

The V.O.I.C.E.

Valuable Organizational Information Connecting Everyone

The Official Newsletter of the Michigan Conference United Women in Faith

President's Message

Greetings Sisters in Faith! I have just returned from the Michigan UMC Annual Conference and while some of the issues were challenging, the plenary sessions, as usual, were wonderful and inspired me to be more loving, more giving, more thoughtful and indeed opened my eyes and ears to better understand why churches and organizations can fail to meet the needs and expectations of church from folks born into generations other than our own. Our work is just UNFINISHED.

The theme of this year's UMC AC was UNFINISHED – Growing Up and Into Christ. The pertinent scripture: Ephesians 4:15 says, Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into...Christ. There is so much I could write about the Annual Conference, but I have Michigan Conference United Women in Faith news and reminders to share.

FIRST, in this newsletter you will find an invitation for ALL MICHIGAN UWFaith members to participate in the Blessing and tours of the newest project at United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids. Having a national Mission Institution right here in Michigan is such an honor and legacy to its founders. UMCH has come so far with its facilities, opportunities and services provided for local underserved community members. Please plan to attend as this program is exclusively for members of United Women in Faith and friends. Please spread the word, especially to some of our more senior members who may have been involved with UMCH before it was sold by the West Michigan Conference.

SECOND, Mission u is right around the corner. There is registration information in this newsletter for your convenience in getting signed up. The book of study is *Practicing Hope* by Tabatha Holley. Mission u is not only a spiritual learning experience, it is also fun to meet UWFaith women from around the state. And remember any child or young person accompanying you is FREE.

THIRD, Our Annual Celebration will be here before you know it. You will find the information and registration materials in this issue of the VOICE, too. It's not too early to register and make your hotel reservation.

FINALLY, If you aren't already doing so, please invite your District or Conference President, Vice President or any of your District or Conference officers to do a program for your local UWFaith Unit. All you need do is ask. If you struggle coming up with programs, here's your answer.

To close, please read these words of Bishop Bard, contained in the MiUMC 2025 Annual Report: ***"Our work is unfinished. There are challenges ahead, and I am hopeful. ... "Love is the heart and direction of our unfinished story. And now faith, hope and love remain – these three things – and the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). I too am hopeful for our shared sisterhood. It is an honor to serve with faith, hope and love as your president.

Blessings,
Sharon Smith,
President

Hello, United Women in Faith Members,
My name is Ethel M. Gill and I am the Vice President of the Michigan Conference United Women in Faith. I am honored to be serving with the Michigan Team and working with everyone to fulfill the purpose of United Women in Faith.

In my role as Vice President, I am the Chairperson of the Program Committee. The Program Committee is responsible for planning programs, specifically the Michigan Conference 7th Annual Celebration and Officer and Leadership Training, which will be held at Clio Bethany UMC in Clio, Michigan, on Friday and Saturday, October 17 – 18, 2025.

The theme is, ***"Embracing New Challenges."*** As the world changes daily around us, we are keeping our vision in front of us! Through faith we will push forward when it gets tough; kicking fear to the curb. We will continue to use our Purpose and Mission as guideposts to keep us on track. We have a mighty Purpose which has served us well for many years. God is with us!

We have made amazing strides over the last few years. We have strong leadership and great training programs. We are reaching people in new ways and generating excitement about the goals of United Women in Faith. Slowly, but surely, we are reconnecting and generating a "NEW BUZZ!" The Committee

is diligently working to deliver a spirit-filled, educational and inspirational experience.

Our keynote speaker will be Sally Vonner, current General Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of United Women in Faith. Sally is a powerful leader, a woman of faith and purpose. Sally has served in many capacities of the United Women in Faith and the United Methodist Church. You want to be at the Annual Celebration to meet, greet and learn from our national leader!

