

GLOWING EMBERS

SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER
WESTERN MOUNTAINS DISTRICT - MOUNTAIN SKY CONFERENCE



United
Women
in Faith

The President's Corner

The start of summer is upon us. I hope everyone has many fun, worthwhile activities planned.

The Soul Care Retreat held at Fairmont Hot Springs in May was a huge success! Our keynote speaker, Sandy Barton from Colorado, spoke about Strategies for Christian Women in Today's World. Time was also spent watching a movie, doing puzzles and crafts, and, of course, soaking in the pools! A highlight of the weekend was being entertained by a live band on Saturday night. Thirty-two women went home renewed and refreshed, ready to do God's work in the world.

Several of our ladies were fortunate enough to attend the National Assembly where the theme was "Dream It, Believe It, Do It". It sounds like they had a wonderful time, and plans are in the works for them to share what they learned at our Western District meeting this fall. It will be held on September 26 at Epworth United Methodist Church in Kalispell. Please mark that date on your calendar and watch for more information to be sent out.

The 2026 United Women of Faith Spiritual Retreat and Annual Gathering will be held in Helena at St. Paul's United Methodist Church. The Spiritual Retreat will be on October 2nd and the Annual Gathering on October 3rd. Members from all over the Mountain Sky Conference will be attending, so please make plans now to attend.

Arlis

**"What does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with
your God."**

Micah 6:8



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Our Keynote speaker, Sandy Barton from Colorado, gave us strategies of "How to be a Christian Woman in Today's World".



Claudia Davis introduced the group to Teresa Bustos who would be leading water aerobics in the Fairmont pools. So much fun!



Working jigsaw puzzles is always a favorite free time activity at the Fairmont Retreat.



These ladies are making "Traveling Shrines and Altars".



The Late Bloomers provided an evening of fun, folk, and handclapping, foot-stomping, sing-along, inspirational music! Their tunes included "Mercy Now", "Amen/This Little Light of Mine", and "I'll Fly Away". Members include "Church" Doug, Charlie and Coy, and "Wacky" Wayne.



United
Women
in Faith

Western Mountains District UWF Leadership Team 2027:

We are thankful for these women who have said YES to serving as your district officers for the coming year. They are ready to serve and ready to be valuable contact persons for you and your unit. Please keep them in your prayers and offer them your appreciation whenever you get a chance.

President:

Arlis Vannett - 406-925-2209 - Arlis_v@hotmail.com

Vice President:

Cathy Speich-Ferguson - 406-925-1994 - cathysf@bresnan.net

Treasurer:

Claudia Davis - 406-461-9618 - Westernmountainsdistrictuwf@gmail.com

Secretary:

Roxanne Roehl - 406-239-1452 - roxroeste@gmail.com

Program Resources Coordinator & Membership:

Elaine Williams - 406-529-1325 - eewilliams31705@outlook.net

Communications Coordinator:

Janna Lauver - 406-698-0810 - Janna@bozemanumc.org

Missions Education & Social Action Coordinator:

Teresa Bustos - 406-461-4989 - tbsharkx@hotmail.com

Committees on Nominations:

Chair: Janet Zimmerman - 406-451-3859 - janetkayzee@gmail.com

Adina Fox - 406-253-1774 - adinafox49@gmail.com

Marie Hendrickson - 406-539-2635 - rosesr4me.mh@gmail.com

Social Justice, Climate Justice, and Racial Justice

*Judy Scrimshire, Social Action Coordinator, Mountain Sky Conference UW Faith
Cheryl Runyon, Racial Justice Committee, Mountain Sky Conference*

The Mountain Sky Conference Racial Justice Committee is working to raise awareness about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP). In 2025, the Annual Conference approved a resolution creating a task force to support MMIP efforts across the conference's four states. The committee also received a \$2,500 grant from the Board of Church and Society, along with a \$1,000 matching contribution from the Grand Junction United Women in Faith unit, to support education and advocacy.

The committee plans to provide resources and training to help churches, schools, and communities advocate for legislation and programs that address MMIP and support Indigenous communities.

