



United
Women
in Faith

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

NOVA NOTES

NOVEMBER, 2024



**Please share this invite and link with others in your group/circle/unit.*

RECAP:



**Northern Virginia District
United Women in Faith
October 19, 2024 Annual Meeting
Extraordinary Women**

SPEAKER: Rev. Gwen Hess, Pastor, Aldie UMC

Our Northern Virginia District United Women in Faith Annual Meeting / District Day is over, and the holidays are fast approaching. If you were unable to attend our meeting, you missed an awesome morning. Friendship United Women in Faith were gracious hosts and Rev Gwen Hess, pastor at Aldie UMC, delivered an inspiring message about Extraordinary Women. If you were unable to attend, you can view the event at www.friendshipchurchnova.org. Click on United Women in Faith District Gathering. Rev Gwen's talk begins at about 25:30 min.

We also installed officers at the Annual Meeting. Loretta Henderson will become the new Northern Virginia District United Women in Faith President beginning January 1, 2025. I am so excited to have her in this office. We've worked together already as I've tried to help her prepare, and I know she will be an amazing leader and powerful force for our District.

It has been a great privilege to serve you these past few years. You are an amazing group of women. Your help and support have always been there for me, and I know you will give Loretta the same support. I won't say I'll miss you, because I will still be around for events and meetings. In fact, some of you may hear more from me as I assist Brenda on the Nominations Committee. I encourage you to prayerfully consider becoming part of the Executive Team. All the women are amazing, and I know you will be truly blessed as I have been.

As the holidays approach and things get busier, take time for yourself to remember the reason for the season. Give thanks for all our blessings, including each other. May God continue to bless you richly as you continue to do His work.

Thank you,
Beth Meserve

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.

UWF Annual Meeting Recap with unit reports by Brenda Romenius:

“EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN” – NOVA UWF DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

The NOVA District of United Women in Faith held its Annual Meeting on October 19, 2024. It was a beautiful day! Friendship UWF were gracious hosts in providing a bountiful breakfast in the fellowship hall, followed by a wonderful program of speakers, music and award presentations in the church sanctuary. There were many UWF members in attendance and on-line.

The Prayer Guide was read and a Candle burning ceremony was held in memory of the 23 deceased members of the UWF units in the NOVA District. The donations totaled \$2,851.73, which amounted to burning the candle for 1 hour and 32 minutes. As the names of these wonderful sisters were read, they were remembered with a narrative of their lives.

Rev. Gwen Hess of Aldie UMC gave a meaningful presentation about “Extraordinary Women,” opening with scripture of the Virgin Mary’s *Magnificat* from Luke 1:46-55. Pastor Gwen spoke of **Susannah Wesley** (mother to Charles and John), **Jarena Lee** (1783-unknown) was the first known female preacher of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC), **Fanny Crosby** (blind, but an exemplary writer of thousands of hymns) and **Dorothy Height** (noted civil rights activist)– all women of faith who felt called to their work and refused to be constrained by society’s rules. All Extraordinary Women!

The business meeting was opened with a presentation by Treasurer Marty Bickford of the present expenses incurred by the NOVA District. It is hoped that we will meet the Pledge to Mission to the VA Conference of \$42,500. The NOVA District approved to pledge \$42,500 again in the 2025 budget.

Many Units were recognized for their accomplishments Sept 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024 -

- **5 Units were recognized for 5-Star Financial Giving; 9 Units were recognized for 6-Star giving.**
- **13 Units completed plans for the Reading Program – 4 additional Units read books but did not complete plans.**
- **16 Units received certificates for the goals on the Living Into Our Purpose (LIOP) form: 1 Bronze, 2 Silver, 13 Gold.**

2024 District Officers are stepping down and were recognized for their leadership and support: Beth Meserve, outgoing President; Dana Connor, outgoing Spiritual Growth Coordinator; Suzanne Dorick, outgoing Social Action Coordinator; and Kirsten King, outgoing Nominations team.

