



Great Miami River District

News from The United Methodist Church

News and Notes: January 24, 2024

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Gregory V. Palmer

Resident Bishop | Ohio West Area



East Ohio Conference and West Ohio Conference to Share an Episcopal Leader Effective September 1

For Immediate Release: January 24, 2024

From: The Offices of Communications from the East Ohio Conference and the West Ohio Conference

A special-called session of the North Central Jurisdiction (NCJ) Jurisdictional Conference of The United Methodist Church was held on Tuesday, January 23 “for the sole purpose of approving new episcopal areas for episcopal assignments to be effective September 1, 2024.”

Delegates to this special-called NCJ Jurisdictional Conference voted to form two new episcopal areas, one to include the East Ohio Conference and the West Ohio Conference, and one to include the Northern Illinois Conference and the Wisconsin Conference. The two conferences in each new episcopal area will share one bishop.

By the action of the special session, the North Central Jurisdiction will transition from nine to seven episcopal areas. The North Central Jurisdiction Committee on the Episcopacy assigns the bishops to the episcopal areas and all assignments will be announced at the NCJ Jurisdictional Conference July 10-13 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The new episcopal areas and the bishop assignments to each of the seven episcopal areas will be effective September 1.

Executive staff leaders and members of the Committee on the Episcopacy in both the East Ohio Conference and the West Ohio Conference have been engaged in strategic conversations to explore the sharing of an episcopal leader since the NCJ Committee on the Episcopacy proposed the possibility during the 2022 Jurisdictional Conference “I and Bishop Palmer convened a leadership team that has been working to identify the key administrative matters that need to be addressed and to examine the best practices of other episcopal areas where shared episcopal leadership has worked well. This work will continue as we prepare the conferences for this transition,” said Bishop Tracy S. Malone, resident bishop of the East Ohio Conference.

“I am confident the people of the East and West Ohio Conferences are well suited to be served by one bishop with a single eye to living the mission of ‘making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world,’” said Bishop Gregory V. Palmer, resident bishop

of the West Ohio Conference.

The Road to General Conference Webinar Tuesday Jan 30



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 will be holding an online Town Hall to answer some of the questions West Ohioans have regarding this important work.

The webinar will be held on Tuesday, January 30, at 7pm.

Some of the questions that will be addressed are:

- What is the General Conference and how does it impact the local church?
- How does legislation get to the GC?
- Who votes at GC?
- Who attends the General Conference?
- What are the General Agencies of The United Methodist Church?

If you would like to submit a question for this webinar, please send it to: townhallquestions@wocumc.org.

[Register Here](#)

Leadership Training Day

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our training day at the last minute. We apologize for the inconvenience this caused.



We are hoping to reschedule the event in April. Please stay tuned for the exact date, time and location.

Clergy Day Apart - Tuesday, February 6 Registration Now Open

Pastors, don't miss West Ohio's *Clergy Day Apart* scheduled for Tuesday, February 6, 2024 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (note time change) at Grove City UMC.



The featured speaker is Rev. Dr. Kenda Creasy Dean, the Mary D. Synnott Professor of Youth, Church and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary. [Register here via WestOhioUMC.org](#)

Laity Discernment Retreats- Beginning Next Week

Do you feel God's call on your life but are uncertain how to discern that call or what to do next? If so, then this is the retreat for you!



At the Laity Discernment Retreats, we will talk about call, discernment and what it means to be "called by our baptism." We will learn ways to intentionally enter into a time of prayer about discernment and we will discover Spiritual Rhythms that can help guide our journey. We will also discuss the variety of ways laity can serve both in our churches and in our communities.

In 2024, the virtual laity discernment retreat will consist of two, two-hour ZOOM sessions,

followed six weeks later by a two-hour ZOOM debriefing. In the six weeks between sessions, there will be opportunities to read, reflect, and practice Spiritual Rhythms that will lead you to a better understanding of your own call.

"I would recommend a Laity Discernment Retreat to someone who is searching or has questions about how they can serve their community or their church. It can help guide them through the process, provide resources and help provide a sense of peace about what they can be doing right now." -Twila Boyd, 2019 participant

Virtual Dates (please plan to attend all three sessions):

- Tuesday, January 30, 2024, 6:30-8:30pm
- Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 6:30-8:30pm
- Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 6:30-8:30pm

For more information, contact Kim LaRue at kimlarue@powellumc.org

Register [HERE](#)

How To Become a Reconciling Congregation: Brunch and Fellowship, Next Saturday February 3

New worshipping communities are forming of United Methodists left behind in disaffiliation votes. Persons who are Igbtq+, their families and friends are looking for a spiritual home.



