



# Western Lakes District

*News from The United Methodist Church*

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## WLD Important Information

### Jots From Jim...

On a recent visit to Amish Country I stopped at a furniture store where I have built a friendship with Eli. As I sat in his office we talked about church. I joked with him about how his congregation worships for three hours on Sunday, with the first hour being all singing. I remind him he only worships every other week so we probably are not that different. He shared with me that when Holy Communion is celebrated twice a year the service lasts for eight hours. It's a wonderful conversation into each of our lives, both made in the image of God yet lived out in very different ways.



Last week I shared with him that a lot of my job as a superintendent is clergy recruitment and assignment (for lack of better words.) In just 18 short days the Western Lakes District went from every church having a pastor to five congregations needing a pastor. No, it has nothing to do with General Conference. It has everything to do with life and death and transitions. Eli looked at me puzzled. He could not understand why a church would be without a pastor. I said, "Well Eli, what does your church do if there is no pastor?" His response, "That never happens." He went on to explain the process.

In Eli's church if there is no pastor then everyone in church writes down on a piece of paper who they feel the next pastor should be for the community. If two or more people write your name down on a piece of paper you are added to the lot of names submitted to the Bishop. At this point the Bishop puts a piece of paper in a book. All the persons who are in the lot are then invited to randomly pick a book. If you pick the book with a piece of paper in it then you are the pastor. It is seen as God's will.

I said, "Eli, what if the person doesn't want to be the pastor?" Eli said, "You have no choice." I said, "Well, do you have to quit your job and how much would you be paid?" Eli looked at me like I was from another planet. He said, "Sir, you don't get paid to be the pastor. You keep your current job. And you spend long evenings studying as much as you can to be a good pastor."

Many people reading this article are chomping at the bit to rip this process and flaunt all types of church polity and doctrine and biblical reasons why this is wrong. Just stop and be still for a moment. Can you see the beauty of being named by your faith community as a leader, and having the trust in God to order your steps as you take on the position of leadership?

I do not want to be Amish. Eli does not want to be United Methodist. Both of us see each other's world differently. But we believe in the same God, the same Jesus, and seek to be kind and peaceful in our living. In the midst of today's chaotic world I found peace in this

simple, innocent, and holy conversation.

As I went to pay my bill he said “I am almost embarrassed to tell you how much this piece of furniture cost.” I wanted to say, “Well, if you are embarrassed then cut the price in half and don’t be embarrassed.” I resisted the temptation. I paid full price. Why? Because I got more than a piece of furniture. I got insight into one’s heart and soul and their beautiful relationship with the Lord. In my opinion, that is priceless.

Have a blessed week.

Jim

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## Annual Reporting


Reminder that the Fund Balance Report, Trustee Legal & Property, Parsonage Inspection, Clergy Self-Assessment and SPRC Assessments were due June 1st.

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**NEED TO REVITALIZE YOUR CHURCH?**

# DISCOVER FX


<https://www.westohioumc.org/discover-fx>



JUL 17	JUL 18	JUL 23	AUG 20	AUG 24	AUG 29	SEPT 3
Western Lakes District	Olentangy River District	Maumee River District	Great Miami River District	Scioto River District	Hocking River District	Western Lakes & Maumee River Districts
First UMC First Place Christian Center 16 W Franklin St. Troy 9:30am — 2:30pm	Maize Manor UMC / Urban Farm Church 3901 Maize Rd Columbus 9:30am — 2:30pm	First UMC 1526 E Wooster Bowling Green 9:30am — 2:30pm	Christ UMC 700 S. Marshall Rd Middletown 9:30am — 2:30pm	Walnut Street UMC 16 S. Walnut St Chillicothe 9:30am — 2:30pm	First UMC 2 S College St Athens 9:30am — 2:30pm	First UMC 301 N Main St Ada 9:30am — 2:30pm

**WHAT IS IN IT FOR ME?**

- Go outside the norm and build relationships with those in your community.
- It’s church—in a new way.
- Be immersed in what Fresh Expressions are and what it can do to revitalize your church.



Discover FX is coming to the Western Lakes District! You’ve heard about Fresh Expressions popping up all across West Ohio. Here is your chance to explore how fresh expressions could revitalize your church and reach people in your community. Is God stirring something new within you? Fresh Expressions are an effective way to build relationships, serve the people within your context and community, and revitalize your church.

Fresh Expressions are about going outside of the norm, going beyond the typical boundaries of ordinary church to build human community with and among people with whom the church has forgotten, ignored, marginalized, or dismissed.

Discover FX is a 5-hour immersion into what Fresh Expressions are and how to launch your own expression of church. After the training, optional coaching sessions will be available via zoom to walk with you through launching a fresh expression of church.

