

THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

Volume LIX

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No. 10

Progress, Need Mark Sandy Anniversary

By Jeff Wolfe

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TUCKERTON – While the floods from Superstorm Sandy have long since receded, the damage from the Oct. 29, 2012 catastrophe is something thousands still face daily.

A Future With Hope, the Sandy recovery arm of the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey, and its partners, the Ocean County Long Term Recovery Group, Episcopal Relief and Development, and the Salvation Army had a third anniversary event to celebrate recovery and to let those still in need know they haven't been forgotten.

"We've had a lot of success helping people recover and return home," A Future With Hope Executive Director Bobbie Ridgely said. "But we know there are still thousands struggling in recovery and we are here to continue helping them."

A Future With Hope has helped by rebuilding 183 homes with more than 10,000 volunteers. One of those rebuilt homes belongs to Tuckerton resident Jeanne DeMarsico. Her house had never flooded before Superstorm Sandy, but this time it was overtaken by nine feet of water, making her home a complete loss.

DeMarsico admitted during the celebration on Oct. 29 at the Lighthouse Alliance Church in Tuckerton that for quite some time after the storm, she was at a complete loss on how to get help.

"A Future With Hope came in and worked with me," she said. "We sat down at a table and mapped everything out. It was worth every moment of delay, every moment of frustration, all of it. It took a lot of work and patience to make that happen."

DeMarsico's original home was demolished in March and she moved into her new modular home on Sept. 23. She hosted a house blessing as part of the third anniversary celebration and said having A Future With Hope and its network of skilled and caring volunteers was the biggest blessing.

Some of the volunteer groups that partner with A Future With Hope include Episcopal Relief and Development, World Renew Inc., Christian Public Service, International Relief Teams, Servants Inc., Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Lutheran Disaster Response and United Methodist churches and groups from Greater New Jersey and around the country.

"The beauty of this experience was in all the people I met," DeMarsico said. "The volunteers from World Renew and from all the different denominations that A Future With Hope brought in from all over were great. Without the volunteers, this would not have been accomplished. It saved us a tremendous amount of money.

"Beyond that, volunteers came up to me and hugged me and said thank you for letting me do this. I stood back and said, you are thanking me? It was all coming from their heart to help someone come home."

The DeMarsico's home was A Future With Hope's first new home build and was made possible because of a partnership forged with Miller Homes to provide modular solutions to families in recovery.

Another partner in the recovery process is the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, which provides financial resources for those in recovery. David Reiner, the DCA Deputy Commis-



Photo By Brittney Reilly

Jeanne DeMarsico of Tuckerton thanks some of the skilled volunteers and workers who helped make her new modular home a reality after her original house was destroyed by Superstorm Sandy.

sioner of the Sandy Recovery Division, recognized the importance of partnerships at the third anniversary celebration.

"It's really wonderful to see what all of the groups have done," he said to the crowd of about 100 people. "It takes groups like all the people here today, like A Future With Hope and the Salvation Army.

"I want to let you know how important you are and how important of an example you are. It means a tremendous amount to those in recovery."

Recovery would also not be possible without regular financial contributions. Major funders for A Future With Hope

include the United Methodist Committee on Relief, the Hurricane Sandy NJ Relief Fund, the American Red Cross and the Robin Hood Foundation. There have also been hundreds of thousands of dollars raised by different groups, ranging from United Methodist churches, Jewish youth groups, Episcopal Disaster Recovery, local swim clubs and individuals and organizations from all around the country.

All of those donations helped A Future With Hope be named a top five Sandy recovery group by the Foundation Center, and continue moving toward the goal of rebuilding between 300 and 500 homes

Continued on page 6

Pastors Answer Military Calling

By Jeff Wolfe

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The call to ministry and the call to serve in the military each have life-changing impact according to Greater New Jersey pastors who have been or are in both roles.

That's why the impact of Veterans Day each Nov. 11 is not lost on them.

"Veterans Day has always been special in my family," said Jack Lea, a former GNJ pastor who served 28 years as a full-time Navy chaplain and is one of several generations in his family to serve in the military. "I think Veterans Day has added meaning in our country now because of the thousands and thousands who have served in the last 14 years."

"To me, it was an honor to serve," said Rev. Chris Miller, who is the senior pastor at First UMC in Delran and served as a military chaplain in various branches of the service before retiring from that role last year. "It was something I felt drawn to as a child. I always had an affinity for the military."

Miller began serving in the Coast Guard when he was 18 and he spent 18 years enlisted there. It was during that time that he also felt God's call to be a pastor. He returned to school to finish his education for ordination and then as his Coast Guard enlistment was ending, he was accepted into the Navy's chaplain program. He served as a Navy chaplain for 11 years, then as a chaplain in the



Photo courtesy of U.S. National Guard

Col. Steve Herman, New Jersey National Guard command chaplain and the pastor at Richwood UMC, promotes Chaplain Candidate Rachel Zarnke to First Lieutenant at a ceremony in March.

Air National Guard and the Air Force reserves before retiring from that role in April of 2014.

"Only one percent of the U.S. population joins the military," Miller said, "so I would imagine being that small of a percentage, you have to be someone who is called to military life."

Another GNJ pastor to experience that calling is Rev. Steve Herman, who is the pastor at Richwood UMC. Herman has been a pastor for 30 years and a chaplain in the Army National Guard for the past 25 years.

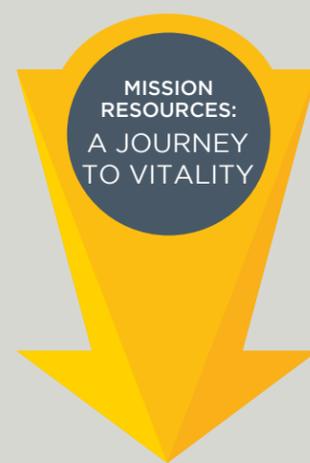
"It was a calling in my life," Herman

said. "When I felt God's calling, it was a matter of sorting all of that out. I thought I was going to be called to be a pastor as my primary calling, and then to the military as a secondary calling. So now I've done both."

Miller and Herman have done a lot for the churches they have served and as military chaplains as well. It has allowed them to minister in different ways to people who might not normally consider seeking God in a church a setting.

"Being a chaplain is very different, but I would also say it is tremendously

Continued on page 7



This month is the third in a series of pages highlighting stories and information about one of our Connectional Ministries Team areas.

This issue: Mission. Page 3
December issue: Small Groups

What's Inside...

UMC of Rockaways moves forward with Team Vital. **Page 4**

Retreat Sparks Small Groups at Morrow Memorial UMC. **Page 5**

Atlantic City Woman Experiences Katrina, Sandy, and Methodist Care. **Page 7**

UMC Head Shaving Event Benefits Cancer Research. **Page 9**

A Message from the Bishop



This is the second of a three-part series on "Why The Five Markers?"

I believe God's love heals and changes people's lives. God's love is at work through passionate disciples who stir up faith, hope and justice in the community. More often than not, these disciples are formed and shaped in vital congregations. GNJ grows vital congregations to unleash God's love in the world.

Why the five markers?

I appreciate that many states are changing their exit numbers to correspond with the mile marker of the highway. The Garden State Parkway for instance starts at exit 0 in Cape May and ends 172 miles to the north at exit 172, Grand Avenue. The exit numbers are markers to help me understand how far I have traveled and how far I have to go.