Pastor Audra Hudson Stone and Jacob Stone will present our Officer Leadership Training and Development Program. They will be speaking on ***“Environmental Justice: A Call to Hope & Action.”*** Their presentation will include information on the realities of environmental injustice. Jacob and Pastor Audra will bring their expertise and passion to this subject matter and will present suggestions for positive change.

Please announce this event at all district and local unit meetings. Please post the flyer and registration information on church bulletin boards. Please join us for this important event. It's not everyday that the CEO shows up at your Annual Celebration!!!

The flyer and registration form are included in “The Voice.” Please be sure to register for the Annual Celebration and book your hotel room as soon as possible.

Over the last six months, I have expanded my knowledge about United Women in Faith. Our organization provides professional training through many platforms. The national website, our conference website, Standing Rules, UWIF Handbook, Leadership Development Days, and many more programs are at our fingertips. These tools can be shared with the local units. When we know more; we do more!

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Ethel M. Gill

Vice President

Mission Giving Advocate

Last month at Central United Methodist Church in Lake Odessa, our United Women in Faith unit honored a long-time member and mission advocate,

Elaine Garlock, with a Special Recognition Mission pin. Elaine is 104 years old, and she has been active in United Women in Faith (formerly WSCS and United Methodist Women) for her whole life, which is a very long time!

Elaine is a very active member of our local United Women in Faith unit. She regularly attends our monthly meetings (driving herself!) and attends our United Women in Faith Book Club meetings, which are held every other week. She bakes wonderful cornbread for our soup dinners. At our unit meetings, we can depend on Elaine to share from the UWFaith Prayer Guide and to share information from *response* magazine about mission projects around the world. She has an amazing memory, and we always look forward to the information and history she shares with us. Elaine is responsible for the UWF Missions bulletin board in our fellowship hall. She strongly encourages us to meet our pledge to mission and advocates for increasing our pledge whenever possible. Do any of your units have an “Elaine”? Maybe you can be that person in your unit who advocates for mission giving and encourages your unit to meet and even increase your pledge each year. You don’t need to be 104!

Responsible stewardship is a challenge for United Women in Faith, especially in this time of uncertainty in our economy. Decisions about budgets and giving are based on a strong belief in mission education, leadership development and the needs of women, children and youth in our world. We hope you will all give generously to support the mission of United Women in Faith this year, increasing your pledge by ten percent, if possible. It will make Elaine very happy!

Judy Huynh

Education and Interpretation Mission Coordinator

Notes From the Conference Treasurer

Did you know that you could send an e-card through the United Women in Faith national website, uwfairh.org? I found out from a quarterly conference treasurer meet-up. You go to the website and select "give today" at the bottom of the page. After you make the donation, you can choose to share that you donated through Facebook, Linked In, X, or through an email you can send to the person or family of the person you are honoring. At first I thought it would send one of those cute on-line cards I sometimes receive from friends for my

birthday. But this was even better. It is a way to share a very short introduction to what United Women in Faith funds support. What a convenient and inexpensive way to send thoughts or greetings and to get the word out about UWFaith and what we support.

District Teams, don't forget that you need to work on your budgets in the next month or two. Approved budgets need to be to me by August 1. Be intentional about decreasing spending and increasing the mission giving pledge. Think about why you/we give and make a point to relay that message to your units in the coming year.

Cheryl Rumery
Conference Treasurer



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

Charter for Racial Justice in an Interdependent Global Community

Because we believe:

1. That God is the Creator of all people, and all are God's children in one family;
2. That racism is a rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ;
3. That racism denies the redemption and reconciliation of Jesus Christ;
4. That racism robs all human beings of their wholeness and is used as a justification for social, economic, environmental, and political exploitation;
5. That we must declare before God and before one another that we have

- sinned against our sister and brothers of other races in thought, in word, and in deed;
6. That in our common humanity in creation, all women and men are made in God's image, and all persons are equally valuable in the sight of God;
 7. That our strength lies in our racial and cultural diversity and that we must work toward a world in which each person's value is respected and nurtured;
 8. That our struggle for justice must be based on new attitudes, new understandings, and new relationships, and must be reflected in the laws, policies, structures, and practices of both church and state;

We commit ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ in word and in deed, and to struggle for the rights and the self-determination of every person and group of persons.

