



United
Women
in Faith
Minnesota

The *fresh*
Connection

Newsletter of the Minnesota Annual Conference United Women in Faith

Fall 2023

Volume 27, Number 3

Annual Gathering October 7: "Legacy of Bold Giving"

By Linda Kotschevar, Program Coordinator

All are invited to MN Conference UWFaith's Annual Fall Gathering scheduled for Saturday, October 7, 2023 from 8:00am Emma Tea to 2:30pm at Resurrection UMC. Go to <https://forms.gle/9ds4enTENfDnuu2b7> to register for the Gathering as soon as possible.

Deaconess Christi Campos, Executive for Development and Donor Relations at the UWFaith National Office, will be the keynote speaker reminding us of UWFaith's "Legacy of Bold Giving" that is built into our shared DNA. It continues to take bold giving to accomplish our current work through Mission Giving and our future work through the Legacy Endowment Fund. As members of UWFaith what kind of legacy do we want to pass on to future generations and so that we live into the future?



Voting at Annual Gathering



Minnesota
UWFaith members get to vote on changes to the Minnesota Standing Rules, the 2024

Minnesota Budget, the slate of nominees for Conference officers, and Minnesota nominees for our Jurisdiction. See pages 7-9 for more information.

Executive Meeting October 6



The Executive Team will meet the day before the Gathering at 3 pm to continue our work for "Growing into the Future" and preparing for Saturday's Gathering.

Lodging information was sent out in June encouraging all officers to make hotel reservations early.

Leadership Development October 7-8

The Leadership Development Retreat follows the Gathering on Saturday and ends on Sunday at 2 pm. All Conference and District officers – elected, appointed, and incoming -- should have received LDR registration information in mid-August.

Leadership development is an important component of serving as a United Women in Faith officer. Plan now to attend this fun and informative teambuilding event!

If you did not receive the registration email, contact Linda or this newsletter.



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Registration deadline is September 27.

President's Letter: Abundance, Audacious Dreams, Healing a Broken World

By Cindy Saufferer, Conference President

Abundance. This word has been on my heart as of late. Just yesterday, I was in my garden and realized that I had an abundance of weeds! As I was rescuing my begonias from this abundance, I remembered an article talking about edible weeds. I promised myself to learn more about this. I may not buy greens at the grocer's next summer! Abundance.

I have been a member of the Emma Norton Services board for approximately 12 years now. When I began, things were not easy, and we often wondered where the money was going to come from to keep the doors open. Two years in, the board spent a weekend dreaming and strategizing. No dream was too large, dream it and put it on paper.



We dreamt of a new building. A building that not only housed women, one that was home and promoted healing in a world held by trauma. We nervously laughed at our audaciousness. This was too big...or was it? The board stopped focusing on the things we didn't have and took a serious look at all we did have. A committed and talented staff, a supportive board, and a group of United Women in Faith wrapping it all in Love. A dream of a home for women, Restoring Waters, is now half complete. Abundance.

Our climate within our denomination and organization makes it a bit more challenging to live into our abundance. I continue to receive emails

about units that are choosing to be inactive and questions of how we can continue without new members. Like my early years at Emma Norton, it is difficult. So, I ask you, what is your audacious dream? How do you envision United Women in Faith? None of it is too big!



You were awarded the Jean Audrey Powers Award for Healing a Broken World at Annual Conference in May. This was achieved with an Abundance of Love from the perfect number of Minnesota United Women in Faith.

The Minnesota United Women in Faith Finance team met this month to create a



Photo: Kim Harris

budget and set our 2024 Pledge. In October at our Annual Gathering, you will be voting to accept an increase in our Pledge. Abundance.

Your Conference Team spent a day, dreaming on your behalf. I can tell you there was an Abundance of creativity, joy, and love as we dreamt of ways to connect to all of you. Mission u revitalized and expanded, Soul Care Retreats to nurture you and friends who currently are not members imagined, all possible because of God's Abundance.

I have been blessed to be a member of this organization. I have witnessed and experienced the generosity of spirit, love, and gifts that have made the world a better place. I am eternally grateful for the Abundance you continue to bring to the table in the most unselfish of ways. I know in my heart it is because *We believe that Love in Action can change the world!*

Visioning Retreat 2023: "Growing into the Future"

Thirteen members of the Minnesota Conference United Women in Faith Executive Team gathered at Koronis Retreat Center August 12 and 13 and joined with Marian Hansen and

Jomyla Choate on Zoom to clarify our "why" and "what" and to envision our "how" so we can grow our sisterhood with faith and action.



