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FEBRUARY 2024

CORRECTIONS to the 2024 DIRECTORY:

Page 4 Susan Smith, add Apt. #6-5

Page 6 add United Women in Faith FAMILIES FORWARD Representative: Dee Ann Wilson, lidwilson@outlook.com

Page 7 Peggy Smalley, Aldersgate Treasurer, change her email to pjsmalley44@gmail.com

Page 11 Susan Smith, change Apt. # to # 6-5

Happy Valentine's Day

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UWFaith Iowa Conference: https://www.iaumc.org/uwf

UWFaith National Website: https://uwfaith.org/.

A Message from your Conference President

The Action has started...Are you Loving?

United Women in Faith believe that **Love in Action can change the world.** The Iowa Conference United Women in Faith have embraced Love in Action in so many ways since January 1, 2024. The UWFaith Conference Leadership team joined other organizations in signing a letter urging the Iowa General Assembly to pass legislation to ensure Iowa's participation in the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program for Children (Summer EBT). Our Social Action Coordinator, Bobby Jo Paige, organized a marvelous virtual Legislative Event on January 13, 2024, with three thoughtful speakers who challenged us into Action: Bishop Kennetha J. Bigham-Tasi, State Senator Rev. Sara Trone Garriott, and Cathy Meyer, SCAN Advocate of the year. She then followed up, inviting those who could to come to the Capitol in Des Moines to continue the advocacy. We learned that not even sub-zero temperatures and snowstorms can stop Love in Action...we persist and are flexible.

We currently have 20 United Women in Faith members from Iowa registered to participate in the North Central Jurisdiction (NCJ) quadrennial event in Indianapolis, Indiana, from May 30- June 2, 2024. Three are voting delegates, two are up for consideration for the National Program Advisory Group, one is up for consideration for a National Director position, and one is up for consideration for the next NCJ team. There are still registration scholarships (early bird amount) available, and registration is still open. Loving can be attending meetings to get education on issues, opportunities for engagement/advocacy at national/state/local levels, and opportunities to serve, doing *Love in Action*. Have you considered attending NCJ or Mission u in July?

In the Spring there will be an opportunity for active local UWFaith units to apply for a Barbara Csomay grant to help fund projects putting Love in Action. Has your unit considered applying? Additionally, there will be the Barbara Csomay Women in Ministry grants which both clergy and laity may apply to further their education at events such as NCJ quadrennial event, Mission u, and Lay Servant training.

How are you putting Love in Action? How is your local unit putting Love in Action? How is your District putting Love in Action? There are so many ways to be LOVING which leads to ACTION which leads to CHANGE in ourselves, our communities, our state, our nation and in our world.

LOVE IN ACTION CAN CHANGE THE WORLD!!

Gladys Alvarez 1140 45th Street Des Moines, IA 50311 (h) 515-277-7337 (w) 515-244-2267 gkna2001@aol.com



Please remember, when referring to United Women in Faith, to only use either the entire name "United Women in Faith" or if you need to abbreviate use "UWFaith".

A Message from your Conference Vice President

Greetings sisters in Christ.

My name is Lynn Calvert and I'm serving as Iowa Conference UWFaith Vice President/Program Coordinator. I am so excited about meeting you at our Conference events. Annual Conference will be an opportunity to meet together for lunch (bring your own) and participate in the program: "What clergy expect from laity and what laity expect from clergy with an emphasis on United Women in Faith." All are invited. A flyer will be available soon. This is an opportunity for clergy and laity to share.

Our Conference Annual meeting is October 5th at St. Mark's UMC in Iowa City. No home game. Hooray! Bishop Kennetha will be our keynote speaker. We will also hear from Sikowis Nobiss from Great Plains Action Society. Rev. Abrahm Funchess will be sharing about the MLK Freedom Bus Tour. This will be our mission trip in 2025. Mark November 10-14, 2025 on your calendar for an astonishing event. I was able to do this tour in 2023 and found it life changing.

