



Great Miami River District

News and Notes --- July 29, 2026

Celebrating Faithful Stewardship

As we move through the year, we celebrate and give thanks for the congregations that are on track to pay 100% of their apportionments by year-end. The commitment, generosity, and support of local churches further the shared ministry & mission of the United Methodist Church.

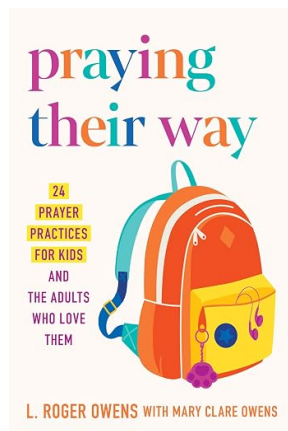


Faithful stewardship allows congregations to connect with the conference and the world to fund ministries that reach beyond the church walls. New church starts, outreach ministries, disaster response, and so many more are supported through apportionment giving.

To all the churches on track to reach this milestone - **THANK YOU!** Your faithfulness helps to continue sharing the love of Christ in meaningful ways.

Let us join in celebrating the churches in our district who have already paid 100% of their apportionments: Liberty - New Lebanon - Newtown - Seven Mile

We have many churches who are currently at 50% and on track for 100% by year-end: Armstrong Chapel - Brookville Community - California Community - Clifton - Fairview - Franklin First - Friendship - John Wesley - Memorial - Middletown First - Milford Calvary - Milford First - Milford Trinity - Mt Healthy - Normandy - Northern Hills - Oakwood - Okeana - Oregonia - Shiloh - Southern Hills - St Charles - St Mark's - Sulphur Grove - Westwood.



Praying Their Way: A Back-to-School Retreat Thursday August 6 | 5:00 pm

As we prepare for a new school year, families will soon be adjusting to new schedules and students will be preparing for new adventures. It is also a time to consider how we can foster spiritual growth.

Hosted by The Upper Room, join author L. Roger Owens for an interactive online retreat inspired by *Praying Their Way*, co-written with his daughter, Mary Clare Owens, as they discuss how to help children develop a meaningful and lasting prayer life. This retreat will offer practical tools and fresh inspiration for praying with and alongside children.

[Register Here](#)

A Tax Message from the General Council on Finance and Administration

The IRS recently issued new rules for group tax exemption rulings—the first major update in more than four decades. These changes don't affect day-to-day operations or tax-exempt status for United Methodist churches, but they do require the General Council on Finance and Administration of The United Methodist Church to send this annual notice to all UMC churches with the included [link to an IRS document](#) that explains our tax-exempt status.



Churches (and other core UMC entities like conferences and general agencies) that need to prove their tax-exempt status can still rely on letters from GCFA documenting their inclusion in the UMC group ruling. They can request a new letter at umgroupruling.org. GCFA will continue to provide information there and in annual messages like this one.

Churches do not have to do anything new. Some church-related organizations (such as foundations, camps, and other affiliated entities) that are included in the group ruling will be contacted directly by GCFA. If the related organization files a Form 990, 990 EZ, or 990-N, GCFA will need to collect additional information every year to follow the updated rules. GCFA is contacting those groups with more information.



2027 Local Church Mission Grants - Applications open August 1, 2027

Because of the faithful generosity and long-term vision of those who gave toward our Mission Foundation endowment, we have the great blessing of being able to offer grant funds to both local churches and United Methodist related ministry agencies in our district.

Applications are available for local churches and partner agencies to apply for a grant for 2027. [Click here](#) for church grant application, due October 2. [Click here](#) for the partner/agency grant application due November 6.

You can also find them on the [district website](#): under "Resources", "Grants."

If you have any questions or need any help with the grant application process, please contact Rev. Justin M. Fuhrmann, Great Miami River District Grants Committee Chair, at jfuhrma@hotmail.com or by phone at 847-913-4190.

Celebrating Milestone Anniversaries

If your church is commemorating a significant anniversary this year, the Ohio Methodist Historical Society would like to recognize and celebrate this milestone in the life of your congregation.



See [attached](#) information sheet with details on how to request an anniversary recognition certificate from the Ohio Methodist Historical Society. When possible, an OMHS officer will present the certificate as part of the scheduled anniversary celebration.

To learn more about the Ohio Methodist Historical Society, visit www.ohiomhs.org.
Questions? Contact Meg Sondey - m.sondey@yahoo.com | 440-487-7376.

College Connection



Thursday August 13 | 6:00 pm

[Wesley Campus Ministry](#) and [Edge Community](#) in Cincinnati have one remaining College Connect event before fall classes begin. The goal of College Connect is to help incoming first-year students at UC, Cincinnati State, and Xavier connect with their Campus Ministries before the school year starts.

Incoming first-year students and their youth or young adult leaders are invited to NOSH Thing (Night of Sharing, Offering, and Hospitality), Thursday, August 13 at The Wesley House, located at 2717 Clifton Ave, for dinner and conversation around "Things I wish I knew sooner".

RSVP is not required, but helpful for planning. Contact [Jeff](#) (Associate Director of Wesley Campus Ministry) or [Emily](#) (Associate Director, Edge Community) with any questions.

TRAININGS & EVENTS



REGISTRATION DEADLINE JULY 31

Ohio School of Ministry Presents "Abundant Grace: Fed by Christ, Sent to Feed the World" | August 31-Sept 2

The Ohio Episcopal Area is planning a three-day gathering for clergy and ministry leaders to worship, reflect, learn, and be renewed.

