



United
Women
in Faith



Inspire Influence Impact

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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United Women in Faith Impact at a Glance



United
Women
in Faith

SCHOLARSHIPS

- **283** students in the United States and around the world received scholarships totaling nearly **\$650,000**.

GRANTS

- **61** grants were provided to international mission organizations totaling over **\$730,000**.
- **114** grants were provided to National Mission Institutions and other organizations in the United States, totaling nearly **\$2.2 million**.

NATIONAL MISSION INSTITUTIONS

- National Mission Institutions were able to serve nearly **130,000** women, children, and youth through United Women in Faith grants.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT DAYS (LDD)

- **712** leaders from all U.S. conferences attended the Leadership Development Days virtual event.

CAMPAIGNS

- More than **3,110** legislative actions were taken by members for Climate Justice and Just Energy for All.
- More than **2,900** messages were sent to legislators to support the Protecting Our Students in Schools Act and the Ending PUSHOUT Act.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

- **16** economic development grants totaling **\$188,100** were awarded in 2023.

LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND

- **\$400,000** was raised for the Legacy Fund during the 2023 Day of Giving events.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT



Inspirers, Influencers, & We Can Make an Impact!

It is my honor to share this report with you for the first time as the General Secretary and CEO of United Women in Faith. Thank you for your support and encouragement in this first year. It is my joy to be on this journey with you. With all the excitement, energy, and encouragement I have felt, it is also a reminder that we have work to do!

I invite all of us to keep our faith, hope, love, prayers, and giving alive no matter how challenging the future may seem. There have been times in my life when I felt comfortable, and God inserted discomfort into my life by making those things that were once easy, difficult. I began to see a pattern—when it felt like God was saying no, it wasn't a no but a push. God used those moments to push me to a place of greater purpose and impact. I believe this is true for United Women in Faith today. While paths that may have once felt easy now seem filled with obstacles, instead of being mired in frustration let us instead look for the direction in which God is pushing us to go.

No matter what may come in the days ahead, we will get through if we, like Proverbs 4:25 says, "Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you," supporting and being in mission with women, children, and youth for generations to come. We are influencers and inspirers! We can make an impact! Believe it!

I believe we **can**, because together United Women in Faith is a community of bold women on a journey, believing that love in action can change the world and with God make the impossible possible! May it be so. Amen.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Vonner".

Sally Vonner
General Secretary and CEO
United Women in Faith



While paths that may have once felt easy now seem filled with obstacles, instead of being mired in frustration let us instead look for the direction in which God is pushing us to go.

Sally Vonner

PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION

Dream It, Believe It, Do It



Dream it, believe it, do it. These are not just words; they are the pillars of our renewed faith and determination. The dreams we carry within us are the sparks that inspire change. They are the visions of a better world for women, children, and youth. We must believe in the power of our collective action to bring these dreams to fruition. But belief alone is not enough. We must act—we must “do it” to make an impact.

We are unwavering in our commitment to advocate for women, children, and youth, which spans our more than 150-year history. What began with a handful of bold women determined to change the world for the better has blossomed into the organization we are today—with nearly half a million members. This is a testament to the enduring relevance of our mission. As Ephesians 4:4-6 reminds us, “You are one body and one spirit, just as God also called you in one hope. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all, and in all.” Even when we feel discouraged in our mission, we can have hope because it is founded on the rock of our faith in the one God, who undergirds all we see and hear and touch. We are united by this hope, this faith, and this calling.

As you know, I have experienced devastating personal losses in this last year. Even as we continue processing life without those so dear to me, I recognize that life is short, and I need to commit to my “Do Its” to make each day count. Many of my “Do It” commitments have been figuring out ways to connect with women, having conversations, hearing stories, and working closely with the local units in my conference, as well as supporting our districts and conference leadership teams. My loved ones laid the foundation, now it's up to me to add on and carry the legacy.

And so I ask: What will our legacy be as members of United Women in Faith? How will we inspire a new generation of women? How can we influence change within our circles of influence? What will your “Do It” moments be?

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to our cause and moving forward with renewed vigor and determination. May it be so. Amen and amen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anise'.

'Anise 'Isama'u
President, Board of Directors
United Women in Faith



Even when we feel discouraged in our mission, we can have hope because it is founded on the rock of our faith in the one God, who undergirds all we see and hear and touch.

'Anise 'Isama'u

A photograph of two women sitting at a conference. The woman in the foreground has short blonde hair and is wearing a dark green blazer over a pink top. She is smiling and looking towards the right. The woman behind her has long dark hair and is wearing an orange top. She is also smiling. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a bright, indoor setting.

Inspire

United Women in Faith is at our heart and soul, a faith-driven organization. Our beliefs bring us together. Our spirituality pushes us to do more.

The Power of Inspiration

- Nearly **6,000** people joined United Women in Faith Digital by the end of 2023.
- **3,444** people attended conference Mission u events with **229** leaders for adults, children, and youth in their studies on living the kin-dom.
- **7,000** print Program Resources and Daily Prayer Guides sold with more than **200** downloaded for digital use.
- **100** *Faith Talks* podcast episodes have been aired.
- Nearly **6,000** United Women in Faith Digital members.
- More than **200** copies of the Soul Care Retreat Manual and Toolkit were sold.
- **9** trained Soul Care Advocates hosted a Soul Care Retreat in each jurisdiction.

INSPIRE

“My word for this year is *breathe* and I am trying to use my breath to center myself in prayer every time I feel the need . . . which is often throughout the day.”

–Cheryl Peters, United Women in Faith Member shares her soul care practice

“I am so grateful for this digital platform to learn and share ideas! I look forward to greater exposure to this platform so that more of our local units can be energized and re-engaged with our wonderful organization!

United Women in Faith still has so much to offer!”

–Stacie Hawkins, United Women in Faith Member from Texas

Online Community Gatherings

After a two-year pilot, United Women in Faith Digital officially launched in 2023. Hosted on Mighty Networks, United Women in Faith Digital offers both community with like-minded sisters and a platform for some of our most beloved resources such as the Program Resource, Mission u curricula, and the *Daily Prayer Guide*. Members can join the main space or join special-interest groups, such as Soul Care or Reading Enthusiasts. Community Guides Francine Davis and Shanae Als engage with members daily and occasionally go live to share important information. Each conference officer group also has a private space with resources and opportunities to connect. Nearly 6,000 members joined the platform by the end of 2023, contributing some 75,994 interactions in the form of comments, messages, and RSVPs.

Monthly gatherings for users of the Program Resource are held with the authors. In 2023, members met with authors Ilka Vega and Margaret Fenton LeBeck.

Soul Care

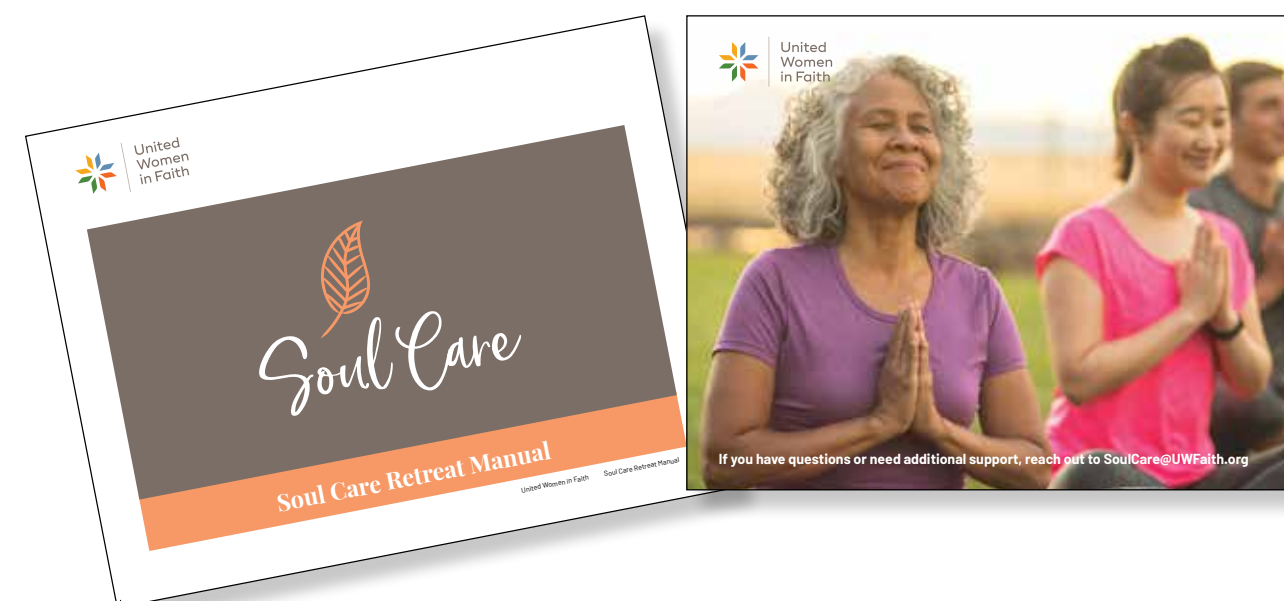
Soul Care events focus on nurturing your mind, body, and spirit while deepening your faith through spiritual practice and creating bonds of sisterhood. The Soul Care retreats also are opportunities to invite friends and family to participate in our work and experience the benefits of membership



The Soul Care program continued to grow in 2023:

- The Soul Care Retreat Manual and Toolkit was released in August alongside a new promotional video and a host of supportive materials and resources. More than 200 copies of the manual were sold by January 2024.
- Nine Soul Care Advocates went in five teams to host a Soul Care Retreat in each jurisdiction.
- The pilot training for Soul Care Retreat Hosts was held on Bridge, Zoom, and United Women in Faith Digital. Asynchronous training for retreat hosts is now being planned to facilitate the ongoing needs of the program.