Rev. Jim Harrington, Pastor of Friendship UMC, installed the NOVA District UWF leaders for 2025. The slate of officers for 2025 are -

President: Loretta Henderson (Woodlawn-Faith) Vice President: VACANT at this time
Secretary: Bianca Roberts (Good Shepherd) Treasurer: Marty Bickford (St. John's)
Communications: Carol Pratt (St. John's) Program Resources: Barbara Barrick (Grace)
Spiritual Growth: Karlene Masters (Fairlington) Social Action: VACANT at this time
Education & Interpretation: Lois Hidalgo (Oakton) MN&O: Maria Ward (Del Ray)
Nominations: Brenda Romenius (St John's), Beth Meserve (Sterling)

Subdistrict Coordinators:

Northern Subdistrict: Janet Keener (Wesley-Vienna)

Western Subdistrict: VACANT at this time

Eastern Subdistrict: Marlene Dakita (Lincolnia)

Western Subdistrict: Myrna Meling

Beth Meserve led everyone in a closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

VIDEOS: "A MINUTE FOR MOTHER EARTH"!

A series very short videos to help your congregation recognize God's call in the midst of climate-related issues. Each "Minute" is based on the curriculum, *Wake Up World, A Curriculum on the Climate Crisis for Faith and Community Groups* (available free on the website and in print form from Cokesbury). Access the complete series of "Minutes" free at www.wakeupworld.earth.

The United Methodist Creation Justice Movement is providing these Tips below as a tool to equip church members, families, and individuals to respond to God's call to care for creation and do justice with our neighbors.

For more about the UM Creation Justice Movement, go to umcreationjustice.org.





November 2024 Tips

Give thanks for churches that remind us the Earth is the Lord's. **Encourage your church** to begin or add to practices, such as recycling worship bulletins, composting after meals, lifting up God's Creation in liturgy and sermons, and other actions that help us be better stewards.

Give thanks for those who get knee deep in dealing with the mounting litter in streams, rivers, and oceans. Find a waterway near you and create or join efforts to remove harmful debris.

Give thanks for those who look beyond their own convenience and count the cost to God's earth as they make decisions. Examine your own habits: **refuse, reduce, reuse, repair, recycle.**

Give thanks for those who are **choosing careers and jobs that help the environment.** Researchers, environmental educators, entrepreneurs, lawyers, law enforcement officers, workers in green industries, farmer laborers, for example, have a crucial role in protecting and healing this home of ours. Encourage the individuals in your life who are doing this work.

Give thanks for those who engage their families, friends, colleagues, and students in actions that help and not harm the earth. People, especially children, learn from trusted sources—**people they see who walk the talk.** Tell your story.

Give thanks for those in agriculture and who seek to work in harmony with nature. Before you eat, **ask a blessing especially for all who provide the foods that sustain life.** Be mindful of those who labor in the fields especially in high heat; speak up for justice for their health.

Give thanks for those who see, hear, and stand with marginalized peoples as they endure the brunt of a changing climate. Respond to disasters, definitely! Also, speak for

the necessary changes to avoid the suffering.

Give thanks for the laws, regulations, and organizations that **protect or restore the natural habitats of God’s creatures**. With those protections, numerous marine and land animals have come back from the brink of extinction. Support those efforts so that wildlife can thrive.

Give thanks for people who donate leadership, time, and money to help organizations that marshal the many for a greater impact as catalysts of change. Individuals can’t do all, but all—together—can. Choose your group(s) to support in some way.

Give thanks for those people who **plant trees and gardens** that nourish pollinators. Fall is a good time for planting many species. Look for places where you can add a tree or three or sow some wildflowers, for example. If you involve children in the event, you will also be sowing seeds of caring for nature.



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Thank Offering is an opportunity to discuss what it looks like to give our best to one another given the personal constraints and privileges we may have.

Visit <https://uwfaith.org/blog/2024/world-thank-offering-2024/> to learn more.

Join us on ****OCTOBER 30, WEDNESDAY** at **8:00 pm ET** for a special Community Gathering with **Sally Vonner**: <https://uwfaith.mn.co/events/community-gathering-with-sally-vonner-celebrating-world-thank-offering>



United Women in Faith Digital Open House

Tuesday, **November 12**, 8:00pm - 9:00pm EST

 [Zoom](#) Meeting

Are you new to United Women in Faith Digital? Do you have friends who you'd like to invite to join this space? Do you need a refresher on the "why?" and "how?" of this digital platform? Do you want to connect with other members from across the country? Then the next Open House is exactly what you're looking for!

