

Annual Meeting Talking Points: 2024

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **SHARE THE OVERALL MESSAGE AND MISSION OF UWFAITH.**
2. **UPLIFT, CELEBRATE, INSPIRE, INFLUENCE AND IMPACT.**
3. **CLOSE WITH GENERAL SECRETARIES GREETING.**
4. **YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO SPEAK FROM YOUR OWN CONTEXT WITH PERSONAL EXAMPLES AND STORIES.**

[Highlighted in Purple:] Talking point topics, please use supportive messaging.

MESSAGE TO MEMBERS: Dream it, Believe it, Do it. UWFAith is positioned for exponential growth. Through 2028 we are looking to increase our membership to greater than 500,000, reach and exceed our \$60 million Legacy Endowment Fund, increase giving to meet or exceed \$10 million and boldly adapt to change to answer God's call to inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities. Let's work together as we continue to put love in action.

Mission of United Women in Faith

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

Celebrate: Share our collective story as United Women in Faith

- Download your copy of the 2023 Annual Report: <https://uwfaith.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2023AnnualReport.pdf>
- Faith Talks podcast celebrating 5 years: uwfaith.org/resources/podcast
- **New Membership Campaign:** We are planning a new membership campaign, launching in spring 2025, designed to align with our strategic vision highlighting our diverse programs that address unique challenges faced by women, children, and youth. It will showcase the tangible impact of our leadership training, mentorship, and social advocacy initiatives, inviting our women to support and expand these efforts. This campaign seeks to shape a new mindset around membership and engagement, fostering a culture where every member is an advocate, leader, and change-maker. Through active engagement, we aim to build a supportive, dynamic, and forward-thinking community, bringing in new women and dollars dedicated to our shared values and aspirations.

Inspire: Share how we connect, nurture, and uplift

- **Mission u 2025 Theme: Hope as Resurrection People**
 - How do we understand hope as followers of Christ? Is it merely optimism despite what we witness all around us or is it something deeper than that? This theme begins with the resurrection accounts to explore how Jesus' followers were changed and the actions that followed (Acts). The hope that grew in these "resurrection people" is evident in how their community grew even in the midst of persecution and overwhelming hardship. What does it mean to be "resurrection people" in the 21st century, and what can we learn and apply to our own lives from the accounts of

people who encountered Jesus after his resurrection? These curricula will invite us to explore what it means to have hope in God even when things seem to be falling apart. Now is the perfect time to reintroduce and invite United Methodist women who are not members to United Women in Faith.

- **Membership** is open to *any* woman who wants to inspire, influence, and impact her community to uplift the marginalized.
 - Encourage members to sign up for the NEW member portal at uwfaith.org to connect to resources, stories, and other members in our online community.
 - Download the Excite-Invite Recruitment Guide to get excited about inviting new women: <https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=9936&catid=2175>
 - **We are asking for every member to commit to intentionally inviting 2 women to learn about United Women in Faith. Check out Faith Talks podcast, join the work of climate and racial justice, connect with their interest.**
- **Resources that inspire.** Visit uwfaithresources.org: Daily Prayer Guide, **response** magazine, Mission u studies, Program Resource, and the Soul Care Retreat Manual.
- **Opportunities for connection:** Consider hosting a Soul Care retreat, share the *Thrive* e-newsletter, invite women to join the Reading Program or listen to our podcasts, offer scholarships for young and new women to attend Mission u or Assembly, or purchase gift subscriptions to **response** or other introductory means to let new women “try out” our organization.
- **Soul Care Offerings**
 - Soul Care Group on United Women in Faith Digital offers content and community for reflection and Soul Care practice.
Launching in early 2025
 - Soul Care Card Deck for personal practice and reflection.
 - Soul Care Retreat Host Group on United Women in Faith Digital provides community feedback and conversations, resources, and support for those who have purchased a Soul Care Toolkit and are hosting retreats.
 - Soul Care Registration — an offer to create and host the registration for retreats being held, and additional retreat content (workshop recordings, small group circle guide, pre-recorded music) for hosts who participate.
 - We are exploring the options for live workshops or cohorts to learn about different types of Soul Care hosted through UWFaith Digital.

Influence: Share how we equip women to lead, serve, and advocate

- **Leadership Development Days (LDD):** Take your leadership to the next level and join us for LDD on November 21- 23, 2024. Save the date!
 - Leadership Development Days offers UWFaith leaders a powerful leadership development program. We will meet virtually for dynamic worship, plenaries, networking, and workshops that will help improve your leadership skills. There will be over 1000 in attendance. This year all 2025 conference officers are invited to attend – another reason to serve as a conference leader! Every district will be able to have 2 district leaders attend! **Registration will open in September, so please make sure to register and mark it on your calendar to attend**
 - Theme: Revive and Lead: Empowered by Resurrection
 - Leadership Toolkit: Many of the resources will be available on the Leadership Toolkit – it will be available to anyone on UWFaith Digital.
 - Last year over 700 women participated in the virtual Leadership Development Days with every conference represented. The event included worship, plenaries, and 19

workshops, including a session on “Leading in the Midst of Anxiety.” You can access the resources on the UWFaith Leadership Toolkit through the UWFaith member portal.

- We are looking to grow our local and virtual meeting groups.
- [Share promotional videos](#) for Membership and Giving, Soul Care, Mission u and more on YouTube.com/UWomenFaith. Check out the newly released Leadership Development Video.
- [Follow and engage](#) United Women in Faith on social media and at uwfaith.org/digital.
- [Join uwfaith.org/digital](#) for free to connect with the United Women in Faith community. You can also subscribe to one of the paid resources.
 - Come connect with sisters, make new friends, join an interest group, and experience your favorite print resources through this online digital platform.
- [Host a Move 4 Mission event](#). All funds raised support Mission Giving, and Conferences receive credit. For more information go to uwfaith.org/move4mission.

