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Weekly Bulletin

December 21, 2016

A Prayer of Confession for the Fourth Week of Advent
(Isaiah 7, Psalm 80, Romans 1, Matthew 1)



O God, we are easily distracted and slightly jaded,
and cannot believe Christ is almost here.

There are still presents to be bought-never mind wrapped.

There are parties to attend, cookies to be baked, trees to be trimmed. Sometimes we cannot wait until all this hubbub is over. Where is the time to sit, to sleep-never mind to dream? We can get so caught up in the busyness of the season that we miss the gift the season is meant to be. We have heard the scriptures and stories so often that they have become white noise. For our frenetic pace, for our exhaustion, for our tunnel vision, for our missing the wonder and awe of a baby born to fulfill promises made long ago, forgive us. Restore to us the sense of surprise that you came to us as a little baby, unexpected, yet longed for. God of the visioners and dreamers, may we always be ready to receive your gifts. Amen.

~ [from Ministry Matters Worship Elements, December 18, 2016](#)



Sunday, January 15

Human Relations Day —

United Methodists will celebrate God's call to empower people who struggle and equip change agents to transform the world. Special offerings on this Sunday support ministries that help people reach their potential.

[Resources](#)



Loving God,

Help us to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all around the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be your children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake.

Amen.



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

Martha L. Schaffer, age 88, who passed away Tuesday, December 13, 2016. She was born in Bremen, Georgia to the late John and Lola Boggs Sr. and was a member of Sixth Avenue United Methodist Church (UMC). Martha was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. Oren D. Schaffer who was a retired pastor from The West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church. Together they served churches throughout Ohio and in Massachusetts. She was also preceded in death by brother John Robert Boggs Jr.; sisters, Jewell Allen, Alva Boggs, Ruth White, Pauline Martin, Lucille Hudgins, Elizabeth Fincher, Bernice Johnsa, Connie Hobbs, and Robbie Garrett.

[Obituary](#). Condolences can be submitted online through the funeral home by clicking [here](#).

Memorial contributions may be made to [Sixth Avenue UMC](#).



During the Christmas season, may you be blessed with the spirit of the season, which is peace; the gladness of the season, which is hope; and the heart of the season, which is love.

Your Northwest Plains District Staff & Leadership Team,
Barry, Brian, Scott, Casey, Duane, Erma, Courtnie, Matt,
Bruce, Doug, Sandy and Deb

Note: The Northwest Plains District office will be closed for the holidays from Friday, December 23 until Tuesday, January 3, 2017. There will be no Weekly Bulletin on December 28.

LAY SERVANT NETWORK

“Connecting With Those Who Suffer”

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Thomas Holmes, Director of Covenant Ministries, Lima, Ohio

January 28, 2017 ~ 8:30am-11:30am

There is no charge for this event. A hot Breakfast will be served.

Trinity UMC, 137 N. Pratt St., Ottawa, OH

A lot of people in our society have been impacted by the realities of increased suicide rates and the wholesale feeling of hopelessness. This workshop will explore some of those dynamics, and what the church needs to do to respond to human suffering. We will explore the experience of trauma (the types of experiences that result in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), as well as developmental trauma (the types of experiences that are the result of malnurturing life experiences). Both the shock trauma experiences and the developmental trauma experiences are culprits for many people who contemplate suicide. These are not the only causes of suicide, but this workshop will focus on the realities of trauma and the correlation to the current drug epidemic and increased suicide/self-destructive behaviors. The bottom line is that people feel hopeless. Suicide is more often a desire to end the pain; it is not a desire to end life. We will look at the practice of spiritual disciplines as well as other self-regulation skills to combat the overwhelming feeling of despair when people are negatively triggered.



This event is open to ALL including: Lay Servants, Pastors, Local & Student Pastors, Health Care Workers, and Local Church Youth Workers.