Thank you for all you do! Please send questions and/or comments to slmdean70@gmail.com.
Blessings,

Lynn Calvert
319-541-8367
slmdean70@gmail.com

A Message from your Conference Secretary

"Go now, write it before them on a tablet, and inscribe it in a book, so that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever." Isaiah 30:8

It was a major accomplishment for the lowa Conference United Women in Faith Directory Committee to collect and assemble all the necessary data for the 2024 lowa Conference Directory. Many thanks to Sally Redenius who formatted and typed all the documents. And we were able to distribute it electronically before the end of 2023! According to conversations on Basecamp (online venue with National for Conference Secretaries), many Conferences were still working on their Directories late in the spring.

During the Leadership Development Briefing with National on January 23, there were breakout sessions for the various Conference Officers. Susan Moberg, National Secretary, will be holding a virtual training session for Conference Secretaries on February 3rd and I will be sharing information presented with District Secretaries, soon after that.

Remember the Daily Prayer Calendar that can be found on Page 6 in the 2024 Directory.

Blessings,

Julie Nelson

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A Message from your Conference Treasurer

Hello Treasurers and any others reading this article: Blessings to you all!

The best news from 2023 is that we exceeded our Pledge to Missions! Our pledge was \$380,000 and we sent \$401,075.77! That means we paid 106% of our pledge. It is the first time since I've been treasurer that we made our pledge. Let me tell you how it happened. We sent \$135,000 from funds we received when Shesler Hall was sold, and \$15,000 from the Mission u funds that had accumulated when we didn't get to have it due to Covid. The rest was sent from local units in lowa! Thank you! We will not have "extra money" in 2024, so please be as generous as possible.



I hope it doesn't sound like bragging, but I also want to sing praises to you because in the figures I received from National, lowa was the highest paying conference in the entire USA!

The USPS has been very slow in getting district checks to me; some have taken more than three weeks and some haven't come at all. We are investigating ways to pay electronically and use email to send the supporting paperwork. If any of you have any good ideas for how we might accomplish this, I would appreciate your input!

May 30 – June 2 is the gathering for North Central Jurisdiction in Indianapolis. We have funds available through the Barbara Csomay account to help financially with the expenses of attending this conference. We only have 20 people signed up so far, and we haven't given away all of the scholarships yet. The conference will pay the early-bird registration fee of \$225, but the regular registration fee that is now in force is \$265. Basically if you apply for a scholarship your registration will only cost \$40. We can also apply for Women in Ministry grant money to help with the hotel and transportation. I'm saying all of this because if you would like to go and think you can't afford it, there is financial help available that will help reduce the expenses.

Speaking of grants, the application process for 2024 grants will take place in April, they will be due in May, and awards will be sent out in June. We've had several inquiries already which is awesome, but you need to be patient.

My chosen word for 2024 is TRUST! There are so many bad things happening in our world that it is easy to feel distressed and fearful. Instead of worrying about things we can't control, we need to put our TRUST in God, the creator and power of all good things ever!

God Bless You!

Helen Pollock
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A Message from your Member Nurture and Outreach Coordinator

Romans 12:4-5 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Just last week I did finally receive the final report of the 2022 Membership Survey. Due to a misunderstanding on the part of many respondents to the early question about whether your unit was an "all Access member" (which was answered yes, but should have been "no" for units), our results are not as accurate as would be ideal. With fewer than half of our units completing the online survey the overall picture may not be correct. However, the results indicate our leadership needs to emphasize the following areas:

- 1. Education about National Mission Institutions
- 2. The value in attending Mission u
- 3. Encouragement to use the Prayer Guide, response magazine, program book and participation in zoom Faith Talks and other online webinars
- 4. Sharing of positive experiences from attendance at Conference and District meetings, Assembly and Jurisdictional Conferences.

I will be forwarding the survey results to the Conference and District elected leadership for their perusal and I will let you all know when the 2023 Membership Survey is released. Conference President Gladys Alvarez and I did make some suggestions to the National Office Membership department for simplifying the process. Hopefully our suggestions are considered.

