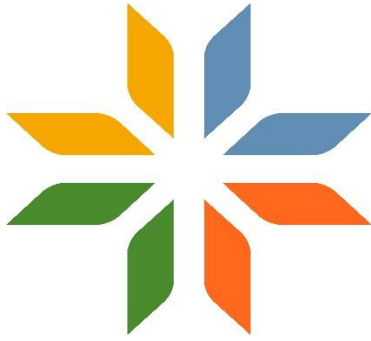




NoCo Connection

United Women in Faith
Northern Colorado

Winter 2025 District Newsletter

Issues with/Suggestions for the Newsletter or Links?
Call 970-219-6747 or email makerttula@gmail.com

A Message from our President

Mary Ann Watson
Longmont, Colorado
719-684-3857 (cell)
maw22744@gmail.com



In this season of Giving Thanks, I am once again reminded of how thankful I am for all the women in leadership positions in our local churches. Though I know you sometimes feel alone, please realize that you and your local units are the backbone of the United Women in Faith nationwide. Without each local unit supporting each other, praying for our projects and raising/sharing funds for the projects, UWFaith would not be.

Mark your calendars! To help people in our local units, the District Leadership Team will have a **Leadership Focused Day, Jan. 31, 2026 on Zoom**. (See registration form in this newsletter.) You are all leaders in some way. We will share many things "mission" such as projects that our money supports plus local projects that our district units work directly with. There will be breakout groups for a few specific elected positions, but the focus is on each member of UWFaith - even helping you plan your "elevator speech" for telling others about UWFaith.

You don't have to be an elected leader to attend, **just a person interested in sharing God's love by being in mission with women and children.**

Other dates to mark on your calendar for 2026:

April 25, NoCo District Spiritual Day Together, in-person

May 14-17, National Assembly, Indianapolis, IN

Sept. 19, NoCo District Annual Gathering

Oct. 2-3, Conference Annual Gathering, Helena, Montana

Feb. 1, 8 and March 1, 8, Mission u (Summer Mission u dates TBD)

Blessings to all as we experience this holiday season,

Mary Ann Watson



NoCo District Book Discussions

Zoom Link

The Northern Colorado United Women in Faith Zoom Book Club meets at 7:00 PM on the **third** Thursday of each month. Click on the button to join or use the Meeting ID: 882 9066 6737 and Passcode: 302893 to join.

Listen to a Book

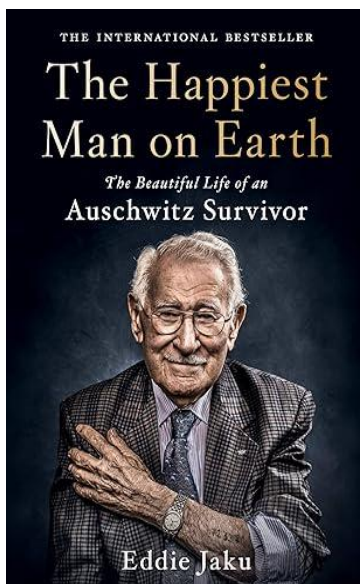
Thursday, December 18, at 7:00 pm

No need to read! Just join the Zoom meeting. Jan Spitler will be reading and showing "The Good for Nothing Tree" which is a children's book by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. Inspired by the parable of the Barren Fig Tree, the story reminds us that with patience, care, and love, we can grow into something special.

See Jan Spitler's article below.



Thursday, January 15, at 7:00 pm



The book for January is "The Happiest Man on Earth" by Eddie Jaku.

In *The Happiest Man on Earth*, Eddie Jaku recounts his remarkable life story of persevering through the horrors of the Holocaust and World War II. After the war, Jaku rebuilt his life in Australia, emphasizing the power of resilience, hope, and compassion. He ultimately found fulfillment in sharing his story to spread messages of joy, acceptance, and human kindness over hostility. Jaku's uplifting narrative shows that small gestures of goodwill can create profound impact.

See Jan Spitler's article below.

January 31, 2026 NoCo Leadership Day: Mapping Our Way Forward

On January 31st, we will gather on Zoom to celebrate the leaders in all of us. We will be "Mapping our Way Forward." We will look at our past and how we want to move into the future. There will be stories, sharing of ideas to expand groups, learning what we do well and planning where we wish to head as a group. There will be speakers on topics relevant to all of us.

We are asking you to bring a story to share from your unit of something special you have done to make your unit better.

You will hear from our district officers about what they can do to help your units.

There is no cost for this event, however, we will take an offering towards our pledge to Conference.

The gathering opens for visiting at 8:30 am and the fun will begin at 9 am.

