



# Great Miami River District

News from The United Methodist Church

## News and Notes: January 3, 2024

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### There's still time to pay your 2023 Apportionments

[Monday, January 8](#) is the final day to pay apportionments and have them applied to your 2023 total. Note, your check will need to be at the West Ohio Conference Center so it can be deposited by the end of the day on Monday. Please assess whether USPS will get your check there in time or whether you need to hand-deliver or overnight your payment.



You continue to reflect the transformative light and love of Christ to the world as you support the mission and ministries of the United Methodist Church, West Ohio Conference, and districts through your shared ministry apportionment giving. [Thank you!](#)

### Leadership Training Day : Sunday January 21 @ Mason UMC

Please mark your calendar for a great day of learning and fellowship on Sunday, January 21 from 2-5:45 pm (doors open at 1:30). Our keynote speaker is Rev. Sam Holmes who is the pastor of The Pointe Church in Centerville, one of the churches in the Gem City Collective. You'll also be able to choose from 9 different workshops over two sessions. [Click here to download a complete list of workshops and descriptions.](#)



Pastor Sam will teach us how to live "freely and lightly" based on Matthew 11:28-30

*"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."* (MSG)

Of course the question is, how do we actually live this out? How do we step into the reality of spiritual renewal and total life transformation? How do we practically live in ways that allow us to discover the joy of following Christ in the midst of any season, any trial, any storm? Find out on January 21.

[Register](#)

**Introducing Super Serve Saturday -  
a monthly serving opportunity!  
Begins January 20**



In the new year we are partnering with Hyde Park Community UMC to offer monthly community serve opportunities from September-May. We are hoping to see families, multiple generations, small groups, youth groups, friends and people of all backgrounds put their faith into action by serving in the community.

Currently we have 4 organizations and 6 projects to choose from in January. All of the opportunities are in Hamilton county but our goal is to expand to all 7 counties in the Great Miami River District very quickly.

Super Serve Saturdays (S3) will take place on the 3rd Saturday of the month - January 20, February 17, March 16, April 20 and May 18. There is something for every age and ability - no superpowers necessary - just a willing, humble and flexible spirit and heart for all!

[Click here](#) to sign up for the first S3 day in January.

Opportunities include:

**New Life Furniture Bank**

Build/assemble/paint furniture to make a house a home  
Sort donations and box them for delivery  
Sort and organize for the thrift store

**Meals on Wheels**

Pack snack boxes and meals

**Wesley Chapel Mission Center**

Tutor and play games with kids from the neighborhood

**The Center for Respite Care**

Serve and share a meal

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**Mark your Calendar for Clergy Day Apart**

Mark your calendar for 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 United Methodist Church](#).



More details and registration coming soon!

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**Martin Luther King Day Program  
Monday January 15 at Freedom Center - Cincinnati**

The Martin Luther King Jr. Coalition of Cincinnati is once again hosting a free event that is open to the public, in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The theme is "Love, Power, Justice": Dr. King Jr. dedicated his life to making love, power, and justice a reality for all people, and especially those who had been oppressed by poverty, racism, and violence.

The event starts at 10:30 a.m. at the National



Underground Railroad Freedom Center, 50 East Freedom Way, Cincinnati, OH 45202, where an interdenominational prayer service jump starts the march. The march concludes at Washington Park with remarks and a music performance. A complimentary Rosa Parks Bus will provide rides for those unable to march.

The MLK Jr. Day program continues inside Music Hall, 1241 Elm St., Cincinnati, OH 45202 where guests will celebrate the day with music and three outstanding community leaders. [Learn more at www.mlkcoalition.org](http://www.mlkcoalition.org)

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

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## Educational Opportunities

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### Lay Servant Ministry Classes January 19-20, 2024 at Williamsburg UMC



Have you ever felt God calling you to become more involved in your local church and community? Or perhaps you have discerned the need to develop your leadership skills. If so, Lay Servant Ministries is a great way to get started. taken as stand alone resources for your enrichment and education and to improve your leadership skills or you can go deeper and become a Certified Lay Servant in the United Methodist Church. [Click here](#) to learn more about that process.

