



# Valley Vision

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Ohio Valley District  
United Methodist Church

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## Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Dear Friends,

There is always a moment when the Holy Days (Holidays, right?) of the Christmas Season come alive for me. Something catches my attention and pulls me into the heart of Christmas. Often it comes in some family moment – a first Christmas, Christmas through a child’s eyes. Sometimes it comes through signs and symbols – lights, Advent Wreaths, festive holiday decorations, the Nutcracker. It is often through music – a Christmas cantata, a carol, a startling new version of a beloved hymn. A few years back it came when I first heard Andrea Bocelli singing *What Child Is This?* with Mary J Blige, the hip hop artist.

Deeply engrained in my own experience is the Word. It is the moment each year when the Word comes alive, when we once again feel the pulse and experience the energy and beauty of the miraculous, when we truly hear the Story that transforms and brings new life to all who truly listen. It came early this year when Lynelle and I attended worship on the first Sunday of Advent at the Sherrodsville Calvary UMC. Pastor Ken Ogg came down the aisle dressed as Joseph and proceeded to tell the story of Joseph as found in Matthew 1:18-25, powerfully dramatizing the words, This is how the birth of Jesus took place.

Something about that message resonated deep within my soul. The character of Joseph came alive for me as he wrestled with the news that Mary was pregnant. He did not know she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. The Scripture tells us Joseph was a *righteous* man and did not want to humiliate her, so he decided to call off their engagement quietly. An angel from the Lord appeared in a dream and told Joseph not to be afraid, not to be offended; Mary was carrying a child conceived by the Holy Spirit. In the dream, the angel said these remarkable words: “She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Thou shalt call his name Jesus. Did you know that the name *Jesus* appears over 500 times in the Gospels? Throughout the New Testament the name *Jesus* appears 909 times. Why is that? Because it is our favorite name for our Lord. Because it is the most beloved name and title given to the Christ by his followers. Joseph and Mary did not choose the name; God sent the name *Jesus* through an angel so that Joseph would get it right.

To follow up, in devotion I opened the Bible to the place that so often speaks to me and resounds in my heart. In the first chapter of the Gospel of John, we hear these words: “From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace; as the Law was given through Moses, so grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ” (John 1:16-18). It is Jesus who has made God known.

In these days when strife and contention and threats great and small are in the air, remember that *Jesus* is the one from whom we *all* have received grace upon grace. Remember that it is *Jesus* who brings us grace and truth. That, beloved people of the Ohio Valley, is what we need most today from the One who will save us from our sins. May it be so in our thoughts, words, actions and dreams.

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus!

Jim





## Payroll System Improvements—Sign up in December for 2018

The Financial and Administrative Services office at the Area Center in North Canton utilizes QuickBooks software to provide payroll services for more than 200 of the 718 churches in the East Ohio Conference.

I am pleased to announce that our office has reached agreement with Paychex on a partnership that will allow us to **maintain the same cost of services** while supplementing our offerings with **additional features** such as tax pay, direct deposit, garnishment services, pay cards, and much more.

If your church would like to enroll in the new payroll service, the benefit has a cost of \$1.75 per check, a quarterly fee of \$25, and free 2018 W-2's (which will be produced in January 2019). The set-up fee will be waived for churches that enroll with services that begin January 2018.

If your church is currently using the Conference staff to process your payroll, you will automatically be included in the new system.

The more than 40 years of experience as an industry-leading provider of payroll and human resource services that Paychex brings to this partnership will enhance the services the Financial and Administrative Services office offers *without replacing our team at the Area Center*.

Our goal is to get everyone in the Conference on the same system with consistent reporting, filing, and processing standards. Not only will this increase efficiency, but in most cases this partnership will result in significant cost savings.

Please contact me with any specific questions relating to the upcoming change. You may also reach out to Joe Walter, senior sales consultant with Paychex, via e-mail at [jwalter@paychex.com](mailto:jwalter@paychex.com), or phone, (440) 478-4072.

Thank you,

Vera Rebrovich, CPA

[Vera.rebrovich@eocumc.com](mailto:Vera.rebrovich@eocumc.com)

(330) 499-3972, ext. 123

### Deadlines

**2017 Shared Ministries Funds** (Apportionments) must be paid by **January 5, 2018** to be credited to your 2017 records. Monies received after that date will be credited to 2018.

**Annual Church Reports** should be completed by **January 22, 2018**. Multipoint charges and granted extensions should have the forms completed by **January 31, 2018**.