While most will be done at 12:30, Treasurers will continue into the afternoon.

The registration form is in below and will be attached to the newsletter email.

Come and join us and invite your friends!

Northern Colorado United Women in Faith Leadership Day: Mapping Our Way Forward Registration Form

Saturday, January 31, 2026

Via Zoom, 8:30 am to 12:30 pm

Treasurers will continue in the afternoon

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Home church _____

What you want to know more about _____

This event is for all UWFaith women. Invite your friends to join us!

Please return to Lora Fulton at:

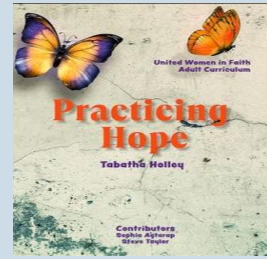
fultonhaus@comcast.net

OR 1710 Dogwood Ct, Broomfield, CO 80020

Questions? Call Lora at (303) 439-2129

Registration deadline: Monday, January 26th.

Mission u February 1, 8, & 22 and March 1



Please add the dates for the 2026 *Practicing Hope* Winter Mission u to your calendars. We'll be meeting by Zoom on Feb. 1, 8, 22 and March 1. The sessions will be led by our study leaders: Rev. J.R. Atkins, Sandy Barton, and Rev. Araceli Berdugo. Kathryn Witte continues as dean, and our very own Pattie Klein from the Estes Park UW Faith unit is our assistant dean!

Also note that the summer 2026 Mission u study is *Experiencing Emmanuel*. Kathryn and Pattie are hoping to find study leaders and hosts for a LIVE study. If you are interested in collaborating, please contact Kathryn at kathrynwitte75@yahoo.com



Assembly May 15–17, 2026 Indianapolis, Indiana

Assembly
Website

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

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

Powerful Worships: 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.

To Do List

Send in Your 2026 Leadership Team Information

Send Connie Takamine (ctakamine@msn.com) the names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers for all those who will be holding positions in your unit in 2026.

Send in the Lists of 2025 Reading Program Participants

By the end of the first week in January, Jan Spitler (janaspitler@gmail.com) needs the names for your members who have completed each Reading Program plan. See Jan Spitler's article below for more information. Not sure what is required for each plan? Go to [United Women in Faith - Reading Program](https://uwfaithresources.org/prodlist.cfm?catID=2178) to find all you need to know. If that link doesn't work, copy and paste <https://uwfaithresources.org/prodlist.cfm?catID=2178>.

Existing Member Registration

Create an account to gain easy access to sisterhood experiences, stories, and quick links to resources on the United Women in Faith Members & Leaders Portal. This also serves to have you show up in the count of members.

**Just Ctrl-Click
Here**

Order the Prayer and Program Bundle

United Women in Faith is offering a bundle of the 2026 Daily Prayer Guide and the 2026 Program Resource book for \$28, plus shipping; the full retail price is nearly \$35, plus shipping, so this is a savings, **but only for a limited time**. To order visit www.uwfaithresources.org and the bundle is the first item listed on the page. You can order the print or the digital bundle. How do you use your Daily Prayer Guide and Program Resource book throughout the year? We would love to hear from you about how these materials help you to share the message of United Women in Faith.

**Order the Print
Bundle**

Gather Information

Ask for information about the NoCo District leadership positions that need to be filled. Doing this does not mean you are offering to take a position, just getting an idea of what the positions entail.

Contact Jan Dillie

303-453-0484

dillie69@msn.com

Leadership Messages

Vice President

Lora Fulton

Church: Broomfield United Methodist

(303) 439-2129

fultonhaus@comcast.net



Our Northern Colorado District gathering was a great event. Thank you to all 40 who attended. A huge thank you to the women at Longs Peak UMC for hosting! The speaker, Brenda Mehos, did a very interesting presentation about what is happening in Gaza and Isreal and the ways we might help. Officers were elected and installed, the budget for 2026 was approved and the Memorial service was very touching. A great way to celebrate our first year as a district.

Secretary

Connie Takamine

Church: First UMC of Boulder

(303) 554-9785

ctakamine@msn.com



We are in the season of the year where address lists become very important. It is a time that we reconnect with friends and family through cards and

letters. Address lists are very important year round for United Women in Faith. Our District maintains a directory to help keep our members connected. We need your help to create the 2026 directory. Please send the contact information for your unit's leadership team to Connie Takamine, Secretary of the District, as soon as possible. We would like addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses.

