



Western Lakes District

News from The United Methodist Church

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

WLD Important Information



Jots From Jim...

Welcome to the wild and wonderful Western Lakes District. Wild for Jesus and Wonderful expressions of Christian ministry. We have big cathedral-type churches and small country chapels. Most have plumbing and some

have multiple campuses. Missions and Bible studies and various forms of worship make each of our 112 churches unique in their own way. Which church is my favorite? Yours. 😊

Sometimes I get asked what my “vision” is for the district. My “vision” is “your vision.” I am here to serve, to walk alongside, to encourage, and be the greatest cheerleader for your congregation. I am here to give my opinion, knowing that you may or may not listen to it and that is OK. The local congregation needs to discover the “vision” in their context and in their setting.

Relax. I know everyone is supposed to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. But how we do that varies from church to church. I encourage you to dream boldly, try something new, and not be confined to the trap of the past. It's a new day. And I believe it is an exciting day.

If there is one thing I hope every church has is “confidence.” You have everything you need to be a vital congregation when you have Jesus in your heart and a Bible in your hand. The world needs the church to bring hope and healing and compassion to so many hurting places. Our neighborhoods need to hear the joy of the church echoing throughout the streets. It is past time to put the arguments of the day away. It's time now to be a wild and wonderful group of people who loves Jesus and wants to make a world of difference.

Recently I had dinner at Texas Roadhouse. I had a nice meal and dining experience. There were no problems. As I exited the restaurant there was a sign by the door that said “See ya tomorrow.” It did not say “I hope you come back” or “Please return.” The restaurant had the confidence that they had done their job so well that I would naturally be back tomorrow. I like that type of confidence.

So, I will “See ya tomorrow” or some time soon. Eventually I will make it around to all the churches stretched out over 13 counties. The “District Dog” named Thor will be riding shotgun in the front seat. We both love Jesus and we both love treats. In the meantime, be the best church you can be. For such a time as this God has called your church to stand strong in the name of Christ. Thank you for all you do for the kingdom. Welcome to the Western Lakes District of THE United Methodist Church.

Jim

Western Lakes District Staff

Rev. Jim Wilson II - District Superintendent

Cortney Reed - Office Administrator

Mary Sullivan - Regional Missional Specialist

Our office is located at:

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Worthington, OH 43085

937-739-4445

westernlakes@wocumc.org

Follow the WLD on Social Media

[facebook.com/westernlakesdistrict](https://www.facebook.com/westernlakesdistrict)

Western Lakes District Newsletter

Welcome to the Western Lakes District. Our newsletter is published every other Friday. If you are moving out of our district, please contact your new district's administrator to subscribe to their newsletter:

Olentangy River District:

olentangyriver@wocumc.org

Hocking River District:

hockingriver@wocumc.org

Maumee River District:

maumeeriver@wocumc.org

Western Lakes District:

westernlakes@wocumc.org

Great Miami River District: greatmiamiriver@wocumc.org

Scioto River District: sciotoriver@wocumc.org



Annual Reporting Due

Reminder that the following items were due June 1. If you have not turned them in yet, please do so now.

Committee Driven Reports (click on the title for the form)

- [Parsonage Inspection](#)
- [Trustee Legal & Property Report](#)
- [Fund Balance Report](#)
- [Clergy Evaluation](#)



Register for Clergy Retreat at Lakeside Chautauqua August 20-23

Register now for the Fellowship of Associate Members & Local Methodist Pastors Retreat, "Finding Our Way," to be held Sunday, August 20 - Wednesday, August 23, 2023.

This retreat is sponsored by the Fellowships from East and West Ohio Conferences, Michigan Conferences of the United Methodist Church and by Lakeside Chautauqua Religious Life Department. Enjoy workshops/discussions on topics focusing on the specific

interests and challenges facing Associate Members and Local Pastors. The Rev. Dr. James Harnish, Pastor of the United Methodist Church, Longwood, Florida and author of "Finding Your Bearings: How Words That Guided Jesus Through Crisis Can Guide Us," will be speaking during Faith for Living Hour each morning.

Deadline to register is Thursday, August 10, 2023. Registration fee of \$80 includes a three-day Chautauqua Pass and Auto Pass per registration for one person, plus participation in all events scheduled during the retreat. Lunch and dinner are included Monday and Tuesday for Associate Members and Local Pastors. Additional meal plans can be purchased for \$80 per person. Hotel accommodations are not included.

