



United  
Women  
in Faith

# NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

### NOVA NOTES

JANUARY 2024



Please *Share* and forward this United Women in Faith Newsletter

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**Proverbs 3:5-6** - Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. (NIV)

As we enter a new year of hope and promise, listen to the words of a young woman in my congregation:

#### **Genesis 32:22-32**

“We were talking about Jacob in the Bible today and how God made him new. There are so many times in the Bible, where God makes someone new. They become a new version of themselves through the healing power and love of God.

But here’s what I loved most about Jacob; he was wounded in this transformation. There are so many times in the Bible where they become clean and they’re just a whole new person and it’s so wonderful! But when Jacob became new, it wasn’t without loss in the process. It wasn’t without him forever being altered. And I can relate to that in so many ways. I feel that it’s great to become new through God, but it wasn’t easy to get here. I still feel the handicaps.

Even still, you can keep living and create joy. Jacob did. And so can I. And so can you. 🧡”

Sometimes we get caught up in the problems we encounter as we follow Christ. Life can be difficult, and following Christ often changes us in ways we aren’t expecting. We need to remember that no matter what happens, God is with us and He is in control.

Let us greet the New Year with joy and thanksgiving for God and all he does for us.

Beth Meserve

Devotion by Desirae Zentz

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#### **Mission Statement**

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

#### **UWF Updated Purpose**

We are a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.



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

**Sunday, January 7, 2024, 2:00-4:00pm, Fairfax UMC**

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

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

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

Do you need a ride?



We will have board games, card games, puzzles, and coloring sheets! We will be collecting canned food at this event to help support the Fairfax UWF Food Pantry. They have recently seen an increase in the number of families needing help.

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



**United  
Women  
in Faith**

**Training for United Women in Faith**

**Unit officers:**

There's so much going on in January! Our churches and our UWF units are very busy and it's been difficult to schedule our training. Let's start with one timeslot –

**Saturday, January 13,  
from 9:30-11:00 over Zoom.**

We'll discuss how unit officers work as a team to make mission possible for us all, clarify roles and responsibilities, and take a look at some news and information from around United Women in Faith.

If any questions, contact Maria Ward  
[alexandria.umw.president@gmail.com](mailto:alexandria.umw.president@gmail.com)

## Fluvanna Christmas Gift Ministry

*To all of you...who donated toiletry products, stationery, stamps, greeting cards, pencils, and money in support of the Christmas Gift Ministry for the women incarcerated at the Fluvanna Correctional Center in Troy, Virginia...a huge THANK YOU!!! Your donations are so success of this*

*Each Christmas, about 1,200 very appreciative ladies at Fluvanna are given a kit of five hygiene items, various greeting cards, and stationery. You have no idea how grateful the women are to receive these very practical gifts, and to know that someone is thinking of them, and they are not forgotten, especially this time of year.*

*GraceInside (the chaplaincy that has “boots on the ground” at Fluvanna) wrote: “We appreciate your continued support of this important ministry and thank you for your generosity and service to the Lord.”*

*It has been my pleasure to deliver the donations (a car-full) to my contact in Palmyra each year. It does my heart good to see so many of our United Women in Faith sisters contribute to this great mission outreach. Thank you for all you do to support women, children, and youth year after year. Love in action can change the world.*

*Blessings,  
Marty Bickford*



## Creation Justice-Why We Take Action for God's Creation

We are called to follow the example of Jesus and the prophets--to be courageous in proactively shaping our communities and our world to better align with our faith values.

*Creation Justice Ministries* specializes in helping Christian communities to engage at the federal level of US government.

In our U.S. democracy, engaging with elected officials is a civic responsibility.

- **Directly Contact Decision-Makers:** Creation Justice’s form to plan and record your visit, call, or email your elected officials to express your concern for God's creation.
- **Get Published-** Efforts to care for God's creation are news-worthy. Write your opinion in the comments section of online articles, or formally respond to an article with a **letter to the editor**. Be an opinion leader by drafting a **blog post** or an **opinion editorial** to a local newspaper.
- **Take Action with** Creation Justice Policy Factsheets.
- **Organize Your Community.** Creation Justice Ministries sometimes helps faith leaders prepare testimonies to federal agencies, but this is an important practice to engage at city, county, and state levels also. Check out Creation Justice Ministries' guide to preparing testimony for a public hearing.

[https://www.creationjustice.org/uploads/2/5/4/6/25465131/prep\\_public\\_hearing\\_testimony.pdf](https://www.creationjustice.org/uploads/2/5/4/6/25465131/prep_public_hearing_testimony.pdf)

## JANUARY CREATION TIPS:

### **Choose one new thing you can do throughout the year to care for creation**

- In a world that needs kindness and delight, [Positively Green Cards](#) delivers both, responsibly. These greeting cards are made from recycled material, printed with soy ink, and manufactured using green power. The company also donates 10% of their profits to organizations that care for the environment. **Make someone—and earth—happy!**
- Junk mail invades our lives to the tune of 41 pounds per person per year. Eighty to 100 million trees lose their lives each year to print junk mail, and much of it ends up in landfills. **Stop junk mail.**  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2023/09/26/how-to-stop-junk-mail/>
- You already know **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**. You may even have added **Refuse, Repair, and Rot** (compost) to the list. Here's one more: Remember! First, *remember who you are and Whose you are!* When you focus on God's call to you to care for creation and justice, it's easier to remember to do the other R's.

