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Greetings to you,

my brothers and sisters in Christ,

Many of you have seen or heard the words to our annual conference mission statement: The mission of the West Ohio Conference is to equip local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world … a world of justice, love and peace filled with people living in the likeness of Jesus Christ.

These are more than buzzwords to create a nice sign or to use in printed materials. These words, each carefully selected, state the purpose, the very reason the West Ohio Conference exists.

As United Methodists, we believe that we have responsibility not only to the people within the walls of our individual places of worship but also to our communities, our sister congregations and people in our nation and world. We are connected one with the other through our prayers, offerings and mission work.

Within the pages of this Missional Report, you will see a small piece of this work. Although we have accomplished much, we have so much more yet to do. Please take the time to review this booklet and celebrate the accomplishments of our conference, your district and your local church. When I think of the connectional system known as The United Methodist Church, I am drawn to the Scriptures, specifically these words from Ecclesiastes 4:12, CEB: “Also, one can be overpowered, but two together can put up resistance. A three-ply cord doesn’t easily snap.” We are stronger together.

Thank you for your contribution of time, talent and treasure. You are a gift from God to the people of God, and I am grateful.

Bishop Gregory V. Palmer
A culturally diverse group spanning from Lake Erie to the Ohio River, our conference includes 58 counties and a broad range of demographics. We are all the beloved children of a loving God.

Bishop Gregory V. Palmer and the Appointive Cabinet oversee the work of our itinerant system of clergy.
Our West Ohio Episcopal Office works diligently on behalf of all congregations and clergy to connect and convene United Methodists to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world! From strategic visioning to teaching, from preaching to supervision, Bishop Gregory V. Palmer brings a vital and renewing spirit, inspiring clergy and laity to practice their daily Christian walk through the disciplines of personal and social holiness. Bishop Palmer is not only our bishop. He also is a very well-respected leader in our United Methodist denomination, playing key roles in our worldwide denomination. His tireless work at the denominational level and his uplifting and prophetic preaching are sought after.

A primary role of West Ohio’s Episcopal Office is the supervision of our clergy. Along with the West Ohio appointive cabinet, Bishop Palmer oversees the work of clergy deployment in churches and beyond the local church. The appointive cabinet meets several times each month and at several annual retreats focused on upcoming appointments, continual training for our district settings and cutting-edge thinking for the future of our clergy and congregations. An extension of the bishop, our district superintendents work diligently to understand the unique gifts and challenges of each region of our conference. They work together to cohesively equip our United Methodist connection among our conference, districts and local churches, where lives are changed and transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In recent years, the Episcopal Office has worked to bring additional opportunities for our clergy in extension ministries (beyond the local church), our retiring classes and our clergy orders to set time aside for worship, teaching and encouragement.

In 2017, we said “farewell” to the longtime assistant to the past three bishops, Karen Corbitt. Nancy Riley joined the episcopal team along with Amy Graham, Tim McCoy, Kay Panovec and the Rev. Barb Sholis. Along with the entire West Ohio Conference staff, the bishop’s office strives to equip our clergy and our laity to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world – a world of justice, love and peace, filled with people growing in the likeness of Jesus Christ.
Special gifts from individuals come through the Council on Development for churchwide special Sundays, The Advance, Conference Advance Specials, local church support, West Ohio Annual Conference Campaigns, United Methodist Church affiliates and more. The mission of the West Ohio Conference is supported through these gifts.

**Designated Gifts from Individuals (to our Council on Development)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advance Specials</td>
<td>$6,523.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black College Fund</td>
<td>$28,300.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp and Retreat Ministries</td>
<td>$39,509.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy Leadership</td>
<td>$7,367.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retired Clergy Benefits</td>
<td>$341,207.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMCOR Disaster Relief</td>
<td>$15,145.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Churches</td>
<td>$714,610.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Wings of the Morning</td>
<td>$3,900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine No Malaria</td>
<td>$4,275.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Advance Specials</td>
<td>$1,765.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminaries, Colleges and Universities</td>
<td>$21,300.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMCH Family Services</td>
<td>$15,403.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retirement Homes</td>
<td>$3,573.96</td>
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<td>United Methodist Rural Advocates</td>
<td>$5,394.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undesignated Gifts</td>
<td>$109,023.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$46,435.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Church Start</td>
<td>$23,145.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light the Way</td>
<td>$165,263.03</td>
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**Estate Gifts Received in 2017**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retired Clergy Benefits</td>
<td>$96,990.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undesignated</td>
<td>$58,514.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(of which $37,500 is being used to offset Light the Way expenses)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Endowment Funds**

The Endowment Fund Management Program continued with the Council on Development providing oversight as an investment-management resource to (1) endowment funds of the conference, (2) local church endowment funds and (3) other United Methodist affiliated endowment funds. As of Dec. 31, 2017, 98 accounts contained a total asset value of more than $21.3 million. Fourteen new funds were added in 2017 for an increase in value of $7.7 million.

