



Western Lakes District

News from The United Methodist Church

WLD Office (937) 739-4445 Email: westernlakes@wocumc.org

WLD Important Information Volume 42-February 21, 2025

Bishop Names Ohio Episcopal Area Task Team and Consultant

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung has named the members of the Ohio Episcopal Area Task Team and the consultant who will facilitate its work. The team consists of eight members and two ex-officio staff members from both the East Ohio and West Ohio Conferences. Their role is to actively listen, discuss, discern, and make decisions about forming a new, unified Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church.

“God is calling us into this new strategic journey together. This task team has been prayerfully selected—each person strong in faith and deeply committed to The United Methodist Church. They are organized for this important work,” Bishop Jung said.

[continue reading](#)

Statistical End of the Year Reports

Pastors, Treasurers and Administrative Council/Leadership Team Chairs were emailed two weeks ago with instructions for completing year end reports. You will need to establish new credentials to access your church’s information this year. However, multiple people in the same church can have access, which should make it easier to complete the reports in a timely manner. If you have any questions, contact Jack Frost at jfrost@wocumc.org. The deadline to complete your reports is April 18th.

Clergy Spouse Retreat

Spouses of clergy from across many denominations are invited to a retreat March 7-9 at Wanake Camp and Retreat Center in Beach City, OH. The theme of this year’s retreat is drawn from the words of Psalm 93---

“The crashing waves of the sea are loud and powerful, but the Lord Above is even more powerful.”



This retreat will be a time of fellowship, support, fun, and worship for clergy spouses, who hold a unique position in the life of the Church.

The cost of the retreat is \$135. If you are the spouse of a United Methodist Church clergyperson, the cost is just \$100 thanks to a generous donation from the East Ohio Conference. First-time clergy retreat attendees are eligible for a \$50 discount. To receive the discount code, please [e-mail Jeannette Burkhardt](mailto:Jeannette.Burkhardt@wocumc.org). The deadline to register is Friday, February 21. [Click here](#) to be redirected to the East Ohio Conference website to register.

Nominate for the Harry Denman Award?

The Harry Denman Evangelism Award program honors United Methodists in each annual conference whose exceptional ministry of evangelism – expressed in Word (what), Sign (why), and Deed (how) – brings people into a life-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ. To read more, [click here](#).

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2025 Harry Denman Evangelism Award: [click here](#) to download and complete the form with your nomination. Please submit the form and supporting documents to mgrace@wocumc.org, or mail them to West Ohio Conference, Attn. Mariellyn Grace, 32 Wesley Blvd, Worthington, OH 43085. Nominations are due by March 15, 2025.

West Ohio Green Church Training is February 23

The West Ohio Conference is excited to present the first Green Church Training for local churches, coming Sunday, February 23, 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! The training must be attended by at least two people from each church (either two lay or one lay, one clergy). After completing the training, churches will either create a Green Team (if they do not already have one) or complete a green project at their church. Cost of the training is \$50 for a church team of two people (additional church members are welcome to attend at \$10 per person). Scholarships are available for churches with financial need. Please register all participants from your church at the same time. For more information, contact mgrace@wocumc.org. Register here: [Green Church Training - February 23 | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church](#)



Restorative Justice 101

Harm can be perpetuated in different ways. Healing from harm can also be done in different ways; or, in some cases, not at all. Retribution for harm done is one way to seek justice but is it the only way? This month during Ministry Mondays, we will take a look at what restorative justice is and the potential it has to help others heal from harm. We will also talk about using the framework to support healing in your ministry context.

Monday, February 24, beginning at 7:00pm on ZOOM.

ADVANCED REGISTRATION is APPRECIATED

<https://qrco.de/bfia1a>

Cost: FREE

Questions and requests for the ZOOM link can be directed to Jami Nathan, AIC Ministries Coordinator, by email (jami.nathan.22@gmail.com) or by phone (419-591-9717).

