



Valley Vision

Rev. Jim Winkler, District Superintendent
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Ohio Valley District
United Methodist Church

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The Great Multitude

Dear Ohio Valley Friends,

In one of our times of devotion at the Abbey of the Genesee in Genesee, NY, friend and colleague Rev. Gary Henderson reflected on a visionary passage from Revelation 7. Ever since that moment I often think of this text when I face those things that divide us:

*After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count,
From every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,
Standing before the throne and before the Lamb,
Robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.*

They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

“Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

They fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing,

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom

And thanksgiving and honor and power and might

Be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” (Revelation 7:9-12)

This Scripture text gives us a glimpse of the Reign of the Lord when all our distinctive characteristics no longer divide but contribute to a beautiful mosaic of multitudes from every nation, tribe, peoples, languages all united in worship around the throne. Our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world leads us to seek the fulfillment of God’s reign and realm in the world now and in anticipation of the world to come (see Part IV, The Ministry of All Christians, in our *Book of Discipline*). It should go without saying that as United Methodists, we deplore discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, status, economic condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religious affiliation (see *Our Social Principles*).

The last section of “psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” found in our United Methodist Hymnal is titled, “A New Heaven and a New Earth.” Our hymnal represents so well our Wesleyan Theology. (Take a look at the Table of Contents in the hymnal to get a wonderful three-page picture of our Wesleyan Theology.) These songs give musical voice to a vision of what is to come – Death and Eternal Life, the Communion of the Saints, the Return and Reign of the Lord, The Completion of Creation.

As I write, we learned of the death of evangelist Billy Graham. One of the things that made Billy Graham so beloved around the world was his willingness to take the good news of the gospel around the world. In many ways his Billy Graham Crusades gave us a glimpse of the reign of God. Like a modern-day John Wesley who rode 250,000 miles on horseback throughout Great Britain, Rev. Billy Graham preached at 417 crusades in 185 countries and territories worldwide, reaching 84 million people in person and as many as 215 million through a variety of media over a 58 year period. He preached on nearly every continent, including Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Australia. It really is an astonishing picture of the Reign of God present and yet to come.



No wonder so many of these crusades were blessed as George Beverly Shea sang, *How Great Thou Art!* Can you hear the words, the refrain, the praise and wonder of our God? There is A Way Forward that will fulfill *The Greatest Commandment* and *The Great Commission*. I pray we find it!

Trusting the Lord with All My Heart,

Jim



Rev. Bruce Hitchcock is New Ohio Valley District Superintendent

Bishop Tracy S. Malone has appointed the **Rev. Bruce Hitchcock** as superintendent of the Ohio Valley District. He succeeds the Rev. Jim Winkler, who is appointed as lead pastor of Mayfield UMC (Western Reserve District). Both appointments are effective July 1.

“Rev. Bruce Hitchcock is a visionary leader, a strategic thinker and one who brings many learnings and experiences from serving in a variety of ministry settings. He has a deep faith and has demonstrated throughout his ministry a strong commitment to discipleship, evangelism, and mission,” Malone said.

Hitchcock is pastor of Geneva United Methodist Church (Western Reserve District). Prior to being appointed to the church in July 2011, he was executive director of the Urban Mission in Steubenville for nine years. “I celebrate the opportunity to return to the Ohio Valley. The pastors and congregations of the district are wonderful, and deeply committed to loving God and serving neighbor,” Hitchcock said.

Ordained a Deacon in 1987 and an Elder in 1989, Hitchcock has served churches across the State of Ohio during his ministry. While earning a Bachelor’s degree from Malone College, he also was pastor of Pleasant Grove UMC in Carroll County. He then served State Road UMC in Germantown in the West Ohio Conference while attending United Theological Seminary, where he earned his Masters of Divinity.

Upon graduation, Hitchcock served East Rochester-Bayard UMC (1989-1993), East Sparta UMC (1993-1996), and Huron UMC (1996-2002) before accepting the position at the Urban Mission.

Hitchcock is chair of the Western Reserve District Committee on Ordained Ministry, and is chair of the Conference Commission on Pastoral Care, a position that places him on the Conference Personnel Committee.

