



United
Women
in Faith

INSIGHT

Northern Illinois Conference

December 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS

December

06 --- PN District Leadership Team
09 --- LS District Leadership Team

January 2025

04 --- NIC Conference Leadership Team
05 --- Winter Mission u Opening Worship
06 --- PS District Leadership Team
09 --- PC District Leadership Team
13 --- LS District Leadership Team
19 --- Winter Mission u Closing Worship

February 2025

03 --- LS District Learning Event
08 --- UMC NIC Laity Convocation
13 --- PC, PN, PS Districts Planning
22 --- PC, PN, PS Districts Sharing and Learning Event

March 2025

01 --- NIC Conference Leadership Team
03 --- PS District Leadership Team
07 --- World Day of Prayer - Church Women United
08 --- World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women - Chicago
10 --- LS District Leadership Team
13 --- PC District Leadership Team
22 --- NIC Day of Spiritual Renewal Retreat
23 --- Day of Giving - Legacy Fund

April 2025

05 --- LS District Spiritual Growth Event
20 --- HAPPY EASTER!
26 --- PS District Spiritual Growth Event

For More Detailed Information and Future Events:

[View the Google Calendar](#)

President's Report

By Barb Farley

Fall greetings to you all. As I write this, I imagine everyone one of you is preparing for “end of the year” festivities and looking to fulfill each one’s responsibilities as this year winds to a close. I myself plan to keep from being distracted by the sometimes ugly rhetoric of our nation’s political scene and look to ease into the rhythms of this season. I am so grateful for the gift of sisterhood, the prayerful attitudes and the nurture that I experience every day from United Women in Faith. Our outreach, our experience, and influence are especially important in this time going forward. I am keeping you all in my prayers and please never forget that God is with us.



Together, we can really make a difference in the lives of so many - especially those who are forgotten on the margins. I pray that we can be ready to listen to those who offer completely different gifts and ideas than our own. I pray that we, collectively, can be a healing balm to our hurting world. One foot in front of the other - that is the way I plan to carry on along with you in respectful service to others.

Treasurer's Report

By Janeen Hamack

Greetings from your conference treasurer, Janeen.

At this time all district pledges are a little behind in comparison to last year. By district they range from 57% paid to 131% paid.

As a conference, we are 81% paid to National for our pledge of \$156,000 for 2024.

Last year, though, we did exceed our pledge to National by 50%.

So, if you are a local unit treasurer, please send your pledges, including your "end of the year cleaning the treasury money" to your district treasurer by Dec. 1, 2024 (or whatever deadline date she has given you), so that she may send it off to me for my Dec. 10, 2024 deadline to National. And be prayerfully thinking about your budgets and pledges for 2025.

Any questions, contact [ME](#) or your district treasurer.

Secretary's Report

By Lois Voss

A few United Women in Faith NIC 2024 Yearbook & Directory booklets are still available for sale. Order [HERE](#).

As the year winds down, organize your 2024 information that you need to keep for yourself. If your tenure is over, gather what you will be passing on to the new leader for your office. Questions? contact [Lois](#).

Whenever your district has new information for the calendar, please send it to [ME](#).

Winter Mission u

Online registration [HERE](#)

Registration form [HERE](#)



Save the Dates

Winter Learning Event

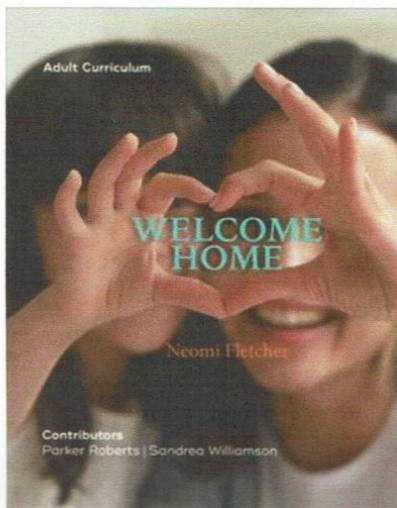
January 5-19, 2025

virtual only

- **Sunday, Jan. 5 (3:00-4:00 pm): Opening Service**
- **Weeks of Jan. 5 and 12: Classes will meet twice each week**
- **Sunday, Jan. 19 (3:00-4:00 pm): Closing Service**