Congregations from Williamsburg in Clermont County to Englewood in Montgomery County and Wilmington in Clinton County are carving an identity as inclusive United Methodist congregations. The Gospel empowers them.

Want to be a part of this movement of the Spirit?

Inclusive and Reconciling United Methodist Congregations from the Great Miami River District and beyond (formerly Ohio River Valley & Miami Valley) will answer questions and offer guidance. Please join them for brunch and conversation. Learn from Reconciling congregations, inclusive congregations, and affirming new faith communities. Individuals (clergy & lay) and small groups are encouraged to attend.

February 3, 2024, 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Brecon UMC Fellowship Hall
7388 E. Kemper Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45249

RSVP: annieburton@gmail.com (Tri-State Reconciling Community)

*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!*

Educational Opportunities

Tuesday Evenings in February via Zoom: Race and Racism in Cincinnati Docuseries

This docuseries is a telling of Cincinnati's history from the racial margins. It shares a people's history that places storytelling authority in the hands of common people, rather than political leaders or other figures in power.

RACE AND RACISM IN CINCINNATI: A 3-PART DOCUSERIES

A people's history of how race shaped neighborhoods, education, and culture.

This series (Tuesdays, Feb 6, 13, and 20 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM) features three separate hour-long videos that each tackle a different time span, starting from Cincinnati's

birth then bringing us to the present day.

To Register visit: <https://bit.ly/3RGn2fp>

Attending all three sessions is highly encouraged

Sponsored by: Church of the Saviour Methodist Church

Lay Servant Ministry Zoom Classes

Basic Course being offered in February

February 23-24, 2024 -Via Zoom

Friday evening: 6:30-9 PM; Saturday 8:30-5 PM

Instructors: Harry and Ann Peat



This course is foundational for all courses in Lay Servant Ministries. Lay Servant Ministries will give you a variety of opportunities to serve your local and the greater church. The ministries of Lay Servanthood are Leading, Caring, and Communicating. We can all find a calling in one or more of these areas of ministry. This class will familiarize you with these areas of ministry and give you a chance to explore each one.

Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course Participant's Book available in the links below
Cokesbury - [here](#) and Amazon - [here](#)

[Register Here](#)

Advanced Course: Discover Your Spiritual Gifts being offered in April

April 19 - 20 2024 - Via Zoom - Registration Opens In March

Friday eve: 6:30-9 PM and Saturday 8:30 AM -5PM

Cost for Classes: \$15.00 per participant zoom

Instructors: Harry and Ann Peat

The early church knew about the gift of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts flowing from the Holy Spirit through the believer. Today, the church is still discovering this. Learn more about how your spiritual gifts support your lay servant ministries. This course is one of the required courses for Lay Speakers.

Be sure to purchase and read the book, "Rediscovering Our Spiritual Gifts" by Charles V. Bryant prior to the class. (using one of the following links, please purchase the text from either Cokesbury - [here](#) or Amazon - [here](#))

Resources

**Youth Trip Grant Applications Now Open
Applications Due February 16, 2024**

"Each of you will be called to do something a little different that suits your group, your context, and the need that God has put on your heart. Regardless of what it is, we want you to know that the Great Miami River District is here to support you. Once again, we are offering the \$1,000 youth mission and spiritual development grants this year. We are doing so with an expanded understanding of what a 'youth summer trip' means. I encourage you to dream, pray, and think in bold and creative ways about how to



engage youth in mission, service, and spiritual growth safely this summer. If you'd like ideas on how to be involved with our local mission partners or smaller rural churches, please reach out to the district office. We would love to share ideas and resources from across the district with you.

Blessings!"

-Rev. Justin M. Fuhrmann, Great Miami River District Strategy Committee Chair
on behalf of the Great Miami River District Mission Foundation

[Download the application from the "District Grants" section of the Great Miami River District website](#), or [download the Word file directly](#).

"We Love Jesus and Our UMC" Photo Contest

Contest Theme: Capture moments that showcase your church's love for Jesus and the spirit of The United Methodist Church.

Submission Criteria:

1. Photos should reflect the theme of love, faith, and community within the context of the UMC.
2. Images can include church activities, worship services, community service, or any other aspect that embodies the spirit of your congregation or ministry setting. Images should reflect events from January 2023 to February 13, 2024.
3. Submit up to 20 digital images to: WOCMedia@wocumc.org.
4. Include photographer's name, phone number and email address, and photograph location/church.