JOIN United Women in Faith Digital for free at uwfaith.org/digital and see what it's all about!



uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=10812



Introducing Soul Care

Adapted from an article by Jeanette Harris, Greater Detroit District President

Time to rest, rejuvenate, and connect with others. That's what soul care is!

Thirty women gathered for a day of soul care at our first local Soul Care Retreat. Soul Care is a new initiative started by the United Women in Faith to allow women the time and space to take care of themselves. How, did this event get started? Twelve months before the August 2023 event, Pat Bostic, North Central Jurisdiction vice president, and Jeanette Harris, Greater Detroit District president applied to the National Office of United Women in Faith to bring a Soul Care Retreat to the Metropolitan Detroit. The application was successful and the work to introduce soul care to the Metropolitan Detroit District began. Our goals were to bring together not just women who had been active in United Women in Faith but to invite others from different faith traditions

and those who had not been connected to any faith tradition at all. The common denominator was to gather women who do a lot! We were women who were raising children, helping aging parents, active in church, and we came tired and somewhat weary! Wasn't it selfish to take a day for ourselves?

"Self-care is not selfish!"

That was the opening salvo from the Rev. Dr. Margie Bryce, leadership coach, self-care advocate, and the host of *The Crabby Pastor* podcast. Bryce reminded us that we are all leaders in the ministry and we must take time to allow our minds, bodies, and spirits to rest or we will not be able to help others. Her message received high marks from all present. We moved into a series of exercises to get to know each other and to form connections. We explored energy-capturing exercises, how to fuel our bodies, meditation, and spent time journaling, relaxing, and reflecting.

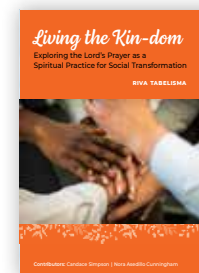
At the end of the day, participants left refreshed and rejuvenated. Someone remarked that they thought of the airline announcement to put on your air mask before you work with anyone else. What a metaphor for soul care!

"I am excited about leading this training! My thoughts and perspectives concerning the Lord's Prayer have been enriched. The small group breakouts gave a great opportunity to dive a little deeper and rethink translation, context, and the lens of culture today and how it shapes the way we pray and hear The Lord's Prayer."

—Adult Study Leader

Mission u

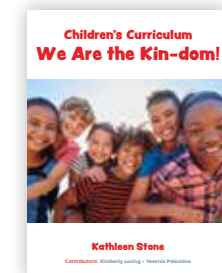
Mission u 2023 was centered on the theme, Living the Good News: Reflecting God's Love. Adults, youth, and children all explored God's good news and what it means for our lives. Some 3,444 people attended conference Mission u gatherings in 2023, led by 229 study leaders. The worship services, composed by the Rev. Paige Swaim-Presley, included several new components including a visual choir during the opening and closing services consisting of members of the deaconess and home missionary community. The closing worship sermon was presented live using a "sermon in dialog" model led by contributing worship writer, Tabatha Holley. Videos of each of these were provided so conference Mission u gatherings could share them as well. Additionally, 16 small group cohorts of Mission u study leaders received training online via United Women in Faith Digital.



Living the Kin-dom: Exploring the Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation
by Riva Tabelisma (Adult)



Seek and You Shall Find: Living in the Kin-dom
by Rachel Mosher (Youth)



We Are the Kin-dom!
by Kathleen Stone (Children)

Deans and Mission u worship planners attended a special training for worship and plenary information and all leaders received downloadable resources such as leader and participant scripts, PowerPoint slides with song lyrics, and video recordings of all worship components.



www.spreaker.com/episode/faith-talks-living-the-kin-dom-mission-u-studies--52592805

Looking Ahead

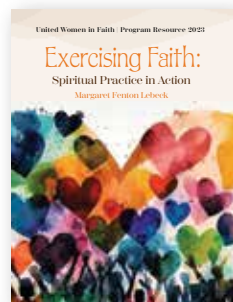
Themes for future Mission u gatherings:

2025: Hope as Resurrection People

2026: Experiencing Emanuel

2027: Showing Hospitality: An Exploration of Christian Welcome

2028: Seeking Healing: Repentance & Reconciliation



Program Resource

In 2023 the Program Resource transitioned the program year from September – August to one that follows the calendar year. The 2022–2023 Program Resource *Mosaic of Faith* Concluded in August. The Program

Resource *Exercising Faith: Spiritual Practice in Action* by Margaret Fenton Lebeck provided programs for September – December to accommodate this transition. This four-part program allowed for weekly meetings or more flexible choices for units as they met throughout the fall.

The monthly online community gatherings on United Women in Faith Digital to preview the upcoming program continued with 65–200 gathering to meet with the Program Resource author for more in-depth learning and to experience community.

“ I love these gatherings. I can’t get over the fact that I can experience meeting with my sisters from all over the country from my desk in my home.”

–Sandra Hamblin,
on her experience with
United Women in Faith Digital



Daily Prayer Guide

The 2023 *Daily Prayer Guide* featured artwork and photographs from missionaries under the theme “Reflecting on God’s Faithfulness.” Daily prayers and reflections, lectionary readings, advocacy days, and information about the many ministries our Mission Giving supports fill the pages of this guide.



Reading Program

In 2023 The Reading Program continued its tradition of offering books to challenge people of all ages in the areas of education for mission, leadership development, nurturing for community, social action, and spiritual growth. We launched a **bookshop.org** link allowing members to purchase most Reading Program books at a centralized site while earning 10% back for United Women in Faith.

By participating in the Reading Program, women can deepen their understanding of these important issues and connect with a community that shares their passion for social justice and spiritual growth.

Participation in the Reading Program is best done in community. You can share the program with others to join you and connect with local and district groups to discuss and process what you are learning together. Mostly, use what you are learning through the program to inform your personal spiritual growth and your actions in the wider world, through advocacy and making changes both locally and globally.

Get the 2024 catalog: uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=10846
Shop on bookshop.org and support United Women in Faith at: bookshop.org/shop/uwfaith

We offered quarterly online programs in 2023, which included author talks and book discussions. These events featured Brittany K. Barnett’s *A Knock at Midnight*, Isabel Wilkerson’s *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*, Bishop Karen Oliveto’s *Our Strangely Warmed Hearts: Coming Out into God’s Call*, and *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis* edited by Ayanan Elizabeth Johnson and Katharine K. Wilkinson.

Watch the author talk with Brittany K. Barnett.

youtu.be/rLKBsb9YE8I



Faith Talks

Faith Talks will be celebrating its fifth anniversary in March 2024 and has produced more than 100 episodes. Providing inspiring content that serves to engage members and non-members alike on topics surrounding spiritual growth, sisterhood, culture, women’s issues, and the impactful work being done by women today.

Faith Talks has recently begun tracking direct giving during some episodes, finding that last quarter we were able to raise funds on titles such as, “Meet the CEO: Sally Vonner,” “Prayer,” and “American Methodists and Women’s Rights.” More intention around how to promote giving through this marketing vehicle will be explored in the coming year.

United Women in Faith Podcasts

Listen while you work, work out, walk, or in stillness.