Top Row: Linda Kotschevar (Program Coordinator), Joyce Prudden (COSROW Rep), Janet Ewing (Nominations), Mary Jane Reetz (Nominations Chair), Elizabeth Everitt (NCJ Officer)

Bottom Row: Melinda Kohrt (TC President), Catherine Williams (MNO), Christie Brown (Spiritual Growth), Myrna Kuehl (BW President), Linda Brinster (Secretary), Linda Oberg (Treasurer), Cindy Saufferer (Conf. President)

Not pictured but present: Jomyla Coates (Directory Project Leader), Marian Hansen (North Star Rep), Shirley Durr (Social Action)

Dreams and Actions

The gathering started around 1 pm revisiting the Dreams list generated at the 2022 Retreat and sharing what dreams were realized since last August or are on their way to being realized. One example: Twin Cities District realized a Sacred Site Tour for their 2023 Spring Gathering.

After that, President Cindy Saufferer asked, "What is our why?" The answer can be found here in this UWFaith statement: "We believe love in action can change the world."

Continues on page 11





Membership • Nurture • Outreach Fall 2023 Report

By Catherine Williams,
Minnesota Conference UWFaith MNO Coordinator

Greetings to all of you. It warms my heart to know you are working diligently for the Lord. Whether it be in your church, community, and/or United Women in Faith. Meeting God’s call is soul fulfilling. Staying active in UWFaith, even in a small way, is important.



I still follow the old adage: “Bloom where you are planted.” We learn so much from being a

part of the garden surrounding us. We drop our seeds at our feet and replenish our work with women, children, and youth in our church and community. Through our beauty and actions, we inspire those around us to join in God’s work. We are right there, seeing others and getting to know them as persons and what they need.



Some of us have our seeds, like burs, plucked and taken to other parts of

God’s garden supporting women, children, and youth farther away from home. United Women in Faith supports 90+ National Mission Institutions (NMI). Emma Norton Services is such an important one here in Minnesota. Red Bird Mission, UMCOR Sager Brown, McCurdy Ministries,

Navajo UM Center-Four Corners are NMI’s our locals have supported.

Then the wind comes along and teases seeds to sail along to places far and wide in God’s Creation. At least 30 countries benefit from our diligence. How far you spread your influence, depends on the wishes of your group. Know that God’s grace is spread through any little bit you decide to do for others in your response to His call. God Bless you all and know you and your local unit matters to United Women in Faith. Together we can do more for God’s creation & everyone growing in it.

Disaffiliating church? Not UMC?

If your church disaffiliates, you can still remain a local unit in United Women of Faith! Women from other denominations can also join any unit, or as their own unit.



There is a place for any woman needing to be surrounded by acceptance and love in

United Women of Faith. “We serve and advocate. We make a difference.”

Questions? Contact Catherine by emailing cwilliamsteacher303@gmail OR call 507-301-5865 and leave a message.

2022 Survey

1. Local Presidents or Contact Person, please fill in the survey online.
2. Go to the website: UWFaith.org
3. Go to the page top - to the right of the Menu is the search icon that looks like a spy glass - click on this.
4. On the search page there is a line to type in what you are looking for: type in - 2022 survey.
5. This will take you to the Jurisdiction choices: click on North Central Jurisdiction. You see a list of states: click on Minnesota.
6. There is a sample unit survey set of questions to preview what will be on the survey. Look at this if you want to but do not fill this out.
7. Scroll down to the Survey itself. There are 40 questions.
8. Complete by August 30, 2023.

Local Units	
Big Waters District	38
North Star District	43
River Valley District	41
Southern Prairie District	60
Twin Cities District	41

Total MN Local Units223

Lessons Learned from Mission u 2023

By Mission u Deans Shirley Durr and Christie Brown

July 7 to July 9, 24 people attended our first in-person Mission u since the Covid pandemic. And during each week of July, a total of 34 people attended our Zoom Mission u.

United Women in Faith's newly elected General Secretary/Chief Executive Officer was in the Twin Cities for a Conference and joined us for part of our Zoom session during the 3rd week of Mission u before heading off for her installation in Texas. Plus, Riva Tabelisma, a Minnesota clergy and author of our study book (*Living the Kin-dom: Exploring the Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation*), joined us for our last Zoom session. Both women significantly contributed to the conversation with their insights and presence.