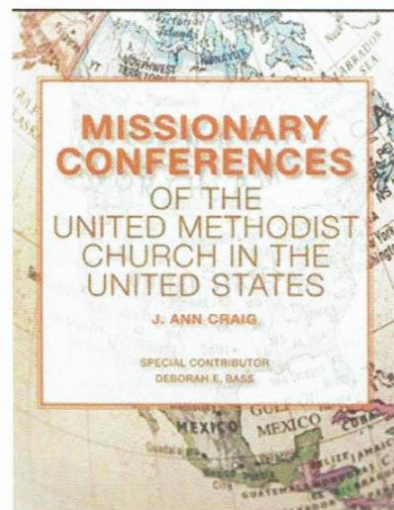
Our studies...

New in 2024....



Tuesday & Thursday
Class 1 (3:00-5:00 pm)
Class 2 (7:00-9:00 pm)

A favorite from 2017...



Monday & Wednesday
Class 3 (1:30-3:30 pm)

You may take one or both studies.

Presented by

United Women in Faith
Northern Illinois Conference



United
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Winter Mission u Reflection

By Catherine Inserra, Spiritual Growth Coordinator

Have you noticed anymore when you walk into a store or restaurant, you hear a new greeting? No longer do we hear 'Welcome' or 'Hello'. The standard greeting is 'Welcome In!' Have you heard this? Noticed it? Every time I hear it, and I am not exaggerating, I wonder about its origins? Probably just a marketing angle to make customers or consumers feel more welcome? And, I wonder about how Jesus marketed his faith and God's welcoming movement? How do we as United Women in Faith market our faith as followers of Jesus?

For Jesus, he consistently invited people to "Come and See!" For generations, whether you knew it as Christian School of Mission or in the past several years rebranded to become known as, Mission u (yes, this is a lower case u), UWFaith has been inviting children, youth

and women to experience transformational learning using thoughtfully written curricula by diversely educated women both clergy and lay based on matters of social justice and faith formation. UWFaith excels in this way!

Welcome Home, the 2024 adult curriculum written by Neomi Fletcher, explored how we can know God as an intimate friend who welcomes us. The sessions included Scripture explorations, discussions, activities to apply to what is being learned, and intergenerational sessions. The eight one-hour explorations start with examining home and redefining what it means in light of Scripture's repeated invitations to dwell with God as individuals, community members, and persons of faith. From the comfort of our own homes to reaching outward and welcoming others, everything is rooted in a co-creator mindset, living out God's kin-dom here and now.

I attended the July 21-23 option at Wesley Woods Outdoors Ministry, a rustic setting located on Lake Geneva in Wisconsin. Many people also attended Mission u at Stronghold Castle in Oregon, Il. which was a beautiful setting. Twenty-five people came to Wesley Woods including one man, a retired pastor who travels with his wife, and four teens who by the grace of God and the good work of Robbie Moultrie, Committee on Nominations Chair, received scholarships enabling them to attend. Their home church of Resurrection UMC and district support were a blessing. For me, I had taught two of the teens when they were much younger at Lay Servant Academies. Reconnecting through Mission u was an outward sign of their maturing in faith and they added so much wisdom and fun to the gathering!

Women and friends of United Women in Faith NIC, *'Welcome In'* Winter 2025 Mission u into your spiritual practices for the year ahead. Experience the sisterhood, fellowship, rich and meaningful learning online from your home. Set up a group at your church if that is best for you. Find the registration information in this newsletter. Check the website. Ask your president. Call me! 847.224.2870. I very much look forward to sharing this time with you.

