



Mission Messenger

August/September 2026

Margaret Dennis
Editor

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH OF INDIANA

President, La Donna Weber

Do you have a United Women in Faith elevator speech ready? (An elevator speech quickly summarizes an idea, product or service during a short journey in an elevator) What do you say when someone asks, “so what is UWFaith about, anyway?” Can you remember why you first got involved? (At my husband’s first appointment I was told that as the pastor’s wife I was honorary president. Turns out my job was to serve tea and coffee using the silver service at women’s events.) (seriously that is it!!) (good thing I had a mother-in-law who helped me learn what UMW was really about!) **What keeps you coming back and being involved?**

One of the ways to describe who we are and what we do is to go the United Methodist Church’s *Book of Discipline* route citing the paragraph numbers and official language ... or you could point to our website ... or you could recite our purpose. But what is United Women in Faith to YOU?

You could point out that our work falls in five categories: education for mission, social action, spiritual growth, leadership development, and nurturing for community. Sound familiar? Those are the categories in our reading program. But that is a good description of what we do, eh? Some of us may be focused on one or two of these categories more than the others. But we all agree that God has called us to do this work on behalf of women, children and youth. (too many Bible verses to point to!!)

The world needs us to step up, to nurture God’s world and create community -- as we have for nearly 160 years. Whether we work to support health and education in places far away (by supporting UWFaith regional missionaries and National Mission Institutions) or provide a home for recovery in Indiana (the Lucille Raines Residence in Indianapolis) by contributing our pledges to mission and to Raines. Whether we advocate for voting rights, climate and racial justice, and fair treatment of the immigrant in our land or we simply pray without ceasing for God’s world and God’s people. We do all that by educating ourselves about the needs of our world and growing as leaders in our homes, our communities, and our churches.

So, get your elevator speech ready. And then try it out on your daughters and granddaughters – do they know WHY you have disappeared to meetings and events all these years? Make an appointment and remind your pastor of WHY our work is more than funeral dinners and keeping the church kitchen tidy. [And that pastors are members too!!] Talk to that young woman who keeps showing up at the soup kitchen or food pantry to help and let her know that we have an organization that can help her do and be more. We have a story to tell!!

All God’s blessings, please – La Donna

Vice President, Jeanie Park Estep

Indiana Conference United Women in Faith Annual Celebration

Join us Friday, October 2 and Saturday, October 3 in Franklin, Indiana. We will be meeting at Otterbein SeniorLife on Friday. Plan to join us to renew friendships and meet some new United Women in Faith. A program on missions will follow with a Soul Care activity.

Saturday morning starts at Franklin Grace UMC at 9am for a continental breakfast and to see the displays and buy some Raines jewelry. The business meeting will start at 10:00 am. This is YOUR organization and we want you to be a part of the decision making!

After lunch provided by the women of Grace UWFaith we will have a panel discussion by 3 very knowledgeable women about Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline. This is real in every school community! Our hope is that you will come away with concrete ideas that you can implement in your community.

The Perfect Praise liturgical dancers will then lead us into a time of worship with Installation of officers and a Love Feast.

Arrangements have been made at Baymont by Wyndham, just off I-65. Call to make your reservations by September 18.

Check out the registration form on page 16 for more details.

Important reminder regarding financials

There is to be one checking account in the name of United Methodist Women d/b/a United Women in Faith for each unit. The president of the unit and the treasurer are the signers on the account. The bank will ask for a tax ID number [an EIN] to open a new account. This is held by your United Women in Faith conference treasurer. Please contact her [Carla Gillespie] for the documentation and the appropriate number. Do NOT deposit United Women in Faith funds in a personal account or local church account. Keep all United Women in Faith funds separate from personal and church funds. DO NOT USE YOUR LOCAL CHURCH'S tax ID number [EIN.] For details see *2025-2028 Funding the Mission* (D11309), <https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=12529&catid=2196>.

REMINDER: Local Units and District Members should send their pledge contributions to their district treasurer as frequently as possible. The organizations that count on us have financial needs throughout the year.

Send monies with the remittance form which can be found on <https://www.inumc.org/united-women-in-faith/> and on the Forms Links of the e-news.

Financial Update

At our fiscal halfway point, we are under our budgeted giving. While this is not cause for alarm, it is an incentive to pick up our pace of giving. This is a year of grace as our districts have been reorganized but the needs of children, youth and women is real, and it is now. We urge all units not to delay sending their pledges in as they receive them, at a minimum quarterly. If you have any questions, reach out to your district treasurer.

2026 Mission Giving *

- Pledge to Mission \$200,000
- Giving (as of 6/30) \$85,609.91
- 42.8% of pledge

* includes lines 1-5

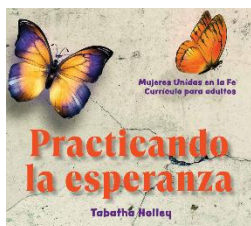
2026 Lucille Raines Residence*

- Pledge \$102,000
- Giving (as of 6/30) \$30,689.75
- 30% of pledge

* does not include LRR Special

Language Coordinators, Margaret Dennis & Ashley Flores

There are lots of ways to show God's love to all. We have talked about a few in this column: smile, learn about another culture including their food and language, listen to their stories, use words deliberately and kindly, and more. But you can also advocate for those who may not feel God's love in their community. Contact us or Social Action Coordinator, Lori Chambers, for ways that you can make a difference!



Also, stay tuned for Mission u opportunities in Spanish! Margaret hopes to record some of our 2025 and 2026 Mission u curriculum as a video that will be available on our YouTube channel for our Spanish speaking neighbors.



Education & Interpretation Coordinator, Rae Wallis

In 2026, the United Women in Faith Youth and Young Adults Service Scholarship Fund was used to assist 56 youth to learn and give back to communities. This scholarship fund is funded as part of Indiana UWFaith askings of \$1.00 per member. This summer three Districts with 5 churches plus one other District-wide group participated.