In other news, I am excited about our first Soul Care Retreat at the Crooked Creek Christian Camp, near Washington, Iowa, for the Golden Valley District, being held April 26-27, 2024. We've moved the registration date deadline to March 10th. Attendees need not be members of United Women in Faith. If you are planning to attend and want to bring a sister in Christ, that is fine. We have to limit the total number to 35, so please get reservations in soon. Outside of Golden Valley District will be allowed, but in-district members will be given first consideration. Pictured Rocks retreat dates are October 11-12, 2024. I will have dates soon for the other 3 district's Soul Care Retreats in 2025.

In Christ's Service,

Mary Taeger

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West Burlington, IA 52655
319-572-0115
mktaeger@gmail.com







MISSION u PROJECT 2024

Mission u Project

Calling all quilters, stitchers, crafters and artists! Mission u 2024, to be held July 13 at Iowa State University in Ames, centers around building healthy, welcoming communities. We are asking everyone to be involved in our Mission u community by providing a 10-inch x10-inch quilt block or decorated fabric square that will be sewn together to form an altar cloth.

Be creative with your square! It can be pieced, embroidered, appliquéd, painted, bedazzled, whatever suits you. Do it on your own, or work with your unit to create your square. **Just remember, the theme is community.**

Send your completed square by June 1 to:

Nancy Stockdale 3406 NE Briarwood Dr. Ankeny, IA, 50021.

See you in Ames!

Nancy Stockdale

Mission u Dean

nstock56@aol.com



Greetings from your Conference Nominations Chair

I never thought I would become a member of the Conference board of UWF, but here I am. This is a new job for me, but I have been approached by Chairpersons for each position I have served during my tenure of membership in UMW and now UWFaith. This will be a learning experience, and I appreciate any help along the way. I know I have much to do and I thank everyone in advance for advice or suggestions, especially in this first year. Ritzanna introduced me in the December newsletter and I appreciate her faith in my abilities. Now I must make sure I live up to her expectations! I live in Knoxville and became involved in my local unit as President in 2015. Now I am preparing to find other members who will say "YES" to taking on roles in our organization and move forward in roles they might never have considered. Each step has brought new challenges and given me new friends.

Thank you for allowing me to grow in knowledge of United Women in Faith.

Blessings to all,

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Conference Secretary of Program Resources

You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to You. Psalm 86:5 NIV

Welcome. It is a new year with a new start. You have survived a lot of snow and cold. Now we look forward to spring and all the blessings and trials it may bring.

One thing about enforced time at home, there is time for reading. Perhaps you have started reading from the new list. Perhaps you have caught up on books from the past few years or talked about them with friends and UWFaith members. However you used the time, then and in the future, include books from the Reading Program.

The bundle is out with the Daily Prayer Guide, Program Book, and Mission u study book. All look to be filled with good ideas and information. All three books can also be purchased digitally, downloaded to your computer. On the website Reading Program | United Women in Faith (uwfaith.org) are ways that can expand the program where you are. You can share the program with others, help someone obtain books, connect with other units in talking about and sharing books, display a chart that shows those reading and their growth, advocate with the legislature or city council about issues that you are concerned about, and pray about the issues and concern privately or with others.

Something new: Bonus Books this year are picked to represent the theme of Love Your Neighbor in the World and in The United Methodist Church.

Finally, I want to let you know that this is not a competition to see who can read the most books. It is fantastic if you get to level 4. It is also fantastic if you read only one or two books in a year. For me, I used to read voraciously. Now, I struggle to finish a book in a year and have several with bookmarks in them from previous years. The idea is to read, to share and to incorporate what you have learned in your life. Enjoy a book "as long as ever you can."

Blessings to you. Enjoy reading.

Marilyn Burch

Lamentations 3:24



"Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can."

