

Voices of Purpose

September 2025

Quarterly Newsletter of the Greater New Jersey United

President's Message

GNJUWFaith Leaders and Members:

Hope you will join me for our Fall Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 18, 2025 at GNJ Conference Center from 9:00am – 2:00pm, *Dream It! Believe it! Do It.* The flyer with details is available in this newsletter.

Also, I share with you the Itinerary for the United Women in Faith Bus Trip (EPA) to Assembly 2026 to be held in Indianapolis, IN.

Also enclosed an option for charter bus travel to Assembly 2026 if you are near the Philadelphia, PA area. Please let me know if you hear anything concerning a bus near the New York City area.

Sincerely,

Holly Cyrus
GNJUWFaith President

Issue Highlights

- *Assembly 2026*
- *Legacy Liaison*
- *Wake Up Call NJ*
- *Social Action*



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www.gnjuwfaith.org



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September 2025

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September 2025

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September 2025

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Editor: Joyce Pratt
GNJUWFaith Communications Coordinator



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September 2025

Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith

Welcome Statement

GNJ United Women in Faith affirms that the grace of God is extended to all God's children without exception.

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

We are committed to the inclusion of people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation as well as people of every age, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status.

We make a bold choice to work for intersectional peace with justice and to create inclusive communities that respect the dignity and sacred worth of all God's children, and honor our shared, common humanity.



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Greater New Jersey
Fall Annual Meeting
Saturday, October 18, 2025

Dream It! Believe It! Do It!

9:00am Breakfast & Registration
2:00pm End of Meeting

GNJ Mission Resource Center
205 Jumping Brook Rd.
Neptune Twp, NJ 07753
(732) 359-1000



Keynote Presenter: Yvonne Bouknight

United Women in Faith Board of Directors

Yvonne W. Bouknight, a Newark native and 38-year Montclair resident, serves on the United Women in Faith (UWF) Board of Directors representing Greater NJ. She chairs the UWF National Legacy Steering Committee and is a member of the National Finance and Reading Program Committees.

SERVING BREAKFAST & LUNCH: \$15

Please Pre-Register link below. Any questions to Holly Cyrus (GNJ UWFaith President).

Email: Holly.Cyrus@faa.gov , Phone: 609-226-5337.

Please provide list of names and/or numbers.

Love Gift: Camden Neighborhood Center. Ingathering Recipient: Camden Neighborhood Center (Diapers and Baby Wipes.)

*Registration: <https://form.jotform.com/252477472076161>



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Homelessness – Children and Adults

Children Experiencing Homelessness

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) met its federal requirements with its 2024 Students Experiencing Homelessness Map. The map and accompanying data report the number of students by county and school years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 with NJ statewide totals of 11,104, 14,393, and 17,315, respectively.

Another meaningful 2023-2024 breakdown was:

- **Grade span:** Most (8,818) were in preschool through grade 5.
- **Race/ethnicity:** Most (7,636) were Hispanic or Latino.
- **Disability Status:** 4,298 had a disability.
- **Students learning more than one language:** 3,683 were multilingual learners.

These were increases from 2021-2022 total breakdowns of 62%, 59%, 64%, and 52%, respectively.

New Jersey's statewide total for the above years was 11,104, 14,393, and 17,315 students experiencing homelessness, a 64% increase from 2022. [<https://nj.gov/education/homeless/counts/>].

People Experiencing Homelessness, 2024

The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development published the following data in its "The 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress [<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2023-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>]. The report is divided by sheltered and unsheltered individuals with breakdowns by age, race, families with children, unaccompanied youth, and veterans.

Statistics for the breakdowns of age and race for all people (512,007) follow:

• Age	<u>Under 18</u>	<u>18-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-44</u>	<u>45-54</u>	<u>55-64</u>	<u>Over 64</u>	
	19.2%	7.5%	19.0%	19.9%	15.4%	13.5%	5.5%	
• Race	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
	3.3%	1.6%	28.6%	0.3%	1.2%	45.5%	4.1%	24.0%

Race Breakdown: 1=American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous. 2=Asian or Asian American. 3=Black, African American, or African. 4=Middle Eastern or North Africa. 5=Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. 6=White and Hispanic/Latina/e/o. 7=Total Multi-Racial. 8=Hispanic/Latina/e/o.

