



Western Lakes District

News from The United Methodist Church

WLD Office (937) 739-4445 Email: westernlakes@wocumc.org

WLD Important Information

Jots From Jim...

Recently I have been in two restaurants with a “common table.” If you are unfamiliar with the concept it is usually a big table seating 12-16 people but multiple groups of people sit at the same table. Growing up in Thornville, Ohio the restaurant in town had a common table and I never hesitated sitting at it. In fact, it was disappointing if there was no room at the common table. For some reason I now find myself “hesitant” to sit at such a table. The first time up in Willshire, Ohio I chose to sit at my own table. I simply watched everyone else at the common table. The second time was in Plain City and I politely asked if I could sit at this table. The answer was a polite “yes” and during my lunch I endured a small child blowing bubbles in his apple juice. Mercy.

Is the church any better with it’s common table? Nope. I have been in a church where I was not allowed to eat at the table because of my theology. I have seen numerous churches separate from our covenant community because of who they feel should be or not be at the table in various capacities. And the list goes on.

As the church re-arranges the chairs around the table and seeks to clarify policies and theologies of who is allowed at the table the world is going off the rails. Everyday bombs go off, missiles strike, people are killed, and I have to ask myself “where is the church?” Oh, that’s right, it is having meetings about table manners, dinner invitations, and whether to have a wood or plastic table.

Relax. Sarcasm is free. At least I’m not swearing in print. I do not know the answers to all the complexities in life today. I do know, that as a kid, it seemed like that “common table” solved a lot of problems, offered a lot of understanding, and everyone knew your name. The next time I find myself in a restaurant I am going to reach deep down within myself and find the confidence to sit at the common table. Perhaps that is where life-changing, soul-rattling, and grace-filled conversations are happening.

If we can’t find it in a church, maybe we can find it in a restaurant. Better yet, maybe the church can step up and model a “common table” for the world today.

It’s time.

Jim

Western Lakes District Charge Conferences

Regional charge conferences are coming up in November. This is always an important time together as we elect church officers, establish compensation packages, and review our membership rolls. Our plan is to hold regional gatherings by county circuits on November 12 and 19.

Please sign up for your church's regional conference [here](#).

You may go ahead and have your committee meetings and begin collecting your information now. The forms needed for charge conferences can be found below. The website is not ready for online entry yet, but will be very soon.

[Charge Conference complete worksheet packet](#)

[Charge Conference complete worksheet packet - Word Doc](#)

[2024 Minimum Salary guide](#)

[Trustee Legal & Property Report](#) - if not completed in June

[Parsonage Inspection Report](#) - if not completed in June

HealthFlex Updates from the Conference Benefits Office

It's time to get down to work now that you are more familiar with HealthFlex. Here's what you should do before the Annual Open Enrollment Period, which runs from November 1-16.

Preparation Steps to Annual Open Enrollment:

Go to: [HealthFlex Group Plan](#)

1. Review the Premium Credit video to understand how it works.
2. Locate the Premium Credit funding based on the number of covered participants.
3. Find the 2024 HealthFlex Rate Sheet for Medical, Dental, and Vision premium costs.
4. Review the HealthFlex Plan Comparisons.
5. Visit **Alex** the Benefit Counselor decision support tool.
6. November 1 – 16 go to [BenefitsAccess.org](#) to enroll in HealthFlex.

[Read more here](#)

Church Property Insurance Be Prepared for Premium Increases

I recently returned from a meeting with other conference treasurers, and we heard from an insurance expert who works with churches. His report caught my attention. Property claims have increased dramatically due to fires, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, windstorms, hail storms and so on. As a result, insurers are taking significant steps to manage their risk.

- Be prepared for your property insurance to increase more than usual when your policy is renewed.
- Don't be surprised if your insurance company does not offer a renewal at any price.
- Be sure to purchase sufficient liability coverage. You may rarely or never make a claim under your liability policy. If you do, it's likely to be significant.

[Read more](#)

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

Geraldine (Jerry) McCormack passed away Sunday, October 5, 2023. Geraldine was married for 64 years to the late Rev. James H. McCormack. During their marriage she was supportive as he served as a Methodist Minister, District Superintendent, and Treasurer for the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church from 1952-1994. Jerry loved her church and her family, especially her precious grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was happiest preparing delicious meals and desserts for our family gatherings.