**Endowment Fund Balances for Period Ending Dec. 31, 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Ohio Conference Fixed Income Fund (Inception date: 4/1/2012)</td>
<td>$52,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Ohio Conference Balanced Fund  (Inception date: 8/1/2007)</td>
<td>$19,585,647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Ohio Conference Growth Fund    (Inception date: 10/1/2007)</td>
<td>$1,675,540</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Local church support of conference and general church ministries was down slightly from 2016 in both dollars and the percentage paid (74.6 percent). In light of sound expense management and reserve levels, the General Council on Finance and Administration ensured West Ohio was a 100 percent conference at the denominational level for the fifth straight year. Our support enables agencies like the United Methodist Committee on Relief to apply every dollar raised in response to disasters to those directly in need.

**Apportioned Connectional Giving**

We are particularly grateful to the 561 churches that paid 100 percent of their apportioned connectional giving. A concerted effort to help the other 450 churches improve their support will continue. Any opportunity to increase our payout rate above 75 percent is also an opportunity to reduce the total amount apportioned.

**Balance Sheet**

While we will not know the final financial position of the conference and the clergy benefits for which it is responsible until later in 2018, strong 2017 investment returns undoubtedly improved funding levels of both the clergy pension plan and retiree health care. The clergy benefit reserve, an account that now exceeds $50 million, saw a 13 percent return. Years of focused effort have put clergy benefits on solid footing.
Developing Clergy Leaders

Evolving the sense of call for a life of ministry.

- Candidacy Summit
- Local Pastors’ Licensing School
- Bishops’ Retreat with Black Clergy
- Fellowship of Local Pastors & Associate Members
- Young Clergy Retreat
**Candidacy Summit**

*Call. Community. Connection.* The Candidacy Summit is a large-group retreat with small-group mentoring sessions, all relative to call discernment. Two Candidacy Summits are held each year for those discerning a call to set-apart ministry. In July 2017 and January 2018, the West Ohio and East Ohio annual conferences worked in partnership once again in offering the summit retreats statewide.

**75 Total Participants**

34 from East Ohio  
38 from West Ohio

---

**Bishops’ Retreat with Black Clergy**

*Black clergy from East and West Ohio annual conferences gathered with their bishops, Tracy Smith Malone and Gregory V. Palmer, for a time of learning, networking and spiritual renewal. The retreat provided an opportunity to step away from the routines of everyday life to connect with God on a deeper level and to address realities unique to black clergy.*

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**Local Pastors’ Licensing School**

*Local Pastors’ Licensing School* is offered annually for those seeking to serve as licensed clergy. People serving as local pastors and provisional members are required to attend before being appointed by the bishop to serve in a ministry context. Full members, licensed local pastors who have completed the Course of Study, and active members of the annual conference provide quality teaching and practical applications to equip and prepare individuals for licensure.

The West Ohio school has three primary goals: formation of pastoral confidence, competence and identity. Because licensing school participants will further their education through attending seminary or the Course of Study, licensing school can focus on these three primary goals upon which individuals can build.

Undergirding the entire week is a deeply spiritual retreat focus. Because students have engaged in personal spiritual formation in their lives, licensing school seeks to guide them to continue that formation with their developing pastoral identity in mind.

**49 People Participated**

*People Participated (in the July 2017 school)*

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**50 Attendees**
Fellowship of Local Pastors & Associate Members

During the 2017 annual conference, the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members gathered for lunch, conversation, planning and relationship building. The event afforded participants the opportunity to gain insight and vision as the director of religious life and church relations of Lakeside Chautauqua addressed the needs of licensed local pastors and associate members.

Young Clergy Retreat

Spring 2018 was ushered in with a time of reflection and relaxation through the Young Clergy Retreat. Clergy members, their spouses and, for the first time, their children gathered for a few days away at the beautiful Salt Fork State Park. Dr. Daniel Houston, a psychologist, led a workshop on improving prioritization, time management and other challenges. The Rev. Nate Melcher from Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church in Minneapolis discussed “Improvising Through Ministry.” And as part of the Lilly Grant for Clergy Financial Literacy, a representative from EY Financial Planners presented “Early Career Financial Planning.” A great time was had by all!
ENGAGING ENTIRE CONGREGATIONS BY FUELING MOMENTUM TO ADAPT, ADJUST AND ALIGN NEW TOOLS FOR LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRY.

- Hispanic Ministries
- Safe Sanctuaries
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Light the Way
- Connection Blueprint
- Council on Development Strategic Initiatives
- Conference Advance Specials
- Missional Church Consultation Initiative
- Traction Tracks
- Revitalization and Capacity Building Grant Recipients
- New Church Development
Hispanic Ministries

The vision for Hispanic/Latino ministry is a transformational, multigenerational and multicultural faith community guided by the Holy Spirit to be a place of hope, love, mutual restoration and peace.

2017 Highlights

Esperanza Viva became West Ohio’s first chartered Hispanic congregation, with the Rev. Edinson de Arco as the pastor.