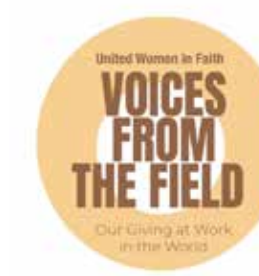
uwfaith.org/resources/podcasts



Faith Talks



response Podcast



Voices From the Field Webinar

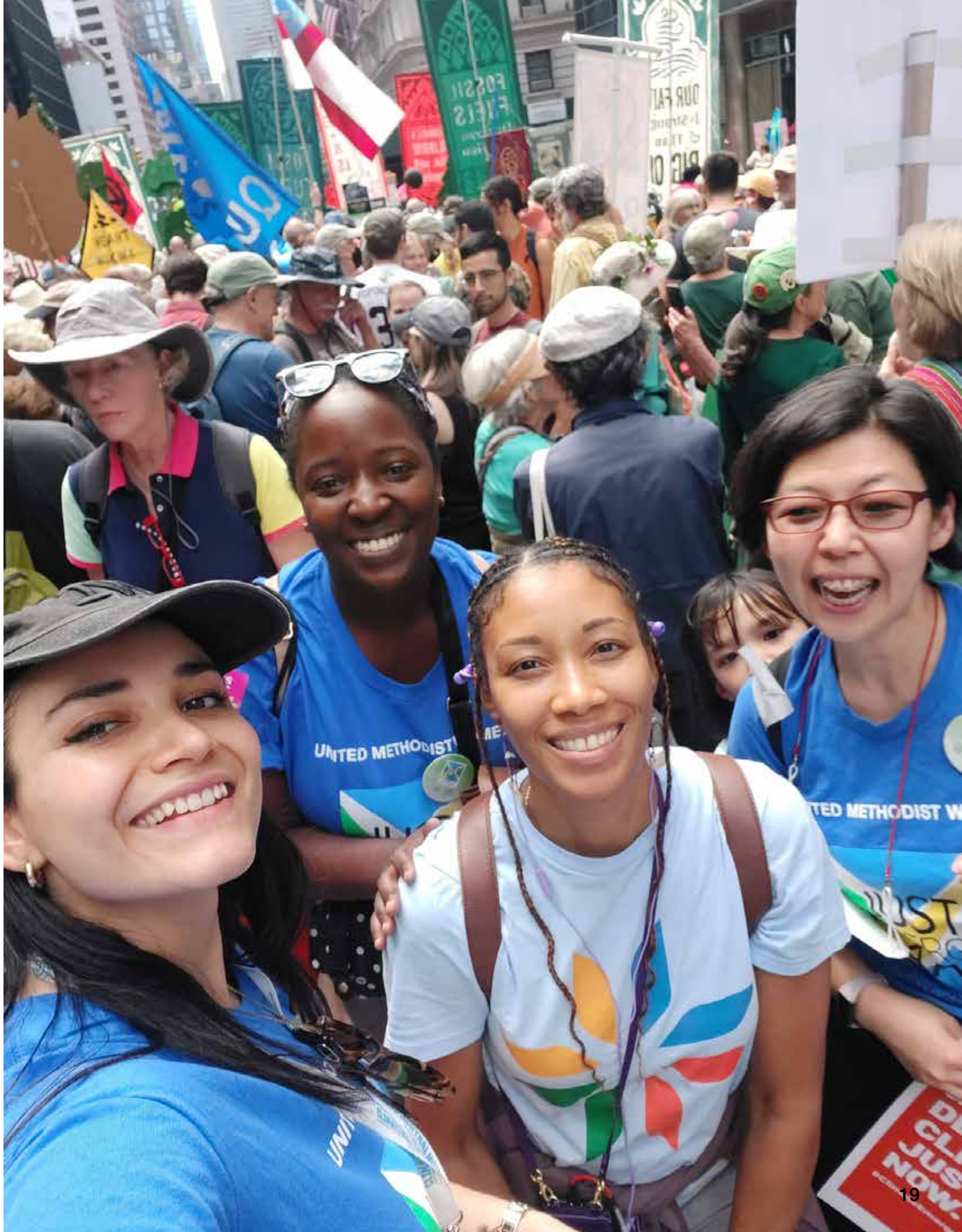



I Cry Aloud to God: Lament & Hope in the Face of the Climate Crisis

This Bible study produced in 2023 emerged from a 2022 Earth Day worship service written for people involved in the Just Energy 4 All work and/or those concerned about the current climate crisis, environmental pollution, or energy burdens. It came out of the spiritual need to acknowledge that the work for climate justice has been hard and tiring, and we are called to reflect and ask questions about how our faith supports us in our commitment to doing this work.

This five-session study breaks down Psalm 77 into four parts. In this text, we see the people of Israel cry out to God in lament, seek God with questions, remember the redemptive acts of God and communities of faith, and dare to hope through faith in the resurrection. The fifth study is a reflection on Psalm 77 as a whole

and how as people of faith we can refuse denial and refuse despair. This psalm, which starts out seeking help, evolves into a hymn of praise.



 **This special study is available for download**
uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=10589&catid=2209

Impact



For more than 150 years, we have been showing up and getting things done. Together we're making the world a better place: locally, globally, fearlessly.

The Power of Our Impact

- National Mission Institutions were able to serve nearly **130,000** women, children, and youth through United Women in Faith grants.
- Bethlehem Centers of Nashville served over **56,000** meals to elderly North Nashville citizens, in their Meals on Wheels Program.
- **200** women received skills training in sewing, tailoring, crocheting, weaving, and knitting as part of the United Women in Faith economic empowerment initiative at four United Methodist Women Training Centers in Sierra Leone.
- Economic Development Programs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo reached more than **1,600** people.
- United Women in Faith Asia-Pacific served more than **700** women, children, and their families in some of the poorest communities in the Philippines.
- **16** economic development grants totaling **\$188,100** were awarded in 2023.
- More than **3,110** legislative actions were taken by members for Climate Justice and Just Energy for All.
- Members facilitated **117** Earth Day celebrations nationwide.
- More than **2,900** messages were sent to legislators to support the Protecting Our Students in Schools Act and the Ending PUSHOUT Act.
- Welcomed **29** new deaconess and home missionary candidates.
- Consecrated **18** new deaconesses and home missionaries and welcomed six deaconesses transferring their relationship from the Philippines.

IMPACT

“Your mission giving brought women and children off the street, back into our programming. Your support allowed us to keep our doors open.”

–Kate Carver, Executive Director, Dumas Wesley Community Center

National Mission Institutions

United Women in Faith assists nearly 90 National Mission Institutions across the United States. They are community centers, colleges, and residences that provide vital services to vulnerable communities. Through their work, hundreds of thousands of individuals have had access to care and education that would have been otherwise impossible. In 2023, United Women in Faith provided support to make the following successes possible:

- Emma Norton Services in St. Paul assisted 313 women and children through housing programs, reducing and preventing homelessness, and creating a pathway to stability.
- Neighborhood House of Calexico served 77 residents in Imperial County with business training at their Micro Business Support Center.
- Neighborhood Services Organization in Oklahoma City served over 100 Oklahomans with housing, over 1,000 patients at their dental clinic, and more through their supplemental nutrition and education program.

GRANTS INCREASE CAPACITY

United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was able to reestablish its National Association for the Education of Youth Children Accreditation program, increasing professional development for child development staff, as part of 2023 support from the United Women in Faith National Office. Additionally, they brought Family Engagement services in-house, enhancing how families are supported, and expanding opportunities to engage social work interns to assist with caseload and other important activities. United Methodist Community House also increased capacity at their Fresh Market, expanding staff and opening hours to better serve the community. The Fresh Market supports local farmers and families by selling fruits and vegetables, and offers sliding scale pricing to increase affordability for all.



Number served by United Women in Faith Grants

Women age 18+	56,951
Children and youth	72,797
Total number of women, children and youth served*	129,748
Families	67,397
Below the Federal Poverty Line	155,899

Number served by National Mission Institutions in total

Women age 18+	173,214
Children and youth	219,029
Total number of women, children and youth served*	392,243
Families	174,415
Below the Federal Poverty Line	437,446

* This is a sum of women (18+), children, and youth. It does not include fathers and young men served under families and below poverty line.





Methodist Women's Federation of Peru Joins United Women in Faith for Economic Development

Adapted from a *United Women in Faith news article* by Mabel Barreto Quineche. Translated by Andrea Reily Rocha Soares

By joining forces, the Methodist Women's Federation of Peru and United Women in Faith will work together to empower Peruvian women. In the months to follow, they will carry out the Transformative Development Project, an initiative that aims to provide Peruvian Methodist women with tools that allow them to transform their own lives and the lives of those in their communities. The project is a response to contemporary challenges and a testimony of faith and hope.

The Transformative Development Project is aimed at the more than 500 women who are part of the 29 women's societies (units) of local Methodist churches throughout the

country, beginning with an initial training on October 25 – 30 for representatives of the six district women's associations. The participants will then replicate the training in their districts. Subsequently, a virtual training program will be carried out on topics such as the development of ventures and projects, finance, accounting, and others.

"Peruvian Methodist women have already developed several interesting ventures in our country, which they have shown at fairs . . . The women just need to strengthen their management and organizational skills and gain new abilities to take on the role they have in our churches and society—that of being light and salt," says Annie Solís, the president of the Methodist Women's Federation of Peru, affirming this project.

Following the October 2023 trainings, the team will elicit entrepreneurial proposals for projects, and some will be selected to receive funds for business development throughout 2024.

To read the full article see: uwfaith.org/latest-news/2023/holistic-transformation-in-peru

International Ministries

United Women in Faith is committed to empowering women and girls in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to gain competence and skills through leadership development, economic empowerment, and skills building. Our goal is to have young women make up 50 percent of the participation in these programs.

- **72** women from the **Sierra Leone** and **Liberia** annual conferences participated in a Training for Transformation workshop which provided local United Methodist Women leadership.
- **16** economic development grants totaling **\$188,100** were awarded in 2023.
- **200** women at four United Methodist Women training centers in **Sierra Leone** attended sewing, tailoring, crocheting, weaving, and knitting training as part of a United Women in Faith economic empowerment initiative.
- More than **700** women, children, and their families in some of the poorest communities around the **Philippines** were served by United Women in Faith Asia-Pacific.
- More than **1,300** families in the Maputo and Cabo Delgado districts of **Mozambique** benefited from the chicken rearing project, which improved food security and nutrition for these families.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Several training and economic development projects in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are helping women and youth improve their economic standing. The projects reached approximately 1,608 people. One program taught more than 230 women and young adults beading skills so they could take quality products to market and increase their income. Another project included training young adults on how to breed broiler chickens. They also

received the necessary supplies to start their new business including chicks, feeders, drinking containers, food, and necessary veterinary products.



Making Peanut Butter Changed Auntie Merlyn's Life

Adapted from an article by Emma Cantor and Eleanor Paano-Barrientos.