Resources for Celebrating Black History Month

February is Black History Month, a time to celebrate the contributions of Black Americans, reflect on our shared history, and commit ourselves to the ongoing work of racial justice. As United Methodists, we are called to stand against racism. Our Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church and our Book of Resolutions affirm our commitment to racial justice and reconciliation. Pastors, congregations, and faith communities are encouraged to use this time to deepen your understanding and take tangible steps toward justice.

Resources are available from the General Board of Church and Society and the General Commission on Race and Religion. In addition, the East Ohio Conference has developed Sunday school lessons for children to equip them with historical knowledge and a theological framework for racial justice called *All in God's Image*. [Click here](#) to review these resources and more.

RESCHEDULED EVENT - East and West Ohio Conferences To Commemorate MLK Day on February 23rd

The East and West Ohio Conferences of The United Methodist Church are coming together to honor the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with a joint worship service on Sunday, January 19, 2025, at Garfield Memorial United Methodist Church in Pepper Pike. Themed “Living the Dream: Bold Faith, Hopeful Future,” the event hosted by Bishop Hee-Soo Jung will focus on building Dr. King’s vision of a beloved community rooted in justice, love, and hope.

The service, scheduled from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., will open with gathering music at 3:45 p.m. and feature retired Bishop Julius C. Trimble, General Secretary of the General Board of Church & Society of The United Methodist Church as the keynote speaker. Known for his commitment to justice and reconciliation, Bishop Trimble will offer a message of inspiration and challenge.

Music will be provided by Garfield Memorial UMC’s praise band, setting the tone for a meaningful and uplifting gathering. The service will be live-streamed, allowing broader access for those unable to attend in-person.

Following the service, an informal reception will take place, offering light refreshments and opportunities for fellowship and conversation.

This event, which is free and open to the public, aims to inspire participants to carry forward Dr. King’s God-given vision of unity and hope. “Our hope is that people will leave this worship experience inspired to build on Dr. King’s vision of beloved community,” organizers said.

Join us as we celebrate the legacy of Dr. King and seek to embody his dream for a bold faith and hopeful future.

2025 LSM Calendar

We have begun scheduling the lay servant ministry classes for 2025. Classes that are scheduled so far are listed at the following link:

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

Some of our upcoming classes and registrations are as follows:

Hocking River District - United Methodist Heritage

(February 28th and March 1st)

[Register Here](#)

Great Miami River – Introduction to Lay Ministry (March 16, 18, 20, 23, 25, 2025)

[Register Here](#)

Great Miami River – Public Prayer (March 30, April 1, 3, 6, 8, 2025)

[Register Here](#)

Olentangy River District – Introduction to Lay Ministry: The Basic Course (April 4 and 5, 2025)

[Register Here](#)



Olentangy River District – Discover Your Spiritual Gifts (May 16 & 17)

[Register Here](#)

Hocking River District – Discovering Spiritual Gifts (June 6 & 7, 2025)

[Register Here](#)

Hocking River District – Basic Course (September 12 and 13, 2025)

[Register Here](#)

Hocking River District – Loving People and Planet in God's Name (October 31 and November 1, 2025)

[Register Here](#)

New Emerging Generations Resources

With a new year, some new and exciting things are happening within the area of Emerging Generations.

- We have an [Emerging Generations tab on the West Ohio Conference website](#)! This is where you can find information about ministries connected to children, youth, and young adults. Check back often as this page will grow as the year goes on.

- Looking for a [Family Ministry based Lenten Devotional](#)? We've got that on the Emerging Gen website ready for your congregation. If you need this resource in a different language, we are happy to provide you with that as well.

- [Emerging Generations Connections](#) is a new monthly way for those working with children, youth, and young adults to connect with upcoming events, resources, and support one another through stories of celebration.



If you would like to be added to the distribution list for the Emerging Generations Connection email or would like assistance in any other area that engages children, youth, or young adults contact Rev. Ann Marie Carley, Director of Camps, Retreats, and Next Gen Engagement for the West Ohio Conference (amcarley@wocumc.org or 380-223-9369).



