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## **SO MUCH TO DO...**

Hello Sisters in Faith!

I am so excited about the Michigan Conference United Women in Faith in 2025 and working with you and the Leadership Team. There is much being planned this year for women and children in the U.S. and around the globe.

Your national, conference and district leaders are working to create and plan programs for this year and beyond.

Are you taking advantage of the many opportunities? Are you watching Faith Talks (live or for listening after each talk)? The topics are varied and provide information you can't get anywhere else. Often an author is invited to talk about their recently published book.

Are you saving up so you can attend Assembly next year? Michigan is SO close to Indiana and Indianapolis! What a great opportunity for fellowship, worship, and learning. Mark your calendar now for May 15-17, 2026. While some of you may recall the fun bus trips to Assembly in the past. Unfortunately, that method of transportation is cost prohibitive at today's prices.

Here's a question I hope you can answer "yes" to: Have you set up your personal access to uwfaith.org? By doing that, you have access to information provided by our national organization, including the private digital area for officers and members alike. Please urge the local units in your district to complete the unit survey. That information is critical to our national and state organizations. If all active units completed the survey, we would know which units are inactive. Remember, the information the survey asks for is from 2023. The deadline is

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The 2025 Program Book and Prayer Guide are still available from national. The book includes many, many opportunities, suggestions and ideas for unit programs.

Will you be attending the Michigan UMC Annual conference in Acme this year? May 30-June 1. The Michigan Conference United Women in Faith is sponsoring a Saturday dinner for members as well as nonmembers. Our special guest speaker is Dr. Ray Francis. We can use your help at this event, as well as with our UWFaith table at the Mission Fair on Friday evening. Let me know if you will be there.

Have you read any books on the 2025 Reading List? There are many interesting books, and if you don't want to participate in the Reading Program levels, you don't have to. Just enjoy the read! Maybe use one for a circle book study.

One more save the date reminder: Sunday, March 23 has been designated United Women in Faith Day of Giving. At 1 p.m. on that date, go online to [uwfaith.org/dayofgiving](http://uwfaith.org/dayofgiving) for a special live streamed event.

Drum roll, please, we have a wonderful new website. Check it out: <https://www.uwfaithmichigan.org>. A huge THANK YOU goes out to Diana Miller and her son, David for their many hours of pulling it all together for us!

Please know that your Conference and District officers would love to visit local units. A program that you wouldn't have to plan!

Bless each one of you and thank you for all you do for United Women in Faith. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15

Blessings,

[Sharon Smith](#)

Michigan Conference United Women in Faith President

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1. Lean into your spiritual growth
2. Strengthen your leadership skills
3. Equip yourself for local and global mission
4. Take faithful action for the common good
5. Build community in ways large and small

I can help you with that! I recommend you begin your first year or 20<sup>th</sup> year participating in the UWIFaith Reading Program. I don't know how many years it has existed but probably not the 156 years we have been women organized for mission.

Find the [catalog](#) & all the details on the national website: [uwfaith.org](http://uwfaith.org).

It will help you become more knowledgeable, informed, & downright smarter!

This is my 16<sup>th</sup> year. (I got a late start & had to wait until my children graduated before I had any time to stick my nose in a book.) A few years ago I joined a local Book Club just to read an occasional novel! The funny thing is, now some of those novels are part of the Reading Program. I just can't escape it – not that I'm trying!

News to look forward to: We are continuing Zoom Book Talks. We are looking at July, Sept. & Nov. Specifics later as plans get firmed up and books are selected. If you participated in [We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders-A Memoir of Love and Resistance](#) by Linda Sarsour sponsored by National UWIFaith. I hope you liked it as much as I did!

Check out the new 2025 books or go back as far as 2020 & pick up some old ones. Encourage a partner to select a book & the 2 (or dozen!) of you have your own Book Talk.

Happy Reading!

Joy,

[Julia Hulka](#)

Program Resource

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*Watching Them Grow!* webinar. Voices from the Field events feature leaders sharing about their work to significantly improve the lives of women, children and youth around the world. The webinars provide an opportunity to meet with our regional missionaries virtually, listen to their stories about projects supported by our mission dollars, and ask them any questions you have. If you haven't participated in one of these webinars, I encourage you to do so. You can also watch the recordings of [past Voices From the Field webinars](#) on the United Women in Faith [Digital website](#). They are all very interesting; check them out when you get a chance.

