



United Women in Faith
El Camino Real District Newsletter

Q4 -December 2022 Issue

In this Issue:

[Presidents Message](#)
[Treasurer's Report](#)
[Thankfulness and Welcome](#)
[Book Review](#)
[Annual Celebration Revisited](#)
[Farewell from District Team Members](#)
[Coming Events](#)
[Around the District](#)
[Communications Update](#)

The *Mission Link* is a quarterly newsletter of [El Camino Real District United Methodist Women](#).

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. The next issue will be published in early March, 2022. The deadline for articles and photos to be submitted is February 28, 2023.

Presidents Message

God is good, all the time. All the time, God is GOOD!

This fall has been an especially *GOOD* season for me with all kinds of activities.

Katherine Kim and I went to the Annual Luncheon celebrating the 154th anniversary of Gum Moon Women's Residence in San Francisco. The theme was Embracing Unity. The gala was hosted by Jan Yanehiro (you might remember her from the Evening Magazine show) and Philip Choi. Entertainment included songs by Tim Pavino (winner of The Voice in the Philippines), three dances by the Bay Area Ballet Conservatory, and a Chinese Lion Dance by local children. The food was fantastic. The menu included Lobster Salad, Abalone with mushrooms, sea bass, and mini buns with condensed milk. Yummy. To top things off, several dignitaries from San Francisco showed up including Mayor London Breed, the acting District





Attorney and several of the Supervisors. Kathy gave the invocation for the occasion and represented United Women in Faith very well.

Our Annual Celebration at Willow Glen was another occasion where United Women in Faith showed their stuff. The District Team did an excellent job of planning the event. We recognized many of the units for their contributions to the well-being of women, children and youth this year. Susan Smith was our speaker and she enlightened us on how she “throws spaghetti against the wall” and sees what sticks. She is always coming up with new ideas to delight her students at the daycare center and also the members of Willow Glen church. Deo and Carolyn provided wonderful music. We welcomed Maribel Ulay onto our leadership team and bid farewell to two long serving members, Katherine Kim and Sandra Nesheim. After the program, we enjoyed a yummy lunch. It was so great to see all of you again. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.

Two weeks later we had the Conference Annual Celebration at Asbury UMC in Livermore. What a beautiful church! The speaker was Bonita Jane Miller who is President of the United Women in Faith Western Jurisdiction and also part of the Program Advisory Group assigned to Eliminating Institutional Racism Working Group. I got to march down the center aisle with our banner. It was an honor for me to represent all of the members of the El Camino Real District.



I also had some real fun when I visited Valley Faith UMC in Sunnyvale for a Sunday service honoring the women of the church. Maribel Ulay was the worship leader and Saniata Melchor gave the sermon where she highlighted her experiences at the UWF Assembly in Florida this last May that she attended. What a fun time! I was even invited to sing in their choir. (I think I sounded OK?) After church we had a wonderful lunch prepared by the members. I was given a cross, picture and a light to use in my home worship center. Several of the members were honored for their service. What a great day for United Women in Faith!

Now we need to start looking forward to the year ahead. We are planning for the *Connect and Learn* event on February 4th, 2023 (Zoom only) and also a return to Mission Springs for our *Spiritual Retreat* on April 14-16 in person only. (Please put these events on

your calendar now!) We would welcome any ideas you might have for these events so send them through your president or directly to me. Ow.debora@yahoo.com We want everyone to participate.

By the time you read this we will be into the holidays. Where did the year go? I hope you have a wonderful holiday season and remember that the district team is here to support you in your unit activities so please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you. Maybe just an invitation to attend – I love going to your events.

Sincerely,

Debbie Ow

President

ECRD District United Women in Faith

Treasurer's Report

Thanks to your continued giving and our modest administrative expenses, our finances are in good shape. All funds for the third quarter Mission Giving have been sent to the Conference and some of you are on your way to becoming 5-star-giving units for next year. Please continue to send remittances, payable to "El Camino Real District UMW" to:

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

Account	Balance as of Nov. 30, 2022
Pledge Account	\$1,367.06
Administrative Account	\$1,667.06

The offering taken at Annual Celebration, for the Gum Moon Women's Residence and Mary Elizabeth Inn, was \$1,350 plus additional online giving. Thank you for your generosity! These funds have been sent directly to the two mission projects.

- <https://www.gummoon.org/>
- <https://meinn.org/>

If you have questions, you may contact me at treasurer@elcaminorealumw.org.