*We are people of faith collaborating to grow healthy communities and advance climate justice through education, advocacy, and worship.*

### **Sign up now for "A MINUTE FOR MOTHER EARTH"!**

Each month you will receive four free video clips—just 60–90 seconds long—to help your congregation recognize God's call in the midst of climate-related issues. Each "Minute" is based on the curriculum *Wake Up World, A Curriculum for Faith and Community Groups* (available from Cokesbury). Take a minute right now and sign up today: Email [adygertgearheart@hotmail.com](mailto:adygertgearheart@hotmail.com)



Poem read to the St. John's UMC-UWF for the Christmas holiday UWF Christmas circle party and friends December, 2023. From St. John's UMC-UWF, Marty Bickford:

*A candle is a simple thing,  
begins with just a piece of string;  
yet dipped and dipped with patient hand,  
it gathers wax upon the strand,  
until complete and snowy white,  
it gives at last its welcome light.*

*Our lives are like that piece of string,  
each day we do a simple thing;  
we work with patient heart and hand,  
to gather gifts upon the strand;  
bestowed in love with God's great might,  
and share at last His glorious light.*

*Anonymous*



Faith Talks: The Power of Networking, National Office Event

**Join the Faith Talks podcast LIVE on January 4 at 2:00 p.m. ET.**

Register: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Zy0B-bRgR2aV-Wyt0gHRgg?mc\\_cid=578f3b2d29&mc\\_eid=d092687032#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Zy0B-bRgR2aV-Wyt0gHRgg?mc_cid=578f3b2d29&mc_eid=d092687032#/registration)

Learn about United Women in Faith's latest leadership tools from guests Praveena Balasundaram, Director of Communications; Olivia DiAgostino, Transformation Program Coordinator; and Shannon Priddy, Executive for Development & Donor Relations.

### **Mark your calendar!**

**February 1, 2024 - UM Day at the General Assembly** is a day when United Methodists come together to do amazing things by advocating for neighbors by meeting with elected representatives. During this event, participants learn about issues that are facing people all across the Commonwealth, connect with other United Methodists, and together celebrate our United Methodist faith that values justice, advocacy, and compassion. Register for UM Day [here](https://na.eventscloud.com/ereg/index.php?eventid=767749&). ( <https://na.eventscloud.com/ereg/index.php?eventid=767749&> )

- **Early Bird Registrations through January 7, 2024 - \$25**
- **Regular Registration as of January 8, 2024 - \$35**
  - **Student Registration - \$10**

*Plan a road trip with your UWF friends now!*





*The Woodlawn Faith  
United Women in Faith*

*Odyssey Premier Brunch Cruise*

Saturday, April 6, 2024 | 11:30 am – 1:30 pm  
Boarding at 10:45 am

Pier 4, 580 Water Street, SW  
Washington, DC

Price

per adult \$126.42 | per child \$99.62 (3-12 yrs)  
Deposit \$64.00 (Secure your seat) due Dec. 10th!  
Balance Due March 1, 2024

**\*\*Featuring\*\***

- 2-hour cruise on the Potomac River
- Delicious brunch buffet
- Unlimited mimosas

- Breathtaking views of the nation's greatest landmarks
- Onboard entertainment with Dee Jay music
- Tip not included | Seats are limited!

Inviting all the United Women in Faith in the state of Virginia to come on fellowship with one another.



Payment Information

Payment in Cash or Cash App to Connie at \$ConcettaTeelJones; also accept Zelle, Apple Pay

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Come, Relax and Fellowship with one another!!



**Virginia UMW/UWF Bus Trip to the Quadrennial Assembly In Chattanooga, Tennessee April 17-23, 2024**

<https://sejuwf.org/quadrennial-meeting>

Trip includes but is not limited to:

Deluxe Kneeling Motorcoach; 1 Night at the historic Martha Washington Inn, Abingdon, VA with dinner and breakfast at the Inn; 4 Nights at the Courtyard by Marriott Chattanooga Downtown which includes a tour of Chattanooga, dinner at the Big River Grille downtown, Sightseeing cruise of the Tennessee River on the Southern Belle, and the SEJ Assembly. Then on to the Fairfield Inn by Marriott in Pigeon Forge and Dolly Parton's Stampede Dinner Show.

*Please speak to your friends and join us for a fun trip!*

If you want more information, please contact Joyce Winston 757-851-6897, [buckrowbeach@gmail.com](mailto:buckrowbeach@gmail.com)

Find the details and bus registration form on [www.vauwf.org](http://www.vauwf.org) or click here.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pSnV3OIT3K2FuRwZb6N9DaEOdg2reB9o/view>

Early registration ends **December 31, 2023**, \$210  
Late registration begins January 1, 2024 through March 19, 2024; \$240