



Western Lakes District

News from The United Methodist Church

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

WLD Important Information Volume 56-September 19, 2025

Thought For The Day...

The Baptized Believer

This morning, I joined over 300 clergy leaders from across the Ohio Episcopal area in a sacred moment of remembrance. We were invited to reflect on our baptism—the divine act through which God claims us as part of the beloved community. The preacher reminded us that while we may not always remember the day of our baptism, we are called to live lives that reflect its meaning. Sometimes, our actions fall short of that calling, and we must return to the waters in spirit, renewing our commitment.

Many believers across our district entered the waters of baptism as infants, others later in life. I was baptized as an infant, and though I don't remember the day, I vividly recall the baptisms of children in our congregation. I remember how the church embraced its promise—to raise us in faith. They became our Sunday school teachers, Vacation Bible School leaders, Cub Scout mentors, and more. They created a community of love, support, correction, and encouragement.

During a recent vacation, I had the joy of participating in the baptism of my grandsons. As we gathered around the baptismal font, I glanced at my son—whom I had once carried to the waters of baptism as an infant. I remembered passing him into the arms of our pastor, the Reverend Dr. William H. Robinson, Jr., my mentor. Now, I held my 21-month-old grandson in my arms, preparing to baptize him. The moment became even more profound when my son handed me his six-month-old child for baptism. In that instant, I imagined my own parents entrusting me to the care of our local church—a gesture of surrender and trust in the beloved community to nurture, instruct, and disciple.

As I returned to Ohio, leaving my son and grandchildren in the care of their congregation in Oak Harbor, WA, I felt peace. I knew they had found a beloved community that would walk with them in faith.

My prayer is that every local mission station in the WLD operates as a beloved community—where all who enter find love, support, discipleship, and encouragement. May we continue the hard work of becoming the *kin_dom* of God, living out our baptismal covenant with grace and purpose.

Let us pray;

Gracious and loving God, We thank You for the gift of baptism—Your sacred claim on our lives and Your invitation into the beloved community. Help us to remember our baptism not only in word, but in the way we live: with love, with grace, and with a deep commitment to one another.

Strengthen every congregation to be a place of welcome, discipleship, and care. May we embrace the responsibility of nurturing faith in every generation—teaching, guiding, and encouraging all who come through our doors.

Bless our children, our grandchildren, and all those entrusted to our care. Let Your Spirit move among us, shaping us into the kin_dom You envision— a community of hope, healing, and holy purpose.

In the name of Jesus Christ, who calls us beloved, Amen.

Don

It Was A Glorious Day

The people of the West Ohio Conference gathered to celebrate the installation and appointment of Rev. Don Wilson as District Superintendent of the Western Lakes District.

We pray for God's guidance in his leadership, strength for the journey ahead, and blessings upon the churches, pastors, and communities he will serve in this new season of ministry.



A special thank you to Bellefontaine First UMC for hosting this meaningful occasion!

To view more photos of this event, visit our Flickr album: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCtfAL>

Charge Conference Season is Here

The Church/Charge Conference season is once again upon us. While this season brings meetings and paperwork, it also serves as a moment for reflection, connection, and collective celebration of all that God has accomplished and offers the opportunity to chart the course for your church's shared journey of living out your faith, mission and ministry.

Your conference may be held anytime that best suits you between now and the end of November. If possible, please hold a more inclusive *Church Conference* and find an elder not associated with your church to preside so all may enjoy this time of fellowship and celebration. Once you have chosen your date and elder, please let the district office know on this [Sign Up Genius](#) or email me with the same information. If you are an active or retired Elder and would be willing to preside if called upon, please let Cortney know your availability. Charge conference forms should be completed at the time of your charge conference, and they are due online by December 1st.

A packet of forms is available on the Conference website here: [2025 Charge Conference and Annual Report Forms | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church](#).

Go! Grant Applications Open September 1

Are you bursting with passion and creativity to revolutionize ministry and make a lasting impact on your community?