In Northern Lakes District, Chesterton UMC and Valparaiso UMC sent 8 youth to the Appalachia Service Project in Kentucky where they did home repairs and met others with dignity, compassion and Christ-

centered love. Northern Lakes District also sponsored a Better Way Civil Rights Tour of Alabama for 28 youth. They learned the history of Civil Rights by visiting historic sights and learning about the UMC Charter for Racial Justice which as we know began with United Women in Faith. Our very own Bishop Tracy Malone



attended this Mission Trip. The Facebook picture of Bishop Malone with several youth visiting Buc-ee's on their trip and walking with youth across the Edmund Pettis Bridge in Selma to commemorate Bloody Sunday was wonderful. We received a heart-felt thank you note from the youth after they returned.

In West Central Plains District, we were able to honor requests from Calvary UMC of Brownsburg and Carmel UMC. We funded one youth's request from Calvary UMC for a trip to Lithuania for service at a UMC children's ministry. We funded 15 youth from Carmel UMC to Puerto Rico where they worked alongside local congregations to address community needs.

From East Central Heights District 4 young ladies from St Luke's UMC attended the UMC Global Young People's Convocation in Ireland. This is a worldwide event that takes place every 4 years and is required by the United Methodist Book of Discipline. Youth learned leadership skills and advocating for others.

According to the Youth and Young Adult Scholarship Committee Guidelines, we pay 15% of the cost per individual for United Methodist Church Missions and 12% of the cost per individual for non-United Methodist Church Missions. We are proud to be able to help these youth and young adults in their mission journeys. 2027 Youth and Young Adult Service Scholarship Forms will be available at the end of the year. Look at the Youth and Young Adult display at United Women in Faith Annual Meeting in October for pictures and thoughts that some of the youth shared after they returned.

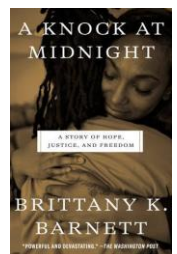
Our mission is powered by women like you. Women who pray, show up, and give what they can of their time, resources and finances. Please reach out to me at raewallis@comcast.net if I can be of any assistance in Districts and Units in explaining *Where the Money Goes*! raewallis@comcast.net

Resources Coordinator, Sara Mayes

I hope everyone is staying good and cool during this sultry hot weather. What a great time to read a good book! As I think about all the great books I have read, there is always one that I merits revisiting, [A Knock at Midnight](#) by Brittany K. Barnett.

Brittany is a lawyer that actually sees how unfair the justice system can be for black and women. Her mother had been incarcerated also. She worked days at her job as an attorney and at night she worked pro bono for people who were wrongly sentenced. I won't go through all the book but if you have not read it, you should! It's a very eye-opening book.

Happy Reading!!!





Gifts to The Legacy Fund Endowment Fund build a financial resource that ensure United Women in Faith can carry out its vital programs and activities for many years to come.

United Women in Faith
Church Center for the United Nations
777 United Nations Plaza, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10017
800-278-7771

legacy150@uwfaith.org

Give online:

<https://uwfaith.org/give/legacy-fund/>

Together, we are building legacy!

Committee on Nominations, Chair Rita Gaither-Gant

The committee has been working diligently over the past months to prepare a slate to present at our Annual Celebration October 3 at Franklin Grace UMC. Regrettably we were unable to present a full slate of officers. We are hopeful you will assist us moving forward and during our Celebration, if necessary. We need your help with locating people for the positions below. Remember you will have a team to assist you.

Please contact anyone on the CON team with names for consideration--the Team's names and contact information are below. Thank you for your assistance!

Offices to be filled:

Mission u: Business Manager.

Committee on Nominations: representative from Eastern Rivers District.

A willingness to serve Form and an update from National regarding conference tenure is included in this newsletter.

Committee on Nominations Team

Rita Gaither-Gant gaitrgantm@aol.com
L. Janenne Stuber stuberm@pnw.edu
Barbie Schmenner barbie.schmenner@gmail.com
Edna May emjmay42@gmail.com
Mary Ann Pollard m.a.pollard@comcast.net
Jerianne Bonenberger jabones59@gmail.com
Heather Lewis heatherdawnlewis@gmail.com

Tenure (from *United Women in Faith Handbook 2025-2028*)

No elected officer will hold the same office for more than four years, except the treasurer, who can hold the same office for six years. Tenure on leadership team for the elected leadership of the conference organization will be limited to a total of eight years. When a leader has completed her tenure of eight years and after a period of two years has elapsed, she may be elected for one additional term, not to exceed two years, where needed. The period of two years also applies to persons who, after completing their tenure in the conference, served on the conference leadership team in any appointed or ex officio position (including ex officio positions as a member of the jurisdiction leadership team, a member of the program advisory group and/or a director of United Women in Faith).

At our Annual Meeting, during the Annual Celebration on Saturday, Oct. 4, we will be voting on the proposed slate of officers for the United Women in Faith of Indiana Leadership Team.

Elected Position	Officer/Candidate	Term
President	LaDonna Weber	2024-2027
Chair of Nominations	Sara Mayes	NEW (2027-2028)
Secretary	Barb McCoy	NEW (2027-2028)
Treasurer	Jacki Moore	NEW (2027-2028)
Communications Coord.	Margaret Dennis	2026-2027
Mission u Dean	Mary Margaret Willbanks	NEW (2027-2028)
Mission u Assistant Dean	Trisha Staneart	Continuing
Mission u Registrar	Bonnie Elam	NEW (2027-2028)
Mission u Business Manager	VACANT	
Appointed Position	Officer/Candidate	Term
Vice-President	Jeanie Park Estep	2026- 2027
Spiritual Growth Coord.	Alicia Mitchell	2026- 2027
Social Action Coord.	Lori Chambers	2024- 2027
Resources Coord.	Jerrienne Bonenberger	NEW (2027-2028)
Education & Interpretation	Rae Wallis	2025- 2026; (2027-2028)
Membership, Nurture & Outreach	Susan Bassett	2026-2027
CON member (Northern Lakes)	Renee Graf	NEW (Class of 2031)
CON member (East Central Heights)	Edna May	Class of 2028
CON member (East Central Heights)	Rita Gaither-Gant	Class of 2029
CON member (West Central Plains)	Barbie Schmenner	Class of 2028
CON member (Southern Rivers)	Heather Lewis	Class of 2029
CON member (Eastern Rivers)	VACANT	
Music Coordinator	Bev Kennedy	
Technology Specialist	Jacki Moore	
Legacy Coordinator	Rita Gaither-Gant	
Language Coordinator	VACANT	
Young Women's Coordinator	VACANT	

Pray for these officers and candidates as they have felt called to lead our UWFaith Conference.