As novice Deans, we learned a great deal reading online evaluations from participants -- as well as from our first time serving -- about how to improve Mission u going forward.

Lesson 1: Start Planning Early

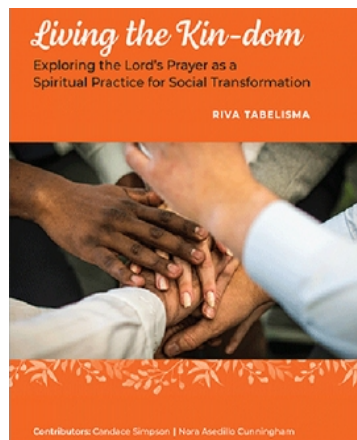
Planning for Mission u should start a month or so after the previous Mission u ends. We had only a couple of months of planning.

Originally there was no Mission u planned because there was no Dean to coordinate one but people began inquiring because they wanted to attend.

After reaching out to National, we acted on the suggestion to involve our Spiritual Growth and Social Action Coordinators in the capacity of Dean. Christie volunteered to take responsibility for an in-person event while Shirley volunteered to be responsible for

the Zoom event and for registration. Christie soon received word that Motley UMC was interested in hosting Mission u.

We then sought Study Leaders with an article in the Spring *Fresh Connection* and settled on Marion Hansen and Elizabeth Everitt for the in person and Becky Boland and Cindy Saufferer for Zoom.



"My seeds from Mission U have grown. I have now planted them outside. That was a wonderful weekend with great sessions focusing on the Lord's Prayer! The memories live on ... " (Pam Johnson)

Next, we met with the Mission u Team (Linda Oberg, Linda Kotschevar, Linda Brinster, Cindy Saufferer, Christie Brown, and Catherine Williams). We also invited the Study Leaders and Jomyla Coates and others from Motley to join the Team as we developed plans.

"It was good to get out of the Kelly Inn and into a church. The challenge is finding a location that more people will find reasonable to get to."

Although our total of 58 participants seems scant, it still exceeded our projected 50. Starting earlier would have provided more time and less stress for organizing and advertising. We believe this will result in higher attendance and better prepare our Study Leaders for next year's Mission u.

Lesson 2: Have optional venues

People are yearning to return for in-person Mission u, even those who are pleased to have a Zoom options. In-person requires travel, days away from home, and expenses for lodging and meals, which are not always possible for many.

Continues on page 6

Mission u Lessons (continued from page 5)



The flexibility for Zoom attendance on two different days at different times was praised, especially the option to choose a different day and time each week.

In the future, we plan to continue offering these options. We're also looking into the feasibility of having Mission u in a different District each year as well as exploring the possibility of a hybrid option - in person and Zoom participating together.

What are your take-aways? What was most memorable for you?

- Group activities. Discussion in sessions as well in resource room
- I will be able to do a UWF program with the materials. Glad I had the book.
- Sally Vonner and Riva Tabelisma were able to join us for a time.
- The study was created to be easily taught in churches.
- Learning different translations of the Lord's Prayer
- being "with" friends
- Different interpretations for the Lord's Prayer, especially liked the Aramaic/English translation
- learning meaning of kin-dom
- The theory behind Ubuntu.

Lessons from evaluations

Only 17 people completed the online evaluation form - about $\frac{1}{3}$ from in person and $\frac{2}{3}$ from Zoom participants. We need to find a way to get a greater number of responses from all venues.

Although 75% or more said they were engaged or inspired by the content and gained new insights from Mission u, they weren't particular challenged by the level of the content. They found the Study Leaders knowledgeable but they wanted more.

See page 15 for info about Mission u 2024.

Respondents did find the spiritual practice exercises meaningful but, again, wanted more -- more assignments, that is.

We have already discussed adding a youth study but maybe we should also consider options of two levels of adult study - one at an advanced level and one intermediate. We're also looking at expanding the Zoom sessions beyond the two hours scheduled for each session, having break out rooms even if the participants are few, and adding brief worship experiences to the Zoom sessions.

