

THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

Volume LIX

DECEMBER 2015

No. 11

Controversial Conversations At Bishop's Convocation

By Carolyn Conover

cconover@afuturewithhope.org

All you need to do is turn on the news or scroll through Facebook to see difficult conversations taking place in communities and the world.

With the theme, Sacred Spaces for Controversial Conversations, the 2016 Bishop's Clergy Convocation on Jan. 25-27 is designed to provide GNJ clergy tools and strategies for guiding these conversations.

Rev. Dr. Karin Walker is leading the curriculum for the 2016 convocation.

"People don't know how to have conversations with people who have different opinions," she said. "That's why creating sacred spaces to have difficult conversations is so important for our clergy."

"We are so easily divided. Our clergy need to bring us together."

The 2015 Bishop Convocation focused on the coach approach to ministry and received strong feedback from clergy who attended.

"Over the years, I have attended a number of convocations. This was by far the best one," one clergy wrote in a follow up survey. "It was well-planned and helpful for my ministry. I am already incorporating the materials learned in my ministry and my congregation."

The 2016 convocation is being planned to build on that success.

"We are doing two things at one time," Walker said. "First, we're creating space for ourselves for conversation. Secondly, we're teaching skills and providing leadership tools so clergy can lead through these kinds of conversations in their congregations."

Convocation is also a time for clergy to enjoy fellowship with each other, relax and regenerate. Once again, convocation will be held in Long Branch at Ocean Place Resort and Spa which provides a beautiful waterfront facility with amenities that include an indoor pool and full service spa. Convocation can be a gift for clergy and many congregations include the registration for the event with their Christmas gifts to their pastors.

Registration for convocation is open at www.gnjumc.org and early discounted rates apply until Dec. 15.

Walker is already familiar with GNJ clergy as she was one of the coach leaders last year. She has extensive experience in conflict mediation, has served as a District Superintendent in the Baltimore Suburban District and is currently serving as senior pastor at Fallston United Methodist Church in Maryland.

"Every one of us is a leader," Walker says, "We want to expand the tool box."



Photo by Brittney Reilly

GNJ pastors had a chance to share with each other and enjoy their time together at last year's Bishop's Convocation.

Morrow UMC Sponsors Syrian Family

During Advent we remember the journey of one family to a foreign land, alone and afraid.

Morrow Memorial UMC in Maplewood is doing more than remembering that journey, it is honoring it with action. Just before Thanksgiving, the congregation voted to sponsor a Syrian refugee family in their community.

This act of love is making news not only in Maplewood, but around the world. Morrow and Rev. Brad Motta were first featured on a CBS Channel 2 report out of New York City just before Thanksgiving. Then Motta was a guest on MSNBC Live With Kate Snow on Tuesday, Dec. 1 and later in the

week, he was interviewed by the news organization MarketWatch. The story has been shared nationally on United Methodist News sources as well.

The news of the sponsorship is also changing lives and introducing people to Christ in new ways.

Motta reports that the local middle school has reached out to ask members of the congregation to speak to students about what Morrow is doing and how they can help. A local woman called the church explaining that although she was an atheist, she wanted her children to become involved in this kind of ministry. A Girl Scout troop leader has volunteered her troop to support the family.

Volunteers from the community have come to help translate documents so that the children can go to school. Calls of support have come from all over the country, as far away as Portland, Ore., and El Paso, Texas.

The Morrow congregation started this journey through a connection with First Friends of New Jersey and New York (www.firstfriendsnjny.org). When the issue was raised to church council before Thanksgiving, Motta said the Morrow congregation voted unanimously to help the family, something he was not surprised by.

"It's kind of in the DNA of this congregation to be one of compassion when they see a need," Motta said on MSNBC. "They have done mission work around the world. With Sierra Leone, they sent an ambulance. When this came up it seemed like a natural thing to do if we could welcome a family."

Not only did Morrow welcome a family, in this case, it reunited one. The father of the family had escaped Syria two years ago after being persecuted and tortured there. So when the other four family members arrived it was a family reunion. The rest of the family had been in hiding and moving around different locations in Syria to avoid persecution.

