

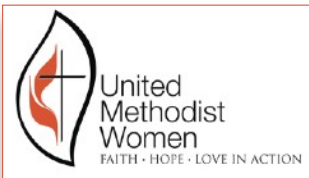
FEBRUARY, 2021

Comment

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, and your neighbor as yourself.”

A Newsletter for United Methodist Women of the North Star District (NSD)

The Purpose of United Methodist Women



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.



NEW BEGINNINGS

We have begun a new year with new opportunities, challenges and hope for the future. United Methodist Women boldly keep moving forward.

As we begin to think about Spring, it is time to ‘plant the seeds’. In February, my mother always started her seeds for ‘starter plants’ in the house.

As a child, I didn’t consider why a person would plant seeds when it is so cold with snow on the ground but I always loved to watch them grow. Local Units, it is time to gather and “plant the seeds” that will outline your activities for the Summer and Fall. One of the ‘seeds’ I would like you to consider is, hosting a Welcome event when your church opens up again (or if you are already meeting in person, pick a date), United Methodist Women at unitedmethodistwomen.org have made it easy for you. Look for the ‘Welcoming Tool Kit’. This Kit will provide ideas for how you can carry out this event, personalize it for your own needs and have a great time together. This is a great opportunity to welcome new people to your local unit, get the ‘message of UMW’ to others and if you like, invite people from your local community to join. Remember, you don’t have to be a member of a United Methodist Church to come to UMW meetings and events.

LET’S MOVE ON FORWARD TOGETHER!

*Marion Hansen
North Star United Methodist Women, District President*

NSD 2021 Calendar

March 19, 2021

NS Executive Meeting
via Zoom

March 20, 2021

NS Spring Gathering
via Zoom

July 7, 2021

NS Executive Meeting
via Zoom

July 16 -18, 2021

Mission U
TBD or Virtual

September 10, 2021

NS Executive Meeting
via Zoom

September 11, 2021

NS Annual Gathering
via Zoom

October 2, 2021

MN Conference UMW
Annual Meeting



Camp Director, Leslie Hobson, will share camping news at the Spring Gathering on March 20

Northern Pines Camp and Retreat Center is so excited to be open for Summer 2021. They were able to provide a safe and welcoming space for guests and small groups last summer through this winter but are now ready to welcome campers. Director Leslie Hobson will share with the North Star District UMW what camp may look like this summer, the new land acquired by Northern Pines and the ministry possibilities there, and what their goals are moving forward. Leslie will also share how the word COMMUNITY guided the camp staff through the last year and the joys found during the pandemic.



Northern Pines Camp

Minnesota
Annual Conference
of the United Methodist Church
Camping & Retreats Ministries



About our Guest Speaker, Leslie Hobson

Deaconess Leslie Hobson has been the director at Northern Pines Camp and Retreat Center since May 9, 2016. Previous to that she taught 6th grade in Elkins, WV from 1981-1990 and upon returning to Brainerd, MN she ran an in-home daycare and did foster care from 1990-2001. She started working part-time at Park UMC in 1996 as the youth and family ministries director and then became full-time after closing her daycare in 2001. She was commissioned as a deaconess in 2007. At that time, her primary ministry area was Camps Without Barriers, a camping ministry designed to help campers with special needs and disabilities attend almost any of the camps of Camp Minnesota. Leslie is married to Steve and they have 2 adult children, Rachel and Zach. Rachel is married to Tyler Bacon and they have 2 children, Winston and Hazel, making Leslie a grandmother, a role she absolutely loves!

Are you ready for the first day
of Spring? Celebrate at the
Spring Gathering via ZOOM!



CONTACT INFORMATION FOR NORTH STAR DISTRICT OFFICERS

President **Marion Hansen** – 28287 Co Rd 23, Sebeka, MN 56477 – 218-837-5054 – marionha@wcta.net

Program Coordinator **Vacant position** – CAN YOU HELP?

Secretary – **Marsha Mower** – 7626 White Overlook Dr., Breezy Point, MN 56472 – 217-412-8797 – m.mower@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer – **Litta (Le) Sears** – 1392 24th Street SW, Pine River, MN 56474 – 218-839-6171 – sears.litta@gmail.com

Nominations Chair – **Karol Lehman** – PO Box 146, McGregor, MN 55760 – 218-310-1578 – lehmankarol@yahoo.com

Nominations – **Vacant position** – CAN YOU HELP?

Spiritual Growth – **Vacant position** – CAN YOU HELP?

Social Action – **Vacant Position** – CAN YOU HELP?

Education & Interpretation – **Vacant Position** – CAN YOU HELP?

Emma Norton – **Valerie Solem** – 21816 115th Ave. NE, Thief River Falls, MN 56701 – 218-681-5208 – valsolem@gmail.com

Resource Manager – **Vacant Position** – CAN YOU HELP?

