



Western Lakes District

News from The United Methodist Church

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

Volume 20 - April 12, 2024

WLD Important Information



Gregory V. Palmer

Resident Bishop | *Ohio West Area*



Beloved friends in Jesus and of Jesus:

As we turn the corner from March to April, and as we journey through Holy Week, the very week when Jesus our savior was arrested, labeled a criminal, crucified, and turn toward Easter and the power of resurrection, I hope you will join me in recognizing **National Second Chance month**. As United Methodists, we are called to the work of justice making, peace building, and the repairing of broken relationships. As a church, we have much work to do.

During my most recent Leadership Clinic with social justice and civil rights advocate Bryan Stevenson, we had church and a master class on Micah 6:8. Bryan gave us five practices for doing justice and loving mercy as citizens of God's kingdom:

- Get proximate to those who are suffering.
- Change narratives of fear and anger towards others.
- Tell the truth.
- Be a people of hope.
- Do uncomfortable and inconvenient things.

Second Chance Month is about doing all of these as we embrace our justice-involved and sisters and brothers - some of whom are already members of our local congregations. I cannot think of a ministry that embodies and promotes these practices more than All In Community. I cannot travel anywhere in our Conference and not encounter a sister or brother who has a lived experience with the criminal justice system in their family.

I hope you and your congregation will join me in demonstrating that West Ohio United Methodists believe in and offer second chances just as Jesus did repeatedly in his ministry among us. I invite you to recognize **Second Chance Month** by declaring one Sunday in April **Second Chance Sunday** and emphasizing it in at least one of your April worship services.

By recognizing **Second Chance Sunday** you are saying to those burdened with marginalizing stigma and shame that we see and hear you. We want good things for you. We will help you rebuild your life. We want to be proximate to you on this journey. We love you.

Our All In Community leadership team has prepared resources to help you do this, including a video, bulletin insert and a fact sheet about the impact of incarceration in our mission field. You will find these resources [here](#). Telling the truth about incarceration's impact in our larger social community and responding with compassion, hope and care bear witness to the power of Jesus' resurrection, and the hope it represents to us all. I am,

Yours in the name of Jesus the Risen one,

+Bishop Gregory V. Palmer

WLD Spring District Conference

The Western Lakes District will hold our Spring District Conference on Sunday, May 19th at 3:00pm. The Spring Conference will include the Pre-Annual Conference briefing also. Clergy, lay delegates, and district officers should attend, but all are welcome to join in. It will be held at Anna United Methodist Church 201 W North St, Anna, OH 45302.



2024 West Ohio Annual Conference: God is Able

The 55th session of the West Ohio Annual Conference is set to convene from Wednesday, May 29 through June 1, 2024, at Capital University in Bexley, Ohio. This year's theme, "God is Able," draws inspiration from Ephesians 3:20-21, promising a gathering that celebrates the limitless power of God.

A significant aspect of the conference includes voting on crucial business matters that will shape the future of the West Ohio Conference. There will be a time of celebration as it marks the retirement of Bishop Gregory and Mrs. Cynthia Palmer.

The conference will also shine a spotlight on the ordination of clergy, symbolizing a commitment to nurturing new leaders and fostering spiritual growth within The United Methodist Church.

Registration is open - [Register Here](#)

West Ohio Annual Conference to Collect Mission Items

The West Ohio Conference will collect items for Midwest Mission during the 2024 Conference. These life-changing items will go to people in need, both globally and locally.

Join us in making an impact from right here in West Ohio! Home Care Kits, Personal Dignity Kits, and other items will be accepted. Click [here](#) for a list of items.

The Midwest Mission Truck drive-through drop off will be located across from the Capital Center at Capital University along E. Mound Street on Thursday, May 30 from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm and Friday, May 31 from 8:00 am - 1:30 pm

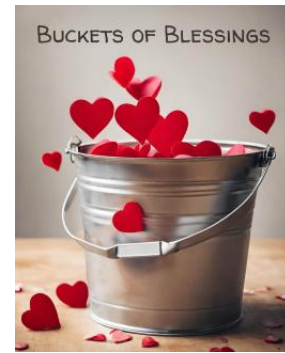
Clergy Spouse Brunch set for May 31

Clergy spouses are invited to a special brunch hosted by Mrs. Cynthia Palmer. The event will be held on Friday, May 31, at 10:00am in the Schneider Room on the campus of Capital University in Bexley, Ohio. Come celebrate the ministry of clergy spouses with great food, good music, and a few words from Cynthia. This will be her final annual conference with us. Be sure to bring your good wishes as she and Bishop Palmer plan to move out of state following the conclusion of their service to the West Ohio Conference.