The United Methodist Church has markers too. We have been working to grow five markers of congregational vitality – 1) disciples in worship, 2) disciples in small groups, 3) disciples in mission, 4) disciples in giving, and 5) making new disciples. These are markers of progress toward health and vitality. As congregations grow deeper, wider and further in these five markers, they become more transformative in changing lives and addressing community needs.

This is the second in a three part series on the five markers of congregational vitality. In the last edition of The Relay, I wrote about worship and small groups and today I want to talk with you about mission and giving.

Each of the five markers are core to who we are as people and meet a deep need within us. For instance, worship helps us recognize there is something greater than us and inspires us for living. Small groups meet our need for relationships and understanding the world. Mission is about our need for purpose and meaning within our lives. Giving fulfills our need to do good and support the things we value. Making disciples fulfills our mission to transform the world.

Mission and Giving

What's your purpose? My father once told me his personal mission/purpose statement was to please God. I marveled how my father could take something so complex and boil it down to its pure essence. I watched my father please God and the thing he did the most was to give. He gave his time and his money. My father did not have a lot of time and he did not have a lot of money but what he had, he gave his best. Fifty years ago, I remember seeing my parent's church envelope with \$20 written on the line for his contribution. My father was a factory worker and it certainly was more than 10 percent (a tithe) of his salary.

Both of my parent's lives were purposeful. They gave of their time to help others and they gave of their money to further the purposes of God. My parent's lives were not perfect but they were fulfilled, happy and blessed. They did not own a lot but they were rich with faith and friends.

In the scriptures, and particularly in the Gospels, we read that the way to please God is to love your neighbor (Matthew 22:39) and give generously (Luke 21:1-4). To become great, we become a servant of all (Mark 10:43-44). To gain life, we share our life (Matthew 10:39).

Congregations that have purposeful disciples grow in vitality. Vital congregations are places where people love their neighbor, seek to serve others, give generously and are willing to sacrifice so that others might have. These congregations have greater purpose and are doing more in mission. In GNJ last year, we saw a significant increase in worshippers engaged in mission. Our goal was 40 percent and we reached 42 percent. We also saw an increase in mission giving. On average, our congregations are spending 18 percent of their budget on mission. This is up from 15 percent.

Our markers of vitality are showing signs of growth and health and as we follow Christ purposefully we set a pace that increases vitality for others to follow.

Keep the faith!
John Schol, Bishop

The December Issue Deadline is November 15, 2015

Relay To Be Published Year-Round

The Relay, which has traditionally not been published in the months of August and January, will now be published all 12 months of the year. That will begin with the upcoming August issue. The news and advertising deadline will continue to be the 15th of each month.

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THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

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Mission Resources: A Journey to Vitality

“Who are you waiting for?”

By Nicole Caldwell-Gross, Director of Mission & Multi-Cultural Ministries
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Hamilton UMC Community Garden

literacy program. It grew to 80 student participants. When our work started getting noticed, we had people from the community start reaching out to us as partners. With their help, we started planning a community garden. The casinos, a local restaurant, a local college and the fire department got involved. The plan for the garden turned into a garden with an amphitheater and a playground. The food produced in the garden led to a community nutrition initiative and a family cooking ministry. As a result we grew new disciples and our worship attendance increased.

Looking back I know that our experience is not unique. The same Holy Spirit is alive and moving mission forward all over Greater New Jersey. So, what are you waiting for? You are who you are waiting for!

When my husband and I began serving Hamilton Memorial UMC in Atlantic City, there were 27 people in worship and a couple of hundred dollars in the bank. Within a few months a dead body was dropped in front of the church. With these harsh realities it would have been easy to believe that our best days were behind us and the best people were beyond us.

Yet, God reminded us of one simple reality: with the power of the Holy Spirit what looks dead may be resurrected. We began by asking one simple question: We know what we don't have, but what do we have that God can use? What we had was an empty lot next door, a few educators within the congregation and a sincere passion for youth education. Building on these assets within the congregation we created a summer



Rev. Jevon Caldwell-Gross and Rev. Cliff Still, former and current pastors at Hamilton Memorial UMC in Atlantic City.

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Treasures in Clay Jars: Patterns in Missional Faithfulness, Lois Barrett

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“What is a Missional Community?” podcast by Alan Hirsch at www.vergenetwork.org

REMEMBER:

“The church is not sent on a mission by God, rather God is on a mission and the church is called to join it.”
 - Neil Cole



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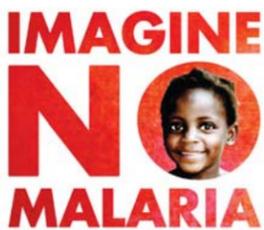


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Nicole Caldwell-Gross, Director of Mission & Multi-Cultural Ministries at:

ncaldwellgross@gnjumc.org
 732-359-1050

Rockaways Turning Plan Into Action

By Jeff Wolfe

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Team Vital focuses on using the five markers of vitality (worship, making new disciples, small groups, mission and giving), but the UMC of the Rockaways is using its experience with Team Vital by making three of them a priority: increasing ministry with children and youth; developing more small groups and increasing mission giving.

"We are trying to develop and use the Team Vital tools to expand our work," said Rockaway's pastor Lyssette Perez of the church's Team Vital action plan. "We already have in place some of the components."

Earlier this year, Rockaways expanded to offer three church services – one of them bilingual. As a result of the Team Vital experience, Rockaways decided to add a bilingual Bible study and a children's component to the bilingual service. The church also is adding a youth component to its regular interfaith service, which is an outreach program to the community.

"We want them to learn how you can be an interfaith community with youth," she said. "We need to embrace our faith and know our faith. If you know your faith, you don't have a problem sharing it with others. The idea in this interfaith program is not to convert others, but to understand and know it so we can interact with other people's faith."

Outreach work is growing at Rockaways and the congregation added small groups outreach as a component of their Team Vital action plan. On Monday and Thursday nights, the church hosts a Zumba class called "Zumba for the Soul!" It usually has about 15 people attend and Perez said one week, 13 attended with nine of them not being regular church attenders.

"We have an interfaith prayer with the



Photo provided

The UMC of the Rockaways hosts a Zumba class twice a week that includes a spiritual aspect for those who come to exercise.



class each week," Perez said. "It's a way of connecting with people and learning where they are at that day or that week."

Beth Caulfield, the Director of Small Groups and Spiritual Visioning for Greater New Jersey, says what the Rockaways are doing with small groups is exemplary.

"They are developing small groups for their congregation's spiritual development, and they are also using it as a tool for reaching out into the community and making disciples," she said. "This is a wonderful way to integrate the learnings from Team Vital."

Small groups, led by Rev. Deb DeVos at Rockaways, are important because it helps those who attend them hold onto beliefs outside of regular church services.

"People who are going to small groups are starting to get it on why they need to

be in church on Sundays," Perez said. "They are learning it's not just singing and prayer on Sunday, it's believing in everything we do."

The third priority for the Rockaways action plan is missional giving. Perez says the Vacation Bible School learned about Thailand and collected \$1,000 to send to an orphanage there.

"We learned many things about Thailand," Perez said. "How they say hello, goodbye, how they pray and how they celebrate. Our next step is to plan mission trips. Next year we want to do a regional one, then national and international. Team Vital is helping us focus and put a plan into action."