**2017 Church Audits** are due into the District Office by **March 31, 2018**.

## Financial Secretaries - Statement for Tax Statements

Just a reminder to all church financial secretaries: When you are doing the end of the year tax statements to your members, please be sure that one of the following sentences is on the statements:

*“No goods or services were provided in exchange for your contributions”, or “No goods or services were provided in exchange for your contributions other than intangible religious benefits.”*



**Burge Fund Applications** are available on the District's website at [www.eocumc.com/ohiovalley](http://www.eocumc.com/ohiovalley). If you need one mailed to you, please call the District Office at 740-264-1601. This fund provides assistance to churches who offer creative proposals for programs or ministries. The applications must be sent to the District Office by January 15.

## Attention: Church Treasurers With Full Time Pastors!

**LOOK AT YOUR Health & Pension STATEMENTS IN JANUARY!** Some churches just automatically send a check through bank pay and never pay attention that the amount that needs to be remitted has changed in the new year.

This year, because of the HealthFlex options, even if the pastor's salary hasn't changed, they may have other payments due. If an employee on healthcare has opted for dental, vision or an HSA, these options will appear on their H&P bill.

Churches also need to know that all buy-ups (including the HSA) are pre-tax monies that need to be deducted from the employees' salaries. Under no circumstance should a church be paying these for the pastor or lay employee.

The Conference Benefits Office will be taking care of making sure all these new payments are taken out for those churches that are on automatic withdrawal.

Robin Whitacre

Benefits Acct Analyst

East Ohio Conference of the

United Methodist Church

PH: 1-800-831-3972, Ext. 151

FAX: 330-966-7581

All Newsletter items for February issue must be in the district office by January 17.

Volunteers in Mission Trip to Chernivsti in western Ukraine - July 10 - 24, 2018. Approximate cost is \$2,000 (includes air and ground transportation, room and board, entrance fees, health insurance). Contact Rev. Kathryn Adams at 330-719-2902 (phone/text) email [revkathryn927@aol.com](mailto:revkathryn927@aol.com)



Congratulations to Pastor Andrew and Alisha Thompson who were married on November 28, 2017. Andrew is serving the Lloydsville UMC.



## The Commission on a Way Forward

The Commission on a Way Forward was proposed by the Council of Bishops and approved by the 2016 General Conference to do a complete examination, and possible revision, of every paragraph of *The Book of Discipline* concerning human sexuality, and explore options that help to maintain and strengthen the unity of the church.

On September 16, clergy and laity from across EOC participated in a pilot conversation that provided opportunities for intentional, meaningful dialogue to discern together how we might strengthen and maintain the unity of the United Methodist Church, and find a way forward through the present impasse related to human sexuality.

All clergy and laity in the East Ohio Conference are invited to participate in one of the following future Conversations on a Way Forward:

Sat. Feb. 3, 10 AM - 1 PM Thoburn UMC

Sun. Feb. 4, 2 - 5 PM, Willard First UMC

Mon. Feb 5, 6 - 9 PM, Lakewood UMC

Sat. Mar 3, 9 AM - Noon, Church of the Lakes UMC

It is important that you register in advance for the conversation you wish to attend, as each location has a seating capacity for small group sessions. To register go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/conversations-on-a-way-forward-registration-38001533610>

## District Representatives to CCYM

The Ohio Valley District needs one High School Representative and one at large representative for the 2018/2019 year. The process has changed. The election process is as follows:

- November – January: Candidates will fill out an application that is available online which will include 3 letters of reference. <http://www.eocumc.com/youngpeople/ccym.html>
- February: District Coordinators/DYC or Committees (CORR and MRI Leadership) will do Reference Checks
- March: DYC or Committees will conduct interviews for candidates and seek District Superintendent approval
- March/April: Nominated Candidates will receive final approval from Spring District Conference or Committees, and DYC/Committee Chairs will notify nominated candidates as well as those who are denied.
- May/June: Announcement of candidate(s) as each District/Committee sees fit, and paperwork due for each nominated candidate by June 9<sup>th</sup>.

CCYM Dates for 2018-2019 are:  
2018

July 27-29 – CCYM Retreat

September 29 – CCYM Meeting

November 10-11 – CCYM Event

2019

February 22-23 – Overnight Meeting

April 5-6 Overnight Meeting (Executive Elections)

June 1 – CCYM YAC Work Day

### Happy December

#### Birthdays

- 8 Sharon Miller (Amsterdam/Mt Zion)
- 8 Rev. Richard Wallace (Baxter's Ridge)
- 8 Pastor Robert Welch (Christ)
- 10 Rev. Timothy Monteith (Scott Memorial)
- 10 Rev. Jim Ricketts (Leavittsville)
- 15 Rev. Kimberly Arbaugh (Carrollton First)
- 16 Janet Ricketts (Leavittsville)
- 19 Pastor Drew McPeck (Tri-County Trinity Charge)
- 23 Sheri Cunningham (Deersville/ Pleasant Valley)
- 24 Pastor Sam Davis (Empire/Mingo Harmony)