Go! Grants support new, innovative ministry ideas that help West Ohio United Methodist churches build meaningful relationships beyond the walls of the church and within their local communities.

Last year, the West Ohio Conference received 220 applications for a Go! Grant. This year, we look forward to more churches applying. For help with ideation or questions, please plan to join one of the six Zoom whiteboard sessions.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Green Church Mini Grants Offered

As one category of the West Ohio GO! Grants, Green Church Mini Grants provide limited funding for a church's "green" projects such as recycling or composting programs; native plants for a pollinator garden; an Earth Day event; or installing energy efficient light bulbs. To be approved for funding, churches will sign the Green Church Pledge, complete a sustainability audit, and commit to attending Green Church Training. Each grant will supply \$100-\$750 for a green project, and recipients will be recognized at the Bishop's GO! Awards in February. To apply, complete the GO! Grant application here: <https://www.westohioumc.org/2026-go-grants>. Applications are due September 30. Questions can be directed to Mariellyn Grace, Director of Mission Engagement, at mgrace@wocumc.org.

A Very Special Presentation on Our Methodist Heritage

We are privileged to have David Worthington, the UMC's Global Ambassador of Methodist Heritage Sites, join us on **Monday, October 13th, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, at the West Ohio Conference Center in Worthington, Ohio**. David is visiting the United States from England, and he will be sharing 'Wisdom from the Past, Hope for the Future - A Methodist Heritage Story.'



David was appointed by the UMC General Commission of Archives and History as the Global Ambassador of Methodist Heritage Sites. He is committed to continuing the work begun by John and Charles Wesley in England nearly three hundred years ago as he believes their story, and that of the early Methodist movement, remains as relevant today as it did in the 18th century.

Please share this information with others who would enjoy learning more about John and Charles Wesley and our Methodist Heritage, and plan to join us for his presentation and a time of questions and answers at the West Ohio Conference Center, 32 Wesley Blvd., Worthington, Ohio. [Preregistration here](#) is appreciated but not required.

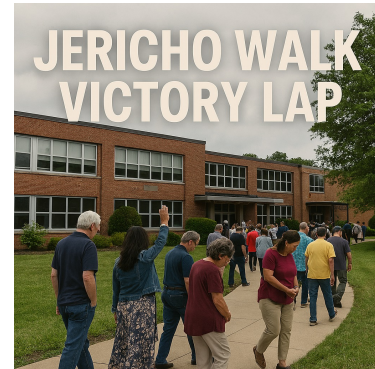
Walls Fall When Churches Stand Together

South Charleston UMC and other local churches unite in prayer for youth and community revival.

"Walking in unity with our brothers and sisters from other churches showed the power of one body, one mission."

— *Pastor Ben Webster, South Charleston UMC*

This past week, South Charleston UMC joined with other congregations in South Charleston, Ohio for a powerful Jericho Walk—a week of prayer, worship, and unity. Each morning, believers gathered at the school, read Scripture together, and then walked in prayer around the campus, asking God to move in mighty ways.



"There was a real sense of God's presence with us," said Rev. Ben Webster, pastor of South Charleston UMC. "Some mornings we sang, other mornings we walked in silence, but every day we were bound together by the Holy Spirit. It wasn't just about walking side by side—it was about interceding for our community."

Even those who were physically unable to walk joined in the movement. At 8:30 each morning, many gathered in their homes to pray alongside the walkers. "That was one of the most encouraging parts of this whole experience," Webster noted. "It showed that this was more than an event—it was a united act of prayer covering our community."

Much of the focus of the Jericho Walk was on the next generation. "We prayed that the youth of our town would develop an unsatiable hunger for the gospel," Webster explained. "But we also prayed that God would raise up workers for the harvest—mentors and disciples who can come alongside young people and guide them in the way of the Lord."

One of the most powerful aspects of the week was the unity among churches. "To see congregations of different denominations, traditions and backgrounds praying shoulder to shoulder was beautiful," Webster reflected. "It reminded us that when God's people come together in obedience and prayer, God hears and responds."

