



United
Women
in Faith

Florida Conference
of The United Methodist Church

Fall 2025, vol.52 no. 2

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

Genesis

Purpose

United Women in Faith is a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

President:

Linda Parrish
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Paulette Monroe
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Haitian Language Coordinator

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"Inspire, Influence, Impact."
52nd ANNUAL MEETING

General Secretary/CEO
United Women in Faith
Sally Verner
Guest Speaker

November 8, 2025
10:00 A.M.—3:00 P.M.
\$25.00 includes lunch

Bishop Tom Berlin
Special Greetings

Register now by clicking the link below:
<https://52ndCAMFconfUWfaithNov82025.eventbrite.com>

You are the salt of the earth ... You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:13-16

First United Methodist Church
Plant City
303 N Evers Street
Plant City, FL 33563

Registration Closes October 31st

All are welcome to attend the 52nd Conference Annual Meeting ~ "Inspire, Influence, Impact"

First Plant City United Methodist Church,

303 N Evers Street, Plant City, FL 33563

Saturday, November 9, 2024

9:00 am—Registration

9:45 am - 3:00 pm—Program

\$25.00 lunch included

Register on Eventbrite by October 31, 2025

<https://52ndCAMFconfUWfaithNov82025.eventbrite.com>



Pledge Due Dates

UNITS:

3rd Quarter: October 5

4th Quarter: December 5

DISTRICTS:

3rd Quarter: October 10

4th Quarter: December 15

SHARE the LOVE!



Give a **Love Offering** in honor of your District or Florida Conference United Women in Faith. You can bring it to your District Annual Meeting, Conference Annual Meeting, or send it to your district treasurer. Encourage your unit to do the same. All offerings collected will support our Mission Giving projects at home and abroad.

District Secretary



Reminder!

Information to be submitted to Conference Secretary by **November 1, 2025**.

- ◆ List of your 2026 Slate of officers and coordinators along with their contact information (address, email, phone).
- ◆ Annual Meeting Minutes
- ◆ List of Active Units



President Linda Parrish

Random Thoughts

"Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love."

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Where is your loyalty? Family? Church? School? Political Party? Sports Team? Favorite Charity? United Women in Faith?

No matter where our earthly loyalty lies, our primary loyalty lies with Jesus Christ. I sincerely hope that all you do is based on this. As it says in **Matthew 6:21**: *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

These are really trying times for most of the world. It's easy to hide and pretend that all is well, and while those of us reading this probably don't have the power or means to change government policies, we can try to live out the words of the song *"Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me."*

We can spend time with those who are lonely, be kind to those who disagree with us, and generous to those in need.

I hope that many of you will be able to join our **Racial Justice Zoom event on Oct. 21**. **Nicole Leon** will speak about immigration issues. Look for the **flyer** and **registration information on page 5**.

I also hope to see many of you at our **Conference Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 8th**. Our planning team is especially excited to welcome **Sally Vonner**, the CEO and General Secretary of United Women in Faith. **Bishop Berlin** will be joining us for the morning session. The flyer and information are located on the cover of this newsletter. Feel free to share it with your members as the women of **First Plant City United Methodist Church Unit** are excited to host us and provide refreshments as you arrive!

Linda



For questions about this newsletter, or to subscribe or unsubscribe: contact the editor at maryvantol.uwf@gmail.com

Paulette Monroe, Chair

Committee on Nominations



This has been a productive year. As I look back and reflect on the past months, I am reminded of the many individuals who willingly stepped forward and said, “Count Me In.” Their readiness to accept unknown challenges continues to serve as a reminder of what the Lord asks of us: to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

The Committee on Nominations truly embodies these principles. Serving on this committee has been both challenging and exciting, offering the unique opportunity to connect with women from across the conference. Throughout this process, I have made new friends, engaged in meaningful conversations, and welcomed many as leaders of United Women in Faith. Despite the difficulties posed by disaffiliation and the realignment of districts, which have significantly changed the structure of our organization, the committee and I are proud to share that we have successfully filled all officer positions for the 2026-2028 term. Together, we have overcome these challenges and ensured strong leadership for the future.

The Committee on Nominations will continue to build up a talent bank of potential leaders. We have a full slate of nominees who will be presented for election on November 8, 2025, at First Church Plant City, Florida.

