

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH OF INDIANA

Who We Are

We're a sisterhood acting in faith to tackle the hard work of the world without hesitation.

Driven by God's love and united in sisterhood, we work to improve the lives of women, children, and youth. Every day, we show up. We take action. We get it done.

And we invite you to join us.

These words from the website of our national organization (<https://uwfaith.org/>) show you our focus and our intent! For 150+ years we have organized and reorganized and organized again for mission and advocacy on behalf of women, children, and youth. Our purpose remains:

[To be] 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.

United Methodist Women (our legal name) operating as **United Women in Faith** is still the only official women's organization of the United Methodist Church. But, let it be known that we also welcome women of all faith backgrounds who are committed to our purpose!

OUR FOUR CORE COMMITMENTS

- Leadership Development
- Service and Advocacy
- Spiritual Growth
- Transformative Education

QUADRENNIAL PRIORITIES (2020-2024)

- Climate Justice/Just Energy for All
- Criminalization of Communities of Color/Interrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline

We continue to address situations of injustice: poverty, racism, sexism, ageism, hunger, human trafficking, and homelessness in our individual settings.

2023

This year has been a year of adjustment as we press ahead post-pandemic and post-disaffiliation. The landscape has changed, and we are learning new ways to be United Women in Faith. Our meetings are now a mix of virtual and in person – and we are seeing the benefits economically, environmentally, and socially. We may not always sit in the same room, but we can still do the work that God calls us to do on behalf of women, children, and youth.

Our National Office of United Women in Faith continues to offer resources for transformative education and spiritual enrichment:

1 **Faith Talks** podcast: these monthly conversations center around interviews of top individuals on the front
2 lines of the church and women’s concerns. With a deeply spiritual focus, each event is informative and
3 inspiring.

4
5 **Voices from the Field** presents conversations with missionaries who are serving God in various areas of the
6 world.

7
8 The print and podcast *response magazine* includes articles in every issue that describe the life-changing
9 work being carried out using the funds that are raised by local, district and conference. The monthly email
10 newsletter **Connect** keeps us informed on a more timely schedule.

11
12 The **Reading Program** offers members a way to choose, track and share recommended books through four
13 reading plans in a wide range of subjects and ages.

14 15 **CHARTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE**

16 United Women in Faith first adopted the “Charter of Racial Policies” in 1952. We worked on ratification at
17 multiple levels of the organization and readopted an updated version in 1962. Throughout the years, we
18 lobbied the United Methodist Church to officially adopt the Charter, seeking to bring its commitments to the
19 full body of the church. The Charter was first received by the General Conference in 1964 and was first
20 included in the Book of Resolutions in 1980. Since then, it has been updated and readopted regularly by
21 delegates to General Conference. From the 1950s to the present, the Charter has been a core part of our
22 identity.

23 24 **INDIANA HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023**

25 **Legislative and Advocacy Day** (February 2) – this annual event is held jointly with Church Women United.
26 In 2023 our theme was Maternal Health and a podcast recording is available at
27 <https://www.spreaker.com/podcast/legislative-advocacy-day-program-5383421>

28
29 Each year we offer two different *Soul Care* opportunities. Our 2023 **Spiritual Growth Retreat** was held at
30 McCormick's Creek State Park's Canyon Inn in January and at Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center
31 in April. The presenter was Rev. Laura McDonald, and her theme was “...For Such a Time as This”. We also
32 offer a **silent retreat** each fall and in 2023 it was held at Sarto House in Evansville.

33
34 For over 100 years UWFaith (and our predecessor organizations) have had a mission education event. Now
35 called **Mission u** it is a transformative educational program that encompasses both Bible-based curricula and
36 fellowship events. In June 2023 we met at Manchester University for three days of study and fellowship. And
37 **Mission u** is open to the whole church – we include a program for youth and for children (and invite men to
38 join us too!) Our 2023 **Mission u** offered the following curriculum:

- 39 • Living the Kin-dom: Exploring the Lord’s Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation by
40 Riva Tabelisma (Adult)
- 41 • Seek and You Shall Find: Living in the Kin-dom by Rachel Mosher (Youth)
- 42 • We Are the Kin-dom by Kathleen Stone (Children)

1 We were able to gather together during Annual Conference at Ball State University for a luncheon
2 celebrating both United Women in Faith of Indiana and our ministry at the Lucille Raines Residence. Our
3 speakers included Krishna Heyward (National Office Director from Indiana), and a former resident of the
4 residence. It was wonderful to be together in fellowship, celebrating our work in Indiana.

