



**Disability Ministries**  
The United Methodist Church



**Ohio Disability & Ministry Collaborative**  
**Enlighten. Educate. Engage.**

| JANUARY 2024 |         |           |          |        |          |        |
|--------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Monday       | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| 1            | 2       | 3         | 4        | 5      | 6        | 7      |
| 8            | 9       | 10        | 11       | 12     | 13       | 14     |
| 15           | 16      | 17        | 18       | 19     | 20       | 21     |
| 22           | 23      | 24        | 25       | 26     | 27       | 28     |
| 29           | 30      | 31        |          |        |          |        |

*The new year is well underway, and we pray it will be a year of joy, hope, peace, and love as we serve God together.*

As you make plans for your church and community, please remember your Disability Awareness Sunday. In the West Ohio Conference, it is the first Sunday in May. Your ODMC team is here to help plan and present your Disability Awareness Sunday with resources, data, and our experienced speakers.

**Congratulations!!!**

Congratulations to our Co-Director, Rev. Zachary Holler on his engagement to Elizabeth Wilson! We hope your life together will be filled with amazing adventures, joy, and love.

**Deepest Sympathies**

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of one of our ODMC members. On November 30, 2023, our dear sister in Christ, Tracy Lynn Colborn, died suddenly. We extend our condolences to her family and friends. You may read her obituary here: [Obituary | Tracy Lynn Colborn of Grove City, Ohio | Spence-Miller Funeral Home \(spencemillerfuneralhome.com\)](#)



**Flat Rock**  
Restoring Hope. Transforming Lives. Living Faith.

**Announcement from Flat Rock Homes, Care Center & Community Services**

Flat Rock is pleased to welcome Rev. Zachary Holler, a West Ohio Conference pastor, to its Board of Directors. With Zach's leadership comes intimate knowledge of disability awareness as Zach is a person with disabilities, including having low vision and being hard of hearing. As an organization that serves folks with disabilities, Zach will add a different perspective to our work at Flat Rock Homes, Care Center, and Community Services. Welcome, Zach! [www.flatrockhomes.org](http://www.flatrockhomes.org)

***2 Corinthians 5:17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!***

## **Coming February 9 to a Church Near You**



*"Night to Shine is an unforgettable prom night experience, centered on God's love, for people with special needs ages 14 and older."* -from [www.timtebowfoundation.org](http://www.timtebowfoundation.org)

On Friday, February 9, 2024, individuals across Ohio and around the world will gather to honor those with disabilities with a glittery prom night of music, games, food, and fun. Contact your local Night to Shine team (listed on [www.timtebowfoundation.org](http://www.timtebowfoundation.org)) to learn how you can help at an event near you. Volunteer and donation opportunities are available in all areas.

If your church holds a Night to Shine, please share your experiences and photos with us. Email: [Rdarling@flatrockhomes.org](mailto:Rdarling@flatrockhomes.org)

## **Accessibility Badge Awards**

**Congratulations** to the following West Ohio Conference United Methodist churches on earning an Accessibility Badge.

- Belpre Heights: Bronze
- Bethany: Bronze
- Clair: Bronze
- Clifton: Bronze
- Crosswoods: Bronze
- Franklin First: Bronze
- Ginghamburg: Bronze
- Grace: Bronze
- Jerome: Copper
- Kirkersville: Bronze
- Lewistown-Trinity: Copper
- Oakwood: Copper
- Ohmer Park: Copper
- Oregon Faith: Copper
- Powell: Bronze
- Pleasantville: Copper
- Rushsylvania: Copper
- St. Paul's Community: Silver
- St. Paul's Tupper-Plains: Copper
- Staunton: Copper

YOUR church may also show your community your commitment to creating a place where all people feel welcome, safe, and valued. The Badge Levels are awarded according to the following criteria:

- Copper: Completed Accessibility Audit
- Bronze Badge (basic accessibility and accommodations): the church is welcoming and offers basic amenities needed for a person with a disability to participate, e.g. a place to park, a way to get into the building and sanctuary, a bathroom that is

usable, etc. Most items at this level are low cost and can be easily provided, e.g. ushers and greeters trained in disability etiquette, website information on access. [Click here to download Bronze Badge information \(MS Word\)](#).

- Silver Badge (satisfactory accessibility and accommodations): the church has many accessible features and offers accommodations for persons with a variety of disabilities including hearing loss and limited vision. Silver level items may cost a bit more and take more effort to put in place. While some areas are not yet fully accessible and inclusive, it is clear that the congregation is working towards accessibility. [Click here to download Silver Badge information \(MS Word\)](#).
- Gold Badge (great accessibility and accommodations): the congregation has gone beyond ADA requirements and strives to provide an accessible space and appropriate accommodations. The church welcomes individuals with varying disabilities and their families through intentional measures and ministries. Continued improvement is planned based on needs of members and the community. This church would be a good choice to host conference events per ¶716.2 of the *Book of Discipline*, and might mentor other churches. [Click here to download Gold Badge information \(MS Word\)](#).

If you have questions or would like guidance to complete your badge requirements, please let us know, and we may be able to assist you!

Email [Rdarling@flatrockhomes.org](mailto:Rdarling@flatrockhomes.org)

### **Resources:**

[Accessibility – Disability Ministries of the United Methodist Church \(umcdmc.org\)](https://umcdmc.org)

[United Methodist Committee on Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Ministries \(umdeaf.org\)](https://umdeaf.org)

[Adapting a Church Building and Program for People who are Blind or have Low Vision – Disability Ministries of the United Methodist Church \(umcdmc.org\)](https://umcdmc.org)

Plan now for your **Disability Awareness Sunday 2024**. The West Ohio Conference designated Sunday is May 5, 2024. The East Ohio Conference has no specific date, and the ODMC will help either Conference in the planning and implementation of this Special Sunday. Members of our speaker's bureau are here to help.

[DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY FAQ's - Global Ministries \(umcmmission.org\)](https://umcmmission.org)