The walk culminated on Sunday, when participants circled the school seven times, just as Israel did in Joshua 6. The group declared in faith that God is not finished with this generation. The walk ended in worship, joy, and deep expectation for what is to come. Pastor Webster summed it up this way: "This Jericho Walk wasn't just symbolic. It was the beginning of a mighty movement of God in South Charleston. We believe that God's going to bring breakthrough and revival here—and we're ready to keep walking in faith."

Greenhouse Listening Sessions

Do you have a vision for a new ministry or church? Is your church looking to revitalize? Sign up for a time and date for your district to meet with Brad and Terri to share your ideas and dreams. We will share how the conference can support you.

For West Ohio, there are 5 time slots available for each location which is centrally located in your district. [9:30am, 11am, 12:30pm, 2pm, 3:30pm] If one of those times doesn't work for you, please send us an [email](#) and we can work something else out. Click on the day and location that works for you and you will be directed to a sign-up sheet.

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland..." ~ Isaiah 43:19

West Ohio Listening Sessions:

MAUMEE RIVER DISTRICT

[Tues, 9.23.25 | Bowling Green First UMC, 1526 E Wooster St, Bowling Green](#)

HOCKING RIVER DISTRICT

[Wed, 9.24.25 | Athens First UMC, 2 S. College St, Athens](#)

SCIOTO RIVER DISTRICT

[Tues, 10.14.25 | Greenfield First UMC, 405 South St, Greenfield](#)

GREAT MIAMI RIVER DISTRICT

[Wed, 10.15.25 | Middletown Christ UMC, 700 S Marshall Rd, Middletown](#)

GREENHOUSE - VERSION ESPANOL

[Wed, 9.17.25 | Zoom \[9:30am, 10:30am or 11:30am\]](#)

East Ohio Listening Sessions

[Click here for more information and sign up links.](#)

Christmas Miracle with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) and The Four Seven Ministries have created a beautiful opportunity for families to experience the Christmas holiday with their incarcerated loved ones. All In Community is collaborating with them to help this year.



Zoom with All In Community on Monday, September 22 at 7pm to hear details about this year's plans for each of the state correctional facilities and how you can help make Christmas magical for those who are often forgotten and left out of the holiday celebrations. And if you can't make this session, there is another planned for October 27.

Advance registration is requested. [Click here](#) to sign up.

[Printable Flyer](#)

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).

Festival of Sharing

The Festival of Sharing is a yearly service opportunity for United Methodists to prepare kits for hygiene, school, and cleanup to be delivered to those in need.

Kit collection is taking place at First Community Church-- North Campus (3777 Dublin Rd, Columbus) again this year on Friday, September 26th from 3-5 pm and Saturday, September 27th from 9-11 am.



We will once again be collecting kits at churches in our district so you don't have to make the drive to Columbus with your donation. [Visit the FOS website](#) to find the list of kits needed and the packaging instructions for each one. **The item list for the hygiene kits has changed!** Please check the site for the current list or find it below.

Drop-off locations near our district:

- **Van Wert First United Methodist Church** - 113 W. Central Ave., Van Wert, OH 45891 Dropoff dates and times: Monday-Thursday, September 15-18 - 8:30am - 1:30pm & Friday, September 19 - 8:30am-12pm Contact: Teresa Shaffer Teresa.shaffer@vanwertfirst.net
- **Spencerville Trinity UMC** - 119 N Main St, Spencerville, OH 45887 Dropoff dates and times: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9:00am-2:00pm, Sept 3-Sept 19 Contact: Stephanie McMichael office@spencervilletrinity.com
- **New Hope United Methodist Church** - 8985 W. Mason Rd, Sidney, OH 45365 Dropoff dates and times: By appointment before Thursday, Sept 24 Contact: Janice Michael sidneynewhope@gmail.com
- **First United Methodist Church** - 1526 E Wooster St, Bowling Green, OH 43402 Sept 2-Sept 19; Mon-Fri; 9am-3pm. Call or email Carol before drop-off. 419-353-0682 or church.office@fumcbg.org
- **St. Paul's United Methodist Church** - 400 Wayne Ave, Defiance, OH 43512 Sept 15-19; Mon-Fri; 8:30am-4:30pm. Call ahead at 419-782-3751
- **Journey at Christ UMC** - 225 W Bigelow Ave, Findlay, OH 45840 Sept 15-Sept 19; 9am-12noon. Call Nate at 419-422-6662 before dropping off.
- **Sylvania United Church of Christ** - 7240 Erie St, Sylvania, OH 43560 Sept 2-Sept 19; Mon-Fri 9am-2pm. Call or email Bridget, 419-882-0048 or church@sylvaniaucc.org
- **Northwest Ohio Association UCC** - 416 Wenz St, Tiffin, OH 44883 Friday, Sept 19, 8:00am-9:00pm