### Happy January

#### Birthdays

- 6 Rev. Clint Quillen (Wintersville)
- 7 Pastor Andrew Thompson (Lloydsville)
- 10 Diane Wallace (Baxter's Ridge)
- 11 Pastor Tom Thomas (Rayland/ Yorkville)
- 12 Carmen Kluth (Harsh Memorial/ Kilgore)
- 16 Pastor Steve Rice (Powhatan Pt/ Amity)
- 17 Jon Little (Asbury Greater Parish)
- 27 Susan Browning (Buena Vista/ Unionport)
- 28 Rev. Daniel Loomis (Carrollton First)

### Prayer Concerns

- Pastor Frank Rogers
- Pastor Kathy Thomas

#### Deaths:

**Amanda McMillen**, surviving spouse of Rev. Frank McMillen, died November 6.

**Rev. John A. Clouston**, retired Associate Member, died November 6. He had served the Richmond UMC in this district.

**Ruth Blank**, surviving spouse of Thomas E. Blank, died November 10.

**Daniel Cico**, spouse of Pastor Karen Cico, died November 13.

**Pastor Donald Prather**, retired local pastor, died November 25.

**Pastor Franklin "Frank" Hudson**, retired local pastor, died November 23. He had served the following Ohio Valley District churches: New Somerset, Bray's Chapel, Pine Grove, Sugar Grove, Buena Vista.

**Roseann Martin**, wife of Rev. Eric Martin, died November 22. They served Jewett/ Hopedale and she worked at Urban Mission.

### New Appointment

Bishop Tracy Malone has assigned Kathy Thomas as supply pastor to the Pine Grove UMC effective 11/1/17. She will be a part time local pastor once her license has been renewed.

**Congratulations to Matt and Rev. Ashley Steele on the birth of their third son, Spencer John, born November 5 at 1:36 AM. He was the largest of the day at 10 pounds 6 oz. !! Spencer joins his big brothers, Theo and Elliot.**



*Christmas greetings are extended to everyone from Rev. Jim and Lynelle Winkler and from Gay Warren. May 2018 be full of many blessings for you, your families and your churches!*

**Ohio Valley District United  
Methodist Church**

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**District Office Will be Closed  
December 25 thru January 1 and  
January 15.**



**THRIVE Youth Group Souper Bowl Run/Walk**



Harsh Memorial/Kilgore UMC Thrive Youth Group Souper Bowl 5K Run/Walk & Kids Fun Run at Atwood Lake Park was on Sat. Nov. 11, 2017. This is a fundraiser

for our Thrive Youth Group to fund various activities that we do throughout the year such as Youth Annual Conference at Lakeside. Since it was Veterans Day we chose military green for our 5K shirt color, gave all Veterans \$5.00 off their pre-registrations and \$10.00 off race day registrations, placed American flags along the race route, recognized our Veterans, and played the national anthem before the race began. We had 43 race registrants with 36 runners on race day. Our 1st three men and 1st three women that crossed the finish line received a commemorative soup bowl. Medals were awarded to winners in each age group. We had five children run in our Kids Fun Run and ribbons were awarded to the winners in each age group. Homemade vegetable beef, chili beef, and chicken noodle soup made by our church members was served to our runners after our race. Several members of our church, youth group, and people from our community volunteered in various capacities to make our race run smoothly. Three of our Thrive youth and two of our church members ran in the 5K. We had businesses and church members who sponsored our race. We had gold sponsors who donated \$200.00, silver sponsors who donated \$100.00, and bronze sponsors who donated less than \$100.00 that helped to make our 5K fundraiser a success. Our next Souper Bowl 5K Run/Walk will be on Sat. Nov. 10, 2018.

**Where is the DS in December & January?**

<b>December</b>	
6-8	Cabinet
9	Christmas Open House at Rev. Jim & Lynelle Winkler's home for the district clergy and their families
13 6:00 PM	SPPR meeting with an District Church
25 - Jan 1	Office Closed for Christmas Holidays
<b>January</b>	
3-5	Cabinet
15	Office closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Observation
16 & 17	Cabinet
19 9 - 11 AM	dCOM at Scott Memorial
26 8:30 - ?	dCOM Interviews at Wintersville UMC
30 - Feb 1	Cabinet

**THE MISSION**

**The Mission of the United Methodist Church is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

**THE OHIO VALLEY STRATEGY**

**FROM REVIVAL TO DISCIPLESHIP TO MISSION:**

**To align resources, develop leaders and inspire growth to increase the number of vital congregations in the Ohio Valley District.**

**THE GENERAL RULE OF DISCIPLESHIP**

**To witness to Jesus Christ in the world and to follow his teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship, and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.**