Developing Young Leaders

In partnership with Global Community United Methodist Church, Esperanza Viva United Methodist Church and Corazones Ardientes Hispanic Ministry of First United Methodist Church – Middletown, relationships were developed with more than 30 Hispanic youth. The youth were introduced to new experiences such as hiking and canoeing, built friendships and community with each other, and shared faith stories.

From these 30 youth, four were chosen to be summer interns in two of our multicultural congregations — Global Community United Methodist Church in Columbus and The Point United Methodist Church in Trotwood. After their internships, they returned to their home congregations ready to be leaders.

Partnerships with West Ohio New Church Starts

In partnership with Global Community, Capitol Area North District and West Ohio’s director of New Church Starts, plans were developed to launch a new church start in Central Ohio in early 2018.

In partnership with the Maumee Watershed District and West Ohio’s director of New Church Starts, we worked to identify an appropriate candidate to lead a new church start in northwest Ohio.

Our Mission Field ...

To engage this mission field, our strategy in 2017 shifted to focus on developing young leaders, building our capacity to bridge with 1.5- and second-generation Hispanic and Latino people, and to develop bilingual ministry and worship opportunities.

25 Years Old
median age of Hispanic & Latino people in Ohio

21% of the Hispanic population is 5 – 14 years old

78% U.S.-Born Hispanics in Ohio
22% Foreign-Born Hispanics in Ohio

79% Hispanics in Ohio speak fluent English
48% Hispanics in Ohio speak only English
Safe Sanctuaries®

Safe Sanctuaries® is the name commonly given by United Methodist annual conferences in their efforts to reduce the risk of abuse, particularly with children, youth and vulnerable adults.

In 2016, the West Ohio Conference Safe Sanctuaries Task Force was charged with revising the Safe Sanctuaries Standards of the conference. The new standards state that each local church is responsible for writing, implementing, training, submitting and annually reviewing an appropriate Safe Sanctuaries policy. The expectation of the conference is that all churches, regardless of size, location, ethnicity, culture or background, will seek to implement these practices and procedures in the context of their ministry. Support documents, also provided through the conference website, are designated to assist churches that want more guidance in areas such as transportation, retreats, camping, mission teams and several other areas. Five district trainings were hosted across the conference to equip churches.

Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity takes many forms in West Ohio, including racial/ethnic, generational, geographic, socioeconomic, theological and political diversity. West Ohio has trained Cultural Coaches to help equip leaders, churches and ministry teams in working across diversity to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Part of their work includes administering the Intercultural Developmental Inventory, an assessment that helps individuals and groups gain a better understanding of how they interact across differences and develop capacity to reach their neighbors in and through the love of Jesus.

WOC Cultural Coaches

Todd Anderson  Douglas Damron
Sherri Blackwell  Harris Tay
April Casperson  Rebecca Hug
Rebekah Clapp  Donnetta Peaks
Rebecca Collins  Rae Lynn Schleif
Karen Cook  Deanna Stickley-Miner

Light the Way

Light the Way is a focused plan to develop new faith communities and increase the number of highly vital congregations throughout West Ohio. We will achieve the plan through two investment areas that reflect our strategic vision:

Increasing the number of congregations engaged to learn new ministry leadership skills, BREAK THROUGH Prayer, a comprehensive self-study, as well as options for every congregation to focus on the ministry areas of prayer, worship, stewardship, social media, family ties and more.

Launched in September & October

Light the Way is planting new communities of faith by employing best practices and rooting ourselves in prayer followed by 1) identifying leadership, 2) assessing leaders, 3) engaging in training, 4) coaching and 5) funding – all before the birth of a new church.

Mosaic Church, Dayton (Miami Valley District), is a collaborative effort by Ginghamsburg UMC and Christ UMC, Kettering. On the first Sunday, 564 people gathered in a theater. www.wearemosaic.org

Central City, Columbus (Capital Area North District from Foothills), launched with 120 people. www.centralcity.com

New City Church, Dayton (Miami Valley District), was our first New Wineskins restart in a 200-year-old Methodist church. It drew a standing-room-only crowd of 202. www.newcitychurchdayton.org
Connection Blueprint is an innovative, hands-on, practical learning process designed to help congregations maximize the impact of Jesus’ redemptive and healing love in neighborhoods and congregations. Each congregation brings assets into this journey and does not start from a place of deficiency. Congregations are invited to discern how God has called them to be outposts of sacred grace and transforming love. They are also invited to believe in the power of assets present within their congregation and community. All good ministry starts with assets. Though the Rev. John Edgar and the Rev. Dee Stickley-Miner lead the Connection Blueprint, the congregations and their neighbors are the experts in their context. Together, we form a learning community where we can move more authentically into building relationships of mutuality that connect neighbors into the full life of our congregations. Teams of lay and clergy from 18 congregations across all districts participated in the first Connection Blueprint. A second Connection Blueprint journey will begin in early autumn 2018.

