



OHIO EPISCOPAL AREA

East & West Ohio Conferences

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*"See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland."
Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)*

2026 OHIO VISION STATEMENT

In 2026, the Ohio Episcopal Area moves forward in collaboration, discipleship, multiplication, leadership development, and global mission – building a unified, Spirit-led movement rooted in abundance, trust, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to prayer, partnership, and courageous action as we form “One Ohio” for the sake of God’s mission in the world.

FIVE STRATEGIC PILLARS

PILLAR 1: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Our Ohio Area must continue healing from past divisions while living into a renewed missional identity. In 2026, we will proceed in building relationships, fostering trust, and strengthening local and global mission partnerships.

Guiding Questions

1. *Where is trust fragile in our Area, and what spiritual or relational practices will help foster confidence and healing?*
2. *How are our connections with local and global mission partners shaping our identity as a missional Area?*
3. *What steps will our districts and local churches take to embody a mission-centered culture that reaches beyond our borders?*

Shared Discernment

1. *Where is trust experienced as strong? Where is it experienced as strained?*
2. *What Spiritual and relational practices foster healing?*
3. *How are local and global mission partnerships shaping our shared identity?*

Practicing Shared Discernment

1. *Trust is cultivated through honesty, shared power, and relational consistency.*
2. *Trust is not produced by mandate.*

PILLAR 2: SHARED MISSION

In 2026, we commit to living into a unified identity – East and West – becoming “One Ohio” in spirit, purpose, mission, and prayer.

Guiding Questions

- 1. How are we intentionally practicing unity across regions – through joint ministries, shared learning, and common mission goals?*
- 2. Where do collaboration and mutual support need to grow, and what barriers must be removed to foster trust and partnership?*
- 3. How will prayer, spiritual practices, and relational accountability guide our movement toward “One Ohio” as a God-shaped identity, not a human strategy?*

Shared Discernment

- 1. Where is collaboration already bearing fruit?*
- 2. What barriers hinder trust and partnership?*
- 3. How are prayer and relational accountability shaping unity as a God-formed identity?*

Practicing Shared Discernment

- 1. Unity deepens when it is named and practiced by people.*
- 2. Unity is not deepened simply because it is announced as a goal.*

PILLAR 3: DISCIPLESHIP

In 2026, we will deepen discipleship across the Ohio Episcopal Area. SEED (Seek, Engage, Equip, Deploy) is a shared, Wesleyan framework for forming disciples who follow Jesus Christ in daily life and join God’s mission in the world. SEED is rooted in our baptismal identity and the priesthood of all believers. SEED affirms that every disciple is called into ministry. It is not a program to be added; SEED is a common discipleship language that shapes how congregations listen, learn, lead, and serve.

Guiding Questions

- 1. How are we seeking God’s movement in our communities and listening to those not yet connected to the Church?*
- 2. How are we engaging people in relationships that nurture faith, belonging, and holy love?*
- 3. How are we equipping and deploying the baptized to lead, serve, and witness in both the Church and the world?*

Shared Discernment

- 1. How are you seeking and welcoming people?*
- 2. What practices are engaging and sustaining faith and community?*
- 3. How are disciples being equipped and deployed for ministry?*

Practicing Shared Discernment

- 1. Discipleship grows when local practices are connected and strengthened.*
- 2. Discipleship does not grow by replacing local practices.*

PILLAR 4: MULTIPLICATION

In forming 100 new faith communities by 2030, we will live out a movement rooted in the theology of abundance. We reaffirm our commitment to a culture of real discipleship: planting, multiplying, and nurturing new communities of faith for all people – from emerging house-churches to multiethnic ministries and digital expressions.

Guiding Questions

- 1. How do our current ministries reflect a theology of abundance rather than scarcity, fear, or institutional maintenance?*
- 2. Where is the Holy Spirit calling us to start new communities – and how do we equip lay and clergy planters for this mission?*
- 3. What measurable steps will each district take toward the vision of 100 new faith communities by 2030?*

Shared Discernment

- 1. Where is abundance already evident?*
- 2. How are lay and clergy leaders being equipped to start new faith communities?*
- 3. What systemic barriers limit faithful experimentation?*

Practicing Shared Discernment

- 1. Multiplication thrives when the Conference acts as a partner.*
- 2. Multiplication does not thrive when the Conference acts as a parent.*

PILLAR 5: EMERGING LEADERS

A renewed, Spirit-filled church requires bold investment in youth, young adults, next-generation clergy, and equipped lay leadership. In 2026, we will deepen our commitment to mentoring, leadership pipelines, campus ministry, and equipping laity.

Guiding Questions

- 1. How are we intentionally identifying, mentoring, and supporting young leaders for ministry, mission, and future lay and clergy roles?*
- 2. Where can laity be equipped to lead more boldly – in worship, administration, discipleship, justice ministries, and mission?*
- 3. What next-generation programs, partnerships, or training systems are needed to create a sustainable leadership ecosystem for the next decade?*

Shared Discernment

- 1. How are young people and laity being nurtured to understand calling and leadership?*
- 2. Where are mentoring and leadership pathways already working?*
- 3. What training and authority are needed for a sustainable leadership ecosystem?*

Practicing Shared Discernment

- 1. Leadership deepens when people are trusted to shape mission.*
- 2. Leadership does not deepen when people are only prepared to assist leaders.*