Save the date for the Mountain Sky United Women in Faith Annual Gathering, October 2–3 in Helena, Montana. The Racial Justice Committee will host an MMIP-focused program, and participants will also pack Christmas shoebox gifts for children and elders served by the Blackfeet United Methodist Parish in Browning.

Creation Care Updates:

The Mountain Sky Creation Care Task Force recently received a \$3,000 Just Energy 4 All grant to support projects benefiting Native American communities served by the Blackfeet United Methodist Parish and Native Grace in Colorado.

The conference encourages every church to form a Green Team and prioritize energy and water conservation efforts. Church leaders and trustees are invited to help make creation care a local priority.

The task force meets monthly on the third Thursday at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Learn more at mtnskyumc.org/creation-justice.

Members are also encouraged to advocate for policies that support creation care and climate justice by contacting elected officials and educating themselves on environmental issues. State legislators for Montana can be found at: <https://archive.legmt.gov/legislator-information/>

If you need background information before contacting decision-makers, the UMC Council of Bishops has written a letter supporting and prioritizing the urgency of Climate Justice work that can be found at: <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/bishops-prioritize-creation-'care>.

During the recent Northern Colorado District Leadership Team meeting, Laurel Kubin shared her inspirational sign: “I need to be able to tell my grandchildren I DID NOT STAY SILENT!!” We all need to take this message to heart.

Want even more information? Our UW Faith Reading Program has some great books to help us move forward by learning more about these issues. One we suggest is “Start With Hello (And Other Simple Ways to Live as Neighbors) “ by Shannan Martin. Other reading to help get started with your local units might be the Sarah August book, “The Land Is Not Empty,” about the Doctrine of Discovery, as well as the UW Faith racial justice timeline

UWF Assembly 2026

Denalie Bruins hold up the quilt for which she had the winning bid at Assembly. She didn't realize it was the item donated and made by a UWFaith member of Mountain Sky Conference. It now hangs at Missoula First UMC. Way to go Denalie, a first time attendee!



Unit Updates From Around The District



Photo Left: Donations collected by Bozeman UMC & Bozeman UWF's Noon Luncheon group (above) were delivered to Family Promise in May, and Family Promise staff member Autumn was all smiles when she saw the generous donations.

Dillon Grace UWFaith unit was asked recently if we could help children who were being placed in foster care by providing toiletry items. We sprang into action and put the call out to our entire church membership. The following items were gathered and donated to our local CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) office. Children who are being quickly removed from a home and placed in foster care are often in need of these items at the time of their transition.

Collected:

- Shampoo – 6
- Hairbrushes – 7
- Combs - 4
- Deodorant – 3
- Hand cream – 2
- Lip balm - 13
- Bars of soap – 5
- Toothpaste – 13
- Toothbrushes – 9
- Travel kit (toothbrush & toothpaste) – 11
- Wash clothes – 8
- Hand towels – 10

Dillon Grace United Women of Faith unit annually donates \$200 to Parkview Elementary School. This 2025-26 school year, Ashlee Clarno, school secretary, was able to purchase the following items: 3 10-packs of socks, sizes S-L; 17 pairs of sweatpants of various sizes. She uses these when students need to replace their socks and/or pants they wore to school for a variety of reasons.

Treasurer's Report for the Western Mountains District Year 2026

The Fairmont Soul Care Retreat was a success; both the retreat and Western Mountains District UWF ended in the black financially. A full report will be in the next newsletter.
Blessings to all, Claudia Davis, Western Mountains District Treasurer

Program Updates:

Have you thought about applying for a grant? If not, consider this from Cheryl Runyon: "We received a grant at Mountain View and used it to purchase energy efficient lightbulbs for the children and families, plus teachers, at Creekside elementary in Boulder. We have a long-time relationship through Kids Hope, Reading Buddies, and summer snack boxes with the children and families in this school."

Go to: <https://uwfaith.org/blog/2026/2026-seed-funding-application/>

Grants of \$100–\$5,000 are available to United Women in Faith-led initiatives, local environmental justice groups, and coalitions between the two.

