



United  
Women  
in Faith

## Frequently Asked Questions on United Women in Faith

### **Why are we taking a new operating name?**

The name United Methodist Women was adopted in 1972, signaling a change not only in the life of the church but in the lives of women and how they could organize for mission.

Over the past 50 years, we have experienced vast change in how women live their lives and choose to engage the world in faith as well as great changes in the life of the church.

It is time to adopt a name that reflects how women are living and engaging their faith in today's realities.

Our new name is part of an overall move to refresh our organization that includes a new look, new feel and new and improved programs. We will be able to better nurture our current members while welcoming into our sisterhood new women who want to put their love in action. The new operating name is also welcoming to women whose local churches may choose to align with another denomination or who are already members of other denominations.

### **Are we still a part of The United Methodist Church?**

Yes! We are still the only official women's organization of The United Methodist Church and our corporate name will remain United Methodist Women.

### **How were these decisions made?**

As part of our strategic planning guided by the Board of Directors, and the Program Advisory Group (PAG), we have conducted an enormous amount of research over the past five years. The new name, programs and program innovations are fruits of that research along with prayerful efforts to discern the times for our organization. The member-elected United Methodist Women Board of Directors, along with input from the PAG, has guided the organization throughout this process.

We've conducted surveys, focus groups and interviews with more than 24,000 United Methodists and women of other denominations and Christian traditions. The changes and programs are data informed and tested to address the needs and life stages of current and future members.

### **Will these changes impact me and my local unit?**

All of our traditional structures on the conference, district and local levels—circles included—remain intact. These new tools and programs are **additional** options available to you and your unit to help you better nurture current members, recruit new members into the organization and manage your unit's finances.

### **United Women in Faith has a mission statement. What about our Purpose?**

The Purpose for the local church remains the Purpose as it appears in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016* (§256.5.3). The core of our work remains the same: changing the world through faith, hope and love in action. The United Women in Faith mission statement—written by board executive committee members, PAG representatives and assigned staff—is a refreshed expression our core principles.



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### **Can we remain members, stay connected and join another local unit if our church leaves The United Methodist Church?**

Yes. United Methodist Church membership has never been required for United Methodist Women membership. Bylaws changes allow for women to be involved and be leaders in our organization even if they become affiliated with another denomination. Our new name captures this inclusivity.

### **Where can I learn about all of the changes underway in our organization?**

**response** articles and other free downloadable resources available on the e-store under Member Resources will give you an overview of the changes underway.

### **What do these changes have to do with “new wineskins?”**

United Methodist Women—now United Women in Faith—is again saying yes to being part of what God is doing in the 21st century by creating new ways for women today to gather for faith, sisterhood and action for women, children, and youth.

In other words, we are making new wine and new wineskins to fulfill our role in God’s mission today. We tap Jesus’ use of the metaphor in Mark 2:22 to explain the need for change to help us share with members the new tools, programs, and exciting changes on the horizon for our organization.

### **What new tools and programs are coming?**

The new tools and programs that will rollout throughout 2022 include:

- **A new, easier to navigate website.** The new website will have a homepage designed to pique the interest of women new to our organization and start them on a journey to membership. The homepage will also include a special portal where members can log in to access resources specially designed for them.
- **Templates for Soul Care retreats.** A pilot member recruitment program will be debuted through which current members invite nonmember friends to themed retreats specially designed to nurture our bodies, minds and souls.
- **Innovations to Mission u.** Beginning in 2022, Mission u will be introducing new curricula each year—one for children, one for youth and one for adults—all focused on a shared biblical theme that incorporates spiritual growth, contemporary issues and how these show up in various geographic areas. The new Mission u curricula will be more accessible and adaptable for use in small groups, local churches, vacation Bible schools, retreats and other settings. Through these vibrant, relevant, justice-oriented and biblically centered curricula, Mission u will continue its commitment to learning together for the transformation of the world and expand its impact.
- **A new national membership option.** This option will enable women to join our sisterhood via our new website. They will learn about and be able to participate in programs and events online or in person. Of course, on-line options and resources will also be available to existing members who already participate in circles and units.
- **More targeted giving options.** Members and nonmembers alike want more options to target their financial gifts to specific programs areas such as Spiritual Growth, National Mission Institutions or international work.



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- **New tools for conference and district treasurers.** New tools, like Vanco Faith, will be available to enable treasurers to manage, collect and distribute conference and district finances electronically.
- **Innovations in the Leadership Development Days programs.**
- **New and improved resources:**
  - Mighty Networks, an exciting new online platform where members can connect, and engage new resources like the Program Resource and Mission u curricula.
  - The Daily Prayer Guide, an updated replacement of the Prayer Calendar, which offers opportunities for daily devotion and connection.

### **What does the rebranding have to do with these changes?**

*Brand* is a term most often associated today with commercial marketing, but in reality, everyone has a brand. Brand is just a term to describe what people can expect to experience when they encounter you. “Branding” are the things we do—our look, our actions, our messages—that help let people know who we are and what we consistently deliver.

Rebranding United Methodist Women means we are clarifying the way we tell our story and updating our programs, resources and outreach efforts so that it is easier to see who we are. The research showed us that our values, our commitments, and the work we do in the world is attractive to many women who are not yet members, including women of diverse-ages, racial ethnicities, cultural backgrounds and life stages. Our welcoming new brand will highlight who we are.