

Cooperation key to Unión Femenil Misionera of Texas

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Christians who are called to serve can do more if they are able to encourage others to come alongside them and cooperate. That idea has guided Unión Femenil Misionera of Texas for more than 100 years, UFM Executive Director-Treasurer Bea Mesquias said.

Looking back

The first Woman's Missionary Union in Texas was established in 1880, 48 years after Massie Millard and Lea Annette Bledsoe began creating missionary societies in Texas.

Since the beginning, WMU has been deeply entwined with the Hispanic population in Texas. As Bledsoe worked with women in Nacogdoches to form the first missionary society of Old North Church, she realized she had to learn Spanish to communicate effectively with the women who spoke that language.

Unión Femenil Misionera was born after seven churches met in San Marcos in 1917, seven years after the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas began.

But like the organization that became the Hispanic Baptist Convention, UFM also saw some difficult years, Mesquias said. In the early 1940s, the work of UFM was almost non-existent. UFM came under the umbrella of Texas WMU in 1962 as part of a unification program.

More than 50 years later, on Aug. 25, 2015, UFM became independent from WMU and now is part of Convención, the Hispanic Baptist Convention

of Texas.

Looking forward

The desire to multiply the service UFM offers to God continues as UFM invests in the lives of a growing Hispanic population and younger generations, Mesquias said.

“I am only one person, but I need to multiply myself to reach more people,” she explained. “We have new people who bring new ideas.”

To multiply the work of UFM, Mesquias said, younger women must receive opportunities to participate more in ministry and programs geared to address the issues they face.



Kirby Minnick, a communications major at Dallas Baptist University and social media influencer, was keynote speaker at the two-day SHINE conference at Crossroads Baptist Church in San Antonio, sponsored by Union Femenil Misionera de Texas. (Photo / Isa Torres)

Last year, UFM organized the first “Shine Girls Conference,” intended for

teenage and college age women. The third Shine Conference is scheduled Feb. 22-26, 2019, in San Antonio.

Earlier this year, UFM also started the Bloom Conference for mothers. The second Bloom Conference, April 5-6, 2019, also will take place in San Antonio.

Although UFM hopes young women and girls can develop their leadership skills and find the space to practice new ideas, Mesquias also emphasized the importance of the women who have come before.

Through previous generations, UFM consolidated its desire to support missionaries and the ministries of churches in Texas and in other parts of the world, she said.

“We are women of action,” Mesquias said. “We know it is better to use what we have for the kingdom.”

When UFM uses what it has to help support evangelism, offer assistance to poor families or support educational initiatives, its members see God’s faithfulness and blessing in their lives, as well, Mesquias said.

Last year UFM donated \$10,000 to Baptist University of the Americas. The support UFM gives to other institutions and ministries is possible because the organization faithfully has challenged women across the state to follow the call God has given them to serve the church, Mesquias said.

Mesquias and other UFM leaders travel across the state to train women in leadership, so they can help groups of women collaborate to reach more people with the good news of Jesus, she said.

While other groups also want to help others serve God and the church, Mesquias notes, it is important that service be carried out contextually. UFM uniquely is positioned to provide contextual ministry with Hispanic

women who deal with specific cultural issues, she said.

For women with tight schedules, or specific societal conflicts—like immigration or lack of opportunities—UFM wants to help them respond to the calling God has given them, Mesquias said.