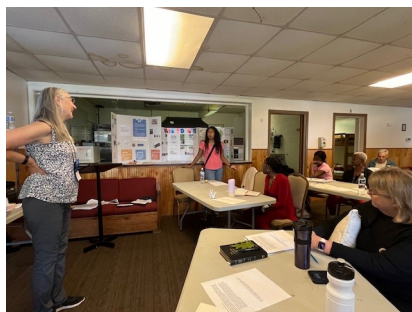
Thank you for your faith. Blessings of peace, joy, and hope this Advent and Christmas Season.



Morning Worship with Beverly



Women at Worship



Rev. Mary Class with Vivian



Mission u Worship Creativity

Reading Program

By Karen Messley

The 2025 Reading Program Catalog is now available to download [HERE](#) —English, Korean, and Spanish included in one!

United Women in Faith's Reading Program is designed to help women of faith to achieve five key goals: lean into our spiritual growth, strengthen our leadership skills, equip ourselves for local and global mission, take faithful action for the common good, and build community in ways large and small. The books are current and cover a wide variety of topics. Participating in one of the Reading Program plans at any of the four levels, or even reading just one or two books in this catalog, can help you grow. And anyone, anywhere, can participate—whether you are a member of United Women in Faith already or just getting to know us.

2025
Reading Program
Programa De Lectura
독서 프로그램



This year's Bonus Books, along with the other offerings in our 2025 Reading Program, are a powerful launching point for both personal reflection and meaningful conversation.

View a virtual page [HERE](#) where you can browse and purchase most of the 2025 Reading Program books while earning 10% back to United Women in Faith to support our work.

Look for the catalog titles in the November/December issue of [response](#).

Eligible years: For 2025, books from the 2020, 2021-2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 Reading Program lists are all eligible for Reading Program reporting credit, if you have not previously read them.

District News

Prairie Central, North, and South Districts

The Prairie Central, North, and South Districts will be having a joint winter event on Saturday, February 22 at 9:00 am via Zoom. "Helping You ~ Helping Others" will be the topic for the morning. We will have a speaker from Northcott Neighborhood House, a national institution in Milwaukee, explain how United Women in Faith help their programming. And, we will have a staff person from the National office taking us through the United Women in Faith website. Watch for further information!

World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women

By Rita L. Smith



From October 30 to November 2, 2024, the World Federation of Methodist and United Church Women (WFMUCW) gathered for its prestigious quintennial seminar in Atlanta, Georgia. This year's theme was "Go and Bear Fruit, Fruit That Will Last: Stewards of Humanity and the Environment." The gathering brought together members worldwide to explore the intersection of faith, sustainability, and social justice.

All officers of the WFMUCW were present, participating in inspiring sessions, meaningful discussions, and community-building activities. A highlight of the seminar was the participation in Thursdays in Black: A World Without Rape & Violence, a global movement calling for an end to gender-based violence. Participants stood in solidarity, wearing black, to support this important cause and raise awareness about violence against women and girls.

Among the distinguished attendees were the World and North American officers:

Sipiwe Chisvo (Zimbabwe)	President	Lois Hector Grant (Caribbean)
Ivonne Pereira Diaz (Chile)	Vice-President	Jeanette L. Bouknight (US)
Louise Wilson (Ireland)	Secretary	Rosetta Dunham (US)
Ngui Ting (Hong Kong)	Treasurer	Rita L. Smith (US)

United Women in Faith Jana Jones (President), Heidi Careaga (Vice-President/Deaconess), Dr. Melba McCallum (Director/Deaconess), Emily Jones, and Sung-ok Lee led worship, presented a workshop, and led a morning manna.