— John Wesley

Missionary from Pakistan to Visit Iowa in Spring 2024

Alice Garrick plans to travel from Lahore, Pakistan, to Iowa in April. She is the Executive Director and has worked for the past 33 years with Women Development Services (WDS) a ministry aiming to make a better life for women and their children. According to Alice, "It's an extremely challenging ministry, especially in the context of Pakistan, where female abuse especially of non-Muslims is at the extreme level. They're forced into fake conversions, under-age marriages, and human trafficking. WDS very often helps restore the lost human dignity to our women and girls, who are living in the most vulnerable situation, and reweaves the torn fabric of society."

Visits to several United Women in Faith gatherings around lowa are already planned, with more dates and places to be announced soon. Alice hopes to share about her work, build relationships in the US and provide opportunities for the sale of goods which are produced and provide her women with a sustainable income. "We aim to break the cycle of exploitation by encouraging the education of girls and helping women to earn an income with dignity."

Some of the hand-made items created at vocational training centers and offered for sale may include embroidered dresses, fabric painted items, woolen scarves, embroidered bags, beads, jewelry, tops and tunics, home decor and crocheted items. Alice promotes women's artisan work "so that our ministry which is for the whole church of Pakistan and the Pakistani Christian community is enhanced for the Glory of God." (See page 9 to view some of these items.)

Alice will be traveling to Iowa April 9th following her participation in an Indigenous Women's Conference in Nauvoo, IL. The following events are planned, open to all interested persons:

Wednesday, April 10 - Riverview Park District—Urbandale Aldersgate UMC, 1:30—3:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 11 - Riverview Park District—Ames First, 7:00 p.m.

Friday, April 12 - Pictured Rocks District Day Apart at St. Paul's in Cedar Rapids, 9:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 13 - Golden Valley District Mission Day, Wilton, 9:30 a.m.—noon

Sunday, April 14 - Community event at 2:00 in Toledo

This photo is of Alice with her daughter, who also works in Women's Empowerment. Some of you may have met Alice and shopped at her booth at Assembly in Orlando in 2022.

If you or your UWFaith unit is interested in hosting Alice for an event, please contact:

Becky Heeren 641-751-6024 becky@alumni.iastate.edu or Barb Oakland (H) 319-377-5977 (C) 563-542-3583 barb.oakland@gmail.com

42-3583

Submitted by Becky Heeren and Barb Oakland

IOWA CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

These few pictures are representative of the many items Alice has to sell.

Many variations of colors and styles.





























A Message from your Social Action Coordinator

Congratulations to our Iowa Conference Leadership Team for voting yes to have our United Women in Faith Iowa Conference sign the letter of support for the Summer EBT Program.

We had our lowa UWFaith/UMC lowa Legislative zoom Event on January 13. We started with our Bishop's devotion Colossians 3:8-17 and sharing how we are like them and yet how we should be talking/acting. Two of our District Social Action ladies lead our Hunger Litany - Janet Johnson from Golden Valley District and Becky Bryant from Camp Clear Lake District. Next Senator/Rev. Sarah Trone Garriott spoke concern about the Summer EBT Program and AEA. She also talked about how to reach and the best way to visit with legislators. Cathy Myer from Save the Children spoke. "How we need to work for all children to make sure they have what they need to grow...it affects their education, their health and their future." She shared lowa Hunger Coalition's advocacy website.

I would encourage you to listen to parts of their talks on these sites from our lowa Conference Communication:

Bishop: https://vimeo.com/903838144?share=copy Sarah: https://vimeo.com/903818016?share=copy

A printed version of parts of their talks are on: News Story: https://www.iaumc.org/newsdetail/ advocacy-event-encourages-involvement-with-legislative-process-18226902

We had 45 sign up and 37 attend, including Leaders/Speakers/Zoom.

I want to thank Rita Carter for doing the Registration, Zoom, and being the sounding board for ideas. Thank you to all who helped put on this event.

On January 29th the weather was good and we had seven ladies come to our State Capital building. We learned more about legislation we need to advocate for, visited the huge beautiful law library and how to contact our legislators. We sat in on Moral Monday discussing the Summer EBT. It was a wonderful time of fellowship and discussion on similar topics.