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Homelessness – Children and Adults

(continued from page 7)

People Experiencing Homelessness, 2024 (continued)

A Bing delivered search result advises the AHAR to Congress provides a comprehensive overview of homelessness in the United States. It includes data from point-in-time (PIT) counts and housing inventory counts conducted in January 2024. The report highlights:

- **771,488 people** experienced homelessness on a single night in 2024, the highest ever recorded.
- **Family homelessness rose by 39.4 percent**, with a significant increase in children under the age of 18.
- **Veterans** experienced a decline in homelessness, with a **7.6 percent decrease** in January 2024.
- The report underscores the need for federal, state, and local lawmakers to advance evidence-based solutions to the crisis.
- The data indicates that **safe, stable, and affordable housing** is essential for rehousing people without homes and addressing the growing number of individuals who cannot afford skyrocketing rents.

Homelessness in New Jersey

Approximately 12,680 people were experiencing homelessness in New Jersey on January 24, 2024, a 24% increase from 2023. Amount these, 1,737 were unsheltered meaning they were living outside or in places not meant for human habitation. NJ Counts 2025 survey reported 13,748 people experiencing homelessness, an 8% increase from the previous year.

NJ Response and Prevention Efforts

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs has implemented various programs aimed at **preventing homelessness**, including distributing over \$1.3 billion in emergency rental assistance and enhancing access to housing resources.

The Homelessness Prevention and Services Ecosystem has seen a **28.9% increase** in system access allowing more at-risk individuals to avoid homelessness.

The **New Jersey Coalition to End Homelessness** is actively working on advocacy and system changes to address homelessness, aiming to make it rare, brief, and non-recurring.

What Can You Do?

Contact GNJUWFaith via their website at www.gnjuwfaith.org CONTACT page and join a social action and/or advocacy committee. We would be honored to have you join us!

Social Action – *Justice for All*

Submitted by Joyce Pratt

Social Action is defined as a **critical theory in sociology that holds that society is constructed through the interactions and meanings of the people who make up society**. It considers the actions and reactions of individuals.

The United Women in Faith (UWFaith) website section “Why We Do Social Action” quotes an excerpt from Matthew 22:37-39, *You shall love your neighbor as yourself*, and shares:
To love our neighbor – and ourselves – means more than just providing care and comfort in time of suffering; to love our neighbor as ourselves we must change the systems that do harm in the first place –“social action.”

UWFaith’s two social action priorities for 2025-2028 are climate justice (Just Energy 4 All) and mass incarceration and the criminalization of communities of color (Interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline). Many of our readers know that I joined GNJUWFaith members in these endeavors. We have experienced success in some of our efforts and strive to accomplish the same for other items on our agenda. We can do this with you!

Oftentimes, instead of reinventing the wheel during my advocacy efforts, I relate to quotes and proverbs shared many years ago by leaders and everyday people like you and me. No sermons, just tidbits! Today I share two of them plus one new quote in the hope you will join us and that they can be useful as you navigate social actions in your activities.

When I was CAD Secretary around 2016-2017, I happily sent articles for our CAD newsletter publisher Lou Hyson and placed related issues on our events information table. Here are two of my beliefs at that time which still apply today under “Social Action,” a concept not yet flourishing during that period.

First – Abraham Lincoln’s

“...that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

We can support Lincoln’s message with Christians who speak of the three comings of Christ: in the flesh in Bethlehem, in our hearts daily, and in glory at the end of time. Also, the bible promises us a leader who will govern the earth with love and fairness for all.

(continued on page 10)

Social Action

(continued from page 9)

This Advent season on November 30th, we celebrate the birth of Christ, the Root of Jesse his ancestor, as we await Christ's second coming. Until then, we must pray as a powerful, spiritual group and ask God, through Jesus Christ, for a government of the people, by the people, and for the people -- Justice for all!

My second belief comes from - Andrea Bocelli's *Because We Believe* (one of my favorite songs). It's an absolutely beautiful song and you can hear it on YouTube.

