

SKY LIGHTS

News for the Mountain Sky United Women in Faith

Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe that we have been the Mountain Sky Conference of United Methodist Women/United Women in Faith for almost four years. I have been honored to be your inaugural Conference President for this new undertaking. When we became the Mountain Sky Conference, I think we were all a bit tentative and worried about how this new merger would work out. Of course, we had no clue about all of the unforeseen challenges that would take place over these four years. And I, for one, am glad that I could not see into the future. Honestly, if you had told me that we would have to completely change how we do things, and turn things completely upside down, I might have had second or third thoughts about saying yes. In spite of all the interesting circumstances, we have come out stronger as a conference. We have been innovative and faithful. We have tried new things, while still holding on to important traditions. We have increased our giving in order to continue the mission which unites us. God has given us a great gift by not allowing us to know what the future holds. These four years have taught me to live into my faith more deeply, to turn things over to God, and to trust that there is always a way through even the most troubling times. I thank you for your support, prayers, and flexibility. You have offered



grace and a willingness to do things differently, and our Conference is stronger because of you!

Our Annual Gathering will be in Billings, MT on October 13 & 14. We will be having a panel discussion on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. I confess this is not a topic that I knew much about, but I have seen documentaries and read articles about this horrifying issue that affects native women across the country. Even though this is a difficult subject to talk about, it is important that we learn as much as we can so that we can support our native sisters to help justice prevail. I pray that you will attend this gathering, either in person or virtually so that you can become educated on this important topic. Registration information is in this newsletter.

Finally, I pray that each of you find strength and peace knowing that the God who knows our future is always there for each of us and will uphold us and bring us safely through to other side.

Blessings,

Linda Cockett

Thank You



United Women in Faith

faith

action

sisterhood

Sky Light Sky Bright

Event Dates

- Annual Meeting
October 13 & 14,
Billings, Montana
- Voices from the Field
September 7 & 21 -
2:00 pm
- Mission u February 4,
11, 18, on 25

Highlights Inside

- Spiritual Growth Pg. 3
- Treasurer's Report - Pg. 7
- Reading Program - Pg 8
- Annual Mtg Invite - Pg 9
- Mission u - Page 11
- Social Justice & Action
Page 12
- Standing Rules - Page 13
- Wyo +1 Invite - Page 15
- Trinity Dist Invite - Pg 17
- Mile High Metro
Report - Page 14
- Candidate Bios - Pg 18-22
- Annual Gathering
Registration Page 23
- Western Jurisdiction
Invite Page 16

This issue can be printed in whole or just print the pages you want to share. Use for bulletin boards, inserts, reminders. Any comments or questions please email

Claudia Davis at
mountainskyumw@gmail.com



**United
Women
in Faith**

Report from**Jana Jones, Director**

I just got a text from a young man living in Sierra Leone, whom my husband and I have been supporting for the last several years to complete his education. What I have learned is that supporting him is not just about school fees. As with raising your own children, it is also about the phone or laptop that dies, medical expenses, on and on. I rejoice that we are able to help him. He just got married last May, (naturally with our contribution.) The text I just received let me know that his young wife was just hospitalized with appendicitis. She needs to have emergency surgery and \$150 will pay for surgery and medicines. Of course, I immediately sent the money. \$150 may be the difference of life and death for this young woman. One hundred and fifty dollars. I pray that the surgery happens immediately and for the skill of the surgeons and care-givers.

This reminds me of what a difference we all make with our Gifts to Mission in United Women in Faith. Those women, children and youth living in the United States and globally benefit from the money we raise via our pledges, our bake sales, our craft fairs, teas, #Move4Mission, and your many fund raisers. These funds are not spent on frivolous items. They are spent on live-saving support and advocacy for vulnerable communities. These programs are vital to these communities. My giving support, added to yours and all the others is significant. We make a difference. What we are doing now is significant. Yet, how much more could we do if we stepped out in faith and made a bigger effort to increase our unit pledges? Please consider what MORE we can do as sisters in faith in this organization.

Updates

As you may have heard, we have a new General Secretary and CEO, Sally Vonner. There was a beautiful installation service on 7/29 in Texas, and about 1500 of us were able to join the livestream. If you would like to honor Sally with a Gift to Mission, [Give | United Women in Faith \(uwfaith.org\)](#)

If you are not already aware, the membership portal is at long-last open! I encourage everyone to please go to the website [United Women in Faith | Love in Action \(uwfaith.org\)](#) to create your personal login account to gain access to more information than is available on the landing page, including (my favorite,) a quick link to the Reading Program page.



The 2024 Reading Program catalog is in the final stages of production and will be coming out at the end of this month or early September. The list is a long one with almost 100 books available for your reading edification and some new ways to get credits. Mark your calendar for an author talk on November 14th from a book on this list. Watch for announcements! Have you read a book that you want to recommend for a future RP list? [Reading Program | United Women in Faith \(uwfaith.org\)](#) has a link at the bottom of the left side where you can suggest a book to be evaluated.

Continue to keep our sisters in churches that are disaffiliating in your prayers and "in the loop". They have loved this organization and can continue to be a part of it. For information see "[What Is Happening in The United Methodist Church?](#)" from UWFaith.org and [Extended frequently asked questions](#) on United Women in Faith and disaffiliation.

Bless you for all you do. And bless you for what you will do in the future. We can do more – together.

Jana Jones,
Director United Women in Faith
Representing the Mountain Sky Conference UWFaith

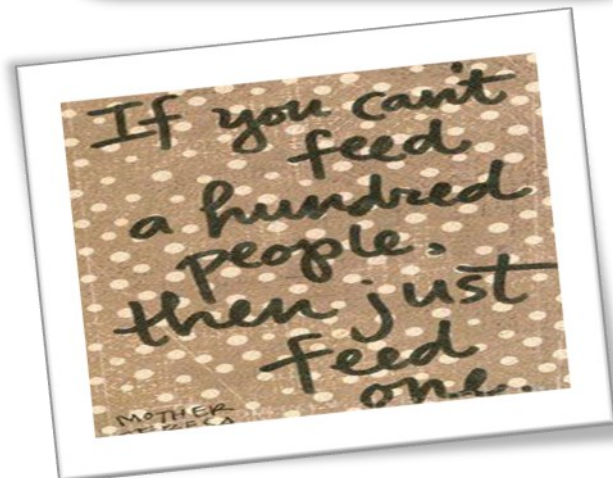
SPIRITUAL GROWTH Through Thought and Action:

What piece will you play in the world today?