Carolyn Bircher

ECRD Treasurer

Thankfulness and Welcome

At a recent El Camino Real District UWF meeting, our newest district team member, Maribel Ulay, gave the devotional. She read the following poem, which seemed so appropriate for this time of year. We're excited to have Maribel on the district team!

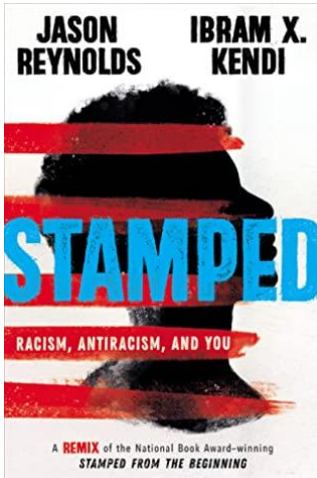
My Cup Overflows – by John Paul Moore

I've never made a fortune,
And I'll never make one now
But it really doesn't matter
'Cause I'm happy anyhow.
As I go along my journey
I'm reaping better than I've sowed
I'm drinking from the saucer
'Cause my cup has overflowed.
I don't have a lot of riches,
And the going's sometimes tough
But with kin and friends to love me
I think I'm rich enough.

I thank God for the blessings
That His mercy has bestowed
I'm drinking from the saucer
'Cause my cup has overflowed.
He gives me strength and courage
When the way grows steep and rough
I'll not ask for other blessings
For I'm already blessed enough.
May we never be too busy
To help bear another's load
Then we'll all be drinking from the saucer
When our cups have overflowed

Book Review: *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You* – by Jason Reynolds

A few years back, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi published ***Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America***. It was a deeply researched chronicle of anti-Black racist ideas and their staggering power throughout American history. Jason Reynolds has taken Kendi's book and made a fast-paced narrative that is accessible to youth readers (or us adults who have less time to invest).

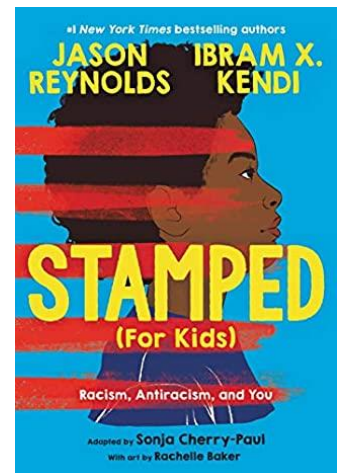


This book takes us through the history of racist ideas in the U.S., from Jamestown to the current day. For each era, explanations are given for how Black lives were affected by the ideologies of that time. It introduces the thinking of civil rights leaders who fought for change throughout our history. But, most importantly, it helps the reader understand why Black Americans feel as they do. I found it especially interesting to read the chapters about the parts of history that I've lived through and to see them through a different lens.

The book explains the difference between racism, assimilation and antiracism. Not only did it discredit racist ideologies, it shed much-needed light on how and why they were created. Finally, Reynolds offered

antiracist tools that we can use to expose racism and stamp it from our thoughts.

This book is on the 2022 Reading Program list in the Leadership Development category. In the 2023 list, under Education for Mission, is another book by Jason Reynolds, ***Stamped (For Kids): Racism, Antiracism and You***. I haven't yet read it, but Susan Smith (Willow Glen UMC children's pastor who spoke at our celebration) highly recommended it.



Carolyn Bircher
ECRD Secretary of Program Resources

ECRD Annual Celebration Revisited

Women from all over El Camino Real District, plus guests from other districts, met on Saturday morning, October 1, for a hybrid celebration of the year's United Women in Faith activities. Some drove to Willow Glen UMC to attend in person, while others tuned in on Zoom. The music was wonderful. The news of the good work being done by the women was heartwarming.

The morning's keynote speaker was Willow Glen's Pastor **Susan Smith** who told her life's story as a dialog with District UWF President **Debbie Ow**. Susan is her church's Pastor of Children & Family Ministries and Director of Woodhaven Preschool on the church property. Her husband Stephen is a high school history teacher and their son Casey, who was a long-time Joint Youth Ministry member, is now 21 years



old. Susan and Stephen first met in their youth group at Los Altos UMC.

Susan told about her "backward" path to her calling. She was in seminary, studying to become the youngest Diaconal Minister ordained, but then heard that the ministry would be changing in the future to the title of Deacon. So, she was ordained a Deacon and afterward felt called to that path! She has been at Willow Glen UMC since 2000 and can remain there as long as she wishes. Unlike United Methodist pastors, Deacons are not expected to be itinerate.