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Women's Retreat Sparks Small Groups At Morrow

By Jeff Wolfe

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When Morrow Memorial United Methodist Church had an afternoon women's retreat on Oct. 4, what took place in just a few hours could well influence entire lifetimes. The retreat used small groups to spur discussion and now has sparked the beginning of a small group ministry for the entire church.

"This was a marvelous way to introduce small groups to a congregation," said GNJ Director of Small Groups Ministry and Spiritual Visioning Beth Caulfield, who led the retreat. "It was a deep connecting experience for all and I hope other churches follow Morrow's lead."

Twenty-eight women participated in the retreat that took place at the Loyola House of Retreat in Morristown. The retreat's theme was "In Love With God" and focused on a study of the Song of Solomon. The women met in small groups three different times during the afternoon and also had some individual time for Bible study.

"The three times that the small groups were together promoted building trust and connecting with each other," said Morrow Memorial member Margaret Prentice, who helped plan the retreat.

The women involved in organizing the day actually formed their own kind of small group.

"We pulled together eight or 10 women from all across the church family, who for the most part, did not know each other," said Morrow Memorial member Vicki Carter, who was also on the planning team. "Those relationships got started at last year's retreat, then those women plus the new ones came together to talk about this year's retreat."

"It was a vehicle for building relationships."

One challenge this retreat addressed was to find a way to have younger women, and especially those with young children, attend. That's why it was a one day event.



Photo provided

Women from Morrow Memorial UMC take time for some personal reflection and study during their women's retreat at the Loyola House of Retreat in Morristown in October.

"We wanted a retreat with a group of diverse women, one that included young mothers," Carter said. "For them, doing an overnight retreat can be a problem. Our goal was to get as wide of a representation as possible from our church."

Morrow pastor Rev. Brad Motta isn't surprised that people at Morrow are willing to try new and different things. He said three women came back after the retreat saying they would be small group leaders. He also said there are plans to start up three or four men's small groups in January.

"This is an amazing place," Motta said. "There is energy in worship and in the fellowship hall and in the office during the week. It's always about how can we

reach out and do more."

After the women's retreat, Prentice and Carter did a formal survey and found the women on the retreat would like to do more by meeting on a regular basis.

"There is an interest in continuing to get together and having small groups and groups that members can participate in," Prentice said.

Carter and Prentice said the goal is to let relationships develop at their own pace so being a part of a small group won't feel like an obligation.

"It's organic relationship building," Carter said. "It's certainly not forced. I think the women at Morrow want to continue to form stronger, deeper and authentic relationships rather than have it

feel like a class where there is a teacher." "We just want them to naturally develop friendships," Prentice said.

Another natural result of the retreat is that Morrow church leaders met in late October to discuss starting small groups throughout the whole church.

Caulfield pointed out that small groups for a church can develop from a variety of beginnings, not just women's or men's retreats.

"At my last church, small groups got started through a men's breakfast," she said. "They started by turning the men's breakfast into a small groups format and then the women, upon hearing the men's enjoyment of their small group, said they wanted to have a small group, too."

Studio Space Part of Mission and Resource Center

By Jeff Wolfe

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Before starting his work each week, Andrew Ryoo posts signs that say "Please walk softly." These signs are a necessity as even normal walking along the halls in the conference office in Ocean have ruined videos being produced in his makeshift studio in the basement.

Even with the makeshift studio, it hasn't stopped production for Ryoo, who started as a videographer for A Future With Hope and has honed his visual storytelling skills throughout Greater New Jersey.

Soundproofing won't be a problem when the GNJ office moves into the Mission and Resource Center in early 2016. One of the new features of the building will be a soundproof video and audio studio on the first floor.

"It will be outfitted structurally in a way that is at a professional level," Ryoo said. "There will be extra insulation and extra drywall. It's going to be outfitted with technology that is sound proof."

The professional quality of the studio also makes its use more flexible. The studio will be an available space for GNJ churches to use to make their own videos.

"It's called the Mission Center for a reason," Ryoo said. "Our mission is not only to make videos at the conference level, but we want to inspire and facilitate our churches to use video in their outreach."

The potential also exists for the new studio to rent to other denominations, nonprofits and outside groups.

"There is a budding arts scene here and we hope we can rent this space out for shoots to other videographers or



Photo by Jeff Wolfe

GNJ Videographer/Designer Andrew Ryoo has made due by converting the basement at the current GNJ office into a TV studio. The Mission and Resource Center will have its own soundproof studio.

filmmakers in the area," Ryoo said. "That way we will be able to practice good stewardship with this space."

Ryoo is looking forward to the day where he will not need to post "walk

softly" signs.

"To call what we have now a studio is an overstatement," he said. "It's basically a couple of lights and a background. There are a lot of sound problems and it's

kind of damp because it's a basement."

The Mission and Resource Center is located on Jumping Brook Road in Neptune just off exit 100 of the Garden State Parkway.

AFWH Brings Murphys A New Beginning

By Carolyn Conover

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After close to 50 years of marriage, Mary and Jim Murphy never thought they'd be starting a new life together. But that's how it felt on Saturday, Oct. 24th when their recently rebuilt house was blessed in an event held by A Future With Hope and the Ocean County Long Term Recovery Group.

"Our first house blessing was 46 years ago," said Mary Murphy, "and now we have another one to start our new life."

Bishop John Schol was on hand to lead the house blessing walking room to room with the couple. The occasion marked a special moment for the Bishop as he and the Greater New Jersey Cabinet and Connectional Ministries Team spent a week in mission working on the couple's Little Egg Harbor home this summer with A Future With Hope.

"Mary and Jim are a wonderful couple." Schol said, "Their story of faith and recovery after being out of their home for three years is an inspiration to us all."

The Murphys had more than three feet of water flood their home during the storm. They moved to a small apartment in Barnegat while they dealt with the process of rebuilding. Their case manager from Ocean County Long Term Recovery Group recommended they work with A Future With Hope to rebuild, but they were nervous about working with a volunteer organization.

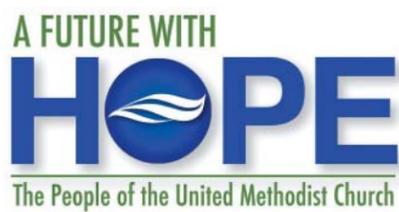
"Last year, I saw the governor's wife, Mary Pat Christie, on TV endorsing A Future With Hope and I knew we would be in good hands," Mary Murphy said.

"Mary shared with me that meeting a new group of volunteers each week was one of the greatest blessings," said GNJ Director of Connectional Ministries Hector Burgos, who worked on the house this summer. "She did not expect the love



Photo By Andrew Ryoo

The Murphys celebrated their homecoming with a house blessing held by A Future With Hope and the Ocean County Long Term Recovery Group on Oct. 24.



and hope they gave her. She didn't understand that we were the ones blessed." Sue Marticek, chair of Ocean County

Long Term Recovery Group also spoke at the celebration.

"This is what we have been working so hard for," she said. "Homeowners have complicated problems. Our partnership with A Future With Hope is what makes us able to solve these problems. Without A Future With Hope working with us to find the solution we wouldn't be able to bring you home."

After blessing the house, Schol presented the Murphys with a gift from the

Greater New Jersey Cabinet and Connectional Ministries team which had collected \$1,000 so that the Murphys could buy furniture for their new home.

It's been three years since Superstorm Sandy drove people like the Murphys out of their home, but Schol expressed that through God's love, there is hope.