Participating Congregations

Oregon Christ UMC, Maumee Watershed District
Freemont Hayes UMC, Maumee Watershed District
Wapakoneta First UMC, Northwest Plains District
Springfield Grace UMC, Miami Valley District
Northridge UMC, Miami Valley District
Gaines UMC, Ohio River Valley District
Walnut Street UMC, Shawnee Valley District
Zanesville First UMC, Foothills District
Church for All People, Capitol Area South District
Westside Cluster, Capitol Area South District
Broad Street UMC, Capitol Area North District
Asbury North UMC, Capitol Area North District
Whitehall UMC, Capitol Area North District
Church of the Good Shepherd UMC, Capitol Area North District
Maize Manor UMC, Capitol Area North District
Magnetic Springs UMC, Capitol Area North District
Marion Prospect Street UMC, Capitol Area North District
Marion Epworth UMC, Capitol Area North District

“Connection Blueprint is different. It isn’t a program; it’s a blueprint for building authentic relationship with others.”

– Rev. Rae Lynn Schleif

“The Connection Blueprint is a collaborative experience that has changed the culture in our church. The Blueprint helped us to identify and build upon our strengths and increased our effectiveness in reaching our community. Using the tools learned in the Blueprint, we have already engaged in new partnerships that will result in $20,000 of ministry over the next year.”

– Rev. Josh Tissot
**Council On Development**

**Strategic Initiatives**

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**Stewardship 101 – Growing Generous Givers**

Focuses on how to develop a holistic understanding of stewardship in the local church, a basic theological foundation for stewardship, ideas to assist congregations in creating an intentional year-round stewardship strategy and next steps. In 2017, several workshops focused on the unique issues of the smaller-church ministry:

- **March 4, 2017,** Hope UMC, Canal Winchester, 76 attendees;
- **May 6, 2017,** Shiloh UMC, Helena, 18 attendees;
- **Sept. 30, 2017,** West Carrollton UMC, West Carrollton, 37 attendees.

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**Creating a Legacy for the Future of Your Church**

Planned giving seminars assisted congregations to develop an endowment program and an intentional year-round strategy. This includes laying a foundation for an endowment to advance the congregation’s mission and vision as a legacy to the leaders who grew the church in the past decades.

*Sept. 23, 2017,* Deerfield UMC, Maineville, 43 attendees

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**Conference Advance Specials**

At the 2013 annual conference, a Conference Advance Special trial was established.

Many critical mission and ministries within the West Ohio Conference do not qualify for General Board of Global Ministries designation. With additional funding and volunteer resourcing, these ministries could expand their mission and ministry serving people in our communities and regions. Since annual conference rules require approval for conferencewide appeals, a special task force was created to develop a trial Conference Advance Special that will allow approved missions and ministries to implement plans for conferencewide appeals to churches and individuals. Criteria and evaluative standards for application are available with the application package that can be found at [www.westohioumc.org/conference/annual-conference-advance-special-trial](http://www.westohioumc.org/conference/annual-conference-advance-special-trial)

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**Approved Conference Advance Specials**

- **Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio**
  - WOC004
- **Greater Hilltop Area Shalom Zone**
  - WOC002
- **Horizon Prison Initiative**
  - WOC001
- **St. Paul United Methodist Church, Dayton**
  - WOC003
- **United Methodist Church for All People/Community Development**
  - WOC005
- **Wesley Chapel Mission Center in Cincinnati**
  - WOC006
- **Kindway Prison Ministry**
  - WOC007
- **Stepping Stones Ranch**
  - WOC010
- **Monroe Street Neighborhood Center**
  - WOC009
- **Gleaning Alert Mission**
  - WOC008
- **Wesley Foundation in Cincinnati**
  - WOC012
- **Westside Free Store Ministries**
  - WOC011
The West Ohio Conference is now in its seventh year of sponsoring the Missional Church Consultation Initiative, a comprehensive two-to-three-year training and coaching revitalization effort initiated by the Episcopal Office and Appointive Cabinet for the purpose of jump-starting congregations into a new life cycle of fruitfulness. Sixty-plus churches across the West Ohio Conference are now in various stages of MCCI training, implementation and deployment with support and guidance of prescription coaches.

Participation in MCCI is determined annually by recommendations from district superintendents, with selection for invitation prayerfully discerned by the bishop. MCCI provides resources to churches and their pastors with an intensive consultation and clergy-coaching model uniquely designed to help pastors and congregations identify their current and new dreams for outreach, discipleship and mission. At the heart of every congregation involved in the MCCI is a churchwide foundational Breakthrough Prayer Initiative, opening members and leaders to dream new God possibilities for their future.

