



United Women in Faith
El Camino Real District Newsletter

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June Q2 2025 Issue

The *Mission Link* is a quarterly newsletter of El Camino Real District United Women in Faith.

Articles for Submission

Please direct items for publication in Mission Link to the Communications Coordinator. If you provide photos of recognizable individuals, please be sure you have obtained permission from those individuals to publish their picture. Mission Link Q3 will be printed after our Annual Celebration on September 27, 2025. The deadline for submitting articles, information and photographs for Mission Link Q3 will be Friday, October 4, 2025.

President's Message



Message from the President:

I am having a hard time writing this to you. I want to be hopeful but it is really difficult. Let me tell you what I have been doing.

I spoke at the budget session of the San Jose City Council on Monday asking them to reject the "Responsibility to Shelter" policy of the mayor which will send homeless people to jail just for refusing shelter. The county will not provide services for such people and they will just be released back on the street. How cruel to traumatize this vulnerable population for no reason.

ICE raids continue in and around San Jose. Innocent people are being seized and sent to detention centers or worse. The situation in Los Angeles seems to be a harbinger of the future where the military will be used against US citizens.

I could go on but you all know of the many abominations coming out of our federal government. Where can we find hope?

One ray of hope for me is that the student I am sponsoring from Kazakhstan received her visa from the US embassy on Tuesday. Her name is Amina and she will be staying with me and attending San Jose State University. I met her on my mission trip to Kyrgyzstan. We have been working on this for months. I know that God has been with us every step of the way.

Another ray of hope is that I am going on another mission trip in June, this time to Vietnam. Our team will be teaching English to children. The Communist government forbids direct evangelism but we will show God's love for these children through our teaching.

I learned about hope at the Mission u session at Monte Toyon. You should all go. (My offer still stands that I will drive anyone to the one day session in Sacramento.) I can say that I do have hope because of the lessons I learned there. Hope is not an emotion. It is not optimism. Active hope is having a vision of a different future. It may involve simple acts of resistance to the powers that be such as feeding the hungry or protesting the treatment of immigrants and refugees. (Remember that Jesus was a refugee who fled to Egypt.) Hope is an integral part of our Christian faith. If we believe in the resurrection of Jesus, then we can have hope even in these dark times.

Sincerely,
Debbie

Debbie Ow
President
ECRD District United Women in Faith

Treasurer Report - Carolyn Bircher

Thank you to all of the units that have sent in pledges! A link to the remittance form may be found at <https://elcaminorealumw.org/treasurer-information/>

The address for sending in remittances is still:

ECRD UMW, c/o Carolyn Bircher
1663 Martin Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Treasurer

Carolyn Bircher

We are approaching the end of our fundraising year. Please send in your 2025 remittances for missions by the end of August. Thank you to all of the units that have been working so hard to raise funds for UWF missions. Remittance checks, payable to "ECRD UMW", may be sent to. ECRD UWF, c/o Carolyn Bircher, 1663 Martin Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94087

I will send reminder emails to unit treasurers at the end of this month, showing your current progress towards becoming 5-star giving units. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

PLEDGE ACCOUNT (for contributions from the local units for missions, which are passed on to the conference (and then to National) UWF)

Remittances received (Apr-June 18)	\$12,630.00
1 st qtr. remittances sent to conference	- <u>\$ 4,885.50</u>
June 18, 2025 balance	\$12,659.22

ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNT (for the ECR District UWF events and operations)

Connect & Learn expenses	- \$ 250.00
Mission u Scholarships	- \$ 275.00
Jan-June Communication expenses	- \$ 119.17
Interest received	<u>\$ 0.05</u>
June 18, 2025 balance	\$ 631.17

We still have funds available for **Mission u scholarships**. If you would like to attend, but are intimidated by the cost, please email me at treasurer@elcaminorealumw.org to request a \$125 scholarship. Full scholarships will be paid for youth and young adults (12-35 yrs).

Mission u Monte Toyon - Practicing Hope

I attended a special United Women in Faith retreat in Aptos over the May 30 - June 1st weekend and practiced hope in lots of ways. We joined in small groups, prayed, sang, ate, had times of rest, and even hiked the great trails around Monte Toyon. Our teacher was **Sandra Hardin**, a good friend from Cambrian Park UMC from the past. She was a dynamic teacher, well informed and interesting. What fun to reconnect with her. That's the joy of going to United Women in Faith events – you get to see and visit with friends you haven't seen in years.