Looking For a Pledge Service?

<https://uwfaith.org/resources/program-resource/>

This link will take you to the UWFaith website and you can see the free resources listed at the bottom of the page.

I hope this is what you were looking for.

Hello Sisters in Faith and Supporters of United Methodist Community House, Some of you may be aware of this coming event, while others of you may be learning about this invitation for the first time with this email:

EXCLUSIVELY FOR MEMBERS OF UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH IN MICHIGAN AND THEIR FRIENDS, ON SATURDAY, JUNE 28, FROM 10 AM - 12 NOON, PLEASE JOIN IN A BLESSING OF THE (NEW) BUILDING ON THE CAMPUS OF THE NATIONAL MISSION INSTITUTION, UNITED METHODIST COMMUNITY HOUSE, IN GRAND RAPIDS.

Please get this invitation out to all in your Districts and to all your cohorts in your Districts and local groups around Michigan as soon as possible. Come one, come all! Arrange to carpool or come alone - we will be there to greet you with executives from UMHC. Attached is the formal invitation that will appear in the VOICE newsletter, coming out soon.

Blessings to you all, I look forward to seeing you on Saturday, June 28, in
Grand Rapids!

Sharon Smith



UMCH CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO ATTEND THIS SPECIAL OCCASSION



United
Women
in Faith

BLESSING *of the* BUILDING

Sat. June 28
10am-12pm
900 S. division,
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

As Michigan's only National Mission Institute, we invite you to be a part of blessing the latest expansion of our campus and witness the growth made possible by your faith, hope, and love in action.

We look forward to fellowship with you as we celebrate this magnificent achievement!



RSVP BY
JUNE 20

Event Program

- 10:15 AM** Welcome, Carla Moore, United Methodist Community House Chief Executive Officer
- 10:20 AM** UMCH History, Julia Paradine-Rice, National Board of Directors, United Women in Faith
- 10:30 AM** Blessing of the Building, Rev. Jodi Flessner, District Superintendent of the Western Waters District of the United Methodist Church
- 10:35 AM** 10:35 AM - Thank You and Invitation to Tour, Sharon Smith, Conference President United Women in Faith

***LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND SELF-GUIDED TOURS
WILL BE AVAILABLE***

616-452-3226 | www.umchousegr.org

Click here to RSVP for the Blessing of the Building

Mission u News

Registration is open! Mission u will be held July 17-19, 2025 at Mt. Pleasant First UMC. Scholarships are available, people are encouraged to ask their local units and districts for scholarships first. Cost is \$80 with lodging on your own. A bank of rooms have been reserved at Hampton Inn of Mt. Pleasant for \$119/night.

This year's theme is Practicing Hope Together and we are thrilled that the adult class will be led by UWF National Fundraising Executive Shannon Priddy. Youth and children attend for free with a paid adult, and we have excellent trained leaders for age-appropriate classes. Youth will be led by Rev. Paul Reissmann (Central First UMC, Lake Odessa) and Pastor Jess (Davenport) Joyce (Co-Pastor, Portage Chapel Hill). Children will be led by Adrienne Struck (Director of Family Ministries, Milwood UMC, Kalamazoo) and Pam Udeagwu (Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator, Metropolitan UMC, Detroit).

Use the attached flyer for registration details or visit this link for online registration: [Mission u of Michigan Registration](#)

Come enter a sacred grove of hope with us as we gather to worship, sing, study, eat, laugh and love together in Mt. Pleasant on July 17th.