0.2 CEU credits for participation.

There is no charge for this event but we do need your registration in order to adequately prepare for breakfast and materials. To register please call the district office at 1.800.589.7828, email nwplains@wocumc.org, or register online at <http://www.northwestplainsdistrict.org/district/northwestplains/event/nwp-lay-servant-network-0>



Emmaus Events

Findlay Emmaus Gathering *(on the third Tuesday)*

Tuesday, January 17, 7 pm

St Marks UMC

800 S. Main St., Findlay | 419.422.4236

<http://www.findlayemmaus.org/>

Sidney Emmaus Gathering *(on the second Tuesday)*

Tuesday, January 10, 7 pm

First UMC

230 E. Poplar St., Sidney | 937.492.9136

<http://www.sidneyemmaus.org/>

NW Ohio Emmaus Gathering *(on the fourth Saturday)*

Saturday, January 28, 6:30 pm

Delta UMC

101 Northwood Dr., Delta | 419.822.4195

<http://www.nwoemmaus.com/>

Emmaus Walks ~ A Journey with Christ

While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and walked with them.

- Luke 24:15

A program of the Upper Room division of the General Board Discipleship which calls forth and renews Christian discipleship.

The Walk to Emmaus is a three-day experience, a highly structured weekend, which takes a New Testament look at Christianity as a life-style. The program is designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people and through them, their families, congregations, and the world.

Findlay Emmaus Walks @ St. Marks UMC, Findlay, OH

<http://www.findlayemmaus.org/>

Women's Walks	Dates
Women's Walk #100	February 9-12, 2017
Women's Walk #101	June 8-11, 2017
Women's Walk #102	October 12-17, 2017

Men's Walks	Dates
Men's Walk #76	March 16-19, 2017
Men's Walk #77	November 2-5, 2017

Sidney Emmaus Walk @ First UMC, Sidney, OH

<http://www.sidneyemmaus.org/>

Women's Walks	Dates
Women's Walk #71	February 23-26, 2017
Women's Walk #72	July 20-23, 2017
Women's Walk #73	October 19-22, 2017

Men's Walks	Dates
Men's Walk #67	March 23-26, 2017
Men's Walk #68	August 24-27, 2017
Men's Walk # 69	November 2-5, 2017

Bryan Emmaus Walks @ Wesley UMC, Bryan, OH

<http://www.nwoemmaus.com/>



Chrysalis is a three day experience of spiritual renewal open to members of any Christian denomination, ages 15 to 24. It is an opportunity to meet Jesus Christ in a new way. Chrysalis is meant to inspire, challenge, and equip youth for Christian action in their homes, churches, communities and places of work.

St. Andrew's UMC, Findlay

Girl's Flight #48 - January 20-22, 2017
Boy's Flight #47 - February 24-26, 2017
Girl's Flight #49 - July 7-9, 2017
Boy's Flight #48 - July 21-23, 2017

<http://www.findlaychrysalis.org/>

Greene Street UMC, Piqua

Girl's Flight #63 January 14-16, 2017
Boy's Flight #63 February 18-20, 2017
Girl's Flight #64 July 7-9, 2017
Boy's Flight #64 July 28-30, 2017

<http://www.westohiochrysalis.com/>

LOCAL CHURCH AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

LIFETREE CAFÉ

come join the conversation



Finding Your Purpose in Life Explored at Lifetree Café [map](#)

How to discover your purpose in life will be explored at Lifetree Café Thursday, December 22, 7-8 pm.

The program, titled “Crafting a Truly Fulfilling Life: Making the Most of Whatever Comes Your Way,” features a filmed interview with Dennis Drake. Drake is the founder of the International Deaf Education Association, a Philippines-based program dedicated to providing education and training to the island’s deaf population.

“This work gave me purpose; it gave me life,” says Drake. “I found my life here with this community and these kids. If I look back over the last 34 years, I have no regrets over how I’ve spent my time.”

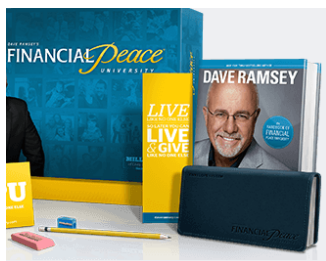
During the program, participants will have the opportunity to tell about times they’ve felt fulfillment in their own lives.

