



UPDATE

Late March 2024

In Case You Missed This News:

A Message from District Superintendent Mark Chow:

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Effective July 1, 2024, I will become the Superintendent of the Scioto River District as well as of the Hocking River District. With the announcement of Rev. Calvin Alston's impending retirement (now delayed for a year by a move to DS of Olentangy River District), Bishop Palmer invited me to prayerfully consider expanding my responsibilities.

While the overall area will include twenty counties in southern and southeastern Ohio, the total number of churches and pastors will be fewer than what the former Foothills District had a few short years ago when I started this journey with you.

And, while I was not praying for God to enlarge my territory, I will be praying that God's hand will be upon us and will keep us from harm as I oversee the 140 churches and 90 or so pastors of these two Districts. I covet your prayers as I begin a new adventure: a different version of a two point charge.

West Ohio Annual Conference Session Wednesday, May 29 - Saturday, June 1, 2024 Capital University, Bexley OH

[Annual Conference Event Registrations | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church \(westohioumc.org\)](https://westohioumc.org)

The 55th session of the West Ohio Annual Conference is set to convene from Wednesday, May 29, through Saturday, June 1, 2024, at Capital University in Bexley, Ohio. Registration is now open! Information regarding meals, housing, and special events is posted on the [conference website](#).

**Need any help with online registration?
Just call Barbara at (740) 677-0136; it only takes a minute
to get registered!**



LSM Classes Being Offered Around the Conference

Here's the link to check out what classes are being offered across the West Ohio Conference:

<https://www.westohioumc.org/leadership/lay-servant-ministries-class-schedule>

Included this year are the following classes being offered in the Hocking River District:

Leading in Prayer **Friday, June 7 from 6-8pm(Zoom) & Saturday, June 8 from 9am-5pm**
Either in person at the district office or by Zoom

United Methodist Polity **Friday, August 23 from 6-8pm(Zoom) & Saturday, August 24 from 9am-5pm**
either in person at the district office or by Zoom

Basic Course **Friday, October 11 from 6-8pm(Zoom) & Saturday, October 12 from 9am-5pm**
either in person at the district office or by Zoom

We will be offering an advanced course in the first quarter of 2025. Remember, even if you have completed the Basic Course and all of the Core Courses, you need to take an Advanced Course every 3 years as part of maintaining your certification. Not sure what you need next? Call the Hocking River District office at (740) 677-0136.

Using the Conference Website for Annual Reporting and More

You can find many needed forms and documents for your reporting requirements by visiting westohioumc.org ! Log in to your account and view the top of the page. There are 7 choices across the top of the page:

About Us Ministries Leadership Stewardship & Finance News & Media Resources Events

The little arrow next to each provides a drop-down menu with many choices.

One example is **Stewardship & Finance** Choices include **Church Administration**, for instance.

By clicking on **Church Administration**, you will have access to **2023 Annual Report Form**, **2024 Minimum Salary Guide**, **End of Year Reports**, and **Local Church Resources**, to name a few.

By then clicking on **Local Church Resources**, you can obtain information on Choosing a Parsonage or Housing Allowance, Internal Controls, Records Retention, Parsonage Standards, and more!

Annual Reports are due on June 1st!

<https://www.westohioumc.org/stewardship-finance/2024-annual-report-forms>

PHONE NUMBER FOR HOCKING RIVER DISTRICT OFFICE:

(740) 677-0136

Dessert and Dialogue

We are grateful for your leadership in the Hocking River District! This is an important time of transition and cultivating a Christ-centered community is vital to moving forward focused on our mission. It is also important that we know the responsibilities and tasks that we are called to do as we move forward. These discussions are important training. For information on **S/PPRC Committee**:

The LAST meeting in Hocking River District is TOMORROW!!

Tuesday, March 26 from 6-8pm, Bethany UMC, 159 Adams St, Corning.

If you are a pastor, please make certain that you or someone from your church attends this training!