A directory is difficult to keep current and there are constant changes. It is important that each unit maintain some sort of membership contact list so you can communicate with each other. I just found that it is important to perhaps have it both online and a hard copy. My Christmas card list recently just disappeared. The heading is there, but there is no information! I have two new kittens who love to get onto my keyboard and I think they must have done something.

The District will compile all the information and each unit will be sent a PDF copy and a hard copy. The directory can be shared with your entire unit. However, be careful with sharing the information beyond your unit. There are many scammers trying to get information.

Our Purpose is to be a Community of women and to develop a creative, supportive fellowship, so the District Directory is an important part of that. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Treasurer's Tips and Topics

Laurel Kubin

Church: Christ UMC, Fort Collins

(970) 686-0544

laurelkubin@gmail.com



Financial resources hold extra meaning to those who don't have a lot to live on. We all know what it's like to pay for food, housing, utilities, insurance and other costs that have been rising faster and faster recently. Just imagine what it would

be like to have income that in no way stretches to cover those basic needs. Perhaps you're experiencing that feeling yourself.

That's where your generosity to the missions of United Methodist Women in Faith is very much appreciated. The funds go to support local and global missions. When you pay your pledge, share through your World Thank Offering, and give a Gift in Memory or a Gift to Mission, you are helping others meet their basic needs.

Local treasurers, if you have not already sent your remittances, please send them as soon as possible so that I'll receive them no later than December 10. Please include your 2025 World Thank Offering.

We've nearly met our District's Pledge to Mission. If you have extra to send here at the end of the year, be assured it will be appreciated.

Blessings to all for your generosity and kindness.

Membership Nurture & Outreach

Margaret Hotze

Church: First UMC of Fort Collins

(970) 223-8539

margarethotze.umw@gmail.com



At this time when I'm thinking of Christmas shopping, it comes to mind that our organization is a gift to us. It's a gift of community, working with others, and sharing life with friends who become like family, a gift to be able to share our strengths as well as our vulnerabilities with our sisters in faith. United Women in Faith is a gift as it enables us to grow in knowledge and faith through our Reading Program, our studies, and our small groups. It's a gift that enables us to participate in mission locally as well as mission around the world. It's a gift that helps us grow spiritually as well as in our knowledge of the world. It's truly a gift of community!

So, ---do you enjoy being a United Woman in Faith? Has your fellowship increased your happiness? Are you learning new things about your community and the world, and are you participating in mission giving locally and beyond? Are you enriched by our fellowship as well as by our work?

As we look towards a new year, may we remember how much it means for us to be a part of this great organization. May God give us eyes to see others who would also enjoy the gift of our fellowship, our learning, and our support of local and worldwide mission. We are blessed to be a blessing! May we be a gift to our churches, our communities, and the world.

Blessings to you! We look forward to all the gifts of the season.

Social Justice & Action

Aricia Shaffer, Co-Coordinator

Church: Broomfield United Methodist

(720) 629-5863

aricialafrance@gmail.com



Nancy Gulley, Co-Coordinator

Church: Broomfield United Methodist

(303) 954-9587

jngulley@comcast.net

Finding Hope in a Divided World:

It's hard not to feel weary sometimes. The world can seem so divided, so loud, so far from kindness. But even in the confusion, God remains steady. Jesus showed us that hope isn't found in power or noise, but in quiet acts of love—listening, forgiving, feeding, praying.

To be in the world but not of it means holding onto that peace that comes from knowing who we belong to. The Holy Spirit wraps around us when we pause

long enough to feel it, reminding us that we are never alone, even when things feel dark.

Caring for ourselves as sacred beings is part of our calling. We rest, we pray, we tend to our bodies and our spirits—not as escape, but as preparation. Only when we're filled can we pour out compassion for others.

So we keep showing up with gentle courage. We choose to see the good. We speak kindness into hard places. We remember that light doesn't need to shout—it only needs to shine.

Finding Opportunity:

Our world is suffering and as we try to help, it can feel like we're up against a tidal wave. Please know you DO make a difference. We have been given an opportunity to build community. We can feed a hungry neighbor, donate money to a food bank, help a new mom with diapers and formula. It is life changing - not only nurturing the body, but providing solace to the spirit. Even if - perhaps most especially if - you're helping one person by listening and reaching out, you are turning that tide and bringing hope and comfort.

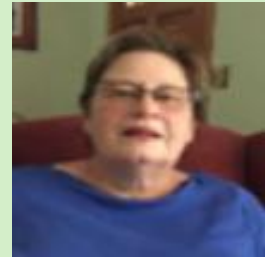
Spiritual Growth

Cheryl Runyon

Church: Mountain View UMC, Boulder

(303) 494-0434

cheryl.runyon@comcast.net



I wish you all the best Advent and Christmas season ever. If you receive a 2026 calendar under the tree, or from a Secret Santa, please add these dates to your fresh, new calendar.