5
6 Our **Annual Celebration** was held at Community of Hope UMC in Muncie in October. The theme was All
7 Things New and we started the weekend with a baby shower party where we had an in-gathering of baby
8 items for the nursery at the Indiana Women’s Prison and Mothers on the Rise. The annual business meeting
9 was held with acceptance of the 2024 budget and pledge to mission as well as election and installation of
10 officers.

11
12 Our virtual **Leadership Development** event in November focused on How to Have a Soul Care Retreat. We
13 are encouraging all district United Women in Faith leadership teams to plan and promote a Soul Care event
14 in 2024.

15
16 Each year we offer **Youth and Young Adult Scholarships** to help fund mission experiences for our
17 conference’s emerging leaders. In 2023 we helped two groups travel outside of the country to be in mission
18 with our siblings in Central America.

19 20 **TREASURER’S REPORT**

21 A pledge of \$220,000 was made to the National office for 2023. The *response magazine*, **Program**
22 **Resource** book and the **Daily Prayer Guide** all highlight stories and programs showing how the Pledge
23 along with the other five channels of giving continue to improve the lives of women, children and youth at
24 National Mission Institutions and international mission organizations.

25
26 Even though our 2023 pledge was not met, and our giving was less than the previous year, we remain
27 faithful and encouraged by the units that are continuing to fellowship together, raise funds and give during
28 these challenging times. Our pledge for 2024 remains the same and we will continue to educate our members
29 about all the ways United Women in Faith remains a bright light and a guiding presence in the lives of
30 women, children, and youth.

31 32 **LUCILLE RAINES RESIDENCE**

33 United Women in Faith of Indiana continues to be proud of our commitment to the Lucille Raines Residence
34 which is owned and operated by our organization. Our members are asked to commit to support this ministry
35 and residents pay rent, but we also need the support of the wider community. This ministry, serving individuals
36 from all over the state who are recovering from drug and alcohol addiction, is saving lives! The 90+ year-
37 old former hotel building continues to age (as we all do!) and needed repairs are a constant drain on the
38 purse. Most recently it was the elevator and the boiler.

39
40 But – Praise God the long-awaited day arrived, and the elevator opened for use by the residents in January
41 2024. Dreaming and discussion began in the summer of '21, and then the Task Force came together in
42 October of 2021 with the seemingly impossible job of raising \$750,000. Finally, after permits, architects,
43 contractors, etc. were in place the work began. Residents had been climbing the stairs since May 9, 2023.
44 But the best news of all – the Accessibility Campaign was successful, and the elevator has been paid in full.

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Thank you goes to each and every one of you for listening to the Raines story and the heart of this ministry. Here is a picture of Carolyn and Mariea cutting the red ribbon!



The boiler replacement is in process. Gifts to Raines are always appreciated and can be sent to your district or conference UWFaith treasurer, directly to Raines (attention Carolyn Marshall), or as a Conference Advance Special (C69).

LOOKING FORWARD!

Now it is time to RE. Reset, refresh, renew, reframe, reignite, realign, regroup, recalibrate, recommit, reconfigure, rebuild

We have encouraging stories of new UWFaith units forming, paused UWFaith units that have reorganized, district online units, units at disaffiliated churches that are going to continue being connected to UWFaith in Indiana and the Lucille Raines Residence, and women connecting with UWFaith of Indiana through the All-Access membership offered by National Office. We are meeting in person and virtually. We are advocating for better lives for women, children, and youth. We are on a mission with the marginalized and vulnerable - locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. In 2024 UWFaith of Indiana will host the United Women in Faith North Central Jurisdiction Quadrennial Meeting. In 2026 UWFaith of Indiana will host the United Women in Faith Assembly. There is a lot going on!

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All God's blessings, please!
La Donna Weber
2024 President