



United  
Women  
in Faith

# NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

## NOVA NOTES

JULY 2025



### 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.



On June 10, a group of interfaith clergy and lay people gathered together in a **prayer vigil and assembly** as “*Pentecostal Witness for a Moral Budget*” to meet with US legislators regarding the inequity and harm that would be caused by the proposed budget (currently referred to as the “One Big Beautiful Bill.”). More than 500 people attended the “**Grace Over Greed**” gathering on Capitol Hill, many of whom are United Women in Faith. Pictured above: Elizabeth Lee, Karen McElfish, Doris Douglass, Marlene Dakita, Maria Ward, Brenda Romenius

The “Grace Over Greed Campaign” calls for lawmakers to support a moral budget that centers grace over greed and protects the vulnerable and marginalized, many of whom are women, youth and children.

Protect Medicaid, which provides health care to those of low-income and the disabled (the House-passed version includes up to \$2.3 trillion cuts to Medicaid over ten years and additional work requirements which limit access to care) ....

- Preserving the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for families, children, and seniors (the House-passed version includes cutting \$230 billion from SNAP)
- Investing in programs that care for the sick, feed the hungry, and uplift vulnerable communities

United Women in Faith from the greater Washington, DC area and the country were present in the assembly. Elizabeth Lee from the UWF National Office was a guest speaker. Karen McElfish, president of the Virginia Conference UWF, was among those interviewed by the media and you can view her interview as featured in the [Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/politics/faith-leaders-democratic-senators-protest-trump-tax-bill/2025/06/10/a7509f6e-a853-4ea2-a9a1-0fae6a15f54b_video.html) here -

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/politics/faith-leaders-democratic-senators-protest-trump-tax-bill/2025/06/10/a7509f6e-a853-4ea2-a9a1-0fae6a15f54b\\_video.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/politics/faith-leaders-democratic-senators-protest-trump-tax-bill/2025/06/10/a7509f6e-a853-4ea2-a9a1-0fae6a15f54b_video.html)

United Methodists are rooted in the **gospel imperative to love our neighbors, do justice, and care for the vulnerable.** Our Social Principles call us to:

- Recognize and protect the inherent worth of all people
- Advocate for governments that guarantee basic freedoms, protect the natural world, and establish just, equitable, and sustainable economies
- Engage in responsible political action for the common good

As United Women in Faith, we uphold these principles in the context of our Mission Statement and Purpose. Though many cannot be present for these gatherings, you can voice concerns to your legislative representative by mail, or on-line at their websites. To the right is a photo taken on the steps of the United Methodist Building in Washington, DC. Members of the NOVA District UWF included in the picture are Maria Ward, Marlene Dakita, Doris Douglass and Cheryl Moore.

***“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8***

Brenda Romenius  
NOVA District UWF



**\*\*Movements of the Heart: Church, Change, and the Call Ahead\*\*****\*Reflections from the 2025 Virginia Annual Conference\*****\*Roanoke, Virginia | June 12–14\***

Attending the Virginia Annual Conference for the first time was an experience I won't forget. The theme, **"Movement of the Heart,"** was a fitting invitation—to listen deeply, respond with compassion, and remain open to where the Spirit is leading, both individually and as a Church.

Some key takeaways:

- The worship gatherings were a grounding force, offering peace, perspective, and renewal.
- One of my personal highlights was the singing during worship. Joining our voices in praise created moments of joy and deep spiritual connection.
- It was eye-opening to see how the Church operates at a broader level, and to meet fellow United Methodists from across Virginia. I was able to meet Women-In-Faith that I had only met on-line; what a blessing that was. Additionally, it was awesome to see Maria, Marty, Lois, Doris and Melissa thank you sisters for making me feel welcome.
- Another deeply sobering moment came with the formal closure of 26 churches. It was a powerful reminder of the changing landscape of ministry. Yet even in that grief, there is hope—because we serve a God who brings new life from loss, and the Spirit is always moving us toward what's next. As the Bishop reminded us, we are the buildings, ones sent to spread the Gospel with our lives, our love, and our witness (paraphrasing).
- One thing that stood out was the lack of ethnic diversity in attendance. In such a large, predominantly white gathering, there was little conversation about representation or racial inclusion. This feels like an opportunity for the Conference to grow—not only in faith, but in equity. A dedicated session or open dialogue on diversity could be a meaningful next step.

We have meaningful work ahead—but I believe that if we continue to listen with open hearts and follow where God leads, we will become a more inclusive, faithful, and Spirit-led Church.

Thank you all for the opportunity to represent this District. A shoutout to my Uber driver; my husband (lol) who also enjoyed himself. It was also nice to have my Pastor, Rev. Dr. Brian K. Brown to chaperone me for my first time conference experience.

