



**DisAbility Ministries**  
The United Methodist Church



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## **OHIO DISABILITY AND MINISTRY COLLABORATIVE**

We give thanks for our first West Ohio Conference United Methodist Church  
**Disability Awareness Sunday, May 2, 2021**



- Perhaps your participation meant an entire service devoted to furthering awareness...Thank you!
- Perhaps you spent a designated time in prayer during your worship service...Many thanks!
- Perhaps special music was dedicated to the theme...We thank you!
- Perhaps your heart silently lifted disabilities' ministries in prayer...Thank you, too!

No matter how you recognized Disability Awareness Sunday, we are grateful! You may ask, who ARE you? We are the recently developed **Ohio Disability and Ministry Collaborative**, formed between the West Ohio Conference UMC Disability Awareness team, and Flat Rock Homes, with its ministries reaching throughout the East Ohio Conference UMC. Our statement of purpose notes: **“The Ohio Disability and Ministry Collaborative seeks to empower and resource local churches to provide worship experiences inclusive of all people with various abilities, and to inform church-seeking families and individuals of inclusive opportunities available to them.”**

We look forward to furthering disability awareness throughout Ohio. In the West Ohio Conference, the first Sunday in May is set aside as Disability Awareness Sunday, although another Sunday may be substituted, if needed. East Ohio Conference churches may feel free to designate a Sunday of their choice. Please read what the Book of Discipline says about Disability Awareness in the church: [Disability in the Discipline – Disability Ministries of the United Methodist Church \(umcdmc.org\)](#)

As mentioned, this Collaborative is between the West Ohio Conference Disability Awareness team and Flat Rock Homes, in north central Ohio near Sandusky, a ministry of the East Ohio Conference. Most readers will know the West Ohio Conference, and here is a bit of information about Flat Rock Homes. Flat Rock Homes was founded as an Evangelical Association ministry in 1866. It became affiliated with the Evangelical United Brethren Church by merger in 1946 and eventually began a covenant relationship with the East Ohio Conference by merger and the founding of the present-day United Methodist Church in 1968. Flat Rock began as an orphanage serving “orphan train” children, and in 1978 changed its focus to minister to the needs of individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Today, Flat Rock serves youth and adults with a variety of disabilities but with a special focus on adults with significant intellectual

and developmental disabilities and severe behavioral disorders. The individuals and families served by Flat Rock come from 28 counties in Ohio, and Flat Rock currently serves in 13 Ohio counties, including: Seneca, Sandusky, Huron, Erie, Lorain, Wyandot, Morrow, Richland, Ashland, Crawford, Knox, Marion, and Ottawa Counties.

Flat Rock's Church & Community Engagement Coordinators, Rose M Darling and UMW Deaconess Sherri Buehl, reach out to churches and are available for speaking engagements in both the East and West Ohio Conferences. For more information, visit [www.flatrockhomes.org](http://www.flatrockhomes.org) or follow Flat Rock Homes on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#).

Follow this link to the West Ohio Conference Disabilities site where you will learn more about disabilities ministries. [Disability Ministries | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church \(westohioumc.org\)](#). Check out the EOC Advocacy/DisAbility Awareness pages at [www.East Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church \(eocumc.com\)](http://www.East Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church (eocumc.com))



The Collaborative offers a **speaker's bureau** available to introduce disability awareness throughout the year, including, but not limited to:

- To Scout ministries, youth groups and children's ministries
- UMW and UMM
- Worship services

We are here to help you plan and/or present your Disability Awareness programs!

Please visit [Disability Awareness Speakers | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church \(westohioumc.org\)](#) for a list of available speakers throughout Ohio.

The Ohio Disability and Ministry Collaborative is led by co-directors Rev. Zach Holler, and Mimi Luebbers. Also serving on the committee are, Lauren Burns, Katie Glover, Sue Hey, Kirsty Jones, Sam Rodriguez, Amanda Stufflebeam, and Rich Schultze. From Flat Rock Homes, are President and CEO, Karen Kilgo, and Church & Community Engagement Coordinators: Sherri Buehl, and Rose M Darling.

Helpful link: [2021 Calendar of Disability-Related Dates - Disability:IN \(disabilityin.org\)](#)

We look forward to working with you to increase Disability Awareness within your congregation!

### **The Ohio Disability and Ministry Collaborative**

Zach Hollers  
Mimi Luebbers

Please contact Rose Darling at [Rdarling@flatrockhomes.org](mailto:Rdarling@flatrockhomes.org) for additional information.