Churches added to the MCCI in 2016-17:

- **Bainbridge United Methodist Church** (Pastor Matthew Brookes) Bainbridge, Shawnee Valley District
- **Bellpoint United Methodist Church** (Pastor Paul McCullough) Delaware, Capitol Area North District
- **Church of the Cross United Methodist Church** (Pastor Keith Luke) Toledo, Maumee Watershed District
- **Coburn United Methodist Church** (Pastor Justin Williams) Zanesville, Foothills District
- **Faith Community United Methodist Church** (Pastor Barbara Schnecker) Xenia, Miami Valley District
- **Friendship United Methodist Church** (Pastor Meshach Kanyion) Cincinnati, Ohio River Valley District
- **Holgate United Methodist Church** (Pastor Susan St. Peter) Holgate, Maumee Watershed District
- **Immanuel United Methodist Church** (Pastor Bruce Tumblin) Elida, Northwest Plains District
- **Pataskala United Methodist Church** (Pastor Angie Sherer) Pataskala, Capitol Area South District
- **Trinity United Methodist Church** (Pastor Caleb Speicher) Grove City, Capitol Area South District
- **Wesley United Methodist Church** (Pastor Bill Bentley) Fostoria, Maumee Watershed District
- **Wheelersburg United Methodist Church** (Pastor Perry Prosch) Wheelersburg, Shawnee Valley District

Traction Tracks

In 2017, a new initiative called Traction Tracks was launched across the West Ohio Conference. Traction Tracks are individualized, tried-and-tested components from the MCCI, offered now as short courses based on the MCCI-developed model. Every Traction Track is designed to help any congregation, pastor and leader in any setting or size gain traction around that particular revitalization component.

Traction Tracks offered in 2017 included the Breakthrough Prayer Initiative, Creating Social Media Strategies, Family Ties (Family and Children’s Ministry) and Introduction to Streamlined Structure.

**12 Traction Track events held in 2017**

**79 Churches** **619 People**
In late 2015, the West Ohio Conference hired our first full-time Director of **New Church Development**. Our goal for New Church Starts is “to be a diverse movement of church planting churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” The West Ohio Conference has developed a comprehensive plan that includes strategic recruiting, assessing, training, coaching and funding to position our innovative new ministries for maximum impact.

The goal of our conference’s grants for new worshipping communities is to be a diverse movement of church planting churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

**NCS Grant Recipients**

**Camino Davida (Bridge)**  
**MWD, Rev. Jose Rios, Hispanic New Church Start**

**Jubilee Project**  
**ORV, Rev. Thomas Hargis, Community Development**

**Over the Rhine (Hyde Park UMC)**  
**ORV, Rev. Ian Strickland, Merger/New Church Start**

**Shiloh at Price Hill**  
**ORV, Rev. Daniel Hughes, Merger/New Church Start**

**Central City (Central Ave. UMC)**  
**CAN, Rev. Joseph Graves, New Church Start**

**Global Community**  
**CAN, Rev. Daniel Kim, New Church Start – Satellite**

**Esperanza Viva**  
**ORV, Rev. Edinson De Arco, Hispanic New Church Start**

**Mosaic Campus - Ginghamsburg/Christ Kettering UMC**,  
**MIV, Rev. Rosario Picardo & Rev. Wayne Botkin, New Church Start – Satellite**

**New City Dayton**  
**MIV, Rev. Chris Reese, New Church Start**

**Lifeline Toledo**  
**MWD, Rev. Steve North, New Church Start**

**Short North Campus - North Broadway UMC**  
**CAN, Rev. Amy Aspey, New Church Start – Satellite**

*Total grant funding for New Church Development in 2017 = $500,000*
Seeking Mission & Justice

Extending Dignity & Creating Places of Belonging with Those Whom Christ Loves.

- Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio
- UMCH Family Services
- OhioHealth
- Healing Weekend
- Freedom Schools
- All in Community
- Disaster Response
- Missionaries
- Volunteers in Mission
- Global Partnerships
- Mission Volunteers
Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio

Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio is a ministry of the West Ohio Conference, in partnership with other community organizations, which provides access to prescription drugs and medical services to low income, uninsured and underinsured people.

58,208 Prescriptions filled in 2017 (+3,208)
1,583 unique patients (-77)

$706,352 Grants & Donations
$22,244 Earned Income
$2,155,685 In-Kind Value of Donated Medications

$2,884,281 Total

OhioHealth

OhioHealth is a nationally recognized healthcare ministry of the West Ohio Conference. It includes 10 member hospitals, relationships with five additional regional hospitals throughout Ohio and increased access to health care through more than 60 outpatient locations including health and surgery centers, home health services, hospice, long-term care facilities and occupational health services.

In 2017, we were privileged to touch more than three million lives across the OhioHealth system, with three million outpatient visits, 169,951 admissions and observations, 108,166 surgical procedures and 510,196 emergency department visits.

$335.5 Million in Community Benefit
$208.8 Million in unreimbursed cost of care to Medicaid patients
$69.6 Million in charity care
$80,000 + in direct and in-kind support of both West Ohio Conference and General Church Mission Partnerships

Nearly 400 Physician Residents & Fellows trained

UMCH Family Services

UMCH Family Services is a ministry of the West Ohio Conference serving as a comprehensive children’s mental health and child welfare agency that helps families stay together, reunify or become new forever families.