Year Round Dropoff Location

• **First Presbyterian Church** – 2330 S Main St, Findlay, OH 45840 Monday-Thursday by appointment only; contact Leslee at info@findlayfpc.org

[New Hygiene Kit list](#)

Green Church Training - Zoom

The Ohio Episcopal Area is excited to present the first VIRTUAL Green Church Training for local churches, coming Sunday, September 28, from 4:00-7:00pm on Zoom. Green Church Training provides a solid foundation for moving your church toward green solutions. The training includes Biblical, Wesleyan, and United Methodist resources for 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 should be attended by at least two people from each church (either two lay or one lay, one clergy). After completing the training, churches are invited to either create a Green Team (if they do not already have one) or complete a green project at their church. Cost of the virtual training is \$40 per church. Scholarships are available for churches with financial need. One participant from each church should register for the whole team; that person will be responsible for passing along information to the other team member(s). For more information, contact mgrace@wocumc.org.

Sunday, 09/28/2025 - 04:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Event Sponsored By the West Ohio Creation Care Task Force

Location Zoom

Contact Mariellyn Grace at mgrace@wocumc.org

Price \$40.00


[Register Now!](#)

Ohio's Annual Reentry Community Gathering Set

You are invited to participate in the Building Bridges of Opportunity 2025 Community Experience on September 24-25, 2025.

Centered on the theme ***H.O.M.E. for the Future***, this virtual and in-person event will focus on strategies to foster Hope, Opportunities, Mentoring, and Encouragement (H.O.M.E.) with young justice-impacted neighbors.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

 United Women in Faith

2025 Fall Celebration

Western Lakes District

Saturday, November 1, 2025 10:00 to Noon
First Place Christian Center, 16 West Franklin Street, Troy, OH

Speaker: Shaiyanne Myrick from the Wesley Community Center in Dayton, one of our National Mission Sites

Shaiyanne will be highlighting the **Baby Ready/Infant Mortality ministry**.

Please support this ministry by bringing one or more items from the Wish List as an offering..
(Monetary gifts are also welcome.)
The Wish List follows on the next page



Please call Brenda Coleman at 937-335-6071 or email clmbrenda@aol.com for reservations by October 27th

Please provide your name, your contact info and your church

— Morning refreshments will be served
(Freewill donations accepted)

Immediate Openings for Song Leader and Pianist

Asbury United Methodist Church – North Hampton, Ohio

Asbury UMC is a small but active church located 10 miles from Springfield, Ohio. Our mission is to *share the love of Jesus with the Northwestern community and beyond*. We are seeking individuals gifted in music and leadership to help guide our congregation in worship. Applicants from all denominations are encouraged to apply. **These roles may be filled separately or combined into one position for the right candidate.**

Position 1: Song Leader

This person will lead the congregation in singing hymns and worship music, offer occasional special vocal music, and collaborate with the pastor and pianist in worship planning.

Necessary qualifications are a strong vocal ability to confidently lead singing; be professional, punctual, and prepared, and have faith in Jesus Christ. An ability to play an instrument is a plus, but is not required.