"Don't give up
Someone is with you
Like stars across the sky
We were born to shine
All of us here, because we believe."

I believe Bocelli means Jesus Christ and God our Father wants all of us to be happy, to shine! Again, justice for all.

In closing, I share **my newest inspirational quote** that I use to recruit volunteers for social action projects. It's from "Don't forget to sing in the lifeboats" by Kathryn & Ross Petras, authors of "Age Doesn't Matter Unless You're a Cheese" (nice!).

Self-Worth

Never forget that you are one of a kind. Never forget that if there weren't any need for you in all your uniqueness to be on this earth, you wouldn't be here in the first place. And never forget, no matter how overwhelming life's challenges and problems seem to be, that one person can make a difference in the world. In fact, it is always because of one person that all the changes that matter in the world come about. So be that one person.

--R. Buckminster Fuller, *Philosopher*

I urge you as UWFaith does:

Share your "why!"

Dream it! (your belief),
Believe it! (your purpose),
Do it! (your voice).

###



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ASSEMBLY 2026

May 15-17, 2026
Indianapolis, Indiana

uwfaith.org/assembly

**Dream it!
Believe it!
Do it!**

WHY YOU SHOULD REGISTER

There has never been a more important time for women of faith to come together, tap into our strength, and unite to change the world. Assembly 2026 is that moment—a once-every-four-years gathering of women committed to faith, empowerment, and making a difference. Picture a weekend that uplifts your soul, strengthens your faith, and brings you together with an unstoppable sisterhood.

At United Women in Faith's 2026 Assembly, you can **DREAM IT! BELIEVE IT! DO IT!**

PRICE

Assembly is a great value at the early registration fee of \$365.

Few other faith-based conferences offer the following for such a low fee:

Inspiring Speakers: Hear from women leaders who will spark your passion and energize your purpose.

Powerful Worship: Experience deep reflection, renewal, and connection in faith.

Workshops: Gain tools to create meaningful change in your life and your community.

Sisterhood: Connect with women from around the world who share your commitment to justice and Soul Care.

SAVE FOR ASSEMBLY

Start now! Calculate the costs as broken out below for your location and divide by 15 for a monthly savings amount. Now it doesn't seem so daunting. The unforgettable experience of Assembly will make it worth every dollar.

Early Registration fee of \$365 runs from Sept. 1 through Nov. 30, 2025.

Hotels range from \$164 to \$199 per night for up to four people (double/double room)

Travel expenses

Meal expenses

uwfaith.org/assembly



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Assembly 2026 Itinerary for United Women in Faith Bus Trip (EPA) Indianapolis, Indiana, Thursday, May 14- Sunday, May 17, 2026

Departure: Thursday, May 14, 2026

Leaving from Methodist Services, 4300 Monument Rd, Philadelphia 19131: **7:00am**

Stopping for additional pick up at EPA UMC Conference Office, (45 min.)
980 Madison Ave. Norristown, PA 19403: **7:45am**

Leaving EPA UMC Conference Office: **8:10am**

Arrival at Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre (includes 1 meal stop and
1 stretch stop) 31 W. Ohio St., Indianapolis,
IN 46204, approximately: **8:00pm**

Return: Sunday, May 17, 2026

Leaving from Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre (includes 1 meal stop and
1 stretch stop) 31 W. Ohio St., Indianapolis,
IN 46204: **10:00am**

Stopping for additional drop off at EPA Conference Office,
980 Madison Ave., Norristown, PA 19403 at **9:45pm**

Leaving EPA Conference Office at **10:00pm**

Final Destination: Methodist Services, (45 min.)
4300 Monument Rd., Phila.19131 at **10:45pm**

If you have any questions, please call 215-666-2212 (c) or 215-493-9505 (H).

Rhonda Rea
EPA United Women in Faith President
jrpiz@aol.com

Charter Bus Transportation to Assembly 2026 (Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel) \$300

\$150- NOW non-refundable deposit secures your bus seat.

\$150- BALANCE DUE- Wed. April 1, 2026

Check or Money Order to EPA Conference UMW / memo-Assembly Bus and name of person riding the bus and phone #.

