



United
Women
in Faith

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

NOVA NOTES

DECEMBER 2022



UWF Mission Statement

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

No Room

He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. John 1:11

If you have ever been in a busy tourist town during peak season, you may have noticed "no vacancy" signs in front of many motels, indicating that the motels are full.

Sometimes motels and inns don't have room for people. Sometimes people don't have room for others in their hearts. Maybe a group at school won't make room for someone who isn't as smart or athletic or physically attractive as they are. Maybe at church a group of friends stands around talking after the service but won't make room for newcomers--people who are hurting and longing for a friend.

Luke tells us there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn at Bethlehem (Luke 2:7). Jesus was born into a world of people that had no room for him. And later in life he was hated and rejected. "He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him."

In this Advent season, is there room in your heart for the Lord Jesus?

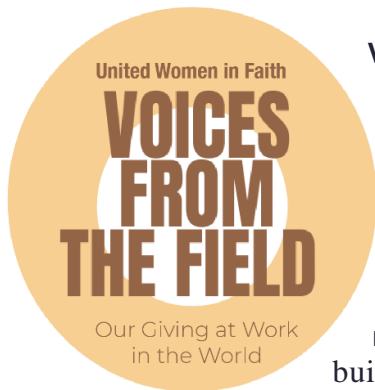
So many things can fill our lives and make us busy: family, friends, careers, sports, and the general business of life. But do we have room for the Lord Jesus, and for others who need to know his love?

I pray that this Christmas you make room for Jesus and let him stay in your life.

Lord Jesus, so often we do not make room for you and others. Fill our hearts, and by your grace help us to accept others who need love and friendship. In your name, Amen.

Adapted from a devotion by Rev. Joel Sheeres

December Devotion from Beth Meserve



Voices from the Philippines with Regional Missionary Emma Cantor

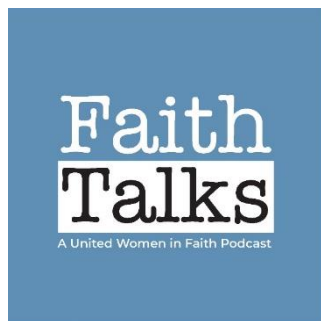
Join Emma Cantor, United Women in Faith Regional Missionary to Asia & Pacific, to hear how God is moving in mission through our work with women in the Philippines.

United Women in Faith has a long-standing relationship with the women of the Philippines. Historically, missionaries sent to the Philippines started ministries in education and health and built local centers for social services. Today, that relationship continues with the work focusing on leadership development, skills building, and livelihoods enhancement programs.

This is an opportunity to join a discussion to engage, connect, and grow in mission as our Regional Missionary Emma Cantor shares how United Women in Faith's work equips and transforms the lives of women and their communities. **Dec 5, 2022 10:00 AM in [Eastern Time \(US and Canada\)](#)**

You can see the full event invitation and registration link here:

<https://mailchi.mp/uwfaith.org/register-for-voices-from-the-field-on-sept-7996217?e=696e3d07d0>



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Join Faith Talks Podcast LIVE to
Welcome the Season of Advent- Dec. 1, 2 pm ET
Join us for bimonthly conversations with
United Women in Faith,
hosted by Jennifer R. Farmer.

Webinar Registration

Register: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9PTKCtrSOqvnZs64K1zcw

Faith Talks welcomes the season of Advent on the live recording of our podcast Dec. 1, 2 pm ET. Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation as we make room to receive Jesus the Christ anew our lives and world. How can we prepare to receive Christ today? How can we sharpen our spiritual senses so that we recognize Christ in the physical world today?

Our guests for this episode in observance of Advent include **the Rev. Kathleen Stone**, an educational program developer, former chaplain of the Church Center for the United Nations, and author of **United Women in Faith's 2022 Advent online reflections**; and **Jaren Keaton**, executive director of Alliance Center for Education (formerly Bethlehem Center of Charlotte), a National Mission Institution in North Carolina.



St. Matthew's UMC-UWF is holding the **Annual Christmas Brunch Saturday, Dec 3, from 10am to noon**. For \$10 donation you will receive a catered self-serve brunch of ham, Mac & Cheese, salads and fabulous Costco desserts. Entertainment from *The Brothers Choir*. And a Mission Market offering Homemade cards and hand-knit and crocheted gift items. St. Mathews UMC, 8617 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, VA 22003.

<https://www.stmatthewsumc.org/blog-1/christmas-party>

Go to St. Matthews UMC Annandale VA web page to see the Sign-Up Genius. There will be an opportunity to donate to our Annual Candle Burning for a suggested donation of \$5 per name. Names "In Honor of" and/or "In Memory of" will be included in the program.



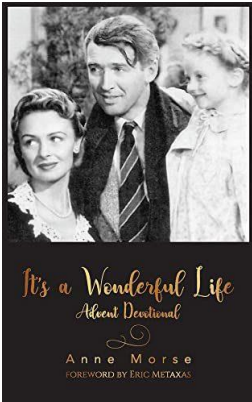
St. John's UWF at St. John's United Methodist Church -
cordially invites all women of St. John's to the
UWF Christmas Festivities

Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in Donaldson Hall.

A light supper, installation of 2023 officers, presentation of mission awards & "A Night of Christmas Fun."

The dinner is potluck so please bring a dish to share.

<https://www.saintjohnsumc.org/index.php>



DEL RAY UMC, 100 East Windsor Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL, December 11th & 18th

The United Women in Faith invite you to join in reading a daily Advent devotional entitled *It's a Wonderful Life* by **Anne Morse**.

The UWF will gather together to watch the movie (TBD) as well as discuss what they've learned from their devotional readings (Dec. 11th & 18th)!

This book can be purchased on Amazon, For additional information & times e-mail Maria Ward at maria.ward@gmail.com to be notified.



