



United
Women
in Faith

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

NOVA NOTES

JANUARY 2026



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.

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



Mid-week prayers from the 2025 UWF Prayer Calendar

Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see.

Hebrews 11:1

January 2026

In this unknown landscape, God showed me that wayfinding isn't just about maps – it's about walking alongside others, trusting God to lead us forward. ~ Valerie Riedthaler, Order of Deaconess & Home Missioner, Sandusky City School District, Sandusky, Ohio, USA

January 7 – Creator God, as you designed beauty and order from chaos, open our hearts to your vision of love. Heal us and guide us on the path of service to others. Amen. ~ Susan Silhan, Order of Deaconess & Home Missioner, Healing & Wholeness Ministry of Selah, Burdett, New York, USA

January 14 – My Lord, my God, and Parent, we thank you for your guidance and leading. We can do nothing without you. Help us to live by faith in Christ. Amen. ~ Gwanghui Jeong, Global Mission Fellows-International from South Korea serving in Cambodia

January 21 – Creator, we lift ourselves up to you. May you nudge us in the comings and goings, in thoughts and trials, restoring the broken and filling our spirits for your glory. ~ Cheryl Fox-Bender, Order of Deaconess & Home Missioner, New Creation Counseling Center, Tipp City, Ohio

January 28 – My Heavenly Parent, protect me from harm and keep me safe as I navigate unfamiliar paths. I trust in your sovereignty and guidance, knowing that you are always with me. Amen. ~ Natalia Manyeza, Global Missionary from Zimbabwe serving in Sierra Leone



Sunday afternoon, January 11 – Northern Virginia United Women in Faith Winter Games Party
2:00 at Fairfax UMC, 10300 Stratford Ave, Fairfax, VA 22030.
Bring your favorite table game and a little nibble to share.
We'll let you know about any need to re-schedule because of weather.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS OR REGISTER EARLY FOR DISCOUNT!

United Methodist Day at General Assembly

Date: January 29, 2026 Time: 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Location: Centenary UMC (Parking Lot Address: 400 E Franklin St
Richmond, VA 23219) Fees: \$40 through Jan. 18, Student: \$10**

Registration link

<https://brushfire.com/vaumc/umdayatthegeneralassembly2026/614665>

**Check SOON with your friends and UWF groups to see if you could carpool
to Richmond, VA for this UWF participation in 2026!**

Wednesday evening, January 14 – Unit Treasurer training over Zoom

Treasurers as well as other officers are encouraged to attend this session to learn about handling and reporting on our precious mission money.

Saturday, January 17 – Northern Virginia District Training Day for the UM church. The Northern Virginia (NoVa) District Training Day for the United Methodist Church. At Floris UMC, Floris UMC, 13600 Frying Pan Road, Herndon, Virginia 20171. https://novaumc.org/training_day/, Regular registration December 18 through **January 7**: \$60 per person.

2026 Training Day
January 17, 2026
Floris United Methodist Church

		
Ashley Boggan Wesleyan Vile-tality	Jason Moore AI & the Church	Faniel Pradel Modern Music & Worship

10 leader training (2)

Sunday afternoon, January 25 – Unit Officer training over Zoom – 2:00pm

All unit officers and others who are interested are welcome to attend this session to learn about how we can all work together to make our units succeed as we continue our missions to women, children, and youth.

Saturday morning, January 31 – Unit Officer training over Zoom – 9:00am

A repeat session of officer training. A second opportunity to get all our officers up to speed!



These are a repeat for the newsletter but their content changes monthly!

Podcasts & Webinars (click on title under image):

Past podcasts, Interviews & Discussions are recorded for YOU.



[Faith Talks](#)



[Voices From the Field](#)



[Just Energy for All](#)



Jan 13

January United Women in Faith Digital Open House

Tue, Jan 13, 2026 • 8:00pm - 9:00pm EST

Livestream [RSVP](#)

<https://uwfaith.mn.co/events/january-united-women-in-faith-digital-open-house>

Join us for an overview of United Women in Faith Digital, our private space for content and community.

In this one-hour Zoom, we'll share:

- How and why we chose this platform for our members
- How to set up your profile and get connected, step by step
- Resources and opportunities you won't want to miss

We'll also have plenty of time for questions!