2026 Timeline

Application deadline: June 17, 2026

Decisions communicated: By July 25, 2026

Funding disbursed: By September 2026

Project implementation: Calendar year 2027

Faith Talks Podcast: "Aging With Love & Care" With Karen Walrond

We are often taught to overlook aging, but every stage of life deserves care, dignity, and intentional love! In this episode of Faith Talks, Jennifer R. Farmer and Karen Walrond explore how we can build a culture that prioritizes love and care as we grow older.

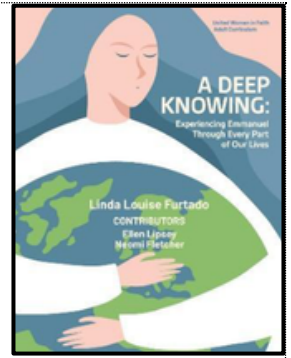


The Faith Talks podcast is a twice-monthly conversation with United Women in Faith, hosted by Jennifer R. Farmer. Each month, we'll explore timely themes and resources, featuring expert insights on living your faith and inspiring interviews with spiritual leaders.

uwfaith.org/resources/podcasts



LIVE
2026 Mission u
A DEEP KNOWING: Experiencing
Emmanuel Through Every Part of
Our Lives



Sponsored by Mountain Sky United Women in Faith
 & Mountain Sky Mission Team

Open to all adults, clergy, and lay persons.

Study Description: Join us at Mission u as we explore the theme, “Experiencing Emmanuel”. Mission u participants will study the times in the Bible when people experienced Emmanuel, or “God with us.” How do we discern God’s presence and call on our lives in times of joy and in times of sadness, fear, or anxiety? What can we learn from these Emmanuel encounters in the Bible to help inform our discernment to faith, hope, and love in action? Select from one of three study locations—Highlands Ranch, Colorado; or Delta, Colorado. Choose from the dates, times, and locations below.

I will attend (check one):

___ Study Location 1 [Registration due July 21]

Dates: Friday, July 31, 4 pm - 8 pm & Saturday, August 1, 8:30 am – 4 pm
Location: St. Andrew UMC, 9203 S. University Blvd, Highlands Ranch, CO 80126
Study Leaders: JoAnne Shengle and Pastor Araceli Berdugo

___ Study Location 2 [Registration due August 10]

Dates: Friday, August 21, 4 pm - 8 pm & Saturday, August 22, 8:30 am – 4 pm
Location: Delta UMC, 477 Meeker Street, Delta, CO
Study Leaders: Sandy Barton and Kathryn Witte

At each session, an offering will be taken, and proceeds will be split between Mountain Sky United Women in Faith and the Mountain Sky Conference Mission Team.

Name:

Street Address, City, State, ZIP Code:

Best phone number:

Email:

District: Wyoming + 1
 Southern Colorado Northern Colorado
 Utah/Western Colorado Western Mountains

Mile High Metro Big Horn
 Other _____

First-time Attendee to Mission u? Yes No

Home church and city or town:

Check all that apply: ___ Clergy ___ Lay Member ___ UW Faith ___ Male ___ Female ___ Non-binary

___ Request certificate sent upon completion of the course.

Food restrictions _____ Physical restrictions _____

Do you need childcare during the study time? ____ Yes ____ No

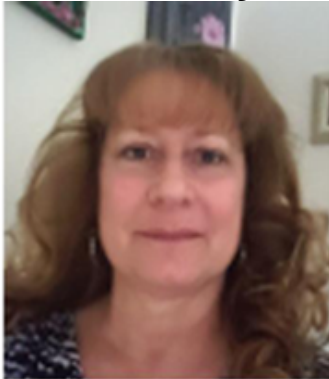
Registration fee: \$65 includes: Dinner Friday night, lunch on Saturday, snacks, and beverages throughout. Your fee also covers the expenses for study leader training and travel.

