

The Old Apple Tree



*East Ohio Conference Retirees Association
Spring 2026*



On May 21, 53 retirees and surviving spouses will attend “Elijah – Prophet of Fire” at the Ohio Star Theater in Sugarcreek, Ohio and enjoy a buffet dinner following. The play will follow the journey of the incredible prophet Elijah as he stands against King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, the most wicked rulers of Israel. From the miraculous provision of a widow to the fiery proclamation of Mount Carmel, Elijah leads people

from all walks of life towards the One True God and the coming Savior promised to us all. We look forward to this time together and give thanks to Marilyn Coney who planned this Spring Event.

Members of the 2026 Retiree Class will be celebrated during the Annual Conference on Friday, June 12, at 7:00 p.m. at the Service of Commissioning, Ordination, and Retirement at the McGaw Chapel on the College of Wooster campus. Retired Bishop John L. Hopkins will be the speaker. We hope many of our present retirees will attend this service to welcome our newest retirees. For information on this class of retirees visit [2026 East Ohio Annual Conference \(ecumc.com\)](http://2026 East Ohio Annual Conference (ecumc.com)).



Retirees are encouraged not only to attend the June 12 Service but to participate in all parts of the conference from June 11-13. Information and registration for the conference can be found on the conference website at www.ecumc.com. Registration for the Annual Conference must be completed by May 15.

2026 Retiree Association Annual Gathering



The 2026 Retiree Gathering Luncheon and Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 8, at Ashland University. Please save this date and look forward to further information and reservation forms that will be mailed in August. This is a time to recognize the 2026 Class of Retirees, honor those who have gone on to their heavenly retirement, and to fellowship with one another. Plan to join us at this annual gathering and reconnect with colleagues and friends.

Connections

We tell each other our hobbies, new ventures, and many ways of serving Christ within and beyond “appointment” ministries. We may be retired, but we are still alive in Christ and active in the church and in the world. We also ask for prayer in the challenges of elder years.

West Plains District

Betty Bailey (widow of Rev. George Bailey) who lives at Wesleyan Village in Elyria will celebrate her 100th birthday on June 21.

Hoyte Wilhelm: I am newly retired (coming up on one year, July 1, 2026) after 30 years of appointed ministry in our local churches. I live on the water with my wife, **Terri**, in Huron--30 minutes from Lakeside. Our home is literally 50 feet from the breakwall at the edge of the lake and so every day is a different postcard picture. I am playing my trombone in several groups, involved with a book club with mostly retired clergy, a conversation group called, "Socrates Cafe," and escape with boating and fishing on the lake and an occasional hike on nearby trails. We are first-time grandparents to six-month old Iris Wilhelm Bredech and enjoy spending time with her parents, daughter Megan and son-in-law Mael who live and

work in Jersey City, NJ and Manhattan, NY. Our son, Timothy is a master welder and Computer Numerical Control (CNC) operator in the Cleveland area. I am still searching for a church home but have enjoyed visiting many different churches with a variety of worship styles.

Northern Waters District

Stan and Carol Wallace went to Columbus on April 1. No Joke. All families and friends are doing poorly. Granddaughter Chloe is completing her Master's Degree in Barcelona and returning to a job in Cleveland. Grand twins in Seattle are graduating from high school in June and Carol will travel to be on hand.

The folks at Lakeside Chautauqua asked **Charlie Yoost** to compile a book of prayers and meditations which he shared at Lakeside as Senior Director of Religious Life, and it has been accepted for publication by Wipf and

Stock Publishers. The book will be available in the late fall.

Paul & Linda Beal: I really don't have much to say except that I am grateful to be still alive with my beautiful angel spouse of 45 years, five adult children and spouses, four grandchildren, and good health and comfortable living conditions and income.