They say a picture is worth a thousand words and today I choose to share with you a few pictures that express transformational love in our world.



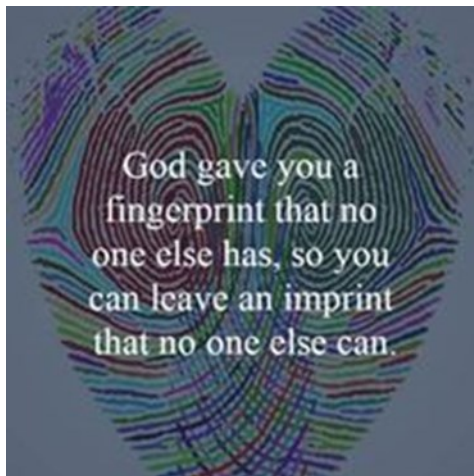
Micah 6:8 What does God require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God.



Continued on Next Page



As you walk through this life, may you create more laughter than tears, generate more happiness than gloom, spread more cheer than despair, and in your final moment may you hear God whisper: "When you made My people smile, you made ME smile!"



*Cathy Speich-Ferguson,
Mtn Sky UW Faith
Spiritual Growth Coordinator*

REQUEST FOR MEMORIAL NAMES:

During our Annual Gathering this October, we will hold a memorial service to remember members who have passed away since our last gathering in 2022. Please submit the names of these ladies to Cathy Speich-Ferguson at cathysf@bresnan.net. Perhaps, you have some information and/or a photo of your deceased member(s) you could share for use at the memorial service.

**Guest Speaker on the Mental Health Crisis
and Suicide Prevention**

On August 4 the Pagosa Springs, CO unit hosted author and mental health advocate Cindy Tank-Murphy. Cindy offered a unique perspective on the much-needed conversation around overcoming the grief from suicide and the mental health epidemic. Cindy believes we can eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness through awareness and open dialogue that will ultimately save lives. Cindy read several excerpts from her book "Strength to Live". Cindy was kind enough to allow us to record her one-hour presentation and to post it on our Conference United Women in Faith [YouTube](#) channel. Check it out!



United
Women
in Faith

Find United Women in Faith Online

United Women in Faith Website: **uwfaith.org**

This 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.

Downloads: umwmissionresources.org

Find new brand elements, member materials, programs, and catalogs here.

Online Community: **uwfaith.mn.co**

Connect with United Women in Faith members on Mighty Networks, a safe and secure online space to deepen our community and engage digital resources for local programming and transformative education. The platform features the digital Program Resource, Prayer Guide, Mission u curricula, online groups around specific interests, and more.

Facebook: **facebook.com/uwomenfaith**

If you're on Facebook, be sure to "like" United Women in Faith. Follow the link and sign up so that our regular posts will appear on your home page.

Twitter: **twitter.com/uwomenfaith**

Do you tweet? So does United Women in Faith! Use the link to find our Twitter 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.

Treasurer Tidbits

How do you promote Mission Giving?

Have you honored a friend's birthday with a Gift to Mission card? Or let a family know you cared for their family member with a Gift in Memory Card? Do you know the suggested donation is \$5 but there is no limit to the donation?

A Special Mission Recognition pin would give recognition to someone in your church or community doing mission work. There are multiple levels of pins, and any donation is appreciated. I hear there will be a new design for the pins in the coming year.



Do you share with your congregation, family, friends, community what United Women in Faith are doing? What about our National Mission Institutions? Our Regional Missionaries?

Do you share what you have learned about social justice issues? The books from the Reading? Podcasts? Webinars?

Have you encouraged others to join you? You might be very surprised to see who will be interested in this great organization.

The Mountain Sky Conference has given about half of our pledge at this point, which is pretty normal. We all need to give and encourage generous giving for mission with women, children and youth.

We welcome the newest District Treasurer – Claudia Davis in Western Mountains District. Sandy Balliet needed to relocate to care for family. Claudia generously agreed to step up to the plate. Thank you, Claudia!

Thank you to all of you for your support of United Women in Faith

Robin Ball

Conference Treasurer

Did you know you can Give to
Mountain Sky Conference United Women in Faith online
Left menu bar on the homepage

<https://www.mtnskyumw.org/donate-pay-it-forward/>

When you shop on Amazon,
Support United Women in Faith of Mountain Sky Conference

amazon.com

(Choose United Methodist Women of Rocky Mountain Conference on Amazon)

When you shop at smile.amazon.com Amazon donates .5% of your purchase
Use this address to set up your account with Smile <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/90-0646827>
Once you set up with smile.amazon, it will link to your account

**The 2024 Budget will be voted on at the
October Annual Meeting.
Please Click Here to view
and/or print the proposed 2024 budget.**

2024
Reading Program
Programa De Lectura
독서 프로그램



The 2024 Reading Program is now available! Check it out at

[Reading Program | United Women in Faith \(uwfaith.org\)](https://uwfaith.org/reading-program)

This year's program includes:

- An expanded selection of books offering more choice for readers.
- A larger number of youth and children's book selections, including several intentionally paired sets to facilitate intergenerational programming.
- A new virtual page at bookshop.org/shop/uwfaith where you can browse and purchase most of the 2024 Reading Program books while earning 10% back for the organization.

Stirring the Pot in Billings and via Zoom, Oct. 13-14, 2023

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works."

Hebrews 10:24

I hope that you have marked your calendars for the Mountain Sky Conference's Annual Gathering, Oct. 13-14, in Billings, MT. Unable to travel to Billings? We will have Zoom capability for the meeting, so you can participate from home or church with us.

Our planning committee has developed a wonderful meeting that will include a panel discussion about Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP), documentaries about MMIP, the choice of two book discussions from our UWFaith Reading Program, and a bedtime story from our wonderful Conference president.