Mail checks to - Rhonda Rea, 241 Greenview Rd. Yardley, PA 19067



The legacy Endowment Fund

The Legacy Endowment Fund of United Women in Faith (UWFaith) is a permanently invested endowment that supports the work of improving the lives of women, children, and youth at home and abroad.

UWFaith members' commitment and faithful service has propelled our foremothers' vision forward for more than 150 years. Our actions have always spoken as loudly as our words.

Acts of love.

Acts of faith.

Acts of generosity.

We show up – and we get things done. Together we're making the world a better place, locally and globally.

Give Today!

<https://uwfaith.org/give/legacy-fund/>

Message from the GNJUWFaith Legacy Liaison

I am willing to share with a district or local unit an event to **Become a Legacy Philanthropist** and **Estate Planning**. Please email your response to: mpowell56@comcast.net.

Our goal is to reach \$60 million by Assembly 2026 in Indianapolis, IN. Early Assembly registration is until November 20, 2025. ***Come join our Legacy Banquet Dinner!***

I am asking district treasurers to join my Legacy Committee. Please contact me. Awards will be given to the conference with the most Legacy giving at the Legacy Banquet!

Blessings,

Marilyn Powell
GNJUWFaith Legacy Liaison



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Mission U 2025 Event Review

The Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith (GNJUWFaith) hosted the UWFaith Mission U 2025 at Centenary University in Hackensack, NJ during July 18-20, 2025.

Mission u 2025 offered three curricula on the theme of “Practicing Hope Together” as attendees studied the *resurrection appearances of Jesus and the example of early Christian communities to explore what it means to practice hope in God even when things seem to be falling apart*. The three curricula were:

- Adult – Practicing Hope by Tabatha Holley,
- Youth – Communities of the Spirit Living in Hope as Resurrection People by Regina Heater, and
- Children – Hope as a Resurrection People by Joni Cisowski

The following eight sessions were designed to invite participants to explore various aspects of hope:

Session 1 – What is hope?

Session 2 – Where is hope? Where does it live? What makes it hard?

Session 3 – Rooting hope.

Session 4 – Hope is a ritual.

Session 5 – Hope is a ritual (even when it gets hard).

Session 6 – Hope is a seed.

Session 7 – Growing hope.

Session 8 – Joy in practicing hope.

Session 2 introduced the concept of *Refugia*, a biological concept where life endures in times of big disturbance in the living world. In closing, a “Practicing Hope through Refugia” sheet gave participants time to reflect on two questions:

- How has our understanding of hope shifted or changed as a result of our time together?
- What is one thing we will do or do differently as a result of our time together?

The greatest pro-active, entertainment activity was the classroom artistic creation of individual Trees of Hope. Not only in our opinion each group large art was the best and all were introduced at our general session, but we also grew from casual to closer friends!

Visit our website for Mission u 2025 photos by Lou Hyson or click here at:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/5FUSQfuAU8KMC2Cn9>.



District News

Cape Atlantic District (CAD)

CAD hosted their Annual Business Meeting and Communion on Saturday, September 27, 2025 at Seaville United Methodist Church in Seaville, NJ with the theme ***Practicing Hope Together***. 2024 5-Star Units were celebrated, and a Memorial Table was set-up for participant viewing.

The Guest Speaker was Seaville UMC Pastor Melissa Doyle-Waid and Keynote Presenters were Re. Derrick Doherty, CAD Superintendent, and Pastor Elizabeth, GNJUW Faith Dean of Mission U. The welcome address was made by Robin Lord the Local President and Pastor Dyle-Waid. Ms. Lord, CAD Spiritual Growth Chair, delivered the devotion and prayer, and Lou Hyson, CAD President provided introductions and led the annual meeting.

The Ingathering recipient was The Branches Outreach, a community focused organization in Rio Grande, NJ and donations were food, personal care items, clothing, and monetary.

It was an exciting meeting and CAD members were encouraged by the increase in attendance and two volunteers for open positions. Plans were suggested and initiated to continue the increased participation.