Love One Another,
Sara Wolfson, Dean
Mission u of Michigan

July 17-19, 2025 | Mt. Pleasant, MI

Register here by July 10: [Mission u of Michigan Registration](#)

Book Talk during Mission u

Summertime and the reading is ready! Come to think of it, reading is a good activity during fall, winter, and spring, too!

I'd like to bring two books to your attention that I will use for the Book Talk during Mission u at Mt. Pleasant First UMC July 17-19. There will be more details about the event in this edition of the VOICE, so I am just going to

highlight the Reading Program part. It will be offered as a Break Out Session on Friday, July 18 at 3:00.

The first book is My Body Is Not a Prayer Request: Disability Justice in the Church by Amy Kenny.

Much of the church has forgotten that we worship a disabled God whose wounds survived resurrection, says Amy Kenny. It is time for the church to start treating disabled people as full members of the body of Christ who have much more to offer than a miraculous cure narrative and to learn from their embodied experiences.

Written by a disabled Christian, this book shows that the church is missing out on the prophetic witness and blessing of disability. Kenny reflects on her experiences inside the church to expose unintentional ableism and cast a new vision for Christian communities to engage disability justice. She shows that until we cultivate church spaces where people with disabilities can fully belong, flourish, and lead, we are not valuing the diverse members of the body of Christ.

Offering a unique blend of personal storytelling, fresh and compelling writing, biblical exegesis, and practical application, this book invites readers to participate in disability justice and create a more inclusive community in church and parachurch spaces. .

You will gain a new perspective on people with disabilities who are a part of the church, or at least want to be! It is a 2025 Reading Program selection under Leadership Development.

The second featured book will be Starfish by Lisa Fipps. It is a youth book under Nurturing for Community, 2025. The back cover briefly describes it as: *A Printz honor - winning novel-in-verse about a girl who is tired of being fat-shamed and is ready to do something about it.*

Please come join us! Bring your own copy or a library copy if available. Reading the books will be helpful but not necessary! If you read both books, plus the study book Practicing Hope by Tabatha Holley, you will be over halfway to completing Plan I of the Reading Program!

See you at Mission u!

Joy,
Julia Hulka

Silent Auction At Mission u

Over the last few years there has been a silent auction at Mission u to raise funds for the United Methodist Community House. I am excited to tell you that there will be another one this year during Mission u! We have managed to raise over \$1000 each year for the Community House, a project near and dear to United Women in Faith, and I hope that we can match those figures again this year.

As always, we are looking for quality items that can be put into the silent auction. There were lots of items last year, including gift certificates, handmade items, teacups and tea, paintings, things for the kids (grandchildren and others) and a host of other items too numerous to mention. **Please plan to bring something that can be put into the auction, and then plan to bid on them so all items will go home with someone that will value them! And...if you want to tell me what you're bringing you can call or email me to let me know.**

I will have bid sheets run off so you can leave your items with me and we can get them all placed with their sheets. I will also have name sheets where you can write down your name and we can record what you win so we have a correct amount.

For the past two years, I've been privileged to work alongside Jean Sherman and her daughter who were great leaders! I will be manning the position myself this year, so if anyone has time and would like to help, especially at the beginning and the end, that would be great!

I look forward to seeing you all at Mission u and seeing what we can do to further the work of the United Methodist Community House!

Kathy Freeland

Auction Director

East Winds district Communications coordinator

E-mail – ksfdaf@sbcglobal.net



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

July 17-19 (Thursday-Saturday)

1:00 pm Doors Open (EST)

Early Registration \$80 by June 15th

Late Registration \$90 June 16 - July 10

Optional group tour: Thursday 10 am

Ziibiwing Center, 6650 E. Broadway, Mt. Pleasant,

a Native American Museum \$6.50. You can check out their website at: <http://www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/>

Lodging is on your own. **We have a block of rooms until June 30th** at the Hampton Inn, 5205 E. Pickard, Mount Pleasant, (989) 772-5500. Mention Mission u or UWF for the special rate of \$119 per room per night: includes breakfast. This price is good for 1-4 people in a room. There is a pool!