On Saturday, we had the privilege of visiting the Martin Luther King Center, where one of our retired Elders, the Rev. Dr. Albert Sampson, is honored on the Legacy Walk of Fame. Seeing his name displayed there was truly an honor, recognizing his lifelong dedication to service and justice. The seminar we attended was enlightening, offering valuable insights, and meaningful discussions with our global Methodist sisters. Reflecting on the 2019 seminar held in Northbrook, IL, we hope that even more of us will have the opportunity to participate in the next one in 2029, continuing the tradition of fellowship and shared learning.



Left: The World President Sipiwe Chisvo with United Women in Faith members, including myself, the North America Area Treasurer.

Left to right: Sung-Ok Lee, Jana Jones, Sipowe Chisvo, Meba McCallum, Heidi Careaga, Emily Jones, and Rita L. Smith



Cunningham Children's Home

If you would like to support Cunningham Children's Home you can:

Purchase Gifts for Cunningham youth from our Amazon or General Wish List:

- Shop directly from their Christmas Amazon wish list [HERE](#).
- You can help fulfill many Christmas wishes by shopping from our general [Christmas wish list](#).
- Reach out to [Brooke](#) to arrange a pick-up or meet-up in the Northern Conference or ship directly from Amazon to Cunningham Children's Home, c/o Brooke Buzard Watson, 1301 N. Cunningham Ave., Urbana, IL 61802



Honoring 130 Years of Building Better Lives for Kids Blessed by Love In Action, UW Faith Strong

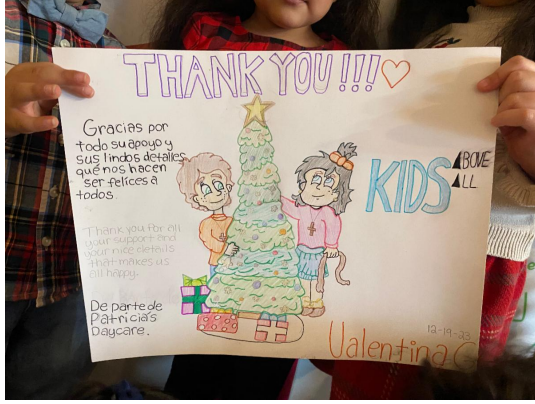
United Women in Faith have been pillars of support for our kids for many generations. Thank you! Since 1894 when Lucy Rider Meyer and her husband, Josiah Meyer, founded the Methodist Deaconess Orphanage in Lake Bluff, IL. Kids Above All (our 6th name across 130 years) has believed in the founding principles that Deaconesses upheld then and still do today. Our agency is rooted in its Methodist roots for alleviating suffering, eradicating injustices where they exist, and facilitating the development of full human potential. With these in mind, our programs and staff are committed to helping children in the NIC and across the Chicagoland area receive the resources and guidance they need to build better lives.

One program that is growing is our Family Child Care Homes Program (FCCH) which connects income-eligible families with our network of DCFS-licensed, in-home childcare providers. Currently, 50 providers are caring for 300 children in Lake County. This program's outreach is threefold: 1) children learn, grow, and play in a safe, nurturing, and fun environment; 2) parents work or attend school to improve their family's financial stability; and 3) providers earn a steady income and receive ongoing training.

With the continued support and love from mission partners like UW Faith, local churches, and other multi-faith communities, we are keeping kids safe and helping families succeed. Lois Spillar, UW Faith at Trinity UMC in Mount Prospect, set up the Holiday Gift Drive table on November 10 to sponsor 38 kids. I shared a mission message along with Lucy Rider Meyer who enjoys getting out once in a while.

Thank you for all the ways you love our kids. Merry Christmas and a More Just New Year because of our ♥ In Action.

Deaconess Catherine
cinserra@kidsaboveall.org



Thank you card from one of the children



UW Faith at Trinity UMC, Mount Prospect

**Pictures by Catherine Inserra

KIDS 2024 HOLIDAY ABOVE ALL GIFT DRIVE DECEMBER 2 - DECEMBER 18

CONTACT: CINSERRA@KIDSABOVEALL.ORG OR (847) 224-2870

Sponsor a Child

Purchase a gift for a child in our programs and help make their holiday wish come true. Contact Catherine at cinserra@kidsaboveall.org or (847) 224-2870 to receive more info and to set up a donation time.