He and wife, Melissa, are the parents of two sons and a daughter.

Youth Leaders: The district will be once again paying for the registration for YAC. Early registration ends on April 4. The district will pay the early fee of \$40 for any youth and leaders. After you register, send us a copy of your receipt for reimbursement.

District UMW: Two Cents and a Prayer Recipient

RJ Ranch Riding Center of Jacobsburg, Ohio has been chosen as our 2018 recipient of our Two Cents and a Prayer offering. RJ Ranch is a non-profit therapeutic riding center for physically and mentally challenged individuals in the Ohio Valley.

RJ offers youth and adults various services. The long term goal is to enhance the quality of life for those affected by physical, mental, and emotional challenges. They serve clients ages four and up. Disabilities include paralysis, autism, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, down syndrome, developmentally delayed, ADHD, conduct disorder, physical impairments, hearing impaired, blind, stroke, victims, abuse (physical, emotional, mental, and sexual), organic brain injury, self-confidence/self esteem issues, and other disabilities. RJ Ranch will also provide general riding lessons to youth at risk.

Their mission is to improve the mind, body, and souls of children and adults with disabilities through equine-assisted therapy and to be an inspiration and educational resource to the therapeutic riding profession. RJ works to increase the awareness of disabilities in our communities.

Your unit can aid in he;ing this worthwhile ministry by bringing your Two Cents and a Prayer offering to the Spring meeting or by sending a donation to the Ohio Valley District UMW Treasurer anytime before December 2018.

District Clergy Family Fellowship

**Monday June 11
6:00 to 7:30 PM**

**Otterbein North Shore
Retirement Center
(Outside Lakeside’s West Gate)**

*** Menu ***

Chicken Salad Wrap
Club Sandwich (ham, turkey, bacon)
Fresh Fruit Display with Dip
Mixed Greens Salad Bar with Toppings
Assorted Cold Pasta Salads
Assorted Desserts (pies and cookies)
Coffee, Tea, Lemonade



**All current, retired and incoming Ohio Valley
District Clergy and Clergy families are invited.**

To insure that we have enough food for everyone, please contact Gay at 740-264-1601 or email her at ovoffice@ovdumc.com by June 1 with the number of persons from your family that will be in attendance.

Resisting Racism

Workshop to be held on Saturday, April 28 at the Family of Faith UMC, 800 E Market Street, Akron. Registration from 8:30 to 9 AM with event starting at 9. Workshop leader will be Rev. Michelle Ledder, Director of Programs Ministry for the General Commission on Religion and Race. "Resisting Racism" Workshop seeks to provide opportunities for participants to deepen their own knowledge (mindset), motivation (heart set), and capabilities (skillset) for resisting racism. Registration deadline is Tuesday, April 24 with a registration fee of \$15 (includes hospitality, lunch and materials - scholarships available). Detailed information and online registration at <https://eoc-resisting-racism.eventbrite.com>



District Conference
Saturday, April 21

Scott Memorial UMC
Cadiz, OH

Following registration at 9:30 AM, the day will begin at 10:00 AM with worship and our keynote speaker, Dr. Gary M. George, followed by our District Conference. After a short break we will be having breakout sessions with Kaye Wolfinger leading a session for pastors on Young Adult Ministries; Staff Pastor Parish session with the leader to be announced; Dr. Gary George will lead a session for our church Trustees; and a session for our church lay leaders with the leader to be announced.

We will also have a moment of gratitude and sharing as we say goodbye to Rev. Jim and Lynelle Winkler.

More details will be in the April newsletter.

District Administrative Assistant Needed

Gay Warren, the Ohio Valley District Administrative Assistant for the last 16 years, has announced that she will be retiring as of June 30, 2018. The superintendency committee will be taking applications during the month of March with the hope to have the position filled by May 1. This will allow Gay to work with the person hired for two months to try to make the transition as smooth as possible.

The applicant must have good computer and people skills and be able to prioritize their time. They need to be of good character and be able to maintain confidentiality. Knowledge of the United Methodist Church is preferable but not required. A background check will be done.

Contact the District Office at 740-264-1601 or email ovoffice@ovdumc.com for a job description and application.