Lessons from observations

The Motley Crew - Motley UMC members who helped with planning the in person Mission u, were invaluable. We need to involve the hosts even sooner in the planning stage. Visiting host and lodging sites should also be an earlier priority

For smoother Zoom experiences, we need to schedule time for technology tutorials for whatever will be relevant to Zoom sessions -- how to use chat, screen share, reaction, breakout rooms, mute/unmute & video, Jamboard, etc.; how to handle potential broadband interruptions. We should also establish one zoom link for all Zoom sessions and have the link ready at least two weeks prior to Zoom Mission u beginning so it can be tested.

Moreover, we need to encourage the use of online evaluation forms, especially for in-person participants. We may need to recruit someone to input paper evaluations into the online form.

The most positive take away: everyone wants more Mission u and appreciate having options we provided.

Standing Rules Report

~~double strike~~ = Delete • Bold = Add

Items inside the box require approval from MN UWFaith members

The Executive Committee approved changes to the Standing Rules to be presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting in October for vote.

Below are the approved changes for the 2024 Standing Rules to distinguish the different roles of the large Executive Committee and the smaller Administrative Committee:

ARTICLE 1 – ELECTIONS

Section 2.

D. Label Processor, Officer Update Processor, Registrar, and Directory Project Leader will also be appointed as needed by the ~~Executive~~ **Administrative Committee**.

G. Recognizing that not all positions may be filled, additional positions can be filled at any time as needed upon approval of the ~~Executive~~ **Administrative Committee**.

ARTICLE 2 – MEETINGS

Section 7. Time allotted to agencies, organizations, or groups, for presentations at Conference events, must be cleared through the ~~Executive/~~ **Administrative Committee** at least thirty (30) days prior to the Conference event.

ARTICLE 3 – FUNDS

Section 7. To protect appropriation, no appeal for funds shall be made to Local Units, Districts or Conference by an organization or individual, which has not been authorized by the Conference ~~Executive Committee or~~ **Administrative Committee**.

Article 5 – Section 1 already defines members of the Executive Committee but there is no such clarity for the Administrative Committee. The following addition, reflecting information in the 2023 Directory, was approved by the Executive Committee in August.

ARTICLE 5 – COMMITTEES

Section 10. The Administrative Committee of the Conference shall be composed of the President, who serves as Chairperson; Secretary; Treasurer; Chairperson of the Committee on Nominations; Program Coordinator; and additional Conference officers as needed.

The following change was approved to remove specification of number given that Mission currently has just one study book but this may change some time in the future.

ARTICLE 4 – EXPENSES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. C. Each officer will be **reimbursed for the Mission u study book(s)** each year ~~allowed two study books for Mission u.~~



Photo: stefan-moertl-D-unsplash

The following change was approved to reflect our new reality wherein officers have different options for Mission u attendance.

ARTICLE 6 – MISSION U

Section 5. All elected and appointed Conference Officers including the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee and District Presidents are encouraged to attend **a Minnesota Conference Mission u** with their way being paid by Conference funds.

A. Conference Nominating Committee members and other appointed officers are encouraged to attend **a Minnesota Conference Mission u** ~~or Mission u Too~~ with their way being paid by Conference or Mission u funds.

B. All elected and appointed District officers are encouraged to attend **a Minnesota Conference Mission u** ~~or Mission u Too~~ with their way being paid from District funds.

C. All elected leadership of UWFaith (WFMUCW, National, and Jurisdiction) residing within the Conference are invited to attend **a Minnesota Conference Mission u** ~~or Mission u Too~~ at Conference expenses.

D. All members of the Conference are encouraged to attend **a Minnesota Conference Mission u** ~~or Mission u Too~~.

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Standing Rules Report

(Continued from page 7)

The Executive Committee approved the following changes to relevant sections of the Standing Rules that were proposed by the Emma Norton Designated Fund (aka Scholarship) Committee.

ARTICLE 5 – COMMITTEES

Section 8. There shall be an Emma Norton Designated Fund Committee (ENDFC) composed of a District President as chairperson, a second District President, and at least two additional members ~~from the Conference Team who~~ **are District Emma Norton Representatives.**

B. The Committee then decides which National Mission **Project** will receive 1/2 of the accrued interest money and which ~~seminarian~~ women **going into full time Christian vocation** will receive 1/2 of the accrued interest money.

C. The ~~seminary women~~ **applicants** need to apply for scholarships before the designated deadline each year to be considered by the ENDFC.

E. The treasurer sends the allotted money to ~~the seminaries of~~ the recipients ~~in their names.~~

The following change to the Policy Page was approved by the Executive Team in August and does not require a vote from the membership.