The Summer EBT Program and the AEA programs both need continued advocacy. If you have written once to your legislatures please write again. The Summer EBT program provides children \$120 for food during the summer. We need legislation to renew it for 2024 and to continue it yearly. The AEA program needs to be left alone with few changes. AEA programs provide professionals for all public schools for example counseling, help for children with disabilities, education for all school staff for mental health first aid training.

Bobby Jo (Roberta) Paige

25577 250th Street Grundy Center, IA 50638 319-428-0488 bjpdaisy@gmail.com



A Message from your Spiritual Growth Coordinator

Our selected Bible verses for February (Romans 2:6-7); January (Romans 6:23); and March (Colossians 3:17) are all written by Paul. In order for me to better understand a particular verse or verses, I like to read the entire book in the Bible where the verse(s) are found. I hope you like to do this too. These verses let me know that through my faith in God and by His grace, I can have God's free gift of eternal life with Christ Jesus. Knowing salvation is a free gift and not based on good works makes me want to be in a closer relationship with God and to do my best to live a life that honors God.

I have found that United Women in Faith offers us so many ways to know God and strengthen our relationship with Him and find ways to share His love. I hope you will check out their website and explore all the opportunities for personal faith growth, mission projects-in USA and globally, and reading program resources. You can also learn more about UWFaith's priority areas, and join in fellowship with fellow UWFaith members. I love food and fellowship and have enjoyed reading the January & February lessons found in our 2024 program book. Even if you do not have access to the program book or the *response* magazines, you can download issues from the website. I don't want to forget to mention the 2024 Prayer Guide or Mission u study books. I am looking forward to attending a Soul Care Retreat, and North Central Jurisdiction in May. I had the privilege of attending training via zoom for Spiritual Growth Coordinators in January and have another one scheduled in February. After these training sessions, I will share what I learn. Wow! So many opportunities!!!

God's Blessings to you and your family.

Doris Strait

18877 Iowa Oak Grove Avenue Keosauqua, IA 52565 (h) 319-293-3471 (c) 319-677-0106 mdstrait@netins.net





A Message from your Education and Interpretation Coordinator

What does Education and Interpretation mean, anyway?! Well, it means that United Women in Faith are invited to LEARN and UNDERSTAND the many ways available to support women, children, and youth in our churches, our communities, and around the world. Often that can mean offering emotional support, but it also takes our material and financial gifts to make lives better for those in difficult situations.

As our world-wide organization of United Women in Faith, we support mission activity at the rate of \$11.23 every minute! (This is our new 2024 mission minute figure just announced.) So, when you're figuring out your pledge, individually or as a unit, consider how many minutes you can support – 5 minutes @ \$56? 10 minutes @ \$112? Or one day of mission @ \$16,171? It's in our hands!

Two special mission giving opportunities are available to United Women in Faith each spring – our March 23 Day of Giving and our annual Call to Prayer and Self Denial. Both of these are "designated giving," beyond our Pledge to Mission and are meant to give support for particular mission needs.

Our "Day of Giving," created to celebrate our 150th Anniversary year in 2019, is an effort to secure the future for United Women in Faith mission projects by establishing a \$60 million Legacy Fund endowment which will earn dividends far into the future. We are all invited to make a special gift to support the Legacy Fund on March 23, our 155th anniversary date celebrating the founding of our Methodist women's mission organizations. A special feature of the Day of Giving is the opportunity to honor someone special with your gift. On-line giving works well for this project – go to uwfaith.org/dayofgiving. You can also send checks directly to this address:

United Women in Faith Attention: Legacy Church Center for the United Nations 777 United Nations Plaza, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10017.

Let's see what we can do this year to build our Legacy! Watch our UWFaith.org website and Facebook page for updates.

Another opportunity offered each spring is the annual Call to Prayer and Self Denial. This year's theme is Lifting Up Voices for Climate Justice. There is a special program in our 2024 Program Book, or you can develop your own around the theme of Climate Justice, one of our social action priorities for UWFaith. Offerings taken in response to this world-wide concern will be used by our United Women in Faith organization to support programs for climate justice put into action. These gifts should be sent to your district treasurer, using the remittance form line under supplementary giving.