In addition, we will conduct our annual business meeting with a report from the Conference treasurer (and proposed budget for 2024), a slate of proposed officers from the Nominations committee (and installation), proposed changes to the Standing Rules, our memorial service for UWFaith members who passed during this past year, and a video from the national office.

You won't want to miss a wonderful time of friendship, fellowship and leadership focused on important issues that affect all of us as United Women in Faith.

Cheryl Runyon,
MSUWFaith Vice President

Wear RED to the Mountain Sky Conference Annual Gathering

Why? To bring attention to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and their relatives. We will gather to share information, take time to learn about these issues and be a part of the solution. Let us lift our voices and say No More!

Books, Movies and TV Shows about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons

If you are interested in learning more about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) before the 2023 Annual Gathering in Billings, MT, Oct. 13-14, please consider reading a book, or

watching a movie, documentary, or television show that addresses this important issue.

There are several books, both fiction and non-fiction, that may be of interest, including:

Daughter of the Morning Star, by Craig Johnson;

Highway of Tears, by Jessica McDiarmid;

Searching For Savanna, by Mona Gable.

The ABC television show, *Alaska Daily*, focuses on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in its main story line. The show is available to stream on Hulu.

Before *Yellowstone*, Taylor Sheridan wrote and directed the movie, *Wind River*, which focuses on the murder of an indigenous woman on the Wind River reservation in Wyoming. The movie is available to stream or borrow a DVD copy from your local library.

Ubuntu Day of Service Projects at the Annual Gathering

We will be offering three Ubuntu service projects on the afternoon of Friday, Oct. 13. These include volunteering at the local food bank in Billings, helping at the Free Store--sponsored by five Billings Methodist Churches and operated by Evangelical UMC--and making menstrual hygiene kits for distribution to women and girls in the Billings area. If we have additional time, we also may make general hygiene kits or peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for distribution to the unhoused folks in Billings.

If you are driving, or have a little space in your suitcase, the period packs require:

- quart size Ziploc bags,
- six sanitary napkins,
- 3 tampons and
- one wrapped wipe.



The general hygiene kits include:

- quart Ziploc bags,
- a washcloth,
- comb,
- hotel-size shampoo and hair conditioner,
- hotel-size lotion,
- lip balm,
- toothbrush,
- small toothpaste,
- floss,
- a nail file and
- two wrapped wet wipes.



Not attending the Annual Gathering in person? Could your unit hold its own Ubuntu service project on Oct. 13 and be with us in spirit? Perhaps you can collect non-perishable food items for the local food bank, sew components for Days for Girls kits, or make period kits for local charities that distribute the kits to women. Be sure to take photos of your Ubuntu service and share them with the Conference team.

If you missed the UWFaith Breakfast, you can watch the speaker, **Rev. Janet Wolf**, on our YouTube channel. The link is below:

**Mountain Sky Conference
United Women in Faith YouTube Channel:**

<https://www.youtube.com/@mountainskyconferenceunite167>



Mission u Update

102 Participate in Summer Mission u

Study leaders Denise Logan, Sandy Barton and Mary Cousins offered an inspiring examination of the Lord's Prayer during this summer's Mission u. Assistant Dean Belinda Alkula helped make it a seamless Zoom experience. Titled "Living the Kin-dom: Exploring the Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation," study leaders modeled practices to strengthen participants' daily prayer lives.

In addition, participants were led to create sacred spaces in their homes. Using different translations of the Lord's Prayer, participants were encouraged to look at the layered meanings of the prayer and how the words encourage us to live out our faith with, and among, our neighbors. Forgiveness is also key in our understanding of the Lord's Prayer. Conversations around forgiveness resulted in some very meaningful reflections on the difference between forgiving and forgetting - the point being that you don't have to forget to forgive.

Large group discussion, small group breakout sessions, and interactive activities were presented over four consecutive Tuesdays, July 11, 18, 25 and August 1, from 7:00-9:30 p.m. Certificates for 10 hours of continuing education credit were offered for the study.

This study and other previous Mission u studies are available on the Mountain Sky United Women in Faith YouTube channel. Use this link to check out the library of recordings.

Mountain Sky United Women in Faith YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@mountainskyconferenceunite167>

You can use these recordings to report on the studies, to use in other group settings like Sunday school, or in spiritual growth gatherings. There is a minute-by-minute markup for each session, giving the timeline for specific portions of the presentations so that you can easily find links to songs, presentations, etc.

As future virtual Mission u studies are offered, you can use these recordings to demonstrate how the course is presented. You can use these recordings as a recruitment tool, as you deem appropriate.

Giving Opportunity

Donations are requested at each study. Proceeds are split between the Conference United Women in Faith and the Conference Mission Team to enable their ongoing work.

Looking Ahead -- Study Leaders Wanted

We are always recruiting study leaders. If you are interested please contact me at kathrynwitte75@yahoo.com. Training is offered each April via Zoom from the national United Women in Faith office. Registration and training material costs are covered by Mission u. Part two of Living the Kin-dom is the next study with training in April of 2024.

Jesus' teachings in the Gospels proclaim the good news of the kin-dom or reign (basileia) of God. In fact, Jesus mentions the kin-dom 90 times in the Synoptic Gospels! What does the Bible tell us about God's basileia and why do we call it the kin-dom? For Jesus, the kin-dom was not simply something to talk about but something we could live and experience. The new study will focus on living and experiencing the kin-dom.

Mission u LIVE!

Yes, we are interested in collaborating to do live Mission u studies. Contact me if you have an idea or have questions. Districts, multiple districts, groups of units, or a large unit could host a live Mission u of the Living the Kin-dom study on the Lord's Prayer. We will offer this through spring 2024. We are currently evaluating having a live 2024 summer Mission u to coincide with the virtual study.

Winter Mission u -- Save the Dates -- Sundays, February 4, 11, 18, and 25, from 2:00-4:30 p.m.

The Rev. Su DeBree will return, building on "Finding Peace in an Anxious World," first presented in winter 2020. Exploring how to build and sustain peace, the study will present new material and will offer an updated interpretation for our current time.

Registration is scheduled to open mid-November. Be watching for more information on the study.