On Jan. 31, the Northern Colorado District will hold its Leadership Development meeting via Zoom. I will plan a breakout session with unit Spiritual Growth coordinators.

On April 25, the district will hold its second SOUL Care Retreat. I'll be working with Lora Fulton, our Vice President, and our other district officers, to plan the retreat. We'll provide updates regarding location and exact times. If you have suggestions/thoughts/want to 'volunteer' your church or another location, that would be GREAT!!!

The Northern Colorado District Annual Gathering will be Sept. 19, in person, at a church to be determined. Again, if you would want to volunteer your unit and church, please let us know.

Spiritual Growth Books on the 2026 Reading Program List—so many choices!

Have you read the latest issue of *Response* magazine or visited the Reading Program page on the United Women in Faith website? The reading program is chockful of great books this year, but especially books related to Spiritual Growth. Some of the titles include *Womanish Theology*, *Sacred Self-Care*, *God's Ghostwriters*, *Freeing Jesus*, and *The Ever-Expansive Spirit of God for All Who Feel Left Out*. My goal for 2026 is to read at least two books from each category. Who wants to join me? I'll also try to include a short book review in future issues of the newsletter.

Seeking HOPE in the Advent Season

I've been thinking a lot about **hope** these past several weeks. I hope this will lift your spirits during the Advent season.

"And now, dear brothers, I want you to know what happens to a Christian when he dies so that when it happens, you will not be full of sorrow, as those are who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and then came back to life again, we can also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him all the Christians who have died." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14)

It may seem strange to start Advent with a passage like this one. But Jesus' very existence brings us **hope**. He came. Even now, with all the events happening in the world, I can have hope.

It's a gift to have this reminder. But it's also a charge.

We have been entrusted with this message of hope. A message the world needs desperately today. It's not a message saying all our troubles will disappear. *It's better than that.*

There's hope in the **middle** of our struggles and pain. In the midst of all the world's trouble, we can have hope **because Jesus came**. He came so that one day we can live in Glory with him. And by following Jesus, we are better at living this life **now**.

During Advent season, Christians around the world anticipate celebrating the birth of Jesus. His life and story are the reason we empower storytellers of hope. Because **the world's greatest story deserves the best storytellers**.

We have a story the world needs to hear. More than ever. A story that reminds me we live with hope. Are you **ready** to tell it?

Communications

Mary Ann Kerttula

Church: First UMC of Fort Collins

(970) 219-6747

makerttula@gmail.com



I am looking out at snow on the ground. I think of snow as magical, except when I am trying to drive on slippery roads or clearing off my car. During these winter months, I hope that you are finding ways to connect with each other even when no one wants to drive to a meeting. Do you know that anyone can create a 40-minute Zoom meeting for free? Just go to

<https://zoom.us/signup?signUpFrom=homepage#/signup>. If you are planning a longer meeting, you can contact our district treasurer, Laurel Kubin at laurelkubin@gmail.com to check about using the district's Zoom account.

Another resource for feeling connected to UWFaith while staying at home are UWFaith podcasts and webinars. You can find information and links for them at <https://uwfaith.org/resources/podcasts/>. These also are great for use at in-person meetings!

And it isn't just national that has winter offerings. Look above for information on the upcoming Mission u sessions on *Practicing Hope*. And, thinking of Mission u, we already are starting plans for the summer Mission u on *Experiencing Emmanuel*. This theme will explore times in the Bible when people experienced "God with us," especially times that involve God "calling" people to a particular action or way of being. Through those stories, we will explore what these experiences can teach us about God and what God desires for this world and the ways we move through it. The adult study will be based on a book by Rev. Linda Furtado.

Song

If Emmanuel makes you think of Advent, click on the button to hear Rev. Linda's YouTube recording entitled "On My Way to Work - Advent Jazz - O Antiphon - O Emmanuel." If the button doesn't work, copy the following link and paste it into your browser's address bar:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNu3lye1q_k

May you experience the hope, peace, joy, and love of Christ!

Program Resources

Jan Spitler

Church: Longs Peak UMC, Longmont

(720) 600-3344

janaspitler@gmail.com



I hope many of you have had a chance to look at the latest Response magazine. Starting on page 19, there is an article explaining the Reading Program and then they list all the books for 2026 and give a summary of each one. Since I started the Zoom book club in August, a few of you have joined in the discussions. But I hope I can get more to join each month. For December, I am doing something different. I will be reading a children's book to those that join the zoom session. It is from the 2024 list and is called "The Good for Nothing Tree". So, you will not need to get the book. I will show all the illustrations too and those that join in can count the book on their 2025 list. That zoom meeting will be on Thursday, December 18th at 7:00 pm. Those that need zoom instructions can contact me.