ARTICLE 2 - MEETINGS

Section 2. The reimbursement for food to the local church who is hosting a Minnesota Conference UW Faith event shall be as follows: Breakfast \$5.00; Lunch ~~\$10.00~~ **\$15.00**; Coffee & Breaks \$3.00; Dinner ~~\$12.00~~ **\$15.00** per day, per person based on number of registrations reported by the registrar for the event.

Standing Rules Committee: Chair Shirley Durr, Conf. President Cindy Saufferer, Nominations Chair Mary Jane Reetz, Conf. Secretary Linda Brinster, Conf. Treasurer Linda Oberg, Mission U Dean Christie Brown, MNO Coordinator Catherine Williams, and Southern Prairie District President Betty Stancer

Nominations Slate

By Mary Jane Reetz and Janet Ewing



Photo: manny-becerra @unsplash

Slate of Elected Officers

Nominated by Nominations Committee

President Marion Hansen
Secretary Sophia Mahowald

Slate of Appointed Officers to be Affirmed

Directory Project Leader Jomyla Choate
Registrar Marylee Greeley

NCJ Nominees

National Director Kim Harris
Voting Delegate Myrna Kuehl
Melinda Kohrt
Linda Kotschevar
Cindy Saufferer

Nominations Report

Would you like to feel more fulfilled?

By Mary Jane Reetz, Nominations Chair

The Committee on Nominations has Open positions. All positions are 2-year terms with a maximum of 4 years in that position. All the open officer positions are appointed.

You will also vote for NCJ nominees for National Director and North Central Jurisdictional Voting Delegates.

We ask that you prayerfully consider a position if called. You may also nominate yourself or another person for one of these positions. A form is included on page 10 in this issue of the *Fresh Connection*. Also, nominations can be taken from the floor at the Annual Gathering in October.

See on page 11 a chart of positions that are Open with brief job descriptions for each. You can see several opportunities for putting your love and faith into action. You will be warmly welcomed by a friendly sisterhood.

See 2024 Budget Proposal on the next page.

Proposed 2024 Budget by Linda Oberg, Treasurer

2024 A & MD Budget Proposal									
Description	2019 Actual	2020 Actual COVID	2021 Actual COVID	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Budget Proposed		
1 District A&M	\$ 58,807.48	\$ 58,006.56	\$ 42,508.70	\$ 48,777.50	\$ 37,585.69	\$ 44,595.00	\$ 44,595.00		
2 Jurisdiction A&M	1,755.00	1,947.00	1,933.00	1,707.00	1,707.00	1,424.00	1,223.00		
3 Mission u	-	-	-	15,300.00	12.00	15,300.00	10,000.00		
4 Mission u Scholarships	-	-	-	850.00	-	850.00	850.00		
5 Communications	5,781.08	5,554.34	5,604.72	5,950.00	5,736.69	5,950.00	7,000.00		
6 Officer's Expenses	4,249.54	667.63	293.42	8,500.00	609.26	8,500.00	6,000.00		
7 Officer Recognition	470.00	-	570.00	850.00	300.00	850.00	850.00		
8 Audit/Bank Charges	-	31.40	-	2,500.00	-	2,500.00	2,500.00		
Workshops / Seminars									
9 Assembly / Jurisdiction (Actual)	-	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00		
10 Assembly / District Funds (Actual)	-	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00		
11 CWU / WFMUCW set aside	-	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00		
12 Annual Meeting	3,792.07	-	-	4,250.00	1,479.40	4,250.00	3,000.00		
13 Visioning Retreat	9,944.47	-	1,155.00	5,000.00	1,722.58	5,000.00	3,000.00		
14 Leadership Development Retreat	300.00	-	-	7,000.00	3,230.57	7,000.00	5,000.00		
15 World Fed Meth Ch Women	300.00	300.00	300.00	150.00	300.00	150.00	150.00		
16 Joint Religious Leg Comm	290.00	235.00	150.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00		
17 Church Women United	235.76	-	-	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00		
18 Spiritual Growth Retreat	-	-	-	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00		
19 Opportunity Fund	25.00	35.00	-	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00		
20 Regis, Dues, Legis, Mission Poss	2,591.35	-	-	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00		
21 Legacy Fund	735.34	-	-	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00		
22 Miscellaneous	89,277.19	76,276.93	62,454.84	113,650.00	62,683.19	108,169.00	95,618.00		
23 Total	\$ 193,284.11	\$ 170,721.65	\$ 142,631.55	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 122,770.93	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 101,000.00		
24 MN Conference Pledge	\$ 282,551.30	\$ 246,998.58	\$ 205,086.39	\$ 233,650.00	\$ 185,454.12	\$ 208,169.00	\$ 196,618.00		
25 Total Expenses and Conference Pledge	\$ 44,043.50	\$ 43,752.37	\$ 39,555.51	\$ 43,300.00	\$ 38,859.25	\$ 42,500.00	\$ 42,300.00		
26 MN Conference Emma Norton Services									