Rising Hope Mission Church

<https://www.facebook.com/RisingHope/> -Join us this Thursday for our next Art Devotion - Christmas ornaments! We're going to start the Advent season by decorating ornaments that can be given as gifts or hung at your house. While we work on them, we'll talk about the meaning of Advent as a way of anticipating the coming of Jesus Christ.

Dec. 1, 12:00-1:30pm, Materials are provided.

Come celebrate the season with us. Children are welcome! Art Devotion happens the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month.



**Northern Virginia District
United Women in Faith
Ugly Sweater Christmas Party
Pender United Methodist Church
12401 Alder Woods Dr, Fairfax, VA 22033**

**December 4, 2022
2pm-4pm**

Come celebrate with us in person for the fun, for the food, and for the fellowship.

Please bring an appetizer, dessert, or light refreshment to share.

Ugly Sweater not required!

Ugly Christmas Sweater UWF Party, Sunday, December 4, 2:00 p.m. at Pender UMC-2401 Alder Woods Dr, Fairfax, VA 22033 - near Fair Oaks Mall, 12401 Alder Woods Drive, Fairfax, VA

UWF Updated Purpose

We are a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.



CREATION JUSTICE MINISTRIES

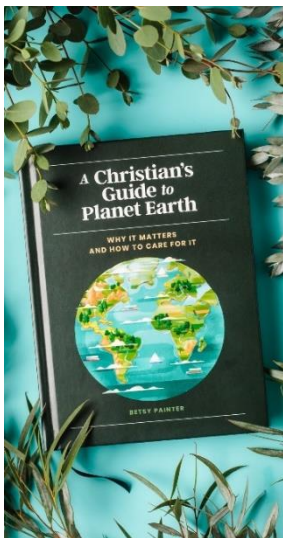
A CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE TO PLANET EARTH: AUTHOR TALK W/ BETSY PAINTER

Thursday, December 8
6pm Eastern Time
creationjustice.org/events

The banner features a green background with a circular inset on the left showing the book cover and a circular inset on the right showing a portrait of Betsy Painter. The text is in a light green, serif font.

Author Betsy Painter Talk, Thursday, December 8, 2022 @ 6:00 PM Eastern Time,

Register: <https://secure.everyaction.com/aFJqCPHtOEGzIXeMMRslpA2>



On Zoom (register to receive the link)

Drawing on science and Scripture, the book *A Christian's Guide to Planet Earth: Why It Matters and How to Care for It* offers a hope-filled, reader-friendly guide to help navigate questions about caring for God's world.



Join us for a discussion with author Betsy Painter. Together, we'll explore connections between our planet's different ecosystems, the challenges of climate change and ecological breakdown, Scripture, and our spiritual experience of God's Creation.



Reminder for *NoVA Notes*, our new Bi-District newsletter for the Alexandria and Arlington Districts! We will distribute this newsletter monthly to keep you informed of what's happening with the *United Women in Faith* in our area. In this newsletter, you can watch for news about upcoming events both in the districts and the Virginia Conference. We would love to hear from you! Let us know what your unit doing for the 2022 & 2023 church-years so we can share with our sisters in Christ. **Please send the information for the newsletter by the 20th of the month.** Please, we NEED your NoVA events information! You can send your stories and news to our new e-mail address: UMWNoVaNotes@gmail.com.

Thank you!
Carol Pratt

No wonder we celebrate the birth of Christ in the darkest days of the year. Jesus came as the light of the world. However, God has been in the business of lighting up the world from the beginning of Creation (Genesis 1:3-4).

Look at a traditional nativity scene. See the sheep, the donkey, the cow, maybe even a camel?

All creation rejoices in the divine light!

Christmas is a special opportunity to recognize God's light and love—
not only for humans but for all creation. Our response is to love in return.



Tips for December 2022

Christmas lights are symbols of the Light that came into the world with the birth of Christ.

Enjoy them and **use LED's wherever you can** to take care of the world that Jesus lit up with his presence.

Christmas-shop without plastic bags. We've been learning to take our own reusable bags to the grocery store. The same principle works in retail stores. Carry in your own bags, politely decline the store's plastic ones, and tell the clerks you are cutting down on single-use plastic. **It's your gift to the planet.**

Use and reuse gift bags rather than wrapping paper. While it might be fun to rip and tear into a wrapped present, the fancy paper itself is most likely to be laminated with plastic, foil, glitter, or other non-paper materials that contaminate a recycle bin. So, go for the bags!

Give Fair Trade presents this Christmas. Buying Fair Trade provides the creators—farmers, laborers, and artisans—fair prices and stable incomes, reduces poverty, betters working conditions, and promotes environmentally sustainable practices. It's a just and good deal for all! If you like coffee, explore the Velasquez Family Coffee website (vfamilycoffee.com). There is a United Methodist connection there!

****I know there is a Fair Trade store somewhere in the NOVA area but the one I knew is moved. It was in Fairfax City years ago but where is it now? Does anyone know where?? Please let us know.*

Give presence, not just presents. Give an adventure, an experience that can be shared, talked about, and remembered long after the usual "stuff" has been covered over in the landfill.

Give a [JeltBelt](#). Stylish and stretchy, the belts are made from recycled plastic bottles. This gift holds up and cleans up too. **Support a company that cares for the earth** and give the recipients of your gift something to think about and talk about.

Invite the children to make decorations for Christmas. Show them how to cut snowflakes from recycled paper or create a collage or ornaments by using greeting cards from a previous year. Encourage them to find joy in reusing rather than trashing. The learning will carry on past the holidays.

The United Methodist Creation Justice Movement is providing these Tips as a tool to equip church members, families, and individuals to respond to God's call to care for creation. umcreationjustice.org.