Communications – **Angie Barnhart** – 24145 435th Ave., Aitkin, MN 56431 – 218-678-3344 – cartoonC@juno.com

Historian – **Susan Clark Harris** – PO Box 362, Aitkin, MN 56431 – 218-838-2579 – sclarkharris@mlcwb.net



SAVE THE DATE!

North Star District
UMW Spring Gathering
in the convenience
of your own home .

Register by March 17.
See info below and on page 2.



WOMEN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Tabitha was a disciple in the city of Joppa. "She was devoted to good works and acts of charity" (Acts 9:36b). Widows wept and Peter traveled to mourn the death of this woman mentioned in Acts. She was not only a believer but also a doer as the mourning widows attested when they showed Peter what she had done for them. We do not know what moved him to do what he did next, but God saw fit to use Peter to raise Tabitha from the dead so that more would believe.



Tabitha Raised From the Dead

Our belief is shown through what we do. Tabitha is an example of this as are Esther, Rahab and the Samaritan woman. The widowed women showed Peter evidence of Tabitha's faithfulness through what she did for them. As members of United Methodist Women, we are called to not only believe but also to do. Just as Tamar took what could be considered drastic action to stand up against injustice (Genesis 38), we are also called to boldly speak out against injustice in our society.

Spring Gathering: March 20 9:30-12 noon via Zoom **New Beginnings-Let Your Light Shine**

Register with Le Sears: sears.litta@gmail.com Be sure to share your name, address, phone number, church and the email address where you want your link sent.

Send your offering to: Le Sears at 1392 24th St. SW, Pine River, MN 56474 (If you want it divided between Emma Norton and our District Pledge, please indicate that in a note with the check). If you would like, you can send your registration with your offering, just allow enough time for delivery of the mail.

Join us for this time of worship together, learning more about our United Methodist Camping program featuring Northern Pines Camp Director, Deaconess Leslie Hobson. Our Conference President, Cindy Saufferer also plans to join us to tell us more about the 'Just Energy for All' program.

Plan to see you there. Marion

Procedure for Zoom: When we have your registration information, we will send you a link/invitation by March 19 to join the meeting. If you have not used Zoom before, you do not need to be a zoom member to attend a meeting. Go to [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us) for more Zoom information. You can attend via computer or telephone and the link has information that will include how you can join us. Please join in early in case you have technical difficulties. If that occurs, call me at 218-837-5054 between 9am and 9:20am.

You may attend as an individual or gather a group of people together and join as a group. If your church has the technology available, this would be a great time to enlist the help of the church's tech person and ask them to link your group to the meeting for you. Remember to wear your masks and social distance while in your group. This can also be an opportunity to invite someone who has not been active in UMW. If you have questions about our Annual Spring Gathering, please contact me, Marion, at marionha@wcta.net or 218-837-5054.



NOMINATIONS

Hello all North Star District United Methodist Women!

Spring will soon be upon us !
Would you like to be part of a team that works with Mission?
We would like you to join us!
We are doing Zoom meetings and gatherings during

Covid-19 so no travel time. You can do zoom meeting/gathering as a group or individual. How can you help and be a Light Shining in a dark world? ***A most critical position we need to fill is that of the President for 2022.***

ELECTED OFFICERS CURRENT FOR 2021

• **Nominated for another term:**

President: Marion Hansen
Secretary: Marsha J. Mower
Treasurer: Litta (Le) Sears
Chairperson, Nominations: Karol Lehman

• **Nominations accepted for all VACANT OFFICES**

Program Coordinator - Vacant
Spiritual Growth - Vacant
Social Action - Vacant
Education and Interpretation - Vacant
Membership Nurture and Outreach - Vacant
Resource Manager - Vacant
Nominations Team - Four Vacancies

• **Appointed offices**

Communications - Angie Barnhart
Historian - Susan Clark Harris
Emma Norton Representative - Valerie Solem

Please email, call, or mail me with your candidate's contact information if you know of anyone who would be wonderful at any of the above positions. I'll do the calling to ask them. You may also nominate candidates during our Zoom meeting on March 20.

We pray that God will lead you to using your talents for Him.

Thank You and God Bless You!
Karol Lehman

WHAT DO TEAM MEMBERS DO?

Each individual on a team provides focus to a particular area of UMW that is important to the whole. The North Star District Team is in need of several team members to provide leadership in the following areas.

The **District President** represents the North Star District on the Conference Team for Minnesota United Methodist Women providing a conduit for information sharing that reaches back to the District team and local Units.

The **Program Coordinator** leads the planning of the Spring and Fall Annual meetings. The District Team provides ready hands and support to this team leader.