In addition to her pastoral duties, Susan has helped organize mission trips to build homes in Mexico and has helped set up the Village House Rotating Women's Shelter in San Jose. She formed a UMW / UWF circle for young mothers and hired a babysitter to take care of their children during their meetings. As she plans activities for the church families, she takes the advice of a babysitter who said, "Throw the spaghetti at the wall and see what sticks." If an activity isn't successful, replace it with something else. One of Susan's hobbies is knitting. She realized that children of divorce needed a place to talk, so she began a "Knit Wit" group where kids could gather in the church's fireside room to knit on small looms while talking about their fears and worries. To include the children in the morning's worship service, she set out a Prayer Box where the children could drop their prayer requests. (Every week one child prays for cheese to be served at Coffee Hour.) She set up a child-sized "Prayer Ground" table and chairs with activities for the children to do. She has noticed that sometimes the children will look up from their work when something in the sermon attracts their attention. The Children's Choir has begun meeting again, and the children sometimes serve as Worship Leaders to read the scripture. When children feel invested in their church, they are more likely to attend as adults.

To see a short slide show of the El Camino Real District women's 2022 activities and to hear beautiful solos by Deo Augustin of Valley Faith UMC, click on the two links below.

- [AroundTheDistrict.mp4](#)
- [MySoulDesireFinal.mp4](#)

Bonnie Home, Almaden Hills

I wanted to express my gratitude to the Technical Team at Willow Glen UMC for handling all the details of technology so that we could have a good hybrid experience for our Annual Celebration. Hybrid meetings are very technically challenging, but we were blessed to have a great experience!

Laurie Lindsey

Farewell from Sandra Nesheim



Sandra Nesheim

I feel honored to have served on the El Camino District team for the past six years. I learned so much about United Women in Faith. I have gotten to know so many amazing women who are committed to helping women, children and families. Some of my favorite memories are of being part of the team as we worked at Mission Springs. My faith in God has grown and been strengthened through my interactions with all of you. Even though my term of service ends in December, you will be seeing me at District events- especially at Mission Springs. Grace and peace to all of you on your journeys of faith.

~ Sandra Nesheim

Farewell from Kathy Kim

Before I say “Goodbye” to ECRD UWF, I wanted to express my gratitude for ECRD which provided me the basis of my UMW work. I also wanted to share a little of my life and work. As I became an older adult, I find I need to reflect and reorganize my old life and get ready for the 2nd half of my life.



Katherine Kim

United Methodist Women (now United Women in Faith) have played an important role in my life. I am a retired pharmacist, Deaconess, and social worker. I came from South Korea in 1963 (59 years ago), where I had just graduated from Pharmacy School at the Chung Ang University in Seoul, Korea. With only \$50 to my name, I came to the US to study pharmacy at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington. With minimal English and knowing no one in the U.S., my life wasn't easy at first.

I retired, in March 2004, from Kaiser Permanente Medical Group as a pharmacist after 36 years of service. I retired early at 62 due to an illness. That same year, I was commissioned as a Deaconess. Ms. Betty Purkey, a Deaconess Program officer and a Deaconess herself, helped me. The Korean UMW was also promoting the Deaconess Program at that time. Our graduating class of 2004 had five Korean Deaconesses out of 23.

I served an Assistant Dean at Ca/Nevada Conference UMW, Western Jurisdiction Core Planning group as a Treasurer, Women's Division Director from 2008-2012, and Program Advisory Group from 2012-2016.

I also served as part of the Korean American Consultative Group for the Women's Division. Rev. Hea Sun Kim, an officer of the Women's Division, helped me. She was one of the best mentors I ever had.

While I was serving as the Women's Division director, I also served the General Conference of the UMC until 2018. I served one term as a delegate and two terms as a reserve delegate from the California/Nevada Conference of UMC. It was an exciting moment for me to participate in the election of Bishops at the Jurisdiction meeting.

As a Deaconess, we are dedicated to love, justice, and service. I started the Senior Ministry at my local church, San Jose Korean UMC of Santa Clara Valley in July 2004. I donated the initial seed money to start this ministry. About 30 seniors mostly from my local church, met every Wednesday with worship service, exercise, singing, arts and crafts, and lunch, etc. We all enjoyed the program! I retired after 10.5 years and passed the baton to a capable successor. She changed the name of the program from "Senior Ministry" to "Wednesday Ministry". Young people started to come, and I became a regular attending member.

While I was working as a pharmacist at Kaiser Hospital, I went back to school, received B.A. in Psychology, Sociology, and Art at San Jose State University, and then continued for a master degree of Social Work. Unfortunately, I had to leave the program with only one requirement left, due to a divorce. My two children were in high school, so we studied together. They both are now successful business people. I hope someday they may consider attending the United Methodist Church.