"It has been a challenging recovery," he said, "but United Methodists have been and will continue to be on the ground each step of the way."

Sandy Anniversary

Continued from page 1

with 20,000 volunteers.

Salvation Army Major Betty Israel said at the anniversary event that all of the partnerships have helped lead to new avenues of recovery as well.

"Innovation happens because a lot of people out there are trying and doing different things," she said. "Every time you hit a wall, you turn another corner and keep going. That innovation is a part of our collaboration."

Part of that collaboration comes from the political level as well. Daniel Stempelkamp, a representative from New Jersey Senator Robert Menendez spoke at the anniversary celebration and pledged to continue to help those still in need.

"Three years after Sandy, it's important to recognize and celebrate the progress made: families moving back home, boardwalks rebuilt, beaches replenished, roads and infrastructure repaired," he said in a statement. "But, while New Jersey is well on its road to recovery, we cannot forget the individuals and communities left behind. The work is not over for far too many. We need to make sure that government is responsive to the people's needs and there to help, not make lives more difficult."

Just how many people are in need is difficult to measure. Most reports indicate there are between 8,000 and 10,000 people who have not yet recovered. A Monmouth University poll released on the third anniversary found that four out of 10 Sandy victims are still in the recovery process.

"We still see a lot of need," said Keith Adams, the Sandy recovery coordinator for Episcopal Relief and Development. "We are still here to help and we want to be able to help everybody."

DeMarsico emphasized that anyone



Photo By Brittney Reilly

Rev. Lou Strugala, who is also the Construction Director for A Future With Hope, prepares to serve communion during the house blessing for Jeanne DeMarsico of Tuckerton.

needing help in Sandy recovery should not get discouraged.

"My experience, yes it was hard and it was a long road, but I would do it again

because of what I have learned and more importantly because of the good people I met," she said. "It was a very beautiful and rewarding experience."

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THE RELAY
The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

The December Issue Deadline is November 15, 2015

United Methodists Deliver 2 Recoveries For AC Woman

By Jeff Wolfe
jwolfe@gnjumc.org

Claudia Waller knows all about hurricanes and the floods that come with them. After experiencing both Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and Superstorm Sandy in Atlantic City, she also knows how much United Methodists care.

"I lost everything in Katrina," said Waller, whose home was in East New Orleans, one of the hardest hit areas by Katrina flooding in August of 2005. "Even two weeks after the storm, you still had to have boats to get into that area."

With that high water in mind, Waller decided after 10 years of working in the casino industry in New Orleans that it was time to come back home to the Atlantic City area. The one problem she faced was how to deal with her house in New Orleans while living in New Jersey.

"I was up here and I didn't know how I was going to get back down there and clean that house out," said Waller, adding it was a four bedroom home with a two-car garage. "Eventually, United Methodists came to help and they gutted the whole house. I was able to sell it in 2006, but it broke my heart."

When Superstorm Sandy slammed into the New Jersey coast on Oct. 29, 2012, Waller wasn't thinking it would turn into another broken situation. While it wasn't exactly like what happened in New Orleans, it was close enough.

As the storm hit and the tides rose, Waller said about four feet of water rose inside her home on Drexel Avenue. What made the situation more difficult is that she was living there to take care of her mother, who is 86.

"We didn't plan on leaving," said Waller, who now works as a health benefits specialist. "We know we live on a harbor, so this house has always taken water. We did take everything upstairs and then the water came in fast and it came in high."

Waller said her brother came with a pickup truck, backed up to the steps

on the house and rescued her and her mother. They stayed with relatives until after the water went down. Waller found what she thought was a good contractor to make repairs on the home, but like what has happened in many cases similar to hers, the contractor did only part of the work (and did that part poorly, she said) and then left with money that was supposed to cover the full job.

"We had flood insurance and we had a contractor that I thought was reputable," Waller said. "He disappeared and took half of our insurance money."

Waller and her mother decided to move back in the house in June of 2013, using the money they still had to try and make the home meet housing code regulations.

"We were doing what we could to make it livable," she said.

Waller found out livable can mean different things to different people. When childhood friend and then Atlantic City Long Term Recovery Group Case Manager Supervisor Donna Nelson-Lee came by for a visit, she saw Waller and her mom still needed a lot of help.

She referred their case to A Future With Hope and when Construction Director Lou Strugala walked through the house last spring, he knew action needed to be taken quickly.

"It was one of the worst situations I have seen," Strugala said. "There was really bad mold all over and there were live wires in the walls."

The construction included installing new hardwood floors in the living room and kitchen, refurbishing a fire place and replacing the inner walls.

"They gutted the floors and updated the electric and the plumbing," Waller said, "They did a remarkably good job. I am so happy."

While she is happy to return to the place where she grew up, Waller knows her mother will be even happier to return to the place she has always called home.

"There have been five generations in

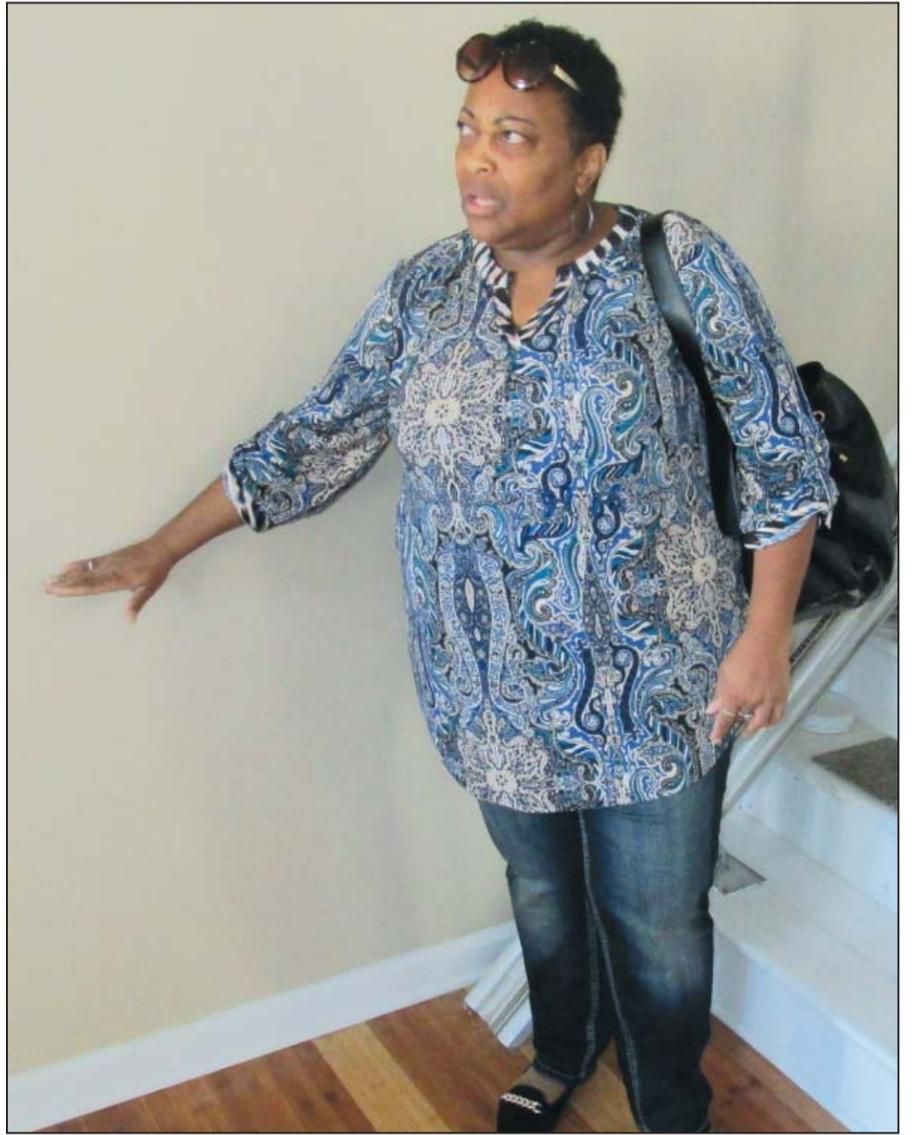


Photo by Jeff Wolfe

Claudia Waller shows how high the water came into her house in Atlantic City when Superstorm Sandy hit the Jersey Shore on Oct. 29, 2012.

this house," Waller said, referring to her mom, herself, her daughter, granddaughter and great grandchild. "I can't wait to see the look on my mom's face when we move back in."