Other options are: Super 8 (989) 546-5662, Chippewa Motel (989) 722-1751, Fairfield (989) 775-5000

Book your room SOON!

The Mission Focus / In-Gathering will benefit:

Community Compassion Network. In need of: infant (not toddler) formula.

Scholarships are available through some local Units, Districts and the Conference.

	<p>ADULT STUDY: Lead by: Shannon Priddy <i>Practicing Hope</i> by Tabatha Holley</p> <p><i>Practicing Hope</i> 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).</p>
<p>YOUTH STUDY: <i>Communities of the Spirit: Living into Hope as Resurrection People</i> by Regina Heater 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 identify for themselves what they need in a community to help them continue to become the people God is calling them to be.</p>	<p>CHILDRENS STUDY: <i>Hope is a Resurrection People</i> 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), ground (places and communities), to the fruit (joy meant to be shared), and finally, a forest as we come together as a forest of hope—preparing our hearts to serve.</p> 

FREE
for all
youth

- 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



This form MUST be filled out for Mission u NO OTHER FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED
Register by July 10, 2025

Name: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Home Church: _____
 District: _____

Youth/Children Name:	Age:

BOOKS MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE AND CAN BE ORDERED HERE

- | | |
|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Study Book <i>Practicing Hope</i> | \$17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Registration (by June 15) | \$80 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late Registration (after June 15) | \$90 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Admittance to Ziibiwing Center | \$6.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (6th grade or older) | FREE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child (1st grade - 5th grade) | FREE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare (Kindergarten or younger) | FREE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation to Community Compassion Network
(the recipient of our Mission Focus) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation for Care Bag supplies
(one of the mission projects) | _____ |

TOTAL DUE: _____

Late registration due by July 10

If sending a check, please make it payable to: MISSION U

Information:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First time attending | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Laity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conference Officer | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid online | <input type="checkbox"/> Missionary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District Officer | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Assistance Applicant | |

Check all that apply:

Special needs:

- ☐ Sign language interpreters
☐ Dietary requirements (specify) _____



Lodging is on your own. **We have a block of rooms until June 30th** at the Hampton Inn, 5205 E. Pickard, Mount Pleasant, **(989) 772-5500**. Mention Mission u or UWF for the special rate of \$119 per room per night: includes breakfast. This price is good for 1-4 people in a room. There is a pool!

Other options are: Super 8 (989) 546-5662, Chippewa Motel (989) 722-1751, Fairfield (989) 775-5000

Book your room SOON!

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- 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



Send registrations to: Sally Messner, 1072 Stonehill Drive, Charlotte, MI 48813
mimissionu@gmail.com

Michigan Conference United Women in Faith
7th Annual Celebration October 17 – 18, 2025
Clio Bethany United Methodist Church 353 E. Vienna St Clio, Michigan 48420

Saturday, October 18, 2025 Registration 9:00 AM Program 9:30 AM \$20 (Includes Lunch)



EMBRACING New Challenges

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.

Friday, October 17, 2025 Registration 3:30 PM Program 4:00 PM Dinner 6:00 PM \$10
There is no charge to attend the program unless you join us for dinner.

October 17, 2025 United Women in Faith Officer and Leadership Training 7:00 PM



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: A Call to Hope & Action

Jacob Stone and Pastor Audra Hudson Stone, co-conveners of the Environmental Justice Taskforce of the Michigan UMC, will share a comprehensive introduction to the issues. Their presentation will include information on the realities of environmental injustice, a Biblical framework for creation care and suggestions for prophetic action.