The **Introduction (Basic)** course is a great place to get started. Your church and your pastor depend on you to pursue and accomplish the work of making disciples. Many journeys towards deeper faith and service in ministry have begun with the Basic class. You will explore the ministry of the baptized, servant leadership, spiritual gifts, Wesleyan tradition, caring, communication and more. [Click here to learn more/register](#).

You may also consider an Advanced class like **Called to Preach**. It is designed for those who have not completed formal preaching training, for pastors seeking a basic refresher course, and for others who are called upon to preach in a pastor's absence. The course will cover the basics for researching, preparing and delivering an effective sermon. [Click here to learn more/register](#).

**Date:**

Friday, January 19, 2024 from 5:30 - 9:00 PM and,  
Saturday, November 4, 2023 from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**Location:** [Williamsburg United Methodist Church](#), 330 Gay St, Williamsburg 45176

**Cost:** \$30.00 per participant

Books must be purchased by participant and are readily available at Cokesbury and Amazon.

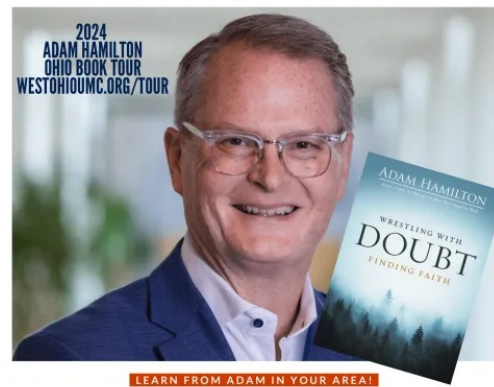
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### Adam Hamilton is Coming to the District! January 16 at 6:30 PM- [Register Here](#)

Rev. Adam Hamilton is touring Ohio with the release of his upcoming book, *"Wrestling with Doubt, Finding Faith."* This is an incredible opportunity to learn from a successful author of church resources and pastor of one of the most influential churches in America, The United

Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City. He will provide a short presentation followed by a Q & A about the book.

The event is free, but registration is required. Books will be available to purchase on site. [Register here.](#)



LEARN FROM ADAM IN YOUR AREA!

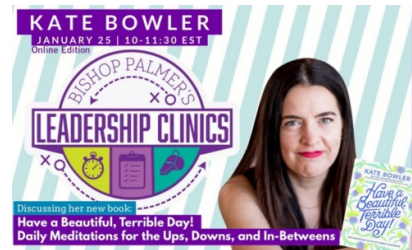
January 16: Cincinnati  
6:30-8pm Mason UMC  
6315 Mason Montgomery Road

Each stop is 90-minutes with a presentation and Q&A about the book. Event is free for laity & clergy but registration is required. Books will be available at event.

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### NYT Bestseller Kate Bowler to Join Bishop Palmer for Clinic Thurs Jan 25 Online

3 Time New York Times bestselling author and award-winning podcast host Kate Bowler will be a guest on Bishop Palmer's Leadership Clinic on January 25, during launch week for her new book. Kate is the author of "Everything Happens for a Reason and Other Lies I've Loved."



Everyone will receive a copy of Kate's newest book which releases that week "Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day! Daily Meditations for the Ups, Downs, and In-Betweens."

[To learn more about Kate or to register for this online clinic, click here.](#)

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### Bryan Stevenson of "Just Mercy" Leadership Clinic March 11 Online

Bryan Stevenson, founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a human rights organization will be the featured guest for Bishop Palmer's Leadership Clinic on March 11, 2024.



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. Mr. Stevenson has received over 50 honorary doctoral degrees and numerous awards.

