



## Multiplying Love

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Dear Hocking River District Family and Friends

I trust you are having a holy and meaningful season of Lent! This is indeed a sacred time for each of us to remember and reflect upon what our Lord Jesus did for us. During these 40 days, we pause to look inward at our souls, to search our innermost beings through prayer, fasting, meditation, journaling, scripture reading and other disciplines.

Many of you are leading others into a deeper walk with Christ through small group studies, prayer gatherings, fellowship groups, special worship services. That is highly commendable. Because of your faithfulness and commitment, many lives are being transformed by the power of God's love. Thank you for allowing God's love to flow through you.

In his book "*Multiplying Love: A Vision of United Methodist Life Together*," Paul Chilcote, a third generation United Methodist Elder, challenges the reader to consider the deep calling of sharing God's love freely with all. The book is written in response to a book by two former United Methodist elders, who urged United Methodists to leave the denomination.

The author, a lover of Wesleyan heritage, has dedicated much of his life studying John and Charles Wesley. The Wesley brothers truly lived out their faith and theology in a life of love. Whether it was singing, preaching or just simply living, everything they did was all about love.

What the Wesley's did for the Christian church of their day was to bring revival, renewal and "*a rediscovery of God's unconditional love.*" In a time of deep division, anger, mistrust and untruth, the author reminds us to NOT despair or lose hope, because "*love is the most powerful reality in this universe.*"

[Reverend Chow's message continued on page 2....](#)

As we continue to journey to the Cross in this holy season, we are reminded of God's deep love for each of us. May you be strengthened and encouraged with each new day, knowing that the God Who created us is the same God Who calls us and loves us!

*"We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters."* (1 John 3:16 NLT)

May the Love of Christ Shine through you!

*Mark*



**ATTENTION CLERGY: Friday, April 12- Sunday, April 14, 2024**  
**A Clergy and Spouse Retreat at Burr Oak State Park**  
**Glouster OH (Morgan County)**

Come away for a weekend getaway in this beautiful setting of God's creation! Enjoy delicious meals, lively fellowship, fun activities, and much needed rest. Some of the options include hiking trails, fishing, boating, basketball, tennis, miniature golf, indoor swimming, and so much more.

Choose from a spacious king room or a private cottage.  
Stay one or two nights.



Space is limited so contact Barbara Conover (740.677.0136 or [bconover@wocumc.org](mailto:bconover@wocumc.org)) to reserve your spot not later than March 14! Scholarships are available.

Rev. Dr. Dan Wells and Jacqui Wells will be our retreat leaders. We look forward to a time of renewal and refreshment as individuals and/or couples in life and ministry.



**PHONE NUMBER FOR HOCKING RIVER DISTRICT OFFICE:**  
**(740) 677-0136**

## Dessert and Dialogue

We are grateful for your leadership in the Hocking River District! This is an important time of transition and cultivating a Christ-centered community is vital to moving forward focused on our mission. It is also important that we know the responsibilities and tasks that we are called to do as we move forward. These discussions are important training. If you are a **Board of Trustees member, a member of the S/PPRC Committee, or a Finance Committee member** it is important that you attend.

For information on **Board of Trustees or Finance Committee:**

**Wednesday, March 13 from 6-8pm, McArthur First UMC, 200 S. Market St, McArthur.**

For information on **S/PPRC Committee:**

**Thursday, March 21 from 6-8pm, The Coolville UMC, 25460 Main St, Coolville.**

Or

**Tuesday, March 26 from 6-8pm, Bethany UMC, 159 Adams St, Corning.**

**If you are a pastor, please make certain that you or someone from your church attends these trainings!**



**Use the Conference Website for Annual Reporting OR Fill Out the Paper Forms That Have Been Mailed Out and Return to the District Office By June 1st**

**All forms must be sent in by June 1, with the exception of the Statistics (Year End Report), which is due by April 15.**

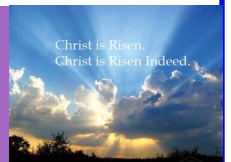
**Copy and paste the following link into your browser to complete Statistics online:**

**<https://westhioumc.org/stewardship-finance/end-year-reports>**



*The Hocking River District office will be closed on Good Friday, March 29 and will reopen following Easter Day.*

Christ is Risen.  
Christ is Risen Indeed.



## District Leadership Training Days -

Sunday, April 28th - focus will be on Circuit Ministry

2:00pm - Chester (Meigs/Gallia/Vinton)

6:00pm - Nelsonville First (Athens/Hocking)

Sunday, May 5th - focus will be on Circuit Ministry

2:00pm - Zanesville Coburn (Muskingum/Perry)

6:00pm - Marietta Gilman (Washington/Morgan)

## Clergy Session

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 - 9:00am - Christ UMC, Kettering

