

March 2025
Social Justice News



United
Women
in Faith



Changing the world: The world feels pretty topsy turvy right now. I think most of us are wondering what's next. Faith certainly helps. Trusting in God, prayer, and recognizing that the world has felt this way before provides some solace.

We're blessed to also have each other through United Women in Faith, too. Whenever we gather, we feel it. There's a sense of common cause & commitment.

As I research what we can do in terms of social and climate justice right now, community comes up again and again as the most critical component to change. I am so grateful for our leaders who are tirelessly providing a place for us to come together so we can make a difference.

There's a quote I heard years ago and it continues to remind me of the importance of community and friendship. "One person can have a profound effect on another. And two people . . . well, two people can work miracles. They can change a whole town. They can change the world."

Indeed.



Learning new things from old friends:

I used to run a candy company and last week I made about 50 pounds of fudge for a fundraiser for Hope House at our United Women in Faith service. Friends from my circle joined to help. One of them mentioned that she's on the Time of Use program with Xcel (the energy you use is cheaper during low use hours). She mentioned needing to run her dishwasher but she didn't have time to do it, so she tried the "light" cycle and it worked great for her.

That small action - and her telling me about it - encouraged me to give it a go. I'd always set my dishwasher to "normal" but this is a small, simple step I can take to save energy and water.

I mentioned it to my son and told him that my mom used the dishwasher as a sterilizer. Everything needed to be washed in soap and hot water before it went in. And so, that's how I do it too. My son suggested skipping that step and seeing what happened. Suffice it to say that I am now saving even MORE water and energy by not pre-washing.

I'd love to hear about the new habits you've adopted. I think sometimes we get into a rut and just don't think about these little changes we can make that not only help the environment, but make our lives easier as well.

The Good News:

One of my favorite websites is "reasons to be cheerful." This month, I'd like to share an inspiring story about a program in Africa where their solar panels are beginning to break down. Father Vincent Ngwira is a Catholic priest who is pioneering the work to repair these solar panels - and he's building community along the way. His influence will be felt globally as we begin to train people how to do this work.

<https://reasonstobecheerful.world/solar-device-repair-africa/>

Veggie Lovers Italian Casserole: (I make this & freeze individual servings)

Ingredients:

28 ounce can of fire roasted crushed tomatoes

2 garlic cloves

Small bag baby spinach

1 onion chopped well

8 oz. ricotta cheese

4 carrots chopped well

1/2 c. Parmesan cheese

1 crown of broccoli cut into small crowns

16 oz. mozzarella cheese 1 cup breadcrumbs

1 small zucchinis cut into chunks

1 Tablespoon oregano

Top with sliced tomato & chiffonade cut basil

* Tip - scrape the seeds out of the zucchini to prevent sogginess.



1 lb. button mushrooms sliced

Olive oil

1/2 Tablespoon rosemary

Instructions:

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees & spray a 9 x 13 glass pan with olive oil.

Toss onions & carrots in 2 T. warm olive oil until the onions are clear. Then add broccoli, garlic, rosemary, & oregano. Cook for 3 minutes and move to a bowl.

Add 1 T. olive oil to the saucepan & cook mushrooms over medium heat for 5 minutes. Then add them to the other cooked veggies.

Chop zucchini & spinach & add to the cooked veggies. Add crushed tomatoes, mozzarella, & ricotta. Gently mix. Then salt & pepper to taste.

Pour the mixture into the prepared glass pan.

Mix the parmesan cheese with breadcrumbs & 1 T. olive oil. Pour over the top & bake for 30 minutes. Garnish with basil & grape tomatoes.

A Call to Action:



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“I will never attend an anti-war rally.

If you have a peace rally, invite me.”

- Mother Teresa

I'm reminded of a sermon I heard about the difference between reacting and responding. It was a powerful message. When we react, we tend to unproductively push against something out of anger and fear. But when we respond, we're more thoughtful and effective. Our response is measured, compassionate, and comes from a place of love and hope.

As we stay apprised of changes being made in our communities, we can see who will be left most vulnerable. New programs will emerge to respond in time, but for now, we know that many programs are strained. Reach out existing programs serving affected populations and ask what you can do to help. You might put together a “food-raiser” at your church so you can help feed families that are at the breaking point. Perhaps you have medical training and can volunteer with a free clinic. You're providing not only food and care, but hope.

A Prayer for You:



Dear Lord,
Please remind my neighbors that they are
beloved to you & you are there for them.
Some are afraid they won't be able to feed their children.
Others are worried they'll lose their home.
Some are sick & scared.
Protect them and help them to know your love & feel your hope.
I ask all of this in the name of your precious son
and our savior Jesus the Christ.
Amen.