The theme, "You Feed Them," invites participants to consider how the Church is called to respond faithfully in a time of uncertainty.

The event will take place at Kalahari Resort in Sandusky. Register now for a time of renewal at Christ's table, equipped for faithful ministry, and strengthened in community to share God's abundant love with a world in need.

Learn more about the agenda and register [here](#)

Green Church Training Sunday, August 30 | 4:00-7:00 pm

The Ohio Episcopal Area will present an in-person Green Church Training on Sunday, August 30, from 4:00-7:00pm at the Urban Farm Church, 3901 Maize Road, Columbus.



Green Church Training provides a solid foundation for moving your church toward green solutions. The training includes Biblical, Wesleyan, and United Methodist teachings on creation care; tips for forming a Green Team at your church; and plenty of ideas and suggestions for creative ways to green your church - plus time to plan and dream with your church team!

More information and registration can be found [here](#).

Lay Servant Ministries

One of the most significant lay leadership development programs available within the United Methodist connection, [Lay Servant Ministries](#) equips and empowers lay



servants to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ who then go and make other disciples.

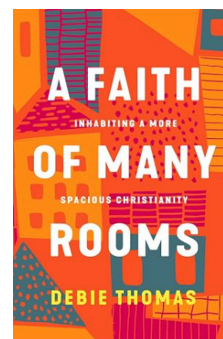
Remaining classes for 2026 are listed below. Click each link to learn more or [click here](#) to see a master list of all the courses, descriptions and leaders. Most are offered online via Zoom unless indicated:

- Great Miami River District: [Leading Public Prayer](#) - August 16, 18, 20, 23, 26
- Hocking River District: [The BASIC Course](#) - August 21 & 22
- Great Miami River District - [Social Justice in Everyday Life](#) - October 4, 6, 8, 11, 13
- Hocking River District: [Teaching Biblical Faith: Leading Small Group Bible Studies](#) - October 30 & 31
- Olentangy River District: [Living Our United Methodist Beliefs, Heritage](#) - November 1, 3, 5, 8, 10
- Western Lakes District: [Come! I Will Tell You a Story, An Introduction to Biblical Storytelling](#) - November 6-7

Expanding Connection Book Club August 18 | 7:00 pm Zoom

The Expanding Connection Book Club will be discussing *A Faith of Many Rooms: Inhabiting a More Spacious Christianity* by Debie Thomas.

Drawing on Jesus's metaphor of the reign of God as a house with many rooms, join the conversation with others to explore a vision of faith that embraces questions, growth, belonging, and grace.



[Click here to read more and get the Zoom link.](#) Questions? Contact Julie Carter – carter@wocumc.org.

LOCAL CHURCH & MINISTRY PARTNER EVENTS



Workshop: Church Social Media Presence
Tuesday August 18 | 10:00 am

Clifton UMC

See [flyer](#) for details

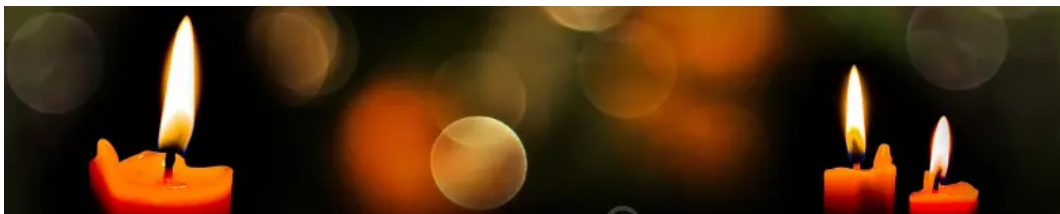


Grief Share Support Group
September 12 - November 21

New Day UMC

See [flyer](#) for more details

CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE



Let us remember with thanksgiving the ministry of those who served in West Ohio and pray for those grieving the loss of their loved ones. [Click here](#) to view notices of deceased clergy and clergy spouses.

The Great Miami River District remembers **Ruth Norene Bryant**, a devoted servant of God whose greatest blessing was her role as a loving wife, mother, and granny. She passed away on July 27 at the age of 100. Ruth was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. Paul Bryant who passed away in May of 1996.

Visitations will be held on Sunday August 2, 2026, from 1:00 - 3:00 pm, with a memorial service immediately following at 3:00 pm. Interment will follow on Monday, August 3, 2026 at 11:00 am in Ferncliff Cemetery in Springfield, OH.

Ruth's complete obituary may be found [here](#)

CLASSIFIEDS

[Click here](#) to view/respond to the ads below

[Click here](#) to submit your own classified ad or event



Employment

Contemporary Worship Leader - *Faith Community UMC*

Pastoral Care Coordinator - *New Vision UMC*

Family Futures Coach - *Dayton Equity Center*

Music Director and Organist - *Monfort Heights UMC*

Ministry Assistant of Community Outreach, Global Outreach & OTR Campus *Hyde Park Community UMC*

Assistant Director of Faith Formation for Young Adults - *Hyde Park Community UMC*

Organist/Accompanist - *Fairview UMC*

Pianist/Organist - *Brecon UMC*

Bell Choir Director - *Sulphur Grove UMC*

Administrative Assistant - *Hamilton First UMC*

Items Available

UMC latch hook wall hanging - *Great Miami River District office*

Piano - *Oak Hills UMC*

Great Miami River District | 7388 E Kemper Road | Cincinnati, OH 45249 US

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