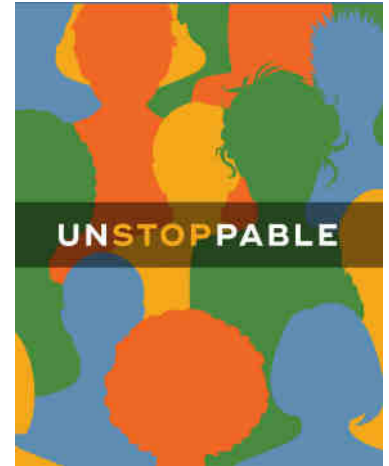




United Women in Faith

Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church

Genesis



Spring 2026, vol. 53 no. 1

FL conference Website: <https://flconfuwf.org>

UPDATES



Mission Giving Reached New Heights in 2025!

Thanks to generous donations, our pledge to mission surpassed our goal of \$150,000 and reached \$163,508 supporting our commitment to women, children and youth.



Leadership Development Days January 23-25

District and Conference leaders gathered together for training, planning and sharing ideas for 2026 at Warren Willis Camp and Conference Center. Jane Darling and Dr. Nora Hernandez Hendrix, led the women by highlighting our history, National By Laws and Handbook, reviewing our Conference Standing Rules and Policies, and finalizing our Goals for 2026-2027. Training for all District leaders was also provided by Conference leaders. Mission giving which included proceeds from an auction, GTM cards, Sale of name badges and more totaled \$ 886.50.



Children's Week in Tallahassee February 22-24

United Women in Faith gathered together along with community partners including Florida Impact, the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the AME church, to fulfill that part of our Vision to put love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth and to influence, and impact local communities. Planning Committee members were Gwen Dixon, registrar, Edith Zewadski-Bricker, as on-site liaison, and Pam Davis, Children's Week 2026 liaison, along with Rev. Dr. Sharon Austin, East Central District Superintendent, and Florida Impact staff, Kim Johnson and Asheena Moses.



How to Increase Membership

We know women live out their faith in many different ways. That's why there are three core pathways for involvement both in person and digital. As you seek new members, consider what she will find most engaging as a pathway. Then help connect her to activities within that pathway as a relevant point of entry to our organization.



INSPIRE

She can come as she is and let her spirit be renewed.

- Join our **Soul Care Community Space** on UWFaith Digital
- Receive **Thrive** e-newsletters with spiritual guidance and self-care tools
- Attend or host **Sister Circles**—small, intentional gatherings rooted in care, connection, and shared reflection
- Listen to **Faith Talks**, and hear inspiring stories of love in action

President's Message



Greetings and Best Wishes from Your Florida Conference UW Faith President

I am so honored to have been elected to serve you for the next two years. We have a vibrant, active, motivated membership, and I hope that you will take advantage of all of the programs and opportunities available to you at the local unit, district, conference, and national levels.

We are going to be focusing on growing our membership and re-energizing those who have become disengaged. I hope that each of us takes an active role in reaching out to those who are currently not a part of our organization. The world is hurting right now and United Women in Faith gives us an effective vehicle to do something positive about it. There is so much to offer in terms of spiritual growth and comfort; active engagement in social justice; ministries to help women, children and youth across the world; educational enrichment; and beautiful, supportive sisterhood.

Please know that you matter, and that together we can make a difference in helping to bring God's kin-dom on earth.

With love and appreciation,

Nora Hernández Hendrix





MISSION u 2026

In Person:

When: Friday, July 17-Sunday, July 19

Where: The Westin Lake Mary, Orlando North

Virtual:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, July 21, 23, 28, 30

6:30 - 9:00 p.m. Zoom

Please note that you must book your hotel room separately, no later than **June 17, 2026**. A link for hotel reservations will be included in your confirmation email.



Come join us for the upcoming **Mission u 2026**. Our adult study is "**A Deep Knowing: Experiencing Emmanuel of Through Part of Our Lives**". Emmanuel means "**God with us**" and this mission study helps us to reflect on biblical stories and personal connections as we walk the walk of faith. In particular, the study addresses what it is to walk this walk when the people of God face adversity.

Our Conference will also offer children and youth studies on this theme of "**Experiencing Emmanuel**". In addition, there are numerous activities to participate in with your community of sisters: line dancing, Ubuntu-origami, Reading Program book discussion and spiritual engaging music.

Come connect with your UWFaith community and as we deepen our faith and journey onward to love in action.