Mission u Dean Maureen Mauzy



MISSION U EXPRESS: EXPERIENCING EMMANUEL TOGETHER

We are so blessed to see the Spirit at work through this year's District Mission u Express events! Together, we are growing in our shared purpose to know God, experience freedom through Jesus Christ, build supportive fellowship, and expand our understanding of mission.

CELEBRATING OUR RECENT EVENTS

Our first 2026 Mission u Express was held June 20 at Paoli UMC in the Southern Rivers District. Although the church does not yet have a UWFaith unit, Pastor Cody Jellison was so moved by our witness that he is already encouraging women to form one! We welcomed 26 participants for Experiencing Emmanuel: A Deep Knowing—Experiencing Emmanuel Through Every Part of Our Lives, led by Study Leader, Margaret Dennis. On July 18, twenty-seven participants gathered at Hebron UMC for the Northern Lakes District event. Study Leader Pauline Neal, a retired educator and commissioned minister, shared her decades of experience as she led us in exploring Emmanuel through three powerful lenses: Holy Resistance — Shiphrah and Puah, Exodus 1 Adversity — Hagar, Genesis 16 Transforming Community — the woman at the well, John 4. The Eastern Rivers District welcomed a record 35 participants on July 25 at Waynedale UMC in Fort Wayne. Rev. Dr. Cindy Reynolds led the study, and the women brought the story of the woman at the well to life through an exciting skit! (Note: By the time this newsletter arrives in your inbox, East Central Heights District will have held their event on August 22 at Castleton UMC, Indianapolis with Study Leader: Rev. Dr. Cindy Reynolds. They were expecting over 50 participants!)

Our last Mission u Express event is scheduled for West Central Plains District on September 12 at Congress St. UMC, Lafayette with Study Leader Pauline Neal.

MISSION U RESOURCES

- Mission u Information: <https://uwfaith.org/events/mission-u/>
- UWFaith Digital Community: <https://uwfaith.mn.co/spaces/9299549/feed>
- Reading Program: <https://uwfaithresources.org/prodlist.cfm?catid=0>

Visit <https://uwfaith.org/events/mission-u/> for more information on the curriculum and <https://www.inumc.org/united-women-in-faith/> for updates on our conference events.

Thank you to everyone who continues to share their heart for mission, learning, and community. We look forward to continuing this journey together as we experience Emmanuel in every part of our lives.

Social Action Coordinator, Lori Chambers

Love your Neighbor – No Exceptions

Prayer Vigil for our Immigrant Neighbors at Miami Correctional Facility

Lead by UMC Indiana Conference with Bishop
Malone present

Tuesday, August 25, 2026 – 2:00 – 3:00PM ET

Bunker Hill, Indiana

Statewide Weekend of Public Witness to End ICE Detention at Miami Correctional Facility

Lead by Indiana Organizing Project Stuart Mora
stuart@indianaorganizing.org – 517-648-4573.
Over 50 plus locations have already been
organized. Please contact Stuart Mora if you
would like to participate.

August 28-30 Vigils across Indiana

Indiana SERJ 1 Facts – How do you want to vote?

Did you know that there will be a question on November's Ballot about amending Indiana State Constitution? Nine other states have taken up this question.

We need to be educated about what we are voting for. Here is the [Senate Resolution](#) for you to read.

[HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL FACTS TO HELP YOU](#) decide how to vote.

This information was taken from Chat GPT. Please do your own search to find out how you want to vote. The important thing is to be educated about the question before you enter the voting booth.

It's Getting Too Hot to Ignore: Using the Heat Index and Sun Awareness to Save Lives

All heat illness is potentially preventable. So why does it remain so common? Lack of access to AC is one cause, but limited knowledge about the risk of outdoor activities in the heat is another major factor. General guidelines on heat safety are widely publicized, but they don't say how to adjust our outdoor activities based on specific levels of heat, humidity, sun exposure, activity and personal risk factors.

A walk in the sun at a temperature of 88°F sounds safe, but with a humidity of 70% the Heat Index (HI), feels like the temperature is 100°F. Add to that 15 degrees for activity in the sun and you would be experiencing a dangerously high 115°F. We might see fewer heat-related illnesses and deaths if more people knew how to

- Find and use the Heat Index
- Adjust Heat Index for sun exposure by adding 15 degrees
- Adjust intensity and duration of physical activity based on Heat Index
- Take account of personal risk factors

Learn how to do all of this [here](#).

TAKE ACTION

- Spread the word with family and friends about how to stay safe in the heat.
- Contact your Indiana State Legislator about passing laws that require landlords to maintain a temperature of 78°F in apartments in the summer and allow tenants to put in window AC units.

Contact your State Legislator [here](#).

*Resource from Elders Climate Action mid-month July 2026 newsletter

Save the Date Thursday, March 18, 2026, on Zoom Legislation/Advocacy Day 9:30AM to 12:00PM. Stay tuned for a possible in person State House visit to make an impact on our Indiana Housing Crisis.

Please feel free to reach out to Lori Chambers by email at lochambers1122@gmail.com if you have any Social Action questions or concerns.

IMPORTANT: Sign up to receive Social Action Messages! If you would like to receive timely information about our Social Action priorities, make sure to “Update Profile” at the bottom of your Constant Contact email and select to receive Social Action Messages, or email me directly and I can add you. Lochambers1122@gmail.com.

Spiritual Growth Coordinator, Alicia Mitchell

Dream It. Believe It. Do It!

Can you believe it’s already been since May that we were all together for Assembly?! What an amazing experience to be a part of and congratulations to Indiana for showing up strong and showing up MANY! GO INDIANA! 🙌

But now that we’ve come home, I’ve been thinking: What are we going to do with what we experienced?

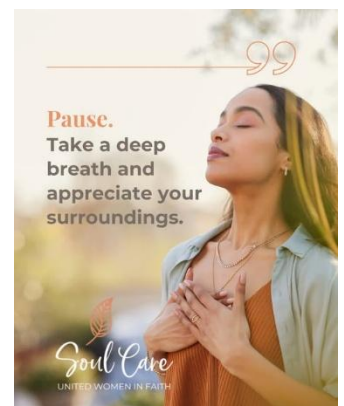
Our Indiana Conference theme has been Walking by Faith, grounded in Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the plans I have for you...” That promise doesn’t call us to sit still and wait for something to happen. It gives us the courage to move...peacefully trusting that God knows the plans, while the Holy Spirit continues to guide us along the way.