Total Served 1,524
Outpatient 1,440
Foster Care 176
Adoption 6
**Healing Weekend**

People with HIV/AIDS and those affected by HIV/AIDS come together for a weekend of spiritual, educational and emotional healing. We create a spiritual web by encouraging connection to every person at the Healing Weekend through small groups, worship, a candlelight celebration and a meditation room. For some, this retreat provides a healthy and healing connection to church and the redemptive love of Jesus.

**65 Participants**  **16 First-time Attendees**

For five years, Belpre Saint Mark United Methodist Church’s sewing circle included Healing Weekend participants in its quilting ministry. The faithful members of the sewing circle donated the costs of all materials and the time and expertise to assemble the quilts. Thank you for this wonderful labor of love! Thank you for being the presence of Christ’s love to Healing Weekend participants.

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**Freedom Schools**

Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom Schools connect the complex needs of children and families to rich community resources through partnerships with local churches, schools, colleges, universities and community organizations. The six- to eight-week summer literacy program nurtures a love of reading and empowers students to reach their full potential. One new Freedom School opened in 2017.

**9 Freedom Schools Served**  **708 Scholars**  **15 Sites**

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**All In Community**

Grounded in the best practices of Healing Communities, *All in Community* is our response to the trauma of mass incarceration and the impact on individuals and families in the West Ohio mission field. One in 10 Ohioans is directly impacted by incarceration. We have an amazing opportunity to share Christ’s redemptive and healing love with our neighbors. We support local congregations by mobilizing their existing resources.

**Healing Communities Trained**

**33 People**  **From**  **15 Congregations**

**25 People Involved in Cultural Competency Work**

**300 Participants Attended All In Community Trainings**

**17 Churches Actively Participate in the 30-For-30 Pilot Program (+6)**

**4 Life-Builder Teams launched through a partnership with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections**

**640 Clergy & Laity are connected through All In Community (+400)**
In the aftermath of a disaster, The United Methodist Church is present, offering Christian compassion, and we stay until the community’s recovery is complete. West Ohio excels at extending the love of Christ through acts of accompaniment, compassion, generosity and justice.

YOU Made a Difference!

On Aug. 25, 2017, Hurricane Harvey hit Texas and Louisiana, dumping more than 40 inches of rain over four days. The rest of the country watched the devastation unfold on television and social media. Recognizing the opportunity for West Ohio to share gifts of grace with our neighbors, Pastor Ken Woode offered Northridge United Methodist Church in Springfield as a collection spot for cleaning buckets. Because Northridge UMC is connected within its community, a trucking business donated a truck, trailer and driver, and members of the congregation were ready to greet everyone delivering buckets and to help load them onto the truck. The gifts of generosity offered through Northridge UMC unleashed the extravagant generosity that flowed from every part of our conference.

West Ohio, you helped create a miracle of love and grace, bringing hope to our neighbors! In less than one month, you put together 2,030 cleaning buckets and 490 school and health kits. Your gifts of love were delivered by the saints of Northridge UMC to the UMCOR Midwest Mission Distribution Center. Your compassion didn’t end there! A month later, after more devastating hurricanes destroyed homes and livelihoods of neighbors in Florida and Puerto Rico, you assembled another 1,070 cleaning buckets and delivered them to the conference center where youth from Powell United Methodist Church and volunteers from congregations across central Ohio and the Shawnee Valley District helped load the buckets onto two trucks. Pam Follmer, Gary Stabler and Roger Thatcher volunteered their time to deliver your gifts of love to the UMCOR Midwest Distribution Center. Thank you for the powerful witness you provided to the never-ending love and compassion that flows from Jesus’ heart!

72 People Trained as Early Response Team members in 2017

13 People Recertified as Early Response Team Members in 2017

3,134 Cleaning Buckets
Cleaning buckets were assembled and sent to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center in September and November, following devastating hurricanes in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico

4,360 Volunteer Hours recorded in 2017
3,100 Hours involved in assembly and transport of cleaning buckets
917 Hours of Emergency Response Team members responding to disasters outside of Ohio in 2017
343 Hours of volunteers responding to disasters within West Ohio in 2017

$100,716 Value of Work
Using a United Methodist Committee on Relief formula
West Ohio is blessed to send, receive and support missionaries working in a variety of settings in the United States and around the world. God’s love knows no limits, and our missionaries live out that truth.

Mission: It’s not just a trip; it’s a journey. As United Methodists, the understanding that “we are called” and “we are sent” is at the foundation of our faith. Scripture is full of stories of people who responded to a call and were sent on mission for God. By being a volunteer, you can make a difference in the lives of others, and your life and faith will be forever changed.

2017 Highlights

The VIM Team Leader Training manual underwent a major revision, integrating activities to better prepare team leaders and members to see beauty and possibility within each mission context and to share the love of Jesus in ways that amplify the mission of the local church.