In addition to A Future With Hope, the funding to remodel Waller's home came from The Salvation Army, Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey, the Atlantic City/County Long Term Recovery Group and Lutheran Social Ministries.

The quick action and the quality work

by A Future With Hope and the United Methodist Church has made an impact on Waller that she wants to give back in more ways than one.

"When I retire, I am going to donate my time give them my help," she said. "I've got to give that back."

"I also know where my tithe is going now because it's a place where people can actually get help. They are actually doing things."

Pastors Answer Military Calling

Continued from page 1

rewarding," Herman said. "You are with people you would have never crossed paths with in parish ministry. They put chaplains in at the battalion level and right away it's like having a church with 500 people and their families. Some might be Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist or even Atheist. But you are there as their chaplain."

Lea, who is retired from the Navy as a captain and attends St. Paul's UMC in Brick, N.J., said being a chaplain al-



Photo provided

Rev. Jack Lea, a former UMC pastor, served 28 years as a full-time chaplain in the Navy and attends St. Paul's UMC in Brick.

lowed him to present God to others in a unique way.

"I think the real value of chaplaincy is bringing God to people instead of asking people to come to God," he said. "In the military world things can get dicey pretty quickly and having someone who embodies the transcendence of God in that person in that uniform with that insignia, that's a powerful witness."

Miller said part of being a chaplain is seeing people for who they are and not the type of assignment they are on.

"Ministry is ministry and people are people," he said. "Sometimes things are intense because when you are in deployment the focus there is on combat."

And if something is going on in a military person's life, whether it be professionally or personally, the chaplain may well be the only person for service personnel to turn to.

"The way the military is designed, you are the only person outside the chain of command that they have complete confidentiality with," Herman said. "The soldiers need something like that and that is why we are there."

Being a pastor and a chaplain also creates a crossover experience, where things learned from each situation help the other.

"The demographic setting is different, because usually military personnel are younger than a lot of people in churches, but the training works both ways," Herman said. "Your pastoral training makes you a better chaplain and your chaplain training makes you a better pastor."

Miller has had the experience of directly counseling people in both settings who were contemplating ending

their lives.

"I had two suicide saves in Baghdad, or two that were confirmed," he said. "Then one time at a church there was a military retired person who knew I was in the military and the only reason he talked with me was because he knew I was in the military. A lot of folks who have been through hell in war don't feel comfortable sharing with people who haven't shared that kind of experience."

Miller believes the country as a whole is more understanding of veterans and active military personnel now than they were when he started, just after the Vietnam War ended.

"I remember how these people who didn't volunteer to go, but were forced to go, were treated," Miller said of Vietnam veterans. "I believe the country has regretted that as a whole. Now if people see someone with a hat that says military veteran or see someone in uniform, they go out of the way to say thank you for your service."

One of the rewarding aspects for Herman has been the ability to bring the church and veteran organizations together.

"I've always found that veterans have a camaraderie and a connection the same way people within the church connect," he said. "We've been able to build bridges between churches and veterans organizations like the American Legions and the VFWs or the county veterans group. We've built those bridges and it brings a lot of people to church who wouldn't go because of that camaraderie."

Lea, who is now the Executive Director of the National Conference on Ministry



Photo provided

Rev. Chris Miller, the pastor at First UMC Delran, served in the Coast Guard, and was a chaplain in the Navy and Air National Guard.

to the Armed Forces, also pointed out that pastors and chaplains have unique and important roles in spiritual development.

"I always felt it was a privilege to be a representative of our church," he said. "The bishop's confidence when I went to the Navy was a blessing to me. I felt like I had taken the church to people who have never walked into the church."

"The pastors and the chaplains are partners in ministry in different places where the other usually doesn't go very often."

Milton UMC's Brown Sisters Add Harmony To IGNITE Stage

By Jeff Wolfe

jwolfe@gnjumc.org

The first line of the song, "Santa Monica Dream" talks about letting go of a dream. But when sisters McKenna and Madison Brown sang that song during the coffeehouse at the IGNITE Youth Conference last month, it may have been the beginning of at least one of them living out a dream.

The Browns, who attend Milton UMC in Jefferson Township, were among 26 acts that performed on the small stage in the west hallway in front about 200 people on a rainy Saturday evening at the Wildwoods Convention Center. During the two hour session, the coffeehouse performances ranged from guitar playing, singing, rapping, poetry reading, personal testimony, group songs and a crowd pleasing step routine by the Ground Zero Masters Commission.

The long wait was a little tense for the sisters, but no one could tell that by listening to their performance.

"We were a little nervous while we were waiting, but once we got up there and started it was better," said McKenna Brown, who is a senior at Jefferson Township High School. "For me I like music OK, but this has always been her dream."

The "her" refers to Madison Brown,

who is a sophomore, also at Jefferson Township. She regularly performs and sings on the piano at Milton UMC.

"One of my goals is to become a Christian-Country singer," said Madison Brown, who hopes to major in music when she goes to college. "I love to play music."

The Browns' music skills were apparent as McKenna, who has learned guitar without lessons, said she hadn't played real guitar notes in front of an audience until their IGNITE coffeehouse performance.

"It was my first time doing the tabs on the guitar," she said. "I've always just done the chords. We were originally going to do a different song, but we decided to do this one."

It was a pretty good choice. The Brown sisters were the final act of the evening and left quite an impression on the audience.

"The Spirit moved and it all took on a life of its own," said Blair Goold, the associate pastor at Monmouth Grace UMC in Eatontown, who helped organize the coffeehouse event. "People wandered in and out, but we swelled at one point with many on all sides of the stage. I got caught up in all of it."

"And yes, the final act, the Brown girls, was a gift from God."



Photo Provided

Milton UMC sisters McKenna and Madison Brown (left to right) left quite an impression by singing the song Santa Monica Dream during the coffeehouse at the IGNITE Youth Conference last month.

Openings Still Available For Haiti Water Mission Trip

Haiti is the poorest nation in the western hemisphere and close to 70 percent of the people there do not have direct access to potable water.

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey will be taking 100 water filters to Haiti in a mission trip on Jan. 9-16. The trip will be led by United Methodist Volunteers in Mission coordinator Kathy Ahmad and spots are still available.