Gratitude

It is a privilege to serve as your Mission u dean. I appreciate your participation and engagement in past studies. Please join me in encouraging others to participate in future studies. Our planning team is continually working to improve both virtual and live Mission u study opportunities and to make them the best possible learning experiences. As you sign up for studies, please think about inviting the other men and women in your life to these inspiring events. You do not have to be a member of United Women in Faith to participate.

MOUNTAIN SKY CONFERENCE of UNITED WOMEN in FAITH SOCIAL ACTION REPORT JULY 2023

Many of us are still suffering from “Annual Conference hangover.” Yes, I attended Annual Conference in person in Colorado Springs in June at First United Methodist Church, going home at night to sleep in my own bed. (smile)

I am especially proud of two petitions that passed this year: One encouraging education about anti-racism and one urging each congregation to develop its own green team. I served on both of the committees sponsoring these petitions and while my personal input was small, I am happy with the passages of both of these petitions.

United Women in Faith has a head start in both of these areas.

Webinars about the care of God’s Earth goes back at least 3 years on the United Women in Faith website, and there have been articles in the response magazine, too. Many UWF units have already made their own cloth napkins and long-since pledged to quit using paper plates for refreshments. Some sponsor community gardens and urge the conservation of natural resources. Recycling is second nature for UWF.

UWF has been educating in the area of anti-racism for years. Our reading program contains books every year that awaken us to the still-prevalent problem of racism in its many forms. Our national office often circulates forms for individual messages to government officials advocating for the passage of anti-racism laws and programs. It’s so easy just to plug in my name in the form and with a click, mail it to my representatives and senators.

The beauty is that UWF folks are not new to either of these causes. We can share our resources with others and encourage our local congregations to strive for God’s will in these areas. Caring for God’s Creation is a sacred trust in which we can all take a part. Racial prejudice has no room in our churches and our organizations. Two books from the 2023 Reading Program might start the conversations flowing: The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek is a great story about prejudice. I’m going to read a children’s book next—Nibi’s Water Song—about a child’s search for clean water.

My sisters, we have always been at the front of social justice movements, and we must continue. Educate. Advocate. Participate.

Mary Ann Tabor

 Follow the Facebook
Prayer Guide

 follow us on
twitter

 Find us on:
facebook®

Standing Rules for Mountain Sky United Women in Faith

The Standing rules have been revised to update for 2023. These amended rules will be voted on at our Annual Gathering. The leadership team has accepted them. If you'd like to read them **please click below**. The rules are 12 pages and too much to include in this publication.

Please read and be prepared to vote.

[Standing
Rules](#)

Sally Vonner

New CEO of United Women in Faith

View the Installation Service

From Dallas, Texas

[Installation Service](#)

Bishop Karen Oliveto Speaker at Mile High Metro District UWFaith Annual Meeting September 16, 2023

All are invited to the Mile High Metro District UWFaith annual meeting at Phillips United Methodist Church which will feature Bishop Karen Oliveto speaking on the topic “Where do we go from here”

Saturday, September 16, 2023.

The theme of the event is **Telling Our Story, Hearing Yours**. In addition to Bishop Karen’s address and the business portion of the meeting, there will be breakout sessions on the racial justice charter, reorganization, moving ahead and an environmental discussion. Bishop Karen’s speech will be in person and we will stream it as well on YouTube. The page is:

<https://www.youtube.com/@phillipsunitedmethodistchu707>

This will take viewers to the church’s YouTube page, then they can choose live. After the event is over, we will post the recording to that YouTube page and you can post it other places if you want.

Should you plan to attend this event in person, the church’s address is:

Phillips United Methodist Church

1450 S Pierce Street

Lakewood, Colorado

No registration is needed, but if you need childcare, contact Donna Parisi at donnaparisi@comcast.net by September 9. Doors open at 8:15; welcome at 9; program will be done by 1:30. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided. We will be collecting new baby and children socks, underwear, diapers and wipes for The Action Center.

Questions—contact Marcia Canter (bomaanka@yahoo.com) or Donna Parisi (donnaparisi@comcast.net).



EarthKeepers Comes to Denver in October

Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church is seeking Mountain Sky-based United Methodists (and especially United Women in Faith) to become EarthKeepers and lead grassroots environmental projects. The projects will be action-oriented, antiracist, bold and entrepreneurial.

Note: A resolution sponsored by the Creation Justice Task Force and urging the establishment of a Green Earth Team at every congregation in the Mountain Sky Conference was approved during the 2023 Annual Conference. This would be an excellent opportunity to not only learn about Green Teams, but design a team that meets your local needs.

Global Ministries EarthKeepers is a training program to launch and grow environmental projects in your own community. Training topics include eco-theology, antiracism, community organizing and project planning. All participants plan a project during the training.

The next EarthKeepers training events will be held **Oct. 5-8, 2023**, in Denver Colorado. Hotel accommodations and meals will be provided by Global Ministries, but attendees will be asked to pay their travel costs. Attendees will engage with other people attending trainings being held in Birmingham, AL and Hartford, CT.

The Application Deadline is **August 23, 2023**. Find details and the application here: <https://umcmmission.org/earthkeepers>.

The Beatitudes
Matthew 5:3-12
United Women in Faith (formerly UMW)
Wyoming + 1 District Annual Gathering & Day Together
September 8-9, 2023

Host: Grace UMC, Grace Hall, 2950 Spruce Dr, Cheyenne
 Registration must be returned by August 26

Share this with others who might not receive it.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E mail: _____

Attending Friday Only___, Saturday Only___, Both_____

Attending by Zoom_____.

Friday Lunch and Saturday Brunch total \$15.00

Registration/Programming Fee \$10.00 (Zoom or in Person)

Registration on Friday is 11:30. We welcome non-perishable food items to donate to St. Joseph Food Pantry. Following lunch will be meditation, financial reports, pledge service, awards, nominations report and installation of officers.

Our speaker for “Blessed Are the Poor” is Melissa Martin, a certified teacher for “Bridges Out of Poverty”.