You'll walk away feeling confident and equipped about how and why to use United Women in Faith Digital.

Note that registration on Zoom is required. Feel free to share this information widely.

[Click here to register in advance for this meeting.](#) [Olivia DiAgostino](#)



Love, Justice, Service: Deaconesses & Home Missioners in Ministry

Host [United Women in Faith](#)

Hear how three newly consecrated deaconesses
are living out their lifetime calls to love, justice, and service.

Guests are:

- Deaconess Myra Cruz Cubos, California-Nevada Conference – CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) for Foster Youth, Fresno, CA
- Deaconess Rebecca Miller, Western Pennsylvania Conference – Physician Assistant, Warren General Hospital, Warren, PA
- Deaconess Dr. Ginny Whitehouse, Kentucky Conference – Professor/Director of ICCA School of Communication, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY

Don't miss the opportunity to join the Voices from the Field virtual event to find out more about the work of the Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner, administered by United Women in Faith. Learn from people who are transforming their communities and how you, through Mission Giving, make this transformation possible. The **quarterly Voices from the Field events** feature leaders sharing their work and life stories, daily challenges, hopes, and dreams. This conversation series highlights United Women in Faith's initiatives supported by Mission Giving—initiatives that significantly improve the lives of women, children, and youth down the block and around the world.

YOU TUBE Link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSweff2vT7A&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fuwfaith.mn.co%2F



[The Link](#)

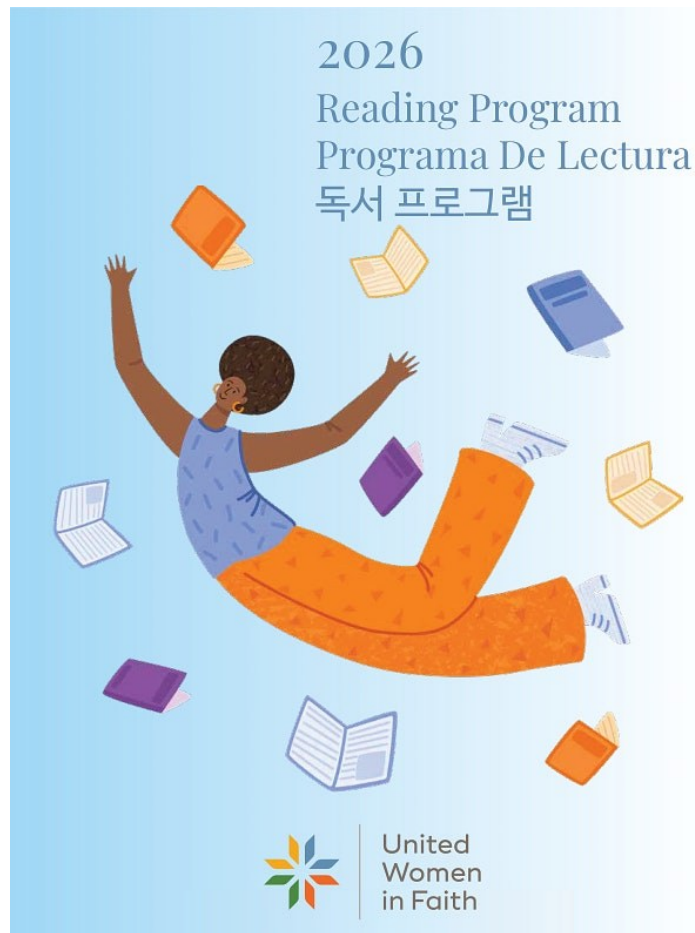
<https://buttondown.com/vauwf/archive/the-link-november-2025-9358/>

 [The Link November 2025](#)

November 3, 2025

This is The Link - the quarterly Virginia Conference newsletter for United Women in Faith. Click above to download The Link (PDF) Inside this issue.

>>>>Check out the
2026 Reading Program



<https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=13204>

A virtual page at bookshop.org/shop/uwfaith where you can browse and purchase most of the 2026 Reading Program books while earning 10% back to United Women in Faith to support our work.

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

Eligible years: For 2026, books from the 2021-2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026 Reading Program lists are all eligible for Reading Program reporting credit, if you have not previously read them.