I also want to remind everyone who is participating in the Reading Program that your list for 2025 should be emailed to me by the end of the first week in January. I need to have the names so that slides can be set up for the Leadership Development event on January 31st. I will be reading all the names at that event. Also, I will be filling out certificates to be mailed to the participating people at the various churches. I hope that many of you have participated this year.

For our zoom book club in January, the book will be "The Happiest Man on Earth". It was written by Eddie Jaku and he is an Auschwitz survivor. This book is from our 2026 Reading Program list. Please remember to check your local

libraries. I know the library in Longmont where I live has many of our Reading Program books available. If you prefer to purchase any of the books, I know there are many used books available. The January zoom book club will be on Thursday, January 15th at 7:00 pm.

I hope that everyone has a blessed Christmas and happy reading!

Committee on Nominations

Jan Dillie - **Chair**

Church: Broomfield United Methodist

(303) 349-8416

dillie69@msn.com



I always enjoy the changing of the seasons. Each season offers something different:

Spring is a time of renewal and awakening.

Summer is the time of long sunny days and outdoor activities.

Fall, my favorite season, is the time of harvest and colorful foliage.

Winter is the time for the trees and plants to rest, holding promise of new growth in the spring. It is also a time when most of us spend more time inside with family and friends.

Just like the different seasons, each United Women in Faith member has different strengths and qualities to offer. It is our members that make United Women in Faith strong. We also need to have officers to lead us. Keep in mind what your strengths and passions are and if you would be interested in serving as an officer.

At present, we need someone to serve as co-coordinator, with Nancy Gulley, for Social Justice and Action. This position would include writing an article such as this one for our newsletter. I have also been informed that our Membership Nurture and Outreach Coordinator would like to step down. We still need to fill the Mission Education and Interpretation Coordinator position. If you are interested in one of these positions, please contact me or one of the Nomination Committee members.

I would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas.

Committee on Nominations Members



Julie Wilson
Church: First UMC of Fort Collins
(970) 226-5925
Jswilson5309@gmail.co

Jo Anne Shengle
Church: First UMC of Lafayette
(720) 936-0910
joanne-75@hotmail.com



Betty Edney-Milner
Church: Johnstown UMC
(970) 381-0290
Betty_milner@msn.com

Consider This!

Living Stones Pilgrimage to Israel

Please consider joining the Pilgrims of Ibillin as they travel to Israel and Palestine to visit several historic cities (Bethlehem, Jericho, Nazareth), plus the Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem. In addition to meeting Palestinian Christians living in these cities, attendees also will visit with Archbishop Emeritus Elias Chacour, the founder of Mar Elias Schools and the author of *Blood Brothers*.

The tour will be held April 12-23 (or 25), with an optional trip to Petra and the Dead Sea in Jordan. For more information visit www.bit.ly/pilgrimslivingstones, or contact Brenda Mehos (bmehos@comcast.net). Brenda was our speaker at the 2025 Annual Gathering at Long's Peak UMC

Twiddlemuffs as a Mission Project

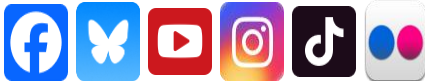
What are twiddlemuffs and why would I knit or crochet one?

A twiddlemuff is a knitted muff with different textures and items attached; a person diagnosed with dementia, PTSD, or ADHD can fiddle with the mitt when feeling restless. The muffs keep restless hands occupied, as well as providing visual, tactile, and sensory stimulation while keeping hands warm.

The basic knitting pattern (from the Internet) suggests using size 7 needles (straight or circular), odds and ends of yarns, and buttons, ribbons, and other trimmings to add texture and interest. The basic crochet pattern calls for a size L hook. The muff will be about 12 inches wide and 24 inches long to provide a lining. Of course, these muffs will all be individual and sizes can vary. If you cannot find a pattern you like, please contact Cheryl Runyon (cheryl.runyon@comcast.net) and she will share a pattern (or two) with you.

Deadlines for Newsletter Submissions

- March 1 for the Spring 2026 newsletter
- June 1 for the Summer 2026 newsletter.
- September 1 for the Fall 2026 newsletter
- December 1 for the Winter 2026 newsletter

Mt Sky Website	National Website
	



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