Delaware Bay District Fall Meeting

Delaware Bay District held their fall meeting on Saturday, September, 20, 2025 at Pitman United Methodist Church. The guest speaker was Alyssa Ruch, Director of Pathways Bridges Project, United Methodist of Greater New Jersey.

Ms. Ruch presented a Journey of Hope resource of the Greater NJ Conference. The Journey of Hope plan seeks to build our past progress in deepening our ministry across the conference to create a more just, inclusive, equitable church.

The in-gathering included teen gift cards at the Christmas Toy Shop and Shoprite or ALDI gift cards for Neighborhood Center Food Programs.

GNJUMC District Information:

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/northeastern-jurisdiction-district-offices>.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday October 25 2025

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED IN NEW JERSEY

2025 FALL GATHERING



BUILDING CONNECTIONS

QUALITY EQUITABLE EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY

Panelists: Donna Beck, Ed.D – journalist/ school educator
Mavis Ermakov, DNP – nursing /health occupations educator

**“Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge.”
Proverbs 23:12 NIV**

South Orange-Vailsburg United Methodist Church

**150 South Orange Avenue
South Orange NJ 07079**



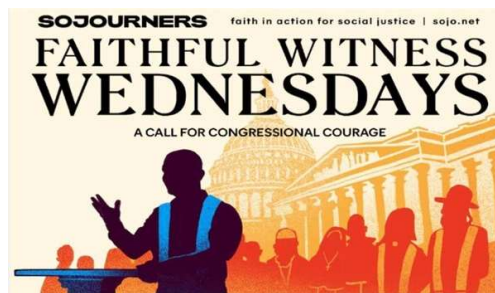
**Ensure inclusive and
equitable quality
education and promote
lifelong learning
opportunities for all**



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Church & Society

The United Methodist Church



Beginning Ash Wednesday on March 5, 2025 and every Wednesday in March, Church and Society joined Sojourners and other faith-based organizations of the Washington, D.C. Interfaith Staff Community to support multiple rallies on the Capitol Hill grounds that call on Congress to exercise greater moral courage in upholding its Article 1 powers and preventing executive overreach.

United Women in Faith General Secretary/CEO Sally Vonner spoke at the event on April 16, 2025.

For additional information, visit:

<https://www.umcjustice.org/search?q=faithful+witness+wednesdays> or
<https://uwfaith.org/blog/2025/faithful-witness-wednesdays/>.

Submitted by Sherri Shumate 3.5.25.



Wake Up Call NJ is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization founded by New Jersey parents to equip other NJ parents with the facts about their children's schools.

They report that 55% of NJ fourth graders can't do math at grade level and by sixth grade it's 64%. Their parents are unaware and are being told everything is okay. 80% of kids in NJ schools actually get As and Bs on their report card, while a majority fail to meet grade level standards in reading and math.

Wake Up Call NJ continues that "...together we can fix our schools. And help our kids. The first step is knowing there's a problem.

For details and resources, visit: <https://wakeupcallnj.com/>.



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Across

1. Sheltered from the wind.
5. Short, solid, sound
9. Health care facility (abbrev.)
13. Makes anxious
15. Strike something
16. End of summer harvest
18. Emergency Response Team
19. Voiceless bilabel sound
20. Hawaii
21. Technical Knockout
22. Female ancestor
23. At that time
25. Neck (French)
26. Daughter of Zeus
27. Dog sound
29. Pass by in time
32. Half a quart
33. Twelve
34. Virginia University
35. Ultra violate radiation
37. Entertain
39. Walking track
40. Miles Standish State Forest
42. Artic German Shepherd Rescue
43. U.S. state
44. Unvoiced lip sound
45. "Protection" hieroglyph
46. Music award
50. Irish female name
53. Medcal imaging of body organs
54. Strong craving
55. ___ to act (two words)
56. Exist
57. Hindu mantra
58. Advanced registered nurse (initials)
59. ___ pickle.
60. Plant stem outgrowths
63. ___ cloud nine
64. Response to cold or stress in fingers and toes.
66. Struck with terror (alternate spelling)
68. Alaska Marine Science Symposium

Down

1. Change
2. Brooklyn university
3. Queen of Persia
4. Sun equator crossing in the Fall
5. Pointed fastener
6. Caused (two words)
7. Your house (Japanese)
8. Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra
9. While
10. Scented, poisonous winged blossom
11. Gathering of crops
12. Little one (suffix)
14. Pause in speech
17. Chemical formula letter

Down

24. Belonging to a cable channel.
25. Survival as the world overheats
26. Dedicated to people over 50
28. Wireless Infrastructure Association
29. Year long green and full plant
30. The (French equivalent)
31. Name pick for boy child
36. Donkeys
38. Express disgust with a food taste.

