



United
Women
in Faith

INSIGHT

Northern Illinois Conference



January 2026

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 2026

11 --- Winter Mission u opening ceremony
12 --- LS District Leadership Team
16 --- LN District Leadership Team
20 --- PC, PN, PS Districts Joint Planning meeting
25 --- Winter Mission u closing ceremony
26 --- PS District Leadership Team
27 --- PC District Leadership Team

February 2026

06 --- LN District Leadership Team
13 --- PC, PN, PS Districts Joint Planning meeting
21 --- PC, PN, PS - *Prayer on the Prairie*
24 --- PC District Leadership Team
28 --- LS District Meeting

For More Detailed Information and Future Events:

[View the Google Calendar](#)

Meet Your Leadership Team for 2026



Audrey Sherman, Selena Roberts, Lillye Hart, Jennifer Weddle, June Neumann, Marlene Stratton, Catherine Inserra, Barb Farley, Shelly Davenport, Vera Carr, Peggy Hansen, Becky John

Guests in the picture are Irma Clark and Sally Vonner

President, Barb Farley (PC), 1st year, 2nd term

Vice President, Peggy Hansen (PC), 2nd year, 2nd term

Secretary, Becky John (PC), 1st year, 1st term

Treasurer, Lillye Hart (LS), 1st year, 1st term

Communications Coordinator, Shelly Davenport (LS), 2nd year, 2nd term

Spiritual Growth Coordinator, Deaconess Catherine Inserra, 2nd year, 1st term

Membership Coordinator, Audrey Sherman (LS), 1st year, 1st term

Mission Resources Coordinator, Marlene Stratton (PC), 1st year, 1st term

Social Action Coordinator, Kathy Tiffin (LN), 1st year, 2nd term

Chairperson of Nominations, June Neumann (LN), Class of 2026

Committee on Nominations

Class of 2026 Vera Carr (LS)

Class of 2027 Phyllis Pepiot (PC)

Class of 2027 A. Selena Roberts (LS)

Class of 2029 Jennifer Weddle (PC)

Photo by Marc Dean

President's Report

By Barb Farley

Happy New Year to all United Women in Faith members in the Northern Illinois Conference!

I have been reflecting upon our 2025 year and am encouraged to see so many areas of growth. I also recognize the need for more outreach, distribution of information, and opportunities for making our UWFaith voices heard. We must embrace the many opportunities we have as United Women in Faith to put our love into action! I encourage each unit to check the UWFaith Conference calendar and also each individual district's calendar to avoid overbooking. Take advantage of learning and action opportunities offered at all levels. (National, Conference, District, local)



I am very happy to say that UWFaith NIC exceeded our pledge to mission by \$64,664 (39%) this year.! Have you personally explored any of the 84 National Mission Institutions supported by our gifts? Has your unit studied the history and work of any of these? The Call to Prayer and Self-Denial theme for 2026 is "The Future is Now: Invest in Our Children." In a time when

many government-funded programs supporting our children have been reduced or eliminated, our National Mission Institutions (NMIs) have and will continue to be important in the lives of many children and families. Let's learn about this important work and educate anyone who will listen!

Another fantastic opportunity to engage, learn, and be effective is to attend UWFaith Assembly in Indianapolis, May 15-17, with Soul Care on the 14th. This powerful event, perfectly named "Unstoppable" and only offered every four years, is an amazing combination of worship, learning, and spiritual renewal. Some 5,000 women will gather as a multigenerational, multicultural movement, inspired by the Holy Spirit to dream boldly and unite to bring God's justice, hope, and healing into each community they serve and into the entire world. The theme, "Dream it! Believe it! Do it!", is an invitation to live into God's calling for our lives. There are scholarships available at the district and conference levels. It is not too late to register. You will find all you need to register in this "Insight".

With one foot in front of the other, together, we step forward into our calling as unstoppable, powerful women empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Assembly 2026

By Linda Osikowicz



Let 2026 be the year you attend United Women in Faith Assembly!

Join thousands women in Indianapolis May 15-17. The weekend will uplift your soul and strengthen your faith. There are workshops to inspire, to share how women are making an impact and to gain tools to create meaningful change in your life and community. Speakers who will spark your passion and energize your purpose include Stacey Abrams and her mother, Rev. Carolyn Abrams, and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, director of Poor People's Campaign. Worship provides a time to experience deep reflection, renewal, and connection in faith. You can learn more and register at <https://assembly.uwfaith.org/website/82390/>.