Trained as VIM Team Leader-Trainers

- Ann Marie Carley, Shawnee Valley District
- Rev. David Hoffman, Capitol Area North District
- Rebecca Hug, Capitol Area South District
- Rev. Ann Myers, Ohio River Valley District
- Rev. Dee Stickley-Miner, Capitol Area South District

UMVIM Team Leaders in West Ohio

- 312

New Leaders trained in 2017

- 18

UMVIM Teams reported to West Ohio Conference in 2017

- 62

Participants on UMVIM teams

- 596

Value of UMVIM work in 2017

- $317,197
Being committed to seeing the face of Jesus in our neighbors near and far strengthens our ability to proclaim Jesus’ redemptive love.

2017 Highlights

Ranvall Baraka grew up as an orphan in the Kamina Children’s Home in the North Katanga Conference. In 2017, Ranvall became the first Kamina Children’s Home resident to graduate from Africa University. West Ohio provided support for tuition, room and board throughout his degree program. Two other young people from the Kamina Children’s Home continue their education at Africa University thanks to West Ohio.

West Ohio and the Oriental Conference are working in partnership to serve people who have been deported to Mexico. Because of the stigma and discrimination faced by people who have been deported, it is very challenging for them to be integrated into Mexican society. The Oriental Conference has developed a job-training program and is inviting congregations to develop intentional relationships with their neighbors who have been deported, building life-sustaining friendships and community rooted in Jesus’ love. Jesus said in Matthew 25:35b, NRSV, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Gaston and Jeanne Ntambo built a 10-room guesthouse and clinic that Jeanne manages as a United Methodist missionary. It provides free care for patients discharged after surgery until they are healthy enough to fly home. To achieve better health outcomes for patients, Gaston added a doctor to the Wings of the Morning payroll. The doctor provides medical care for all patients staying at the guesthouse and accompanies Gaston on all medical flights. Thank you, OhioHealth, for providing resources necessary to pay the doctor’s salary!

The United Methodist mission in Laos continues to shine the light of Jesus’ love. Currently, the church is present in eight of the 17 provinces, with 60 congregations, 56 lay leaders and more than 4,000 souls receiving new life in Christ. Members of the Laos congregations provided school supplies for 839 children and assisted 20 children with school registration fees. Through the food security project, 50 families received assistance in raising farm animals and growing vegetables. A model farm is being established as a training center where people can learn natural farming methods to address hunger and food insecurity.

In Vietnam, the church provided Bibles and backpacks to 326 children. Children in a church in Central Vietnam called this program “Jesus goes to school with us!” Through this outreach, children witness to their parents, sharing the love of Christ. In the Central Highlands, 311 health kits were provided to 286 families where access to health care is limited. As a result, one church welcomed 14 new families into their church. A laity-training program inspired a used-clothing ministry. The church is building relationships with people who are poor, many of whom are learning about Jesus for the first time. These ministries were possible through support of people and congregations in West Ohio.
Growing DISCIPLES & LAY LEADERS

JOHN WESLEY, FOUNDER OF METHODISM, CALLS US TO THE MINISTRY OF MAKING DISCIPLES BY ALL THE MEANS AND ALL THE WAYS WE CAN.

- Camps & Retreats
- Lay Servant Ministries
- Certified Lay Ministry Academy
- Ministerios De Servicio Laico-Curso ba´sico
- Undergraduate Scholarship Awards
- Campus Ministries
- Shift: A collegiate Ministries Leadership Event
In 2017, our West Ohio camps brought about new connections and relationships that are propelling us into the future. It was a year in which 32 percent of youth surveyed reported new faith commitments or a call to vocational ministry. It was also a year where we saw 80 percent capacity during most summer weeks and several retreat weekends, and the number of retreat groups increased by 141. We welcomed a new director at Widewater Camp and Retreat Center and received reaccreditation at Camp Wesley, making all three camps American Camp Association accredited and Safe Sanctuary compliant! God is doing miraculous things on the holy grounds of West Ohio Camps. Won’t you join in the mission?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Campers</td>
<td>2,977 (+75)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Retreat Users</td>
<td>6,750 (+2,619)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Camp Faith Commitments</td>
<td>106 (+15%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Event Attendees</td>
<td>10,502 (+4,830)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Users of Camp</td>
<td>20,204 (+7,003)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campers Called to Ministry as a Vocation</td>
<td>120 (+17%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camper Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>$49,291 (+$9,974)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camper Scholarship Recipients</td>
<td>652 (+195)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Camps</td>
<td>199 (+125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Hours</td>
<td>8,138 (+1,441)</td>
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<tr>
<td>People on Work Teams</td>
<td>251 (18 Groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>59 (-32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Camp Story: Sophie Mather**

“When I went to Camp Otterbein for the first time, I was a rising eighth-grader looking for acceptance and calling. I had definitely been led to the right place. At camp that first year, I lived for a week in a community of young people who supported me and helped me feel loved. I remember thinking, this must be what God’s love is like. Before going to camp that summer, I had decided that camp would be a good place for me to overcome my weaknesses in order to be accepted. Instead, I found that I could be – and that I was – accepted with my weaknesses. And so, I began to understand God’s love for God’s imperfect people.