Admission to the 60-minute event is free. Lifetree Café is located at The Bachwell Center, 116 N. Washington Street, Van Wert, OH. Please park behind the courthouse and enter on Court Street.

Lifetree Café is a place where people gather for conversation about life and faith in a casual, comfortable setting.

Questions about Lifetree may be directed to First United Methodist Church at 419.238.0631 or firstchurch@wcoil.com.

Note: Topic for December 29: “The Aliens are Coming: What if it’s true?”



Financial Peace University at Grace UMC

301 E. Findlay St., Carey, OH

Tuesdays @ 6:00PM beginning January 3, 2017

[Sign up today!](#)

<https://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/classes/1032563>



Northwest Plains District Lay Servant Training Events

Saturday, March 4—Spiritual Gifts, led by Rev. Debbie Kaylor

Saturday, March 4—The Theology of Hymns, led by Rev. Colleen Ogle

Saturday, April 1—Lead in Worship, led by Rev. Dwight Bowers

Saturday, April 1—Stewardship as a Lifestyle, led by Rev. Amy Haines

Details and registration will be available soon!

WEST OHIO CONNECTION AND BEYOND

2016: Remembering Notable United Methodists

The church this past year marked the passing of a Bible study innovator, a birthday ambassador and the Pulitzer-winning author of a beloved novel. Heather Hahn has brief remembrances of 21 United Methodists who put their faith into action. [Read story](http://tiny.cc/1mtuhy) <http://tiny.cc/1mtuhy>

Christmas Greetings from Bishops



In a Christmas message to United Methodists on behalf of the Council of Bishops, Bishop Bruce Ough — council president — reminds churchgoers that disruptions are sometimes God's call for people to make room for him in their hearts and their lives.

[Read and watch statement](#)

Seminary Grant to Help Churches Reach Youth

United Methodist Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary recently received \$1.5 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help churches launch new ministries that will attract young adults — a population that congregations today are struggling to reach. [Read press release](http://tiny.cc/7rbwhy) <http://tiny.cc/7rbwhy>

New Scholarship for MDiv Students at United Methodist Seminaries



The Office of Loans and Scholarships at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) have announced the creation of a new scholarship for students enrolled in United Methodist seminaries. The Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship was created to help entering United Methodist clergy avoid excessive educational loan debt, minimize financial stress and build financial acumen. To be eligible, applicants must be enrolled full-time as a Master of Divinity student at one of the 13 United Methodist seminaries/schools of theology, and be pursuing certified candidacy or a certified candidate for ministry

(elder or deacon) in The United Methodist Church. [Read More](http://tiny.cc/nqbwhy) <http://tiny.cc/nqbwhy>

RESOURCES



Three Things We Need To Live By God's Spirit

By Lincoln Brewster

I need to ask you a question. It may be a little personal, but I'm going to ask it anyway:

What kind of thoughts are guiding your life?

Chances are, they're not too different from the mindsets guiding two major groups that Paul speaks to in Romans 8. Those two groups, early Jewish Christians and early Greek Christians, each had a unique issue. Early Jewish Christians were tempted to live by willpower. Early Greek Christians were tempted to follow culturally permissive pressures. The grace of God was entirely new to both groups.

Which one do you gravitate toward? Which of those two losing solutions most sounds like you?

[Read more](http://tiny.cc/khtuhy) <http://tiny.cc/khtuhy>



IRS Standard Mileage Rates Go Down for 2017

Set annually by the IRS, taxpayers can use the standard mileage rates to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile.

Starting on January 1, 2017, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car, van, pickup truck, or panel truck will be:

- 53.5 cents per mile for business miles driven (down from 54 cents for [2016](#)).
- 17 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes (down from 19 cents for 2016).
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations (remains the same from 2016; based on federal statute).

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile, including depreciation, insurance, repairs, tires, maintenance, gas, and oil.



Saturday, Dec. 24 ~ Christmas Eve

United Methodist Discipleship Ministries offers ideas for a service of lessons and carols as well as ways to welcome Christmas guests.

[Resources](http://tiny.cc/6rqvhy) <http://tiny.cc/6rqvhy>