Here are four pieces of information you will be asked upon registration. Assuming you are attending a church in Northern Illinois Conference, you will answer:

1. Jurisdiction: North Central Jurisdiction
2. Conference: Northern Illinois Conference
3. District: one of these districts: Lake North, Lake South, Prairie Central, Prairie North, or Prairie South
4. Unit: most likely the name of your church, such as McHenry: First UWFaith

You may make a room reservation from the Assembly website as well, <https://assembly.uwfaith.org/website/82390/hotel-information/> You'll see the list of hotels that have room blocks for Assembly. Scroll down a bit and click on "Reserve Housing." That will take you to a page that asks you to select attendee type. If you put in "Northern Illinois Conference" it will just show the JW Marriott, which is where NIC has a block of rooms. But, if you choose "attendee" (the fourth choice in the alphabetical list), and click "make reservation" it will take you to a page where you select your check-in and check-out dates, room, and

number of guests. Then click "Search" on the far right and all the hotels will be shown and you can see their prices and check their availability.

Also, some have asked about rooming with another person. If you are interested in having a roommate--it helps to share expenses--please let me know. If you have a room reservation, I will contact you with a list of those looking for a roommate and you can decide if you want to reach out to them. If you are looking to room with someone, please let me know that, too, and I will add you to the list of those looking for a roommate.

Celebrate Cultures and Gifts—Invitation to Perform

We invite any member or attendee choir, dance group, or other performing arts presentation to share cultural or other performances on the large stage as women gather for our Community Gatherings. Time slots are open during Friday afternoon, Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon Community Gatherings. Please remember the below guidelines for this participation:

1. There is no time for rehearsal. You will enter the stage and perform at the assigned time and day.
2. Any pre-recorded music needed to accompany live dance or other live performances must be copyright cleared and e-mailed to us by April 15.
3. Presentations can last no more than 4 minutes.
4. We CANNOT cover any expenses for these performances. All performers must already be registered and attending Assembly 2026 at their own expense.

Please submit requests to perform [HERE](#) by March 1, 2026.

Assembly Scholarships

Each district will be offering scholarship/s. Please take advantage of this opportunity. For information about your district's scholarship contact:

Lake North: [Fay Bennet](#) or [Beth Carroll](#)

Lake South: see form below

Prairie Central: see form below

Prairie North: see form below

Prairie South: see form below

Still have more questions? Contact the NIC Assembly Liaison:

[Linda Osikowicz](#)

630-569-2763 (please leave a message)

Lake South District Scholarship Form [HERE](#).

Prairie Central District Scholarship Form [HERE](#).

Prairie North District Scholarship Information [HERE](#).

Prairie South District Scholarship Information [HERE](#).

Secretary's Report

By Outgoing Secretary, Lois Voss

Happy January 2026! May you continue to lead our sisters with grace.

I am working on our United Women in Faith Northern Illinois Conference 2026 Yearbook and Directory. This is a book of many resources to help you in your role of leadership. Both paper and digital versions will be available.

Please mark your new 2026 calendars with our UWFaith NIC team Zoom meetings so you can avoid conflicts: Saturday at 9 am on Zoom - January 3, March 7, May 2, August 29 - our one evening meeting is November 5 at 7 pm. NIC Annual Celebration is Saturday, October 24, in person.

Remember to follow our "Brand" guidelines and keep United Women in Faith first in writing our name at all levels. We are United Women in Faith Northern Illinois Conference, or United Women in Faith NIC, or UWFaith NIC.

An example of a district name is United Women in Faith Prairie North District, or United Women in Faith PN District, or UWFaith PN.

UWFaith may be used in publication after United Women in Faith has been written. Never use UWF in public writing. Save it for your personal notes for yourself.

Please remember to send any changes in contact information or events to your secretary, [Becky John](#); president, [Barb Farley](#); and communication coordinator, [Shelly Davenport](#).

I have enjoyed working as your conference secretary. Four years flew by!

Social Action

By Kathy Tiffin



The General Board of Church and Society is dedicated to the work of living faith, seeking justice, and pursuing peace.

See current Action Alerts [HERE](#)

View the latest Faith in Action stories [HERE](#)

Winter Mission u

Deadline extended to January 7, 2026

Deadline extended to January 7, 2026
INVITED YOUR FRIENDS!

Paper Registration form [HERE](#).
Online registration [HERE](#).