At Assembly, we sang, “Here I am, Lord.” But have you stopped to ask yourself lately: Where is God calling me? What opportunities are showing up in my life right now? What have I been thinking about doing but haven’t moved on yet?

It’s normal to question. It’s normal to hesitate. Sometimes we even walk forward a little afraid. But remember what Assembly reminded us:

Dream it. Believe it. Do it!

And Indiana, we have some *doing* to do!



Opportunities for Involvement

Our Conference and District teams need women willing to stand a little taller and stretch a little further. And if nobody else asks, I'M SCREAMING, HELP ME! 🤖 I would LOVE additional hands, hearts, ideas, and creativity in Spiritual Growth. You do not have to be a Bible guru. Bring your faith...even if it feels the size of a mustard seed...and a willingness to be the hands and feet of God.

If something in you is saying, "Maybe I could help..." don't ignore that nudge. Reach out to me at Alicia.Mitchell@garrett.edu. Let's talk!

Upcoming Silent Retreat

And now...it's almost time for a little silence. 🤖

I know many of us could use some rest, reconnection, and room to actually hear ourselves and God, again.

Save the dates: October 16–18, 2026, when we'll gather at Joseph Retreat Center in Tipton, Indiana, for our annual Silent Retreat.

But I'm hoping we experience silence as more than simply being quiet. What if silence isn't empty? What if it creates room to notice, listen, dream, reconnect with God and ourselves, and return home ready for whatever God is calling us to next?

I pray you'll be part of it. More details are coming!

Until then, take care of yourself, keep walking by faith...

and go do that BIG thing! 💖

Creation Justice Tips (from umcreationjustice.org)

Slow down. Move through the world in a way that truly sees God's creation. Breathe deeply, opening to the Spirit.

In the indigenous Lakota tradition, **consider plants, animals, and the environment in a relational way** rather than as objects in our environment to be owned or used. How would our thinking and actions change if we thought of our environment as something we are in a relationship with?

Lucille Raines Board President Cheryl Wilson

Residents at Lucille Raines are doing well and spirits are good. Three of us board members met with them on a Sunday afternoon early in July. We just wanted to answer any concerns they might have after the decision to eliminate the positions of executive director and administrative assistant, and to assure them that nothing about their stay at Raines will change. They voiced their support and appreciation of Mariea, our long-time program coordinator, who will now assume more responsibilities as House Leader. They surprised us with a delicious cookout.

AA and CA support groups are once again meeting at Raines. Ten rooms need renovations and await donations to make them move-in ready. There is always a list of those waiting for rooms.

The interim position of part-time COO is filled by Jarrett Hill, the Executive Director at Roberts Park UMC. When Bishop Malone appointed Rev. Dr. Andrew Scanlan-Holmes, pastor at Roberts Park, to be her designee on the Board, Jarrett came with him. Both men have been very valuable in their guidance to the Board.



The last year has been a learning time for the Directors as we are transitioning to be more of a “working board”. I have often shared that Raines is owned and operated by the UWFaith of Indiana. But I’ve recently learned that 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations cannot be owned by any individual or organization. It is a public trust that is managed by a board of directors that holds financial responsibility to serve the organization’s tax-exempt mission. The Board is accountable to state and federal authorities to ensure that Raines operates

in a legally compliant manner and for the purpose outlined in its formation. UWFaith of Indiana, ie ALL OF US, are responsible for this amazing ministry!

With these new added responsibilities, it seems wise to reorganize our Board. It is being proposed to split into two new groups: a smaller governing board selected for needed skill sets, and a much larger group known as the Friends of Raines. The governing board will handle the compliance and financial issues. The Friends group will be the supporters of the residents and all the activities that happen at Raines like staff appreciation, Raines fest, and holiday celebrations. The Friends will be Raines ambassadors sharing the importance of the ministry around the state, as they work to gather donations and fundraise. Those who hated to leave the Board because their 4-year term was up, can stay active in the Friends group. But as I said, this is still in the planning stage and will need to be adopted at the Raines Board business meeting in November.

What we need from you, our faithful supporters through the years, is your prayers during this time of reorganization. We need each of you to be ambassadors for Raines in your units, churches, and communities. Lucille Raines will only continue if people believe in the importance of this ministry enough to put that belief into action with their donations. Financial stability, although improving, continues to be our primary focus currently.

By sending your donation through your local or district treasurer, you help to fulfill our yearly pledge to Raines. To become a monthly supporting member or to donate with a credit card, use the UWFaith Vanco website at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YZ57/home>.

Encourage friends/family/church to visit the website lucillerrainesresidence.org and click on the support button. There are ways to give a one-time donation or monthly donations.

2027 will mark 50 years of ministry to people working to find hope and renewal. God has blessed this ministry richly and will faithfully continue to lead.

Have you heard about the Common Loaf, the gluten-free bread used in Communion at Annual Conference? The recipe is available to you or your church for a donation to Lucille Raines.

Read about it at <https://www.inumc.org/the-common-loaf/>





Santa's Helpers

To ensure that each resident of the Lucille Raines Residence receives a Christmas gift, fostering a sense of community and goodwill during the holiday season, an annual Christmas gift shall be provided to each resident. The value of the gift shall be \$50 per resident. The total amount allocated for gifts shall be based on 49 residents, totaling \$2450. Each district shall contribute an equal share to the total amount. The contribution per district shall be \$490. The District Treasurer will forward the gift to the treasurer of the Lucille Raines Residence no later than October 31 of each year.

RAINES FEST with the popular Country Store will be here soon, October 19-21. Ask Circle, friends and family to begin saving shelf stable food, toiletries (NO alcohol), paper products, etc. Let's show residents a fun shopping time. We're also looking for volunteers to help staff the store.

Some hard truths about home ownership

You know that United Women in Faith of Indiana are responsible for the Lucille Raines Residence building and its ministry, right? And as such we have bills to pay – must keep the lights on, the staff paid, the appliances operating ... all the stuff that comes with responsibility of this particular home.

