



Great Miami River District

News from The United Methodist Church

News and Notes: February 14, 2024

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

Our theme this year, God is Able, draws inspiration from Ephesians 3:20-21, promising a gathering that celebrates the limitless power of God.



Registration for conference members will open March 1. There will be limited guest seating; however, the conference is expected to be livestreamed on the home page of the West Ohio Conference website: westohioumc.org. More details coming soon

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

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

Great Miami River District Churches Receive Bishop's GO Awards

[GO Grants](#) resource innovative ministry ideas that help West Ohio churches develop relationships beyond the walls of their buildings and within their communities, to make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.



On February 4, churches from across the West Ohio gathered in Columbus to celebrate what God is doing through 100+ new ministries across the conference. Seven West Ohio teams across five budgets aligned to support these new dreams which will also provide research & development for ideas that can be shared in a variety of contexts. [Click here](#) to see all the award recipients.

Our district was well represented at the celebration! Congratulations to the following Great Miami River District Churches who received a GO Award:

Community Engagement

- Aley - The Growing Space
- Epiphany - Creative Arts
- Faith Community, West Chester - Mary & Martha: Women Encouraging Women in Faith & Love
- Kettering Christ - NeighborFood
- Park Avenue - Spread the Love of Jesus
- York Street - Golden Horizons: A Legacy of Faith & Community

Inclusion

- Franklin First - Angel Shop
- Hartzell - Gray't Expectations
- Loveland - Thankful Thursdays

Family Ministries

- First Fil-Am Church of Greater Dayton - Mothers on Mission & Service
- Oak Hills - After School Ministry
- Shiloh - Mission Room

Emerging Generations

- Wesley Campus Ministry - Mobile Living Room
- Wesley Foundation of Cincinnati - Wondering with Wesley Podcast
- Westwood - Westwood Young Adult Community Group

GHX (Greenhouse Expressions)

- Forest Chapel - Bethlehem Bhutanese Ministry
- Westwood - Lunch Church

GH (Greenhouse Leader Development)

- Hope Collective - Rev. Jon Morgan
- New Day - Rev. Carrie Jena
- Summit - Rev. Steve Rudisill

Building Bridges

- Clough - Exterior Updates
- Dayton Grace - Operation Senior Service
- Emmanuel - Community Invitation
- Mosaic - Restoring Bridges
- Southern Hills - Handicap Door Repair

Educational and Serve Opportunities

Mission Team Leader Training is February 19 in Westerville

Deadline to register: Tomorrow! February 15

Thinking about leading a mission journey in 2024? Now is the time to prepare! Join West Ohio for a Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Team Leader Training next Monday, February 19, from 9am-1pm.



With experienced team leaders as instructors, 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 of the training is \$35 per person and includes lunch. Deadline to register is tomorrow! [Click here to register](#). Questions? Contact [Mariellyn Grace](#).

The Connection :: A Confirmation Event with Bishop Palmer March 3 from 2-6:30pm at Ohio Wesleyan University

Deadline to register: Tomorrow! February 15

If you have confirmands from last year, current students, or students who will be entering confirmation this fall, you do not want to miss the **The Connection** with Bishop Gregory V. Palmer on Sunday, March 3.



Confirmands will learn about the history and polity of The United Methodist Church, experience the unique connections of being a part of West Ohio, fellowship, worship, and spend time talking with Bishop Palmer. The afternoon will conclude with a meal shared together.

[Click here](#) to register your group today. If you have questions or difficulty registering, contact Ann Marie Carley at amcarley@wocumc.org.

The Road to General Conference Webinar #2

Tuesday, March 19 at 12pm

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



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

[Register here](#)

The Value of a Letter

The gift of a letter or card can have a profound impact on a person in prison who feels forgotten by the world, and perhaps, by God. HOPE Letters is a mentorship through correspondence program that reaches inside our state correctional facilities to offer hope to those who are incarcerated. Endorsed by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, HOPE Letter writers are touching many lives to offer encouragement, non-judgmental companionship and a listening ear.

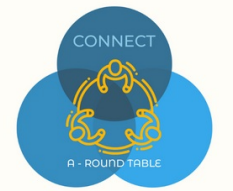


The good news is *anyone* can write letters or sign cards. It's an easy way to make a big difference in a person's life. On Monday February 26, All in Community is offering an online training that will teach you how to send hope to neighbors who are returning to your communities.

The event is free, however, advance registration is necessary. [Click here to register now.](#) Questions and requests for the ZOOM link can be directed to Jami Nathan, AIC Ministries Coordinator, by email jami.nathan.22@gmail.com.