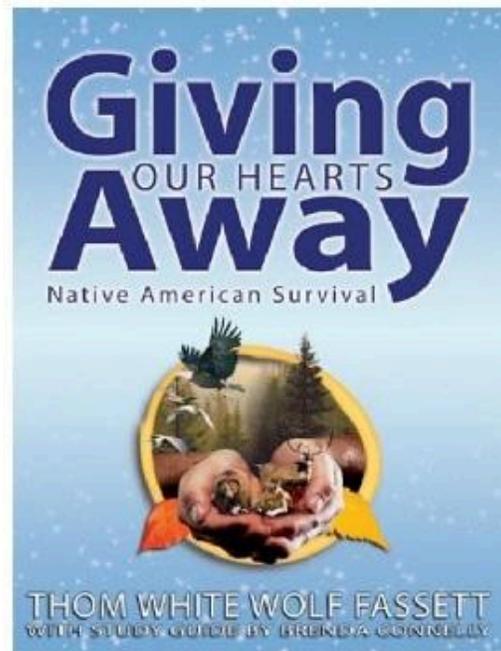
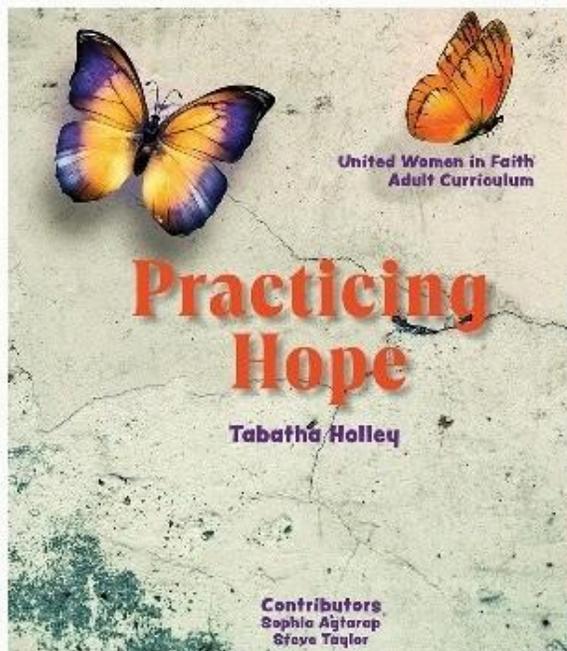
January 11-25, 2026

classes meet two times a week, for two weeks -- 2-hour sessions

Please invite others to share in this great experience!

We are very excited to invite you to participate in our upcoming virtual winter Mission u. It begins on January 11, 2026 so it's time to locate your 2026 calendar and mark the month of January as a very special time for United Women in Faith Northern Illinois Conference and beyond. If you won't be in the Central Time Zone in January, be sure to note that all times are Central Time.

Sunday Jan 11	3:00-4:00 CST	Opening Worship
Mondays & Wednesdays Jan 12, 14, 19, 21	2:00-4:00 CST	<i>Giving Our Hearts Away</i>
Mondays & Wednesdays Jan 12, 14, 19, 21	6:00-8:00 CST	<i>Practicing Hope</i>
Tuesdays & Thursdays Jan 13, 15, 20, 22	2:00-4:00 CST	<i>Practicing Hope</i>
Tuesdays & Thursdays Jan 13, 15, 20, 22	6:00-8:00 CST	<i>Practicing Hope</i>
Sunday Jan 25	3:00-4:00 CST	Closing Worship



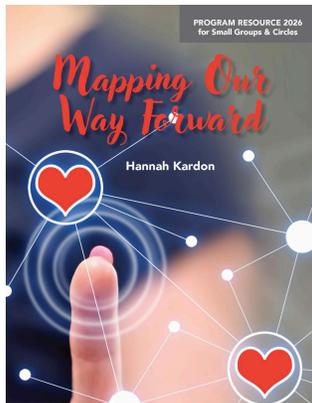
The Practicing Hope study classes are offered on Monday and Wednesday from 6:00 to 8:00 PM (CST) or on Tuesday and Thursday, you must choose one of the following time slots: 2:00 to 4:00 PM (CST) or 6:00 to 8:00 PM (CST) for your class. This study focuses on Jesus' resurrection appearances and the example of early Christian communities to explore what it means to practice hope in God even when things seem to be falling apart.

We are also offering the 2008-09 Mission Study again, [Giving Our Hearts Away](#), on Monday and Wednesday from 2:00 to 4:00 PM (CST). The purposes of this study is to learn about the inter-relatedness between the indigenous peoples and their land, to identify key issues affecting the Native Americans in the United States and to examine the root causes of these issues, to understand and appreciate the “Give Away” culture of the Native Americans in the areas of spirituality, ecology, language, story-telling, food, and to lead the participants to act as responsible US citizens and Christians in accompaniment and solidarity with Native Americans.

Your cost is in two parts, the registration fee of \$10 helps cover tech and other behind-the-scenes support. The Class fee of \$15 per study helps cover the cost of study leader training and class expenses. If this is your first time attending Mission u (or the previous events known as School of Christian Mission), we will waive one class fee. You may choose to take one or both studies.

If you have registration questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Paulette Myrie-Hodge, Registrar, at nilmissionu@uwfaith.org or nilumw.registrar@gmail.com

Program Resources



Get ready for the new year and order your copy of the [2026 Program Resource: Mapping Our Way Forward](#). It is about finding our way and holding on to the balance of grounding and flowing in the midst of the uncertainties that surround us. We can map our way forward into the unknown by holding on to God and our core values, letting them keep us grounded as we face each challenge.