Choose **one of these ways** to complete your registration:

1. **Registration deadline is listed above and registering online is easy and administratively more efficient.** Please register and pay online at <https://www.mtnskyumw.org/events/mission-u/>
2. Or print this form, fill it out then mail this paper registration with your check payable to *Mountain Sky Conference Mission u* to: Pattie Klein, 1807 Ptarmigan Trl, Estes Park, CO 80517
3. Or print this form, fill it out, scan it then email the scanned form to Pattie Klein at <mailto:paklein58@gmail.com>.

Study Leaders

Joanne Shengle



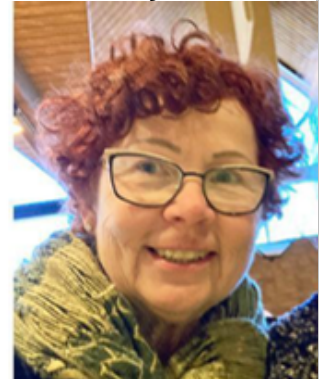
Pastor Araceli Berdugo



Sandy Barton



Kathryn Witte



Jo Anne Shengle has been a member of FUMC Lafayette, Colorado, since 2000 and has served in many ministry and leadership roles, including Church Council Vice President, SPRC Chair, and United Women in Faith President. A retired school nurse, she enjoys the outdoors, family, and friends, and is honored to serve as a Mission u study leader.

Pastor Araceli Berdugo serves in Tooele, Utah, in a multicultural, bilingual English-Spanish ministry. A Methodist for nearly 30 years, she has served in many church leadership roles and says it is an honor to take part in Mission u. She and her husband, Juan, have six children and seven grandchildren, and she says serving God is her greatest joy.

Sandy Barton is a member of First UMC Grand Junction, a Certified Lay Servant, and a longtime Mission u spiritual growth study leader. A former high school English teacher with 40 years of experience, she now serves as Spiritual Growth Coordinator for the Mile High Metro District and on the Grand Junction UWF leadership team.

Kathryn Witte has a background in printing, design, and communications and served more than a decade with the Nebraska and Great Plains Conferences of the United Methodist Church. She now works with the General Board of Global Ministries as In Mission Together Coordinator for Nigeria and serves as Dean of Mountain Sky Mission u, Conference Secretary for Global Ministries, and a member of Broomfield United Methodist Church.

SAVE THE DATES: FALL 2026

Fall Western Mountains District Annual Gathering: September 26, 2026

This year's District Annual Gathering will be held on September 26th at Epworth United Methodist Church in Kalispell! Plan to bring handmade items for the ever-popular silent auction to benefit missions! Anything from homemade huckleberry jam to quilts, potholders, pottery - the sky is the limit! Or come a day early and visit Glacier National Park or perhaps Whitefish Mountain Resort. Or visit Whitefish, Bigfork, or Kalispell for some gift shopping. Renew friendships with women from around Western Montana. There are plenty of bed-and-breakfasts and hotels in the area if you plan to stay overnight!

Watch for more information soon!



2026 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH: Spiritual Retreat & Annual Gathering Join Us in the Journey

St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Helena, Montana

Save the Dates:

October 2, 2026 – Spiritual Retreat

October 3, 2026 – Annual Gathering

Come together with United Women in Faith from across the Mountain Sky Conference for a time of spiritual renewal, learning, fellowship, worship, and inspiration as we journey together in faith and action.

This year's Mountain Sky Conference Annual Gathering will be held October 2-3 at St. Paul's UMC in Helena, Montana! Friday will be a spiritual growth retreat.

Saturday will be workshops, speakers, a business meeting, elections, and services. Katie Pryor, Executive for Membership, Nurture, and Development, will be our keynote speaker Saturday. She will explain the "UNSTOPPABLE" campaign, which will be introduced at this year's Assembly. She will also lead a workshop about the UNSTOPPABLE campaign. Other workshops and services include Intermountain Children's Home, Racial Justice, Pledge to Mission, Memorial Service, and Just Energy for All.

More details and registration information coming soon.

***GLOWING EMBERS Western Mountains District Mountain Sky Conference
2026 Summer Newsletter***

Do you have news articles, events or photos you would like to submit for the newsletter? If so, you may email your information by February 10th to:

janna@bozemanumc.org