The Saturday Morning Retreat will begin at 9:00. Our speaker will be Linda Cockett, President of Mountain Sky Conference UWF. Her program will be **“Blessed Are the Poor In Spirit”**. We will have Brunch followed by Memorial Service and Communion. **Call or return registration to Gerrie Evans, Wyoming District Treasurer, at 5245 Brianna Court, Cheyenne, WY 82009, 307-421-5709, gerrieevans2@gmail.com. Write checks to Wyoming + 1 District, United Women in Faith.**

Overnight stays: We recommend Days Inn on West Lincolnway. They could not quote us cheaper rate unless we guaranteed 10 rooms, but they recommend you reserve online through one of the hotel apps for the best price. They provide a free breakfast and felt that the cost would be about \$100 per room with 2 queen beds. There are two or three others on the same street that might be good choices.

We will not be able to eat at Grace on Friday night because of their previous commitments. Many of our Cheyenne First members eat out on the second Friday of each month with our group called Young at Heart. The group is mostly retired people, couples and singles, who like to all get together to eat and visit. We need to go to a place where the whole group can be seated together, and we make arrangements each month for a different place. We always order from the menu and pay our own bills. If this sounds good to you, we need a reservation from you 3-4 days ahead.



United
Women
in Faith

Get Together!

REGION JURISDICTION QUADRENNIAL EVENT

May 9-11, 2024 ANCHORAGE, AK, www.wjumw.com

What does it mean to answer the call to “love one another”
(John 13:34) in 2024? Come GET TOGETHER! to:

FEEL the joy when faith-filled women unite

NURTURE our souls through the strength of our sisterhood

DEEPEN our relationship with God

EXPLORE the power of love to make a difference

**TOGETHER we can do more. TOGETHER we can be more
TOGETHER the power of love in action can change the world.**

Trinity District Leadership Team Report

July 2023

Trinity District Spiritual Retreat was held June 10th at the Lamar UMC. Special guest speaker was Pat Blasi, who taught Physics, Chemistry, General Science for 7-10 grades and held workshops for teachers teaching science in elementary and high school at Methodist High School in Kanpur India from 1964-1967 as a short term missionary thru the Methodist Church. We had 20 in person and 6 on Zoom. We also had a workshop in prayer.

Our Annual Gathering will be held in Ft. Morgan on September 23rd and our guest speaker will be Linda Cockett. Our theme will be “change can be good”. Our task force met on July 8th so we are just getting started with the planning. Save the date September 23rd on your calendar and join us either virtually or in person.

N. Elaine Allison,

Trinity District UWF President

United Women in Faith In The News!

June 29, 2023

NEW YORK, NY – United Women in Faith, the largest denominational organization for women, today issued a statement regarding the Supreme Court decisions in Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard, and Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina. The statement can be attributed to Sally Vonner, general secretary and CEO of United Women in Faith, and Elizabeth Chun Hye Lee, director of mobilization and advocacy for United Women in Faith:

“We are gravely disappointed in this decision, which represents a massive step backwards for racial equity. We are concerned about the immense harm this decision will have on students as well as the long-term precedent of eroding affirmative action. United Women in Faith also joins the United Methodist Church, which previously issued a resolution on affirmative action, and reiterates our support for affirmative action as an important tool in efforts to achieve equity

[Click Here](#) to view the entire statement and press release



response, an award-winning publication, is the official magazine of United Women in Faith and is published by the national office. Each issue will touch your heart, stir your soul and challenge your mind. Topics and issues cover spiritual growth, mission outreach and reports on our local, national and international work. **response** tells the story of United Women in Faith and is an essential resource for all members.



response helps United Women in Faith members stay informed about the work of the organization and is a great way to share the story of United Methodist Women with new and potential members and with leaders in your church and community committed to uplifting women, children and youth.

[Subscribe today for yourself or as a gift](https://www.cambeywest.com/subscribe2/?p=RSP&f=custcare)

Mountain Sky Nominations Report

Members will be voting on new and returning officers for the Mountain Sky United Women in Faith Leadership Team at the Annual Gathering on October 13 & 14 in Billings, MT and on Zoom. The vacant positions are: President, Treasurer, Membership Nurture and Outreach, Education & Interpretation, Program Resources, Communications, Spiritual Growth, Director, Mission u Dean, and Nominations (Big Horn Dist., Mile High Dist., Trinity Dist., and Western Mtns Dist.) If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else, you may do so during the voting process at the Annual Gathering. Here are the women running for offices.

Robin Ball - President & UW in Faith Delegate

My first experience of mission work was with my grandmother and mother as they supported local, regional and international missions through Women's Society of Christian Service and then United Methodist Women. This was the beginning of my education about the world. And how we can effect change and offer mercy to the most vulnerable, especially women and children. Over time I discerned my call to mission as supporting and promoting the mission work of United Women in Faith and the United Methodist Church. During my time with United Women in Faith I have held these offices in my journey to support mission work:

Local — Education & Interpretation, Treasurer and President

District – Nominations, Treasurer and President

Conference – Mission u Dean, Treasurer

What do I see for 2024?

Assess the effectiveness of the current district configuration for United Women in Faith and Mtn Sky Conference of UMC. If a change is needed, what would be more beneficial for our districts.

Activate the Membership Committee as part of our efforts to support current members and reach out to share our story of faith, sisterhood and justice to other women

Thank you for your support of our great organization of women committed to their faith.



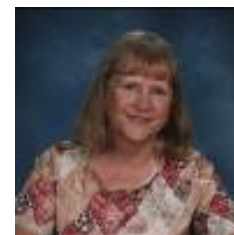
Connie Pittenger - Treasurer



Although I have been a member of the Montrose, CO, Unit since 1984 when I moved to Montrose, I didn't become really active until I retired from being a Speech/Language Pathologist in 2007. Since 2007, I have served as the Unit Social Action Coordinator many times, the Unit Vice President for 2 years, and as the Unit President for 8 years. In Spring, 2017, I attended a Next Steps Leadership meeting in Cedaredge, CO, and learned about an opening for the District Treasurer. I told the District Nomination Committee person that I had never been the Treasurer of my Unit but I had been the Treasurer for other organizations and that I was good with details. That fall, I was elected to serve as the UT/Western CO District Treasurer and have served in that position since that time. During my tenure as the District Treasurer, I have learned some of the basics of QuickBooks and have been an active participant in the UT/Western CO District Team.