Down

41. With 60 across, a Fall nature event
47. Providence's state
48. Sixth tone of a C-major scale
49. Pills (two words)
51. Sixth sense
52. Very long period of time
57. Female reproductive cell
61. Automotive benefits
62. Retired workers insurance
63. Overeaters Anonymous
65. ___ & T
67. Alpha

Submitted by J. Pratt 10.5.25
Answers on page 20

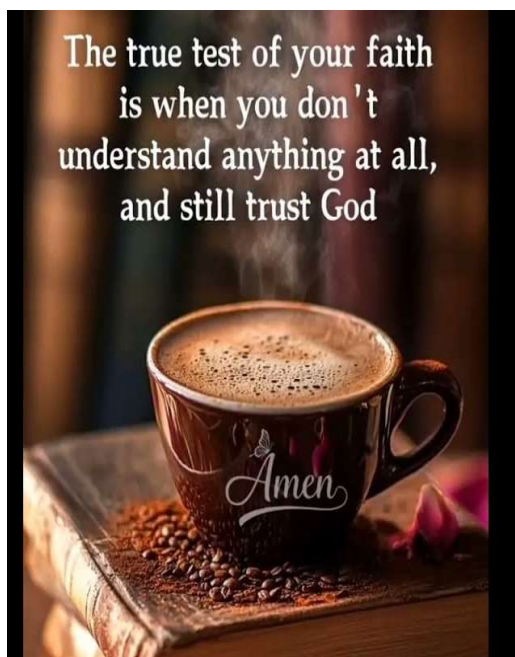
Fall Feasts in the Bible

As the Fall season rolls around (September – November), the Bible gives us a beautiful picture of God's appointed times, known as the Fall Feasts. These feasts point to His faithfulness and the hope we have in the fact that God keeps His promises.

Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), September 23-24. In Leviticus 23:23-25, God commands the Israelites to observe the Feast of Trumpets as a day of rest and remembrance, marked by the blowing of trumpets (shofars). In the New Testament, trumpets are connected to the return of Christ's. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 tells us that at the sound of the trumpet, the dead in Christ will rise first. As we celebrate this feast, we are looking forward to the future when the trumpet sounds, Jesus will return to His people.

Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), October 7-14. Leviticus 23:33-43 describes the Feast of Tabernacles, a joyful celebration where the Israelites would live in temporary shelters (sukkot) to remember God's provision during their journey in the wilderness. John 1:14 tells us that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," echoing the imagery of tabernacling. In the book of Revelation (21:3), we see that in the New Jerusalem, God will once again dwell (or tabernacle) with His people for eternity.

Dianna Wiebe, <https://www.grapevinestudies.com/blog/see-the-fall-feasts-in-the-bible/>.



A	L	E	E		P	L	O	P		A	S	H	E
D	I	S	Q	U	I	E	T	S		S	W	A	T
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		O	N		R	A	Y	N	A	U	D	S	
		A	G	A	S	T			A	M	S	S	

