

~ ~ A Word from the President ~ ~

Happy New Year!

It's time to look back at 2025 and evaluate what we did well, what we want to continue, and what might be paused or laid aside. Now is the time to move forward—to try something new, to reach out to someone, and to invite them into our circle of United Women in Faith.

As I stepped into the role of president one year ago, my biggest fear was this: *How am I going to write a "Letter from the President" four times each year?* That fear resurfaced recently with the reminder that articles for *The Clarion Call* were due.

But perhaps it isn't just the president's letter that stirs anxiety in me. Perhaps it's also what is happening in our world—in our country, our states, and our towns. Phrases related to fear, such as "do not be afraid" or "fear not," appear in the Bible nearly 100 times. Did Mary's fear subside when the angel said to her, "*Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God*" (Luke 1:30, NIV)?

Today, when I read Isaiah 41:10—"*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God*"—I choose to rest in this promise. I will try to let go of my fears, to praise God, and to trust that God is with me.

In closing, I would like to share this prayer written by Rabbi Irwin Keller in 2016:

A Prayer Before Reading the News *Elohai neshamah shenatata bi tehorah hi*

My God, the soul you have placed in me is pure and vulnerable. I am afraid that looking at today's news will be painful. Encircle me in a robe of light so that I can witness the wounds of the world without being wounded myself.

Let me learn what I need to know in order to be of my greatest use, without being overwhelmed by despair. I feel your protective light now as I open myself to the world's suffering and the world's joys. Amen.

Karen Saunders TWK UWF President