Other in-person trainings offered across the conference if you absolutely can't make it to Corning tomorrow:

Sunday, April 14 at 4pm at Tyler Memorial UMC, 260 Mill St., Chillicothe

Or, Sunday, April 21 at 4pm at Winchester UMC, 70 E. Washington St., Winchester

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE CHURCHES REPRESENTED AT THE S/PPRC TRAINING ALREADY HELD IN COOLVILLE LAST WEEK:

Coolville

South Harvey

Athens First

Union

Hockingport

Torch

Canaanville

Marietta Christ

Marietta Faith

Stewart

Bates Chapel

St. Mark's

Norwood

Tunnel

Webb's Chapel

Clark's Chapel



2023 Statistical Reporting

2023 statistical reporting information was recently emailed out to pastors, treasurers, administrative council/leadership team chairs, and church office administrators. These reports are due by April 15th, and online submission is preferred. Providing accurate information is essential, as this reporting affects how your 2025 apportionments are calculated. You can access all information that you need to complete those reports at <https://stats.gcfa.org/Login.aspx>

For questions around these reports contact Jack Frost, jfrost@wocumc.org.

Didn't receive this information via email? Please update your church's leadership contact information, either in MyChurch account or by calling or emailing the Hocking River District office!



The deadline to apply for scholarships from the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation is April 15. Don't miss your chance at more money to attend United Methodist-related colleges, universities, and seminaries. Now's the time to begin or complete an application!

Visit <https://umhef.org/apply> to learn about eligibility, available award programs, & application instructions.

As a reminder, here are some quick facts about UMHEF scholarships:

- UMHEF awards more than \$2 million in scholarships every year! Open to students who plan to attend a United Methodist-related college, university, or seminary. See the list [here](#).
- Students must be a member of one of these churches for at least a year prior to applying: The United Methodist Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the AME Zion Church, or the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Students whose churches have disaffiliated from The UMC are also welcome to apply.
- Scholarships are available to undergraduates, graduate students, and Doctor of Ministry students. (*Other doctoral students are not currently eligible.*)

The two main UMHEF scholarship programs include the [UM Dollars for Scholars](#) matching award program and the traditionally competitive [General Named Endowed Program](#).

Other [specialty awards](#) are also available.

Deadline to Apply Has Been Extended to April 15, 2024

April is National Second Chance Month

All In Community means that regardless of what you've done, what a loved one has experienced, or what has been done to you or a loved one, we are here for ALL of you IN this COMMUNITY.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, National Second Chance month proclaims our common belief that everybody has dignity and potential. Since 2017, National Second Chance month has become a rally cry within states, government agencies, coalitions, and faith communities do justice and love mercy in ways that truly provide over 80 million people living with the stigma, shame, and barriers of an arrest or conviction a second chance. National Second Chance Month is about better opportunities for people coming home. It is, also, about making our communities more just and safe for all citizens.

With 1 in 3 Americans living with a criminal record, chances are someone, or someone's loved one, in your congregation is in need of a second chance. The best way to free people from the shame and stigma of justice-involvement is to acknowledge this reality. This month, All In Community encourages you to pick one Sunday in April and lift up our justice-involved members and neighbors. Below are resources, including a downloadable video to make your Second Chance Sunday meaningful and impactful.

In addition, here are a few other ways you can be a person of hope, change narratives, get proximate to, tell the truth, and do something that is uncomfortable or inconvenient that lets justice-involved persons know that they do have a second chance:

Help returning neighbors in your community in practical ways: volunteer at a halfway/transition house; help them complete a resume or application process; give them a job connection or job; rent to them at a reasonable rate.

Be a social support: sit and listen to them; provide life wisdom, not solutions; invite them to a community event; love on their children.

Change your language to reflect human dignity [formerly incarcerated person, returning neighbor, person in recovery] instead of dehumanizing labels [felon, convict, ex-offender, addict].

Become informed of local laws or court practices that promote incarceration over effective diversion practices and opportunities.

Press lawmakers to address unreasonable laws that hold people back.

Inform your congregations about upcoming events that support successful reintegration.

Below is a list of Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction events for family members, servants, and service providers.

By recognizing National Second Chance Month, you are saying to those burdened with marginalizing stigma and shame: *We see and hear you.... We want good things for you and to carry your burdens, too.... We want to be proximate to you in this journey....We welcome you in this community.*

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/pegzot0yridmukf5x7vpr/WOC_Second-Chance-Sunday_FINAL.mp4?rlkey=rhsw5nbt6kw7aq7klm2ezlbo7&dl=0





Foundation Program for April:

Dr. Kenneth Sloane Webinar

April 11 6:00 p.m. Online

The United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio is pleased to offer a live Zoom webinar at 6:00 p.m. on April 11 featuring Rev. Dr. Ken Sloane, CFRM, ECRF, Director of Stewardship and Generosity at UMC Discipleship Ministries. The webinar will focus on one of the Foundation's stewardship standards: creating an intentional discipleship system.


