



# Great Miami River District

*News from The United Methodist Church*

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## News and Notes: February 21, 2024

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### 55th Session of the West Ohio Annual Conference May 29-June 1, Capital University, Bexley

Our theme this year, God is Able, draws inspiration from Ephesians 3:20-21, promising a gathering that celebrates the limitless power of God. Registration for conference members will open March 1.



Pastors, please confirm with your lay members that they plan to attend. If they aren't available, please select a new lay member to Annual Conference or move your alternate up; but be sure to let us know in the district office of any changes you make.

Laity, if you are interested in attending Annual Conference to learn about the business of the conference and represent the Great Miami River District with voice and vote, please complete an interest form by [clicking here](#). With the district now encompassing 7 counties, we are looking for 119 people to serve as at large members. Contact [Nancy Newton](#) for more information.

**Plan to submit legislation?** It must be received by Conference Secretary [Chris Clough](#) by 11:59pm, Friday, March 1, 2024. Any legislation received after that date will be returned. The maker of that legislation can decide if they want to ask to suspend the rules for consideration of the Annual Conference body.

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### Pastor, are you looking for support?

Rev. Joe Royer, pastor of Springboro First UMC, and several others are creating a new cluster called **Healthy Directions**. It's open to any pastor who desires to help their church work toward being a healthier church.



Healthy Directions will meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month from 11am-12:30pm. The location will be centralized based on interest. The next meeting is March 14. Your time together will include conversations around theology, purpose, ministry processes, administrative/ministry team strategies, people skills, church organizational structure, problem-solving and more. This group will celebrate the healthy moments and problem solve the frustrating moments as you work together to support one another.

Want to learn more? Contact Joe at [pastor@fumcspringboro.org](mailto:pastor@fumcspringboro.org) or 513-463-7378.

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### A Story and Invitation from the GMD Justice Network Team

"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness." Micah 6:8

As United Methodists, we understand our call to transform the world

involves personal, social, and civic righteousness. The relationships we form in our communities through work in justice and mercy ministries show our love for our neighbors.



You're invited to read a story written by Bobby Woodward from The John Wesley UMC. [Click here](#) to read about his journey and invitation to join the GMD Justice Network Team.

You can answer God's call by connecting your church to other Great Miami River District churches seeking to address social justice issues. The Justice Network Team meets via Zoom every 3 months to share their programs and needs. Contact Russ Naber at [naberrb@gmail.com](mailto:naberrb@gmail.com) to get started or learn more about the Justice Network.

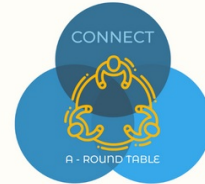
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## Educational and Serve Opportunities

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### Connect A-Round Table Wednesday, February 28 at 10am

The next opportunity to join our Connectional Ministries team on Zoom is coming on February 28. Plan to brunch with others around the West Ohio Conference for **Aging Well** with experts from Life Enriching Communities.



In your time together you'll learn:

- How to map out your future regarding your own goals
- The importance of putting a plan in place for you and your loved ones
- The benefits of aging in place vs. the benefits of a continuing care retirement community (CCRC)

[Click here to register](#)

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### Basic & Recert ERT Class

**Saturday, March 2 from 8am - 4pm**  
**Aley UMC**



UMCOR's Early Response Team (ERT) Basic class will be offered on Saturday, March 2 at Aley UMC in Beavercreek. 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. The cost is \$40 for the Basic class and \$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](#).

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### Acclaimed Author is Bishop's Guest at March 11 Leadership Clinic

Bryan Stevenson, author of "Just Mercy" will be joining Bishop Palmer on March 11, 2024 from 10am - Noon for an online edition of the Leadership Clinic. An option to view later will also be available. The first 200 to register will receive a copy of "Just Mercy." Bryan Stevenson is the founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, a human rights organization in Montgomery, Alabama. Under his leadership, EJI has won major legal challenges eliminating excessive and unfair sentencing, exonerating innocent death row prisoners, confronting abuse of the incarcerated and the mentally ill, and aiding children prosecuted as adults. "Just Mercy" was adapted as a major



motion picture and the film won the American Bar Association's 2020 Silver Gavel Award as well as four NAACP Image Awards.

[Click here to register](#)

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**Family Ministry Network Zoom Meetings**  
**Join on March 14 from 6-7:30pm OR**  
**March 17 from 1-2:30PM**



Do you work with children, youth, or young adults? Join Rev. Ann Marie Carley as she introduces you to the new Great Miami River District Family Ministry Network.

Ann Marie is offering two Zoom opportunities designed to shape the future of ministry with children, youth and young adults in our district with a focus on leaning into our connection. Each meeting is the same; she's offering two options to better accommodate your schedule. Questions? Contact Ann Marie at [amcarley@wocumc.org](mailto:amcarley@wocumc.org).

[Click here to learn more and register](#)

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**The Road to General Conference Webinar #2**  
**Tuesday, March 19 at 12pm**



The much-anticipated United Methodist Church General Conference will be held April 23-May 3, 2024, in Charlotte, NC. In preparation for this event, Bishop Palmer is holding online Town Halls to answer some of the questions West Ohioans have regarding this important work.

The second webinar is coming up on Tuesday, March 19, at 12pm. Bishop Palmer will answer previously submitted questions he wasn't able to get to last month as well as any new questions you may have. Send them to: [townhallquestions@wocumc.org](mailto:townhallquestions@wocumc.org).

[Register here](#)

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**Is your Congregation Looking to Grow Younger? Saturday, April 13 ::**  
**9am-4pm at Ohio Wesleyan University**



West Ohio churches are invited to one-day event on April 13 designed to generate momentum across the generations. You'll hear from leaders who are experts in generating a culture of intergenerational leadership, worship, and sustainable multiplication. The goal is for you to be empowered to cultivate a presence for all generations in your church.

[Click here to learn more and register.](#)

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## Funding Sources

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### Grants Available to Local Churches

Several grants are available to local churches from the General Board of Global Ministries and the Foundation for Evangelism.

- [Equipping the Local Church Grant](#) - 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. *Due February 29.*



- [Racial/Ethnic Local Church Grant](#) - to foster the development and strengthen the witness and ministry of racial/ethnic local churches in the United States. *Due March 1.*
- VBS Mini-Grants - to help with vacation bible school costs such as curriculum, supplies, staff costs, etc. Contact [Maddy DeWitt](#) to learn more at 380-223-9229. *Due March 15.*



[Click here](#) to view/respond to the ads below  
[Click here](#) to submit your own classified ad

#### **Employment**

Director of Communications - *Church of the Saviour UMC*  
Youth Director - *Church of the Saviour UMC*  
Finance Director - *Hyde Park Community UMC*  
Benefits/HR Specialist - *West Ohio Conference*  
Administrative Assistant - *Aley UMC*  
Administrative Assistant - *Aldersgate UMC*

#### **Needed**

Softball Players - *Clifton UMC*

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Watch this newsletter, [GMD's Facebook](#),  
[Conference social media](#), and [WestOhioUMC.org](#)  
for the latest news and events right here in the Great Miami River District!

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