The taking in of Syrian refugees has become a political issue in recent weeks since the bombings in Paris. It's one of the reasons that what Morrow is doing has received a lot of attention.

"We know they went through the (immigration) process and that he (the father) was granted asylum," Motta said. "We see a lot of fear and anxiety. Our role as a church is to have compassion and welcome these families that are pretty isolated if they don't have these first friends."

"We want to be a voice that says you are welcome. How can we make you feel welcome?"

Streets of Bethlehem



Photo provided

A choir of angels is part of what takes place during the Streets of Bethlehem event held each year at West Grove United Methodist Church in Neptune. Story, Page 7.



This month is the fourth in a series of pages highlighting stories and information about the markers of vitality.

This issue: Small Groups. Page 3
January issue: Worship

What's Inside...

Communities of Hope update. **Page 4**

Denville partners to provide 3D prosthetics. **Page 6**

Rich Hendrickson to provide leadership for GNJ Stewardship Foundation. **Page 8**

PaCE Groups off to fast start. **Page 9**

A Message from the Bishop

The Fifth Marker



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?

Our new GNJ Mission and Resource Center will be completed in February. One of the first things we did before building was have an engineer mark the four corners of the building with wooden stakes

so the builders would set the foundation properly. The markers were a guide for building our new center.

The United Methodist Church also has markers to guide the vitality of a congregation. 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 markers measure 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 third in a three part series on the five markers of congregational vitality. In the last two editions of The Relay, I wrote about worship, small groups, mission and giving. Today I want to talk about making new disciples.

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 things and support the things we value. Making disciples by sharing our faith story with others fulfills our need to know our lives have significance and make a difference to others.

Making disciples has been associated with the ministry of evangelism. Evangelism has gotten a "bad rap" over the years. Some have misused their story and God's story to manipulate people and at times, used evangelism to impose one's own culture on others.

Evangelism, sharing our faith to make new disciples, is first and foremost a commitment to reconciling someone with God and others. Reconciliation is to make peace or to make things right between two persons. We achieve this when we take an active interest in someone. Not a brief moment or conversation but engaging with someone and walking with them during their struggles, questions and even rejection of God's grace. Reconciling someone with God is helping someone grow a relationship with God.

Making disciples is also not inviting someone to church, but inviting them into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Here are a couple of tips for sharing your faith to make disciples. Don't use words like "got to", "should" and "must." These words never warm someone up to a relationship. Story, authenticity and being real are received better than a lecture, formulaic presentation and one-way presentation.

My life has been shaped by a number of stories.

- My youth leader immigrated to the U.S. with his family because of religious persecution. He survived by eating an onion and by the faith of his family.
- A good friend and mentor shared his own story with me, took an interest in my love of sports and allowed me to visit with him when I was looking at colleges.
- A Sunday School teacher always encouraged me and
- A college chaplain sat and listened to my hopes, dreams and challenges.

The best evangelism is not a single person's story but a community and a congregation nurturing and supporting people into a relationship with God. Congregations become more vital as they encourage faith sharing, work together and take an interest in others.

I call on each of our churches to review their engagement in the five markers of congregational vitality. Identify where you are doing well and build on these vitality ministries. Identify ways you can strengthen other ministries to grow vitality. We grow vital congregations because they engage people in the community to stir up faith, hope and justice through which God's healing love is released to transform lives and communities.

Keep The Faith!
John Schol, Bishop
The United Methodist Church
Greater New Jersey

Youth Needed For NEJ Conference

The Greater New Jersey Jurisdictional Conference Delegation is seeking one additional youth representative between the ages of 12 and 18 to participate in the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference from July 11-15 in Lancaster, Pa. Youth participate fully by sitting with the delegation during the proceedings, speaking from the floor of the conference, having their expenses paid and helping determine who the next bishops will be, but do not have voting rights.

The following questions will be asked of each applicant:

Why do you want to be part of the Greater New Jersey delegation to the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference?

What is your involvement in your local church and in the youth programs of your District and Greater New Jersey?

What are your hopes and dreams for the future of the church?

