



Great Miami River District

News and Notes --- March 25, 2026



Nominations Team is seeking District Committee Members

The GMD Nominations Committee is seeking to identify innovative, qualified and effective leaders to serve on our district leadership committees. Openings are available on the Mission Foundation, Church Location and Building, District Ordained Ministry, Grants, Superintendency and Stop Racism, Violence and Silence teams.



If you have the passion, gifts and commitment to serve beyond your local church, please complete this [Interest Form](#) and submit it to DS Suzanne Allen at sallen@wocumc.org no later than April 15th.

2026 Annual Conference Registration is Open

The 57th session of the West Ohio Conference will be held May 27 through May 30 at Capital University in Bexley. Bishop Hee-Soo Jung will preside. The theme for this year's session is "Abundant Grace," based on the scripture from Matthew 14:13-21.



Preregistration is required for Annual Conference for all clergy members, lay members, and guests.

[Click here](#) to register for Annual Conference.

[Click here](#) for information on events, meals, housing, parking, and more.

Clergy Session is May 7 at Lakeside Chautauqua from 9am-5pm. This will be a coordinated session with the East Ohio Conference. Clergy will meet together for worship and training during the first part of the day. Then each individual conference will meet separately for the business session. *Registration for this event is coming soon.*

Bishop Jung's Hands of Hope Challenge: West Ohio Disaster Response Ministries will again be collecting kits and supplies for Midwest Mission Distribution Center, a cooperating depot in the UMCOR relief supply network. [Click here to learn more.](#)

At Large Lay Members are needed to represent the Great Miami River District. Please [contact Nancy](#) if you are interested in serving.

Statistical End of Year Reports

Pastors, Treasurers, Finance Chairs, Office Administrators and Administrative Council/Leadership Team Chairs - you should have received an email today with instructions for completing year end reports.



Some things you'll want to know:

- Reports are due Friday, April 17, 2026.
- Make every effort to complete the information online.
- Have your church's GCFA# ready, which can be found in the attachment sent with the email this afternoon.
- [Use this link](#) and input your GCFA# and this password: Stats2025#
- Once you're in the system, you'll establish new credentials for accessing your church's information. Note that multiple people in the same church can have access, which should make it easier to complete the reports in a timely manner.

If you have any questions, contact Jack Frost at jfrost@wocumc.org.

Wesley Camp and Retreat Center

Wesley Camp and Retreat Center is relaunching this summer, and registration is open now for campers age 7-17 to attend.



Camp options:

"Adventure Awaits – Finding our Way Together"

camp: June 7-12, June 14-19, or June 21-26.

"Taste of Adventure Awaits – Finding Our Way Together"

camp: June 28-July 1 or July 5-8.

Summer camp offers participants guidance by trained young adults who create a supportive atmosphere where they can explore, try new things, and experience God's presence in meaningful ways. Each day is intentionally designed to balance recreation, learning, and adventure, with faith formation. Campers will be in a safe environment to discover their God-given gifts, build confidence, and build friendships that extend beyond the week of camp.

To learn more and to register, [click here](#).



Upcoming dates + summer staff needed

To fulfill the vision of a safe place to “unplug, unwind, and experience God,” a dynamic team of 30 faithful young adults are needed to serve as counselors, medical staff, and program and support staff. These leaders must be passionate and energetic and want to spend their summer serving God, building community, and helping campers experience the joy of camp. Are you that person or do you know someone who would make a great counselor? [Click here to learn more and](#)

[apply.](#)

Mark your calendar for upcoming workdays: March 28, April 11, April 18 and May 9 from 9am-2pm and for their Open House weekend May 2-3. You will want to see the

extensive facility upgrades and renovations designed to create a safe, sustainable, and deeply welcoming environment for young people.

For the Love of Camp campaign

There's still time to support Wesley Camp & Retreat Center and their reopening this summer. For the Love of Camp campaign is a two month effort to raise \$10,000 for camperships so that every child, regardless of financial circumstance, can experience the life changing power of camp. Please consider helping. [***Learn more and donate here.***](#)



New Comprehensive Course of Study Catalog available from GBHEM

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry has launched a new Course of Study (COS) Catalog, a unified resource that — for the first time — brings together COS course offerings from the nine sites in one easily accessible location. This consolidated catalog features courses offered across three academic terms, Summer 2026, Fall 2026, and Spring 2027, helping licensed local pastors and conference leaders plan more effectively for the year ahead.