Karen Waldron - Membership, Nurture & Outreach

Karen Waldron is finishing her 4th year as Unit President for Fort Collins First United Women in Faith. She is also currently serving as Co-Chair of Nominations for the Peaks Pikes Peak District, before which she served as District Treasurer and District Spiritual Growth Coordinator. Currently retired, Karen served 6 years as the Business Manager for Fort Collins First UMC. Prior to that, she was a Software Solution Architect for FileNet Corporation, Software Developer for StarTel Corporation, and kept the books for the business she owned with her husband for 30 years. Karen has five grown children, including two step-children, nine grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. She loves spending time with grandchildren, volunteering at and through the church, traveling and enjoys reading mystery novels and books on the United Women in Faith reading program.



Continued next page

Nomination continued

Michaele Ann Buell-McFeeters - Education and Interpretation Coordinator



Michaele Ann was born in Bentonville, Arkansas (home of Walmart) and graduated high school there. She attended college at Cottey College, University of Central Arkansas, University of Arkansas, University of Central Missouri, and taught in the public schools, grades 2 and 4, and at John Brown University, Southern Illinois University and NW Arkansas Community College in the areas of Education and Geography. She has been a member of many environmental and conservation groups as well as professional organizations. Michaele Ann is an active P.E.O.

Michaele Ann grew up in the Disciples of Christ Christian Church where she was a member the major part of her life until she and her husband moved permanently to Trinidad, Colorado in 2015 where both are now retired.

We began attending the Methodist Church-Bob is a Methodist-and I found a new church home. Pat Minton invited me to my first Mission u in Colorado Springs and I have been "hooked" on UMW ever since. I have served in several offices at the district level including MN&O, Chair of Nominations, and Social Action Coordinator. I have always loved attending the conference and Mission u meetings and connecting with people from all over. I am really looking forward to being a part of the Conference Team (something I have wanted to do for years) and hope to be able to contribute to the work of the United Women in Faith!

Mary Ann Tabor - Secretary of Program Resources

I am retired from the State of Colorado (office manager at a community college) and am blessed always by my three adult children and the world's most precious little granddaughter, now age 9. I have been active in United Women in Faith (formerly UMW) for many years, serving on local, district, and conference levels, most recently as Social Justice and Action Coordinator. Now I look forward to spreading the word about the all the wonderful books in our Reading Program.



Linda Cockett - Communications Coordinator



Linda Cockett currently lives in Torrington, WY. She is married and has one child. She is the Executive Director of Goshen County Senior Friendship Center which encompasses five senior centers throughout the county. She is also heavily involved in church and United Women in Faith activities. She is a cradle Methodist and truly believes in all aspects of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, especially the emphasis on Reason. She loves that her church encourages her

to think! She is always grateful for all the mentoring and love she has received from her sisters in United Women in Faith.

Denise Logan - Spiritual Growth Coordinator

Hi, I am Denise Logan. I am a member of the First United Methodist Church of Rocky Ford, Colorado. My husband, Ray, and I have lived in Rocky Ford since our marriage 45 years ago. We have one son, Mitch. He and his wife Rachel live in Rye, Colorado. We have a dog named Izzy and a cat named Pongo who are very spoiled.

I am a certified lay servant and a Sunday School teacher. During my 40 plus year membership at the church I have taught several different age groups of Sunday School classes and Vacation Bible School, directed the children's choir, helped with youth group and been a member of the adult choir. I have also been a member of the United Methodist Women, now United Women In Faith since my early days with the church. I am currently the Treasurer of our local unit and the Spiritual Growth Coordinator of the Trinity District. Most recently I was a co-instructor for Mission U.

I am honored to be considered for the position of Conference United Women in Faith Spiritual Growth Coordinator.



Continued next page

Nomination continued

Teresa Rivera - Committee of Nominations - UW in Faith Voting Delegate

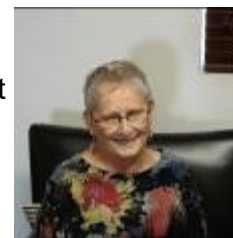


At our local church I have served as our unit's secretary on the UMW Board, the coordinator for Program Resources and the Reading Program. I am currently the chair of Hilltop UMC's Church Council and have been on the Leadership, Selection and Development Committee, Finance Committee, Staff Parish Committee and the Worship Committee for our church. I spent many years playing handbells and enjoyed being part of the Gospel choir. I am currently the secretary for the Hilltop Gospel Choir Board.

I love to spend time watching my grandson and love to garden. I travel between Utah and Washington state to be with family in both states. I also volunteer at the Salt Lake County State Health Insurance Program and a hospital in Vancouver. I look forward to serve where I can make a difference!

Pat Blasi - Committee on Nominations (Trinity District)

Raised on an eastern Nebraska farm and graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan with a major in Physical Science, minors in mathematics and music. Pat taught for over 40 years, probably some of her most memorable years was 3 years in Kanpur India as a short-term missionary for the Methodist Church. Pat returned and went to Los Alamos, New Mexico and taught for 3½ years where she met her husband Ed. They were blessed with 51½ years of marriage and four children. Pat lost Ed during the pandemic years in 2020. A lifetime member of the church and some form of United Women in Faith for most of her life. She has formerly served on Nominations for our Conference team and was Dean of Missions for the Conference 2012-2016. She has served as the Trinity District's Representation on the Nomination Committee for the Conference for the past two years.



Belinda Alkula - Mission u Dean



Belinda Alkula is married to the Rev. Dr. Charles Alkula, current pastor of the Boulder St. Paul's UMC. She serves as that church's lay member to annual conference. She has served in a variety of United Methodist Women's officer roles in the Legacy Yellowstone Conference UMW: Local unit president; District nominations committee member, vice president, spiritual growth/membership coordinator. And she has served in the Mountain Sky Conference (MSC) UMW, as the spiritual growth mission coordinator. In 2022, she began service as the assistant dean of the MSC Cooperative Mission u.