The focus of **Membership, Nurture and Outreach** is our members. This person's focus is on 'everything membership' and finds ways the District team can better serve our local Unit membership.

The **Spiritual Growth** leader provides Spiritual guidance and support for the team as well as worship leadership at our meetings. This person, with the help of the team also plans our Day Apart activities.

The **Education and Interpretation** leader provides information intended to help our members become knowledgeable regarding 'all things UMW'

The **Social Action** leader helps us focus on and be informed about a wide variety of Justice issues that impact our lives today.

The **Program Resources** manager coordinates the Reading Program and makes us aware of the excellent books and learning tools available through United Methodist Women.

The **Committee on Nominations** seeks out people who are ready to serve God through their service within UMW. They are seeking volunteers for the above positions that will be available in the year 2022 and/or to fill existing vacancies within our team. If you feel called or know someone who might like to serve, please contact Karol Lehman.

Marion Hansen
North Star UMW, District President



JOIN YOUR UMW SISTERS ON FACEBOOK! 'Minnesota United Methodist Women'

Contact information for all officers of the North Star District UMW can be found on Page 2.



NSD TREASURER

Are you a Five Star Unit?

Seventeen North Star District Units have achieved the 5 Channels of Giving in 2020 and will receive a Recognition Award in the mail by sometime in April.

(See graphic on right.)

The following financial report for 2020 is a great effort by the units of our District. They gave as much as they could and the following reflects that giving:

Mission Giving \$31,437 (60% of Budget) & Emma Norton Services \$8,235 (74% of Budget).

Just a reminder for local treasurers, if you could please remember to send in the remittance form with your checks made out to **North Star District** that would be very helpful. If you do not have a sample form, please let me know. Also, if there are any changes to your unit treasurer's physical, email address or phone number, please let me know. My contact information is found at the bottom of page 2 of this newsletter.

If I can be of any assistance please contact me. Continue to keep mission as your unit's emphasis and give as you can. Have a great 2021. Enjoy the spring season!

*In Christ,
Litta (Le) Sears, NSD Treasurer*

Subscribe to the free online
'COMMENT' newsletter of
North Star District of UMW
go to cartoonc@juno.com
or find it on the Minnesota Conf. website:
mnconfumw.com

Subscribe to the free online newsletter
'FRESH CONNECTION'
Minnesota Conference of UMW
go to mnomnumw@gmail.com

5-STAR AWARD MEANS GIVING TO:

- ★ Pledge to Mission
- ★ Special Mission Recognition
- ★ Gift to Mission
- ★ Gift in Memory
- ★ World Thank Offering

NSD 2020 5-STAR AWARDS WENT TO:

Aitkin ★ Detroit Lakes ★ Eagle Bend
Emily ★ Hewitt ★ Hubbard ★ McGregor
Motley ★ Nashwauk ★ Ortonville
Otertail ★ Pequot Lakes
Park Rapids-Riverside ★ Rosendale
Sauk Centre ★ Willmar ★ Verndale
CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE UNITS!

United Methodist Women: Talking Points

United Methodist Women is here for the long haul. 2019 was a monumental year for United Methodist Women, our church and our nation. United Methodist Women celebrated their 150th anniversary shouting the theme "Women still need to organize for mission!". Women organized for mission are ESSENTIAL for the Church to BE a church. God continues to look for women who are committed to turning their faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth.

United Methodist Women is here for the long haul, regardless of what decisions are made in the wider church.

(summarized from United Methodist Women 2019-2020 Talking Points provided by UMW)

FYI: Three hardcopies of the **Comment** are sent to each of the churches in the North Star District. Do you know someone who would like one? Please ask at your church where the copies are and if you can, distribute them to women who'd like one. **THANKS!!**

Just Energy for All

The Minnesota Conference United Methodist Women has received \$4200 from the National Office for engaging United Methodist Women and their congregations in the work of the priority issue of Climate Justice and the **Just Energy For All** campaign. This will help us work for energy that is cleaner and more just for all of God's people and creation.

The work is specifically to be in collaboration with another organization involved in the work of Just Energy. Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light (MNIPL) is the perfect fit. MNIPL works with faith communities to build transformative power and bring people's unique gifts to address the climate crisis. **Rev. Susan Mullin**, a deacon in the Minnesota Conference, is its director of faith community organizing and will work closely with UMW on the campaigns.

This year, MNIPL will work with Minnesota United Methodist UMW groups and local churches to help them craft "climate stories"—a process that will include gathering to discuss how they have been

impacted by climate change (damaging storms, crop losses, heat waves, poor air quality, etc.), reflecting on changes they have made to be better stewards of God's creation, and articulating their hopes and dreams for the future. MNIPL will also facilitate opportunities for congregations to meet with their U.S. Congressional representatives to advocate for climate justice.