The people of Haiti often resort to gathering water from garbage-filled rivers to supply their households with water for their daily needs, including cooking and drinking when water becomes too expensive or they do not have access to a clean water source. In Haiti waterborne illnesses, such as typhoid, cholera, and chronic diarrhea, are the cause of more

than half of the deaths in the country every year.

GNJ volunteers will be conducting training sessions for families who will receive the filters after they have gone through basic hygiene classes and understand the proper assembly and maintenance procedures for the filters.

Whenever possible, team members and a translator will accompany representatives of the families to their homes to ensure that the filters are properly positioned and verify that in the home environment proper maintenance procedures are followed.

If you are interested in joining the team or know someone else who might be interested, contact Kathy Ahmad at kahmad@comcast.com.

Bountiful Thanksgiving Blessings!



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Bishop Schol Brings Bright Spots To Philippines

By S.J. Earl Canlas
United Methodist News Service

MANILA, Philippines - Greater New Jersey Bishop John Schol was one of the two U.S. Bishops to visit the Philippines to talk about how churches should focus on "bright spots." Bishop Schol and Fort Worth Texas Bishop J. Michael Lowry told Filipino United Methodists during a workshop in Manila about using that concept to establish vital congregations.

Filipino United Methodists are the first outside the United States to use the "bright spots" approach.

Lowry talked about a congregation in Venus, Texas, which he said was the "crummiest" place for a church. However, he said a non-seminary trained preacher got the attention of the congregation there by asking, "Anybody, got a 'God-sighting' this week?"

Lowry said that inspired the church members to think about "what God had been doing in their lives."

Lowry and Bishop Schol led the workshop at Knox United Methodist Church in September on behalf of the Council of Bishops and United Methodist Discipleship Ministries.

All three episcopal leaders from the Philippines attended the workshop: Bishop Rodolfo Juan, Manila Episcopal Area; Bishop Ciriaco Q. Francisco, Davao Episcopal Area; and Bishop Pedro Torio Jr., Baguio Episcopal Area. About 35 people attended the workshop on the first day, and more arrived for later sessions.

Positive deviance

The bright spots approach applies positive deviance – the idea that in any community, certain groups or individuals will have uncommon behaviors and strategies that allow them to find better solutions to problems or challenges than their peers. The idea is to figure out actions that yield positive acceptance and consequences that grow congregations, then see if those actions can be adapted elsewhere.

Schol and Lowry said vital congregations in The United Methodist Church are making disciples.

"That's why we want to have more vital congregations," Schol said.

He emphasized the need for participants to be in the driver's seat as experts in making disciples and establishing



Photo By S.J. Earl Canlas

GNJ Bishop John Schol, right, was one of two U.S. Bishops to share the importance of Bright Spots to episcopal and congregational leaders in the Philippines in September. Here, Bishop Schol joins other leaders in communion.

vital congregations. He told workshop participants that the approach must be homegrown.

"It should be about the Philippines, something the churches here can own," Schol said.

He urged the participants from the Philippine conferences to be open to God's love.

"God's love," Schol said, "is going to transform us in this room. God's love heals and transforms people's lives . . . brings faith, peace and justice."

Examples of 'bright spots'

The three Filipino bishops recounted examples of bright spot stories in their episcopal areas. Juan talked about the ministry of Jesus First United Methodist Church in Baliwag, Bulacan, where laity are involved with care groups.

Francisco said many local churches in the Davao Area struggle to be vital churches. He cited Cathedral United Methodist Church, formerly Central United Methodist Church, in Davao City, which has a growing ministry and has 100 percent paid commitments to its annual conference.

Schol told the group about a recovering alcoholic named Jerry who connected

with a local church where he gained his sobriety.

"Jerry is my bright spot," Schol said.

Lowry said it was easy to have the view that the local church exists for the annual conferences.

"But it's actually the opposite: the annual conference exists for empowering the local church where disciples are made and touch the world."

Observation teams

Teams of two will study and monitor up to 50 vital congregations to assess how they are meeting five parameters of a vital congregation: new disciples, attendance in worship, attendance at small groups, engagement in hands-on mission and giving to mission.

They will also document congregations that are doing something other than the distinctives of vital congregations or what they are doing in a lesser degree than how vital congregations do it.

The training focused on showing the need for appropriate skills at objective observation and procedures at monitoring progress and receiving data and analyzing data.

However, Schol insisted on learning what made a vital church in the Philippine churches, as well as how churches in the Philippines would use and develop this approach.

S.J. Earl Canlas is a writer in the Philippines.

Sergeantsville UMC Shaves To Save Lives

By Jessica Stenstrom
jessica@stenstrom@yahoo.com

Members of Sergeantsville UMC joined together with the extended community to shave heads and raise money for childhood cancer research. The third annual St. Baldrick's head shaving event raised \$48,397 to date with donations being accepted until the end of the year.

The event honors two Delaware Township children, Rayanna Marrero and Mackenzie Wright, who lost their battles with cancer. Rayanna, who was a member at Sergeantsville, died in April 2012 from complications of a bone marrow transplant after she was diagnosed with cancer for the second time. While traveling shortly after Rayanna's death, her grandmother, Linda Swackhamer, witnessed a St. Baldrick's head shaving event in a restaurant. She describes it as a God moment where she knew it would be a great way to honor Rayanna's memory while raising funds for childhood cancer research which is significantly underfunded.

Each year the head shaving event unites the church with the extended community for a day of fun for a good cause. In addition to the head shaving, there is also a silent and live auction, baked goods for sale, fire truck rides and other activities for children. The core planning team is a partnership of church and community members who are led by Swackhamer, who is the event organizer.

This year over 60 people braved the shave, standing in solidarity with children who have lost their hair due to cancer treatments including Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli, who was the top fundraiser, shaving for the second time this year.

"Our shaves and volunteers work extremely hard all year and it was evident



Photo by Amelia Vanden Berghe
David Swackhamer Jr. goes under the clippers during a St. Baldrick's Foundation head shaving event to raise money for cancer research at Sergeantsville UMC.

in the success of our event," said Swackhamer. "We are making a difference in the lives of children."

In just three years, a total of \$137,266 has been raised. With that money, St. Baldrick's awarded a research grant in Rayanna's name over the summer. During the head shaving event, a short video message from the doctor was shared with attendees.

St. Baldrick's Foundation is a volunteer-driven 501(c)3 nonprofit which raises money for childhood cancers research. It organizes head-shaving events to bring the community together in support of parents and survivors. St. Baldrick's is the number one private funder of childhood cancer research providing more than \$176 million for childhood cancer research since 2005. For more information, visit www.stbaldricks.org.

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Stratford United Methodist Church is seeking a dynamic and energetic spiritually gifted music leader with a passion for proclaiming Jesus Christ through leading worship.

Basic Responsibilities Include:

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2. Lead, oversee and help create other special worship services and activities throughout the year (Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Easter, Church Conference, Vacation Bible School)
3. Develop and coordinate emerging musical ministries, such as hand bells, choir and youth worship team
4. Organizational and administrative skills necessary to maintain the music library, work with gifted and committed volunteer musicians of a variety of ages and supervise the projection and sound teams

The ideal candidate will:

- be a strong vocalist
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Complete job description available upon request

Haiti Relief Project Announces Grants To Help School, Others

The Haiti Relief Project (HRP) announced in late October that it has dispersed \$12,000 in grant funds to schools, a health center and a church that continue to recover from the effects of the earthquake in 2010.