Every year the National UWF puts together a "Mission u" program for men and women to study a topic of current interest. This year the theme was "Practicing Hope," complete with study books for adults, teens and children. There are scholarships for each Conference UWF and I got to enjoy the experience through the generosity of our District team . Thank you, Debbie Ow ! Next year I hope to bring some of you with me.

Blessings, Betty Dickey



Laos Mission Vision Trip

Katherine O Kim | 3/16/2025

In February 2025, Santa Clara church members Ms. Ha Myung Soon and Deaconess Katherine O Kim went on a trip to visit the Laos Mission Initiative. Over several days, the visitors toured several facilities in Laos.

The Laos Mission Initiative is part of the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) and operates under the guidance of the Asia-Pacific regional office. Its core ministries focus on growing the Lao Methodist Church, training and educating pastors, Community Health and Agricultural Development (CHAD), and social development through language and vocational centers.



The CHAD project focuses on clean water supply, sanitation facilities (toilets), livestock and medical support, and improvement of food security and livelihood through agricultural infrastructure. This project has been supported by the Wesley Center in Tokyo, Japan, by providing \$50,000 annually to support community development. This funding is set to expire in March 2025, raising concerns about continued support. Just recently, word has been received that funding has been extended for three more years—a definite answer to everyone’s prayers.



Future plans include requests for assistance from various entities supporting the Laos mission, enrollment in the General Board of Global Ministries Advance Project to establish a fund for Pastor Kim Doo Silk and Mrs. Lee Sora; and engagement with the Santa Clara UMC Laos Mission Project.

Starting March 2025, Mrs. Sora Le has started a pilot Sunday School program in Laos with the supplies she received from the Bay Area.

To read Kathy Kim’s complete report, [click here](#).

Climate justice through faith-inspired [connection](#), [education](#), [advocacy](#), [action](#)!

This is the beginning of the mission of the Climate Justice Ministries Task Force. The Task Force has been working diligently on organizing for the Annual Conference and its local churches to respond to the climate emergency in ways that are responsive to the urgency and magnitude of the climate crisis and in solidarity with those who are marginalized and harmed by current emissions, systems and practices.

The draft of the Fossil Fuels divestment petition and recommendations will be presented at the annual conference in Sacramento from June 27-30, 2025.

[Conference Resolution draft](#)

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California-Nevada Annual Conference 2025 information

The Constitutional Amendments of The United Methodist Church

Do you know what the 4 Constitutional Amendments are that will be voted on by every Annual Conference around the world?

The 4 amendments are:

1. Worldwide Regionalization
2. Gender and ability inclusion
3. Racial Justice
4. Educational requirements for clergy members

To learn more about these amendments and what they will mean for The United Methodist Church, click on this link which will take you to the California-Nevada UMC website.

<https://www.cnumc.org/constitutional-amendments>

Around the District

If you have a photo or announcement about a local unit event, feel free to submit it. We will try to publish some things in this section that may trigger ideas for other units.

Watsonville UWF will be hosting El Camino Real District Annual Celebration 2025

The ECRD Annual Celebration will be at Watsonville First UMC on September 27, 2025, 10:00-noon. The theme is "Moving Forward With Hope." The speaker will be Mele Kai, Palo Alto Tongan UMC. The church is located at 229 Stanford St. Watsonville, Ca 95076. Please come and join us!

History of Watsonville First United Methodist Church by Marilyn Hyde

The present Stanford Street facility of the Watsonville UMC was built by Methodist volunteers in 1954, and the sanctuary was completed in 1960. The Freedom Community (Methodist) Church merged with our congregation in 1998.

Methodist women have played important roles throughout our church's history. Women's groups included the Woman's Home Missionary Society, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, the Ladies Aid Society, and the Women's Society of Christian Service. Presently,

United Women in Faith (United Methodist Women) gather monthly for devotion and personal enrichment. We also support the church and community in many important ways.

For more than 172 years, Watsonville Methodists have been a voice for community reflection and engagement, including support for our Japanese-American neighbors during World War II, sponsoring immigrant families, coordinating a 200-unit low-income housing site for 40 years, hosting foreign-exchange students, providing a childcare center, and feeding and sheltering those in need following economic downturns, floods, and earthquakes.