[Register now...](#)

UMCOR Collection & Buckets of Blessings Challenge

As we do every year at Annual Conference, West Ohio Disaster Response Ministries will be collecting kits and supplies for Midwest Mission Distribution Center, our North Central Jurisdiction UMCOR depot. However, this year's collection will also include the Bishop's Buckets of Blessings Challenge, where we see which District can contribute the most buckets of cleaning supplies! Also called Home Care Kits, these buckets include liquid household cleaner, dish soap, liquid laundry detergent, and a scrub brush, all in a 5-gallon bucket. [Click here for more on how to make Home Care Kits](#). For his final Annual Conference as West Ohio's Bishop, let's make sure we shower Bishop Palmer with Buckets of Blessings!



In addition to Home Care Kits, we will also be collecting the following items:

- [UMCOR Hygiene Kits](#)
- Shampoo (12-19 oz.)
- Deodorant (2-3 oz.)
- Lotion (8-10 oz.)

Kits and supplies will be collected on Thursday, May 30, from 7:30am-5:30pm, and on Friday, May 31, from 8:00am-1:30pm. Take all donations to the Midwest Mission truck located west of the Capital Center near the golf cart station. Please do not bring supplies into the Capital Center where Annual Conference is being held.

In order for your donation of Home Care Kits to count toward your District total, be sure you notify the Midwest Mission personnel at the truck about which District your supplies are from.

If you have questions or need more information, email mgrace@wocumc.org.



High Street UMC, Springfield, Expands Ministry to Unhoused Population

In 2021, Living Waters Ministry began its journey of serving the unhoused population in Springfield, Ohio. A ministry of High Street United Methodist Church in

the Western Lakes District, this outreach provides showers and, most recently, laundry service. It is an extension of the weekly community meals served at Central Community Center, housed at High Street UMC.

After seeing the unhoused living in a tent city day after day, the Rev. Cynthia Atwater saw a way to serve this population beyond feeding. "A shower is very basic," she said. "It's giving dignity, and that is free." Atwater began strategizing to create a ministry allowing attendees of the community meals to make an appointment to take a shower the following day. Later, the ministry began laundering shower clients' clothing.

High Street UMC, which will celebrate 175 years in ministry in April, serves about 150 people, mostly families, at their weekly community meal. The community meals provide a "meet-and-greet" opportunity. Some guests eat at the center, while others take their food with them. When they return for showers, the time presents an opportunity to have more intimate conversations to get to know the clients better.

[Read more...](#)

Drivers License Clinic

APRIL
30TH
10 - 2 PM

REINSTATE YOUR LICENSE
OR LEARN HOW!

High Street United
Methodist Church
230 E High St,
Springfield, OH

**Has Your License Been Suspended by the BMV?
Or Due to Unpaid Child Support in Clark County?
Let Us Help at our Drivers License Clinic**

The Ohio BMV will be on site to help you learn how to reinstate your suspended license.

Clark County Child Support will reinstate suspended licenses for community members with open Clark County CSEA cases that are employed or agree to work with OMJ or Clark County Dept of Reentry for employment support.

Take this opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings and get back behind the wheel safely!

Questions: Contact us at 937-521-3860



West Ohio Conference Alford-Cantlin Fellows Doctor of Ministry Cohort at MTSO

Applications for the Alford-Cantlin Fellowship program are now available for West Ohio clergy. In partnership with Methodist Theological School in Ohio, and with financial support from [the United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio](#), the West Ohio Conference Office of Ministry is offering this special cohort with the [Methodist Theological School in Ohio Doctor of Ministry program](#) beginning in July 2024.

This partnership between West Ohio and MTSO is designed to support United Methodist clergy who are seeking next-level leadership opportunities and academic training focused on transformational change. Interested clergy should contact Donnetta Peaks at dpeaks@wocumc.org or April Casperson at MTSO at acasperson@mtso.edu.

Applications are available [here](#) and due by May 1. Courses begin the week of July 22, 2024.

Events



United
Women
in Faith

2024 Spring Spiritual Day Western Lakes District

Saturday, April 13, 2024, 10AM-12PM
Bellefontaine First United Methodist Church 201 N.
Main St., Bellefontaine

“Moving Forward Together”

Speaker: Pastor Charlotte Hefner Come, Reconnect, Make new friends
Continental breakfast will be served

All women are invited to this FREE event!

Please call Sheila Rowe at 419-230-5361 or email sheilabug100@hotmail.com for reservations by April 8th. Please provide your name, your contact info and your church name.