Join us as we welcome you to this digital space, sharing more about why we are stepping into these digital waters and some of the tips, tricks, and best practices that you can use when you're swimming around.

This will be a space to answer any questions you have and will ensure that you walk away feeling confident about how and why you can use this space. Zoom link to join: <https://uwfaith-org.zoom.us/j/82335797952>



United Women in Faith Digital News!

Welcome to United Women in Faith Digital

A space for United Women in Faith members and friends to connect, fellowship, and access resources.

Go to the network: <https://uwfaith.mn.co/landing>

United Women in Faith Digital is an online platform that provides access to resources, community gatherings, and educational content:

(I admit for me this link above has been the easiest and only link I have used to access to the digital UWF -Try it! There is so much additional UWF programs information! Such as [Faith Talks](#), [Voices in the Field](#), and [Just Energy For All!](#))



Social Action—from VA UWF Jeanette Yoh

VOTE! Election Day right around the corner. **November 5th!** Become involved, know where your candidate stands on issues that you are concerned about.

Check on your candidate at

<https://justfacts.votesmart.org/>

Aldersgate Christmas Market 2024 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH EVENT

Saturday, November 9th | 9:00am - 2:00pm, Aldersgate UMC, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA



This year's United Women in Faith (UWF) **Christmas Market** will be on **Saturday, November 9th, from 9am - 2pm**. The whole church and community are invited, so mark your calendars. There will be something for everyone and a great place to get a jump start on your holiday shopping. All money raised at the Christmas Market will go to missions and charities supported by the Aldersgate UWF. Saturday includes: White Elephant & Collectibles Sale, Once-loved jewelry, hats, handbags, and scarves items Sale, Faith Café lunch 11-1:30 pm.

<https://www.aldersgate.net/events/christmas-market> < more details.

Fairlington UWF Holiday Fundraisers 2024, Proceeds from our fundraisers (nuts and ornaments) support local and national non-profits impacting the lives of women, children, and youth. Email us at FairlingtonUMW@gmail.com for details or to ask questions.

To order nuts: <https://fairlingtonumw.terri Lynn.com/>

(by the way, I've ordered these before and they taste great!)

2024 White House Historical Assoc. Ornament

Official 2024 White House Christmas Ornament honors President Jimmy Carter. The ornament's anchor shape, an iconic symbol of hope and represents Carter's service in the United States Navy.



DONATIONS TO THE CHRISTMAS GIFT MINISTRY
FOR THE FLUVANNA CORRECTIONAL CENTER FOR
WOMEN

ARE DUE BY NOVEMBER 2, 2024****

This ministry – sponsored by GraceInside, Virginia’s Prison Chaplain Service – was established in 1998, and is supported entirely by donations from individuals, churches, and organizations throughout the state of Virginia and beyond. Each inmate at the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women receives the gifts listed below.



Donations may be dropped off at St. John’s UMC, 5312 Backlick Road, Springfield, VA 22151, Monday – Thursday, 10 AM – 3 PM;

Here’s a complete list of the approved donations. **Please note that the correctional center does not permit ANY substitute or additional items.**

Hygiene Items (place in a gallon zip lock bag)

1. One individually wrapped toothbrush (must be in the original container). **Battery-operated toothbrushes are NOT permitted.**
2. One tube of toothpaste, 6oz (must be in the original container).
3. One deodorant stick, 2.6 oz. - no spray or roll-on (as close to 2.6 oz. as possible but no larger)
4. One bottle of shampoo, 8oz-15 oz. (as close as possible to 15 oz.)
5. One bottle of lotion, 8oz-15 oz. (as close as possible to 15 oz.)

Greeting Cards and Stationery Items

1. Christmas cards and greeting cards for all occasions (**no aluminum foil on the card or envelope flap**)
2. Stationery items – writing paper (tablets 3 1/2 x 9 preferred)
3. Forever postage stamps (place them in a separate zip lock bag)
PLEASE, no pencils and envelopes; they are overstocked.