[For full history by Marilyn Hyde, click here](#)

Wesley UWF Tea Time and UWF Anniversary



Psalm 118:24 NRSV

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

On Sunday 3/23/25 following the worship service, your Wesley UWF served as hosts for Tea Time and created a time of celebration in honor of United Women in Faith 156 years.

One definition of celebration is “praise and appreciation.”

A special hand made and cheerful “United

Women in Faith 156 years” banner was displayed up high to celebrate the good news of UWF sisterhood in Christian love and service.

Each plate was filled with festive and delicious birthday cake, sweet treats and tasty snacks overflowing with God’s grace and peace. Coffee, tea & guava juice filled our cups that runneth over with praise and thanksgiving. Flower decorations of live orchid plants and candy/paper roses radiated joy and gratitude.

The WUMC congregation gathered in the Fellowship Hall with smiles and friendly conversations as they celebrated this time of love, community and fellowship. Surely, the Holy Spirit gladdened and strengthened each heart throughout this UWF 156 Birthdate celebration. Our birthday wish is that all might know our loving God and his great love. We believe that love in action can change the world.

Peace..... Mary Horio, President, Wesley UWF

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Wesley UWF 2025 Rummage Sale

Wesley UWF held their annual Rummage Sale on June 7th , 2025. It was a very huge and successful event! Folks got to clean out their closets, the surrounding community(many low income) received wonderful bargains, and the proceeds went to Missions.

Some of the organizations that benefitted from last year's Rummage Sales include UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), the Fire Disaster Fund of the Calif-Pacific UMC Conference, Gum Moon Residence/Mary Elizabeth Inn, Grateful Garments (nonprofit supporting women of sexual violence), UWF Missions and many more not mentioned here.

The Rummage Sale is a green/environmental event which reuses and recycles many once-treasured items that would otherwise end up wasting in landfills. All unsold merchandise is given to HOPE Rehabilitation Services in San Jose which restocks their Thrift Store. HOPE operates workshops, day programs, job training, and counseling for individuals with disabilities. So many people benefit.

Finally, the Rummage Sale brings church members together in fellowship who want to serve. It's a lot of work, but it's all for a worthwhile cause.



Our wonderful volunteers!!!!

Marina

Marina UMC hosted the Annual Church Rummage Sale on May 17, 2025. The event was well attended, bringing together both familiar faces and new visitors. It was a wonderful success—a day filled with community spirit, meaningful conversations, and shared laughter.



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The Marina UWF Prayer Shawl Ministry continues. Shawls are made with love and given with blessings and prayers to provide comfort to those in need. Future plans include adopting Care Homes in the Marina Area.



CNUWF Annual Celebration - Save the Date

California Nevada United Women in Faith will be holding their Annual Celebration on October 4, 2025 at Centennial United Methodist Church in Sacramento. More information available soon.



Mission u 2025

Proposed dates -

July 19, 9AM to 5PM Centennial UMC, 5401 Freeport Blvd., Sacramento 95822

July 25-July 27 - ECCO, Episcopal Conference Center, Oakhurst

Mission u Theme: *Practicing Hope Together*

Practicing Hope is an adult curriculum exploring hope, particularly when hope seems hard to find. The curriculum asks questions such as these: What is hope in the face of neo fascism? What is hope in a time of genocide? How do we imagine a future for the next generation as our planet grows hotter by the season? What tools do we have to face these hard realities? How does Christ teach us to embody hope when our backs are against the wall?

This study's purpose is to allow all of our communities to cultivate hope that is honest about our current conditions (refugia), hope that is restorative when everything feels urgent (rest), and hope that is possible even when we transgress (repair).

For more information about the different sessions and registration, click the flyer below.

[Missionu flyer 2025](#)

Coming Events

September 6 - Marina UWF Afternoon Tea

September 27 - District UWF Annual Celebration at Watsonville UMC

October 4 - Conference Annual Celebration, Centennial UMC, Sacramento

November 2 - Spiritual Retreat, Central Valley. Watch for more information.

ECRD

Please send any announcements for any upcoming events to:

communication@elcaminorealumw.org

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter. (Any misspelling, errors or typos are ours alone).

Joyce & Leslie

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