MISSION FOCUS will benefit Clio Bethany United Methodist Church Food Pantry
Please donate canned foods, nonperishable foods, personal hygiene - full sized, toilet paper, paper towel, laundry soap

Comfort Inn, 11911 Dixie Hwy, Birch Run, MI 48415 (989) 624-7777 or (989) 624- 7273
Hotel Rooms are available at a special rate of \$125 per room, single or double occupancy
\$10 charge per night for each additional person over two people. Complimentary Breakfast.
Cut off Date is Thursday, October 2, 2025, for Room Block at \$125 Rate
Register Early! Mention "United Methodist Women" or "United Women in Faith"

Register by October 11th online at:
<https://my-site-102740-102533.square.site/> or scan QR Code



Registration Form for mailing attached



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

Conference Annual Registration Form
Registration Deadline is October 11, 2025

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

**Email required if you wish to receive annual meeting materials.
NO hard copies will be available at the meeting.**

Please Check one: ☐ Local Officer ☐ District Officer ☐ Conference Officer

District _____ Office held _____

Home Church and City _____

Please check events attending:

☐ \$10.00 - Friday Officer Training/Leadership Development

☐ \$20.00 - Saturday Celebration

_____ TOTAL DUE (Make checks payable to: Michigan Conference UWF)

Dietary Restrictions: _____

Child care needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Names and ages of children: _____

Lodging is on your own. Hotel rooms are available at:

Comfort Inn, 11911 Dixie Hwy, Birch Run, MI 48415 (989) 624-7777 or (989) 624- 7273

Hotel Rooms are available at a special rate of \$125 per room, single or double occupancy
\$10 charge per night for each additional person over two people. Complimentary Breakfast.

Cut off Date is Thursday, October 2, 2025, for Room Block at \$125 Rate

Register Early! Mention "United Methodist Women" or "United Women in Faith"

**Mail before October 11th with check payable to: Michigan Conference UWF to:
Sally Messner 1072 Stonehill Drive, Charlotte MI 48813
sallymessner@yahoo.com 269-783-6334**



Sally Vonner

Sally Vonner is a woman of faith and purpose as a leader, mother, sister, and friend to many. She is a proud member of United Women in Faith. As the General Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of United Women in Faith, she 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. She collaborates with United Women in Faith's senior executives from the Offices of the General Secretary, Connectional, Finance and Asset Management, Operations, and Transformation on day-to-day operations.

Sally has served various areas of the United Methodist Church (UMC) as a women's retreat leader, jurisdictional conference delegate or alternate (2008, 2016, 2020), and organizer for immigration assistance and reform, community development initiatives, and dismantling racism at jurisdictional and conference levels. She was commissioned as a 10-10-10 missionary by the General Board of Global Ministries in 2000 with placement in the North Texas Annual Conference as the Communities of Shalom Coordinator. She was also the Associate Director of Connectional Ministries for the North Texas Annual Conference, 2005-2010.

She is a long-time member of the Black Methodist for Church Renewal at the national, jurisdictional and local levels. Sally has been a member of a women's leadership cohort for Chief Executive Officers with J.P. Morgan Chase, since 2021.

She is a graduate of Perkins School of Theology with a M.Div. and Women's Studies Certification and Texas A&M Commerce with a B.S. in Biology. Sally is a long-time member of First UMC Grand Prairie (TX). She regularly attends Teaneck UMC in Teaneck, NJ and is a member of their United Women in Faith unit. She is an active member of the Bergen County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Sally enjoys reading, walking and traveling to beaches in the U.S. and the Caribbean.



Pastor Audra Hudson Stone and Jacob Stone

Pastor Audra Hudson Stone and Jacob Stone are co-convenors of the Environmental Justice Taskforce of the Michigan Conference United Methodist Church, living in Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

Audra holds a Master of Arts in Public Ministry from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary with a concentration in ecological regeneration and she currently serves as the campus minister for the Central Michigan University Wesley Foundation. Jacob holds a bachelor's degree from Adrian College in environmental science and biology and has a background in outdoor education and UMC camping ministries.

In November 2023, they served as young adult representatives of the UMC to the 2023 World Council of Churches Eco-School, focused on faith-based responses to climate change and environmental degradation.