Answers to September 2025 Crossword Puzzle



GNJUWFaith 2025 Calendar & Upcoming Events

January 11	Conference Leadership Development Event: 9 am - 12:00 pm Leadership Team Meeting, 12-2 pm RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by Jan. 10 th . via Zoom.
April 12	GNJUWFaith Annual Spring Meeting – 9:00-2:00 pm Need location. RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by April 11 th .
May 18 – May 22	26th EPA & GNJ Annual Conference Wildwood Convention Center, Wildwood, NJ
June 7	Leadership Team Meeting (including all District Presidents) – 9:30 am-noon Need location. RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by June 6 th
July 18-20	Mission “u” Three Day School Centenary University, Hackettstown, NJ
July 24	South Seaville Camp Meeting 4 th Thursday Women’s Day; Tabernacle, South Seaville, NJ
August 2	Treasurer’s Meeting 9:30-11:30, Leadership Team Meeting 12-2 pm Need location. (Leadership Team Meeting includes all District Presidents)
October 18	GNJUWFaith Annual Fall Meeting, 9 am-2 pm Mission Resource Center, 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune, NJ 07753 RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by October 17 th .
Upcoming Events	Assembly 2026 (Indianapolis, IN) – May 15-17, 2026 NE Jurisdiction – 2028, April 11-3. No location yet. Register at nejuwfaith.org.

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GNJUWFaith 2025 Calendar & Upcoming Events

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Upcoming Events

Assembly in 2026 (Indianapolis, IN) - May 15-17, 2026

NE Jurisdiction – 2028 April 11-13 No location yet.

Register at nejuwfaith.org.

Retreat & Meeting Recordings

Visit GNJUWFaith website at www.gnjuwfaith.org,
GNJUWFaith EVENTS, Program Resources.

GNJUWFaith Resources and Actions

<https://tinyurl.com/ResourcesGNJUWF>

UWFaith National Events

<https://uwfaith.org/events/calendar/>

New Brand Resources

<https://umwmissionresources.org/>

United Women in Faith YouTube

<https://m.youtube.com/c/uwomenfaith>

UWFaith. In 1972, United Methodist Women first became the women's mission organization as part of The United Methodist Church's Board of Global Ministries. And in 2012, The United Methodist Church General Conference voted to make United Methodist Women's national policymaking body autonomous.

<https://uwfaith.org/who-we-are/our-history/>.

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United
Women
in Faith

GNJ UWFaith Calendar of Events 2026

November ?	Leadership Development Days via zoom (National)
January 10	Conference Leadership Development Event: 9 am - 12:00 pm Leadership Team Meeting, 12-2pm RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by Jan. 9 th . via zoom.
April 11	GNJUMW Annual Spring Meeting – 9:00-2:00 pm Need location. RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by April 9 th .
May 15 – May 17	Assembly in 2026 in Indianapolis, IN
June 6	Leadership Team Meeting Need location. RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by June 6 th . Gather at 9:30 a.m. Meeting from 10 a.m. to Noon.
July 17-19	Mission “u” Three Day School Centenary University, Hackettstown, NJ
July 23	South Seaville Camp Meeting 4 th Thursday Women’s Day; Tabernacle, South Seaville, NJ
August 1	Treasurer’s Meeting 9:30-11:30, Leadership Team Meeting 12-2 Need location.
October 17	GNJUMW Annual Fall Meeting, 9 am-2 pm Mission Resource Center, 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune, NJ 07753 RSVP to holly.cyrus@faa.gov by October 16 th .
Upcoming Events	Assembly in 2026



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

in Indianapolis, IN May 15-17, 2026.

Voices of Purpose

2025 Newsletter Deadlines & Distribution

Newsletter Issue	Deadline for	
	Articles	Distribution
Spring 2025 (January – March)	April 4, 2025	April 8, 2025
Summer 2025 (April – June)	July 4, 2025	July 8, 2025
Fall 2025 (July – September)	October 3, 2025	October 7, 2025
Winter 2025 (October – December)	January 3, 2026	January 7, 2026

Visit GNJUWF website for previous published newsletters: www.gnjuwfaith.org/news.



The Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith (GNJUWFaith) newsletter ***Voices of Purpose*** is a quarterly bulletin published and distributed to bring news and events of united women in faith and the religious services they embrace. Our “voices” can be heard in every corner of society from science and medicine to the economy, politics, and race, always through God’s grace.