Impact: We make a difference through reaching new women, taking action and giving.

- [Social Justice Priorities for 2024-2028](#) – both [Social Justice Priorities of Climate Justice and Mass Incarceration and Criminalization of Communities of Color](#) will continue into the next quadrennium. Both priorities remain urgent issues that directly impact women, children and youth where the voice of United Women in Faith and members play an important moral role. As our foremothers have done, we will have greater impact when we organize together in our prophetic witness. Please plan to incorporate both priorities into your UWFaith work over the next four years.
 - The number of individuals harmed by mass incarceration far exceeds two million; the school-to-prison pipeline disproportionately impacts girls of color.
 - The climate crisis is an injustice multiplier disproportionately impacting those most vulnerable and in the margins of societies: women and girls. 80 percent of people displaced by climate change are women.
- [Mass Incarceration and Criminalization of Communities of Color Social Justice Priority](#)
 - As you plan your annual meetings, we encourage you to create meaningful experiences to help deepen members' understanding of mass incarceration's effect on women and children *and* help members feel the power of making an impact by taking action in real-time. To support that goal, consider either/both:
 - Screening our new video, [Never Give Up: Cynthia and Michelle's Faithful Fight Against Mass Incarceration](#), featuring United Women in Faith member-leader Cynthia Holland and her daughter, Michelle Morrison.
 - Inviting members to take one of three current virtual advocacy actions:
 - [Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools](#) (email)
 - [Stop School Pushout!](#) (email, also available in Korean and Spanish)
 - [Lift Your Voice to End Corporal Punishment in Schools](#) (email + optional phone call)
 - *Note: When introducing the advocacy actions above, please thank members who contributed to these efforts last year! In 2023, more than 500 advocates wrote emails and/or made phone calls in support of The Protecting Our Students in Schools Act, which would prohibit corporal punishment in schools that receive federal funding and nearly 800 advocates sent messages in support of The Ending PUSHOUT Act, a bill to help stop school pushout, especially for girls of color.*
- [Climate Justice Social Justice Priority](#)

- UWFaith JE4A campaign hosted two successful webinars in cooperation with the Energy Star program, the Breathe Again Collaborative and Global Ministries, among other partners, empowering faith communities to build climate resiliency, increase their energy efficiency and save money.
 - Through our collaboration with the US Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program, we co-branded a Water and Energy Efficiency Checklist for Congregations. It provides a valuable resource for houses of worship to reduce their environmental impact and for UWFaith members to be part of a just energy transition from the ground up.
 - General Conference Climate Justice impact: at the start of General Conference, United Women in Faith co-organized a successful Earth Day Vigil for Creation with more than 400 participants in person and virtually. United Women in Faith played a crucial role in advocating for Climate Justice legislation at the General Conference in collaboration with different partner groups including United Methodist Creation Justice Movement, with an overwhelming majority of environmental-focused legislation passing. The work still continues to move the UMC towards a just and fossil-free future!
 - United Women in Faith members and allies have taken around 500 actions for Climate Justice so far this year, advocating for domestic policies that advance climate and environmental justice, increasing environmental protections for frontline communities, facilitating a just energy transition, and for adequate climate financing to fulfill our responsibilities under the Paris Agreement. Anyone can take action now! <https://p2a.co/J1FJexa>.
- **VOTE** – Put your faith into action. As women in faith, we have the opportunity and responsibility to advocate for justice, including our Social Justice Priorities through engagement in the electoral process. Please join town halls and ask the candidates how they will address our Social Justice Priorities. Make sure you vote and work to fight against voter suppression in your state. As is said in *The Book of Resolutions*, “While declaring our ultimate allegiance is to God, Scripture recognizes that faithfulness to God requires political engagement by the people of God.” (*The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church*, #5012)
 - **Racial Justice Charter** -- If your Conference received funding support to implement a Charter for Racial Justice event/action in 2024, please allow time on your agenda to share a report about what was done and/or what is planned for the fall/winter.
 - **Reading Program** -- We are excited to share the 2025 Reading Program, to be released in late August/early September [can link when it's ready]. Meanwhile, we give thanks for all the member volunteers whose faithful behind-the-scenes work makes this possible: we had more than 400 people apply to be volunteer Reading Program evaluators in 2024!

Our Impact in numbers

Note: Stats are from our 2023 Annual Report. Giving stats 2024.

- Scholarships: 304 students in the U.S. and around the world totaling over \$650,000
- Grants: Over 182 grants provided to international mission organizations and the National Mission Institutions along with other organizations totaling nearly 2.9 million
- Leadership Development Days: Virtual event hosted 712 leaders from all U.S. Conferences
- Campaigns: More than 3110 legislative actions were taken by members for Climate Justice
- Economic Development Grants: 16 economic development grants totaling \$186,000 were awarded in 2023

- As of July 2024, the total raised to support the continued work of United Women in Faith through the Legacy Endowment Fund is \$38,773,749.
- The total raised for Day of Giving 2024 was \$424,415.00.

General Secretary's greeting

Thank you for your support and encouragement in this first year. It is my joy to be on this journey with you. I invite all of us to keep our faith, hope, love, prayers and giving alive no matter how challenging the future may seem. Proverbs 4:25 says, "Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you," supporting and being in mission with women, children and youth for generations to come. We are influencers and inspirers! We can make an impact! Believe it!

I believe we can, because together United Women in Faith is a community of bold women on a journey, believing that love in action can change the world and with God make the impossible possible! May it be so, Amen.