

Susan Williams

The United Methodist Church took historic steps towards becoming an inclusive global church in 2024. At General Conference 2028, the church will have to imagine how to become this paradigm shift. A constitutional amendment created regionalization. Gender can no longer be used to exclude. Article V states the UMC should be combating racism, inequality, colonialism and white privilege and White Supremacy.

In the book, Our Unforming De-Westernizing Spiritual Formation Cindy Lee states: “We need the powerful posture of imagination to see something that doesn’t exist. We imagine the society we want to live in... imagine... if (we) could live in a world without systemic barriers. Imagination is refusing to let the “buts” and “impossibles” get in the way. Only things we can first imagine are possible.” General Conference needs to be a time of un-forming and re-forming, the church.

In my travel to Africa, I saw ways people were treated as European countries and the Americas “colonized” countries. What shocked me are the policies/practices implemented as places were “de-colonized”. Sixty-six years ago, treaties put in place systems, which continue to oppress. My travels around the world have given me better global understanding. As a United Women in Faith member, I was exposed to the concept of White Privilege. I own my ancestry and the need to use privilege to advocate for others.

I network with faith leaders across the country. I have served roles within UWFaith including at the Jurisdiction level, former National Director and current Alaska President. I serve on the Nome Community Center Board. While on the UWFaith Board I served on the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. I worked on initiatives dealing with international healthcare, environmental justice, and Indigenous rights. We strove to hold corporations accountable for global impacts.

I serve on the UMC Western Jurisdiction executive leadership team. At February’s meeting, we had a time of “prayer, and discernment about the

connectional work of the Jurisdiction”. Our call to Love Without Limits, led us to identified priorities: Wellness and Healing in the Church and Faithful Resistance.¹ At the 2024 Jurisdictional meeting, I learned about the UMC workings and decision-making politics as Bishops were elected.

I am on the Alaska UMC Leadership team. At APUMC, I have served in various leadership roles: Lay Leader to AC, Lay Leader, Staff Parish, Nominations, Church Council. I am a past President of the Birchwood Camp Board and conference Outdoor Ministries Committee.

My skills include planning, administration, organizing, public speaking, and fiscal analyzer. A former Union officer, I had to mediate employee issues, writing summary briefs. Listening was a critical skill.

My love of God and the United Methodist Church led me to submit my name for consideration. I believe God has empowered me for such a time as this.

My childlike imaginative wonder sees us surrendering our church to God, letting go of conventional boundaries, making room for a glorious new church.

Let’s prayerfully unite, to hear God’s call for Alaska’s delegation to General Conference 2028.

Thank you.

Susan

¹ https://westernjurisdictionumc.org/wjlt_feb2026/