We (UWFaith of Indiana) have budgeted **\$8,500 per month** to keep this ministry running.

Which means we need to have the local units send in their askings (the minimum annual amount we ask for PER MEMBER, currently \$17) to their district treasurer in a timely manner – don't wait until the end of the year! And be aware that the askings do not cover the total so we need the creative thinkers out there to find ways to top up their donations. And remember that your first choice when emptying the treasury at the end of the year should be Lucille Raines Residence.

Tea with Lucille? Cookie walk? How about a charcuterie board auction before the World Series or the Super Bowl? Casserole sale on the Sunday before school starts? What other ideas can you come up with?

Creation Justice Tips (from umcreationjustice.org)

Use the air—it's free! Open your dishwasher instead of drawing energy to dry the dishes. Hang dry your laundry or a portion of a load to shorten the cycle at least occasionally. Let your hair dry naturally instead of using a blow dryer.

Membership, Nurture and Outreach Carol Tiller / Sue Bassett

From Carol: Regretfully, I am resigning from my position because of my husband's and my health. I have so enjoyed meeting and working with the conference officers and women from around the state. United Women in Faith is truly an organization of Christian sisterhood composed of caring women whose faith is shown by their actions. I will continue to advise the new coordinator if she needs assistance.

From Sue: My name is Susan Bassett and I am honored and excited to serve as the MNO Coordinator for UWFaith. For 70 years, the United Methodist Church has been an important part of my life, and I am grateful for the many people and experiences that have shaped my faith journey. I grew up in Auburn, Indiana, where I attended The Auburn First UMC. I was active in UMYF and several other church activities. After college, I married my high school sweetheart, Jeff, and together we raised our two children, Kylee Hope and Kurt Bassett. In 1983, my husband and I moved to LaGrange, Indiana, where we joined the First United Methodist Church. We were active in the church for 40 years, and I was involved in the LaGrange United Methodist Women, which eventually became LaGrange First UWFaith. Those years of fellowship, service, and relationships with other women became a very meaningful part of my life. Professionally, I worked as a dental hygienist and also served as the office manager for my husband's dental practice in LaGrange. We both retired in 2021 and moved to Indianapolis in 2023 to be closer to our children. After moving to Indianapolis, we joined North United Methodist Church. From the very beginning, we felt welcome. One of the first groups to reach out to me was NUWFaith, and their invitation to participate, along with their continued effort to keep me informed and connected, helped me feel right at home. Once again, I experienced the incredible gift of women gathering together, caring for one another, and making a difference in the lives of others. That caring community has had a meaningful impact not only on my life, but on my family as well. I look forward to getting to know more women, building connections, and continuing the wonderful tradition of faith, friendship, and service that has meant so much to me throughout my 70-year journey in the United Methodist Church.



Join Us On

Thursday, September 17, 2026

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm est

United Women in Faith Leadership Development and Membership Engagement invite you to our next **Unstoppable Quarterly Training: Growing Membership**, open to leaders at every level, from local units to district, conference, and national roles.

We've built a strong foundation among our core membership. This session equips you with practical tools to extend that foundation further, welcoming new generations of women into a sisterhood defined by inspiration, influence, and impact.

What We'll Cover:

- Welcome from Leadership Development & Overview from Membership Engagement
- The Membership Lifecycle: Recruitment through our **Inspire, Influence, and Impact** pathways
- Hands-On Activity: Building your Membership Action Plan
- Measuring Success: Key metrics for local, district, and conference groups
- Unit Survey Report & Q&A

Whether you lead a local group or serve at the district, conference, jurisdiction, or national level, your leadership matters. We welcome you to join us, and to share this invitation with other leaders in your network.

[RSVP HERE](#)

Did you know that the official abbreviation of our organization is UWFaith??

Don't use UWF, UWinFaith, or UWofFaith.

DANGER!!! DANGER!!! DANGER!!!

Occasionally scam messages (email or text) are sent that may look like they come from a member of the United Women in Faith leadership team. These messages often ask the recipient to purchase gift cards or say the sender needs you to contact them immediately. This is not the way we do things!!

Please know that these messages are a scam and are not coming from any of us. We will never ask for gift cards or personal favors through text messages or emails. Check the email address or phone number ... is it the one listed for that person in our directory?

If you receive one of these messages:

- Do **not** respond or engage with the sender.
- Mark the message as **spam** or **junk**.
- If possible, block the number or email address to prevent further contact.



Thank you for staying alert and helping protect our organization from these types of fraudulent schemes

Communication Coordinator, Margaret Dennis

I hope you are enjoying the more frequent, but hopefully not overwhelming, communication from Conference. United Women in Faith is ACTIVE! And we are trying to keep you informed of all that is going on at the National, Conference, and District level.

Remember NEVER unsubscribe. If you do, you will be taken off ALL our lists within Constant Contact and won't receive any news from conference or district. Contact me if you are having any problems, margdenn@att.net, and I will help you figure out the best way forward

2026 Calendar of Events

Mission u Express

September 12 West Central Plains

District Fall Gatherings

September 12 Eastern Rivers

September 12 Southern Rivers

September 12 West Central Plains

September 19 East Central Heights

September 19 Northern Lakes

Annual Celebration

October 2-3

Franklin UMC, Franklin

Silent Retreat

October 16-18

Tipton, IN

Conference and District Leadership Training

Saturday, November 7, Virtual

2027 TENTATIVE Calendar of Events

World Day of Prayer

Friday, March 5

Legislative Day

Thursday, March 18

Virtual

Spiritual Growth Retreat

March 19-20 (Fri 7pm – Sat 3pm)

Canyon Inn, McCormick Creek State Park

Spencer, IN

Spiritual Growth Retreat

April 23-24 (Fri 7pm – Sat 3pm)

Lindenwood Retreat & Conference Center

Plymouth, IN

Conference and District Leadership Training

Saturday, November 6, Virtual

[2028 North Central Jurisdiction Gathering](#)

June 8-12, 2028

Sioux City, South Dakota



United
Women
in Faith

Indiana Conference 18th Annual Celebration

Friday, October 2, 2026

Otterbein SeniorLife Center

1070 W. Jefferson Street, Franklin, Indiana 46131

5:00 pm Check-in

5:30-6:30pm Buffet Dinner

6:30-7:10pm Mission Stories

7:10-8:00 Soul Care

Saturday, October 3, 2026

Franklin Grace UMC

1300 E Adams Dr, Franklin, IN 46131

9:00 am Check-in & Breakfast

10 am -12 pm Business Meeting, Reports &
Recognitions

12:00-1:00 pm Lunch

1:00 – 2:00 pm Panelists and Action: Interrupting the
School-to-Prison Pipeline

2:30- 3:00 pm Love Feast & Inspiration

** All times are Eastern.*

Event Highlights

- Friday night Soul Care
- Saturday panel with Michele Daniel Jones (Constructing Our Future), Maranda Williams (REFORM) and Cecilia Whitfield (Use What You've Got Ministry).
- Saturday special guests, Perfect Praise, liturgical dancers.
- Bring your used books for the book swap.

