Prayers requested for imprisoned United Methodist

Rev. Dr. J. Kabamba Kiboko is the senior pastor of Forest Chapel United Methodist Church and the sister of Vano Kalembe Kiboko, a United Methodist evangelist and a former congressman in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Vano was arrested December 29 by the country's secret service. Those who attended the Spring Celebration last year at Church of the Saviour will remember that Vano was our guest speaker with Kabamba serving as his translator.

Kabamba flew to the DRC last week to be by her brother's side. In addition to being subjected to deplorable prison conditions, Vano has contracted malaria, to which the government has denied treatment. Rev. Kiboko I. Kiboko, a United Methodist pastor in Iowa, is trying to save the life of his brother by asking for help from the denomination and the Obama administration.

Vano's arrest came after he publicly denounced the December 8 shooting of a woman engaged in a nonviolent protest. "Vano is imprisoned for living out his baptismal covenant 'to resist injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves,'" the pastor wrote in a letter to his
congregation.

Please be praying for Vano's release and healing and learn more including how you can help.

Remembering Selma

Rethink Church in their series called Conversations on Race, held some interviews with Rev. Kent Millard. A retired United Methodist clergy from Texas, Millard went to Selma, Alabama as a Boston University School of Theology student after hearing Dr. King call for seminary students to come to Selma to support the voting rights marches. He recalls his experience 50 years ago in Selma. Click here to read the interview.

Cities in Alabama have many events, reenactments and commemorations planned this year to mark this significant time in our nation's history. To further lean into our recent Come to the Table events, ORV Superintendent, Rev. Brian Brown and Rev. Peter Matthews, Executive Director for the Wesley Foundation at the University of Cincinnati, are organizing a district mission trip to Selma March 6-8 to honor the blood, sweat and tears of those original marchers from 50 years ago.

The three Selma to Montgomery marches in 1965 were part of the Selma Voting Rights Movement that led to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, a landmark federal achievement of the 1960s American Civil Rights Movement. The ORV trip will culminate in a crossing of the Edmund Pettus Bridge (declared a National Historic Landmark in 2013), the location of "Bloody Sunday" on March 7, 1965, when armed officers attacked peaceful civil rights demonstrators attempting to march to the state capital.

Get more details for this historic trip in the making by clicking here.

Explore your call to leadership

Is God calling you to in-depth ministry as a lay person? Certified Lay Ministers (CLMs) are trained and equipped to fulfill their unique calling with enhanced ministry to small membership churches. Certified Lay Ministers preach the Word, provide care for the congregation, assist in program leadership, and serve as witnesses in the community to further
the growth, mission and connectional thrust of The United Methodist Church.

If you would like to know how the West Ohio Certified Lay Ministry Academy could further equip you for ministry, consider attending one of two upcoming informational events on **March 21** at Howard UMC in Findlay or **March 28** at Hope UMC in Franklin.

**United Methodist Financial Credit Union ready to assist YOU!**

Is your church planning a building project, parsonage update, or a refinance of its current debt? If so, please consider the United Methodist Financial Credit Union (UMFCU). As a trusted partner of the East and West Ohio Conferences their loan products are designed specifically for United Methodist Churches in accordance with The Book of Discipline.

For more information about UMFCU church loans, please contact **Rev. Rachel B. Miller**, Vice President - Church Services or call her at 614.551.1365.

**It's Time to Apply for a Youth/Mission Outreach Grant**

Churches of the Ohio River Valley District are invited to apply for a grant, up to $1,000, to offset the cost of their Summer Mission/Spiritual Development trip, and/or outreach program. The grant application for 2015 is available by clicking here or by emailing the Assistant to the District Superintendent, Rev. Tim Waugh.

Completed grant applications are due into the district office by Friday, March 13, 2015. If you have any questions contact **Rev. Tim Waugh** at 513.421.2057.

**Stewardship 101 for the Smaller Church**

Growing generosity in a unique church culture

The smaller church has unique cultural issues to address in order to grow generosity. A workshop being held February 28 for pastors, finance committee members, stewardship team leaders and other church leaders will help you address their unique challenges by addressing:

- the Biblical foundation for giving to God
- understanding generosity as a lifestyle
- holistic approach to stewardship
- best financial practices
- modified local church year-round strategy to grow generous givers
the role of the pastor and the role of the finance committee
and more...