January 2026

John Wesley began a New Year tradition of leading people in renewing their covenant* with God. At the very beginning, God gave us a garden to tend and till. Now is the time to renew your commitment to be good stewards of Earth. **Choose one new thing you can do throughout the year to care for creation.**

Why not eat beef? Wanting this food increases the demand for grazing land and corn cultivation, which increases deforestation (even in the Amazon Rain Forest) and emissions as grain travels to cattle, cattle to slaughter, meat to groceries and restaurants. Reduce those pressures. **Eat less or no beef.**

Stop wearing plastic. Are you surprised? Synthetic fibers from clothing are a significant contribution to **microplastic pollution**. Go back to nature—wool, cotton, silk, and even bamboo and hemp. Plastic doesn't go away.

Plastic bottles or aluminum cans? Technically, both are recyclable. However, due to multiple factors beyond putting it in the recycling bin, plastic is less likely to be recycled into new products. On the other hand, the systems for recycling aluminum are effective. **Choose aluminum.**

To God's prophet Jeremiah, it seemed nobody was listening as he warned of impending doom from the Babylonians. In the face of climate change, we too may feel ineffective as we speak out for justice. Jeremiah continued: He was faithful to his call from God to speak up, and he bought land as a sign of hope, trusting God that the people would return. **Stay faithful to your call.**

Drilling for gas and oil on previously protected lands is disrupting the habitats and reproductive patterns of the native species. So, in addition to spending valuable resources to provide deadly greenhouse emissions, the policy is also killing wildlife. **Speak up for funding alternative energy sources and for protecting God's creation.**

If you live in an apartment complex, condo, or retirement community, do they have a recycling service? Are they planting trees? Or switching to LED lights? If not, advocate for God's creation. Gather a **Green Team** of residents who care. **Educate** the other residents, and lobby for change.

Invest in the future, not the past. Your bank account, insurance, or stock portfolio may be supporting the fossil

fuel industry. If their practices do not align with your values, change banks, insurance companies, or stockbrokers and tell them why. **Reinvest in clean energy and sustainable practices.**

Keep in mind these three big threes: 1) Carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide make up greenhouse gas emissions; 2) emissions, deforestation, and food waste are top contributors to climate change; 3) viewing life through the lens of climate justice (how global warming is affecting people near and far), **making changes both large and small, and speaking up to others are keys to addressing the problems.**

The cost of solar has dropped dramatically. The environmental and justice costs of fossil fuels have climbed relentlessly. Make this year a renew year to **investigate and install clean energy at home, church, business, or community buildings.**

**Anew
The calendar
gives us a New Year to begin anew.
God, however, gives us grace to
begin again
“morning by morning”—
even minute by minute.
With that gift of grace, we renew our resolve to care
for Earth and justice.**

Yes, One Person Can Make a Difference!

Be aware that everything you touch, use, consume, buy—it has to go somewhere. Mostly your trashcan. **Buy in bulk** (no packaging); **bring your own container or bag.** **Reuse everything** instead of throwing it out to end up in a landfill. Develop a keen awareness of what you are buying/using as a consumer and do better in **striving for net-zero waste in your home.** I've been practicing *landfill plastic reduction* since 2019. —Susan March, Wilkes Boulevard UMC, Columbia, Missouri

As a reader of the Tips, do you have a Tip to share from your own experience? Send your idea to tips.creationjustice@gmail.com.





The website for Assembly 2026 is open!

This year's Assembly, themed "*Dream it! Believe it! Do it!*" will take place in Indianapolis, May 15-17, 2026.

Visit UWFaith.org/Assembly to learn more Stacey Abrams, Workshops, Soul Care, Town Halls, & More. Registration Now Open,



Stacey Abrams-Keynote Speaker



Carolyn Abrams-Keynote Speaker

We are thrilled to share that Assembly 2026 will host longtime United Methodists Stacey Abrams and longtime UWFaith member Rev. Carolyn Abrams in conversation as our Inspiration Speakers.



ON THE DAY BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY STARTS....