Hamu Chigwada - UW in Faith Director

I balance my work in the insurance industry with my commitment to family and United Women in Faith. I immigrated from Zimbabwe to the U.S. in 2006 to attend graduate school in Milwaukee and I graduated with a Master's degree in statistics. Later I received MBA from U of Colorado in risk management and insurance. I am president at the Green Mountain UWF and serve as the secretary of the Western Jurisdiction UWF leadership team. I previously served as communications and social action coordinator for the UWF Mile High Metro District and was a member for the Charter for Racial Justice for the Rocky Mountain Conference. UWF has given me a chance to grow spiritually, and I've learned to serve in many ways. I have met many great women over the years and continue to grow through the many UWF events. I look forward to serving and doing all I can to grow spiritually in the years to come. When I am not working, I enjoy spending time with my husband, my 25-year-old daughter, my mother, and my two-year-old son.



Continued next page

Nomination continued

Peg Plimpton - Committee of Nominations (Western Mountains District)



WSCS, UMW, and UWF have been part of my life since I was 25. When our family of four, including two daughters, moved to Grove City Ohio, the Welcome Wagon visitor TOLD me that she would pick me up for Circle "next Thursday" and that was that. In the years since then I have held every office but Treasurer, and loved most of these moments.

Currently I serve as Secretary to the Missoula FUMC UWF unit and enjoy a much calmer life than that of a young mother and "Church Lady." Life is rich and includes volunteering to help families find housing in Missoula, Scouting Coordinator and Trustee of First UMC, fandom for the Ohio State Buckeyes and Montana Grizzlies, walks with a terminally friendly dog along the river bank and various yarn and needlework projects. God has been good.

Deborah Bondie - Committee of Nominations (Mile High Metro District)

I was born in August 1953 in Southern Illinois. My family moved to Michigan about the time I started Junior High School. I graduated High school in 1971. Three years later I joined the Navy. Boot camp was in Orlando, Florida at the time. Following Boot camp, I went to Hospital Core School. Then I was sent to San Diego for six months of training to learn to be a pharmacy Technician.



After finishing Pharmacy school, I was sent to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. After spending two years in Hawaii, I was transferred to Vallejo, California. I lived in Vallejo about two years. Then my Navy time was up.

Moving to Connecticut to be with my boyfriend was a journey across the country. I met my husband in California a year before I left the Navy. Bill and I lived in Connecticut for about two years. Bill was in the Navy also. We moved to Denver because Bill became a Navy recruiter.

We have two grown children, Cora and Robert. We have lived in Lakewood, Colorado since 1987. I have been a part of Phillips Church since 1987 and am now the current President of the UW Faith unit.

Jana Jones - UW in Faith Director



Jana Jones currently serves as a National Director to United Women in Faith, representing the Western Jurisdiction and the Mountain Sky Conference. She is chair of the UW Faith Reading Program committee and a member of Planning and Assessment committee. As part of her role as a United Women in Faith Director, she represents UW Faith as a director on the General Board of Global Ministries on the UMCOR/Global Health committee. Jana also serves as the chair for the Mountain Sky Conference Abundant Health Team, part of Mission Engage-

ment.

Jana is an active member at Smoky Hill United Methodist Church in Centennial Colorado, serving on the Missions team, Abundant Health team, Worship team and Choir as well as being the communications coordinator for her local UWF unit at Smoky Hill. Jana is a retired pediatric nurse who has worked in hospital in-patient settings and as a school nurse consultant.

Janet Ulrich - UW in Faith Director (alternate)

Janet serves as the President of the Western Mountains District. She hails from Alaska where she served as President of the Alaska Conference. Her organization and willingness to serve in any capacity is greatly appreciated

Continued next page

Nomination continued

Cheryl Runyon - UW in Faith Delegate



Cheryl Runyon is a member of Mountain View UMC in Boulder, CO. She is a member of the Mountain View United Women in Faith unit and has served as co-president of the unit. Cheryl is a member of the Wesley Annes circle, Women of the Word and Strangers as Neighbors small groups, and the Books at Lunch Bunch. She is the unit Education and Interpretation coordinator and assists with the Reading Program.

She currently serves as the Vice-President of the Mountain Sky Conference (CO, MT, UT, WY) of United Women in Faith. Cheryl previously served as Vice-President of the Peaks Pikes Peak District in the Mountain Sky Conference and Social Action and Education and Interpretation Coordinator for the Peaks and Plains District of the Rocky Mountain Conference of UMW. She also recently reviewed books under future consideration for the UWFAith Reading Program.

Cheryl and her husband, Gary Schmitz, will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary in 2023. Gary and Cheryl are the proud parents of a son, Ryan, who resides in El Paso, TX, and works for the Locomotives, a minor league soccer team. The family are fans of baseball (St. Louis Cardinals and those poor Colorado Rockies), football (Broncos), and basketball at the University of Colorado. We have learned a great deal about soccer in the past few years.

Cheryl is a native of southern Illinois and attended college at Eastern Illinois University and law school at Southern Illinois University. Her focus as an undergraduate was zoology and political science and she had a concentration in environmental and energy law in law school. She is a retired member of the bar in Illinois and Colorado. Cheryl worked for the Illinois General Assembly, served as a staff attorney for the Illinois Supreme Court, and worked for the National Conference of State Legislatures in the areas of energy, science, and natural resources. Cheryl has researched and written several books and reports for state legislators and staff about low-level radioactive waste, wetlands protection, and emergency management, as well as drafting model legislation for consideration by state legislatures. She also worked for Boulder County in the Safeguard program explaining the legal system to school children and as the Medical Reserve Corps coordinator for natural and man-made disasters.

Cheryl has contributed articles to a business newspaper in Nebraska, as well as to her local church and UMW and UWFAith newsletters. She currently substitutes at the Boulder Public Library and thoroughly enjoys discussing good books with all readers.

As part of her personal mission work, Cheryl knits and donates scarves for former foster children (Red Scarf Project), hats for local non-profits through Community Knitting, and hats, scarves, and dishcloths for Christmas shoe boxes for Native American elders in South Dakota (One Nation Walking Together).