Minnesota Conference United Women in Faith Committee on Nominations Potential Leader Form

Return to: Mary Jane Reetz, Committee on Nominations Chair
1138 Silver Bay Road • Brainerd, MN 56401 • mjrnature@yahoo.com

You need to have a different form for each person you are recommending.

1. For which office or appointed position is this person recommended?

2. Contact Information for the person you're recommending (REQUIRED)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code _____

Phone(s): _____

Email Address: _____

3. Please identify the age range of the person you're recommending. (Optional)

- 18-30 31-40 41-50 51-65 66-70 >70

4. Please identify the ethnicity/race of the person you're recommending. (Optional)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian or White | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African-American or Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latina | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please write in) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian-American or Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hmong | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American | _____ |

5. Please identify district and local church to which the person you're recommending belongs.

District: _____ Church/City: _____

6. Your Information (REQUIRED) Please let us know who you are.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code _____

Phone(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Visioning Retreat (continued from page 3)

The Executive Team also built a new list of dreams and actions to take to start realizing some of those dreams. At the top of the list is to “create an organization” that is “flexible, simple, doable, purposeful” that “we can be excited about” with specific details of how to achieve this dream, including nourishing our spiritual growth with soul care.

Connected to this dream, the Team brainstorm a list of specific actions to “develop the ability [to] see the needs of the community and serve that need” including re-imagining Mission u and taking time for fun and bonding as well as learning.

Among other actions brainstormed were various ways to connect with members, with diverse generations and affinity groups beyond our members, and with other organizations that share our UWFaith values. But the first action on

which all others are based is to remember our faith is linked to our actions; remember to pray.

Reports and 2024 Calendar

After Worship on Sunday morning, led by Christie Brown (Spiritual Growth Coordinator), the gathered officers met to hear and accept reports (detailed in this newsletter) and to plot a Calendar for next year (see 15). A more complete Calendar, still in progress as the Conference and the Districts plan their 2024 meetings and gatherings, will appear in the 2024 Directory.

Before leaving Koronis, Executive Team members signed up to work on one of three teams: Mission u, Communications, and Soul Care. And we took a little time to enjoy the views.



Nominations Report: Chart of Open Positions

continued from page 8

POSITION	BRIEF JOB DESCRIPTION
Social Action Coordinator	engage members in service and advocacy for justice as it is rooted in our biblical tradition, encourage work on the quadrennial priorities; also see https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=9874&catid=2196
Education and Interpretation	interpret and promote Mission Giving and Outreach; also see https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=9867&catid=2196
Communications Coordinator	may be 2 or more people, creative w/ communications and publicity (including <i>Fresh Connection</i>), update/manage website and Facebook page, coordinate use of Zoom account; also see https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=9866&catid=2196
Committee on Nominations	help develop a talent file and contact for potential officers, keep tenure records current, yearly contact appointed officers to verify if each will continue their appointments; 2 people needed for each of the following Classes: 2025, 2026, 2027
Technology Coordinator	connect with tech person at meeting sites, connect with presenters to be sure programs and equipment are compatible; may be called on to help with other tech-related tasks in the Conference
MNO Officer Update Processor	collect data and sort lists of officers, convey data to Label Order Processor and <i>Fresh Connection</i> editor
Legacy Liaison	goto person for informational and promotional materials related to Legacy Fund including quarterly giving reports
Mission u Dean	coordinate Mission u classes in diverse venues (in-person, Zoom, etc.) w/ the Mission u Team; attend Dean training via Mighty Network

See the rest of the Nominations Report and Slate of Officers on page 8.