“Every time the group announces that we will be making peanut butter, I feel excited because I will be doing my passion, which is

cooking. It is also a time for our women’s organization to bond, talk about things, and plan future pursuits,” shared Merlyn Yasay, also known as Auntie Merlyn, one of Banaybanay Women’s peanut butter makers in the Philippines.

Before she began making peanut butter, Auntie Merlyn had limited income as a barangay (county) health worker, she barely made ends meet with her work as a masseuse and rice farming with her husband. She takes care of her three grandchildren because their mother is working abroad.

The regular production of peanut butter has allowed the group to raise enough to give the women compensation. Auntie Merlyn is grateful because it has helped to meet some needs of her grandchildren, including funds for school transportation and a small allowance.

The income from the peanut butter business has also allowed the women’s group to be more active in the Women’s Society of Christian Service activities because they can more easily afford to attend. They also sell their peanut butter during those events. Beyond this, the group has been able to help others by donating to the school supply distribution for the Indigenous students at NASA Elementary School in Talisay, San Isidro, Davao Oriental.

Indeed, each jar of peanut butter made by the Banaybanay women is delicious because it is sealed with faith in God and love for others.

To read the full article see: uwfaith.org/stories-of-sisterhood/2023/making-peanut-butter-changed-auntie-merlyns-life



Watch
Banaybanay Women Make Peanut Butter in the Philippines
youtu.be/hpzl6CcGdWI



CAMPAIGNS



Just Energy for All Climate Justice

In 2023, we held more than **20** different climate and environmental justice events and took **3,110** legislative actions toward climate justice. We also trained **1,500** participants through Just Energy for All trainings and webinars.

We launched an online Energy Grants Toolkit along with a coalition of interfaith partners such as Interfaith Power and Light to help houses of worship, National Mission Institutions, and small organizations access federal funding to help them implement energy-saving measures in their facilities.

United Women in Faith joined faith advocates during COP28 held in the United Arab Emirates to demand fossil fuel phasedown and just climate financing. We also took part in the March to End Fossil Fuels, joining forces with more than **500** organizations and **75,000** individuals to advocate phasing out fossil fuels.

To access the Energy Grants Toolkit see: uwfaith.notion.site/Energy-and-Climate-Resiliency-Funding-Opportunities-for-Houses-of-Worship-d7dcc9ff868f4af091c086040623b978



Marching for Climate Justice in New York

Adapted from an article by Ilka Vega in the Jan/Feb 2024 issue of **response**.

On September 17, 2024, United Women in Faith and the Office of Economic and Environmental Justice joined the March to End Fossil Fuels. Together, United Women in Faith members from Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and the New York City area did something very powerful, bold, and courageous. They brought demands to

End Fossil Fuels to the forefront of political attention. Their action was covered on the front page of *The New York Times* as well as other major media outlets around the world. Some 75,000 people of all backgrounds and experiences came together to witness how their lives have been impacted by fossil fuels and climate disasters.

As people of faith, we bore witness and brought our voices together to put our love into action.

“Every day is a chance for each of us to engage with curiosity and a growth mindset. I can *choose* to let go of fear and defensiveness and to try, again, to open myself up to being changed for the better by what I learn.”

—Emily Jones, Executive for Racial Justice in an article in Red Letter Christians



What Black History Means to Me as a White Woman

Adapted from an article by Emily Jones written for Red Letter Christians

At a time of increasing backlash to the teaching of America's racial history, one might ask, “What does Black history mean to America?” and, “What does Black history mean to White people?”

Certainly, our nation's history is rich with lessons of triumph, challenge, perseverance, and wisdom. Too many of us remain ignorant of these stories. This is especially true of women's stories. Most of our schools didn't teach us much, if anything, about Fannie Lou Hamer and Ella Baker, about Mary McLeod Bethune and

Ida B. Wells, about Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman. We weren't taught about the many lasting fruits of African American struggles which have benefitted us all, including free public schools in the South instituted by Black state legislators of the Reconstruction Period, and birthright citizenship and “equal protection under the law” secured in the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, another fruit of the Reconstruction Era after the Civil War.

However, for White learners, the study of history, particularly Black history, also has another side that's often uncomfortable to face. The study of Black history is also unavoidably the study of *White history*, too — how whiteness came to be, how it was practiced, and at what spiritual cost. It is, I think, this wrestling with White history that scares White people most—and drives a substantial part of the energy of current anti-educational backlash. This, too, is a lesson that Black historians and public intellectuals have been teaching for years. The most comprehensive history of White people that I know was written by Dr. Nell Irvin Painter (Edwards Professor of American History Emerita, Princeton University). Indeed, much of the most compelling critical scholarship on Whiteness emerges from the various disciplines connected to African American studies.

This can be hard to hear, especially for those of us, like myself, who are White women. Let's face it—few of us enjoy sitting with uncomfortable truths. Fewer still want the mistakes that we and our ancestors made to be unveiled. When one couples those feelings with the privilege inherent with being White in America—including having the luxury of choosing whether and when we openly engage race at all— then we may begin to understand the resistance to embracing Black history as a part of national collective history.

Interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline Racial Justice

In 2023 United Women in Faith continued its commitment to racial justice and ending the school-to-prison pipeline. We offered a variety of online programs for education and mobilization including a three-part Bible study on the school-to-prison pipeline, led by Pastor Janelle Gayle with more than 200 people in attendance. We also hosted screenings of “Tribal Justice” and “Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools,” with an average attendance of 300 at each event. We provided essential support for parents and caregivers through a skills-building webinar on supporting Black neurodivergent students with Cheryl Poe of Advocates4Kids.

Watch



Deaconess Judith Pierre-Okerson speaks about working with underserved children at a public school in Florida and her experience with the school-to-prison pipeline.

youtu.be/VIYQtyZqLEs

United Women in Faith members continued to advocate for legislation to end the pushout of girls of color and to stop corporal punishment in schools with more than 500 advocates wiring emails and placing phone calls to support the Protecting Our Student in Schools Act to prohibit corporal punishment in schools. Nearly 800 advocates sent messages in support of the Ending PUSHOUT ACT to help stop school pushout, especially for girls of color.

We have the moral and spiritual choice to engage, instead—to take what we may not have known about our history and let it be not a call to backlash, but just the opposite, an invitation to still deeper learning and action.

The study of history teaches us that progress is possible. Real, sustained, collective struggle can and often does yield meaningful, tangible gains. This study also teaches that the progress we have made thus far is not enough. We should not fall for the deception that we are “post” racial reckoning or that 2023 is the full fulfillment of the dreams and visions of those who came before. Now is not the time to pause our efforts or contract our aspirations. Our racial present still too closely resembles our racial past. Honoring the legacy of those who came before us — and cherishing those who will come after us — means continuing the work as long as it takes.

To read the full article see: redletterchristians.org/what-black-history-means-to-me-as-a-white-woman

Office of Deaconess & Home Missioner

“The best thing about being a deaconess is sharing challenges about church issues and sharing experiences about our ministries.

Encouraging and lifting each other up makes me feel that I am not alone in the journey.”

—Deaconess Omega Lee Ramos, North Texas Conference

Deaconesses and home missioners are laypeople who are called by God to be in a lifetime relationship in The United Methodist Church for engagement with a full-time vocation in ministries of love, justice, and service.

In 2023, we held six virtual discernment events and welcomed 29 new deaconess/home missioner candidates. Additionally, 18 new deaconesses and home missioners were consecrated at a service in New York City. We also welcomed six deaconesses transferring their relationships from the Philippines.



2023 marked 135 years since the beginning of the deaconess movement! As part of our celebration, we launched a fundraising campaign that raised \$17,000 to support the Deaconess and Home Missioner Education Fund.





Influence

Connecting together as community leaders, justice champions, and brave changes makers, we are women with more than a cause. We are on a mission to boldly act and transform communities and ourselves.

The Power of Our Influence

- **\$400,000** was raised for the Legacy Fund during the 2023 Day of Giving events.
- **712** leaders from all U.S. conferences attended the Leadership Development Days virtual event.
- More than **1,700** leaders joined the Leadership Toolkit made available on Bridge.
- More than **6,000** members joined United Women in Faith Digital—a growing space for online learning and community.

INFLUENCE

“I attended Sharing your Faith Story [workshop]. I did not realize that I had a story worth sharing until I was given the opportunity to share it out loud with the group.

The group was so responsive that I felt proud of telling my story.”

—Leadership Development Days attendee

Membership

United Women in Faith members are bold, spiritual women who work together to transform communities by fostering spiritual growth, developing leaders, and advocating for justice.

The new All-Access Membership continued growing in 2023. This membership option offers flexible ways for new and current members to join the work of United Women in Faith by having easy online access to member resources nationwide. Through All-Access, members can be involved through virtual or in-person groups. They can choose to engage when, where, and how best fits their life.

YOU CAN ENJOY ONE OR ALL OF THESE RESOURCE AREAS WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

INSPIRE

Invitations to spiritual, nurturing, and fellowship events



IMPACT

Opportunities to act for justice through advocacy and action alerts



INFLUENCE

Access to valuable resources to strengthen your leadership and live your faith



Scholarship

In 2023, United Women in Faith provided nearly 300 students in the United States and around the world with scholarships totaling over \$650,000.