2026-28 Slate of Nominees

President: Dr. Nora Hernandez-Hendrix

Vice President: Veta Daley

Secretary: Janie McMillan

Treasurer: Natacha Etienne Joseph

Communication Coordinator: Mary Van Tol

Social Action: Edith Zewadski-Bricker

Committee on Nominations: Class 2029:

Dreena Robinson and Shari Gillis

Haitian Language: Kerlyne Charles-Jeune

While nominations from the floor will be considered, note that all nominations must be submitted no later than two weeks prior to November 8, 2025, should you wish to nominate someone. The final deadline for submitting additional names is October 25, 2025. Any names received after this date will not be accepted for consideration.

Email your nominee to:
paulette_monroe@yahoo.com

Social Action Liaison
Ann Eachus



Know Your Rights Racial Justice Event

7 pm October 21

Immigration raids are no longer barred in ‘sensitive locations’ such as schools, health care facilities *and houses of worship*. What would your church do if law enforcement came to your church campus?

Learn more about this and other immigration issues from **Nicole Leon of the Florida Immigration Law and Justice Center**. She will be the speaker at our Racial Justice Event on **Zoom on October 21 at 7 pm**. Florida ILJ has UMC roots. It was formerly known as Florida Justice For Our Neighbors. Save the date now. Invite your pastor and church office staff to join us. **See registration on page 5.**



The Florida Conference United Women in Faith

encourages YOU to come to Children's Week 2026 in Tallahassee!

Mark your calendars for **February 22-27** for a special week of educational events, networking activities, and advocacy opportunities that you won't want to miss.

The Annual Celebration of the **Hands artwork** decorating the Rotunda must be mailed to Tallahassee by **February 6, 2026**.

For more information go to <https://childrensweek.org/>

Or email:

Pam Davis, pameladavis.umw@gmail.com



Florida Conference United Women in Faith

Racial Justice Event

October 21, 2025 7:00 pm on ZOOM

Know Your Rights

What should you do

If ICE comes to your church?

If ICE comes to your home?

If you see immigration officers nearby?

Learn from speaker

Nicole Leon

Executive Director

Florida Immigration Law & Justice Center

Click below or copy and paste link (in browser):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/8DP09oDITP6Z15qXy7G7zg#/registration>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.





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SAVE THE DATE

July 17-19 for In Person

July 21, 23, 28, 30 6:30 PM on Zoom

Mission u 2026: Experiencing Emmanuel



Join us at **Mission u** as we explore the theme, Experiencing Emmanuel. Mission u participants will study the times in the Bible when people experienced Emmanuel, or "God with us." How do we discern God's presence and call on our lives in times of joy and in times of sadness, fear, or anxiety? What can we learn from these Emmanuel encounters in the Bible to help inform our discernment to faith, hope, and love in action?

Mission u 2026 offers three exciting curricula on this theme. Order your copy at: uwfaithresources.org



Adult Curriculum: *A Deep Knowing: Experiencing Emmanuel Through Every Part of Our Lives*

This curriculum is designed to help participants take a step back and a closer look at the various ways we see Emmanuel within and around biblical stories. What can it look like to walk with God as people who face adversity, issues of justice, and a heritage of relational and spiritual connections? This curriculum encourages participants to seek out and name the experiences of Emmanuel from biblical times to our present day as we look toward our future in faith.



Youth Curriculum: *God With Us: Experiencing God's Presence in Our Lives*

This curriculum invites youth to wonder about where and how God is present in their lives and what that means. *God With Us* breaks down Biblical characters and stories to explore how God is present in extraordinary and ordinary lives. Throughout, youth will explore how they can encounter God in suffering and tough times, as well as in resistance and our spiritual lineage. By the end, youth will be affirmed and learn the importance of being their authentic, God-created selves.



Children's Curriculum: *Experiencing Emmanuel*

The *Experiencing Emmanuel* children's curriculum helps children give voice to the sacred. Faith is a lifelong journey of seeking and naming the presence of God in our lives. Scripture shows us how God's people came to know God and each other—and how those stories shaped their identity. As we interpret these stories, our sense of self and community is formed. This curriculum invites children into that journey and offers a path for children and their mentors to explore faith together, building vocabulary, confidence, and a deeper awareness of God's presence in their lives.



Together we are Building Our Legacy!