Discover what FX can do for your church in a convenient location in your district and learn from your colleagues who are already doing Fresh Expressions in your region. Training is from 9:30am - 2:30pm and lunch is included.

July 17 | Wednesday | WLD | Troy First UMC, First Place Christian Center | 16 W Franklin St, Troy, OH 45373 [Register Here](#)

## Conference Archives Moving to MTSO

The archives of the East and West Ohio conferences will be moving to the Methodist Theological School in Ohio (MTSO) this summer.

For more than 50 years, the archives were housed at Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU). Last year, OWU notified the conferences that the Beeghly Library was closing for renovations and that relocation of the archives would be necessary.

“We are grateful to Ohio Wesleyan for caring for our archives for all these years, and we look forward to working with MTSO. The United Methodist Church has a rich history, and our archives are about cultivating our past to help engage our future,” said Dave Boling, West Ohio Conference Archives and History Chairperson.

It is anticipated that the materials will be moved to MTSO in June. Once the archives are relocated to MTSO, attention will turn to accessibility and use of the archives. Watch for more details later this summer. Should you have any questions, please contact Dave Boling at [historyarchives@wocumc.org](mailto:historyarchives@wocumc.org).

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## Avoid a Higher HealthFlex Deductible in 2025

Are you covered by the HealthFlex active (non-retired) healthcare program? If so, you will want to complete the Health Check Questionnaire by August 31 to avoid a higher plan deductible in 2025.

To get started, join VIRGIN PULSE by [clicking here](#). This is a quick, easy, and confidential way to complete the Health Check Questionnaire and boost your overall well-being.

Once you're in, you'll gain access to a range of wellness resources, including the opportunity to:

- Earn up to \$410 per year by participating in HealthFlex well-being programs.
  - \$100 by taking your annual/Biometric Exam with Quest Blueprint for Wellness Screening.
  - 8 free counseling sessions per concern through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with Optum.
  - Free Telemedicine and Behavioral Health Service offered by MDLive.
  - Access to Chronic Disease Prevention and Diabetes Management offered by Omada.
  - Discounts on Weight Watchers membership.
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## Grand Lake Celebrates Special Friends

Sunday, June 9th Grand Lake UMC held their first Special Friends Sunday for their homebound and nursing home parishioners. 32 vases were put together by volunteers from the church and then members were asked to hand deliver a flower to the person designated on the vase of flowers. Everyone was blessed to be part of this outreach ministry and the recipients were happy to know that their congregation was thinking of them.



## Survivors are Real Winners of Buckets of Blessings Challenge

During this year's Annual Conference session in Bexley, OH, churches and individuals donated 6,183 pounds of kits, buckets, and other supplies for survivors of disasters. In the Bishop's Buckets of Blessings challenge, the winning district was Olentangy River

with 64 Home Care Kits! Other district totals were as follows: Maumee River-55; Great Miami-54; **Western Lakes-34**; Hocking River-3; and Scioto River-1. A total of 211 Home Care Kits were collected, along with numerous UMCOR Hygiene Kits and other materials. "The real winners, of course, are the people whose hopes will be lifted in the midst of disaster," Bishop Palmer remarked. All supplies will be distributed through Midwest Mission Distribution Center. THANK YOU, West Ohio, for your generosity and compassion!

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**Let us remember in prayer those grieving the loss of their loved one, and remember in thanksgiving the life and ministry of:**

**Rev. Dale E. Guckenberger**, age 84, who passed away Tuesday, June 11, 2024. Rev. Guckenberger is survived by his wife, Eileen Guckenberger.

Rev. Guckenberger served congregations in the Indiana and West Ohio conferences. Those churches include: Brook Student Assoc, IN (Calument) NW 1964; Goodland IN Griggs Memorial Student Assoc, NW 1965; Cleves (C) 1967; Chaplain, Bethesda Hosp & Apt to Attend School 1970; Staff Chaplain, The Christ Hosp 1971; Minister of Pastoral Care, Hyde Park Community 1973; The John Wesley (C) 1978; Dtr of Pastoral Care & Chaplain La Porte Hosp, IN 1983; Chaplain, Hamilton Grove Retirement Ctr, New Carlisle IN 1992; Pastoral Counselor-Samaritan Counseling Ctr 1995.

Visitation will be Tuesday, June 25, 2024, at 10:00 AM followed by the funeral at 11:00 AM at Spring Grove Funeral Homes - Willow Room (4389 Spring Grove Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45223).

Please send condolences to: Eileen Guckenberger 7500 Shenango Ct Maineville, OH 45039

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Dale's memory to Back2Back Ministries <https://back2back.org> where he advocated endlessly for the fatherless.

[Click here](#) to read Rev. Guckenberger's obituary.