Technical Requirements:

1. Submissions should be in color.
2. High resolution preferred.

Judging Criteria:

1. Relevance to the theme.
2. Creativity and originality.
3. Composition and visual appeal.
4. Emotional impact.

Prizes:

1st place: \$100.00

2nd place: \$50.00

3rd place: \$25.00

Images submitted may be displayed at the West Ohio Conference Center and on our social media channels. Photos will also be used at the 2024 Annual Conference. Photo credits will be included.

Submission Deadline: February 14, 2024

How to Enter: Send digital images to WOCMedia@wocumc.org



Resources for Students and Youth

A poster for the "Winter Youth Gathering 2024" with a snowy background. The text reads: "Winter Youth Gathering 2024 with Bishop Gregory Palmer inviting all youth 6th-12th grade -Powell UMC-". Below this, it says "Friday, February 2, 6-9:30pm" followed by "dinner - games - powerful worship", "-interview with Bishop Palmer", "small group breakouts - student panel", and "communion". At the bottom left is a QR code with the text "scan me to register!". At the bottom right is the text "SUPPORT Kaleidoscope Youth Center & Church for All People: bring hats, scarves, and gloves".

Winter Youth Gathering 2024 **Next Friday - Register By This Sunday**

Join us at the Winter Youth Gathering 2024 with Bishop Gregory Palmer! This event, specially crafted for 6th-12th graders, will take place on Friday, February 2, from 6:00 to 9:30 PM at Powell UMC.

Event Schedule:

- Dinner/Activities (6:00-7:00): Kick off the night with a delicious dinner and fun activities that will set the

stage for an unforgettable experience.

- Worship: Immerse yourself in a powerful worship session starting at 7 PM. Let the music and message inspire and uplift you.
- Interview with Bishop Palmer: Hear about Bishop Palmer's faith journey and call to ministry.
- Small Groups: Following worship, dive into small groups where you can connect with your peers, share your thoughts, and explore the meaning of faith in your lives.
- Panel Discussion: Gain insights and perspectives from a diverse panel of speakers, addressing topics that matter to today's youth. This is your chance to ask questions, share your opinions, and learn from one another.
- Communion: Conclude the evening with a meaningful communion service, symbolizing unity and the shared journey of faith.

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to strengthen your faith, build lasting connections, and have a blast in the company of fellow youth. Mark your calendars for the Winter Youth Gathering 2024 at Powell UMC.

Service Opportunity- Youth and leaders are invited to bring winter items: hats, scarves, and gloves to support neighbors of Kaleidoscope Youth Center and Church for All People. We can't wait to see you there!

Registration link: [Winter Youth Gathering 2024](#)

Deadline to register is Sunday, January 28

Confirmation Event With Bishop Palmer March 3, 2024

Attention all confirmation teachers, students, and church leaders! On March 3, 2024, Bishop Gregory V. Palmer will be hosting a very special confirmation event for all confirmands of West Ohio.



Registration is now open via [WestOhioUMC.org!](#)

If you have questions, contact Rev. Ann Marie Carley amcarley@wocumc.org.

ExploreCalling



This February: Exploration An opportunity for young adults to explore a call to ministry!

Exploration creates sacred space for young adults, ages 18-26, to be in meaningful fellowship, passionate worship, theological reflection, and practical workshops as they discern whether God's call on their life is to ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church and what faithful steps they can take in response.

Please share this with any young person within their congregations who might be interested. [Reach out to Jenn Lucas](#) if you have questions

[Learn more at https://www.explorecalling.org/exploration/](https://www.explorecalling.org/exploration/)



[Click here](#) to view/respond to the ads below
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Employment

Director of Children's Ministries - *Epiphany UMC*

Administrative Assistant - *Aldersgate UMC*

Director of Youth Ministries - *Sharonville UMC*

Children's Ministry Coordinator - *Oakwood UMC*



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

Judith A. (Long) Steigleder who passed away on January 18, 2024. She was the wife of Rev. Richard Steigleder who retired in 2002 and passed in 2011. Judy supported Richard in serving these congregations in both East and West Ohio Conferences: Polk, East Ohio Conf; Hoover-Elizabethtown Charge; Shiloh; Findlay St Marks; Green Camp; South Charleston; Belmont; Northridge and Lima Grace. [Obituary](#). Her memorial service was held yesterday in Lima. Contributions, if desired, may be made in memory of Judith A. Steigleder to the Mark C. Sprague Fund at the Methodist Theological School, 3081 Columbus Pike, Delaware, Ohio 43015 or to the Spiritual Growth Fund of the Westside United Methodist Church 604 Gloria Ave., Lima, OH 45805. Condolences may be expressed online [here](#).

Great Miami River District of the UM Church | 7388 E Kemper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45249

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