

Congregational Excellence – Fall 2023 Resources



Mission Insite: A free resource for United Methodists to know more about demographics, insights, and people who live in our local community. Use the resource with leadership and see the connections. Receive a copy of the community reports by contacting district liaison or access the resources through www.greatplainsumc.org/missioninsite



Readiness 360: A free resource to look at your church as a snapshot on current spiritual intensity, dynamic relationships, missional alignment, and cultural openness – the four drivers in churches ready for the next step. R360 is a four-week survey to offer to the congregation, then leadership team will receive results and implement a plan for next steps based on data from the congregation, contact district liaison and info at www.greatplainsumc.org/readiness-360.



Simplified Board Structure: A resource for churches to transition from a committee-based to a simplified board structure for congregational governance, as a tool to be nimbler and more efficient in maximizing the church's witness. The simplified board structure focuses on God's mission and vision for the church, as each member of the leadership board is fully accountable and responsible as a member of the Administrative Council, Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, and the Staff Parish Relations Committee. Enter the process of intentional discernment, assigned coaching, district superintendent approval and charge conference vote for this resource. www.greatplainsumc.org/simplified-board-structure



Coaching or consulting available for your congregation: This can be helpful for churches who are undergoing deep conversations on faithful next steps for the congregation and would like coaching or consulting to help hear God's guidance in the immediate or near future. Contact your district superintendent or liaison for more information.



Kids, Family and Youth Ministry Resources: We want to invest in you to continue to do great children, family, and youth ministry. It takes time, energy, and resources to create a thriving KidsMin and YouthMin. On the website, you'll get to know our fantastic team of Kids and Youth Ministry Regional Coordinators and Ministry Specialists and access our monthly newsletters, resource toolbox, grant information, and other ways to get plugged in. Access these resources for Kids + Families. www.greatplainsumc.org/kids-family
Access these resources for Youth Ministry www.greatplainsumc.org/youth.



Leadership Lab: Leadership Lab is a choose-your-own-adventure Christian Leadership experiment for high school students in the Great Plains Conference. High school students engage in a web of relationships, resourcing, and experiences that culminate in eligibility for a triennial trip to the Holy Land with other students, their mentors, and the key conference leaders. Eligibility is determined by completing the Leadership Lab curriculum. www.greatplainsumc.org/leadership-lab

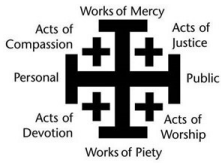


The Kitchen Table is an online gathering place to connect with United Methodists involved in ministries of justice, mercy, and relationships. It will be a space for support, collaboration, networking, dreaming, and nourishment. All are welcome to drop by once or to come each week. We will meet on Mondays at 6 p.m. from September 11 through November 13. To register: <https://tinyurl.com/KitTable>





Waves of Justice Toolkit: Are you from a smaller community or church and wondering how to make progress on the toughest challenges facing your family, friends, and neighbors? The Mercy and Justice Team of the Great Plains Conference has created a toolkit to help. Download the Waves of Justice Toolkit on our website today to learn how to build and grow justice ministry in the places where you live, work, and worship. <https://www.greatplainsumc.org/waves-of-justice-churches-toolkit>



Lay Servant Ministry Certification: For anyone inquiring or interested in exploring certification in Certified Lay Servants, Certified Lay Speakers, Certified Lay Ministers, check out: www.greatplainsumc.org/laity



For Lay Servant ministries guidebook, application, and annual reports. Download the Lay Servant Ministries catalog, look at the upcoming courses offered along with opportunities to take courses at BeADisciple.com and The Academy for Small Membership Church. For more information www.greatplainsumc.org/lay-contacts.



Lait Summit and other Lait Events: For more information about annual event of Lait Summit www.greatplainsumc.org/laity-summit, United Methodist laity are welcome to email ideas to jleeper@greatplainsumc.org.



Disaster Response Trainings: available for your congregation, network, or district. Many trainings are offered including: Basic Disaster 101 to training an Early Response Team (ERT) of individuals 18 and older who are trained to respond in emergencies in our communities and beyond. See the menu of trainings available at www.greatplainsumc.org/disasterresponse



Post-Disaffiliation Grants: Through the last several years, many communities have struggled through and suffered from conversations about disaffiliation in the United Methodist Church. The Great Plains Annual Conference desires to walk along individuals and communities in ways that bring healing and growth. The Conference Council on Finance and Administration has approved initial resources for the remainder of 2023 to provide support to local communities in the Great Plains who have suffered negative impacts following

disaffiliation conversations and votes. For details visit www.greatplainsumc.org/grants.



Discipleship Band: Discipleship Bands are small groups of 3–5 people who gather to explore how to be followers of Jesus in the real world more effectively. Each meeting includes work in the Bible, sharing our successes and failures in a confidential context, prayer for each other, and a promise made to the group to do one thing that grows our spiritual lives. If you are interested in forming these groups at your church, email rfitzgerald@greatplainsumc.org for more information.

District Liaisons – Each district has staff to work with your church on resources and connection. For further resourcing and conversation, feel free to contact the below district liaisons.

- Blue River, Elkhorn Valley, Gateway, Great West - Rev. Sarah Marsh, sarah.marsh@greatplainsumc.org
- Dodge City, Hays, Elkhorn Valley, Prairie Rivers, Flint Hills, Topeka – Rev. Hollie Tapley, htapley@greatplainsumc.org
- Elkhorn Valley, Missouri River, Hutchinson, Salina – Rev. Gerald Liu, PhD gliu@greatplainsumc.org
- Five Rivers, Parsons, Kansas City, Wichita East-West – Rev. Nicole Conard, nconard@greatplainsumc.org

For further resourcing, Congregational Excellence staff include Rev. Jeff Clinger, Director jclinger@greatplainsumc.org; Jeanie Leeper, Lay Leadership Coordinator, jleeper@greatplainsumc.org; Rev. Richard Fitzgerald, Conference Circuit Pastor rfitzgerald@greatplainsumc.org; Rev. Melissa Gepford, Intergenerational Discipleship Coordinator mgepford@greatplainsumc.org, and Donna Ernest, Administrative Assistant dernest@greatplainsumc.org.