Amaya Duckett is one scholarship recipient who is pursuing a B.A. in Criminal Justice and Psychology at Spartanburg Methodist College, a National Mission Institution. After college, she is planning on attending law school and becoming a family law attorney.

She writes: *The United Women in Faith scholarship is more than just a scholarship to me. As an African American woman, I am often overlooked or excluded in society because of the color of my skin. However, as a United Methodist Church member, I am always treated the total opposite. I am treated as if I belong and am important. Walking into my church I am always greeted with love and warmth from members who aim to promote inclusivity. Giving back to the community serves a purpose in my life also because it allows me to do what I was put on this earth to do, which is to serve others.*

Receiving this scholarship from United Women in Faith reminds me that I am finally being seen for all that I do academically, physically, spiritually, and emotionally.



“Leadership Development Days was a time that I needed as a newer member to see our impact throughout the world and gain a clearer understanding of our work as a group and as individual units and members.”

—LDD Attendee

Leadership Development Days

Our 2023 Leadership Development Days (LDD) event was attended by 712 leaders, representing every conference in the United States. Conference and district officers, local and jurisdiction leaders, and All-Access members joined the online event to learn, worship, and network in January 2023. This year, the event focused on membership, how to use our membership resources including the Excite and Invite Guide as well as how to lead in a time of anxiety.

After the event, more than 1,700 leaders downloaded the Toolkit made available to all members because every United Women in Faith member is a leader.

LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT

The Leadership Toolkit is a dynamic and growing collection of resources from across the organization that includes videos and presentations from the Leadership Development Days event and is housed all in one place, on the digital platform Bridge.

This toolkit is designed to be shared with anyone who could benefit, including officers at any level, local unit members, and All-Access members.

To access the Leadership Toolkit, see:

uwfaith.org/stories-of-sisterhood/2023/united-women-in-faith-leadership-toolkit-available



Leadership Development Days

Adapted from an article by Maryann Verghese for the May/June 2023 issue of **response**.

From January 19 through 21, United Women in Faith hosted Leadership Development Days 2023. This annual event is designed to equip and strengthen leaders with spirit-filled worship, plenaries, workshops, networking, and more. While traditionally LDD has focused on officer training and elected leaders, LDD 2023 broadened the invitation to include all types of leaders within United Women in Faith. Attendees included staff; members of the Board of Directors; United Women in Faith leaders connected to The United Methodist Church; new all-access members; and jurisdiction, conference, and district officers.

Guided by Philippians 3:12-16, LDD 2023 celebrated the theme “On Toward the Goal.”

“United Women in Faith made space for leaders to pause and restore themselves through learning, nurturing our souls/soul care while allowing for critical connections and strengthening of community when the sisterhood comes together in support of one another,” one LDD attendee said. “We shared stories and ideas; prayed for one another, then departed feeling empowered and ready to make bold change in the world!”

Networking sessions gave space for attendees to virtually connect in jurisdictional groups and through interests to inspire, influence, and impact. Participants chose two workshops to attend over the weekend spanning soul care, membership, social action, fundraising, and more.

As LDD 2023 continues to provide leadership development opportunities for more members of United Women in Faith, Elizabeth Chun Hye Lee, director of Mobilization and Advocacy at United Women in Faith, says that leadership development opportunities will continue to expand. “To get us toward our mission of faith, hope, and love in action, we recognize that leadership and leadership development is required at every level of United Women in Faith,” she said.

The Legacy Endowment Fund

The Legacy Endowment Fund of United Women in Faith is a permanently invested endowment that supports the work of improving the lives of women, children, and youth at home and abroad. Gifts to the Legacy Endowment Fund build financial resources that ensure United Women in Faith can carry out our vital programs and activities for many years to come.

Highlights from 2023:

- Donors contributed **\$854,858** in cash donations and **\$243,513** in major and planned gift donations and pledges to the Legacy Endowment Fund.
- Members and friends of United Women in Faith raised more than **\$400,000** for the Legacy fund during the 2023 Day of Giving campaign celebrating United Women in Faith's 154th anniversary.
- The 1869 Society, made up of individuals who have made planned gifts to the organization has grown to more than 100 members. The first Legacy of Love event, held in February 2023, celebrated and thanked these individuals.



It Began with a Mug

Adapted from an article by Cecilia Malm in the November/December 2023 issue of response.

Claudia Davis had recently moved to Billings, Montana, with her husband and children and was looking to connect with people in her new community.

"I got a phone call inviting me to attend a Christmas party," she recalls. "It was a mug exchange. And, it turns out, also a meeting of the local United Methodist Women unit."

As the unit leaders gave a report on the national and international impact of the organization and described missional work all over the globe, Davis says, "I thought to myself, I want to belong to an organization like this that is making a real difference."

When she heard about the launch of The Legacy Endowment Fund, she was supportive from the start.

"I had worked with nonprofits, and I knew from those experiences how important having an endowment is to an organization," she says. "I understood right away how the interest generated by The Legacy Endowment Fund could help underwrite administrative costs so that more money could go directly into mission."

As Davis and her husband sat down to create their wills, "we decided that a percentage of what remained of our estates would go to The Legacy Endowment Fund of United Women in Faith. It was an easy decision since the organization has been such a big part of my life and I want it to continue to have an impact for many years to come."

By making a planned gift, Davis automatically became a member of United Women in Faith's 1869 Society. Members of the 1869 Society receive special recognition from the organization, invitations to events, and a monthly newsletter with additional financial planning information.

These days, Davis can reflect over a mug of coffee or tea on her decision to include United Women in Faith in her estate plans and say, "It makes me incredibly happy to be a part of something that I know can do so much for the world."

To read the full article see: uwfaith.org/latest-news/2023/november-december-response-a-legacy-of-love-began-with-a-mug



YOU CAN GIVE TO THE LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND IN THREE PRIMARY CATEGORIES:

- **Legacy Builders**— monthly gifts of \$18.69 or more
- **Friends of Legacy** — major gifts or pledges of \$5,000 or more
- **1869 Society** — planned estate gifts



Learn more at:
uwfaith.org/give/legacy-fund

United Women in Faith 2023

Annual Report Financials

Treasurer's Report



“ I was grateful for how flexible we were in the midst of so much change”

Tamara Clark, CPA
Treasurer/CFO Finance & Asset Management

As we closed out 2023, I was grateful for how flexible we were in the midst of so much change. Despite another year of financial challenges and related critical decisions, we adapted to the budget realities so that we could fulfill our mission.

Operating Revenue

Conference Giving

We continued to experience a decline in giving in 2023. Conference Giving was \$6.9 million, a decline of \$927,000 from the prior year. We are thankful to all of our members for their giving, especially for those conferences that managed to increase their mission giving and pledge for the year! Out of 53 conferences, 26 conferences met their pledge, and 12 conferences not only met their pledge but increased their giving.

Interest & Publications Income

Interest income was \$2.2 million, a decrease of \$396,000 due to receiving less bequests. Publications income was \$483,000, a decrease of \$61,000 due to pricing increases and less sales.

Rental, Service Fee, & Other Income

Rental and Service Fee income, which includes the operations of **Brooks-Howell Home** and the **Church Center for the United Nations**, totaled 6.5 million. There was a decrease of \$503,000 which is primarily due to the Brooks-Howell Home closing its home health care department and one floor of its nursing department. Our Other Income totaled \$1.8 million, a decrease of \$561,000 compared to the prior year. This was because 2022 was an Assembly year where Other Income was higher.

In total, Operating Revenues totaled \$18.1 million, a decrease of \$2.44 million or 12%.

Operating Expenses

Programs Rendered by United Women in Faith

Our total for Programs Rendered by United Women in Faith was \$6.2 million, a decrease of \$1.6 million, as we intentionally decreased our budget to be in line with the expected Conference Giving.

Our National Mission Institution Repairs and Maintenance expenses declined by \$242,000 due to fewer NMIs requesting property grants during the year. The Mission Resource Center experienced a decrease of \$207,000 due to intentional budget reductions. The Other Programs line decreased by \$1 million because 2022 was an Assembly year with higher expenses.

Programs Rendered by Other Organizations

Our grants to other organizations totaled \$5.5 million, a decrease of \$639,000 due to budget reductions and awarding fewer grants from designated funds.

Program Support

Program Support, which includes expenses for the Church Center for the United Nations and Brooks-Howell Home, totaled \$8.5 million. There was a decline of \$1.4 million as significant operational changes and budget reductions took place at Brooks-Howell Home.

Supporting Services

Supporting Services, which includes management, general, and fundraising expenses, totaled \$5.2 million. This was a decrease of \$109,000 compared to the prior year and represents 20% of the total Operating Expenses. Although this section includes what we typically think of as non-programmatic work (finance, property management, grants, human resources, fund development, etc.), the staff who perform these necessary functions often work directly with members and carry out some of our programmatic functions.

Operating Expenses totaled \$25.5 million, a decrease of \$3.7 million or 12%.

Non-Operating Activity

Our Non-Operating Activity includes the appreciation (or depreciation) in our investments, the change in post-retirement costs, gains on the sale of property, and contributions to our endowments, such as the Legacy Fund. The value of our investments appreciated by \$11.2 million due to the market. There was an improvement in post-retirement and pension benefit costs of \$3.6 million due to our Health Fund being added as a plan asset in our retiree obligation valuation.