Nearby Hotel Information

Baymont by Wyndham

2122 Holiday Ln, Franklin, IN 46131

\$104.00 plus tax (\$117.00) for 2 Queen beds/room

You must call 317-736-0480, by September 18.

Conference has reserved a limited number of rooms at this rate.

Pictures and video may be captured during the event by conference representatives for news and promotional use including social media. Registering for the event gives permission for one's image to be used. Names of children and youth will not be used with photos.

Registration Form: Please print legibly

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email/Phone: _____

Church: _____

District: _____

District Officer? 2026__ 2027__

☐ Friday \$15

☐ Saturday \$20

☐ Donation \$_____ (½ Mission Giving; ½ LRR)

Total \$_____

Note dietary restrictions: _____

Do you need childcare for Saturday*? Indicate names and ages. Send a sack lunch/drink for children.

Emergency Contact _____

Phone _____

*Apologies but no childcare will be available Friday night due to venue restrictions.

Send registration and payment by Sept. 15th to

Cathy Burris
8923 Branch View Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46234-2901
317-502-1067, cburris799@aol.com

Payment options:

☐ Check enclosed payable to UWFaith of Indiana
OR

☐ Pay with credit card. You MUST complete and send in registration form.



<https://tinyurl.com/ACReg26>



<https://tinyurl.com/ACOffering>



United Women in Faith of Indiana

Mission u Express

WEST CENTRAL PLAINS



A one-day event to experience this year's Transformative Education event with your sisters in United Women in Faith.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Church/Unit: _____ District: _____

Emergency Contact Information: _____

Please check all that apply:

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ UWFaith member | ☐ Study Leader | ☐ Clergy |
| ☐ Conference officer | ☐ Home Missioner | ☐ Other: _____ |
| ☐ District officer | ☐ Non-UWFaith member | |
| ☐ Deaconess | ☐ First Time Attendee | |

\$20 per person – includes lunch | 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern

Saturday, September 12 | West Central Plains district

Study Leader: Pauline Neal | Congress St. UMC | 2010 Congress St., Lafayette

Deadline for registering is August 29.

Free childcare is available on-site, if requested

Names and ages of children: _____

Emergency on-site contact and phone # _____

**** Parent/Guardian must provide a sack lunch, including beverages, and any other item needed.**

Payment Options:

☐ Check Enclosed: \$ _____
Payable to "UMW Indiana Mission u"

☐ Pay with Credit card (via VANCO [here](#)
or use QR code) – You MUST complete
and send in a registration form.



Email or mail completed form to: Mary Margaret Willbanks, 1300 S Tennessee Ave., Muncie, IN 47302,
willthree@netzero.com If you have any questions or concerns, contact Mary Margaret at 765-212-5312.

Optional Adult, Children & Youth Curricula is available for purchase online. Visit <https://uwfaith.org/events/mission-u/>.

In lieu of hands-on-donation, please consider donating to your local food bank.

PLEASE NOTE: Pictures and videos captured during the event by conference representatives will be used for news and promotion, including social media. Registering for the event gives permission for one's image to be used. Names of youth and children will not be used with pictures.



Find United Women in Faith Online

United Women in Faith Website: uwfaith.org

This is our primary website. Here you will find the latest news and information about United Women in Faith programs, initiatives, and events. It's where you connect with other members and get involved. You'll also find links to our many resources and the e-store.

Downloads: umwmissionresources.org

Find new brand elements, member materials, programs, and catalogs here.

Online Community: uwfaith.mn.co

Connect with United Women in Faith members on Mighty Networks, a safe and secure online space to deepen our community and engage digital resources for local programming and transformative education. The platform features the digital Program Resource, Prayer Guide, Mission u curricula, online groups around specific interests, and more.

Facebook: facebook.com/uwomenfaith

If you're on Facebook, be sure to "like" United Women in Faith. Follow the link and sign up so that our regular posts will appear on your home page.

Twitter: twitter.com/uwomenfaith

Do you tweet? So does United Women in Faith! Use the link to find our Twitter account @uwomenfaith. Follow us, tweet with us, and become a part of the continuing conversation around faith, hope, and love in action.

YouTube: youtube.com/uwomenfaith

Need a video for a presentation? You'll find it on YouTube. Check out the video resources available by following the link. New videos are posted often!

Flicker uwfaith.org/flickr

Need a photo for your newsletter or PowerPoint? Follow this link and you'll find terrific images illustrating the work of United Women in Faith members.



United
Women
in Faith

INDIANA CONFERENCE

All Star and Five Star Giving Form

***Five Star Women* give to all five channels of giving below**

Indicate Amount Included

Pledge to Mission

Special Mission Recognition (\$40 Minimum)

Gift to Mission (\$5 Minimum)

Gift in Memory (\$5 Minimum)

World Thank Offering

***All Star Women* – All of the above PLUS these Conference Askings**

Lucille Raines Residence (\$17)

Mission u (\$2)

Youth and Young Adult Scholarship (\$1)

Assembly Offering Asking 1 year prior to Assembly only (\$1)

TOTAL

Name _____ **Unit** _____

Make check payable to your local unit or district.

Give the check and form to your unit or district treasurer.