Janet Ulrich - UW in Faith Director (alternate)

I grew up in Idaho and Montana, graduating from Flathead High School, in Kalispell, and Montana State University in Bozeman, with a degree in accounting. I began my career in Helena, with the Federal Highway administration. Then moving to Baltimore and next to Alaska. I lived in Anchorage for over 35 years, retiring from the Federal Aviation Administration in 2016. I returned to Kalispell shortly after retiring.

My mother and grandmother are/were United Methodist Women, so it was natural for me to join UMW when I established my membership in Alaska. I was immediately recruited as treasurer, and served in many local, conference, regional school, and jurisdiction positions, from the committee on nominations, to president. The Alaska Conference does not have districts, so I am now beginning tenure in district positions, starting with Program Resources, as I love the Reading Program! I have been District president for the past four years. I am currently treasurer of my local UMW, and my mother is the local Program Resources chair!

Hobbies include sewing, latch hook rugs, traveling, reading, canning, cross stitch, playing Bridge, and visiting family and friends! I enjoy hiking, being a life member of Volkssports, a non-competitive sports organization. I attended the national Volkssports convention in 2017, as it was held in Billings, and I figured I would never be closer to the convention site! I did my first bike event there, as well as 3 hikes and 3 swim events!

My parents returned to Kalispell full time in 2017, and we help each other with various activities. We have a tree farm south of Kalispell and we spend time up there, cutting firewood and pruning trees. I tried to learn as much as possible from my dad about managing the tree farm, before he passed away two years ago!



“Stir the Pot of Love for Justice”

Mountain Sky Conference United Women in Faith

Annual Gathering

Billings, MT

Oct. 13-14, 2023



REGISTRATION DUE OCTOBER 2, 2023

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

I am, if applicable:

_____ Conference Officer

_____ District Officer

_____ Past Conference Officer

_____ Past District President

_____ National Officer

_____ Hostess Unit Volunteer

Participants:

Virtual Registration _____ \$25

In-Person Registration _____ \$68

(Includes 3 meals—2 lunches, 1 dinner)

In-Person Registration, Sat. only _____ \$33

(Includes Sat. lunch)

TOTAL \$ _____

I will be attending UBUNTU activity, and Leadership Workshops (UWFaith 101 and Developing Sisterhood) on Friday afternoon. _____ YES _____ NO

Ubuntu activities include:

_____ making period kits _____ helping at the food bank _____ helping at the Free Store

*Email will be sent to you for your preferred choice of activity.

Any special needs, including food allergies? _____

Your attendance Zoom link will be emailed to you the week of Oct. 9; be sure to watch your email.

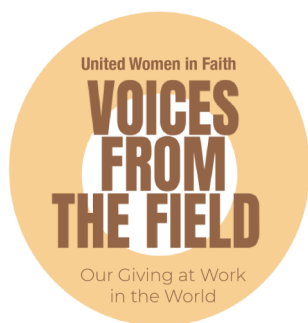
Questions? Call 303-439-2129, or email muscumwregistrar@gmail.com

Please mail form and checks payable to United Women in Faith to:

Lora Fulton, Registrar

1710 Dogwood Ct.

Broomfield, CO 80020



United Women in Faith and National Mission Institutions

Tuesday, September 7 and 21, 2022, 4:00 p.m. ET, 3:00 p.m. CT, 2:00 p.m. MT, 1:00 p.m. PT
Virtual via Zoom

Join us for a virtual conversation featuring members of United Women in Faith that are closely involved with some of our National Mission Institutions (NMIs). Bear witness to their callings to faithfully serve organizations that are transforming lives and communities, and learn why our support as United Women in Faith is imperative.

Click [Here](#) for more info.

Director Stell Wallace Summer Report

July 13, 2023

Thank you for allowing me to represent you as we do the business of United Women in Faith. In a time of uncertainty with our church, it is a blessing to know our organization is solid and moving forward. As we focus on the future, remember our purpose and what it takes in order to fulfill this statement. This organization allows us to develop leaders, understand social issues and act on them. Our collective pledges are how we support global mission. I am proud to be a member of UWF.

Currently I am in three book studies; local, conference, and I just finished Caste for the National Reading Program. What an excellent read, and you receive 2 credits in the area of Social Action. I highly recommend this book. As one of the breakout room leaders, discussion was rich and thought provoking. Also, the 2024 reading list will be out at the end of the summer. Great books to come.

Both the National Governance Committee and the PNW conference are revising the Standing Rules at this time. This is done every few years to reflect changes. Our new name will be added. At the conference level we have added information on the Spiritual Growth Retreat and what is expected.

Every jurisdiction has instituted a cohorts committee. Ours meets every other month. We focus on some part of what is going on at National. This month we focused on Mission Giving. Shannon Priddy is now part of the development staff, and her sole focus is Pledge to Mission Giving. Presidents, E & I, and treasurers from each WJ conference attended. A strategy of changing our mindset for how we ask and focus on money was addressed. Our WJ Directors/PAG were also in attendance and together we are working to change how we approach mission giving in our conferences. Shannon asks us "what is our why". Why are we members of this organization. Where is our passion for the mission statement?

Now is the time of the year when district and annual meetings are being created for September and October, censuses are being taken as well as a list of those who have passed since the last meeting. Most importantly is creating a new slate of officers for the coming year. Nominations are not just the committee's job. We all need to be the eyes and ears to help find those women who can do the position. They don't have to have prior experience. We can train them. Only the president must be a member of UMC. All other positions may be filled by anyone who is a member of our organization. BTW, Mission u is an excellent place to look for officers.

Again, thank you for allowing me to represent our jurisdiction.

Blessings,

Estella (Stell) Wallace

Pacific Northwest Conference

Western Jurisdiction

Member of the National Board of Directors (2016-2020 and 2020-2024)

PS - Do you have your nominees for PAG/Director? We have great women in leadership. Also, our new slate of Jurisdiction officers is being released soon. I'm excited for what is to come.

Mountain Sky Conference
United Women in Faith
725 Middlemas Rd
Helena, MT 59602



SKY LIGHTS August 2023

Editor: Claudia Davis

mountainskyumw@gmail.com

www.mtnskyumw.org

<https://www.facebook.com/Mountain-Sky-United-Methodist-Women>



United
Women
in Faith