Position 2: Pianist

This individual will play piano for Sunday worship; accompany hymns, choirs and soloists; provide preludes, postludes and offertories; and collaborate with the pastor and song leader in worship planning. Playing the organ would be a welcome bonus.

Necessary qualifications are proficiency in piano, experience in traditional and contemporary music, and faith in Jesus Christ.

Hours and pay:

Sundays 10:00am – 12:00pm (plus limited planning and special services)

Compensation: \$8,000 - \$10,000 annually depending on experience for each position.

Email: pastoramanda27@gmail.com Telephone: (614) 900-2730

Foundation Adds Will-maker Feature to Website

The United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio is excited to announce a new feature on its website: www.umfwestohio.org. The *Plan Your Philanthropy* page on the site now features the option to make a free basic will via an online platform made available from Crescendo.

It's estimated that nearly 70% of people don't have a will, which can cost descendants more in the long run through the probate process. Cost and access to help are typically identified as the primary barriers. This resource allows anyone to make a simple will for free and put their estate plans in order and their minds at ease.

Simply [click on this link](#), create an account and follow the detailed instructions. Users will be able to download their will to share with loved ones.

For more information contact the Foundation at 330-223-9257.

Laity Sunday 2025: Be Strong in the Spirit

Laity Sunday is a special observance in the United Methodist Church that celebrates the ministry of all Christians, emphasizing that everyone is called to participate in God's mission. It is traditionally observed on the third Sunday in October (this year, October 19th) and serves as a reminder of the vital role that laypersons play in the church and community.

Ministries of the laity include lay leaders, lay servants, Sunday school teachers, small group Bible study leaders, deaconesses, home missionaries, and other significant forms of ministry.

For the 2025 to 2028 quadrennium, the theme is "Together By Grace," with a specific focus for 2025 on "Be Strong in the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:16). This theme encourages laypersons to embrace their spiritual strength and actively engage in ministry. [Click here](#)

Pay Your Apportionments Online with E-Check



We are excited to announce that the Conference now offers apportionment payments online via e-check. The conference will cover processing fees.

If you are a treasurer or someone authorized to make payments on behalf of your church, you will need to be registered at westohioumc.org, have permission to view MyChurch, and editing privileges. Please reach out to your district administrator for assistance.

Before you decide if e-check is a good option for your church, please log onto our website at westohioumc.org > MyChurch > Apportionments. There you will find a link to the "e-check Good to Know." You will also find the tutorial and link to make your payment.

At-A-Glance Look - Upcoming Courses

Welcome to your opportunity to become a more effective leader, build faith, and learn something new - we have classes below for you! Please choose one that meets you where you are. Details provided for each behind the button below.



Loving People and Planet in God's Name (Deadline 10.27.2025)

Called to Preach (Deadline 11.1.2025)

[Sign Up Here](#)

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

Mrs. Joyce Ann "Judy" Klingel, who passed away on September 4, 2024. Judy was married to Rev. Robert Klingel, an Elder in the United Methodist Church who served the Monroeville Charge, N IN Conf; Carey Memorial, King Avenue Associate, Oakland Park, Fairfield St. Mark's, Newark Christ, Wesley, Englewood, Miamisburg St. James, and Fairfield St. Mark's congregations.

Judy graduated from Marion Business College, Marion, Ohio and retired in 2005 after serving 30 years as an administrative secretary in both public schools and court systems. Her life was dedicated to her family and the churches her husband served. Judy is survived by her husband of 65 years, Robert Klingel and son Douglas Klingel (Kerri and granddaughter Lauren). She was preceded in death by daughter Jill Szul, grandson Connor Szul, brother Richard Bauer and parents Hazel and Ralph Bauer. [Obituary link](#). A Celebration of Life was held on Sunday, September 14th at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Fairfield.

Condolences will reach Rev. Bob Klingel at 5784 Longbow Drive, Fairfield Twp, Ohio 45011-2127. Memorial Contributions may be made to St. Mark's UMC, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation of Greater Cincinnati, or a charity of your choice.

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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!