Volunteer Form

Name _____

USPS Address _____

City/Zip+ _____

Local Church _____ District _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ Other _____

Email _____

Please consider me for: _____ (please indicate if interested in district or conference)

- ☐ President (Elected position) _____
- ☐ Treasurer (Elected position) _____
- ☐ Secretary (Elected position) _____
- ☐ Communications Coordinator (Elected position) _____
- ☐ Chair, Committee on Nominations (Elected position) _____
- ☐ Vice President/Event Planner _____
- ☐ Mission u Team member _____
- ☐ Committee on Nominations member _____
- ☐ Music leaders (pianist/song leader) _____

Please indicate if district or conference for positions below _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Mission Coordinator (Appointed) | ☐ Other Coordinator (Appointed) |
| ☐ Spiritual Growth | ☐ Language Coordinator |
| ☐ Social Action | ☐ Younger Women's Coordinator |
| ☐ Membership Nurture and Outreach | ☐ Technology Coordinator |
| ☐ Education and Interpretation | |
| ☐ Resources | |

Age Under 40 40-60 Over 60

United Women in Faith of Indiana

Tell us about your interests and
experience on the reverse side.
Thanks!!

January 2026



Volunteer Form

Return this form when finished to the **conference chair of nominations or your district chair of nominations** as appropriate. Now, tell us about yourself and why you would like to take on a leadership role in United Women in Faith of Indiana!



United Women in Faith of Indiana

2026 MISSION TODAY REPORT

WHY? The goal of the Mission Today program is to encourage ALL local units to fulfill the PURPOSE of United Women in Faith by:

- **Energizing** United Women in Faith to be more involved in mission through prayer, study and action;
- **Increasing** contacts between local organizations and mission personnel and projects enabling a better understanding of where Mission Giving dollars go;
- **Encouraging** the use of a variety of mission resources;
- **Expanding** concepts of mission, including social justice as mission.

United Women in Faith demonstrate their commitment to the PURPOSE through their Prayers, Presence, Participation, Gifts and Service. Use this checklist to help plan your upcoming year.

Prayers

- ☐ Used the Prayer Guide at each meeting to pray for mission personnel and projects. *
- ☐ Communicated with at least 5 persons listed in the Prayer Guide during the year.
- ☐ Held a mini-Spiritual Growth Retreat or Soul Care event.

Presence

- ☐ At least one member (not a conference or district officer) attended a Mission u event. *
- ☐ At least two members were added to the membership roll.
- ☐ At least two members (not a conference or district officer) attended at least one district or conference event such as an annual celebration, a Soul Care or spiritual/silent retreat, Mission u event, Leadership Development or officer training.

Participation

- ☐ At least two members subscribed to and/or read *response* magazine (including online articles). *
- ☐ Used at least two programs from a UWFaith Program Book during the year. *
- ☐ Conducted at least one Mission u study during the year. *
- ☐ At least two members completed one of the Reading Program Plans. *
- ☐ Initiated a new or expanded an already-existing Local Ministry Program which benefits women, children and/or youth. *
- ☐ Attended a "Tour-Talk-Lunch" ("TTL") at Lucille Raines Residence or gave in-kind or monetary support beyond the conference asking. *
- ☐ At least one member has signed up to receive the [UWFaith's Action Network](#) Alerts or the UWFaith of Indiana Social Action emails via Constant Contact, and shares with information with members.
- ☐ Told a mission story at meetings through sharing "member support" articles (identified by the Mission Giving logo—see other side) from *response* magazine.
- ☐ Included a book review/report on a Reading Program book during a meeting.
- ☐ At least two members watch or listen to at least 2 "Faith Talks" or "Voices from the Field", live or recorded on UWFaith website.

Gifts

- ☐ Made and met its Pledge to Mission. *
- ☐ Remitted the Conference Asking of \$20 per member, plus Assembly asking of \$1 the year prior to Assembly. *
- ☐ Received Five Star recognition by contributing to all five channels of Mission Giving by unit and/or member(s). *
- ☐ Legacy Fund donation made by unit and/or member(s).

Service

- ☐ Implemented the Charter for Racial Justice in at least one way during the year. *
- ☐ Invited a district or conference officer (not a local member) to one meeting during the year.
- ☐ Pledged to care for God's creation by becoming a "Green" local organization.
- ☐ Participated in at least two events/activities during the year which focused on Current Justice issues.

To be recognized by your District and Conference, please mark the checklist above as you complete an item and indicate what level was attained as follows:

Category	Number of items for that level	Number of items completed
Honorary Mention	At least 6 (with at least one per category)	
Bronze	At least 8 (including at least 4 asterisked items)	
Silver	At least 12 (including at least 6 asterisked items)	
Gold	At least 16 (including at least 6 asterisked items)	

Local Organization: _____ District: _____

Name and Position of person completing this report: _____

Email or postal address, and Phone: _____

Return completed form by January 15, 2027 to the Conference or District Education and Interpretation Coordinator.

Suggested Resources



Read *response*, the magazine for Women in Mission, through a subscription or online: uwfaith.org/resources/response-magazine or click [response Magazine | United Women in Faith](#). The Mission Giving logo found in *response* identifies a program and/or person supported by United Women in Faith's Mission Giving.

Current Justice Issues, including the Charter for Racial Justice, are online at uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/racial-justice/ or click [Racial Justice | United Women in Faith](#)



Current Climate Issues may be found online at uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/climate-justice/ or click [Climate Justice | United Women in Faith](#)

*Making Disciples of Jesus
Christ through Mission
Opportunities for Youth
and Young Adults.*

Youth and young adults receiving funds from the Youth and Young Adult Service Scholarship Fund will be asked to submit a summary of their experiences to the conference organization of United Women in Faith within 45 days of trip completion. Send report to the Conference E&I Coordinator.

Scholarship recipients' contact information may be obtained by contacting the Youth & Young Adult Scholarship Committee.

The Youth and Young Adult Service Scholarship Fund is funded by the giving of each local organization (unit) of United Women in Faith of Indiana.



United
Women
in Faith

2026 Youth & Young Adult Service Scholarship Fund

Direct questions to Rae Wallis,
Conference Mission Coordinator for Education and Interpretation
317-625-2523, raewallis@comcast.net.