Soul Care Retreat: Make Space for You



Imagine stepping into feeling completely grounded and refreshed. We invite you to begin your experience with our **1-day Soul Care Retreat** on **Thursday, May 14**, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

at the **Indiana Convention Assembly 2026 Center in Indianapolis.**

In a demanding world that leaves many feeling stretched thin, this retreat offers a dedicated sanctuary—a haven to pause, truly rest, reflect on our current pace, and prayerfully consider how to move forward differently. This profound journey will nurture your mind, body, and spirit through a beautiful blend of spiritual formation and healing arts, guided by the wisdom of **Rev. Dr. Dionne Boissière.**





Special presentation on **Tuesday, January the 13th, 7:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. at Trinity UMC, in the Connecting Room, 2911 Cameron Mills**

Rd., Alexandria, VA.

Ron Fitzsimmons, the Executive Director of *Alice's Kid's*, will share with us how they provide specific items for needy children.

Alice's Kid's is an Alexandria based non-profit that uses a unique process to identify targeted assistance to children. With a single mother in the 1960s, Ron and his sister Laura were known as "welfare kids". In 2011, Ron and Laura decided to try to come up with a way to help lift children in similar situations.

I hope you will be able to join us.

Questions? Alva asmircina@gmail.com

Alice's Kids: <https://www.aliceskids.org/our-process>

Save the Dates!

Happy New Year! Your NOVA District Mission Team diligently planned a fabulous 2026 for NOVA District UWF members and we encourage you to mark you calendars for these events.

As your Spiritual Growth Coordinator, I hope you enjoy the monthly mid-week prayers from the UWF Daily Prayer Guide 2026. I also ask that you plan to attend the following Spiritual Growth opportunities as noted below:

- **February 18 (10:00-11:00am) - Quiet Day Service** hosted by Sydenstricker UMC and UWF (8508 Hoes Road, Springfield, VA 22153). Rev. Don Jamison is our speaker and pianist Becky McCauley will accompany our voices raised in praise to God.
- **May 2 (9:00am-1:00pm) - Spiritual Life Retreat** hosted by Sterling UMC and UWF (304 East Church Road, Sterling, VA 20164). Beth Norcross will lead us to discover spirituality in nature. Check in and fellowship with finger foods begins at 9:00. Program is scheduled for 9:30-12:00noon, followed by lunch). Registration instructions will be announced closer to the date. I look forward to seeing you at these and other NOVA District UWF events in 2026!

Shalom,

Karlene Masters
2025-2026 Spiritual Growth Coordinator



Many, many **thanks** to all of you who donated toiletries, stationery, and greeting cards to the Christmas Gift Ministry for the women incarcerated at the **Fluvanna Correctional Center** in Troy, Virginia. Your generosity and commitment are so vital to the success of this ministry.

I delivered to my Fluvanna contact **91 hygiene kits**, and several boxes/bags containing stationery, greeting cards, additional toothbrushes, toothpaste, lotion, shampoo and deodorant.

Also, **over \$1,000** was contributed by individuals and units to the Fluvanna Resource Fund administered by GraceInside. These funds are used to purchase hygiene kit shortages, or provide travel expenses for funeral or deathbed visits, worship materials, and other incidentals necessary to support the prison population.

At Christmas about 1,200 grateful women at Fluvanna are given the hygiene kits. They look forward to receiving them. Just to know that people “in the outside world” are thinking of them, especially during the holidays, is very important to their outlook on life.

GraceInside (the chaplaincy that oversees this ministry) wrote: “We appreciate your continued support of this important ministry and thank you for your generosity and service to the Lord.”

Again, thank you for your contributions to this great mission outreach, and for all you do to support women, children, and youth year after year. May you and yours be truly blessed this holiday season.

Marty Bickford



UWF 2025 Prayer Calendar

Tuesday, December 31

Your Gifts at Work:

Funds support Grassroots International programs that improve the social-political and economic situation of rural women in the Gaza Strip by promoting women’s leadership and gender equality through trainings on agroecology, food sovereignty, gender and climate justice, income generation, and empowerment for women.

Lectionary Reading

Kings 3:5–14

John 8:12–19

***Feb 14, 2026, Sat 9am, 9:30-11:30 am via Zoom
Charter for Racial Justice event Three Notch'd District***