To be considered, please respond by Jan. 15 to Rev. Tom Lank at tom.lank@gmail.com and Rev. Deborah Barnett at pastordbbe@comcast.net with your contact information (full name, age, address, email address and parent/guardian names and addresses, phone numbers and email addresses) along with the answers to the above questions.

Registration Now Open
www.gnjumc.org/bishops-clergy-convocation

Sacred Spaces for Controversial Conversations BISHOP'S CLERGY CONVOCATION January 25-27, 2016



THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

John R. Schol, Bishop

The Greater New Jersey Conference
1001 Wickapecko Dr.
Ocean, NJ 07712-4733

Rev. Christopher Heckert, Chair, Commission on Communication
973.763.7676 • checkert@morningchurch.org

RELAY STAFF

Jeff Wolfe, Editorial Manager
732.359.1047 • jwolfe@gnjumc.org

Carolyn Conover, Director of Communication and Development
732.359.1016 • cconover@gnjumc.org

Brittney Reilly, Online and Digital Communication Manager
732.359.1040 • breilly@gnjumc.org

Rev. Jessica Stenstrom, Contributing Writer
609.397.2333 • jessica_stenstrom@yahoo.com

New Subscriptions, renewals, address changes, and corrections should be addressed to Beverly Karlovich, bkarlovich@gnjumc.org or by mail to:

United Methodist Relay • 1001 Wickapecko Dr. • Ocean, NJ 07712-4733

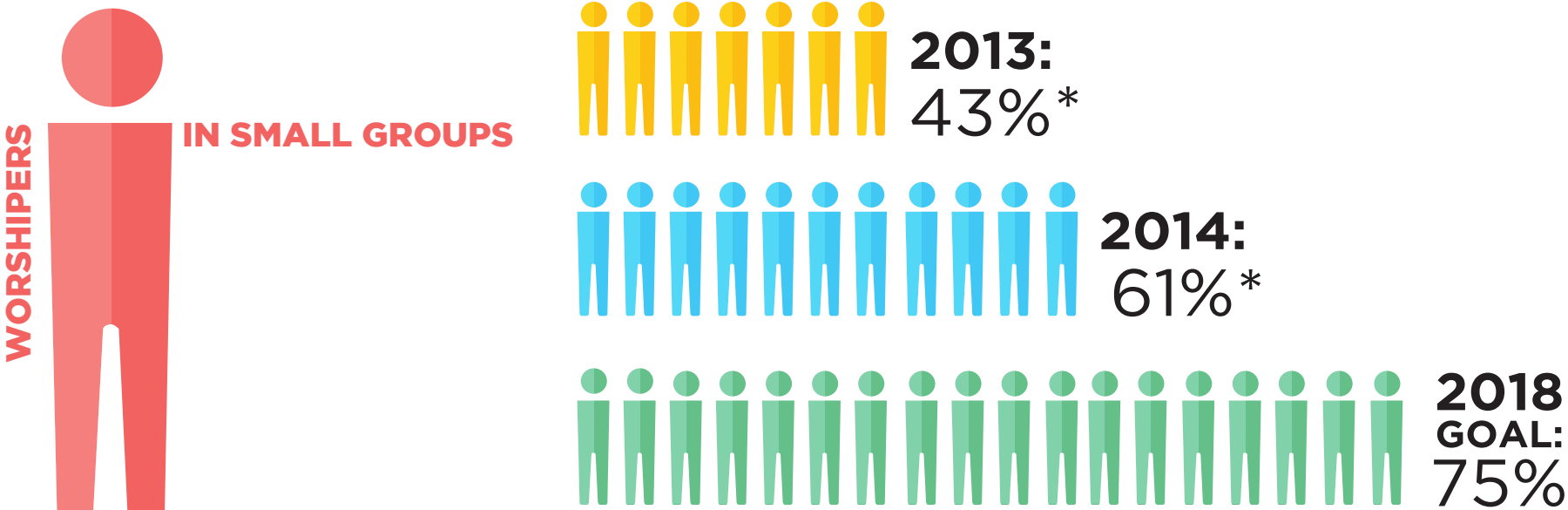
FOR ADVERTISING RATES, INFORMATION and PLACEMENT

Jeff Wolfe, jwolfe@gnjumc.org

The United Methodist Relay (USPS 343-360) is published monthly by the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Office of Publication: Office of the Bishop, 1001 Wickapecko Dr., Ocean, NJ 07712-4733. Periodical Postage Paid at Red Bank, NJ and additional entry offices. Mailed free to selected lay leaders and clergy of each church. Others may subscribe at the rate of \$9.50 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to UNITED METHODIST RELAY, 1001 Wickapecko Dr., Ocean, NJ 07712-4733.