Reading Program

We are delighted to announce the release of the [2026 Reading Program](#)! It is available on the [Reading Program webpage](#).

The Reading Program is a beloved tradition with a powerful future. Through the Reading Program, members and friends of United Women in Faith read and grow together, engaging contemporary books on spiritual growth, social action, leadership development, nurturing for community, and education for mission. We are for readers (and listeners) of all ages, with titles available for adults, youth, and children. We have programs available in English, Korean, and Spanish.

[Click Here to View and Download](#)

Happening In the Districts

Lake North District



Our local unit had a wonderful turnout for our holiday/annual meeting, with more than 18 women gathering to pack over 40 emergency kits for UMCOR. We celebrated the season with fellowship and purpose, coming together to support a meaningful mission. Afterward, we enjoyed a warm and festive lunch featuring soups, appetizers, and desserts.

Photo submitted by Beth Carroll

Prairie Central, Prairie North, and Prairie South
Prayer on the Prairie



United
Women
in Faith

United Women in Faith
Prairie Central
Prairie North &
Prairie South Districts

Invite you to a joint, virtual event

Prayer on the Prairie

Saturday, February 21, 2026, 9:00-11:00 am



Our morning will include:

Styles of Prayer to carry you into Lent. Build your Resources List.
Bring your ideas to share.

Learn about Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House,
a National Mission Institution in East St. Louis.

Please register via a Google form-- <https://forms.gle/FjJNwrqRasNRzCV68>
or by emailing Linda Osikowicz, Lmosikowicz@comcast.net

There is no fee for the event but offerings may be sent to your district treasurer. You may direct your offering to Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House or to your district's Pledge to Mission. Contact information for your treasurer will be sent with the Zoom link.

Community



Cunningham
Children's Home
hope begins here.

Peace Grows

By Ginger Mills



One recent afternoon during chapel in the Spiritual Life Center, Chaplain Kate told our kids the truth.

"I told them I was struggling with hope and peace today," she said, "and they responded compassionately."

After chapel, one young man, *Mack, asked to stay behind and talk about music with Chaplain Kate. He played the drums and shared his favorite songs with her. On the way back to his residential unit, they were singing and laughing together, and right before they walked back into the Residential Treatment Center, he said he was grateful to be somewhere that reminds him that even when he feels hopeless, he can still look to God for his peace and not his circumstances, and that there are people at Cunningham who give him attention and hope.

Mack's Christmas miracle was attention and hope from loving and safe adults who care about his past, present and future.

"I held back tears while I silently thanked God for each of our amazing direct care staff who give our youth attention and hope," Chaplain Kate said, "and I thank God for this young man's vulnerability."

God used one of our kids to bring peace back into Chaplain Kate. God gave HER hope through the trust and openness of a young man in our residential treatment program. When we remind one another that there is hope, hope grows. Hope begins here when we share it with each other, and as a result, our peace grows too.

Thank you for your continued love and support and for being a beacon of hope for the youth and families at Cunningham Children's Home.

**name changed to protect privacy*

THANK YOU, NIC UMC AND UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH, FOR ALL THE WAYS YOU CONTINUE TO STEP UP FOR OUR KIDS YEAR AFTER YEAR.



Happy and healthy 2026
from Kids Above All!



Check out what other conferences are doing.

Read the Desert Southwest Conference newsletter [HERE](#).
Read the Wisconsin Conference newsletter [HERE](#).

National

LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT
DAYS

Leadership Development Days is taking a pause this year. However, this is not a step back. It is a step forward!

We are making room for something new that will better support the faithful, wise, and unstoppable leadership of our members!

In the meantime, you can continue to grow and lead with the United Women in Faith [Leadership Toolkit](#) found on UWFaith Digital at <https://bit.ly/UWFLead>. It's easy to access from your computer, tablet, or phone, anytime and anywhere. Here you'll find helpful

resources, practical guidance, inspiration, and recordings of past LeadershipDevelopment Days to fuel your unstoppable leadership journey.

Tips for Writing and Speaking Our Name - United Women in Faith

This is the order for writing our name to avoid confusing it with a district name:

- First write our organization name, second write the location (from largest to smallest, if more than one), then the event & year or person.
- Example: United Women in Faith Northern Illinois Conference Prairie Central president Lois Lane
- Example: UWFaith NIC leadership team 2025 UWFaith PC secretary Betty White
- Example: United Women in Faith NIC Spiritual Growth Retreat 2025 at Park Ridge: First

Note that there is no “of” or extra “in”. Note that there is no three-letter abbreviation; please use UWFaith.

The district abbreviation is only two letters: LN, LS, PC, PN, or PS.

Our National office recommends using our full name first in written documents. Then later in the text, you could use UWFaith.

Happy writing! UWFaith NIC secretary, Lois Voss

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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United Women in Faith [website](#)

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