Lord use me to be your vessel.

*Loretta B. Henderson*  
President





## UWF Event Re-cap:

Spiritual Life Event (SLR) Northern Virginia District UWF,  
June 7, 2025 8:30am – 1:00pm, Oakton United Methodist Church,  
Spiritual Care for Caregivers of Loved Ones with Dementia

Speakers: Maria Delpizzo, RN, and Pam Phillips, RN.



**Myrna:** *“Yes, Saturday’s program was so positive, uplifting and fantastic. Both Maria and Pam”.*

**Marty:** *“The Caregiver for Loved Ones with Dementia program given yesterday at the Spiritual Life Retreat by Maria Delpizzo and Pam Phillips was wonderful. I believe everyone who attended went home with good information about how to approach family members and friends who have dementia, as well as how to take care of themselves as caregivers.*

*Thanks to Karlene Masters and Lois Hidalgo for their organization of this event, and those who pitched in to help set-up and take-down.*

### Education and Interpretation

Hello everyone. I hope all is well with you! Summer has arrived and it seems that our family is just as busy...if not more so. My grandchildren keep me hopping...but I wouldn't trade it for anything!!!

I hope that your unit has had a good year with mission work. Please continue to fill out the current **LIOP forms**. They should be mailed or emailed to me no later than September 6th, so that I can go over them and send my report to the Conference level by their deadline. Don't forget Mission U coming up soon. Unfortunately, I won't be able to attend as I am going with the family to Disneyland in CA!

Here is the link to the current form. We will have a new updated form this fall! <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZN4VQIzC2MFbBlfmwRzGe2FcOgY4ElzG/view>

As always, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns!! Take care.

Lois Hidalgo  
E&I Coordinator  
Nova District UWF

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Oakton, Va. 22124

**Mid-week prayers from the 2025 UWF Prayer Calendar**



**July 2025**

**God has a plan and a purpose for every generation.** ~Kim Kilpatrick, Rosa Valdez Early Learning & Laboratory Center, Tampa, Florida

**July 2** – God of Ebenezer, who has been our help so far, may you be the same God of Ebenezer to new generations as well. Amen. ~Jaehyoung Choi, Global Missionary from South Korea serving in the United States as Missionary in Residence

**July 9** – Lord, thank you for our friends and family. Thank you especially for intergenerational friendships. Please guide us in our interactions with those we love. In a world that is so divided, please help us to be kind and loving. Help us to bridge the divide. Amen. ~Maria Hase, Order of Deaconess & Home Missioner, Alhambra Elementary School District, Phoenix, Arizona

**July 16** – Lord, may technology connect us and not separate us generationally. Give me guidance and wisdom to be more like Jesus in how I navigate the gaps among us. Amen. ~Jessica Morgan, Therapeutic Recreation Manager, Murphy-Harpst Children’s Centers, Cedartown, Georgia

**July 23** – We praise God for youth whose actions are a testimony of God’s love, compassion, and wisdom. May God continue to bless and provide for them. Amen. ~Rita Jeremias, Executive Secretary, Mozambique North Annual Conference

**July 30** – Lord Jesus, I am praying for your children who are doing the ministry of your church. May they be filled with the Holy Spirit, guide them, and strengthen their faith. ~Loi Salizar, Order of Deaconess & Home Missioner, Dr. Lena Edwards Charter School, Jersey City, New Jersey.

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**Podcasts & Webinars (click on title under image):**



[Faith Talks](#)



[Voices From the Field](#)



[Just Energy for All](#)

*"For everything there is a season..." Ecclesiastes 3:3-8*

**Here's a Creation Justice Sample Tip**

Jesus has told us that we are to care for the "least of these who are members of [Christ's] family" (Matthew 25:40). Working to ameliorate climate change recognizes that people like Jesus described, those with few resources or connections, will suffer the most from the ravages that are more and more evident.

Jesus calls us to care for humanity and to work for climate justice.

sign up for monthly tips, newsletter, blog, Creation Justice News & stories.

<https://umcreationjustice.org/>

**July 2025**

Air conditioners use a high amount of energy to cool a space, resulting in more greenhouse gas emissions. Ceiling fans, on the other hand, use minimal energy to circulate air and can make a room feel cooler without drastically reducing the temperature. **Flip the switch to your fan.**

**Make your church's property cooler.** Consider removing the paving from a portion of the parking lot and planting trees in the newly reclaimed land. In the midst of urban heat-reflecting concrete and asphalt, a church with lots of trees stands out as an inviting sanctuary.