Social Action Report: “Called to act with justice”

By Shirley Durr, Social Action Coordinator

The Social Action Team has not met since our Spring meeting (see the Spring 2023 *Fresh Connection*). Our awesome District Coordinators -- Diana Eickelberg (River Valley), Diane Bublitz (Big Waters), and Nancy Kipp (Twin Cities) continue to do inspiring and significant work for economic justice, climate justice, and racial justice.



MN C&S Chair Gail Chalbi,
AC2023

As Conference social Action Coordinator (SAC), my work for the past few months, for the most part, has been as a member of the Minnesota Conference Church and Society Ministry Team, a group National UWFaith encourages SACs to join.

Besides helping with content for Minnesota Church and Society's Facebook page

(<https://tinyurl.com/mncs2023fb>), I

helped develop Item 151, Banning the sale, transfer and manufacture of assault style weapons, that was co-sponsored by MN Conference UWFaith and presented for approval at Annual Conference 2023. This resolution passed with an overwhelming “yes” vote. <https://tinyurl.com/Item151AC2023>

I also joined with Sally Vonner (UWFaith's General Secretary and CEO) and others to visit George Floyd Square and Say Their Names Cemetery in South Minneapolis where we mourned and reflected on several issues of social justice. See story on page 14. If you could not join us that day, you can still join a group for your own visit.

At my local church, I've centered issues of climate and racial justice in church activities as well as in worship services I coordinated.

I will no longer be Social Action Coordinator in 2024 but I'm certain that my successor will work with other UWFaith sisters in Minnesota and me to be ceaseless voices for justice.

Resources to Help You Act for Justice

1. **Stop School Pushout:** <https://p2a.co/5rHY0nq> Join UWFaith members and friends in urging Congress to pass The Ending PUSHOUT Act of 2023 (H.R. 2690), a federal bill that would support schools in addressing discriminatory and punitive discipline policies that criminalize and push Black girls and other girls of color out of school.

2. **Lift Your Voice to End Corporal Punishment in Schools:** <https://p2a.co/vUKRTtL> As women of faith, we believe all children

and youth are sacred, beloved by God, and deserving of an education that nurtures their God-given gifts and encourages their ongoing growth. The use of corporal punishment in schools undermines student safety and well-being.

3. Peace with Justice Grants

<https://mnumc-reg.brtaapp.com/PeaceJusticeGrants>: The applicant must be a Minnesota United Methodist local church, district, annual conference, or other affiliated organization, or an ecumenical group/organization working with and through at least one United Methodist agency or organization. The average grant amount is \$1,500.

4. Racial Justice Book Grants

<https://www.minnesotaumc.org/newsdetail/mn-church-and-society-offers-racial-justice-grants-14356637>: This is a specific grant of up to \$300 to help members of your church purchase books for a small (or large) group study on racial justice.

5. Serve and Advocate

<https://uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/>: This UWFaith website has up-to-date suggestions for social action including connections to help you work for Racial Justice and Climate Justice,

We serve.

We advocate.

We make a difference.

UWFaith CEO Sally Vonner visits Minnesota

Sally Vonner, United Women in Faith's new General Secretary and Chief Executive Officer as of June 1, 2023, visited the Twin Cities area of Minnesota the week of July for a conference. She stayed on MN Conference UWFaith President Cindy Saufferer's farm in Morristown.

While here, she visited the site of Emma Norton's Restoring Waters and joined the ENS Board, which includes Cindy and Twin Cities District President Melinda Kohrt, for their work day on Saturday. Emma Norton is a UWFaith National mission.

After leaving Emma Norton, Ms. Vonner and Cindy joined other UWFaith members at Say Their Names Cemetery, an art installation at 37th Street and Park Avenue memorializing People of Color from across the United States who died as the result of police brutality. Becky Coleman, Twin Cities District Program Coordinator), Shirley

Durr (Conference Social Action Coordinator), and Rev. Dennis Alexander (retired UMC clergy) joined them.

At the memorial, Cindy encouraged us to say each name as we walked the installation and use our phones to search for some unfamiliar names in order to learn about them, to see them as individuals rather than statistics.



Leaving the Say Their Names Cemetery, Cindy and Ms. Vonner visited George Floyd Square on the corner of 38th Street and Chicago Avenue, a memorial on the site where George Floyd died as the result of police brutality in 2020. Becky, Dennis, and Shirley, who



live in South Minneapolis, have visited George Floyd Square several times.

