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Fwd: Western Lakes District Newsletter

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Western Lakes District

News from The United Methodist Church

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WLD Important Information Volume 75- June 12, 2026

2026 Annual Conference Recap

More than 1,000 members gathered for the West Ohio Annual Conference, May 27-30 under the theme "Celebrating Abundant Grace," with Bishop Hee-Soo Jung presiding. The guiding scripture for the conference was Matthew 14:13-21, in which Jesus fed 5,000 with five loaves and two fish.

In his State of the Conference address, Bishop Jung called the conference to unity, discipleship, and service, saying Ohio Methodism is diverse but united in mission.

He outlined Five Strategic Pillars to guide the church: building relationships, shared mission, deepening discipleship, multiplying faith communities, and developing emerging leaders. Jung said the miracle of the loaves and fish shows what happens when what is offered in faith is "received by Christ, blessed by Christ, broken by Christ, and given by Christ for the life of the world."

He added, "Where Christ blesses what we offer, fragments become feast. Where the church moves in prayer, unity, and mission, the world begins to see hope. For Christ, for Ohio, and for the world God so loves."

Celebrating Relationships

The conference celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women and the 30th years of the Order of Deacons.



Guest speaker Ray Buckley, director of the Center for First Nations, urged conference members to place relationships at the center of Christian faith, drawing on stories from his Native heritage, family, and personal witness. He described God's love as humble and steadfast, carrying people through hardship and calling them into deeper connection with one another. Buckley said, "When Jesus says, 'Remember me,' he is saying, 'Pull me into the marrow of your bones so that your life is changed.'"

Three guest preachers addressed the conference during the week: Bishop Seong-Bok Kim of the Seoul Annual Conference of the Korean Methodist Church, Bishop Mande Muyombo of the North Katanga Area in the Congo Central Conference, and the Rt. Rev. Shay Craig, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota. Kim and Muyombo's presence reflected West Ohio's pastoral, cultural and mission partnerships. Craig is the niece of the late Bishop Judith Craig, who led the West Ohio Annual Conference from 1992 to 2000.

Celebrating the Ministry of Clergy and Laity

- Ordination of four elders and three deacons
- Recognition of orders for four clergy
- Commissioning of seven provisional elders
- Recognition of thirty-two retiring clergy and seventeen local pastors
- Acknowledgment of ten Certified Lay Ministers
- Foundation for Evangelism Laity Award: **Dustin Cover and Camille Freking-Cover**
- Fresh Starts Multiplier Award: Beloved UMC
- Green Church Award: Maple Grove UMC and Faith Community UMC
- One Matters Award, Discipleship Ministries: Englewood UMC and **Countryside Chapel**
- Donated more than 2,000 items for Midwest Mission
- Collected an offering of \$17,000 to benefit Wings of the Morning
- Commissioned a home missionary and a deaconess

[Continue Reading & Watch Videos](#)

The Western Lakes District celebrates with the following achievements:

New Certified Candidates Going to Licensing School

Camille Freking-Cover Kathy Kaufman

New Certified Lay Ministers

Ron Hoover Jana Thompson Jamie Ramos

Newly Elected Provisional Member

Christian Taylor - Van Wert First to Worthington UMC

Newly Ordained Full Member

Cynthia Atwater - High Street Springfield

Newly Ordained Full Member

Jordan McKenzie - Ginghamburg David Richey - North Hampton Asbury

Register for Lakeside Stewardship Conference

Lakeside Chautauqua is hosting a three-day stewardship and financial wellness conference this August, sponsored in part by the United Methodist Foundation of West Ohio and the Methodist Foundation of Ohio.

Registration for this event is now open for the event being held August 10-12, 2026. The event hosts expect both clergy and laity, regardless of



experience in stewardship, to deepen their understanding of faithful stewardship as a result of attending. The conference schedule includes workshops and presentations from experienced voices including the Executive Directors of both Ohio foundations, to explore how generosity, sustainability and mission can thrive together.

The event will occur during Lakeside's summer season and attendees can take advantage of all Lakeside has to offer during their stay. Each summer, the community hosts more than 3,000 programs and activities, including concerts, special events, educational lectures and everyday opportunities for leisure, such as swimming, biking and enjoying Lake Erie.

[Register Now for the Conference](#)

[Download the Full Schedule](#)

SCD 2026: See, Create, Disciple August 2-5, 2026

SCD is the UMC's largest training and resourcing event for revitalization, fresh expressions, new churches, and leadership development. And Ohio is hosting this exciting event in Columbus this summer!



Be inspired by plenary speaker, author, and leader, Rev. Carey Nieuwhof who says, "If you care about the future of the church, this gathering is for you because we're not just talking about what's changing... we're talking about how to lead through it. At SCD, we're going to dig into what it looks like to see where God is already moving, create new pathways for people to meet Jesus, and disciple in ways that actually form lives, not just fill rooms."

What you can expect:

- 50+ practitioners leading breakouts across ministry and leadership topics
- Bishops and denominational leaders from across the globe
- Practical tools you can take home and apply immediately

[Learn more here and register now.](#)



Ohio School of Ministry

"Abundant Grace: Fed by Christ, Sent to Feed the World | August 31-Sept 2

The East & West Ohio Annual Conferences are planning a three-day gathering together for worship, learning, conversation and renewal at Kalahari Resort in Sandusky - and you're invited!