[Learn more and register here](#)

Rev. Faith Fowler
Cass Community UMC-Detroit
Urban Ministry Exchange



Fresh Starts
Exchange

FSX – Urban Ministry

We're less than 3 weeks from our first Fresh Starts Exchange. July 18th will be our urban ministry version featuring Rev. Faith Fowler from Detroit. We'll learn from Faith and each other about children/youth ministry, funding, discipleship and anything else to help in our urban areas.

Learn more and register at

www.westhioumc.org/FSX.

Religion and Race Announces Opening of Grant Cycle for Mental Health Awareness and Wellness Initiatives

The General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) is pleased to announce the opening of the new CORR Action Fund grant cycle, inviting all United Methodist Church pastors and laity in the United States to apply for funding to create cohorts and small groups focused on mental health awareness and wellness. The grant aims to support initiatives that are trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, and promote justice-oriented praxis.

Applicants are requested to submit complete applications with all required documents via email to grants@gcorr.org.

The deadline for submission is July 15, 2023. Detailed guidelines and application requirements can be found at www.gcorr.org/caf2023.

Church and Society Now Accepting Applications for 2023 grant funding cycle. See instructions below to apply online.

The General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) awards grants to United Methodist congregations and groups related to The United Methodist Church through the Ethnic Local Church, Human Relations Day, and Peace with Justice programs.

To apply for grants, applicants must complete forms on the GBCS online system. Only complete online applications with all required documents submitted by 5:00 p.m. EST, July 24, 2023 will be considered for funding.

Church and Society provides grant awards in three categories:

1. Ethnic Local Church Grants focus on the self-identified needs of ethnic local churches and persons as they address one or more chronic social issues or concerns.
2. Human Relations Day Grants support advocacy and community engagement aimed at

uplifting the right of all God's children to realize their potential in right relationship with one another.

3. Peace with Justice Grants support programs and projects that witness to God's demands for a faithful, just, disarmed, and secure world.

To learn about award grantees from the 2022 Grant Cycle [click here](#).

[Click here to apply online](#) Questions? Contact us by email: grants@umcjustice.org

Thank You, West Ohio for Giving at Annual Conference

Each year during annual conference, a Special Offering is collected for a West Ohio mission.

This year at the 54th Session of the West Ohio Annual Conference, over \$30,000 in contributions were raised to support West Ohio Mexico Mission Partnership and Disaster Response Ministries.



In addition to giving to the special offering, you donated 3,134 pounds of supplies to Midwest Mission Distribution for UMCOR.

Thank you, West Ohio for your extra - mile giving which helps show Christ's love in action, locally and in the world.

Conference Adopts Net-Zero Emissions Resolution

During its annual meeting in Dayton, the West Ohio Conference adopted a Net-Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions (N-ZGGE) resolution with a target date of 2050. This action recognizes the need to address the degradation of our environment caused by global warming. To prevent the worst impacts of climate change and preserve a livable planet, emissions need to be reduced by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. The resolution comes two years after 12 Boards and Commissions of the UMC pledged "to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 across ministries, facilities, operations, and investments."

The net-zero resolution expresses a commitment to responsible and just climate action and calls for establishment of a working group of conference members and organizations to assess current gas emissions (baseline), determine appropriate offsets or alternatives, and schedule implementation.

[Read more...](#)

Virtual ERT Recertification Class Set for July 29

On Saturday, July 29, from 9am-1pm, West Ohio will hold a virtual ERT recertification training using ZOOM. The four-hour course will be taught by West Ohio ERT trainers and is approved by UMCOR. Registrants must complete a background check and submit a photo prior to the training in order to participate. The class is only for West Ohio and East Ohio ERT's who have already completed the 8-hour basic course and need to recertify. Cost of the training is \$20.

Click here (<https://www.westohioumc.org/conference/event/virtual-ert-recertification-class-3>) for more information or to register. Questions? Email mgrace@wocumc.org.

North Star Congregations Provide Purposeful Direction and Hope

In the midst of transition in the United Methodist Church, Bishop Palmer and the Extended Cabinet of the West Ohio Conference are excited to share this new ministry initiative

called North Star Congregations.

The North Star is the anchor of the northern sky. It can be a helpful guiding light to those who are looking for a purposeful direction. Historically, the North Star has always provided a beacon of hope in times of uncertainty.