MNIPL will additionally educate United Methodist groups about Line 3, help them understand how they can make their voices heard in opposing it, and arrange "water protector welcome tours" to allow people to see what is happening on the ground and hear from frontline water protectors. Line 3 is a pipeline that transports oil from the

tar sands in Alberta, Canada, across northern Minnesota to Superior, Wisconsin. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission has granted permission for the Canadian company that owns the pipeline to build a new Line 3 with a different route across our state.

To learn more on becoming involved, contact Cindy Saufferer, MN Conference President at cindy.saufferer@gmail.com



Emma Norton

The Journey Home Begins Here

Brr, it's chilly out there! Want to help our residents stay warm and comfy like Bernie at the inauguration? We're seeking donations of mini space heaters, as well as warm comforters and blankets for new families moving in at Emma's Place!

To coordinate a donation drop off, please email our Advancement Associate, Victoria, at VVirasy@emmanorton.org, or you can ship donations to Emma Norton Residence at 670 Robert St N, St Paul, MN 55101.

Would you like to share the love with Emma Norton? We're launching our first text-to-give fundraiser! Text EMMA to 243-725 to get a special donation link to help welcome new families and residents to Emma Norton!

Good news to report about EN Services:

In December we heard the wonderful news that the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency has allocated \$18 million in funding for the new Emma Norton Residence in the Highland Bridge development!

"The project will create 60 homes for women and children and office space for Emma Norton Services," said Tonya Brownlow, the organization's executive director. "The great thing is, it will allow us to expand [from 50 to 60 units] and it will be their own apartment versus what we have now, which is shared rooms." Check out this awesome article from Finance & Commerce to learn more:

<https://finance-commerce.com/.../funding-boosts-highland.../>

A good way to find out the progress being made at Emma Norton is to check out their facebook page. Just search for **Emma Norton Services**.

UMW READING PROGRAM

UMW has decided to expand the Reading Program to two years (2021-2022) according to Response November/December 2020 issue. This article outlines the various Reading Program Plans (remember that books on the reading list from 2017 onward can still be entered for credit if you haven't already listed them in a previous year). Books are available through libraries, bookstores and online. Remember Amazon has a smile.amazon.com program and will donate 0.5% of eligible purchases to UMW if you go to this site after completing your purchase. Also remember your small, local bookstores which would love your business.

SEND YOUR READING PROGRAM REPORTS to Marion Hansen at marionha@wcta.net



DISTRICT HISTORIAN

I am not sure how busy you are this winter, but....One thought to add to the things you can be doing in the cold period before spring is this: Go through your photographs or files of UMW district items to see what you want to keep. Whatever you may wish to pass on from

North Star District events, I would gladly accept for the District albums and historical files. We don't want them to be tossed while you are 'purging.' Also, if you are lucky to have been involved in the Northeast or Northwest Districts (pre-2008), I would love any items from those years, as we are missing most of the events from prior to North Star.

If you have enough time/memory, add notes about the events in the pictures: who and when and where. Any of you with Conference UMW photos or history, the Conference Historian would likely want those.

We can arrange how to get the materials to me when it's possible. Happy hunting!

Thanks in Advance!
Susan Clark Harris



The symbol on the left represents UMW's commitment to work for racial justice. Its multicolor image shows a world of racially and ethnically diverse peoples working together side by side to create a world in which every person has a voice, rights and opportunity for abundant life. Within the image are two hands joined together to work for justice for all God's children.



COMMUNICATIONS

Well, I guess it's time to stop ignoring the 500 pound gorilla in the room. January 6 was a horrendous day in our country's history. I'm pretty sure you all know what I'm talking about. Shortly afterward the Minnesota Conference of the UMC came out with a statement encouraging United Methodists to remember and live by our Social Principles and work for peace and justice including those concerning civil disobedience and also white supremacy and racism. They said, "Racism is the combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the others."

I will add this: The God we worship . . . the God who taught us about Hope & Loving our neighbor . . . the God who died to save us . . . what did he look like? His mother, Mary, the only connection He had with human DNA was a Jewish woman. She was born and bred to produce children that looked like Jews - not Northern European, blond, blue-eyed children but of middle eastern descent, brown eyed, dark skinned, dark haired. This Jesus - her son - was promised to her even though she was a virgin, to be her Savior. This is probably what He would have looked like. He came into the world to save us no matter what our ethnicity. He taught love and compassion. Does it matter what He looked like OR what we look like? God loves us all no matter where our ancestors came from. Racism has no place in the Christian religion. Pray for those who hold up a Bible but still hate their fellow man! ***Lord God, come into their lives! Teach them to Choose Love! Have a Blessed and Happy Easter!***

Angie Barnhart
Communications, North Star District UMW



Artistic rendering from Dutch artist Bas Uterwijk, an interpretation of the real Jesus.