Lorraine Mayfield-Brown, Dean, Mission u

Adult Study Leaders:

Terry Fitzgerald

Elaine Henderson

Debbie Bracewell

Rev. Dr. Tino Espinoza

Dr. Judith Pierre-Okerson, Haitian Creole

Paulette Monroe, Youth Study Leader

Jackie Brooks, Children's Study Leader

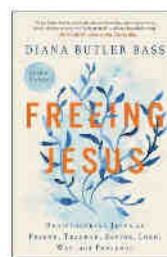
Rev. Tiffany McCall, Virtual Study Leader

Go to our website for full bios of these leaders.

<https://flconfuwf.org>

Registration is now open at this website:

Event url: <https://na.eventscloud.com/871577>



One Book,
One Conference

Join the discussion at Mission u!

Some of the electives this year will be focused on the Reading Program. We have chosen *Freeing Jesus: Rediscovering Jesus as Friend, Teacher, Savior, Lord, Way, and Presence* by Diana Butler Bass as the book we will explore. It's available on Bookshop.org, Amazon and Barnes & Noble, but don't forget to check out your local bookstore or your public library.



Haitian Convocation

United
Women
in Faith

Deaconess Ruth Pierre Jean Pierre, Convocation Planner tells us how we have influenced others and help us grow in our understanding and acceptance of those immigrants who have come here to have a better life experience and to continue to help their communities.



INFLUENCE

She can step up and lead with courage, compassion, and faith.

- Attend **Leadership Development experiences**
- Lead or join in **virtual or in-person groups** that explore your **personal or professional development**
- Facilitate **Mission u** justice-centered studies that inspire change and community
- Access **digital learning courses and workshops** to sharpen skills and grow your voice in faith-led spaces

15th Annual Haitian Convocation on March 14, 2026 was held at the First United Methodist Church in Winter Park. This was a last minute change due to safety issues at our original venue. Rev. Dr. Sharon Austin came to our rescue and connected us with Winter Park who turned out to be truly welcoming and offered us a level of hospitality we have never experienced in the past 14 years! Over 200 people attended!!!

We were honored by the presence of many leaders including:

- Derrick Scott III, Florida Conference Co-Lay Leader
- Rev. Dr. Sharon Austin, Superintendent, East Central District
- Rev. Vidaliz Lopez, Superintendent, South East District
- Rev. Pierre L. Exantus, Chair of the Haitian Committee on Ministries
- Molly McEntire, Director of Connectional and Missional Ministry

Our guest speaker, Grace Emmanuelle Okerson, delivered an extraordinary message. She beautifully connected this year's theme, "*Inspire, Influence, Impact*," from Matthew 5:13-16, with the Book of Esther, which was the biblical competition text. She demonstrated how each part of Esther aligns with each segment of the theme and its scripture.

Grace emphasized the idea of "**passing it on**," a spiritual heritage from mother to daughter, in honor of our foremothers in United Women in Faith. She reminded us that we must inspire, influence, and impact others without waiting for someone else to do what God has called us to do. She concluded with these powerful words:

"My hope and prayer for this community, is that we embrace our role as daughters, remembering that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. As believers, we are called to inspire others with our faith, influence others by being a visible and guiding light, and impact the world positively."

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Florida Conference United Women in Faith for their support and prayers. Special thanks to Rev. Sharon Austin for her financial support and her unwavering commitment to the Haitian community and the Haitian Convocation. Her district generously provided bags and notebooks with the event name. We collected **\$690.00** for Mission Giving. We also thank all the English-speaking sisters who supported the Convocation with their presence.

The **16th Haitian Convocation** will take place on **March 13, 2027**. Stay tuned for the location.



IMPACT

She can show up for justice, putting faith into action to help change the world.

- Stand with us in racial and climate **justice and advocacy campaigns**
- Be inspired by **Voices From the Field**, hearing directly from women leading change
- Roll up your sleeves in **local service projects** or partner with national ministries to make a difference
- Participate in the **Reading Program** to explore justice topics

Save the Date — July 26, 2025



United Women in Faith

Virtual Book Review

THE COLOR OF COMPROMISE:

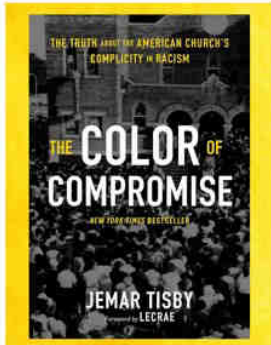
The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism

By Jemar Tisby

About the Book

The Color of Compromise is not a call to shame or a platform to blame White evangelical Christians. Rather, it is a call from a place of love and desire to fight for a more racially unified church that no longer compromises what the Bible teaches about human dignity and equality, and a call that challenges Black and White Christians alike to stand up now and begin implementing change. Here, Tisby outlines concrete ways to bring about a more equitable and inclusive environment among God's people - starting today.