Small Groups Resources: A Journey to Vitality


GREATER NEW JERSEY 'S SMALL GROUPS



* From the GNJ end of year statistical report.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:
Increase the percentage of worshipers in small groups from 43% to 75% by 2018.

How can you decide what will work in your congregation and community?

1. Take a survey of your congregation. Create a list of ideas, send it out and ask people if they are interested. Always ask for their suggestions as well. You can also print one up and hand it out during service.
-  **Helpful tip:** *There are easy online tools like SurveyMonkey that are free.*
2. Contact one of the members of the Small Group Resource Team about how to develop the best small groups for the needs of your congregation.

Small Group Program Reading List

- BOOKS:**
- Creating Community: Five Keys to Building a Small Group Culture by Andy Stanley and Bill Willits
- Teaching Biblical Faith: Leading Small Group Bible Studies by Jack L. Seymour
- The Class Meeting: Reclaiming a Forgotten (and Essential) Small Group Experience by Kevin Watson



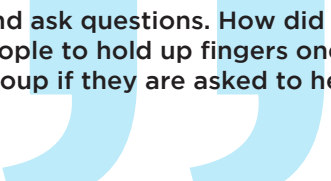
Call on the Small Groups Resource Team for help:


Don't worry about being perfect. Know that you're not alone, and just do it. The journey of 1000 miles begins with the first step and those steps of the righteous are ordered by God.
- Arthur E. Harrell, Raritan Valley District Lay Leader, Oldwick UMC
gennart@comcast.net

Don't be afraid to try something new! Some will be successful and some will not - but at least you tried!! People within your church see your efforts and that will encourage them too. Positive energy creates more positive energy. Small groups are a blessing to everyone.
- Dale Simms, Small Group Ministry Coordinator, Denville Community Church
anniesaunt06@yahoo.com

Start your groups each week with a question that helps to build relationships. What are your highs and lows for the week? How is it with your soul? People will get to know one another and grow closer. Leave room for the Holy Spirit to work in your group.
- Rev. Debra A. De Vos, UMC of the Rockaways and Trinity UMC of Hackettstown
deb918@gmail.com

At the end of the meeting take 5 minutes for a feedback loop and ask questions. How did we do tonight as a group? What went well and what didn't? Ask people to hold up fingers one through five to grade the evening. People feel better about a group if they are asked to help evaluate it. Then improvements can be made.
- Dr. Frank L. Fowler III, Trinity UMC Hackettstown
ffowler@catchthespirit.org



More team members can be found on the small group pages at: www.gnjumc.org



- "HIGH ADVENTURE" FOR YOUNG ADULTS
- GRIEF SUPPORT
- SPIRIT-FILLED ZUMBA
- GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN
- THE DANIEL PLAN FOR HEALTHY EATING AND LIFESTYLE
- LIFE AFTER DEATH
- HIKING AND NATURE CLUBS
- ONLINE BIBLE STUDIES

For additional information and support on small group resources:



Go to: www.gnjumc.org

Contact Beth Caulfield,
Director of Small Groups
Ministry & Spiritual Visioning

bcaulfield@gnjumc.org
908-938-1379

Hope Is Making Progress In New Jersey

By Jeff Wolfe
jwolfe@gnjumc.org

Frank McMillan knows what it takes to turn what appears to be hopeless situations into something meaningful. He saw it happen in Virginia where he played a key role in helping a community recover from the foreclosure crisis.

After speaking at a Communities of Hope meeting this fall, McMillan is seeing hope again in Greater New Jersey.