Dr. Sloane describes his presentation this way: "The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This goal has the best chance of being successful in congregations that have intentional discipleship systems in place and a clear image of what a maturing disciple looks like. Across the church, we need to see generosity for the key ingredient it is in a maturing disciple of Jesus Christ."

Attendees will learn the value of having an intentional discipleship system (IDS) and a shared commitment to it; see the connection of mission, values, and vision as they support the congregation's IDS; and explore how a deeper intentionality in our disciple making helps us clarify to people outside the church who we are as United Methodists.

Registration is not required. A link to join this Zoom presentation can be found at

<https://umfwestohio.org/foundation-program-calendar-2024/>.

Contact Susan Black for more information at sblack@wocumc.org.



So far we have received close to 300 responses to the survey. If you've not had time to participate yet, the survey is open until April 2. Your feedback will be vital in helping us discern how to best support you and your church in disciple-making over the next year.

This survey should take no more than 5-minutes of your time.

Copy and paste in your browser: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc4NnHq4Axy7CUm0ImN-ok37BKr9I8JzpMlbinu47qskcpM5Q/viewform>

Thanks in advance for
your time and input.



Grief and Next Steps Seminar

Led by Rev. Elaine J. Sturtz



LPCC (Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor), Pastor, Former Hospice Chaplain, Author – Books available to purchase

Seminar for anyone who has experienced any type of loss or grief. Focus - how to live in this different life, defining grief, how to take next steps into life

No cost or registration required

Saturday, April 20, 2024

10 AM – 12 PM

Peace United Methodist Church 235 Diley Road, Pickerington, OH

www.livinginthedifferent.com ejsturtz7@gmail.com

Job Opportunity

SCIOTO RIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (Olentangy River District)

Position Description Full-Time

Position Title: Director of Youth and Young Adults

Type of Employment: Salary, Sunday Essential Employee, Full Time with Health Insurance

Reports To: Senior Pastor

General Description The Director of Youth and Young Adults is responsible for the leadership, planning, and implementation of the ministry with and to the Middle School youth (6-8 Grade), High School youth (9-12 grade), and young adults (Post-high school graduation to 30 years old) of Scioto Ridge United Methodist Church. The

director will build leadership teams of servants that help in the spiritual formation of youth and young adults.

Education and Experience • Bachelor's degree in youth ministry, Bible/theology, or a Masters of Divinity or theological studies preferred. • 5+ years of experience in youth and young adult ministry. • Experience working in

a church setting with multiple staff. • Experience in a Wesleyan/Methodist church setting.

Qualifications and Skills • Must be a growing Christian, deepening his/her personal relationship with Jesus Christ and modeling this to others. • Desire to serve God through being in ministry to and with youth and young adults.

• Has a heart for spiritual formation/discipleship of youth and young adults. • A demonstrated understanding of

current student and young adult faith culture and formation. • Ability to partner with and include students' parents/caregivers on the discipleship formation of their youth. • Organizational, communication, and leadership

excellence. • Exhibits outstanding spiritual leadership, ability to recruit and train volunteers and excellent

relational skills. • Familiarity with Wesleyan/Methodist theology. • Creates and maintains inclusive space for

LGBTQ+ youth and young adults. • Demonstrated ability to lead youth and young adults on local and global

missions trips.

Send Resume to Rev. Jason Wellman at pastorjason@srumc.org

UPCOMING EVENTS:

SAVE THE DATE!

Hocking River District Clergy/Spouse Retreat Friday, April 12- Sunday, April 14, 2024 Burr Oak State Park



Rev. Dr. Dan Wells and Jacqui Wells will be our retreat leaders. We look forward to a time a renewal and refreshment as individuals and/or couples in life and ministry.

To register, contact the district office! There is a space open for you still!

**Hocking River District “Dessert and Dialogue:
Serving on a Staff/Pastor/Parish Relations Committee (S/PPRC)”
Coming to Bethany UMC in Corning!
Pastors and PRC members should plan to attend. See page 3 of this
newsletter for dates and locations.**

West Ohio Annual Conference Session

Wednesday, May 29 - Saturday, June 1, 2024
Capital University, Bexley OH

SIGN UP TODAY!



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Office Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

E-Mails: Office - hockingriverdistrict@wocumc.org

Mark Chow, DS - mchow@wocumc.org

Barbara Conover, Office Admin. - bconover@wocumc.org