



Western Lakes District

News from The United Methodist Church

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

WLD Important Information Volume 40-January 24, 2025

Bishop Announces Day on the District Events - Clergy and Laity

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung has announced Day on District gatherings for clergy and laity. The theme is "Healing and Restoration in Community," with the scripture Mark 2:1-12 as a guiding principle.

Clergy sessions will begin at 10am and conclude at 3:30pm. Bishop Jung highly encourages all clergy to attend as district strategy and visioning will be part of the agenda. If you cannot attend the date assigned to your district, please contact your district superintendent and select another district event to attend.

Lay leaders are invited to meet at 4:00pm. Laity sessions will begin with dinner at 5pm and will conclude by 8:30pm. The schedule includes worship, Bible study led by Bishop Jung and a visioning and ministry conversation.

Mark your calendar - registration is coming soon ---

- Olentangy River District – Stonybrook UMC, Saturday, February 1
- **Western Lakes District - Bellefontaine First UMC, Monday, February 3**
- Hocking River District – The Plains, Saturday, February 8
- Scioto River District – Walnut Street UMC, Thursday, February 20
- Great Miami River District – Monroe UMC, Saturday, February 22

[Register Here](#)



United Methodists See Loss, Offer Relief

As wind-blown wildfires ravage Los Angeles County, United Methodists are doing what they can to offer shelter and address immediate needs.

They are also starting to count their own losses — which include the destruction of church members' homes and the buildings of at least two United Methodist churches.



"I've never seen anything like it in my life, and I've been through two earthquakes and other fires," said the Rev. Garth Gilliam, superintendent of the [California-Pacific Conference's](#) North District. "I've never seen the vast scope of blocks and blocks of homes

just gone.”

[Read more](#) from Heather Hahn, United Methodist Communications

To support this and other U.S. disaster response and recovery efforts, [donate to UMCOR here](#).

Leadership Training 2025

Registration Now Open!

Plan to join us on Zoom if you'll be serving on Finance, S/PPRC or Trustees, or to explore the One Board Leadership Model.

These one-hour training sessions are for new and seasoned leaders. They will help you understand the duties and responsibilities of

Finance, S/PPRC, Trustees, and the One Board Leadership Model, respectively. Each session will include time for Q&A so you can serve effectively in your role.

The sessions are scheduled as follows. Please use the link below to register for the sessions that pertain to your role.

- **Finance: Tuesday, Jan 28, 2025**
- **S/PPRC: Wednesday, Jan 29, 2025**
- **Trustees: Friday, Jan 31, 2025**
- **One Board Leadership Model: Tuesday, Feb 4, 2025**

[Register for one or more of the training sessions here](#)

Please Note:

- All sessions will take place on Zoom from 10:30 - 11:30 am on the designated date.
- Please register if you can attend live OR if you'd like to receive access to the recording.
- Each session will last one hour.
- No in-person Leadership Training Day will take place in early 2025.
- All sessions will be recorded and available on the [West Ohio Conference Learning Platform](#).

[Register for the 2025 Leadership Training](#)

Frankly Speaking - February 4th

Join Rev. Rae Lynn Schleif and her guest speaker for an eye opening conversation around incarceration on Tuesday, February 4th at 7pm.

Copy the link below and paste it in your address bar to join the discussion.



Frankly Speaking
with
Four Friends

For more information:
Rev. Rae Lynn Schleif
Four Friends Speakers Bureau
Volunteer Coordinator
614-735-0190
rschleif@gmail.com
Jami Nathan
All In Community
Ministries Coordinator
419-591-9717
jami.nathan.22@gmail.com

Frankly Speaking with Four Friends

is a monthly opportunity to engage with restored neighbors (formerly incarcerated individuals) in conversations that will enlighten people about their lived experiences. Frank and open discussions will provide for the reduction of stigma around incarceration. Each month will feature different speakers and different topics for conversation.

WHEN: 1st Tuesdays at 7pm

WHERE: Online

COST: FREE to attend

<https://wocumc.zoom.us/j/86240001092>



Brought to you by All In Community, a mission outreach through the United Methodist Church in Ohio

<https://wocumc.zoom.us/j/86240001092>

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.

Carpool To the MLK Event February 23

Did you want to attend the MLK event on Feb 23, 2025 and didn't want to drive alone? We have an option for you.

CARPOOLING with three easy steps:

- Review options below
- Click on District/Church that works best for you.
- Register (please provide contact info for updates)
-

TRANSPORTED BY VAN - (ONE LOCATION AVAILABLE) GMR District, New Vision UMC, 4400 Reading Rd., Cincinnati, 45229 - use same steps as carpooling

We have collected a few churches along with their addresses that are graciously allowing us to use their parking lots to carpool from. When signing up, please provide your full name, a phone number and email address so you can be reached to be provided info the Friday before.

The address of the event is: Garfileld Memorial UMC, 3650 Lander Rd, Cleveland, OH 44124 Please notice in the location on the registration section that we have provided the approximate driving time it should take from the location you have chosen to Cleveland.

Should you have any questions, please email Lesley Moore at lmoore@wocumc.org

[Sign up to carpool 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).

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.

2025 Virtual Laity Discernment Retreats

Do you feel God's call on your life but are uncertain how to discern that call or what to do next? If so, then this is the Retreat for you! At the Laity Discernment Retreats, we will talk about call, discernment and what it means to be "called by our baptism." We will learn ways to intentionally enter into a time of prayer about discernment and we will discover Spiritual Rhythms that can help guide our journey. We will also discuss the variety of ways Laity can serve both in our churches



and in our communities.