Mail applications to 9431 English Oak Dr., Indianapolis IN 46235

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH
OF INDIANA CONFERENCE



2026

Youth and
Young Adult
Service Scholarship Fund

Mission Scholarships for
Youth and Young Adults

A Project of United Women in
Faith of Indiana conference

Criteria for applying:

1. Youth and young adults ages 13-25.
2. Must attend a United Methodist Church.
3. Qualifying persons must participate in work, study, or travel experiences that develop leadership in the Youth and Young Adults Ministries of the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church.
4. Preference will be given to work with UWFaith national mission institutions, UMC mission sites or advance specials of the Indiana Conference UMC. Preference will also be given to those churches/youth who have not recently received a scholarship.
5. Amount of scholarship shall be determined by the Youth and Young Adult Service Scholarship Committee. As a general guideline, 15% of the individual's cost will be given for work with UMC missions and 12% for work with non-UMC missions.
6. Scholarships will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis, as funds are available.
7. Applications are due at least 6 weeks prior to trip.
8. Funds will be available January 1, 2026.

For use by Scholarship Team

Date Application Received _____
 Date Application Processed _____
 Date Application Approved _____
 Amount Approved _____
 Notes:

2026 Youth and Young Adult Service Scholarship Application Form

Please type or print plainly
one form per group

Individual/Group Name: (circle one please)	# Eligible Youth & Young Adults in group: _____
Parent/Youth Leader name: (circle one please)	Email Address: _____
Home Address: _____	City: _____ Zip: _____
Applicant's UM Church Name	District: _____
Church Address: _____	Phone: _____
City: _____	Zip: _____
Mission Project: _____	
Indicate whether it is a United Methodist-Related Project and include Project Number (if Applicable): _____	
Project Location: _____	
Cost per youth/young adult: \$ _____	
Dates: _____	
Project Objective/Work goal: _____	

A letter of reference from Youth Leader or local church pastor <u>must</u> accompany the application.	
Mail completed form to the Youth & Young Adult Service Scholarship Fund Committee at the address on the reverse side of this form.	
Form may be duplicated as needed. Download at https://www.inumc.org/united-women-in-faith/	

INDIANA CONFERENCE UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH OFFICERS 2026

President

La Donna Weber (24-27)

8300 Sawyer Brown Road, S303
Nashville, TN 37221-7687
260-444-8036
ladonnarw@aol.com

Vice President

Jeanie Park Estep (26-27)
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iparkestep@gmail.com

Secretary

Vacant

Treasurer

Carla Gillespie (25-26)

3409 Sundancer
Jeffersonville IN 47130
937-414-8173
Ct25.cgillespie@gmail.com

Spiritual Growth Coordinator

Alicia Mitchell (26-27)

4728 Aerie Lane
Indianapolis 46254
317-313-5175
Alicia.mitchell@garrett.edu

Social Action Coordinator

Lori Chambers (24-27)

16529 Owen Drive
Westfield, IN 46074-0460
317-696-5965
Lochambers1122@gmail.com

Education and Interpretation Coordinator

Rae Wallis (25-26)

9431 English Oak Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46235-1147
317-625-2523
raewallis@comcast.net

Membership Nurture and Outreach

Susan Bassett (26-27)

4000 N Meridian St. #10 G
Indianapolis, IN 46208
260-350-0006
sbassett1956@gmail.com

Resources Coordinator

Sara Mayes (23-26)

7766 Camp Brosend Drive #0
Newburgh, IN 47360-1336
270-577-9003
Skma092362@aol.com

Communications Coordinator

Margaret Dennis (26-27)

6500 Blue Spruce Drive
Newburgh, IN 47630-1969
812-604-5995
margdenn@att.net

Chairperson Committee on Nominations

Rita Gaither-Gant (25-26)

4102 N. Dequincy Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226-4563
317-549-3574
gaitrgantm@aol.com

Committee on Nominations

L. Janenne Stuber (class of 2026)

761 South Park Drive
Chesterton, IN 46304-2941
(H) 219-929-1935
(C) 219-477-8748
stuberm@pnw.edu

Edna May (class of 2028)

6926 Bluff Ridge Place
Indianapolis, IN 46268-1898
317-291-6926
Emimay42@gmail.com

Mary Ann Pollard (class of 2028)

585 East Main Street
Hagerstown, IN 47346-1421
765-994-1614
m.a.pollard@comcast.net

Robin Hatton (class of 2028)

2709 North Virginia Avenue
Muncie, IN 47303-1796
765-212-7253
rhatton@bsu.edu

Margaret (Margie) Schimmel (class of 2029)

1802 Legoma Drive
Fort Wayne 46819-2012
mes.4264@yahoo.com

Jerianne Bonenberger (class of 2029)

5610 Picadilly Lane
Evansville 47711-1876
jabones59@gmail.com

Heather Lewis (class of 2029)

931 E Highway 150
Hardinsburg, IN 47125-8539
heatherdawnlewis@gmail.com

Appointed Officers**Co-Language Coordinators****Margaret Dennis (25-26)**

6500 Blue Spruce Drive
Newburgh, IN 47630-1969
812-604-5995
margdenn@att.net

Ashley Flores (25-26)

3409 Sundancer
Jeffersonville IN 47130
937-689-9744
ashley@richmondcumc.com

Music Coordinator**Beverly Kennedy**

4713 North Camelot Drive
Muncie, IN 47304-6212
765-273-0658
auntbevk@gmail.com

Young Women's Coordinator

Vacant

Legacy Coordinator**Rita Gaither-Gant**

4102 N. Dequincy Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226-4563
317-549-3574
gaitrgantm@aol.com

Technology Specialist**Jacki Moore**

5134 Pike Creek Lane
Indianapolis, IN 46254-5784
317-413-3927
Jacqueh6@yahoo.com

Mission u Officers**Dean****Maureen Mauzy (2026)**

802 East Center Street Unit 111
Warsaw, IN 46580-3396
maureenmauzy@gmail.com

Assistant Dean**Trisha Staneart (25-26)**

2802 Cross Creek Circle
Westfield, IN 46074-9728
317-867-2277
tstaneart@frontier.com

Business Manager**Barb McCoy (2026)**

1025 Brandon Way
Fort Wayne, IN 46845-2390
260-637-1842
barb.mccoy@frontier.com

Registrar**Mary Margaret Willbanks (2026)**

1300 S Tennessee Ave
Muncie, IN 47302-3886
765-212-5312
willthree@netzero.net