Donate Toys via Amazon Registry

The drive needs new, unwrapped toys, games, or books for children and youth ages 0-24. Our 2024 Holiday Gift Drive Amazon Registry will be available before the drive begins to help guide the gift selection process for our children and youth.

Volunteer in our Toy Room

Our 2024 Toy Room will be at Kids Above All's Better Life Distribution Center, located at 1801 E. Oakton St. Des Plaines, IL 60018.

Contact Catherine at cinserra@kidsaboveall.org or (847) 224-2870 to reserve your time to volunteer.



RECYCLE BEYOND THE BAG

Recycle your household bags & wrap into Trex's Earth-friendly composite decking and railing!



FROM THE STORE



- ✓ Produce bags
- ✓ Store bags
- ✓ Ice bags



FROM YOUR PANTRY



- ✓ Ziploc® & other reclosable bags
- ✓ Cereal box liners
- ✓ Case overwrap
- ✓ Bread bags



FROM YOUR FRONT DOOR



- ✓ Newspaper sleeves
- ✓ Dry cleaning bags
- ✓ Bubble wrap
- ✓ Plastic e-commerce mailers

Plastics must be clean, dry and free of food and organic residue



NexTrex
NexTrex.com 540-542-6930



Pliable Plastic Donations Continue in 2024

Kids Above All is still collecting Pliable Plastic for another bench for their new Distribution Center. Please donate clean plastic you can stretch or push your finger through: newspaper wrap, grocery bags, wrapping for paper goods, bubble wrap, etc. Please remove paper receipts and cut off paper shipping labels/urls. Donations may be brought to Catherine Inserra at anytime.

National

Following the re-election of Donald Trump as the nation's 47th President, United Women in Faith issued the following statement:

NEW YORK—As United Women in Faith, we want to remind our friends and family that our work doesn't begin or end with one election. We have been and will continue to be committed to racial justice, climate justice, gender justice, environmental protections, women's health, immigrants' rights, and human rights. Through our faith, we will channel the determination of our foremothers and re-commit ourselves to the perpetual push for justice.

It is true that the electoral results affect us differently depending on our racial identity, religion, citizenship status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socio-economic status. Nevertheless, we stand in solidarity with the marginalized communities most impacted.

We invite our members and the general public to join us in our . Through each election cycle the call of our faith endures. We will, therefore, anchor ourselves in the call to remember what the Lord requires of us: “to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with the Lord your God.”

This U.S. presidential election saw the first Black and South Asian woman as a major party’s nominee. It is indisputable that some hoped for a different outcome. And yet, we must never relent in the struggle to secure policies that advance justice and equity. We must remain engaged in political processes and committed to encouraging support for policies that see, value, and protect women, children, and youth. Let us commit to truly taking care of one another. Let us commit to be in prayer, with bowed heads and through our actions, that those in power prioritize the greater good over selfish gain. United Women in Faith will stand with its members, offering strategies for how women of faith can continue to advocate to achieve our shared goals and build a safe and whole world in which all can know God’s freedom and love.



Brand / Logo Guidelines

Just a reminder to keep United Women in Faith first in writing our names:



United Women in Faith Northern Illinois Conference or
United Women in Faith NIC or
United Women in Faith Lake South District or
United Women in Faith Annual Celebration

UWFAith may be used in publication after United Women in Faith has been written.



United
Women
in Faith

NEVER use UWF in public writing. Save it for your personal notes.

Connect with United Women in Faith
NIConference:



Connect with United Women in Faith
Globally:



Submission deadline: 15th of the month

Send to: [Shelly Davenport](#), Communications Coordinator

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