated women that provide support, education, and advocacy in organizing families impacted by incarceration. The ultimate goals of **Free Hearts** are to reunite families and keep families together. (<https://freeheartsorg.com/>) I would like to thank Bethesda UMC, Pastor Mary Kate Myers, and unit president Annette McRee for hosting this event.

I would also like to thank the fellow officers for their willingness to serve: Marilyn Smith, Secretary; Debbie Miller, Treasurer; Janet Pierce, Communications; Bobbi Toombs, Program Resources; Diana Gardner, MNO Coordinator; Judy Davis, Nominations Chair; and the Nominating Committee Members: Kate Howard, Frances Warpool, Patsy Elliott, and Peggy Owen. We had two ladies, Marina Rawls, Spiritual Growth Coordinator and Stacey Hagedwood, Social Action Coordinator, step up and volunteer at the District Annual Meeting held at Christ UMC in September to serve in these positions. Wow! How powerful God worked that day! Our new District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Vona Wilson, gave a heartfelt, personal testimony about healing and finding joy, which was enjoyed by all.

The positions of Vice President and Education & Interpretation Coordinator remain open. We would love to have these filled. Remember, we are a strong "sisterhood" who help and strengthen one another. Anyone who might be interested in being an officer, please contact Judy Davis at jldavis71391@att.net. Resources and training will be available for you. Rest assured, you will never go it alone.

Blessings,

Beth Stockwell
Harpeth River District President
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