**Rev. Roger Allan Ashley** peacefully and unexpectedly passed away at his home in Zanesfield, Ohio at the age of 86 on June 15, 2024. Born in Sparta, Illinois on May 10, 1938, Roger was the cherished son of James and Lela (Buescher) Ashley. He is preceded in death by his parents and brothers: James Ashley, Eugene Ashley, Bill Ashley, Leland Ashley, and Don Ashley; sisters: Iva May Estoppey, Doris Wahl, Marcella Henderson, Georgia Ann Rezba and survived by his brother Carl Ashley.

He was a beloved United Methodist minister who touched the lives of many with his unwavering faith and boundless kindness. His early ministry was in the Kentucky Conference and then spent the rest of his ministry career in West Ohio serving the following congregations: Johnson Co Parish, KY Conf 1961; Martinsville Circuit 1963; Cedarville 1965; McArthur Zaleski 1967; Athens First Assoc (A) 1970; Middletown Christ (DS) 1971; South Charleston (S) 1975; Green Camp (F) 1977; Belle Center (S) 1983; Farmer-Ney (D) 1985; Zanesfield (S) 1988; Willshire-Union (D) 1995

Roger's greatest joy and source of pride was his family. On May 27, 1961 he married his beloved wife, Eldonna Humphreys Ashley, and she survives. He adored her beyond all measure and together they created a loving home filled with laughter, faith, and unwavering support. Roger was a devoted father to Curtis (Shellie) Ashley and Ryan (Tonja) Ashley. He cherished every moment he had with his grandchildren Jeffrey Ashley, Brianna (Tandy) Adams, Kay Seiber, Jenna Ashley, Drew Ashley, Scott Cheeseman, and TJ (Georgia) Shipton. He was also a great grandfather to Elliana and Castiel Shipton. Their love and accomplishments were his greatest treasures.

A memorial service to honor and celebrate Roger's life will be held at 11:00 a.m. at the Bellefontaine United Methodist Church on Monday, June 24, 2024. Visitation will be held from 9:00 a.m. until the time of the service. In lieu of flowers, the family requests

donations to the Bellefontaine United Methodist Church, the Logan County Friendly Senior Center, or the charity of your choice reflecting Roger's lifelong commitment to serving others.

Click here to read entire obituary <https://www.jenningsfarley.com/obituary/reverend-roger-ashley>

## Events



### Foundation Offering Saving Grace Webinar

The United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio invites you to join via zoom on July 23 at 6:00PM for a presentation from Rev. Anna Guillozet, WOC clergyperson and co-presenter of *Saving Grace*. Rev. Guillozet will be discussing one of the Foundation's stewardship standards, incorporating personal financial literacy into your church.

*Saving Grace* is a curriculum to achieve this goal for church members and clergy. This presentation is free and all WOC clergy and church leadership are encouraged to attend. To access the zoom link, click here: [Join Zoom Meeting](#).

### Upcoming Lay Servant Ministries Classes

**Lay Pastoral Care Giving:** August 18, 20, 22, 25, 27 from 6:30-8:30pm on Zoom only. Sponsored by the Great Miami River District. [Registration begins July 1st](#)

**United Methodist Polity:** Friday, August 23 from 6-8pm (Zoom) & Saturday, August 24 from 9am-5pm (either in person at the Hocking River District office or by Zoom). [Registration begins July 1st](#)

**Public Prayer:** September 8, 10, 11, 15, 17 from 6:30-8:30pm on Zoom only. Sponsored by the Great Miami River District. [Registration begins July 29th](#)

**Basic Course** Friday, October 11 from 6-8pm (Zoom) & Saturday, October 12 from 9am-5pm (either in person at the Hocking River District office or by Zoom). [Registration begins September 2nd](#)

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.

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### Introduction to Servant Lay Ministry - LSM Basic Course

#### Instructors: Sandra Combs and Jack Hott

This course is foundational for all courses in Lay Servant Ministries. Participants are encouraged to discover and employ personal spiritual gifts as God intended and to consider the importance of exercising servant leadership, developing future leaders, remaining rooted in consistent spiritual practices, and being part of a group that holds members accountable in their discipleship. This Basic Course is the first step for those seeking certification as Lay Servants.

Dates/Times: TWO options for taking the class: In-person OR ZOOM  
6:30-8:30 PM for each session: July 23, 25, 28, 30, 2024 and August 1, 2024

(In-person) location: 6400 Inner Blessing Way Centerville, OH 45459

Cost: \$30.00

~OR~

Zoom Cost: \$15.00

Contact: Lesley Moore - [lmoores@wocumc.org](mailto:lmoores@wocumc.org) - 567-221-7103 or Glen Lash -



**Students will need to purchase their own text:**

Lay Servant Ministries, Basic Course Participant's Book, Sandy Jackson with Brian Jackson, available at Amazon.com, Cokesbury.com, and store.upperroom.org.