Money Contributions. For donors who wish to contribute money, please make your check payable to “GraceInside” and write “FCCW Resource Fund” in the Memo section. These funds are used to purchase any shortage of Christmas gift items and to support inmates in other ways, such as providing classroom materials and worship supplies; or paying travel expenses for funeral or deathbed visits. Checks may be given or mailed to Marty Bickford, 3561 Martha Custis Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302-2003. Please contact her if you have any questions at martybickford121@outlook.com or 703-731-7992.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and support.



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This is the report that was sent to the NOVA District United Methodist Church for their District Meeting. It was also sent to the **VA Conference United Women in Faith for their Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 26**, and will be read at the Executive Team Meeting on Friday, October 25.

Northern Virginia District United Women in Faith
September 15, 2024

The Northern Virginia District United Women in Faith have had a great year.

Our **District Spiritual Life Retreat** was held on April 13, 2024 at Sydenstricker UMC. Provision Church provided our lunch, and Rev. Alyssa Densham was our speaker. The meeting was well attended and quite informative. A love offering was collected and given to Provision Church in the amount of \$1,125.

Beth Meserve and Doris Douglass attended the **Southeastern Jurisdiction United Women in Faith Conference in Chattanooga** in April, 2024. The gathering was very inspirational. It was great to see our sisters from other conferences as well as spending time with our own conference leaders.

Our **Mini-Mission Event** was held July 13, 2024 at Woodlawn Faith United Methodist Church. The women of Woodlawn Faith UMC provided us with a delicious breakfast of chicken and waffles. An all-women's choir sang for us, and Rev Michelle Holmes-Chaney spoke on "Finding Peace in an Anxious World". This event was also well attended and appreciated by all.

For **Misson Encounter**, the NoVA District United Women in Faith was asked to provide backpacks, dry erase markers, and index cards for the foster children under the care of UM Family Services. We were pleased to be able to purchase these back-to-school supplies, as well as contribute additional funds totaling \$694 to UMFS.

Our **Annual Meeting** was held at Friendship UMC on October 19, 2024. Rev. Gwen Hess spoke to us about "Extraordinary Women." Our new slate of officers for 2025 were installed at this meeting. Our District members have been asked to bring donations (hygiene kits, greeting cards, stationery) for the Christmas gift ministry which are distributed to the women at the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women in Troy, VA.

We hope to have another *Winter Game Day* at Fairfax UMC this January in lieu of a Christmas party. Plans for that are underway.

On a sad note, we lost our Membership and Nurture Mission Coordinator, **Vikki Beaty**. She was a faithful member of United Women in Faith and an inspiration to us all. She will be sorely missed. In Vikki's memory, a donation was given to Phoenix Rising, a mission near and dear to her heart.

Beth Meserve

Northern Virginia District President

From Brenda Romenius:



Hello, St. John's United Women in Faith sisters 😊

I am forwarding this message to you from the Virginia Conference for your interest.

One of the tenets of being a United Woman in Faith is to "connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation." The VA Conference is offering a program to enhance our spiritual practices.

"Soul Feast" will be conducted by live Webinars on the first Monday of each month from 6:30-7:30 PM, until June 2025. The book "Soul Feast" by Marjorie J. Thompson 2024-2025 is available on Amazon (I bought mine for \$13.50). Attached is a description of each session and the chapter reading. You can register for the sessions at <http://www.vaumc.org/soulfeast>.

The next session Live Webinar (Session 3) is scheduled for Monday, November 4, 6:30-7:30 PM.

**Northern Virginia District
United Women in Faith
Winter Games Party**



Sunday, January 12, 2025, 2:00-4:00pm, Fairfax UMC

Please come at 2:00 p.m. and bring:

- a bit of finger food to share
- a can or two of food to replenish the Fairfax UMC pantry
- a game that we'll all enjoy

The address of Fairfax UMC-- 10300 Stratford Ave, Fairfax, VA 22030-3217.

Do you need a ride?



We will have board games, card games, puzzles, and coloring sheets!

We will be collecting canned food at this event to help support the Fairfax UWF Food Pantry. They have recently seen an increase in the number of families needing help.

We look forward to seeing you there. Plan now to join us and bring a friend! No RSVP Required. Free onsite parking. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Meserve beth.meserve@gmail.com