The new platform also offers streamlined access to information for those pursuing the Advanced Course of Study (ACOS). Students can now more easily identify ACOS offerings, understand eligibility requirements, and plan long-term educational progressions that align with their ministry and conference expectations.

GBHEM is committed to supporting the formation and education of licensed local pastors, and this consolidated COS Catalog represents a significant step toward simplifying the journey for clergy and conference leaders alike. [***For full catalog access, registration details, and term planning tools, click here.***](#)

TRAININGS & EVENTS

Networking Event for Youth and Young Adult Ministry Leaders - Tomorrow! March 26, 2026

Do you lead or oversee youth or young adult ministries in your church? If so, we'd love for you to join a gathering of leaders from across our district on the last Thursday of each month for a lunch and learn at the district office.



Our time together is designed to spark connection, collaboration, and Spirit-led inspiration for the next generation. This is more than a meeting—it's a moment to listen for what God might be stirring among us as we support students and young adults in their faith journeys, together.

Date: Thursday, March 26, 2026

Time: 12:30pm (lunch provided)

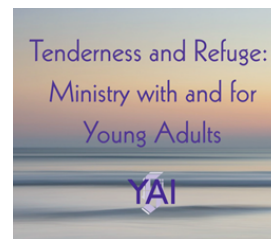
Location: Great Miami River District office, 7388 E Kemper Rd, Cincinnati

RSVP: [***Click here to let us know you're coming.***](#)

We hope you can join us as we spend time together for encouragement, prayer, and sharing about our ministries. All are invited!

Tenderness and Refuge: Ministry with and for Young Adults

Church groups, youth ministers, and those invested in young adults won't want to miss a new mini-course opportunity from the Garrett Collective.



This self-paced video series focuses on six prevailing themes from years of research with young adults yearning for faith community. These themes include a desire for

- inclusive communities,
- relatable leadership,
- an emphasis on relationships,
- an emphasis on spirituality, and
- an emphasis on social justice,
- alongside an ambivalence towards the Christian label.

It features Garrett-Evangelical alums, friends, scholars, and practitioners Dr. Evelyn Parker, Dr. Patrick Reyes, Dr. Kate Ott, Rev. Alexa Eisenbarth, Dr. Gina Robinson, Benjamin Parker, and Maria Alejandra Salazar. Each module includes a recorded video conversation, reflection questions, and next steps for engagement. [Click here to learn more.](#)

The Art of Hospitality Saturday, May 2 from 9am-2pm

What brings guests back to church after a first visit?

In partnership with the Great Miami River District, [Epiphany United Methodist Church](#) in Loveland is hosting a training event designed to explore this important question. This workshop will examine what compels visitors to return and how congregations can offer hospitality that not only welcomes guests but exceeds their expectations.



Yvonne Gentile, Director of Guest Experience at Kansas City's Church of the Resurrection and ShareChurch, will lead the session. She will provide practical, scalable tips and tools suitable for churches of all sizes.

Cultivating a culture of radical hospitality is essential for every Christian community, especially when connecting with people who are new to faith, returning to faith, or seeking a spiritual home. You will learn principles and best practices of exceptional hospitality that can be immediately implemented in your own church setting.

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

The cost is \$45 per person, or \$200 for a group of 5 or more. Questions? Contact Becky Dawson at 513.677.9866 x 207 or bdawson@epiphanyumc.org.

Cincinnati Green Team Gathering April 11, 2026 from 2-4pm

Faith Communities Go Green (FCGG), a collaboration between Green Umbrella and Equasion, believe that faith communities have a powerful voice to offer as the world confronts the climate crisis and can become strong allies in the fight for climate action.



If you are interested in strengthening or starting a Green Team at your church, please consider a program that FCGG is offering on April 11 at [Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church](#).

At this training, you'll learn:

- How to start a Green Team
- How to sustain a Green Team
- How to scale Green Team Projects
- How to find Green Team Resources

Guest speakers include Cincinnati Councilwoman, Meeka Owens, and the Green Team Leader of Mt. Auburn Presbyterian, John Talmadge. For more information, please email Donna at FCGGMembers@gmail.com.

[Register here](#).

Shifting the Atmosphere Conference April 29-May 2, 2026



"Shifting the Atmosphere" is a national gathering for leaders of African American churches with the goal to coach and encourage worship teams, pastors, and church-based community leaders to create congregations "where workshop ignites change and leadership fuels revival."