ALL IN COMMUNITY

Wellness Wednesdays

PROVIDED BY:



LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH II ONLINE

12:30-1:30PM (ZOOM ROOM OPENS @ 11:30AM)

ZOOM REGISTRATION:

[HTTPS://WOCUMC.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/5TOA3DKASQGAMW6T7B3XGA](https://wocumc.zoom.us/meeting/register/5toA3dKaSQGAmw6T7b3XGA)

We cannot do this thing called life without God and without one another. And so, we want to continue undergirding you personally with education, tools and techniques that promote well-being in mind, body, and spirit .

Wellness Wednesdays provide a safe online space, a brave space, to receive a good tip on how to maintain health and well-being in the midst of life's challenges. Focused on living out the Scriptures and being present for those who are impacted by criminal justice systems, this time together provides real-time conversation and relevant education around creative ways to care for ourselves as we co-labor in "doing justice."

Join this online community as we address and uplift the critical need for nurturing among our All In ministry servants and community partners.

Presenter: Dr. Camisha Chambers, AIC Nurturing Communities Coordinator
nurturingcoordinator@gmail.com

Zoom Registration:

<https://wocumc.zoom.us/meeting/register/5toA3dKaSQGAmw6T7b3XGA>

UMCom Online Trainings

From how to create a Facebook group to a course on welcoming people to your church, United Methodist Communications offers a variety of free courses that can help your church communicate better with your community! [FIND COURSES HERE](#)

Scholarship Information Available

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) Scholarships offers financial aid to United Methodist students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees. Every year, an average of \$4.5 million is awarded to help students in the United States and abroad pursue their dreams through higher education. With this financial aid, GBHEM is opening pathways for students of all backgrounds to earn their degrees and serve as the next generation of leaders for the church and the world.



GBHEM scholarship applications open in January each year. You may only submit one application per year, which will be screened for all possible eligible programs. You may indicate on the first page of your application which of the below listed programs you would most like to be considered for. Scholarship programs are divided into three categories:

- **General Scholarships**

- **HBCU Scholarships**
- **Ministry as a Career Scholarships**

Foundation for Evangelism Grants

Equipping the Local Church Grants from the Foundation for Evangelism will be "awarded to small and medium church congregations, or clusters of churches working together, in a Wesleyan-tradition denomination. The grant is intended to help launch an experiment or initiative to share the Gospel in word and deed, build relationships, and invite others into a discipleship journey with Jesus." Grant awards are \$5,000 or \$10,000 and applications are open through February. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

Our 2025 Annual Conference is May 28-31

The 56th session of the West Ohio Conference will be held May 28 - May 31, again this year at Capital University in Bexley. This will be the first Ohio Episcopal Area annual conference in which Bishop Hee-Soo Jung presides. The theme for the session is *Rise Up, Beloved: Trust in God's Promises*, inspired by Mark 5:35-43, where Jesus encourages Jairus, a synagogue leader, to have faith that his deceased daughter will be raised from the dead. Registration will open on March 1. For more information, [click here](#).



At large members are needed to represent the Western Lakes District. If you are interested in serving, please contact Cortney at creed@wocumc.org.

VIM Team Leader Training March 8

Are you planning a mission journey in 2025 or beyond? Join West Ohio for a Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Team Leader Training! With an experienced team leader as instructor, you will learn how to plan and lead a mission experience in Ohio, the United States, or around the world. You will also be provided with checklists, timelines, team forms, and practical resources for nurturing the spiritual life of your team. A background check is required.