In 2025, the virtual laity discernment retreat will consist of two, two-hour ZOOM sessions, followed 6 weeks later by a two-hour ZOOM debriefing. In the 6 weeks between sessions, there will be opportunities to read, reflect, and practice Spiritual Rhythms that will lead you to a better understanding of your own call.

"I would recommend a Laity Discernment Retreat to someone who is searching or has questions about how they can serve their community or their church. It can help guide them through the process, provide resources and help provide a sense of peace about what they can be doing right now." -Twila Boyd, 2019 participant

Dates (please plan to attend all 3 sessions):

- Tuesday, February 18, 2025, 6:30-8:30pm
- Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 6:30-8:30pm
- Tuesday, April 8, 2025, 6:30-8:30pm

· [Register Now!](#)

For more information, contact Kim LaRue at kimlarue@powellumc.org.

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

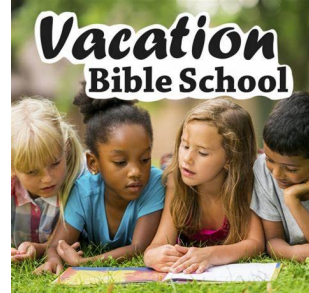
Price \$35.00

[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, with the opportunity to attend a special

zoom seminar on February 5 at 1pm to discuss how to submit a competitive VBS grant application. Additional consideration will be given to those serving rural and underserved communities.

Contact Maddy DeWitt at 380-223-9229 or mdewitt@wocumc.org for more information. VBS Grant Seminar Zoom Link: <https://wocumc.zoom.us/j/88190772238>

Lakeside Clergy Renewal Scholarships

As people of faith, keeping “Sabbath” is essential to maintaining one’s relationship with God. For clergy to truly have a Sabbath, it is often necessary to get away from home! However, the cost of travel is always a consideration.



Lakeside Chautauqua provides a place and also helps with the cost. United Methodist clergy may apply for a Renewal Scholarship that will provide hotel lodging (up to 3 nights) in the Fountain Inn. You are invited to take time with God along the beautiful shores of Lake Erie for rest and renewal. You can use this unstructured time for prayer, planning, and mediation. The time is yours. Lakeside Chautauqua provides accommodation free of charge. [Click here](#) for the application due February 15, 2025

Employment Opportunity - Music/Worship Leader

Asbury United Methodist Church seeks a music leader to lead music at our Sunday services. The person filling this position will work with the pastor and pianist to conduct meaningful, spiritually-enriching services.

Skills: This person will have the vocal skills to lead the congregation in the singing of hymns and perform occasional special music pieces. It is preferred– but not required– that this person can also play an instrument(s) to provide accompaniment with our pianist. While our services are currently more traditional in style, those who have a background in contemporary worship will be considered and are encouraged to apply.

Time Commitment: Sunday mornings from approximately 10:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Other times outside of Sunday services for worship planning and preparation, special services, or church functions may be required as well, but on a limited basis.

Character: The person filling this role should be punctual, come prepared for services, and have a strong sense of professionalism.

Faith Background: Though we are a United Methodist congregation, candidates from other denominations are more than welcome to apply.

Pay Rate: To be determined dependent upon skill level and experience.

Contact: To apply or inquire further, please email Pastor Jordan McKenzie at jlmckenzie@gmail.com. You may also call the church at (937) 964-1370.

Church Information Asbury United Methodist Church is a small but very active congregation in North Hampton, Ohio, approximately ten minutes outside of Springfield. Its mission is to share the love of Jesus with the Northwestern community and beyond.

Ohio Minimum Wage Increases

Please note that **Ohio's minimum wage** has increased from **\$10.45 to \$10.70 per hour**,

effective **January 1, 2025**. As a result, **new labor posters** reflecting this increase must be posted by the effective date (January 1, 2025). While these posters can be costly, **free downloadable labor posters** are available. Please see the following link to access and print the required poster. Please post the updated Ohio minimum wage poster as soon as possible.

[Download Ohio Minimum Wage Poster.](#)

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

Peggy Shimer, loving wife of Rev. Dr. Mark A Shimer, died suddenly on January 11, 2025. She was preceded in death by her parents, and survived by her husband, Mark; daughter Teresa (and John); son, Chris (and Renee); and granddaughter, Madeline.

Peggy was an invaluable asset for Mark as he tried to follow God's leading throughout his years of ministry in the West Ohio Conference with the following congregations: Bowersville Paintersville 1984; Bowersville 1985; Dayton Grace Assoc (DS) 1991; Springboro First (W) 1998; Defiance St Pauls (NWP) 2007; Personal Leave 2010 and into his retirement. She was an important consultant during Mark's Doctoral program. Yet, while supporting Mark, in her own quiet way Peggy was a strong, independent, and loving person in thought, word, and action. Starting in seminary and as they moved within the Conference, Peggy worked as secretary and office manager in various settings including Capital University, a local newspaper, and Clinton Memorial Hospital.

Peggy's children were constantly in her heart, and they were not afraid to call her for a listening ear and wise advice. When her granddaughter was born, she retired to become full-time grandma. Mark cannot define in words how much Peggy will be missed. In addition to family, Peggy was a lover of animals, especially dogs and cats. She also was passionate about her opportunity to volunteer time and effort at the food pantry at St Paul's UMC in Defiance. Your support of local food pantries, county animal shelters or a local Humane Society would make Peggy very happy and appreciative.

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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