In total, Non-Operating Activity was \$15.9 million, a significant change from 2022 when we experienced a negative change of (\$21 million) due to the market.

Summary

Our Operating Revenue totaled \$18.1 million, Operating Expenses totaled \$25.5 million, and our Non-Operating Activities totaled \$15.9 million. Overall, we experienced an increase in Net Assets of \$8.5 million.

Financial Summary 2023-2024

OPERATING REVENUE *

	2023	2022	2021	2020
CONFERENCE GIVING				
Mission Giving.....	6.49	7.31	8.21	9.17
Special Edition SMR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Supplementary Giving	0.09	0.11	0.03	0.08
Designated Giving	0.36	0.47	0.46	0.47
Total Conference Giving	6.95	7.89	8.70	9.73
INTEREST INCOME				
Investment Income (Net of Fees)	1.98	1.92	1.39	1.32
Bequests, Trusts, & Other Long-Term Gifts	0.27	0.72	0.91	0.56
Total Interest Income	2.25	2.64	2.30	1.88
PUBLICATIONS				
response magazine.....	0.21	0.24	0.22	0.25
Mission Resource Center	0.27	0.31	0.21	0.27
Total Publications	0.48	0.55	0.43	0.52

(*ALL FIGURES SHOWN QUOTED IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS U.S.)

	2023	2022	2021	2020
RENTAL & SERVICE FEE INCOME				
Brooks-Howell Home	4.18	4.80	5.76	4.99
Church Center for the United Nations (CCUN).....	2.41	2.28	2.16	2.21
Total Rental & Service Fee Income	6.59	7.08	7.92	7.20
OTHER INCOME				
Benefit Trust	0.96	1.10	1.05	0.86
Miscellaneous Income	0.87	1.28	2.04	0.78
Total Other Income	1.83	2.38	3.09	1.64
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	18.10	20.54	22.44	20.97

OPERATING EXPENSES *

	2023	2022	2021	2020
PROGRAM SERVICES				
Programs Rendered by UWFaith				
Transformation.....	1.76	1.88	1.97	2.24
Position	0.31	0.29	0.32	0.27
Engage.....	0.16	0.23	0.20	0.17
Mobilize.....	0.13	0.26	0.19	0.28
Connectional.....	0.42	0.54	0.57	0.64
National Mission Institutions				
Property Insurance.....	0.69	0.36	0.90	1.26
Repairs & Maintenance.....	0.05	0.30	0.35	(0.17)
Mission Education.....	0.74	0.74	0.76	0.85
response magazine.....	0.35	0.31	0.22	0.22
Mission Resource Center	0.36	0.56	0.43	1.01
Deaconesses, Home Missioners				
Office, & Network.....	0.43	0.44	0.38	0.35
Other Programs Rendered by UWFaith	0.81	1.90	1.19	1.18
Total Programs Rendered by UWFaith	6.21	7.81	7.48	8.30
Programs Rendered by Other Organizations				
United Methodist Organizations National & International				
National Missions	1.62	1.75	1.65	1.76
International Missions	1.43	1.35	1.21	1.35
Ecumenical Organizations	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.07
Social Action Organizations	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.05
Grants from Designated Funds	2.41	2.98	1.82	2.74
Total Programs Rendered by Other Organizations	5.53	6.18	4.78	5.97

	2023	2022	2021	2020
PROGRAM SUPPORT				
Church Center for the United Nations	2.41	2.31	2.40	2.52
Brooks Howell Retirement Center Retired Deaconess, Missionary Home Operations	4.43	5.79	5.25	4.69
Retired Deaconess, Missionary Pension, & Health Benefits	1.57	1.65	2.22	3.06
Scarritt Bennett Education Center	0.00	0.10	0.10	0.10
Annuity Fund.....	0.00	0.02	0.08	0.02
Organization-Wide Program Support.....	0.11	0.06	0.04	0.20
Total Program Support	8.52	9.93	10.09	10.59
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	20.26	23.92	22.35	24.86
SUPPORTING SERVICES				
Management & General				
Leadership & Management.....	4.42	4.75	4.67	4.97
Total Management & General	4.42	4.75	4.67	4.97
Fundraising				
Development Office	0.82	0.60	0.53	0.52
Total Fundraising	0.82	0.60	0.53	0.52
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	5.24	5.35	5.20	5.49
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	25.50	29.27	27.55	30.35

EFFECT ON NET ASSETS *

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Operating Deficit	(7.40)	(8.73)	(5.11)	(9.38)
Apprn./ (Depn.) in investments.....	11.17	(22.04)	8.65	16.35
Change in Post-Retirement & Pension Benefit Costs	3.60	(1.08)	2.20	12.11
Endowment/Sale of Properties	1.18	1.23	6.41	0.99
INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	8.55	(30.62)	12.15	20.07

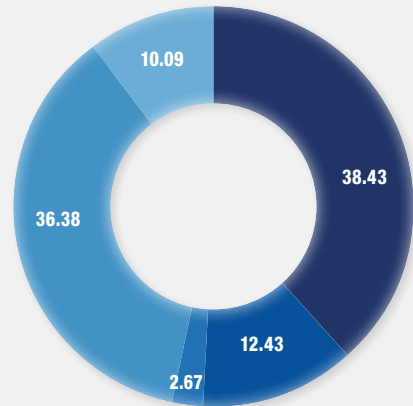
NET ASSETS *

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Without Donors Restriction	35.12	31.38	40.09	35.80
With Donors Restriction.....	69.22	64.40	86.28	78.44
TOTAL NET ASSETS	104.34	95.78	126.37	114.24

OPERATING REVENUE

The total operating revenue comes from conference giving; sale of publications; income from interest, rentals, and service fees; events; and other sources.

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE for 2023 was \$18.09 million



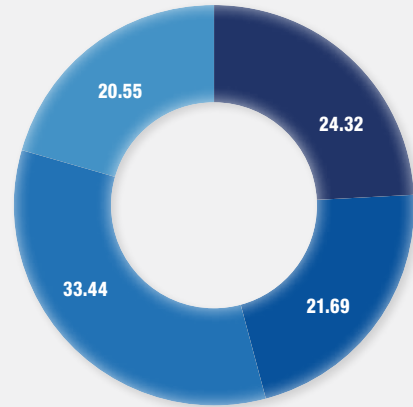
UWFaith 2023 OPERATING REVENUE

Conference Giving	38.43%
Interest Income	12.43%
Publications	2.67%
Rental & Service Fee Income	36.38%
Other Income	10.09%

OPERATING EXPENSES

The total expenses include services provided through programs rendered by the UWFaith national office. The total expenses also include programs rendered by other organizations such as the National Mission Institutions, the program support expenses at places like CCUN and BHH, and our supporting services expenses which reflect the administrative costs of running the organization.

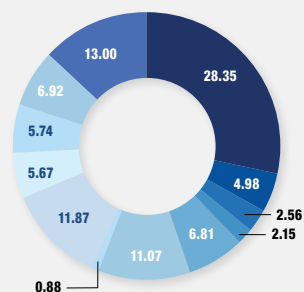
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES for 2023 was \$25.49 million



UWFaith 2023 EXPENSE CATEGORIES

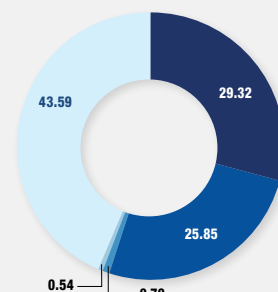
Programs Rendered by UWFaith	24.32%
Programs Rendered by Other Organizations	21.69%
Program Support	33.44%
Supporting Services	20.55%

PROGRAMS RENDERED BY UWFaith



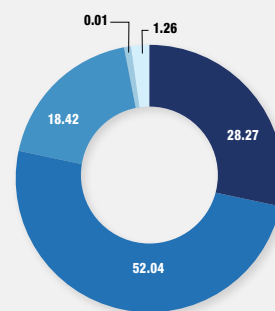
Transformation	28.35%	Mission Education	11.87%
Position	4.98%	response Magazine	5.67%
Engage	2.56%	Mission Resource Center	5.74%
Mobilize	2.15%	Deaconess, Home Missioners Office, & Network	6.81%
Connection	6.81%	Other Programs rendered by UWFaith	13.00%
Insurance (NMI Property Management)	11.07%		
Repairs & Maintenance (NMI Property Management)	0.88%		

PROGRAMS RENDERED BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS



National Missions	29.32%
International Missions	25.85%
Ecumenical Organizations	0.70%
Social Action Organizations	0.54%
Grants from Designated Funds	43.59%

PROGRAM SUPPORT



Church Center for the United Nations	28.27%
Brooks-Howell Home, Missionary Home Operations	52.04%
Brooks-Howell Home, Missionary Pension & Health	18.42%
Annuity Fund	0.01%
Organization-Wide Program Support	1.26%

A total of 26 conferences met their pledge.