Beyond that I grieve and miss family, friends and colleagues who have passed or are not doing too well and I pray for the UMC and the world which are struggling to find hope and peace. Glad I am retired and thankful I enjoyed the UMC and the world when I did. Best wishes to you and all retirees and their families. I keep in touch regularly with Jim and Bonnie Magaw whom Linda and I have known since Mt Vernon appointments in 1979, and I heard just this past week from colleague, friend and fellow graduate from Otterbein University and United Seminary, Ron Mowry, who retired with wife Susan to Chillicothe, Ohio as he was praying his prayer

list. I also enjoy the humor of old friend and colleague and CPE classmate Jerry Butcher online. Those are a few old friends and colleagues who are still around.

I was chatting with friends at a restaurant over the weekend and the man at the next table told his cell phone caller to hold on, and he took his call outside to talk. When he came back, I said, "That was very thoughtful." He replied, "I had no choice. You were making too much noise."

Central Valley District

Sheila Buckeye writes Rev. Bill has been gone for just about 5 years. I moved back to Wooster from Maryland. I keep busy with the 9 grand-kids, ages 2-20, in 3 states and traveling every chance I get. Since Bill passed, I have traveled to Australia, New Zealand, Alaska, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, France, and The Netherlands. Next is a return to Italy in 2027. It was his wish that I keep doing what we loved.

Out of State

Tom & Yvonne Matus report they are enjoying the warm sunshine here in Louisiana and being close to family.

Sang E. & Suzy Chun, moved to 3 Horizon Road Apt 1217, Fort Lee, NJ 07024 since 2023 where they are near to our two children. We see our six grandchildren at every Sunday at Arcola United Methodist Church in Paramus, New Jersey. Our two children, Dr. Ivy Grace Chang and Brian Kris, live in River Vale, New Jersey about 12 miles away from us. Ivy Grace and her husband Prentice have been retired since last year. Briand and his wife Lisa have their own business. We, 12 of us, are happy living nearby together. We thank God blessing us with such happy life.

Bill & Ginny Norman are in Los Alamos County NM. It is hard to believe I have been retired for 19 years, and still in fair health, and so is Ginny. We moved to New Mexico in 2012 to be near our son Ben and his wife Deb and daughter Grace. Grace turns 15 in April and is taller than me. Still a sweet girl. She seems to be thriving in Navy JrROTC. We are active members of White Rock UMC. Living at 6300 ft elevation in White Rock, the

arid climate of the high desert is agreeable to us, even with the prolonged drought, but we do miss a whole lot of people in Ohio, Tennessee and Florida. May God bless all of you.

The deadline for submitting materials to be included in the 2026 Fall Issue of TOAT is August 15, 2026. Submit materials to paulw2800@gmail.com

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from the East Ohio
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Association**

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Please keep in prayer the families of the following retirees who have entered the church triumphant since our last reporting January 1, 2026:

- Paul W. Anderson**, *retired Elder*, died July 23, 2025.
- Joel L. Weekley II**, *former Local Pastor*, died July 25, 2025.
- Alston B. Hall**, *retired Elder*, died August 2, 2025.
- Chales H. Mehl**, *retired Local Pastor*, died December 20.
- Richard K. Hoover**, *retired Elder*, died December 24.
- Donald L. Kline**, *retired Elder*, died January 1.
- Joan E. Knotts**, *retired Diaconal Minister*, died January 11.
- Jeffrey M. Proya**, *retired Elder*, died January 14.
- Neal McBride (Mac) Kelly**, *retired Elder*, died January 31.
- Carol Rothrock**, *surviving spouse of the Rev. Richard Rothrock*, died February 19.
- Frances Marian Glass**, *retired Elder*, died February 19.
- Bonnie Conner**, *clergy spouse of the Rev. V. Yvonne Connor*, died February 26.
- Norman James Greenawalt**, *retired Elder*, died March 4.
- John I. E. Buchanan**, *retired Elder*, died March 29.
- John H. Wolfe**, *retired Elder*, died March 31.
- Louise C. Lindberg**, *surviving spouse of the Rev. Dr. Melvin Lindberg*, died April 4.
- James A. Porter**, *retired Associate Member*, died April 8.
- Karl W. Hankins**, *clergy spouse of Rev. Donna Van Trees*, died April 13.

(Please note that a family member should contact the bishop's office at time of a death. Send notices to Melissa McGee at mmcgee@eocumc.com).