[Flyer](#) - for more information [Register Now](#)

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## **Embracing Personal Prayer**

### **Instructor: Rev. Dr. Alice Kay Lovelace**

Prayer is a relationship with God. Prayer grows and matures over time. This course combines scriptural teaching and personal experience that will help you overcome obstacles to intimacy with God. This course is divided into four sessions which will help your encounter God in new and different ways.

This course will be offered on Zoom at 5:00 - 7:30 pm EDT on Tuesdays for 4 consecutive weeks: July 16, July 23, July 30, and August 6, 2024

Zoom Cost: \$15

Book required: *Lord, Teach us to Pray* by Margie Burger. Purchase book prior to class - available on Amazon.

Instructor: The Rev. Dr. Alice Kay Lovelace, OSL, is a retired clergy Elder in the West Ohio Conference currently serving New Jasper United Methodist Church. She enjoys companioning others in their spiritual life, and is particularly fond of cats.

Event Sponsored By Western Lakes District  
Contact Lesley Moore at [lmoore@wocum.org](mailto:lmoore@wocum.org)

[Register Here](#)

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## **Explore Your Call to Leadership**

Is God calling you to lead or serve in your church congregation? Are you interested in building a ministry team for community impact? Are you interested in receiving theological, cultural, and practical ministry training?

The Certified Lay Ministry Academy was established for spiritual formation, community connections, and academic training. Certified Lay Ministers (CLM's) are trained, equipped, and certified to fulfill their unique God calling, enhance the quality of ministry to small membership churches, and to expand team ministry in churches.

[Learn more...](#)

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PEER Ministry is coming to the Great Miami River District. PEER Ministry is People Ministry. Using the parable of the Good Samaritan at its core, PEER Ministry gives youth and young adults specific skills in

caring for friends. They learn how to listen, ask caring questions, and guide friends through tough choices, changes, and challenges. They welcome people, even those who are not always welcomed. If youth aren't leading, they are leaving and PEER Ministry helps youth become leaders both in the church and in the world.

Sponsored by The Wesley Foundation in Cincinnati and hosted by Monroe UMC, PEER Ministry's own National Director and Owner, Lyle Griner, will join us for two days of unparalleled training August 2-3. Come for one day or come for both! Check out [www.peerministry.org](http://www.peerministry.org) to learn more about the program and more about Lyle.

Day one, Friday August 2, will consist of PLAN-IT, a one day guided planning event. This day is geared toward your adult leaders and board members tasked with calendaring your ministry year. Using Lyle's guided planning method, you will walk away with the next 12-18 months of your ministry year planned!

Day two, Saturday August 3, will focus on the PEER Ministry model and training of your adult and youth/young adult leaders. Please bring your student leaders to join your adults in learning the core principles of PEER Ministry for use in your local context.

Wesley Foundation hopes to host 10-12 congregations and student ministries across the district and conference. We hope you will be one of them, and that you'll invite a friend!

Date: August 2 & 3, 2024

Time: Friday 9:00am-3:30pm; Saturday 9:00am-5:30pm

Location: Monroe UMC (206 East Ave Monroe, OH 45050)

Cost: Tiered pricing based on the number of people you are bringing and if you are attending one day or both days.

Learn more/Register

Questions: Reach out to Katie Steele at The Wesley Foundation at [katie@wesleyuc.org](mailto:katie@wesleyuc.org)

## Resources

### Faith Resources Available from West Ohio Connectional Ministries

If you are looking for a way to connect with emerging generations and their families, *Faith on the Fly* cards can help. *Faith on the Fly* cards are a set of short devotions, prayers, and activities families can do together to explore their faith and grow deeper in love with Jesus.



To connect with young children and families looking for ways to incorporate prayer into their lives, *Preschool Prayer Cards* can help. These prayers are easy, fun, and can be said at mealtime to help incorporate prayer throughout the day.

If you are seeking *Faith on the Fly* or *Preschool Prayer Cards*, email [amcarley@wocumc.org](mailto:amcarley@wocumc.org). Requests must be received by **June 30**.

### Children's Curriculum Available from United Women in Faith

As part of United Women in Faith's Mission u, a children's curriculum is available for local churches to use anytime throughout the year. "Me in the Kin-dom" by Kathy Cook helps children explore the kin-dom of God through the lens of the Lord's Prayer. Children will experience how they are unique members of God's kin-dom and learn they are also part of a larger community that welcomes all of God's children. Curriculum can be ordered by [clicking here](#). Cost is \$14.99.

## 2024-2025 Appointments



The list of pastoral appointments beginning July 1, 2024 can be accessed [clicking here](#).

Please refer back to these lists as they are updated frequently.

Western Lakes District | 32 Wesley Blvd | Worthington, OH 43085 US

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