Cost: \$35 (training, materials & lunch)

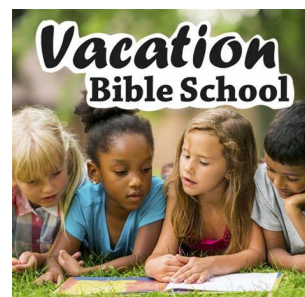
Deadline to register: March 4

Sat, 03/08/2025 - 09:00 AM - Sat, 03/08/2025 - 01:00 PM

Aley United Methodist Church
4143 Kemp Rd, Beavercreek, OH 45431
Contact Mariellyn Grace at mgrace@wocumc.org
Price \$35.00
[Register Now!](#)

UM Foundation of Ohio VBS Mini Grants

Applications for VBS mini-grants will open on January 27, thanks to the generosity of a major donor who invested her resources into honoring her family's legacy through an endowment with the United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio. Grants of \$250-\$1000 will be available for curriculum materials, supplies, staff costs, or other expenses related to the production of Vacation Bible School programs in West Ohio churches.



Applications are due by February 28. Additional consideration will be given to those serving rural and underserved communities. Contact Maddy DeWitt

Ohio Methodist Historical Society Convocation & Annual Meeting May 2nd & 3rd

What a wonderful opportunity we have to tell our faith story. Telling our faith story gives us an opportunity to share how God has worked in our lives. It is a way to Praise and Honor God. We want to focus on these stories this year and make sure we use all of our senses. We hope you will come join us for an unforgettable experience. We hope that it will inspire you to explore different ways to tell your faith story as well as your Church's faith story.

[More Information](#)

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

Lary Dale Luzader, passed away Thursday, January 16th at the age of 89. Lary is survived by his wife of 63 years, Rev. Dorothy Ann Luzader, his two sons, David Luzader, daughter-in-law Catherine Finney Luzader and grandsons, Joshua, Samuel, Jonah, Michael and Benjamin, son the Rev. Stephen Luzader also his sister Jean Marie Gastonguay of Cleveland, Ohio.

In retirement Lary was involved in Gideons and loved doing campus distributions of the Bibles with the students. A longtime church member, he worked with the men's group ARMM, attended Men's Bible Study and co-lead day trips for seniors at Anderson Hills Church.

A fall resulted in a brain bleed snuffing his life in 12 hours on Thursday January 16, 2025 devastating the family.

A private burial for the family was held February 5, 2025 at Spring Grove Cemetery with the Rev. Dr. Jon Ferguson of Anderson Hills Church presiding. There was a military presence. T.P. White will be serving the family.

[Full Obituary Here](#)

Mrs. Wanda Beth Boggs passed away Tuesday, December 31, 2024, at the age of 96. Born January 19, 1928, she was preceded in death by her husband Rev. Clarence Eldon "Evarts" Boggs. Rev. Boggs and his wife served as missionaries to Japan, raised five children, and served in ministry to the West Ohio Conference as a pastor for 29 years prior to his death in February of 2000.

Condolences may be sent to: 4900 Ninebark Court, Fort Collins, CO 80528

Rev. Michael Thomas Messick, 72, of Lancaster, Ohio, passed away February 2, 2025. Even through a long and well-fought fight with several illnesses over the last year, he kept his sense of humor until the very end.

He is survived by his wife Rev. Ruth Messick. Michael adored his family and is survived by his children Shelli (Matt) King of Brentwood, TN, Jason (Sharon) Messick of Mt. Juliet, Bryan (Amanda) Messick of Central, UT, Katie Smith of Ashland, KY, and Sarah (Krist'n) Hutchinson of Ashville, OH, his beautiful grandchildren Jodi (John) Messick, JT Messick, Matthew King, Stephen (Georgia) Messick, William King, Sydney Messick, Corban Messick, Kaylee Messick, and Raylan Smith, and great grandchildren Esther and Athena Messick. He is also survived by his three sisters. He was preceded in death by his parents and his still-born brother.

After receiving a call to ministry after the Navy, Michael spent his life bringing the word of

Jesus to everyone he met through his sermons, his love, his sweet and gentle spirit, and his wonderful stories.

He served several congregations within the West Ohio Conference Eldorado (DN) 1988; Crosby (C) 1990; Crosby-New Haven (C) 1992; West Mansfield (S) 1995; Circleville Good Shepherd (CS) 2004; Incapacity Leave 2009.