The [response](#) magazine also has many good articles about our mission dollars at work. In the January/February 2025 issue there is a story about Pasumai Ulagam, a project which provides instruction in the art of tailoring and provides microloans to women living in rural India. For a loan of \$100, a woman can buy a sewing machine or the products needed to start her own business. Think about it – by giving a gift of \$100 to missions through United Women in Faith, a woman in India can become self-supporting! The great thing about these microloans is that the repayment rate is very high, and the money that is paid back can be loaned out to someone else. Think about how many lives we can change for the better by a small increase in our mission giving! Small increases in giving can provide huge returns for women, children and youth around the world! Let's all try to increase our mission giving by ten percent this year. We can do this!

[Judy Huynh](#)

Conference E&I

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### **IMPACT - THE THIRD "I"**

At Leadership Development Days I learned about the Three I's: Inspire, Influence and Impact. Inspire provides ideas and resources to nurture your spiritual growth and find community. Influence provides opportunities to develop your leadership skills, such as workshops and networking. And Impact encourages you to put your faith into action, especially on our two social justice focuses: Climate Justice (Just Energy 4 All) and Racial Justice (Interrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline).

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Conference Social Action Coordinator (SAC), I am on the steering committee for this annual event. This year Advocacy Day takes place on Wednesday, March 12. If you've participated before, just head to the website, <https://michiganumc.org/advocacy-day-2025/> and register if you can attend.

If you can't attend, you can still participate! We need every United Methodist to contact their representatives in the Michigan legislature to advocate for this year's focus: Fixing the 2019 no-fault car insurance changes. The problem? The change drastically reduced reimbursement rates for care providers. The result? Care for survivors is often unavailable. Families worry that an injured love one could die as a result.

We need to advocate for the following two changes in the law: (1) **provide sustainable reimbursement rates for medical providers** and (2) **increase the number of hours that family caregivers can be reimbursed**.

Think it won't happen to you? Seven Michiganders are severely injured every day. We need to fix this! Put your Faith in Action; you can make an impact!

Rene Johnson  
Social Action

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### **FRIEND ME, PLEASE...**

Be a friend to Michigan Area United Women in Faith on Facebook.

Here are the steps. Go to Facebook. Find the magnifying glass at the top of the page. Type in - [Michigan Area United Women in Faith](#). When the page pops up —tap the button to join.

You will receive updates on events going on in our conference. Find pictures of women you know and maybe even yourself attending gatherings. See what other districts are creating. What campaigns you may want to be involved in. Post an event or flier for your Unit. There is so much to see and learn on our Facebook page.

Join the Facebook Friends on Michigan Area United Women in Faith!

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### **ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE?**

When was the last time your unit, or you personally, increased your Pledge to Mission? If you attended the 2024 MI Conference UWFaith Annual Celebration, or one of the District Annual meetings I attended, you heard my challenge – increase our Pledge to Mission by 10% in 2025. If your unit pledges \$500, that would be a \$50 increase; if your unit pledges \$2,500, that would be a \$250 increase. Can you do it? Do you need some ideas for fundraisers? Contact me, [Judy Huynh](#) (Conference E&I Coordinator) or your District E&I Coordinator. Do you just want some inspiration to strengthen your connection to the global mission of United Women in Faith? Contact me or another District or Conference officer to come and speak to your group. We are a sisterhood of faith working TOGETHER to improve the lives of women, children and youth. Let's rise to the challenge. We can do this – together!

Blessings,

[Julia Paradine-Rice](#)

National Director

989-576-0675



THIS IMAGE REPRESENTS **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S** COMMITMENT TO WORK FOR RACIAL JUSTICE. IT SYMBOLIZES A WORLD OF RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE PEOPLES WORKING TOGETHER SIDE BY SIDE TO CREATE A WORLD IN WHICH EVERY PERSON HAS A VOICE, RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ABUNDANT LIFE. WITHIN THE IMAGE ARE TWO HANDS JOINED TOGETHER TO WORK FOR JUSTICE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN.

### **CHARTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE 101**

Since 1844 issues of racial justice have impacted the Methodist denomination. Because of disagreements over slavery and authority of bishops, there was a denominational split. Post Civil War, the U.S ended slavery but moved to

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persevered establishing schools, serving missionaries and advocating for equity. In 1940, Thelma Stevens became the Woman's Division head of Christian Social Relations in the newly formed Methodist church. She was instrumental in the writing of the first Charter of Racial Policies in 1952. A year earlier a book entitled, "States Laws on Race and Color" was published. That book commissioned by the Woman's Division became a source for the U.S. Supreme Court in its deliberations on Brown v. Board of Education. In 1962, a new Charter for Racial Policies was adopted by the General Conference upon petition of the Woman's Division. In 1968 General Conference brought together the Methodist Church and the United Brethren Church, creating the United Methodist Church. Two years later, the third Charter for Racial Justice was adopted. Then in 1980, the Charter for Racial Justice Policies was adopted by General Conference. In 2016, United Methodist Women became an independent organization within the United Methodist Church.