Prayer Concerns

- Rev. Bob Miller (Amsterdam/ Mt Zion)
- Rev. Doug Lewis (DS of Firelands District)

Deaths: Please pray for the families of the following:

Martha Jennings, surviving spouse of Allen C. Jennings, died January 22.

Rev. James H. Scott, retired elder, died January 27.

Latosha L. Campbell, spouse of Pastor Oliver J. Campbell, died February 8.

Rev. Lyle Hinkle, retired elder, died February 16, 2018.

Happy "March" Birthdays

- 1 Tammy Rogers (New Somerset)
- 2 Pastor Allen Hill (Herrington Bethel)
- 9 Maple Woods (New Alexandria/ Georges Run)
- 12 Rev. John Jackson (Lansing)
- 13 Pastor Frank Rogers (New Somerset)
- 14 Linda Lish (Bellaire South)
- 19 Doug Arbaugh (Carrollton First "The Bridge")
- 25 Pastor Bob Carson (Brilliant/ Bridgeport First)

Hunger and Poverty Grants

The UMAMN (United Methodist Appalachian Ministry Network) will host their Spring Meeting In Steubenville April 25 -27, 2018. Local pastor and leaders are invited to attend a leadership training and luncheon. Invites will be emailed. Applications are available for UMAMN \$2500 Hunger and Poverty grants. For an application or more information please contact Angela Kirtdoll at kirtdoll.umamn@gmail.com

New Appointments

New Appointments: Bishop Malone has announced the following appointments:

Rev. Jerry Ernst (Finley UMC) will be appointed to Mt Vernon Mulberry UMC effective July 1, 2018.

Rev. Bill Wendell will be appointed as the Associate Pastor at Thoburn UMC effective July 1, 2018.

Rev. Randy Weaver (Shadyside Lincoln Avenue) will be appointed to Cambridge Christ UMC effective July 1, 2018.

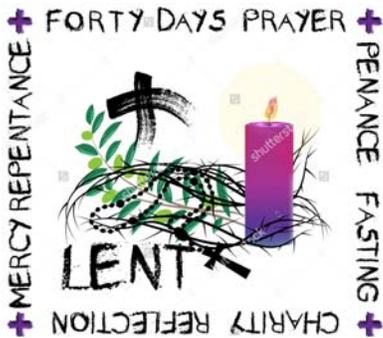
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Electronic Service Requested



Summer Camp Open Houses

Want a chance to tour the sites, talk to the staff, and see what is being offered for 2018? Join us on the following dates or contact the site.

Camp Aldersgate - Saturday, April 14 from 2 - 6 PM –Open House & Summer Preview

Camp Asbury - Sunday, April 15 from 2 - 5 PM—Open House and Summer Preview

Camp Wanake - Saturday, April 7 from 2 - 6 PM, Resurrection Egg Hunt & Summer Preview

Go to www.EOCSummercamps.org for more information

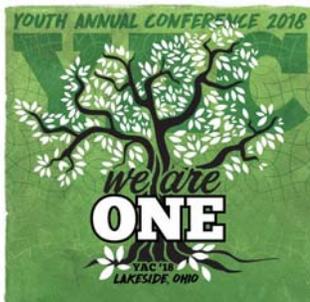
Where is the DS in March?

1	9:30 AM	District Strategy/ Missions/ Ministries Meeting
5,6		Cabinet
20-22		Cabinet
24		Transitions Workshop
30		Office closed for Good Friday

Choir Cantata



Mt. Pleasant UMC, 89 Canyon Rd, SW, Carrollton, OH will host a choir cantata, "This is God", on Palm Sunday, March 25th at 7:30 PM. A piano prelude will begin at 7:15 PM. Please call the church office at 330-627-2219 for additional information.



YOUTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE (YAC): Teens from across Ohio will gather at Lakeside Chautauqua June 8-10 for YAC '18. Ephesians 4:3-6 is the guiding verse for this year's theme *We Are One*. Register now through April 4 and pay only \$40/person. Learn more about YAC '18 at www.eocumc.com/yac

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.

All Newsletter items for April issue must be in the district office by March 21.