Please encourage your units to "go an extra mile" and support these two special projects of United Women in Faith. As you know, Our Mission Dollars Do Amazing Things!

Barb Oakland
Cell 563-542-3583
barb.oakland@gmail.com



National UWFaith Program Advisory Group-Iowa Member

"Keep on Doing Good"

When I read the February Iowa United Women in Faith Bible verse, Romans 2:6-7, the phrase that stands out to me is to "keep on doing good" as we serve and follow Jesus, who showed us that doing good isn't always easy or enjoyable or even safe. Jesus showed and preached God's goodness to those he met anyway—even though it led to the cross. So we have our model as we live in today's world, and I want to share some examples and possibilities for you to add to the good you're already up to:

- * I celebrate that you and I helped our Iowa Conference United Women in Faith surpasse our 2023 Pledge to Mission! This provides funds for women, children and youth in the US and globally as well as the work of United Women in Faith. Some of this was due to an unexpected circumstance that blessed us while we mourned the closing of Shesler Hall and it's ministry in Sioux City. We'll have to work hard and do good to meet our 2024 pledges.
- * Please share your good and kind prayer to lift up our National UWFaith President and her family as they mourn the loss of 'Ainise 'Isama'u's husband, Henry, after a brief illness. If you would like to send a Gift in Memory card, please email me for the address or donate in his memory or 'Ainise's honor on the UWFaith website. May God bring peace and comfort through your goodness to the bereaved family.
- * Do you know someone in your congregation or community to honor with a Special Mission Recognition Award & pin for doing good? Look for those in and outside your unit who do mission work in some way—the new logo pins are now available—and Treasurers should designate "Cross" or "Logo" type of pin on the order form (see Downloads section for forms).
- * The 2024 Call to Prayer & Self-Denial will focus on "Lifting Up Voices for Climate Justice." The informational brochure is available to download in English United Women in Faith CTP Brochure English (www.amages.org), Korean or Spanish. You can also download a promotion 2 ½ min video (https://youtu.be/GWT0vaSmVRE) and the program if you haven't purchased the program book: 11207 ProgramResources 2024 CTP SELF DENIAL for download.pdf. United Women in Faith has been doing good climate justice work for many years. Iowa women have taken part in Zoom meetings with Iowa Congressional office staff members, and others have attended webinars or discussions or advocacy through the Just Energy for All Campaign. Last year's focus was on the Charter for Racial Justice, and a meaningful program from our lowa Charter Committee was presented via Zoom.
- * I am looking forward to the March 8-9 Zoom meetings of the full Program Advisory Group with staff and international participants and presenters—always a good time filled with information and inspiration. One of the sessions will involve discussions of a book *Becoming Brave: Finding the Courage to Pursue Racial Justice Now* by Brenda Salter McNeil that uses the biblical story of Esther to help us connect with becoming racial justice activists. Should be a good and challenging session, in addition to many others.
- * Remember the United Women in Faith Day of Giving on Saturday, March 23rd with the theme "Faithfully Forward." There are many ways to give individually (online, phone 800-278-7771 (7am-4pm), text "FUTURE" to 20503) or individuals and units can mail checks to United Methodist Women Attn: Legacy, 777 United Nations Plaza, 11th Floor Church Center for the United Nations, New York, NY 10017. [Write "Day of Giving" in the memo section.] Celebrate 155 years of United Women in Faith with a gift to the Legacy Fund and invest in our future good work!



Faithfully Forward uwfaith.org/dayofgiving

United Women in Faith 150 100

* Pray for United Women in Faith's work during the United Methodist Church General Conference from April 23rd through May 3rd in Charlotte, NC. We have four good resolutions: The Girl Child, Children's Sabbath, Status of Women, and Voting Rights in the U.S. Read the article on pp 26-29 in Jan/Feb response.

Ritto Courter, Iowa Program Advisory Group-Iowa Member 515-979-0605 rtaac@mchsi.com