Mission U Registration Now Open - United Women in Faith

All are invited to attend Mission u this year, which will be held in-person June 21-23, 2024, at the Bergamo Life-Long Learning Center in Beavercreek, OH.

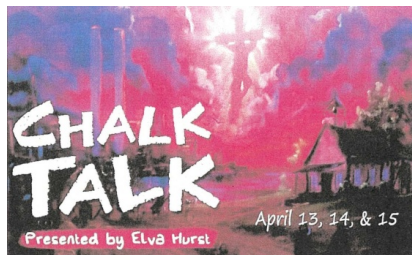
A virtual Mission u will also be held during the month of July. Mission u is co-sponsored by the West Ohio Conference United Women in Faith and the West Ohio Conference.

This year's theme is "The Kin-dom is Among You...Drawing Closer to God and One Another." Adults and youth (6th-12th grades) will participate in dynamic discussions, meditative worship, engagement with the natural world, and reflection on the lovely grounds of the Bergamo Center.

Martha Scholarships for first-time attendees will be available as well as Mission u scholarships. All this and more, including registration info and flyers, can be found [here](#). Questions? Contact Linda Bales Todd (Dean) at joylab47@yahoo.com or Carolyn Johnson (Assistant Dean) at cjohnson3253@yahoo.com.

Basic & Recert ERT Classes to be offered April 13 in Findlay

UMCOR's Early Response Team (ERT) Basic class will be offered on Saturday, April 13, 8:00 am-4:00 pm at St. Mark's UMC in Findlay. A four-hour recertification class will also be offered. West Ohio ERT trainers will teach participants how to assist survivors of natural disasters in their time of need. Trainees will learn how to provide a caring, Christian presence while taking steps to prevent further damage to the family's personal property. Skills that are taught include tarping, debris removal, mucking out flooded homes, etc. FEMA recognizes this training to enter a disaster scene. A background check is required, and a link to complete this will be provided upon registration. Cost is \$40 for the Basic class or \$35 for recertification. *ERT members are not required to be United Methodist but must deploy with a United Methodist-led team.* For more information or to register, click here: <https://www.westohioumc.org/event/early-response-team-training-recert-st-marks-findlay>



Chalk Talk - April 14th

Elva Hurst is a professional artist and author from Lancaster County, PA. Growing up in a large old order Mennonite family, she spent most of her time teaching herself art between chores on the family dairy farm. After graduating 8th grade from her one room school, she discovered the lost performance art of chalk talk.

Watch as Elva takes you and the audience through an inspiring show, sharing her stories through florescent chalk, music, and sound effects. Enjoy the grand finale as colored lights and an ultraviolet black light create beautiful effects on her artwork, ending the show with a memorable experience.

Join us **Sunday, April 14th** for "Our Great American Songs" 2:30pm Fortnightly Music Group at Northridge UMC, 4610 Derr Road, Springfield, OH. Free will offering donations will be taken.

Connect With Others Working With Emerging Generations!

If you are a volunteer or staff person who oversees



your local church ministry with children, youth, or young adults we invite you to connect with others who are doing the same in one of our Family Ministry or College Ministry Networks. These networks are designed to help share resources, best practices, and provide support for those engaging emerging generations across the connection. Each district is working on developing Family Ministry Networks for those working with children and youth and our College Ministry Network is for anyone who is working with college-aged students either on a college campus or in a local church. Information about network development, key leaders, and any upcoming zoom meetings are below. If you would like information on

how to connect to these networks, email Director of Camps, Retreats, and Next Gen Engagement, Ann Marie Carley (amcarley@wocumc.org).

College Ministry Network Zoom Meeting, April 23rd 12:00pm-1pm (Sammi Shivener)

Western Lakes District Zoom Meeting, April 18th 11:30am-12:30pm (Matt Overman)

Kairos Prison Ministry Is Celebrating Ministering To Inmates In The Ohio Reformatory For Women For Over 25 Years

Kairos Prison Ministry, an international nonprofit organization and leading prison ministry with over 30,000 volunteers announces that Kairos Ohio Reformatory for Women will be holding it's 55th Weekend in ORW, meaning that we have been serving right here in the community for over 25 years! Our 55th Kairos Inside Weekend will begin on April 18 and is a 3 ½ day Weekend that is entirely led by volunteers. It is often said that Kairos offers a front row seat to a miracle!

Hundreds of inmates throughout the years have participated in the 3 ½ day Weekend program which includes a series of talks, discussions, and prayer that creates or continues a desire for spiritual growth. This has enabled Kairos to establish a Christian community inside the prison by bringing the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to those in darkness. This has resulted in an improved prison living environment, reduced recidivism, a safer community, and countless healed families.