Twelve conferences met their pledge *and* increased their giving! Below is a list of the 12 conferences:

- Alaska
- Desert Southwest
- Greater New Jersey
- Holston
- Iowa
- New York
- North Texas
- Northern Illinois
- Oklahoma Indian Missionary
- Oregon-Idaho
- Pacific Northwest
- Peninsula-Delaware

Conferences with the highest giving amounts:

- Iowa
- Western North Carolina
- Virginia
- Great Plains
- Illinois Great Rivers

Conferences with the largest dollar increase compared to the prior year:

- Holston
- Iowa
- Desert Southwest
- Greater New Jersey
- New York

**Thank you to all 53 of our Conferences!
Your giving makes a difference around the world!**

Budget Narratives 2024



“We continue visioning for the future of how we engage United Women in Faith leaders from the local unit to the board of directors.”

Khia Shaw and the Transformation Homeroom

Transformation Office

The 2024 Transformation Budget will continue to support the strategic work of United Women in Faith to inspire, influence, and impact our members and the lives of women, children, and youth around the world. We do this through three priorities: positioning the organization, engaging new women and funding opportunities, and mobilizing members. The budget gives particular emphasis to these priorities as we seek to grow our membership and giving, market and promote our new brand, and continue to transform lives within and beyond The United Methodist Church.

Position

The Position priority calls for United Women in Faith to be positioned as a leading women’s Christian organization within the wider faith community and in the world. The 2024 budget continues to focus on making this happen by:

- Working with our public information officer consultant, Jennifer Farmer, to focus on media placement of press releases and op-eds that highlight United Women in Faith’s priorities and the monthly production of the *Faith Talks* podcast.
- Coordinating with marketing experts to promote United Women in Faith membership, programs, and giving on social media and in digital markets. Metrics and baselines have been developed and will undergird this expansion in 2024.
- Expanding paid advertisements, including online and direct mail, to promote our new brand and new/revitalized programs to current members, the wider church, and new audiences. This will include promoting Mission u, justice priorities, resources, Soul Care retreats and products, along with virtual events/programs through the website, brochures, and video.
- Encouraging innovation as we hire a new position director who will lead expansion efforts based on the new strategic goals.
- Supporting the new member portal that provides members with resources and inspirational content.

Engage

The Engage priority seeks to attract and engage women for increased membership, funding, and donations. Engage work also encompasses being a reliable source for women’s spiritual growth. The 2024 budget supports expansive opportunities for membership, spiritual growth, and engagement; development of new resources and merchandise; and scaling of innovative program designs:

- Mission u is continuing its focus on flexible curricula. The 2024 emphasis is on living the kin-dom. This second-year study focuses on the invitation to posture our lives and transform ourselves. Mission u will continue the cohort model with 16 cohorts and 32 trainers and will continue to be virtual.
- Distance Learning will continue to be a supportive tool as events and trainings continue online. Expansion and building capacity are a focus which will entail using software for curriculum development.
- Newly developed programs and resources will be scaled to support districts and units for ongoing, successful recruitment, retention, and re-engagement of current and former members and new women.
- As part of the Strategic Blueprint, finding new ways to fund the work of United Women in Faith is a priority. A cross-functional team is developing a funding roadmap with implementation throughout 2024.
- The Thrive e-newsletter will continue to serve as a tool for conversation and engagement for current and potential members. Giving linked to stories will be tested in 2024.
- Soul care will continue to be a concept that we are weaving into the identity of United Women in Faith. In 2024, we will continue to support the work of Soul Care programs and this new retreat model with supportive materials and resources for event replication. Communal opportunities will be available for Soul Care retreats offered on the United Women in Faith Digital with consultants and staff supporting this program.
- All-Access Membership will continue to be supported through the new member portal. Funds will support resource and merchandise development, marketing, social media strategy, and implementation.
- Spiritual growth as part of the strategic work will be integrated in innovative ways connecting faith and action across United Women in Faith programs.

Mobilize

The Mobilize priority is to mobilize members to inspire, influence, and impact their communities and the world. The 2024 budget requests continue to support this strategic work:

- The social justice issue priority campaigns seek to equip members for advocacy and service by providing opportunities for education and building awareness around Interrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline and the Just Energy for All campaigns. To that end, 2024 funding supports educating and activating members through direct program offerings, national webinars, capacity-building Zoom sessions, 13 Steps to Sustainability revision, and resources for members to train other members.

- Support opportunities for members to engage in local, regional, and national actions—either legislative or through other calls to action. This includes funding for consultants and partnerships to expand our capacity and reach as well as supporting social action training and organizing for members engaged in work with local partners. In doing so, members are engaged in a deeper understanding of advocacy and faith and continued development as leaders in social action.
- The work supported by the budgeted funds for Be Just Be Green, Eliminating Institutional Racism, and The Charter for Racial Justice Teams supports developing and supporting member leaders in the areas of Climate and Racial Justice through training and engagement with members throughout the organization. There will also be support for Jurisdiction Leadership Teams, all of which are committed to expanding

their work around the Charter for Racial Justice through various programs and activities throughout the quadrennium.

- Provide support as needed for the Reading Program as it expands with a racial justice/diversity, equity, and inclusion lens.
- Support and develop women as faith and community leaders in any context where they are called to serve. The Leadership Development budget seeks to train and support current elected and appointed officers from across the organization through the work of staff liaisons assigned to support the work of conference officers as well as through the Leadership Development Days event. In 2024, LDD will be offered online and will expand to include district officers and All-Access members. The work of Leadership Development will extend to members on the Influence membership track.

Finally, we continue visioning for the future of how we engage United Women in Faith leaders from the local unit to the board of directors as well as how we develop women leaders to show up in other areas of leadership in the church and the public square. This includes working with board members to support the implementation of our Program Advisory Group cohorts, virtual training for members at every level, preparation of leaders for General Conference and the post-General Conference church, and continued innovation around connecting and equipping members as leaders.



“Connections will continue to develop and maintain relationships with agency partners, caucuses, and ecumenical partners; and work on equipping members of United Women in Faith to be leaders in the church and beyond.”

Sung-ok Lee and the Connections Homeroom

Connectional Office

Connections

In 2024, Connections will be carrying out the strategic work for **General Conference**, before, during, and after this quadrennial church event. The Connectional Officer and the Director of Denominational Relations will be leading and guiding this work of monitoring/tracking legislation, coalition building, networking, and preparing United Women in Faith for participation in General Conference to take place April 23–May 3, 2024.

The work of following up on General Conference decisions will take place, including any decisions on regionalization. If legislation on regionalization passes at General Conference, the office will guide our work to support the ratification at annual conferences the same year.

Connections will continue to develop and maintain relationships with agency partners, caucuses, and ecumenical partners; and work on equipping members of United Women in Faith to be leaders in the church and beyond.

Connections will guide the jurisdiction quadrennial meetings of United Women in Faith starting April 19 through June 23, 2024. This will include shepherding the election process to take place for national leadership.

Connections will continue to coordinate cultivation requests for national speakers at annual meetings for United Women in Faith; and support members and units to stay connected to the organization as units reorganize from disaffiliations up until 2023. The Connectional Officer will continue to guide the Governance Committee’s work of decisions on policy and bylaws.

International Mission

United Women in Faith national staff members will continue working with the United Methodist Women leaders in the priority countries on leadership development, economic empowerment, and skills building in the areas that they select and design projects to address these needs and determine the implementation process. The office will continue to fund international scholarships and grants.

Country Teams Strategy

In 2024, national staff will continue coordinating the nine country teams as they train local women in their church and community, conduct post-training assessments, and prioritize identified needs. The focus remains on a country team model which includes national staff, regional missionaries, Women's Desk coordinators, youth representatives, and other local women leaders. Grants will be provided to support the Women's Desk coordinators in priority and other strategic countries. In addition to Training for Transformation, project design, and proposal writing, training will be provided to the teams to enhance their program planning skills. Other training needs will be also assessed and addressed as needed.



Membership Engagement

Funds will be dedicated to continuing innovation around a plan to engage our members in international work. This will include cross-cultural exposure and mission opportunities. Funds will also support efforts to gather information and tell the story through *Voices From the Field* and other similar programs. Based on the success of the 2023 itineration, more such gatherings with Regional Missionaries will be considered in 2024. The Regional Missionaries will be in the United States attending the five Jurisdiction meetings in 2024.

Church Center for the United Nations (CCUN)

The work at CCUN will be increasing given the return of the CCUN Chaplain from medical leave. Participation with Ecumenical Women, UN-Commission on the Status of Women, UN-Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and Thursday morning prayers, in addition to collaborative work with the General Board of Church and Society and the General Board of Global Ministries. The work of space rental and maintaining our special consultative status at the UN continues with the administrative work of the reservation specialist.

Office of Deaconess & Home Missioner (D/HM)

The Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner is an office of The United Methodist Church administered by United Women in Faith. The community of D/HM has been increasing in numbers in the past three to four years. In 2024, the D/HM office will engage in the following work:

- Deaconess and Home Missioner Education – This includes expenses such as professor and academic advisor stipends; mental health professional stipends, and scholarships for D/HM candidates and community.
- Consecration – This includes orientation, training, and consecration service, with travel and housing.
- Other programs and administration needs – Fenton Memorial Deaconess Home, self-care retreats, financial planning, cutting-edge grants, D/HM coaching, and a nurture and care team; intercultural competency and racial justice training to provide opportunities; and Safe Sanctuary training and background checks as they enter the D/HM relationship.
- DisAbility Ministries Committee – The Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner has the responsibility for funding one staff member for this committee of The United Methodist Church through 2024.
- Church and Ecumenical connections – The Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner engages in multiple conferences and meetings and holds membership in professional organizations which include DOTAC, DIAKONIA, and NADHM.
- Three consultants work with discernment planning, inquiries, maintaining contact with current candidates and discerners, and serve as liaisons to those in process as they take their core studies and discern their call.
- A consultant works with the weekly newsletter, organizes our D/HM interviews, organizes the D/HM coaches and programs related to coaching, serves as a liaison to our office for candidates who have completed their core studies and are awaiting consecration, and acts as the registrar for the Fenton Memorial Deaconess Home.
- The Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner works with two coordinators who assist those transferring their deaconess relationship from the Philippines and supporting the new deaconess/home missioner movement in Africa. Each of these coordinators also receives a stipend.

The Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner intentionally connects with other agencies in The United Methodist Church and supplies tables at conferences that future deaconess and home missioners may attend to raise our visibility and educate others on the deaconess and home missioner relationship.



“Operations seeks to provide the structure and support that allows United Women in Faith to serve women, children, and youth around the world while building capacity to equip the next generation of women leaders.”

Mollie James-Vickery and the Operations Homeroom

Operations

We have seen incredible change in society, The United Methodist Church, and United Women in Faith in recent years. These changes have provided us with the opportunity to build our virtual skills, design hybrid events, create online communities, and find new ways to connect with new women. Our 2024 Operations budget builds on that work while maintaining and optimizing systems and processes that support our strategic goals and provide a sustainable hybrid culture for our staff and members. The Operations office continues to create print and digital resources that complement and enhance one another; design events that are in-person, virtual, or hybrid to meet the needs of our members and shift quickly in response to public health concerns, making the best use of the technology we have; identify what is needed and equip member leaders to do the same; and build a workplace that reflects the values of our members and honors their stewardship and trust in our staff. Most of all, Operations seeks to provide the structure and support that allows United Women in Faith to serve women, children, and youth around the world while building capacity to equip the next generation of women leaders.

Communications

Communications informs and interacts with members by utilizing various channels of print, social media, websites, e-blasts, texts, and videos. It continues to support members with print and digital resources for programs, education, and information to support leaders.

Communications also creates content and strategizes best practices with colleagues for sharing their communications.

The new webstore is fully functional and offers new shipping options and download experience. The two-year pilot for Mighty Networks is completed and Communications is preparing to launch an online space for digital resources, community building, and interest groups.

Events Management

The spring of 2024 brings jurisdiction events. Events Management is excited to be mentoring these teams in venue contracting, weekend designs, registration, website builds, marketing strategies, worship writing techniques, leader contracts, budget planning, and more.

The Events Management director and team are now also the staff liaisons for the conference vice presidents. Events Management continues to enhance presentation, manage all logistics and planning for board meetings, Mission u events, Leadership Development Days, online events such as *Faith Talks*, *Voices From the Field*, and more. Events Management was key in working alongside the Spiritual Growth and Engage leads to run pilot events, train leaders, and create the new Soul Care Retreat Manual, which was released in the summer of 2023. Collecting quality survey data and reporting for events is an EM specialty, which we continue to offer for events across the organization.

Human Resources

Human Resources continues to manage the employee life cycle and administer employee benefits. HR is also responsible for the reservations and maintenance of Grace employee apartments, the planning and implementation of employee recognitions, staff-in, the employee bi-weekly newsletter, and live meetings. HR continues to find new and innovative ways to support staff in the hybrid environment to facilitate a healthy work/life balance.

Information Technology

IT personnel, and the associated software and hardware they select and support, serve all homerooms and staff, providing training and troubleshooting our systems, statistical analysis of member data, and project work to complete the four goals in the Strategic Blueprint. As a remote-first organization, the IT staff are critical to keeping the lines of communication and information sharing open and accessible across the United States. Where known, increases in monthly and annual charges are included; otherwise, a 3% inflator is used to cover likely increases. A small budget is assigned for consulting hours for work that cannot be completed by IT, likely to be used for joint IT-FAM projects underway to modernize and optimize our accounts payables, remittance, and shipping.

Organizational Development

Organizational Development continues to serve as a resource for United Women in Faith's strategic planning process and work to move the goals and key objectives forward. Organizational Development also supports efforts in the areas of reinforcing culture, strengthening skills through peer coaching circles and other learning and development initiatives, as well as providing support to the board's Planning and Assessment Committee to carry out functions as outlined in the bylaws.

FIND UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH ONLINE



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH WEBSITE

uwfaith.org is our primary website. Here you will find the latest news and information about United Women in Faith programs, initiatives, and events. It's where you connect with other members and get involved. You'll also find links to our many resources and the e-store. Find new brand elements, member materials, programs, and catalog at **uwfaithresources.org**.



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH DIGITAL

uwfaith/digital Connect with the United Women in Faith community online with opportunities to explore and participate in discussion groups with others as well as access online resources and inspirational content. Paid resources are also available such as the Program Resource, *Daily Prayer Guide*, and more.



FACEBOOK

facebook.com/uwomenfaith If you're on Facebook, be sure to "like" and "follow" United Women in Faith so that our posts will appear on your feed.



X

x.com/uwomenfaith Do you tweet? So does United Women in Faith! Use the link to find our account @uwomenfaith. Follow us, tweet with us, and become a part of the continuing conversation around faith, hope, and love in action.



YOUTUBE

youtube.com/uwomenfaith Need a video for a presentation? You'll find it on YouTube. Check out the video resources available by following the link. New videos are posted often!



FLICKER

uwfaith.org/flickr Need a photo for your newsletter or PowerPoint? Follow this link and you'll find terrific images illustrating the work of United Women in Faith members.

PHOTO CAPTIONS & CREDITS

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Pg. 2: Finda Quiwa, United Women in Faith Regional Missionary in Africa, visits the North Texas Conference in September 2023. Photo by Shellie Ross.

Pg. 6: Sally Vonner, General Secretary and CEO, United Women in Faith. Photo by Janet Joyner.

Pg. 7: Installation service of Sally Vonner, July 29, 2023, Dallas, Texas. Photo by Reflections HD Photography (ReflectionsHD.com).

Pg. 8: 'Anise 'Isama'u, President, Board of Directors, United Women in Faith. Photo by Reflections HD Photography (ReflectionsHD.com).

Pg. 9: 'Anise 'Isama'u. Photo by Paul Jeffrey.

Pg. 10: Photo by iStock

Pg. 14: Soul Care Retreat participants. Photo courtesy Jeanette Harris.

Pg. 18: United Women in Faith at the End Fossil Fuels Climate March, September 17, 2023, in New York City. Photo by Samantha Nyachoto.

Pg. 19: United Women in Faith at the End Fossil Fuels Climate March, September 17, 2023, in New York City. Photo by Ilka Vega.

Pg. 20: Members of a women's savings and credit group gather to work together and collect their savings in Kathmandu, Nepal. The group is sponsored by Milijuli Samaj Nepal, a women's organization supported by United Women in Faith. Photo by Paul Jeffrey.

Pg. 22: Photo courtesy United Methodist Community House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Pg. 23: United Methodist Community House Fresh Market in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Photos courtesy United Methodist Community House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Pg. 24: A woman shows her wares at a church fair in Peru. Photo courtesy Mabel Barreto Quineche.

Pg. 25: *Top:* Training for Transformation workshop. Photo by Keziah Kargbo.
Bottom: Mamie Irung shows the placemat sets she made through the beading workshops. Photo by Christelle Mahongo, beading trainer.

Pg. 26: Banaybanay women making peanut butter. Photo by Paul Jeffrey.

Pg. 27: *Top:* Faith Pavilion at COP28 in Dubai Expo City. Photo by Ilka Vega.

Bottom: United Women in Faith staff Khia Shaw and family during the March to End Fossil Fuels. Photo by Samantha Nyachoto.

Pg. 28: Emily Jones, United Women in Faith Executive for Racial Justice. Photo courtesy Emily Jones.

Pg. 29: Photo by 123rf.com

Pg. 30: Deaconess and home missionary consecration 2023. Photo by Marcia Florkey.

Pg. 31: At the United Women in Faith Assembly in July 2022, Bill and Michelle White were honored as the newest commissioned to the Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner. Photo courtesy Julia Paradine-Rice/Michigan Conference United Women in Faith.

Pg. 32: United Methodist Women Leadership Development Days, February 2020. Photo by GNTV Media Ministry.

Pg. 34: All Photos by iStock.

Pg. 35: Amaya Duckett, scholarship recipient. Photo courtesy of Amaya Duckett

Pg. 37: United Methodist Women Leadership Development Days, February 2020. Photo by GNTV Media Ministry.

Pg. 39: Claudia Davis, 1869 Society member. Photo courtesy of Claudia Davis.

Pg. 41: Tamara Clark. Photo by Janet Joyner.

Pg. 46: Khia Shaw. Photo by Janet Joyner.

Pg. 48: Photo by iStock.

Pg. 49: Sung-ok Lee. Photo by Janet Joyner.

Pg. 50: Finda Quiwa, United Women in Faith Regional Missionary in Africa, visits the North Texas Conference in September 2023. Photo by Shellie Ross.

Pg. 52: Mollie James-Vickery, United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith

Vision

Turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world.

Mission

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

Purpose

To 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.

faith

action

sisterhood



United
Women
in Faith