**Cool off the market for plastic.** *Refuse, reduce, and reuse* strategies work; recycle is less available. Remember your reusable shopping bags; choose a non-plastic reusable drink container; buy bulk, refillable, or solid items such as shampoo bars that have no plastic packaging; switch to glass storage bowls; **move away from "disposable" anything.**

**Cool your own temperature by reconnecting with nature.** With life's hot pressures assaulting you, take time to be in God's creation to gain perspective and renewal. Shade offers a 10–15-degree respite from direct sunlight.

Only seven states have laws to protect workers with outdoor jobs from extreme heat. Despite the dangers, others leave it up to employers to decide. Find out what safeguards are in place or not and **advocate for lifesaving policies.** Seek justice for those who cannot speak up for themselves.

**United Women in Faith**

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Ready to be more active in service and advocacy? Dedicated to Climate Justice, Racial Justice and Equity, Impact offers galvanizing opportunities to learn, connect with like-minded women and make a difference. With this path, you'll receive action alerts for Legislative actions, rallies and marches, letter-writing campaigns and other ways to act boldly.

Visit <https://uwfaith.org/get-involved/become-a-member/> to learn more.



Northern Virginia District United Women in Faith

## Mini-Mission Event

July 12, 2025

9am – 3pm

Sydenstricker United Methodist Church  
8508 Hooes Rd, Springfield, VA 22153

### Living the Kin-Dom

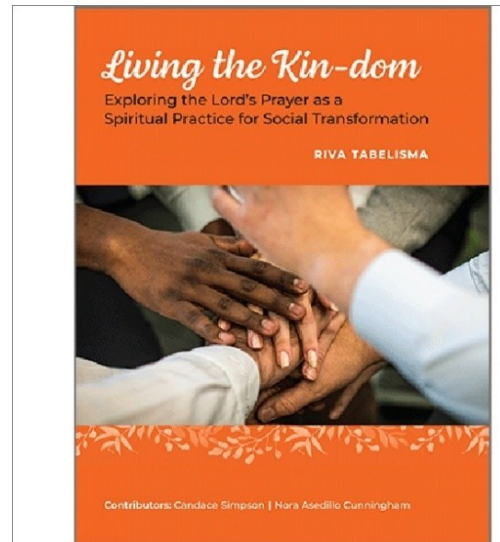
#### Exploring the Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation

The Lord's Prayer is a rich guide for how we can live out God's kingdom in our lives. We will focus on the different aspects of the Lord's Prayer and how it points us to living Christlike. Join us as we explore the depths of this powerful prayer.

Speaker: Dr. Jason Stanley

Rev. Dr. Jason C. Stanley is an ordained deacon in the United Methodist Church and currently serving as the Director for Call & Candidacy for The Virginia Annual Conference.

Light Breakfast and Lunch provided by Sydenstricker UWF Unit.



**July update: Time is upon us for mailing in our registration to Marty Bickford for our next District Event. We will need registrations (received) by July 6. This deadline is to make sure we have a catered lunch available for you. If you have waited it too long, please bring your own lunch and call Myrna Meling at 703.451.6830 so we will have your seat reservation. The registration fee is \$20 for all participants.**

**We look forward to see each of you on Saturday, July 12 by 9am.**

**Mission u 2025:** <https://www.vauwf.org/missionu>

## Mission U 2025 – Practicing Hope

Are you longing to deepen your faith?

**Mission U 2025 is for YOU!**



Plus  
Worship and singing • Food and fellowship •  
Hands-on mission project  
at

**Good Shepherd UMC**

9155 Hungary Rd  
Henrico, VA 23294

**VA United Methodist  
Center**

10330 Staples Mill Rd  
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Craving connection and community with like-hearted Christians?

Laura Douglass, Registrar

[missionu@vauwf.org](mailto:missionu@vauwf.org)

call text: 571-689-4365

**July 25-27, 2025 Friday – Sunday**

Registration Information: Our Mission u event this year is designed for adults ages 18 and older, and sessions are offered in English and Korean. You can attend in person or over Zoom.

The registration options are:

1. **Hotel room with roommate** (pending availability) – Register and stay two nights at the Mission u hotel, the Hampton Inn Glenside. It is included in the price of **\$235.00**.
2. Register **without a hotel room** for those who live locally or want to make their own hotel reservations. That registration fee is **\$80.00**.
3. Register to attend over Zoom (English only). That fee is **\$30**.

### Contacts

Dean: [Maria Ward](#)

Registrar: Rev. Laura Douglass [missionu@vauwf.org](mailto:missionu@vauwf.org), 571-689-4365

Hello NOVA District UWF Sisters

The information below is from the National Office of the United Women in Faith regarding the availability of **grant money for units engaged in programs/projects to interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline**. Some units may be working with local schools to encourage youth activities and engagement, or local police organizations in sustaining positive youth relationships, or juvenile detention centers in mentoring youth for leadership skills.