HRP is a collaboration of Monmouth County clergy, churches and concerned citizens who came together after the earthquake to raise funds and supplies. So far more than \$100,000 has been

distributed to those affected.

Rev. Sony Augustine of First UMC in Asbury Park is one of four Monmouth County pastors who provide oversight for HRP.

The flagship projects chosen for grants include:

- A small school serving about 80 students in a remote area of Haiti called Jacmel, and another school in Petit-Goave.

- A health center where a doctor from Florida regularly visits to provide services to severely disabled individuals.
- A church who is continuing to rebuild after damage received during the earthquake.

Other Monmouth County pastors and churches who oversee HRP are Rev. Jean Guy Florival of First Haitian Baptist Church, Rev. Mesidor Germain

of Church of God of Prophecy, and Rev. Cedric Miller of Living Word Church. Participation and collaboration from other churches are welcome, as are visitors to accompany them when visiting project locations in various parts of Haiti. A local restaurateur, Marilyn Schlossbach, has been such a visitor to Haiti and regularly participates in planning meetings. HRP is committed to transparency, and intends to keep the community informed about fundraising efforts and future grants.

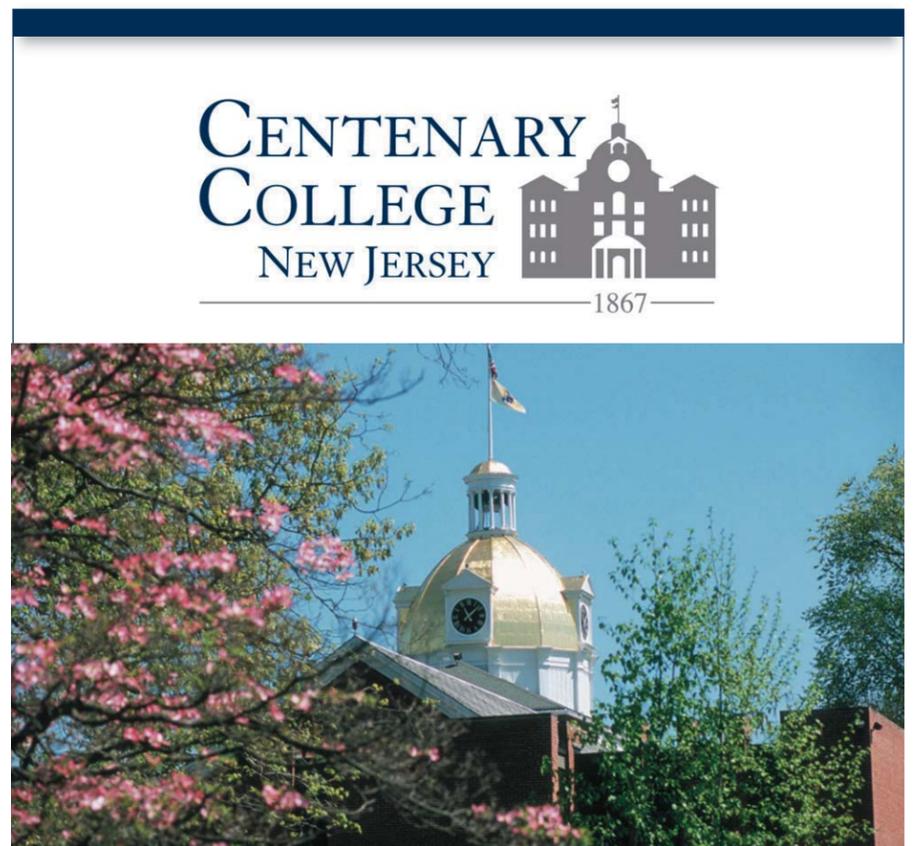


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PRESIDENT

The Centenary College Board of Trustees and Search Committee seek their next president and invite expressions of interest and applications. The College has responded creatively and effectively to the challenges of offering higher education opportunities to the people of New Jersey and beyond. It has done so by offering an appealing variety of programs on its main campus and strong, well-respected, professionally based programs at off-site centers. Throughout its long and distinguished history, the institution has maintained its commitment to core values of equal access for all persons and strong moral values.

The 148 year old, state chartered, United Methodist related college is located in a suburban setting in Northwest New Jersey in the beautiful Kittatinny Mountains in the town of Hackettstown. The College offers undergraduate and graduate education in a residential setting and in two centers in Parsippany and Edison, New Jersey. Centenary's Equine program consistently ranks as one of the best in the nation. The Environmental Studies program offers extended internships and research opportunities. A service learning initiative has produced more than 20,000 hours of community service each year and was the first such offering to be a graduation requirement in New Jersey. The College is home to a new performing arts center that hosts musical and theatrical events and engages students actively while attracting community participation. The Division III NCAA athletic program is another major draw for the College and brings thousands of persons to the campus. Centenary has more than a \$200 million dollar impact on the regional economy.

The College offers the following programs of study for more than 2,000 students annually: 27 bachelor degree programs, 3 associate degrees, 30 concentrations, 20 minors, graduate studies for the M.B.A., M.A., M.Ed., in business, education, counseling, leadership and public administration, a School of Professional Studies with B.A., B.S., and M.B.A. programs in accelerated and on-line formats. Also a number of certificates are also offered in areas such as Reading, Student Assistance, Criminalistics and Social Media Marketing.

The new president will be guided by a strong strategic planning and assessment culture on the campus. The Board of Trustees is actively involved in the advancement of the college and participates fully in a shared governance model with faculty and staff through a new Faculty Senate, Managers Forum, and Staff Council. The College enjoys a \$42 million balanced budget, an endowment of \$10.3 million and recently invested more than \$6.5 million in renovations to campus facilities.

The Board of Trustees seek a distinguished, enthusiastic, and transformational leader who can advance the growing reputation and broad service that the College provides the region. Candidates should demonstrate the following:

- Understanding the challenges of higher education
- Excellent financial knowledge and management skills
- Strong strategic planning leadership skills
- Intellectual depth and commitment to teaching and scholarship
- Commitment to historic relationships such as its affiliation with the United Methodist Church
- Effective communication skills with varied constituencies
- Student-centered and willing to be engaged on and off campus with students
- Fundraising experience and enthusiasm for obtaining new resources
- Support of diversity in all its forms

The Search Committee will begin review of applications in **November 2015**, and will screen candidates in a first round review for those whose materials are complete and in hand by December 4, 2015. The committee will continue to accept applications until the new president is appointed in mid-February, 2016. Applicants must present a letter of interest that addresses Centenary's mission, attributes desired in candidates and goals as outlined in the Profile. Also, candidates should include a comprehensive curriculum vitae and five references with email and phone numbers. References will be contacted after approval by the candidate. Please submit applications to **Wolfgang Gstattenbauer, Chairman of the Search Committee at CentenaryPres@agbsearch.com**. Drs. Tom Courtice and Jim Davis, AGB Search Consultants are assisting the search. You may direct inquiries and questions to jdavis@agbsearch.com or tbc@agbsearch.com or phone 540 539 9415. For a copy of the Profile and other information, please consult www.centenarycollege.edu or www.agbsearch.com.

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CONFERENCE HAPPENINGS

Three GNJ Places Named Historical Sites

Three places in Greater New Jersey have been newly named as United Methodist Historical sites by the General Commission on Archives and History. The three sites are the Camden Neighborhood Center, Flanders United Methodist Church and Port Elizabeth United Methodist Church.