## District Spring Conference -

Sunday, May 19, 2024 - 2:00pm - Belpre St Mark's

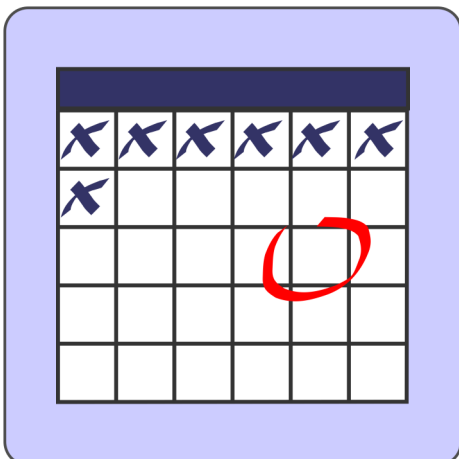
## West Ohio Annual Conference -

Wednesday, May 29, 2024 - Saturday, June 1, 2024 - Capital University, Bexley OH

## Starting Well

Wednesday, May 24, 2024 - 6:00pm - 9:00pm - Zanesville Grace

**Need help with registration for Annual Conference? Call Barbara (740) 677-0136**



**IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2024**

## 2023 Statistical Reporting

2023 statistical reporting information was recently emailed out to pastors, treasurers, administrative council/leadership team chairs, and church office administrators. These reports are due by April 15<sup>th</sup>, and online submission is preferred. Providing accurate information is essential, as this reporting affects how your 2025 apportionments are calculated. You can access all information that you need to complete those reports on the West Ohio Conference website, at [End Of Year Reports | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church \(westohioumc.org\)](https://www.westohioumc.org/End-Of-Year-Reports)

For questions around these reports contact Jack Frost, [jfrost@wocumc.org](mailto:jfrost@wocumc.org).

**Didn't receive this information via email? Please update your church's leadership contact information, either in MyChurch account or by calling or emailing the Hocking River District office!**



**PHONE NUMBER FOR HOCKING RIVER DISTRICT OFFICE:**  
**(740) 677-0136**

## **GRANT OPPORTUNITY**

### **VBS Mini-Grants Available from Foundation**

Thanks to the generosity of a major donor, the United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio is pleased to announce the availability of mini-grants for VBS programs in West Ohio. Grants of \$250-\$1000 will be available for curriculum materials, supplies, staff costs, or other expenses related to the production of Vacation Bible School programs in West Ohio churches. The Clara's Kiddies/Jesse's Vine Endowment was formed in 2017 by Ketha Robbins to support VBS programs in honor of her grandmother and great-grandfather who encouraged her faith. She remembers how much fun she had during those summer days as she learned about the Bible alongside other children who were hearing about Jesus for the first time. To Ketha, this is what made, and continues to make, VBS so special. In her words, "It is a bookend. It is the start of what a person's spiritual life can become."

Applications are due by March 15 and can be completed at this [link](#). Special consideration will be given to those serving rural and underserved communities. Contact Maddy DeWitt at 380-223-9229 or [mdewitt@wocumc.org](mailto:mdewitt@wocumc.org) for more information.

Good Works **Transformation Station** continues to provide appliances, bicycles, non-emergency food, and vehicles through a “sweat equity” initiative we started years ago. In February, we provided a participant with car #202. **We need vehicles.** Could you pass the word about the TS?

If you would like to participate in the mission and ministry of Good Works through giving, click here.  
<https://good-works.net/make-a-donation-2/>

## **EAST AND WEST OHIO CONFERENCES TO SHARE AN EPISCOPAL LEADER EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2024**

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.

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**The deadline to apply for scholarships from the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation is extended to March 15.** Don't miss your chance at more money to attend United Methodist-related colleges, universities, and seminaries. Now's the time to begin or complete an application! Visit <https://umhef.org/apply> to learn about eligibility, available award programs, & application instructions.

### **As a reminder, here are some quick facts about UMHEF scholarships:**

- UMHEF awards more than \$2 million in scholarships every year! Open to students who plan to attend a United Methodist-related college, university, or seminary. See the list [here](#).
- Students must be a member of one of these churches for at least a year prior to applying: The United Methodist Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the AME Zion Church, or the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Students whose churches have disaffiliated from The UMC are also welcome to apply.
- Scholarships are available to undergraduates, graduate students, and Doctor of Ministry students. (*Other doctoral students are not currently eligible.*)

The two main UMHEF scholarship programs include the [UM Dollars for Scholars](#) matching award program and the traditionally competitive [General Named Endowed Program](#). Other [specialty awards](#) are also available.

**Deadline to Apply is Extended to: March 15, 2024**

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

## REGISTER NOW!

### **The Next "Road to General Conference Town Hall" With Bishop Palmer Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at Noon via Zoom**

"The Road to General Conference" Town Hall March 19 | West  
Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church  
([westohioumc.org](http://westohioumc.org))



If you would like to submit a question for this webinar, please send it to: [townhallquestions@wocumc.org](mailto:townhallquestions@wocumc.org). **Registration deadline is Thursday, March 14, 2024.**

### **West Ohio Annual Conference Session Wednesday, May 29 - Saturday, June 1, 2024 Capital University, Bexley OH**

[Annual Conference Event Registrations | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church \(westohioumc.org\)](http://westohioumc.org)

The 55th session of the West Ohio Annual Conference is set to convene from Wednesday, May 29, through Saturday, June 1, 2024, at Capital University in Bexley, Ohio. This year's theme, "God is Able," draws inspiration from Ephesians 3:20-21, promising a gathering that celebrates the limitless power of God.



A significant aspect of the conference includes voting on business matters. There will be a time of celebration as it marks the retirement of Bishop Gregory and Mrs. Cynthia Palmer. The conference will also shine a spotlight on the ordination of clergy, symbolizing a commitment to nurturing new leaders and fostering spiritual growth within The United Methodist Church.

Registration is now open! Information regarding meals, housing, and special events is posted on the [conference website](#). More details will be available in the e-newsletter, NewsNet, the conference website, and social media channels.

#### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Office Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**

**E-Mails: Office - [hockingriverdistrict@wocumc.org](mailto:hockingriverdistrict@wocumc.org)**

**Mark Chow, DS - [mchow@wocumc.org](mailto:mchow@wocumc.org)**

**Barbara Conover, Office Admin. - [bconover@wocumc.org](mailto:bconover@wocumc.org)**