This training by West Ohio Conference Council on Development personnel takes place from 10am-1:30pm at Howard UMC (220 Cherry St, Findlay, OH). The cost is just $5 per person with lunch included. Click [here](#) to register.

### Nine Concerns about Church Members Who Withhold Their Financial Gifts

The story is too common, but I hear such stories repeatedly. My most recent conversation was with a church leader where an affluent church member offered to make a large contribution to the renovation of the worship center. He had one stipulation: the worship center had to be named in memory of his late mother. The leader politely declined. The affluent member did not make the donation. To the contrary, he began withholding all of his gifts to the church.

Almost every pastor and church leader has some story about members withholding their financial gifts as an act of protest about the direction of the church and its leadership. I have never known such a situation that had any positive affect. Such is the reason I offer nine concerns about this practice.

### Summer Service 2015

Celebrating 34 years, Good Works exists to connect people from all walks of life with people in poverty so that the Kingdom of God can be experienced.

If you or someone you know is at least 20 years old or has completed a year of college, please consider a 9-week paid internship with Good Works focused on discipleship and leadership development in the context of Christian community. Interns lead youth and adults in relational service with people without homes, older adults needing physical assistance and support, and children and teens experiencing the risks of poverty.

The Summer Service internship in Athens county runs from June 7-August 8, 2015. Good Works provides housing, most of your food and a $1500 stipend. Interns can also raise additional funds.

Visit their website at [www.good-works.net](http://www.good-works.net) to learn more. You may request an application by email at [goodworks@good-works.net](mailto:goodworks@good-works.net). Application deadline is March 31, 2015. Interviews will be held onsite in Athens, Ohio in April.

### News from the Pews

Check out the exciting church/agency sponsored events coming up in the Ohio River Valley District. Simply click on the title of the event to be redirected to the ORV website for more info.

- February 12, [Small Group Network Meeting](#), Milford Trinity United Methodist Church
- February 15, [Empty Soup Bowls Luncheon](#), The John Wesley United Methodist Church
- February 17, [Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner](#), Loveland United Methodist Church
- February 20-April 3, [Fish Fry Fridays](#), Hartzell United Methodist Church
- February 21, **CPR & First Aid Training**, Armstrong Chapel United Methodist Church
- March 1, **Mommy and Me for Tea**, Friendship United Methodist Church
- March 7, **Bethune-Cookman University Inspirational Gospel Choir Concert**, Bethel UMC
- March 14, **Men's Breakfast**, Otterbein Lebanon United Methodist Church

**Passages**

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

**Rev. Robert D. Rider, Sr.**, 84, who passed away on Friday, February 6. His wife, Dorothy Wolfe Rider, preceded him in death in 2007. Rev. Rider retired in 1993 after serving the Cheshire Charge, Pine Street Charge, and the New Vienna, Oakley, Sciotoville, Fostoria and Piketon UMCs. **Obituary.** Funeral services will be 10am Wednesday, February 11 at New Vienna United Methodist Church with a graveside service following at 1:30pm at Asbury Cemetery in Nelsonville. Clergy are asked to robe and process at the funeral service. Memorial contributions may be made to Community Care Hospice, PO Box 123, Wilmington, OH 45177 or to Imagine No Malaria c/o New Vienna United Methodist Church, 11576 West St, New Vienna, OH 45159. Condolences will reach the family in care of son Randy (Sharon) Rider, 7680 Farmers Rd, New Vienna, OH 45159.

**Martha C. Stutler**, 74, who died January 24. She is survived by her husband, Rev. Dewayne Stutler. She served alongside her husband in the West Ohio Conference at Stockport Charge (1994); Southern Charge (1997); Little Hocking-Decatur (2003); Rock Springs Charge (2008); and Living Faith (2013). **Obituary.** Messages of condolence may be sent to Rev. Dewayne Stutler, 111 North Hart Street, Apt. 9, Marietta, Ohio 45750. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Martha's memory to the Living Faith United Methodist Church, 4771 State Route 339, Vincent, OH, 45784.

**Deadline for News and Notes articles is noon on Fridays.**

Articles are published based on available space and relevance. All articles are subject to editing.

Please submit article requests to **ohiorivervalley@wocumc.org**.