Information and resources regarding the School-to-Prison Pipeline can be found at the United Women in Faith website <http://www.uwfaith.org> – “School to Prison Pipeline.”

Please share this information with your unit. Details for applying for the grant money is included in the information below. Applications must be received by September 1.

Brenda Romenius  
NOVA District UWF

**Make an Impact**

### **Small-Scale Grant Opportunity for Districts and Units Working to Interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline**

**Deadline to Apply: September 1, 2025**

The Office of Racial Justice invites United Women in Faith Districts and Units to apply for funding to support their local work to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline and/or end mass incarceration.

#### **Goal of Funding Support**

To advance United Women in Faith’s efforts to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline and end mass incarceration by providing small-scale seed funding to support district and local unit projects.

#### **Available Funding Support**

Consideration will be given to funding requests of \$100 - \$1,500. Funding is limited. Please budget responsibly and request only the amount needed. Requests for funding support in excess of \$1,500 will not be considered.

## Criteria for Evaluating Applications for Funding Support

Your project should have a **clear goal** connected to interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline and/or ending mass incarceration. Goals may be at any level, from changing the practice of an individual school to shifting federal juvenile justice policy. Project goals should demonstrate a healthy mix of ambition and realism.

Your project should **include the voices of directly-impacted people** in the leadership and/or decision-making process. Depending on your specific context, this may include students at risk of pushout, currently- or formerly-incarcerated people, or others.

We believe we do our best and most sustainable work when we work together. With that in mind, United Women in Faith groups are welcome to apply for funding to support **collaborative work** in coalition/partnership with other local organizations, as long as the work involves substantial and active participation from the United Women in Faith Unit or District, as well.

Groups that receive funding will be asked to report on their results, including:

- What was done;
- Who was involved;
- How the community was impacted;
- How funds were spent;
- What next steps are planned; and
- What was learned.

### Timeline

- **Application deadline – September 1, 2025**
- Groups notified of funding support decisions – By October 15, 2025
- Groups confirm plan to move forward (or not) – By November 1, 2025
- Selected group(s) receive funding – By December 15, 2025
- Implementation of project – Calendar Year 2026
- Report on results due – By February 1, 2027

[Click Here for Application Directions and Link](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZvvJb7IB9f4Mpkg-Bbq8796c4nkpxlQT/edit?mc_cid=7dbe74a5d2&mc_eid=12c4a01b29&tab=t.0)

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZvvJb7IB9f4Mpkg-Bbq8796c4nkpxlQT/edit?mc\\_cid=7dbe74a5d2&mc\\_eid=12c4a01b29&tab=t.0](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZvvJb7IB9f4Mpkg-Bbq8796c4nkpxlQT/edit?mc_cid=7dbe74a5d2&mc_eid=12c4a01b29&tab=t.0)

**COMING SOON!...**

**August 6, 13, 20, 27 -- Spanish language fun!**

Join Margie Hernandez on **Wednesday mornings from 10 am – 11:15 a.m. via Zoom** and learn about the Latin culture, play games, and above all, learn some conversational Spanish.

Register here: [August Spanish practice](#)



**August -- Coffee & Chat times around the NoVa District**

**Please come by to say hello, ask questions about your year-end reporting, and learn what's coming this fall for NoVa United Women in Faith.**

Saturday, August 2, 2:00 -- Burton's Grill, 21434 Epicerie Plaza, Sterling, VA 20164  
-- in the Cascades Overlook Town Center

Sunday, August 3, 2:00 -- Artie's, 3260 Blenheim Blvd, Fairfax, VA 22030

Saturday, August 9, 2:00 -- O'Brien's, 380 Broadview Ave, Warrenton, VA 20186

Sunday, August 10, 2:00 -- Hahu Cafe and Market, 3143 Golansky Blvd, Woodbridge, VA 22192

Questions? Contact Maria Ward

**Young Women's Retreat in September**

The Virginia Conference United Women in Faith is hosting the **Young Women's Retreat September 19-20** (Friday evening and Saturday) at Camp Overlook in Keezletown (Harrisonburg), VA. This is an event for women between the ages of 18 and 40. St. John's United Women in Faith is offering a scholarship to a young woman (she doesn't have to be a member of the church) who is interested in attending. For more information, please contact Marty at [martybickford121@outlook.com](mailto:martybickford121@outlook.com).



**The website for Assembly 2026 is now open!**

**This year's Assembly, themed "*Dream it! Believe it! Do it!*" will take place in Indianapolis,**

**May 15-17, 2026. Registration opens Sept. 1, 2025.**

Visit [UWFaith.org/Assembly](http://UWFaith.org/Assembly) to learn more