Jerry is survived by her four children, Pam (Darrell) Chevalier of Pataskala, David (Teresa) of Lewis Center, Scott (Sandy) of Westerville, and Jill (Karl) Oberer of Sandusky; 13 grandchildren Matthew (Melissa), Kerri (Joe), Amanda (Jonathan), Beth (Dan), Brett,

Jason (Sarah), Jen (Ethan), Ashley (Ben), Brittany (Derek), Katie (Mike), Daniel (Stephanie), David (Gabrielle), Liz (Austin); and 19 great grandchildren Colin, Mason, Jacob, Makayla, Nicholas, Emalene, Cole, Drew, Hunter, Alleigh, Will, Owen, Madison, Peyton, Jaxon, Savannah, Sawyer, Lucas, and Harper. She has many nieces and nephews. Special thanks to Paramount Care Facility and Promedica Hospice nurses for their loving care.

Besides her parents, Jerry was preceded in death by her husband, infant son James H. McCormack III, her sister Marian Phelps, and brother Jack Kugele.

Services were Thursday October 19th at Church of the Messiah.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to Church of the Messiah - specify The Bradley House of Hope, 51 N. State Street, Westerville, Ohio 43081.

Arrangements by Rutherford-Corbin Funeral Home 515 High St. Worthington, Ohio. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.rutherfordfuneralhome.com

* * *

Rev. Mr. Alan Lee Sippel, 78, passed away on October 19, 2023, after a courageous battle with cancer. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and minister to many. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Alan was born in Hamilton, Ohio to Carl and Phyllis Sippel, and from his early years, developed a passion for art, instilled in him by his beloved mother, a practicing artist and art teacher. Alan went on to attend and graduate from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1967 with a degree in Speech and a minor in Fine Arts and then completed his graduate work at Miami University. After being an art teacher for a short time, Alan was called to serve in the ministry and attended the United Theological Seminary in Dayton for his training. Alan was ordained in the United Methodist Church (UMC), and served at Shiloh UMC in Cincinnati, Gilman UMC in Marietta, Amelia UMC near Cincinnati, Grace UMC in Dayton, Church of the Redeemer UMC in Columbus, eventually retiring from Worthington UMC in 2009.

Alan was a devoted father who attended every cross-country and track meet, worked endless hours on his son's farm, and traveled to Japan to visit his other son. He was always there to offer guidance, support, and encouragement, no matter what challenges they faced.

Preceded in death by his son, Ben, Alan is survived by his loving wife, Suzanne (Boell), his son, Chris Sippel (Shaker Heights, OH) and wife, Tomoko, and grandchildren, Kai and Mia, his daughter-in-law Lisa (Mt. Gilead, OH) and grandchildren, Charlie and Miriam, and his brother, Chuck and wife, Leigh Sippel (Morgan Hill, CA). Alan will be deeply missed by his family, and many other friends, colleagues, neighbors, and church communities.

A Celebration of Life with a reception to follow will be held at Worthington United Methodist Church on Saturday, November 11 at 2:00 pm. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that gifts be made in Alan's memory to the Jon Benjamin "Ben" Sippel '02 and Alan Sippel '67 Memorial Scholarship at Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) or a cause of your choice. Gifts to OWU may be made online at www.owu.edu/give, by selecting "Other" in the designation field and typing in "Sippel Scholarship". Gifts may also be mailed to: Ohio Wesleyan University Attn: Advancement Office 61 S. Sandusky St. Delaware, OH 43015, and writing "Sippel Scholarship" in the memo line."

To read the obituary click: <https://www.ohiocremation.org/obituaries/Alan-Lee-Sippel?obId=29645612>

Events

**Hamilton Scheduled to
Appear in Upcoming
Leadership Clinic**

Author and United Methodist Pastor,

REV. ADAM HAMILTON
January 16, 2024
Reynoldsburg, OH



"The Future of the United Methodist Church"



Rev. Adam Hamilton will be featured in the upcoming season of *Bishop Palmer's Leadership Clinics*.