The conference is open to clergy, worship leaders, and lay people in Christian churches serving Black and interracial communities. It will be held April 29-May 2, 2026, at Hamilton Park UMC in Dallas, Texas. The sponsors are the Junius B. Dotson Institute for Music and Worship in the Black Church and Beyond, a project of UM-related Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, and Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century, a program of Discipleship Ministries.

Featured presenters will include the Rev. Rudy Rasmus, CEO of Bread of Life and pastor emeritus at St. John's UMC in Houston; the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Wilson, CEO of the Dotson Institute; Dr. Diana Sanchez Bushong of Discipleship Ministries, and the Rev. Dr. Michael Bowie, executive director of Strengthening the Black Church. CEU credits will be offered.

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

Ohio Methodist Historical Society's Convocation and Annual Meeting May 8-9, 2026



The Center for Evangelical United Brethren Heritage will be the host for the 187th Convocation and Annual Meeting of the [Ohio Methodist Historical Society](#), (OMHSO) May 8-9 at United Theological Seminary. All are invited to come and learn more about our United Methodist roots. [Flyer](#).

OMHSO was originally founded in 1839 as the Western Methodist Historical Society. The goal of the organization was to "collect and preserve...materials for a complete and authentic history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, west of the Allegheny Mountains." Members of the Society include Methodist church historians, and others who have a common interest in preserving the history of Methodism in Ohio.

The OMHS Convocation and Annual Meeting is held in a different Ohio location each year. In addition to topical workshops, there are practical workshops for local church historians such as "Preservation 1001", "Creating an Archives for your Church", and

"Making History Come Alive in the Local Church." Education of church historians is a primary goal of the Society.

Methodist churches celebrating significant anniversaries such as 100, 125, 150, 175 and 200 years are encouraged to submit a written history to the Archives of Ohio Methodism at MTSO. You will then be presented with a certificate during the annual meeting on Saturday, May 9th.

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

Chaplaincy Informational Meeting April 23, 2026 on Zoom



As the demand for chaplains increases, the [United Methodist Endorsing Agency](#) has scheduled a virtual meeting, "Endorsement 101 with the UMEA Director", on April 23, 2026, 4:00 pm- 5:00 pm. Meeting participants will learn what endorsement is, what it means, and how those called to ministry can serve through The United Methodist Church outside of the local church setting.

To serve as clergy in hospitals, counseling centers, prisons, and other organizations, a formal endorsement is required to certify clergy for spiritual care roles. The United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA) identifies, endorses, and supports clergy across the United States.

[Click here](#) to register for the Zoom meeting.

UMVIM Team Leader Training April 18, 2026



Are you considering leading a mission journey or disaster response team? The Ohio Episcopal Area is offering Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Team Leader Training on Saturday, April 18, from 9am to 3pm at Ashland First United Methodist Church. With an experienced team leader as your instructor, you will learn how to plan and lead a mission experience in Ohio, the United States, or around the world. You will also be provided with checklists, timelines, team forms, and practical resources for nurturing the spiritual life of your team.

Cost is \$15 per person, including lunch and materials. Deadline to register is April 15. For more information, [email Mariellyn Grace](#), Director of Mission Engagement for the Ohio Episcopal Area. [Register here](#)

SCD 2026: See, Create, Disciple August 2-5, 2026



SCD is the UMC's largest training and resourcing event for revitalization, fresh expressions, new churches, and leadership development. And Ohio is hosting this exciting event in Columbus this summer!

Be inspired by plenary speaker, author, and leader, Rev. Carey Nieuwhof who says, "If you care about the future of the church, this gathering is for you because we're not just talking about what's changing... we're talking about how to lead through it. At SCD, we're going to dig into what it looks like to see where God is already moving,

create new pathways for people to meet Jesus, and disciple in ways that actually form lives, not just fill rooms."

What you can expect:

- 50+ practitioners leading breakouts across ministry and leadership topics
- Bishops and denominational leaders from across the globe
- Practical tools you can take home and apply immediately

[Learn more here and register now](#) during early bird pricing through March 18. Path 1/Discipleship Ministries is providing a discount code to use when registering to get you the lowest possible price. Use **SCDOHIO** at checkout.