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### [\*\*MARCH 23 - DAY OF GIVING\*\*](#)

Why March 23? On this date in 1869, a group of eight intrepid women founded the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, the forerunner of United Women in Faith. Their vision was to create educational opportunities and provide health care to women in India. These founding women invited others to join their mission through their prayers and two pennies. Thus, a movement of faith and generosity in action was born.

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# Save the Date

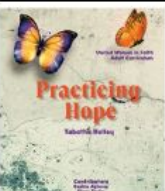


**Mount Pleasant First  
United Methodist Church**  
400 South Main Street Mount  
Pleasant, MI 48858

July 17-19  
(Thursday-Saturday)




**ADULT STUDY:** *Practicing Hope by Tabatha Holley*



*Practicing Hope* is an adult curriculum exploring hope, particularly when hope seems hard to find. The curriculum asks questions such as: What is hope in the face of neofascism? What is hope in a time of genocide? How do we imagine a future for the next generation as our planet grows hotter by the season? What tools do we have to face these hard realities? How does Christ teach us to embody hope when our backs are against the wall? This study's purpose is to cultivate hope that is honest about our current conditions (refugia), hope that is restorative when everything feels urgent (rest), and hope that is possible even when we transgress (repair).

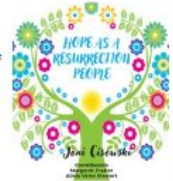
**YOUTH STUDY:** *Communities of the Spirit: Living into Hope as Resurrection People by Regina Heaater*

is a youth curriculum that examines the hope we find in early post-resurrection Christian communities and how they kept hope alive even in seemingly hopeless times. Explore how we can create such communities today by examining common themes found in the post-resurrection stories: bravery, miracles, rituals, time and diversity, the fruit of the Spirit, and adversity and perseverance. Participants will consider these themes with a sense of wonder and create a Community of the Spirit of their own. They will be asked to consider what they believe are important components of a Community of the Spirit, with the hope that they will




**CHILDRENS STUDY:** *Hope is a Resurrection People by Joni Cisowski*

is a children's curriculum that helps children build trust in Jesus to bring them comfort and support as they find courageous hope in the face of uncertainty. As they move through each session, they will develop their understanding of hope by reflecting on important people, communities, places, activities, personal goals, and desires for the future. Then, they will look for ways to build communal hope to be the change our world needs today. Children will create a "Tree of Hope," offering them a time of creative reflection as they explore parts of their lives that help build hope—from the people (roots),



- This form can be found on the Michigan UMW Website, registration can be paid by check payable to: Mission u, or online at: <https://michiganconferencemissionu.square.site/>
- This link is also found on the website.
- The study books are available at: <https://uwfaith.org/events/mission-u/>
- If you prefer, you can order them to be picked up at Mission u . Please indicate this on the order form above.
- You can register for Mission u online at: <https://michiganconferencemissionu.square.site/> or scan the QR Code



**Printable Mission u Save the Date**



[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)***SAVE THE DATES: October 17 – 18, 2025***

*United Women in Faith  
Michigan Conference  
7<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration*

***EMBRACING New Challenges*****Saturday, October 18, 2025 9:00 AM**

Sally Vonner, current General Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of United Women in Faith, will be our keynote speaker. Sally oversees the implementation of the organization's vision, mission, and strategic plan to positively impact the lives of women, children, and youth around the world. Sally has served many years in many divisions of United Women in Faith. She is an inspiring speaker and a strong leader who serves and embodies the Purpose and Vision of the United Women in Faith.

**Friday, October 17, 2025 4:00 PM**

Audra Hudson Stone and Jacob Stone will present a special program on "Environmental Justice." They are well educated in this field and bring a wealth of knowledge and insight [about](#) the subject. They are very engaging speakers.

United Women in Faith Leadership Development and Counterpart Training will begin at 7:00 pm.

We look forward to seeing you at this exciting and important event. An informational flyer and registration form will be available soon.

Host Church: Clio Bethany United Methodist Church, 353 E. Vienna Street, Clio, Michigan



United  
Women  
in Faith

***"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put it into practice. And the God of Peace will be with you. Philippians 4:9 NIV***

**Printable Annual Celebration Save the Date**



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