Suggestions for Promoting The Legacy Endowment Fund and Engaging Every Member

**Please share this idea sheet with your entire Mission Team and ask that they help pass it along to their Districts and Local Units!*

At Annual Meetings:

- **Ask for podium time during meeting to give a Legacy report (or screen time if a virtual meeting)**
 - Make report uplifting and lively. You may want to ask other members of your Legacy Team to report with you.
 - Give the updated amount donated to Legacy by your conference since inception and celebrate. Then give total given by your conference in 2025 – celebrate how close you are to making your 2025 giving goal and encourage gifts to make or surpass your goal.
 - Give total of Endowment and celebrate how close we are to the goal of \$60 mill.
 - Promote the three giving categories (focus mostly on planned gifts this year)
 - *Legacy Builders* monthly giving.
 - *Friends of Legacy* major gift pledges
 - *1869 Society* planned gifts (mention planned giving pages on United Women in Faith website)
 - You may want to ask members to stand who give in each of the above categories so that they can be recognized and thanked.
 - **Ask if you can hold an Estate Planning Workshop as part of Annual Meeting (can present yourself with PowerPoint slides provided by National Office, National Office staff could Zoom in to present it, or staff may be able to visit your conference to give workshop in person)**
 - Mention that there will be a Legacy Banquet at Assembly next year and that there will be Legacy Awards given to the conference that holds the most Estate Planning Workshops, Closes the most Planned Gifts with LOI, and most Legacy Builders.
 - Have a time when you ask for donations to The Legacy Endowment Fund (use attached slide with QR code and text-to-give information)
 - If you have not done so yet, play the Giving Jeopardy game as a group (PowerPoint version available upon request)
 - Invite a National Office Development Staff member to visit your meeting and speak.
 - Refer to a Legacy Response article and pass out copies
 - Ask a respected member to give a short testimony on why she gives to The Legacy Endowment Fund or show optional donor video
 - If your conference has an E & I Coordinator, consider reporting together so that she can promote the importance of Mission Giving as well.

United Women in Faith Legacy Fun-Raising Events:

Bake Sale: Organize a bake sale where volunteers bake and sell homemade treats like cookies, cupcakes, and brownies. Consider adding a theme or specialty items to attract more customers.

Garage Sale: Gather donations of gently used items from and host a garage sale. Promote the sale through social media, community bulletin boards, and local newspapers.

Cook-Off Competition: Organize a cooking or baking competition where participants showcase their culinary skills. Charge an entry fee for contestants and sell tickets for spectators to taste and vote for their favorite dishes.

Movie Night Fundraiser: Host a movie night screening at a local venue or outdoors. Sell tickets that include snacks and beverages, and consider partnering with a business for sponsorships or donations.

Themed Dinner Party: Organize a themed dinner party or potluck where guests contribute dishes based on a specific theme (e.g., Italian night, BBQ bash). Charge an entry fee and include entertainment or activities related to the theme.

Board Game Tournament: Organize a board game tournament with various games for participants to compete in. Charge an entry fee or accept donations, and provide prizes for the winners.

Gardening Workshop: Offer gardening workshops or plant sales where participants learn about gardening techniques, plant care, and sustainable practices. Sell plants, seeds, or gardening kits as part of the fundraiser.

Pet Photo Contest: Organize a pet photo contest where pet owners submit photos of their furry friends. Charge an entry fee and invite the community to vote for their favorite photos. Award prizes to the winners.



faith

action

sisterhood



Registration is officially open for **Assembly 2026**, happening **May 15-17, 2026**, in Indianapolis, Indiana - and you won't want to miss this powerful gathering of women of faith from across the county!

More information and the link to register are available at uwfaith.org/assembly. **Early registration ends Nov. 30.**

Here is a booking link that goes directly to the block of rooms for the Florida Conference:

<https://book.passkey.com/go/UWF2026Florida>

The rooms are at the Sheraton City Centre. The Florida Conference has set aside 5 rooms for the night of the 13th and 30 rooms for the nights of the 14th - 16th, with check out on the 17th. As a reminder, the deadline to book these rooms is December 1st, 2025. Up to 4 people can share a room. Rooms cost \$179 + tax per night. There will be shuttle service between this hotel and the convention center.

Those of you that will be elected as a conference officer, including district presidents, will receive special instructions after the annual meeting on Nov. 8.



2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 23-25	LDD	Warren Willis Conference and Camp Center (Leadership Development Days-District Officer training)
February 22-27	Children’s Week	Tallahassee
March 14	Haitian Convocation	Emmanuel Haitian, Orlando
March 23	United Women in Faith “Day of Giving”	
May 15-17	Assembly 2026 United Women in Faith	Indianapolis, IN
June 4-6	Florida UMC Annual Conference	Lakeland
July 17-19	Mission u	Westin Lake Mary Hotel, Orlando North
July 21, 23,28,30	Virtual Mission u (Four 2 hour sessions)	Zoom
Sept. (TBD)	Social Action/Racial Justice Event	Zoom
Nov. (TBD)	53rd Conference Annual Meeting	TBD

“Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep His promise”.

Hebrews 10:25

Happy Autumn