Now, I need to look forward. Even though I am a retired person from UMW, I am still healthy and have plenty of work to do! I have received so much, so I want to give back to society. Here are some of my current (and planned) activities:

- I am a member of Advocacy/Justice committee for Ca/Nevada Annual Conference.
- I am still involved with local and National Korean American UMW (advisory committee person for the National Korean American network). I would like to recruit more young Korean American members.
- I continue to work for Domestic Violence Advocate groups for victims as I have for over 20 years.
- I would like to set up a shelter someday. I am a Real Estate Investor and I manage my own properties, so I hope to put these skills to good use.
- I am a globe trotter. I travel a lot, and I went on many Ubuntu¹ Journeys with UMW members. I usually combine mission trips with my traveling. I just came back from the Danube River Cruise by Viking. It was a good time for European travel, as the dollar was quite strong, compared to the last time I was there.

As I leave the district team, I wanted to share the following verse (that has guided me) with you:

I Thessalonians 5:16: "Be joyful always. Pray continually; give thanks in all Circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus".

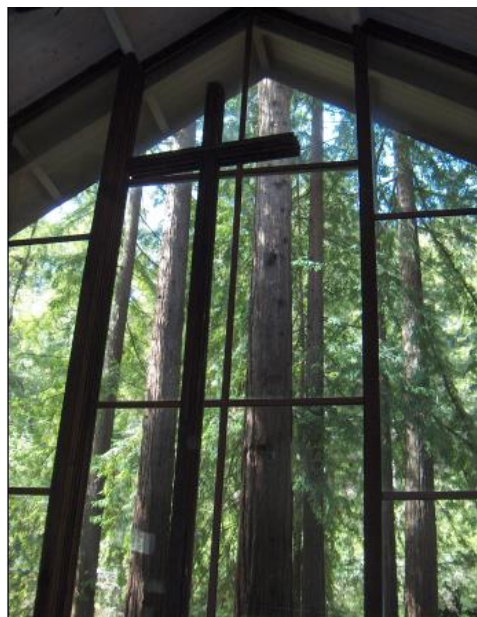
Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!

Katherine Kim

¹ Ubuntu means "I am because you are". *We are all connected by shared humanity.*

Coming Events

- **Connect and Learn – February 4, 2023 9:30a.m on Zoom.** Your District Team is busy planning another Zoom program to help you connect with other United Women in Faith in the district and get ideas for leadership, programs, and communications. Last year, the major piece of feedback that we received was that the sessions were not long enough. This year we will attempt to remedy that! Be on the lookout for email regarding the Connect and Learn.
- **Spiritual Retreat – April 14 – 16 at Mission Springs.**
This will be our first in-person Spiritual Retreat in several years, so *save the date* and plan to spend it in worship and fellowship with our UWF sisters. As the date draws closer, look for more information in emails and the ECRD website.



Around the District



Valley Faith UMC, Sunnyvale – the United Women in Faith put on the service honoring women in the church and their service. . Maribel Ulay was the worship leader and Saniata Melchor gave the message where she highlighted her experiences at the UWF Assembly in Florida this past May.



Willow Glen UMC, San Jose – the United Women in Faith from Willow Glen UMC, Almaden Hills UMC and Cambrian Park UMC hosted a *Holiday Faire* to raise money for the Casitas de Esperanza (a transitional housing project in San Jose for homeless families). The event featured a “Recycled Christmas”, with ornaments, decorations, linens and miscellaneous décor that were all donated. There were also some delicious baked goods and some beautiful quilts for sale at the event. A highlight was specially roasted coffee by Pastor Jaekuk from Willow Glen UMC.



Sunnyvale UWF hosted their 53rd Annual Holiday Faire! -

The following pictures will give you an idea of the beautiful handcrafted items that were on sale there! The fact that it's been going on for 53 years makes this a particularly special event!



Wesley UWF had their second Dress-A-Girl project, in which they made 53 dresses! The dresses were blessed at a Sunday service. Wesley UWF also have a video about the Dress-A-Girl project that was very good at expressing what the project is about. Check out the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFWo8SAq7K4>



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.

Communications Update

The updated reading program lists, with information about local library availability, is now available on the district website. Thanks to Carolyn Bircher for annotating that list! We've also updated the reading program page.

- Reading Program on ECRD Website: <https://elcaminorealumw.org/educate/reading-program/>

*Laurie Lindsey
Communications Coordinator*