He is the author of the critically acclaimed New York Times bestseller, Just Mercy, which was named by Time Magazine as one of the ten Best Books of the year. Just Mercy was adapted as a major motion picture. Mr. Stevenson is also the subject of the Emmy Award-winning HBO documentary True Justice. He is a graduate of the Harvard Law School and the Harvard School of Government.

The first 200 to register will receive a copy of Just Mercy.

[Learn more and register at WestOhioUMC.org](#)

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### Basic & Recert ERT Classes: Next Saturday January 13 in Columbus

UMCOR's Early Response Team (ERT) Basic class will

be offered on Saturday, January 13, 8:00 am-4:00 pm at North Broadway UMC in Columbus. 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. Cost is \$40 for the Basic class or \$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: <https://www.westohioumc.org/event/early-response-team-training-recert-nbumc>



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## Resources

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### 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](#).



### Human Relations Sunday

The official date set to celebrate Human Relations Day is January 14, 2024. We encourage churches to celebrate on a date that is most convenient for your congregation.

Human Relations Day is a denomination wide Special Sunday designed to celebrate and raise awareness to further the development of better human relations by involving congregations in community and youth outreach. A special offering taken the Sunday before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Gifts received for the offering build King's vision of "the beloved community" through programs such as Community Developers and United Methodist Voluntary Services and Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs.



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

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## Multiethnic Ministries Grants



The 2024 Racial/Ethnic Local Church(RELC) Grant and the Annual Conference Multiethnic Ministries Grant applications are now available! **RELC Grant and**

**Multiethnic Ministries Grant applications will be accepted January 2 – March 1, 2024. Application forms can be found here: <https://umcmission.org/multiethnic-ministries/>**

RELC Grants are provided to assist local racial/ethnic congregations with projects and programs on one of three areas: 1) Leadership Development; 2) Church Growth and Development; and 3) Pastoral Salary Support. The maximum RELC programmatic grant is \$15,000 and the maximum pastoral salary support grant is \$12,000. The church's membership must be at least 51% majority racial/ethnic.

Multiethnic Ministries Grants are provided to annual conferences to assist with programs focusing on racial-ethnic leadership development and racial/ethnic church growth and development.

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## Resources for Students and Youth

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### 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/)

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### **Save the Date! 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.



To register for updates about this event or ask questions, contact Director of Camps, Retreats, and Next Gen Engagement Rev. Ann Marie Carley [amcarley@wocumc.org](mailto:amcarley@wocumc.org). More details around this special event will be coming soon!

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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*

**For Sale or Free**

Padded Pews - *Shiloh UMC*

Pews - *Norwood Grace UMC*



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

**Rev. Kenneth Everett Brown** who passed away surrounded by family on Wednesday, November 29, 2023. Kenneth served as a pastor, first in the Evangelical United Brethren Church, then in the United Methodist Church for over 50 years. He served congregations throughout Fairfield County, as well as in Liberty Center, Newark, Kenton, Englewood, and Westerville, preaching his first sermon at 12 and serving his first appointment at 18. [Obituary](#). Rev. Brown's funeral was held December 5 at the Halteman-Fett & Dyer Funeral Home in Lancaster.

**Janan "Nan" G. Kramer** of Toledo who passed away peacefully on December 20, 2023. She was married to Rev. Robert A. Kramer and together they served churches throughout northwest Ohio including Trilby (Toledo), Howard (Findlay), Grace (Lima), Aldersgate (Toledo), Stonybrook (Gahanna), St. Paul's (Toledo), Otterbein (Dayton), and Broadway (Toledo). In 1985, Nan was ordained a Diaconal Minister. [Obituary](#). The family will receive friends and family on January 11, 2023 from 10-11am at Sylvania First UMC with her Memorial Service immediately following. Those wishing to contribute in Nan's memory are asked to consider [Sylvania First United Methodist Church](#) or [Hospice of Northwest Ohio](#).

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