On Tuesday, January 16, Hamilton will be featured at Bishop Palmer's Leadership Clinic, live and in person at the Church of the Redeemer United Methodist Church in Reynoldsburg, Ohio from 10:00 AM -12:00 PM EST. Hamilton will share his perspective around the topic "The Future of the

United Methodist Church", followed by an interview with Bishop Palmer and questions from the audience.

A virtual and "stream later" option will be available. Each registration will receive a complimentary copy of Hamilton's upcoming book, *Wrestling with Doubt, Finding Faith*.

Rev. Adam Hamilton is the founding pastor of The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas, one of the fastest growing, most highly visible churches in the country. Resurrection is a multi-site church, currently with six campuses in Kansas and Missouri. The Church Report named Hamilton's congregation the most influential mainline church in America, and he preached at the National Prayer Service as part of the presidential inauguration festivities in 2013. Hamilton is the best-selling and award-winning author of several books including *The Call*, *24 Hours That Changed the World*, *Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White*, *Prepare the Way*, and *Luke*, all published by Abingdon Press.

Go to <https://westohioumc.org/Clinics> to register.

Called to Preach - Register Now!

Called to Preach is designed for those who have not had formal preaching training or who seek a basic refresher course. It is the required preaching course in the lay speaker track of study, covering topics like choosing scripture, finding a focus, writing and presenting the sermon. Also, we will discuss navigating the challenges of preaching in-person vs. in similar online environments. Instructors are Pastor Kathleen Herington and Pastor Theresa Wallington-Tipton.



November 11: 8:30am – 4:30pm, and
November 18: 8:30am- 1:00pm

Location: **Church of the Master UMC, 24 N. Grove St., Westerville, Ohio 43081**

Cost for Classes: \$30.00 per participant in-person
Book(s) Title/Required reading and assignments:
Pew to Pulpit: A Beginner's Guide to Preaching by Clifton Guthrie

Order your books here - [Cokesbury](#) or [Amazon](#)

[Register Here](#)

Mission Team Leader Training is November 11 at Conference Center

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 on Saturday, November 11 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. Click here to register: <https://www.westohioumc.org/conference/event/volunteers-mission-vim-team-leader-training>. Questions? Contact mgrace@wocumc.org



Card Shower For Rev. Joyce Fry

Rev. Joyce Fry is turning 80 on Nov 25!

If you have had the privilege of being in ministry with Joyce, her family would like to shower her with cards and notes to let her know just how much she is loved.

Please send any cards to her sister: Karen Rudsell at 1066 Stoneyridge, Troy, Ohio 45373

Foundation to Offer Online Legacy Planning Seminar Nov. 12

The United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio will be offering a seminar on estate planning and legacy giving on November 12 at 6 p.m. via Zoom. All congregations and their members are welcome to attend. No registration required. The seminar will cover basic estate planning and legacy giving options. Participants can join the seminar at this link: [Join Zoom Meeting](#). Contact Susan Black at sblack@wocumc.org for more information.

Nonprofit Partners Summit Returns for 3rd Consecutive Year

The United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio is gearing up for the *Nonprofit Partners Summit*, a free two-day educational conference intended to benefit nonprofits with close ties to the UMC in West Ohio.

"The goal of the Summit is to provide capacity-building resources to faith-based nonprofits that are actively working to meet the needs of their communities," said Foundation Donor Relations Manager, Maddy DeWitt. "In addition to our Nonprofit Partners Program participants, we welcome any nonprofit with close ties to a UM congregation in our Conference to participate."

The two-day event, scheduled for November 2nd and 3rd, offers two experience options. The first day will be online and focused on personal development training, while the second day will be in-person at the West Ohio Conference Center with a focus on nonprofit fundraising and administration. Attendees will hear from expert presenters on both days.

Participants have the option to attend one or both days. Space is limited on the 2nd day, so organizations interested in attending should sign up as soon as possible.

Registration opens on October 2nd. Links to the registration pages are below:

Online Experience: [Online Experience Registration](#).

In Person Experience: [In Person Experience Registration](#).

Questions can be directed to Maddy DeWitt, at mdewitt@wocumc.org.