Visitation will be held at Wellman's funeral home was on February 9, 2025. In lieu of flowers, gifts in memoriam can be made to the Fairfield Medical Center Foundation in gratitude for the incredible care he received during some of the most trying times of his life. Online condolences can be made to www.wellmanfuneralhomes.com.

[Full Obituary Here](#)

Randall M. Flory, age 52, of Eaton, OH, passed away Monday, December 30, 2024 at his residence after a long courageous battle with ALS. Randy is survived by his wife Rev. Laura Griffin as well as many family members listed below.

He was born November 17, 1972 in Dayton, OH. Randy was a 1991 graduate of Eaton High School; was a lifelong Preble County farmer and was also a local welder and diesel mechanic; was an avid Green Bay Packers fan, enjoyed collecting John Deere tractors, and enjoyed building and riding Harley Davidson motorcycles.

He was preceded in death by his father Donald Flory; and uncle Toney Flory along with numerous other aunts and uncles. He is survived by his mother Dottie Flory of Eaton; daughters Hayley (Daniel) Flory-Perry of West Alexandria and Sydney Flory of Eaton; wife Laura Griffin of Eaton; sisters Tanya (Doug) Henning of Eaton and Tamera (Patrick) Jones of Camden; brothers Thomas (Griselda) Flory of West Manchester and Rodney (KeLinda) Flory of Dublin; and numerous aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

Visitation was held on Friday, January 3, 2025 at the Gard Funeral Home & Cremation Services, 226 W. Main St., Eaton, OH with Pastor Greg Jackson officiating. Burial followed at Fairview Cemetery in Gratis. Memorial contributions may be sent to the ALS Association, 1300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209. Online condolences and other remembrances may be sent to the family by visiting <https://www.gardfuneralhome.com/obituaries/randall-flory>

John Delmer Hart, 56, of Lancaster, OH, passed away on February 11, 2025. John was born December 11, 1968 in Tacoma, WA, the son of Thomas Hart and Evelyn Jensen Hart.

John had a unique ability to connect with people; he never met a stranger and made friends wherever he went. He was a dedicated member of Shalom United Methodist Church. He always loved food ministry and cooking for others as well as helping with technology.

Remaining to cherish John's memory are spouse, Rev. Melissa Hart; son, Luke Hart; sister-in-law, Dawn Jacobs; brother-in-law, Mark (Janay) Jacobs; many nieces and nephews; and many friends he loved as family.

Visitation will be held Friday, February 28th from 6:30-8:30pm and Saturday, March 1st beginning at 9:30am with the memorial service to start at 11am at Shalom United Methodist Church, 4925 Plum Rd, Carroll, OH 43130. Rev. Dr. Scot Ocke will be officiating, and lunch will be served after the service. Anyone wishing to view the service online can watch the livestream on Facebook at Shalom United Methodist Church – Carroll or on the church website at www.shalomumchurch.org. Interment will be at Wakeman Cemetery in Waterville, OH at a later date. Military Honors will be conducted by the Whitehouse American Legion Post #384. Memorial donations in John's memory may be directed to Luke Hart's College Fund. Checks should be made out to Melissa Hart and

may be sent to Shalom United Methodist Church at the address above. [Full Obituary Here](#)

Marilyn Jean (Parrett) Zimmerman, who passed away on February 13, 2025. Marilyn was born on May 7, 1937, in Washington CH to the late Robert and Loa (Straley) Parrett. She grew up on a small farm in Fayette County. She was a 1955 graduate of Washington High School and attended Asbury College where she earned her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education.

Marilyn was the wife of Rev. Paul Zimmerman, a retired elder in the United Methodist Church. Paul served in the Indiana Conference from 1963 until transferring into the West Ohio Conference in 1980, where he served Bloomingburg-Madison Mills (CS) 1980; Liberty Chapel (D) 1989; and St Paris (S) 1993, retiring in 1997.