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

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



In your time together you'll learn:

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

[Click here to register](#)

Basic & Recert ERT Class

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

UMCOR's Early Response Team (ERT) Basic class will be offered on Saturday, March 2 at Aley UMC in Beavercreek. A four-hour recertification class will also be offered. West Ohio ERT trainers will teach participants how to assist survivors of natural disasters in their time of need. Trainees will learn how to provide a caring, Christian presence while taking steps to prevent further damage to the family's personal property. Skills that are taught include tarping, debris removal, mucking out flooded homes, etc. FEMA recognizes this training to enter a disaster scene.



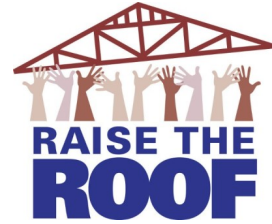
A background check is required, and a link to complete this will be provided upon registration. The

cost is \$40 for the Basic class and \$35 for recertification. *ERT members are not required to be United Methodist but must deploy with a United Methodist-led team.*

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

Raise the Roof for Tanzania School

On Tuesday, January 18, people attending Bishop Palmer's Leadership Clinic learned of an immediate need from our brothers and sisters in Tanzania. They need our help to complete a project that was left undone by a church that chose to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church. Seven classrooms for preschool and primary school children have been built but there is no roof.



"We have the opportunity to Raise the Roof," said Bishop Gregory Palmer. "There is a need and I know West Ohioans will rise to the occasion and supply the \$15,000 that is needed for this special project." Palmer was the first to contribute to the cause. With a comprehensive approach on evangelism and church planting, the Tanzania Annual Conference, led by Bishop Mande Muyombo, and Global Ministries started a mission center in Mwanza District. The center includes an orphanage with 85 children, United Methodist schools, and a hospital. Learn more and donate by clicking here.

To contribute to "Raise the Roof," you may donate online by clicking [here](#) or send a check to the United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio, 32 Wesley Blvd, Worthington, OH 43085, with 'Advance #00205A-Raise the Roof' in the Memo line. If you give online, be sure to mark the donation 'In Honor of' and include 'Advance #00205A-Raise the Roof' in the Name line.

Funding Sources

Youth Trip Grant Applications Are Open

Deadline to apply: Friday! February 16

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.



Again this year the GMD is offering **\$1,000 youth mission and spiritual development grants**. We are doing so with an expanded understanding of what a 'youth summer trip' means. You are encouraged to dream, pray, and think in bold and creative ways about how to engage youth in mission, service, and spiritual growth safely this summer. And 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.

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

Racial/Ethnic Local Church Grant Applications

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 through March 1, 2024. [Application forms can be found here](#).



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.



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

Employment

Director of Children's Ministries - *Epiphany UMC*
Administrative Assistant - *Aldersgate UMC*
Director of Youth Ministries - *Sharonville UMC*
Children's Ministry Coordinator - *Oakwood UMC*

Needed

Softball Players - *Clifton UMC*

A Call to Prayer



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

Rev. Grayson Atha, who passed away on February 11, 2024. Grayson is survived by his wife of nearly 65 years, Wende, and among their children, Rev. Marcus Atha. During his time in ministry, Grayson served a variety of United Methodist Churches, including the Haviland Charge, Norwood Grace, Lebanon UMC, Mt. Zion (Cincinnati), King Avenue in Columbus, Williams Street in Delaware, and Summit UMC and Gates Fourth UMC, both in Columbus. He also served as District Superintendent for the former Findlay District, where he made the first cross-racial appointment in the West Ohio Conference, and following his role as District Superintendent, he was appointed to a cross-racial appointment at Mt Zion UMC. Grayson was most recently named Pastor Emeritus at King Avenue UMC. We encourage you to read Grayson's full obituary, partially written by Grayson himself, [here](#), where you may also leave condolences for the family.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, February 17, 2024 at King Avenue UMC, 299 King Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, 43201. Visitation is from 9:30 am - 11:00 am, with the service immediately following. The service will be live-streamed at www.kingave.org.

Donations in honor of Grayson can be made to the West Liberty Historical Society (Opera House - Phase III) at www.westlibertyhistory.com, or to King Avenue UMC, www.kingave.org.

Mrs. Marjorie Uth who passed away on Saturday, February 10, 2024. Marjorie was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. Ralph E. Uth, in 2016. Rev. Uth and Marjorie served the West Ohio Conference from 1949 until his retirement in 1988 at these churches: Hoytville Charge; Lewisburg Charge; Ironton, Immanuel; Mt Blanchard; West Jefferson; Mason; Delphos Trinity; and Blanchester. A memorial is being planned for April 27, 2024. That information as well as the obituary are not yet available. Condolences will reach daughter Carol Uth at 3661 Epworth Ave Cincinnati, OH 45211.

for the latest news and events right here in the Great Miami River District!



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