We invite you to share your knowledge, experiences, and opinions with our readers. Don’t worry about writing skills for we have volunteer editors who would love the challenge. Please visit our website contact page to submit your presentation. We await your call!

www.gnjuwfaith.org



Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith

LEADERSHIP TEAM 2025

PRESIDENT

Holly Cyrus ('24)

VPRES/PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Virgil Williams ('28)

SECRETARY

Linda Wilson (27)

TREASURER

Carol Bloch ('25)

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT ADVISOR

Agnes Bockari ('28)

Membership, Nurture and OUTREACH CHAIR

Betty Sayner ('28)

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTIONS ADVOCATE

Open

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Open

STANDING RULES CHAIR

Grace Rapp

PHOTOGRAPHER

Lou Hyson ('27)

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Joyce Pratt ('27)

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES REP.

Cynthia Wilks-Mosely

LGBTQ Representative

Open

GNJUWF Website: www.gnjuwfaith.org

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

NOMINATIONS CHAIR

Open

CLASS OF 2025

Kathy Schulz

CLASS OF 2026

Rosa Williams

CLASS OF 2027

Jill Morrow

CLASS OF 2027

Deborah McDermott

CLASS OF 2028

Rebecca C. Grant

CLASS OF 2028

Marilyn Powell

CLASS OF 2028

Open

APPOINTED

CHARTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Chair: Sue Zahorbenski

Members: Leslie Bivins, Joyce Pratt
Carolyn Pendleton, Millie Grey
Mary Bland, Barbara Miller

Legacy Fund Committee

Chair: Marilyn Powell

Members: Open

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United
Women
in Faith

LEADERSHIP TEAM – 2024-2025

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DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

COASTAL PLAINS

CAPE ATLANTIC

Lou Hyson ('28)

CENTRAL

Debbie Champion ('25)

DELAWARE BAY

Staci Sheetz ('25)

METRO HIGHLANDS

MEADOWLANDS

Tracy Carroll ('25)

Tia Swanson ('25)

RARITAN SHORE

OPEN

SKYLANDS

Elizabeth (Liz) Steen ('26)

ELECTED BY OTHER GROUPS

KOREAN NETWORK PRESIDENT

Kyungmee Kim

KOREAN LANGUAGE COORDINATOR

OPEN

KOREAN LANGUAGE

OPEN

HISPANIC NETWORK PRESIDENT

OPEN

HISPANIC LANGUAGE COORDINATOR

OPEN

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Sara Joslin

OTHER LEADERSHIP TEAMS

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Susan Zahorbenski

DEAN MISSION "U"

Rev. Elizabeth Vaneekhoven (25)

ASSISTANT DEAN MISSION "U"

Rev. Bernadette Cataline

UMW NE JURISDICTION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Governance Committee for National UWFaith

Yvonne Bouknight

UMW NE JURISDICTION LEADERSHIP TEAM

Vice-President

Susan Zahorbenski

UMW NATIONAL DIRECTOR/SECRETARY

CEO

Sally Vonner

GNJUMC PRESIDING BISHOP

Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi

GNJ CONFERENCE UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH WEBSITE

www.gnjuwfaith.org

Revised: 8/2/25



United
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Social Action Resources

Greater New Jersey United Women in Faith Website

www.gnjumw.org.

National Human Trafficking Prevention Month

www.state.gov/national-human-trafficking-prevention-month/

New Jersey Assembly Bills Pending

<https://legiscan.com/NJ/pending/ssembly-state-local-government-committee/id/3085>.

New Jersey Legislature

List of all New Jersey legislators in alphabetical order showing, party, hose, and district. Legislators can also be found by municipality/city. Click on “Members” and then “Legislative Roster.” <https://njleg.state.nj.us/legislative-roster>.

United States House of Representatives

Directory of U.S. Representatives (also referred to as congressmen or congresswomen) showing district name, party office, phone, and committee assignment. <https://www.house.gov/representatives>.

United States Senate

Listing of all U.S. senators alphabetically by name, showing state, party, office room, and phone. <https://www.senate.gov/senators/>.

United Women in Faith Website

<https://uwfaith.org>.

United States Congress

Meeting sessions and links for House of Representatives and Senate and current bills search. <https://congress.gov>.

Social Action Quotes

To serve as a reminder of the power of individual action and the collective impact it can have on society, we share the following quote. It is hoped that it inspires you to act for a better world and to advocate for social justice and equality.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. When we go into action and confront our adversaries, we must be as armed with knowledge as they.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