North Star Congregations are local churches in the West Ohio Conference that are prepared to welcome anyone whose church has closed or disaffiliated. North Star Congregations are places where you will find spaces and persons of peace who will care for individuals and families during a difficult season along the spiritual journey.



If you or someone you know becomes disconnected from a local congregation, please be assured that there is still a place for all in the United Methodist Church. Consider these United Methodist faith communities as places of rest and recovery with people who will provide care while offering a haven of peace, grace, and opportunities to be in ministry. To become a North Star Congregation or to find a North Star Congregation, [click here](#).



Another opportunity to join a GHX Cohort begins this summer on July 14, 2023! GHX is a new approach to revitalization, bridging your established church to those in your community. In the GHX Cohorts clergy and laity teams are trained to dream new ideas for new ministries to connect with people outside the walls of the church. GHX Cohorts last 3 months. There is an in-person opening meeting, 3 coaching sessions via zoom, an in-person closing meeting, followed by a final zoom coaching call.

What are people saying about their experience from the GHX Cohorts?

“Our goal is to make connections in the community, and we are doing it!” ~ Rev. Linda Ward, Bremen UMC

“Our church is continually looking at ways to be out in the community. I don’t believe this would have happened had we not been a part of a GHX Cohort.” ~ Rev. Ruth Carter-Crist, Pandor UMC and Gilboa UMC

“Because of our GHX, I see people who haven’t had some hope or dignity in a long time while we sit down and eat with them. When you give time to someone and actually listen, something happens inside of them.” ~ Rev. Karl Penn, Fort McKinley UMC

It’s time to take church to the people! We encourage teams of 3-4 to register together. (pastor + 2-3 laity). Click here <https://www.westohioumc.org/ghx> for more information or to register!

Xenia Faith Community - Music Ministry Openings

Worship Musician – Organist and Accompanist. This is an interim position with the possibility of becoming permanent. We are looking for someone who would provide quality organ and/or a combination of organ/piano music for traditional/blended worship services and additionally accompany Chancel Choir and other musicians which will assist the congregation to honor and glorify God. For more details see the attached job description. Contact Pastor Jeff Bandy at pastorjeff@fcum.org for questions or to submit a resume.

Director of Music. This is a permanent position. We are looking for someone to lead the music ministry of the church in engaging, authentic, passionate traditional/blended worship experiences. They would be responsible for leading the Chancel Choir and Praise Team, coordinating special music performances, and selecting music for Sunday worship and other special services throughout the liturgical calendar. For more details see the attached job description. Contact Pastor Jeff Bandy at pastorjeff@fcum.org for questions or to submit a resume.

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

Daniel Wayne Downing, age 76, died on March 29th, 2023.

Dan, the youngest of seven children, was born in Dayton, on August 20, 1946, to Earl E. and Marie (Clune) Downing. Dan attended Beavercreek High School before serving in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam era.

Dan and Vicki (Rhoden) met in July of 1971 and married on August 11, 1973. They would have celebrated their 50th this August. Dan ran his shop from 1971-1991, taking a 25-year career detour, renting his shop to Jack Hohl. During his time away from his shop he ran a successful home maintenance business, helped his ailing mother, supported his wife as she completed her education, and kept things going in his family. Dan cared about many things but his family came first, only after his love for God.

Dan is survived by and was devoted to his wife, Vicki, his four children, Daniel Wayne Downing Jr. Michael David Downing, Gwen and Jo Downing-Groth, their children Thurston, Enita, Hannelore, Felix, and Katherine and Ryan Aubry, their children Oliver and Hazel. He is also survived by one brother, Walter Downing, two sisters, Mary Mahan and Carol O'Cull, numerous nieces, nephews, and close friends. Dan shared his passion for collecting and restoring vintage hotrods, singing in church and community nursing homes, collecting, repairing and riding motorcycles with many life-long friends.

Dan was active in the Emmaus Community and in each church, he served with his wife, South Park UMC, Dayton, Christ Kettering UMC, Kettering, and Grace UMC, Springfield. He was preceded in death by his parents, brothers, Donald and Virgil, and sister Marilyn (Downing) Haas.

A celebration of life memorial service was held for Dan on April 22, 2023, at Grace United Methodist Church, 1401 West Main Street, Springfield, Ohio, 45504. Memorial donations may be made to Grace Church in Dan's memory.

