

WMU offers women a ‘rolling missions adventure’

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ANAHEIM, Calif. (BP)—Connie Dixon covered quite a few miles this past year as she served as national Woman’s Missionary Union president.

She visited 20 states, had 29 speaking opportunities, attended 94 Zoom calls, recorded five videos and two podcasts, wrote 27 articles and walked through 61 airports.

The year was a “whirlwind,” she said, and in a way, this year’s WMU missions celebration and annual meeting on June 12 mimicked that.

Instead of gathering at a venue near the convention center, participants loaded onto three buses for an experience called Embark: WMU’s Rolling Missions Adventure. They traveled around the greater Los Angeles area to get to know the churches and ministries there a little better.

They started at Gateway Seminary, where the women toured the facilities, met faculty and staff, heard their stories and prayed for them.

Afterward, Dixon kicked off the annual meeting with her report, which celebrated ways she has seen “Hope in Christ”—the meeting’s theme—displayed through WMU this past year. One was through the compassion “demonstrated so beautifully by the care given by WMU groups across the nation to refugees,” she said.

Dixon said hope has also been shared through partnerships across the states and around the world, and it has been shared through 25 HEART (Humanitarian Emergency Aid for Rebuilding Tomorrow) Fund grants totaling more than \$300,000 given jointly by the WMU Foundation and

national WMU over the past year.

“That is the largest amount and largest number of grants given in a single year in the history of the fund,” Dixon said, noting that the grants went to help victims of hurricanes, volcanos, ice storms and other crises.

“God has faithfully used the tool of WMU, and I believe he will continue to work through WMU in the future,” she said.

Texas Baptist women honored

During the meeting, Dixon was re-elected to serve another year as president, and Texan Shirley McDonald of Greens Creek Baptist Church in Dublin was re-elected as recording secretary.

Libo Krieg, Hispanic trainer for WMU of Texas, received the Dellanna West O’Brien Award for Women’s Leadership Development.

“A trainer and leader for over 30 years, sister Libo Krieg has demonstrated servant leadership, personal integrity, courage and selflessness,” said Tamiko Jones, executive director-treasurer of Texas WMU.

From being a Missions Friends teacher to serving as an associational Hispanic WMU director, Krieg “has a heart to develop leaders, especially in Hispanic churches and communities around the United States and around the world,” Jones said. “She is a bridge-builder and an encourager of bridge-building. She recognizes and knows the potential in women.”

Cindy Townsend, minister of WMU at First Baptist Church Jackson, Miss., reported the WMU Foundation’s Mission Matters Most campaign had exceeded its goal of raising \$50,000 for the Vision Fund, which goes directly to support the ministry of WMU.

Participants heard the stories of four Acteens panelists— Aileen Gregorio

Mejia and Nieves Montanez, both of Freeman Heights Baptist Church in Garland; Grace Carter of University Hills Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.; and Taylor Glover of Harps Crossing Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Ga.

‘Our hope is in Christ’

Jeff Iorg, president of Gateway Seminary, encouraged meeting participants to kindle their passion for ministry so that they will share their hope in Christ even more broadly.

Sandy Wisdom-Martin, WMU executive director, shared a story from WMU’s new book, *Because of Hope*, which will be released later this month. The story highlighted the faith of Albert Peeks, a man who suffered a major brain injury in a Navy accident and overcame huge odds to earn a college diploma decades later.

Wisdom-Martin said his story is one of 50 in the book that highlights what it looks like to have hope in Christ. “When hope in Christ is all you have, hope in Christ is all you need,” she said. “What comes today or in the future matters not. The redemptive work of our Savior is complete. And we declare with confidence—with boldness—our hope is in Christ.”

After the meeting’s conclusion, each bus went to one of three ministry sites—First Baptist Church San Bernadino, Orangecrest Community Church in Riverside and Mount Zion Church of Ontario—to learn about the work being done there.

The buses were set to head out again the following day to visit ministry sites including Chinese Baptist Church of Orange County, Kings MMA Anaheim, First Baptist Church Cypress and First Southern Baptist Church Anaheim.