A viewing will be held on Monday, February 17, 2025, at the Summers Funeral Home, Washington Court House, from 4-6:00 p.m. In keeping with her wishes, cremation is to follow. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. [Obituary](#)

Condolences may be left online or sent to Rev. Paul Zimmerman, 643 High Street, Washington Court House, Ohio, 43160.

Mrs. Roylene Reed passed away on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. Roylene was the wife of the late Rev. Albert Reed. She supported Rev. Albert's ministry as they served these congregations in the West Ohio Conference: Broadus U.M., Springfield, OH, West Ohio Conf., Lex., C.S. 1963; Braden U.M., Toledo OH, West Ohio Conf. 1966; C.C.O.M. Staff, West Ohio Conf. 1986; Trilby (T) 1989; Coord. Metro Ministries Toledo District 1990; LOA 1990; Retired 1995.

On December 24, 1963, she united in marriage to Albert L. Reed and moved to Springfield, Ohio where Albert was a seminary student at Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio. Roylene taught in the Columbus school system. She continued her studies at The Ohio State University. In June, 1966 Albert and Roylene moved to Toledo, Ohio where Albert was appointed to Braden United Methodist Church. They lived and worked in the Braden community for twenty years. Roylene retired from Toledo Public Schools, July 1, 2000, where she taught for more than thirty years. She received a master's degree from the University of Toledo. During this time two children were born to this union, a son Timothy Lee Reed, and one daughter Alberta Jean Reed-Freeman (Michael). She leaves one brother, Thomas Wilson.

Funeral was Feb 18 11:00am at Braden United Methodist Church 4725 Dorr St, Toledo, OH 43615-4030 (419) 241-7257 [Full Obituary Here](#)

Leo Allen Brown, 72, of Quinlan, Texas, entered his Heavenly home on February 16, 2025. He was born on October 13, 1952, in Defiance, Ohio, to the late Robert & Virginia (Warren) Brown.

Leo dreamt of being a farmer and he spent over 25 years milking cows and farming land around the Oakwood area. While there, Leo met and married Rev. Rita Brown in 1991, where she so willingly became an instant mom to his three children, Pete, Sara, and Kris. Whenever Rita's ministry required a relocation to a new church, Leo so selflessly followed without hesitation. He supported her through her career and trusted God through it all. His faith was unwavering and admirable as he knew God would make a way for their family wherever He called them. They spent their marriage serving and blessing others – with him at the organ and piano and her at the pulpit in a number of churches in the West Ohio Conference: Oakwood First (D) 1991; Allentown-Zion Charge (L) 1996; Lebanon Assoc (W) 2002; Mills Memorial (CAS) 2007. Upon their retirement to Texas, Leo continued to share his musical gifts as the church organist at Quinlan United Methodist Church until the end of his life.

In addition to his parents, Leo was preceded in death by his wife, Rev. Rita K. Brown; son, Pete Brown; and sister, Cynthia Grimes. He leaves behind to cherish his memory: daughter, Sara Pollock of Morrow, Ohio; daughter and son-in-law, Kristine & Scott Reed of Fairview, Texas; two grandchildren, Blaine & Charleigh Reed; brothers and sisters-in-law,

Bob & Sue Brown of Oakwood, Ohio, Bill & Linda Brown of Antwerp, Ohio, and Larry & Diane Brown of Defiance, Ohio; sister and brother-in-law, Rainell & Bill Koenn of Cecil, Ohio; brother-in-law, Eugene "Beanie" (Gloria) Grimes of Toledo, Ohio; and countless nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, February 23, 2025 at 2:00pm at Ted Dickey West Funeral Home, 7990 President George Bush Turnpike, Dallas, TX 75252. Visitation will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2025 from 9:30-11:00am, with a Celebration of Life Service beginning at 11:00am at the Oakwood Community Church, 202 E. Harmon St., Oakwood, Ohio 45873. [Full Obituary Here](#)

2025 Appointments

Appointments

The list of pastoral appointments beginning January 1, 2025, can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

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



West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church | 32 Wesley Boulevard | Worthington, OH 43085 US

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