Matawan UMC Church History Published

"From the Back Street to Main Street... And Beyond," an illustrated history of the Methodist community of Middletown Point by multi-published author Helen Henderson will be released in paperback on Nov. 15. The book follows the Matawan United Methodist Church in Aberdeen from its beginnings in the 18th century when six people met in local homes to the suburban congregation of today. To purchase the book, email author Helen Henderson at helenhenderson_author@yahoo.com

Preston is Chair of Homes Foundation Board



PRESTON

Samuel B. Preston was recently elected the chair of the board of trustees of the United Methodist Homes of New Jersey Foundation. He brings a wealth of experience as an adjunct professor of business ethics at the Stern School of Business at New York University and a retired international banker. Preston has a B.A. from Washington and Lee University and an M.B.A. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He has been active in the local United Methodist Church serving as chairman of the Board of Trustees, Stewardship, and Missions and other roles. Most recently he held positions at Rabobank, N.V. in The Netherlands, Chase Manhattan Bank and Salomon Brothers. Established in 1985, the United Methodist Homes of New Jersey Foundation acts as an independent entity and supports the mission, philosophy and ministry of the Homes.

Bibles for Native American Children, Youth

St. John United Methodist Church in the Fordville community near Bridgeton, N.J., plans to give out Common English translation Children's Bibles to the children and youth members of the Nanticoke Lenni Lenape Confederation. St. John's is the only designated Native American United Methodist Church in Greater New Jersey and one of only five in the Northeastern Jurisdiction. Members and friends in Greater New Jersey can help purchase a Bible for only \$10. If you or your church are interested in putting some of these children's Bibles on your shopping list, please contact Cynthia Mosley at cmosley19@hotmail.com or 856-451-3216.

Union To Host Concert For A Future With Hope

The praise team of the United Methodist Church in Union, N.J., will hold a concert at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 14 to benefit A Future With Hope. A free will offering will be taken during the concert with the proceeds going to the Sandy recovery mission. All are invited and there will be light refreshments afterward. The church is located at 2095 Berwyn Street, Union, NJ. For more information, call 908 687-8077.

At Drew, Scientist Wins Nobel Prize, Baenninger Inaugurated as President

Dr. William Campbell, a scientist and associate fellow in Drew University's RISE program, won a Nobel Prize for discovering a drug that treats parasitic diseases. The award was announced in mid-October.

Campbell shares the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine with Satoshi Omura of Japan. The drug they discovered is Avermectin, and a derivative, Ivermectin, has significantly lowered the incidences of River Blindness and Lymphatic Filariasis, according to The New York Times.

"Drew University is thrilled that Dr. William Campbell was named a Nobel Laureate for his work that literally helped save millions of lives," Drew University President MaryAnn Baenninger said. "We are so proud that this stellar scientist is part of the Drew community's Research Institute for Scientists Emeriti program working directly with Drew undergraduate students."

In an interview with Nobel Media Chief Scientific Officer Adam Smith, Campbell said his first reaction was, "You must be kidding."

RISE, a program that Drew established in 1980, enables students to do research with scientists who have retired from the corporate world. Before Drew, Campbell spent decades at Merck, where he was part of a team that developed Ivermectin.

Drew is a United Methodist-related



Photo by Bill Dennison/
Drew University

Dr. William Campbell, Nobel Laureate, works one-on-one with a Drew undergraduate student on real-world, scientific research as part of Drew's unique RISE Program.

university established in 1867 as a seminary. Today, Drew Theological Seminary is world renowned and has educated many Greater New Jersey pastors. Education is a core value of the United Methodist Church and the Global Board of Higher Education Ministry Division of Higher Education supports 119 United Methodist-related schools, colleges and universities including 13 schools of theology. To find out more about Drew, go to www.drew.edu. To learn more about higher education ministry in the United Methodist Church, go to www.gbhem.org.

Baenninger Inaugurated

When Dean Criares, chair of the Drew University Board of Trustees, first met with MaryAnn Baenninger about the role of president in early 2014, he was in full pitch mode, knowing that several schools were pursuing her.

During a breakfast at the Hilton in Short Hills, N.J., Criares aimed to sell Baenninger on why she should choose to lead Drew. Quickly, however, Baenninger disarmed him: "Please Dean, hear me out: I – want – this – job."

Criares said he remembers little after Baenninger said those nine words. His telling anecdote of directness was among many at Baenninger's inauguration ceremony in October that collectively and perfectly captured the essence of Drew's 13th president.

Trustees, administrators, professors, students, former colleagues and Madison Mayor Bob Conley described Baenninger



BAENNINGER

as personable, decisive, hands-on, driven, caring and inspiring. Indeed, the first female full-term president in Drew's history made a big impression in just 15 months in office.

OBITUARIES

FRANCIS M. COYLE, retired associate member, died on Sept. 25. There was a funeral service on Oct. 2 at Sweeney Funeral Home. Memorial Donations (In lieu of flowers) may be sent to The First United Methodist Church of Riverside at P.O. Box 427, Riverside, NJ 08075. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his spouse Connie at 103 New Jersey Ave., Hainesport, NJ 08036.

RICHARD J. HERRITT, retired associate member died on Sept. 29. There was a funeral service on Oct. 6 at Cape May UMC. Memorial Donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to Samaritan Hospice at 5 Eves Dr, #300, Marlton, NJ 08053. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his daughter Joyce Minosse at 1138 Second Ave. Blackwood, NJ 08012.

RACHEL BOOTH, spouse of Rev. Theodore M. Booth, died on Sept. 15. A Celebration of Life was held on Sept. 19. Visit gnjumc.org to electronically send a note of sympathy.

CELESTA DEXHEIMER, surviving spouse of retired Elder Rev. John Dexheimer, died on Sept. 20. There was a memorial service Oct. 18 at Fishersville UMC, Fishersville Virg. Memorial Donations (In lieu of flowers) can be sent to Augusta Regional Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) at 33 Archery Lane, Staunton, VA 24401.

WILLIAM J. MCCULLOUGH, retired associate member, died on Oct. 20. There was a service on Oct. 23. Memorial Donations (In lieu of flowers) can be sent to First United Methodist Church at 700 E Landis Ave., Vineland, NJ 08360 or to a United Methodist Church of your choice. Expressions of Sympathy may be sent to his wife, June D McCullough at 2139 E Chestnut Ave., Apt 15, Vineland, NJ 08361.



RELAY ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE

Back issues of the Relay are available at
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THE CONNECTION

A blog on the 5 markers of vitality by the
Connectional Ministries Team

www.gnjumc.org/connection



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#GIVINGTUESDAY

DECEMBER 1, 2015



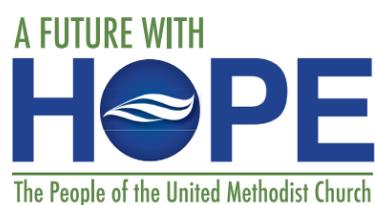
WHAT'S #GIVINGTUESDAY?

#GivingTuesday is a global day dedicated to giving back. On Tuesday, December 1, 2015, the world will come together for one common purpose: to celebrate generosity and to give.

HOW CAN I JOIN IN?

Your congregation, your community, your family and your friends can join us in supporting the Mission Fund for Giving Tuesday.

#MissionFund #GivingTuesdayGNJ



FIND OUT MORE AND DONATE AT:
www.gnjumc.org/giving-tuesday