Events

Lay Staff Retreats Scheduled

An exciting opportunity is coming to a town near you! West Ohio Conference Lay staff members – both paid and volunteer – are invited to a day to *Sit, Soak, and Shine*.

This day of retreat is sure to refresh our local staff members. Below is the schedule of dates and locations of this event.

- July 25 – Athens Central UMC
- July 26 - Chillicothe Trinity UMC
- July 27 - Xenia Faith UMC
- August 1 – Bowling Green Trinity UMC
- **August 2 – Bellefontaine First UMC**
- August 3 – Maize Manor UMC- Columbus

For more information, please contact Julie Carter at jcarter@wocumc.org.



Date of Festival of Sharing: Friday/Saturday, September 29-30, 2023

Drop Off Sites:

Defiance St. Paul's UMC, 400 Wayne Ave., Defiance 419-782-3751, Mon - Fri 8:30am to 4:30pm (Please call ahead)

Findlay Journey at Christ, 225 W. Bigelow Ave, Findlay, 419-422-6662, Mon - Fri 9:00am - noon, (Please call



ahead)

Spencerville Trinity, 119 N. Main St., Spencerville, 419-647-4451, Mon - Fri, 9:00am - noon (Please call ahead)

NWP District Office, 910 E. Third St. Ottawa, 800-589-7828, Mon - Wed, 9:00am - 3:00pm (Please call ahead to make drop off arrangements)

Van Wert First UMC, 113 W. Central Ave., Van Wert 419-238-0631, Mon - Thu, 8:30am - 1:30pm & Friday 8:30am - noon (Please call ahead)

Dates for the kits to be dropped off to the locations above will be: September 18 - September 22 or what works best for your location, but these dates will be communicated in the newsletters - always best to call ahead first to be sure and use the above list details.



Registration Now Open for Summer and Fall Foundation Events

The UM Foundation of West Ohio has two upcoming events that are now open for registration.

Saving Grace Clergy Edition is an 8-week self-study course with a weekly online cohort. This course is for clergy only, who may sign up here: <https://www.westohioumc.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=2039>. Registration is free and those who complete the course will receive \$100.

Anyone interested in learning more about the **Saving Grace** curriculum can check out this resource for more information: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/august-23-2022-saving-grace-can-change-your-church>

Generosity Summit 2023

The Foundation invites West Ohio clergy, church leaders, and lay persons to attend the inaugural **Generosity Summit**, September 11-12, at Deer Creek State Park. The one-and-a-half-day conference features expert speakers from around the connection on the topics of stewardship, clergy finance, planned giving, and much more. Sponsors of the Summit include Wespath and Horizons Stewardship.

Registration is online with a fee of \$100 per person which includes all meals. More information on topics and speakers can be found at <https://umfwestohio.org/generosity-summit-2023/>.

Deadlines Approaching for Discounted Generosity Summit Housing

West Ohio clergy and laity interested in attending the Generosity Summit on September 11-12 at Deer Creek State Park *and who wish to get a discounted room or cabin* need to make their accommodation reservations before the room block closes on July 28. Reservations for the block can only be made by **CALLING** Deer Creek at 740-869-2020 by July 28. Rooms and some cabins will be available after this date but at full rates. Please note that registration to attend the Summit is required separately and costs \$100 including all meals. Register to attend the Generosity Summit [here](#).

Resources

4 Tips to Increase Your Church's Social Media Effectiveness

Want to increase your church's social media effectiveness? Start by focusing on people. Here are four tips to help you increase your church's social media effectiveness. By

following these tips, you can increase your church's social media effectiveness and reach more people with your message. [Read More...](#)



Proud to Be #BeUMC

As Christians, we are people of God who are called to follow Jesus in making the world a better place. As United Methodists, we embrace our Wesleyan heritage and live into the mission to #BeUMC and become the church our communities need us to be.

The #BeUMC campaign is rooted in these key messaging themes:

- Disciple Making
- Belonging and Inclusion
- Influence, Connection and Impact
- Experience of God through The UMC

Stay tuned to NewsNET, westohioumc.org and our social media channels as fellow West Ohio clergy and laity share why they are United Methodists.

[Click here for #BeUMC Resources](#)



Ask The UMC Series Available

Ask The UMC offers a series of questions and answers to help clear up some common misperceptions or misinformation around disaffiliation.

[Ask The UMC Series: Is The United Methodist Church really...?](#)

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.

Western Lakes District | 32 Wesley Blvd, Worthington, OH 43085

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