That is how I found the calling that I had been looking for as a rising eighth-grader. I found that I had been called to love others in their weakness, just as I had been loved. I had been called to worship with my life and to join with others who were worshipping.”
Jesus taught us to love one another, to care for each other and to bring God’s good news to the world. Lay Servant Ministry is our United Methodist system to equip laity to realize and respond to their call to ministry. It includes the Certified Lay Servant, Certified Lay Speaker and Certified Lay Minister programs.

- 920 Certified Lay Servants trained in 2017
- 91 Certified Lay Speakers trained in 2017
- 63 Certified Lay Ministers trained in 2017
- 1,074 Adults in Lay Leadership trained & deployed in 2017

Fourteen students are enrolled in the 2017-18 Certified Lay Minister Academy, established for spiritual formation, community connections and academic training. Students who complete the academy may request certification as a Certified Lay Minister to fulfill their unique God-calling, enhance the quality of ministry to small-membership churches and expand team ministry in churches.

Remain in Me: Call, Covenant and Community

Thirty-two of our West Ohio Conference Certified Lay Ministers participated in the first-ever leadership retreat hosted Aug. 4-5, 2017. Remain in Me: Call, Covenant and Community was designed to help a Certified Lay Minister reconnect with other CLMs, renew friendships and re-energize their ministries. Jesus’ final teaching to the disciples to “remain in me” guided their time together. The CLMs spent this time remembering their unique CLM calling, renewing their covenant with God and in ministry, and reclaiming their connection with one another and in Jesus.

Ministerios De Servicio
Laico-Curso básico

The Miami Valley and Ohio River Valley districts collaborated in offering Lay Servant Ministries courses to our Hispanic leaders within the West Ohio Conference. The first Spanish course hosted was Ministerios De Servicio Laico-Curso básico (An Introduction to Lay Servant Ministries: The Basic Course), the foundation course for Lay Servant Ministries. Future courses will be offered to equip these leaders with their certification as Certified Lay Servants who serve local churches in ways in which their witness, leadership and service inspire others to a deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship.
The West Ohio Conference is pleased to announce that five West Ohio students received leadership and merit scholarships for the 2017-18 academic year. Through the generous donations received during the United Methodist Student Day offering, as well as funding through the conference’s Connectional Ministries office and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, these leadership scholarships totaling $10,335 were awarded to support young adults in their pursuit of God’s calling.

### Call to Leadership Scholarships

**Alexandra Applegate**, California Baptist University, Ginghamsburg United Methodist Church, Tipp City  
**Kaitlyn Pees**, Cedarville University, Village Chapel United Methodist Church, Ashville

### Ethnic Minority Scholarship

**Jerusha J. Perry**, Howard University, Village Chapel United Methodist Church, Ashville

### Merit Scholarships

**Abby Lightle**, United Theological Seminary, Anna United Methodist Church  
**Margaret Thomas**, Otterbein University, Church of the Master United Methodist, Westerville

The West Ohio Conference and its churches have relationships with 16 campus ministries at various colleges and universities across Ohio. West Ohio Campus Ministry provides funding to support this United Methodist presence. Campus ministries grants are provided to help these programs reach and guide an increasing number of undergraduate students.

**West Ohio grants totaling $113,400 were awarded in 2017 to these undergraduate campus ministries**

- Central Avenue United Methodist Church, Athens, Foothills District  
- Church of the Master United Methodist, Westerville, Capitol Area North District  
- Global Community United Methodist Church, Columbus, Capitol Area North District  
- Grace International Campus Ministry, Bethel International United Methodist Church, Columbus, Capitol Area North District  
- Wesley International, Oxford United Methodist Church, Oxford, Ohio River Valley District  
- Ohio Northern University, Ada, Northwest Plains District  
- Summit United Methodist Church, Columbus, Capitol Area North District  
- Toledo Campus Ministry, Toledo, Maumee Watershed District  
- Wesley Foundation Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio River Valley District

**Shift: A Collegiate Ministries Leadership Event**

Effective campus ministries leadership has required shifts in approaches to ministry to reach and guide undergraduate students. While this calling looks and feels very different across our campuses, it compels us to provide intentional, student-led ministries that reach this emerging generation of leaders. The second annual SHIFT: A Collegiate Ministries Leadership Event designed for campus pastors, board members and student leaders convened in November 2017 with guest teacher, the Rev. John Weaver, Wesley Foundation director, Middle Tennessee State University. Weaver shared insights on developing leadership teams and best practices in fundraising. Ministries that receive a Collegiate Ministry Grant from the West Ohio Conference are required to attend as part of the grant program.