Mark your calendar for now to be renewed at Christ's table, equipped for faithful ministry, and strengthened in community to share God's abundant love with a world in need. [Flyer](#)

[Click here to register](#)

Lay Servant Ministry

Lay Servant Ministries is one of the most significant lay leadership development programs available within the United Methodist connection. Through this equipping and empowering system, lay servants have the opportunity to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ who then go and make other disciples.



Check out the new classes that have been added to the schedule. Most are offered online via Zoom unless indicated. Click each link to learn more and sign up:

- Great Miami River District - [Leading Public Prayer](#) August 16, 18, 20, 23, 26, 2026
- Hocking River District - [The BASIC Course](#): August 21 & 22, 2026
- Hocking River District - [Teaching Biblical Faith: Leading Small Group Bible Studies](#): October 30 & 31, 2026
- Olentangy River District - [Living Our United Methodist Beliefs, Heritage](#): November 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 2026
- Western Lakes District - [Come! I Will Tell You a Story, An Introduction to Biblical Storytelling](#): November 6-7, 2026

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

Rev. Harold Thomas “Tom” Wilson, 90, died peacefully on May 23, 2026, at his home in Friendship Village of Dublin, surrounded by his family. Born on June 18, 1935, in Portsmouth, Ohio, Tom was the son of Harold Thomas “Bus” Wilson, Sr., and Beatrice (Meade) Wilson.

Throughout a distinguished 60-year career in the United Methodist Church, Tom served as pastor to congregations in Vinton, Ripley, Portsmouth, Columbus, Whitehall, and Van Wert. A highlight of his ministry was founding the Church of the Good Shepherd in the Sharon Woods area of Columbus. He led the fledgling congregation for a decade, famously holding services in a local school while the community raised funds to build their permanent sanctuary. In the late 1990s, while assigned to Dayton, Tom served as District Superintendent, overseeing 65 churches with wisdom and grace.

Following his retirement, Tom served interim appointments at Grace Church, in Dayton; Miami University, in Oxford; Stonybrook Church, in Gahanna and Grove City United Methodist Church.

Tom married his first wife, Billie (Cranford), in 1958, with whom he had three children. In 1976, he married Joan Maitland Dunlop Wilson, and together they raised a blended family of five children. Tom and Joan celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on May 16, 2026.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Joan; his brother, Robert Wilson; and his children, Julia Carpenter-Hubin (Don Hubin) of Columbus, Paula Wilson Render of Chicago, and Greg (Colleen) Wilson of New Jersey. He also leaves behind his stepsons, Rick (Amy) Dunlop of Lewis Center and Rob (Monica) Dunlop of Seattle; six grandchildren, Lindsay Carpenter, Leslie Carpenter, Lucy Dunlop Boggs, Ava Dunlop, Max Wilson, and Jack Dunlop; and his great-grandson, Khalid Carpenter.

A Memorial Service was held on June 6th at 3:00 PM. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

Mrs. Carolyn Vesper, loving wife of Rev. Keith Vesper, passed away on June 1, 2026.

Visitation for Carolyn will be Tuesday, June 16, 2026 from 10 am until time of her memorial service at 11am, at Worthington United Methodist Church, [600 N. High St, Worthington, OH 43085](#). In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts in her name may be given to the National Brain Tumor Society.

Check link for full obituary: [Carolyn Vesper Obituary - Dublin, OH](#)

Mrs. Karen Lee Brown Kumpf passed away peacefully on Tuesday, June 9th at age 83. Karen Lee Brown Kumpf, devoted wife and mother, trend setting music educator, and faithful servant to others, best known locally as the founder of Harvest of Hope.

On August 6, 1966, she married Karl Kumpf. She enjoyed being a pastor's wife for almost 60 years, constantly enriching their shared ministry. Together they raised two amazing children, Kristin (Mrs. Michael Barr), now of Richmond, Virginia, and Kenn, now of Chicago, Illinois. Her children were the center of Karen's life, and nothing delighted her more than spending time with them, nurturing them, and watching them grow.

Karen's Christian faith was central to her life. Nothing could interrupt her daily Bible reading, devotions, and journaling. She was very active in Christ United Methodist Church; she received special recognition for work with the women's group, led the church's mission committee, and was instrumental in expanding the Vacation Bible School program and beginning the After School enrichment program. She sang in the choir for many years and organized and directed the church's first praise team.

Family and friends are invited to celebrate Karen's life at Christ United Methodist Church, [301 Wooster Street](#) in Marietta on Saturday, June 13 at 11:00 am. The family will be available to greet friends from 10 to 11 and after the service with some light refreshments. Memorial contributions can be made to Washington County Harvest of Hope, PO Box 902, Marietta, Ohio 4750, or Christ United Methodist Church, [301 Wooster St. Marietta, OH 45750](#). www.CawleyandPeoples.com

Church Events Within the District

Enrollment in the Covenant Freedom School is open. Families can enroll their child (ren) online at <https://covenantfreedomschool.com> or by going to Covenant United Methodist Church, [529 West Johnny Lytle Avenue](#), (937)324-3501. The Covenant Freedom School begins June 15 and ends July 24. Students who are enrolled in grades 1 through 8 and attend schools in Springfield and Clark County are eligible. There is no cost for this program. For descriptions and more information about covenant Freedom, please go to the website.



2025 Appointments

Appointments

The list of pastoral appointments beginning January 1, 2026, can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

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