Kairos achieves this impact by being the ministry that keeps coming back through Continuing Ministry. We go back into ORW for Prayer and Share groups as well as monthly Reunions.

"We are excited to be celebrating our 55th Weekend of bringing light to those in darkness within prison walls. Our ministry continues to transform the lives of inmates and volunteers alike and will for many years to come." Evelyn Lemly, CEO

There are many ways the Central Ohio community can get involved in this and future Kairos Weekends, of which there are generally two per year. Ways to get involved include joining the team that goes into ORW, as part of the support team, baking Kairos Cookies that are given to participants, creating agape (letters, posters, placemats, banners, prayer chains) which are physical representations of love, prayer vigil participation, and through financial support as each Kairos Weekend is funded by donations and grants.

We would love the opportunity to speak with you about the positive impact that Kairos has made in the community. Please reach out to Sue Spiers at 937-441-4920 or sjanine48@gmail.com and visit www.kairosohio.org to learn more about the important work Kairos does in Central Ohio.

Living City Project - Saturday, April 20

The 2024 Living City Project Citywide Cleanup is a day of service that will impact over 25 neighborhoods across the city of

Dayton. Last year there were 700+ volunteers who picked up over 128 tons of trash and debris.

The event is a collaboration is between the [Living City Project](#), [Declare](#), Kettering Health, churches, neighborhood organizations and the City of Dayton. On April 20th, groups will start out at different host locations all across the city to pick up litter, remove debris, branches, etc. around Dayton. The project concludes with celebratory lunches at the Dayton Dream Center and Revival Center Ministries.



If you have a group that would like to volunteer or your church would like to be a host site, please contact Harold Nuss at hnuss@declare.org.



Grief and Next Steps Seminar Led by Rev. Elaine J. Sturtz

LPCC (Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor), Pastor, Former Hospice Chaplain, Author – Books available to purchase

Seminar for anyone who has experienced any type of loss or grief. Focus - how to live in this different life, defining grief, how to take next steps into life.

No cost or registration required

Saturday, April 20, 2024 10 AM – 12 PM
Peace United Methodist Church 235 Diley Road, Pickerington, OH
www.livinginthedifferent.com ejsturtz7@gmail.com

Basic & Recert ERT Classes to be offered May 11 in Plain City

UMCOR's Early Response Team (ERT) Basic class will be offered on Saturday, May 11, 8:00 am-4:00 pm at Jerome UMC in Plain City. A four-hour recertification class will also be offered. West Ohio ERT trainers will teach participants how to assist survivors of natural disasters in their time of need. Trainees will learn how to provide a caring, Christian presence while taking steps to prevent further damage to the family's personal property.

Skills that are taught include tarping, debris removal, mucking out flooded homes, etc. FEMA recognizes this training to enter a disaster scene. A background check is required, and a link to complete this will be provided upon registration. East Ohio Conference members are also welcome! Cost is \$40 for the Basic class or \$35 for recertification. *ERT members are not required to be United Methodist but must deploy with a United Methodist-led team.* For more information or to register, click here: <https://www.westohioumc.org/event/early-response-team-training-recert-jerome-umc>.

Resources

Cokesbury Resources for Vacation Bible School Available

Now is the ideal time to spring into your summer planning — including laying the groundwork for vacation Bible school. To get started, [click here](#) for 2024 programs and resources from Cokesbury.



GCFA Unveils “Understanding the UMC Budget Process” Video to



Educate and Empower General Conference Delegates

The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) is thrilled to announce the release of its latest educational videos, "*Understanding the UMC's Budget*

Process," the third installment in the ongoing "Data-Driven Discernment: Charting Hope at General Conference" campaign. This video is designed to provide members and delegates with a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies behind our denomination's budget crafting and allocation.

The first two installments of the Data-Driven Discernment series, "Strengthening the Episcopal Fund" and "Journey of a Dollar," illuminate the process of allocating funding for bishops and the intricate path a dollar takes once it enters the offering plate, outlining the financial journey of contributions. "Understanding the UMC's Budget Process" video explores how our denomination's budget is crafted and allocated, ensuring a thorough understanding of the financial landscape as we approach General Conference.

[Read more here](#)

Insurance Considerations for Leasing and Renting Church or Ministry Property

Sharing space with other organizations and ministries is a great way to extend your relationship with the community, provide assistance to those in need, and perhaps generate some additional revenue or resources. Doing so may also introduce new insurance exposures for your church to deal with.

[Read more...](#)

2023-2024 Appointments



The list of pastoral appointments beginning July 1, 2023 can be accessed [clicking here](#).

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

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