Fall UMCOR Kit Collection for Midwest Mission

After a year that saw record-breaking disasters occurring around the world, Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC) – our North Central Jurisdiction UMCOR supply depot – needs our help replenishing their stock of hygiene and menstrual hygiene kits. From **Oct 16 - Nov 10**, hygiene and menstrual hygiene kits can be dropped off at the following locations, to then be picked up by MMDC:

Chillicothe Trinity UMC, 24 S Mulberry St, Chillicothe (South/Southeast)

Drop-off hours: Mon-Thurs, 9am-3pm

Contact Trish Barber at 740-412-1529 for questions or to make other arrangements.

Monroe UMC, 206 East Ave, Monroe (Southwest)

Drop-off hours: Tues-Thurs, 10am-2pm

Contact Edna Miller at 513-539-7290 for questions or to make other arrangements.

Lima Trinity UMC, 301 W Market St, Lima (West/Northwest)

Drop-off hours: Mon-Fri, 8am-3pm

Contact Rev. Jim Nathan at 419-591-8148 for questions or to make other arrangements.

West Ohio Conference Center, 32 Wesley Blvd, Worthington (Central)

Drop-off hours: Mon, Weds, Thurs, 10am-4pm

Contact Mariellyn Grace at 380-223-9212 for questions or to make other arrangements.

Instructions for how to make hygiene and menstrual hygiene kits can be found here: <https://umcmmission.org/relief-supplies/> Cleaning kits (flood buckets) will also be accepted at the drop-off locations.

For more information, contact Mariellyn Grace at mgrace@wocumc.org.

Connect A-Round Table

Sharing around a table is one of the most uniquely human things we do. No other creature consumes its food at a table. When we share around the table with each other, we are reminded that food is more than fuel.

Gathering around a table is the most important place of human connection; fellowship while sharing a meal. We shouldn't be surprised, then, to find that throughout the Bible God has a way of showing up at tables. In fact, it's worth noting that at the center of the spiritual lives of God's people in both the Old and New Testaments, we find a table: the table of Passover and the table of Communion.

Connect A-Round Table is a time to gather on zoom, share a meal together, and connect over subjects that peak interest. Each Connect session includes a 45-minute round table discussion with a panel discussion followed by a Q&A. The session will conclude with creating actionable steps to the topic being discussed. Everyone is encouraged to bring a meal with them to each session.

Our first Connect A-Round Table is scheduled for Wednesday, November 29 at 6:00 pm. The topic for that evening is call. Each of us has a calling but do we know what it is? Come to learn more about what a call is, learn how to identify your call and the call in others.

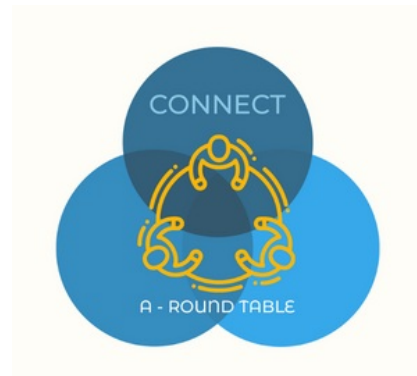
If there is a topic you are interested in, please submit those ideas to jcarter@wocumc.org.

[Click here to register](#)

Confirmation Event With Bishop Palmer March 3

Save the Date -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. More details around this special event will be coming soon!

Resources

Receive Free Steaming for Advent Studies When You Sign Up for Amplify Media

Whether you want to experience Advent through the sights, sounds, and smells of the season, or explore the events surrounding Jesus' birth from the points of view of those biblical figures who *don't* take center stage, you can invite your congregation or small groups to encounter the season differently this year with these new studies from Matt Rawle and West Ohio's Rachel Billups!

Click here to preview [Experiencing Christmas](#) or [An Unlikely Advent](#). Then, subscribe to access these studies and hundreds more resources for Advent and beyond.

[Click here to subscribe...](#)

2023-2024 Appointments

The list of pastoral appointments beginning July 1, 2023 can be accessed [clicking here](#).

Please refer back to these lists as they are updated frequently.

Western Lakes District | 32 Wesley Blvd, Worthington, OH 43085

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