CATEGORY: SOCIAL ACTION



Faith, Hope, and Love in Social Action

Edith Zewadski-Bricker, Florida Conference Social Action Liaison

Feeling overwhelmed ...by passwords, by IRS forms, by doctor appointments, and, of course, by daily news reports of social injustice? One of the speakers at our recent United Women in Faith's Children's Week Legislative Advocacy Training, said repeatedly, "Don't be overwhelmed." By joining in the social action through United Women in Faith you'll find a way to narrow your focus, and a safe, Jesus-oriented path to navigate the issues of today. Tell the women and youth in your circle of influence to join with us. The "safe, Jesus-oriented" path may just win them over to UWFaith!

Has everyone in your unit received a copy of the Charter for Racial Justice? Have you completed the Charter Local Certification form found on our website, flconfuwf.org and submitted it to your District President?

Our social action priorities for the next four years are Climate Justice and Ending Mass Incarceration & Criminalization of Communities of Color. To learn more and share with others, or go to <https://uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/> And, follow the monthly **Faith Talks**. To hear the recent program, "There is Still Hope" go to https://youtu.be/VC_NFiKxLKU?si=LX2NLnva1HmyJKDG

Remember just having a conversation with a neighbor can be an act of social action. With Jesus as our guide, let us commit to social justice for ALL including immigrants consumed by fear; for those living in war-torn countries; for God's people and God's creation impacted by climate change; for people of color experiencing insidious racism; and, of course, for women, youth and children here and around the world.

Check out these shorts:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/-NfetOVwKIM?si=l3TwznTM5ktdS7JQ>

[https://youtube.com/shorts/ixfY1DJe3bo?](https://youtube.com/shorts/ixfY1DJe3bo?si=kpYLIQSPoCwd9DfR)

[si=kpYLIQSPoCwd9DfR](https://youtube.com/shorts/ixfY1DJe3bo?si=kpYLIQSPoCwd9DfR)



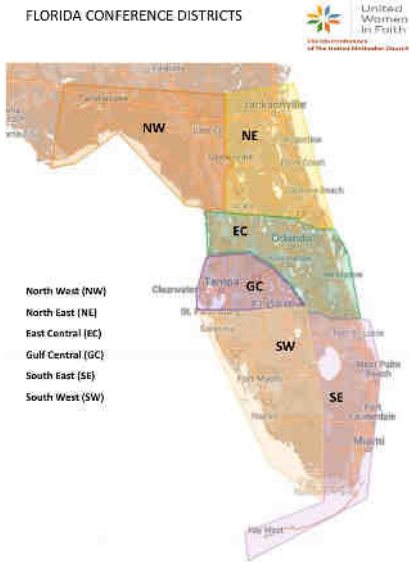
Do you know your District and Conference Leaders?

Our Florida Conference is made up of **SIX Districts** as shown in the map below. District Presidents include the following:

- Janet Blume—East Central
- Shirley Erwin—Gulf Central
- Mary Negrón—North East
- Dr. Gwendolyn Dixon—North West
- H. Leigh Toney—South East
- Beverly Emonds—South West

The Conference Leadership Team is made up of all District Presidents and 13 other leaders that include the following:

- Dr. Nora Hernandez Hendrix—President
- Veta Daley—Vice President
- Janie McMillan—Secretary
- Natacha Etienne Joseph—Treasurer
- Mary Van Tol—Communications Coordinator
- Deborah Jenkins- Bailey—Chair CON
- Kerlyne Charles-Jeune—Haitian Outreach Coordinator
- Christine Schneidman—Rising Women Liaison
- Pam Davis—Legacy Liaison
- Edith Zewadski-Bricker—Social Action Liaison
- Lorraine Mayfield-Brown—Dean, Mission u
- Jane Darling— Secretary SEJ
- Mae Griner—Program Advisory Group (National)



Committee On Nominations

Class of 2027, Chair, Deborah C. Jenkins-Bailey - South East **Contact: dcjenkins@att.net**

- Class of 2026 Paulette Monroe - East Central
- Class of 2028 Marie Sharpe - South East
- Class of 2028 Julie Ramga - Gulf Central
- Class of 2029 Shari Gillis - Gulf Central
- Class of 2029 Dreena Robinson - South East