The following day, Ms. Vonner was the guest speaker at Epworth UMC's Sunday worship service where she met UWFaith members from three districts. (See photos above, below, and on page 15.)



Nancy Iverson and Catherine Williams come from River Valley; Cindy is from Southern Prairie. Twin City churches represented besides Epworth were Centennial, Minnetonka, Discovery, and Living Spirit. You can watch a recording of that service here: <https://tinyurl.com/SallyVonner-Epworth8-23-23>

Continues on page 14



Becky Coleman (far left), Shirley Durr (center in the distance), and Sally Vonner (far right)
Say Your Name Photos by Dennis Alexander



Some UWFaith members pose for group photo with Sally Vonner after worship at Epworth.

Photo: Cheryl Goode



Some of the people who gathered for fellowship after church service

Photo: Cheryl Goode

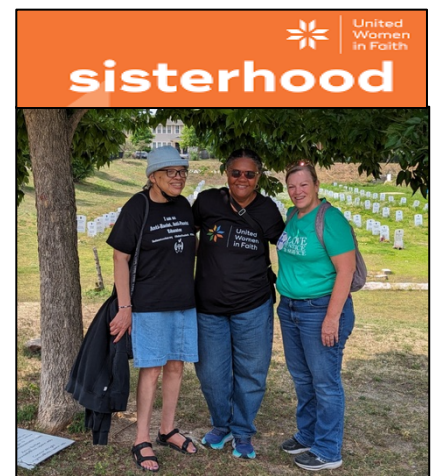


Photo: Dennis Alexander



**SOME DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
LOOK FOR UPDATES AND ADDITIONS**

SEPTEMBER

15 BW Exec Team _____ UMC of Anoka
 16 BW Fall Gather _____ UMC of Anoka
 23 RV Fall Gather _____ Christ UMC, Rochester
 23 TC Fall Gather _____ Hamline UMC. St. Paul

OCTOBER

6 Conf Exec Team _____ Resurrection UMC, Hastings
 7 Conference Annual Gather _____ Resurrection UMC
 7 Leadership Dev. Retreat _____ Resurrection UMC

NOVEMBER

2 SP Exec Team _____ Zoom @ 630 pm
 18 TC Exec Team _____ TBA

DECEMBER

2 SP Exec Team _____ Zoom @ 630 pm
 18 TC Exec Team _____ TBA

Mission u 2024

In the second year of *Living the Kin-dom*, we will deepen our study to include the ways Jesus preached and ministered a *proximity* to the kin-dom. Jesus said those inheriting the coming and future kingdom were those typically pushed outside the hierarchies of belonging - the hungry, the stranger, and the prisoner (Matthew 25:40). Not only would they inherit the kingdom, but to enter the kingdom we have to become like children (Matthew 18:1-5), be more righteous than a Pharisee (Matthew 5:20) or be poor in spirit (Matthew 5:3).

Furthermore, the Lord's prayer speaks well to the second year of the curricula when we will be exploring the proximity of the kin-dom. This second study will focus on the invitation to posture our lives and transform ourselves in ways that bring us *proximity* to the kin-dom and the kin-dom in *proximity* to us.



**DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
LOOK FOR UPDATES AND ADDITIONS**

JANUARY

2 SP Exec Team _____ Zoom @ 630 pm
 18 TC Exec Team _____ TBA
 27 TC Winter Gathering & Leadership Dev _____ Zoom

FEBRUARY

17 BW Exec Team _____ Zoom

MARCH

APRIL

19 BW Exec Team _____ 1st UMC, Sartell
 20 BW Spring Gathering _____ 1st UMC, Sartell
 23-May 3 General Conference _____ Charlotte, NC

MAY

29-June 3 MN Annual Conference _____ Bloomington
 30-June 2 UWFaith NCJ _____ Indianapolis, IN

JUNE

15 BW Exec Team _____ Onamia UMC

JULY

Mission u _____ TBA

AUGUST

11-12 Visioning Retreat _____ Koronis

SEPTEMBER

20 BW Exec Team _____ TBA
 21 BW Fall Gathering _____ TBA

OCTOBER

4 Conf Exec Team _____ TBA
 5 Annual Gathering _____ TBA
 5-6 Leadership Development _____ TBA



is published three times a year by the Minnesota Conference of United Women in Faith.

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Printed by: Rapit Printing, New Brighton MN

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Photos: Kim Harris