**Change the World Conference: The Future Church
April 23-24, 2026**



Clergy leaders and lay leaders are invited to a two-day conference at [Ginghamsburg Church](#) in Tipp City to envision ministry beyond yesterday's models. Change The World: The Future Church looks ahead with holy imagination, forgetting what is behind and pressing toward what lies ahead. You'll explore innovative mission, digital discipleship, and Spirit-driven strategies to reach a rapidly changing world with the unchanging gospel. The future is not something we fear. It is where God is already leading. [Click here for more information.](#)

**West Ohio United Women in Faith Mission U
June 12-14, 2026**



You are invited to participate in the West Ohio United Women in Faith Mission u event, scheduled for Friday, June 12 - Sunday, June 14. This year's theme is "Experiencing Emmanuel."

Mission u is significant in the growth of women's mission organizations and in our own faith journeys. Through worship, in-depth study, music, prayer, sharing, and exploring, we invite you to grow with us. There will be two sessions, both In-Person and Virtual.

[Click here for more information.](#) Registration opens April 1.

Lay Servant Ministries



Did you know? Districts in the West Ohio Conference have opportunities for laity to become a more effective leaders, to increase your faith, and to learn something new through the [Lay Servant Ministries](#) program. Many classes are scheduled for next year and many are available via Zoom. Click the underlined title to learn more and register. Or [click here](#) to see a list of all the courses, descriptions and leaders. Make 2026 the year you become the best leader you can be!

April 13, 16 20, 23, 27, 30	April 24-25	April 24-25	May 15-16
<u>Ministry with the Forgotten</u>	<u>Spiritual Gifts</u>	<u>Leading Worship</u>	<u>Called to Preach</u>

August 21-22	October 30-31	November 1,3,5,8,10	November 6-7
<u>Basic Course</u>	<u>Leading Group Bible Studies</u>	<u>UM Heritage- Living Our Beliefs</u>	<u>Intro to Biblical Storytelling</u>

LOCAL CHURCH & MINISTRY PARTNER EVENTS

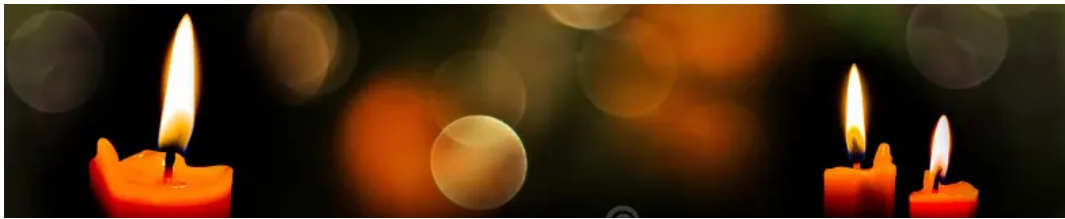


The Point Church
Christ in the Passover Experience
 March 30
 Click [here](#) for more details



Rev. Jim Waugh
When Kids Come Out
 Wednesdays April 8-29, Zoom
 Click [here](#) for more details

CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE



Notices of deceased clergy and clergy spouses may be viewed on the West Ohio Conference website by [clicking here](#).

In our district, we remember with thanksgiving the life and ministry **Mrs. Carole Brown** who went to be with our Lord on Thursday, January 29, 2026. Carole was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. George Brown, a Full Elder in the United Methodist Church, who served Somerset, Maize Manor, Belmont, Lancaster, and Westwood UMCs. In addition he served as the Wilmington District Superintendent. [Obituary](#). A memorial service will be held at Otterbein Community UMC on Sunday, April 26, 2026. Visitation will be at 1pm followed by the service at 2pm. Memorial gifts may be made to [Otterbein Lebanon SeniorLife Benevolent Care](#) in Carole's memory. Condolences will reach the family c/o son Rev. Larry Brown, 3583 Foxcroft Dr, Lewis Center, OH 43035 or lkbrown3583@gmail.com. A bus is being arranged from Twin Towers in Cincinnati to Otterbein for the service. Please contact Rev. Jill Crosswell if you want to reserve a seat: jcrosswell@aol.com.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

Employment

Chaplain - *Twin Lakes Senior Living*
 Director of Music and Worship - *Friendship UMC*
 Organist/Accompanist - *Friendship UMC*
 Connection Coordinator - *Springboro First UMC*
 Church Administrator - *John Wesley UMC*



Items Available
Pulpit - *Oak Hills UMC*

Great Miami River District | 7388 E Kemper Road | Cincinnati, OH 45249 US

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