Communities of Hope, an offshoot of A Future With Hope, is completing its training sessions in January with its four pilot churches of Covenant UMC in Plainfield, St. Luke's UMC in Long Branch, Atlantic Highlands UMC and Asbury UMC in Atlantic City. McMillan says these churches are each playing key roles in their communities.

"It always starts with a group like the Communities of Hope congregations: a group of people, often times meeting in a church basement, who are committed to creating transformation in their neighborhoods and cities and to crossing lines that typically divide them," said McMillan, who is now an organizer with New Jersey Together, a coalition of about 30 congregations in Jersey City affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation.

"There will always be moments of frustration and moments of excitement, but a core of leaders like the people I met are the necessary pre-requisites."

Communities of Hope congregations work within their communities to identify needs, set priorities and partner with the people it serves. Collaboration with differ-



Rev. Don Medley, of Covenant UMC in Plainfield (right) and Jan Flood, of Atlantic Highlands UMC, have a discussion during a Communities of Hope meeting this fall.

ent faiths, residents, local organizations, schools, government and businesses broadens what can be accomplished and yields a result that is greater and has more lasting impact than one group or congregation can establish.

One of the first things each of the teams did was take a purposeful walk around their communities to get a firsthand and fresh look at what the needs

are.

"I think one of the most valuable learnings for the teams was doing that community walk," said Nicole Caldwell-Gross, GNJ's Director of Missions and Urban Ministry, who is leading Communities of Hope. "They determined that they didn't really know the community as well as they thought they did. For ministry and community development, the No. 1 thing you need is knowledge of the community."

"Some groups have done two community walks and they have discovered new things in places they have lived their whole lives. To take a walk with a group of people and look with the eyes of the people is a really powerful learning experience."

While the teams may start with pas-

A FUTURE WITH HOPE

The People of the United Methodist Church
 EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES OF HOPE

tors and laity in the churches, they have been encouraged to reach out to others in their communities to begin the process of creating partnerships.

"There are unexpected and untapped resources within all of our congregations," Caldwell-Gross said. "But these teams aren't comprised only of congregation members, they are very intentionally recruiting people from outside the congregation to be a part of a team and to get a different perspective."

Asbury and Atlantic Highlands are two examples of what teams are doing. Atlantic City has been hit with thousands of job losses, so Asbury is turning its fellowship hall into a community center where job training can take place. In Atlantic Highlands, the team is discerning how it can replace community services that were lost during Superstorm Sandy.

With the last of the five meetings scheduled for January, the next steps will be to have virtual check-ins once a month and then Hope Summits every six months.

McMillan said from what he has seen and heard, there is reason for each of the groups to have hope.

"I really enjoyed working with and hearing the stories and challenges faced by the different congregations and leaders involved in Communities of Hope," McMillan said. "Community organizing has the potential to transform neighborhoods and cities, and offer a vision for how our cities and communities can be different and better."



The United Methodist Church
 of Greater New Jersey

MAY 22-24

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Beginning in 2016, annual conferences will begin on Sunday evenings and last through Tuesday. The dates are May 22-24, 2016; May 21-23, 2017; and May 20 - 22, 2018.



The United Methodist Church
 of Greater New Jersey

2015 Statistical Reports

Website: <http://ezra.gcfa.org>

Opens January 1, 2016 • Deadline January 31, 2016

Username: 3360__ __ (4-Digit Church Number)

Password: gnjchurch15

You will be asked to change your password when you log in for the first time. Please keep the username and password available for all users.

If you have questions or need help:

Please contact Sr. Accountant, Danielle Andrews at dandrews@gnjumc.org or call 1-877-677-2594, ext. 1031. Monday through Friday, between 8:30 and 4:30 p.m.

TEAM VITAL

The United Methodist Church
 of Greater New Jersey

IS YOUR CHURCH VITAL?

Create a vitality action plan. Join Team Vital!

Accepting Applications for Spring 2016

Scheduled for February 6 and April 16

Registration is open until Dec.15.

Find out more and register: www.gnjumc.org/team-vital

SUBSCRIBE NOW

The Relay is sent to lay leaders and clergy throughout Greater New Jersey Conference of the United Methodist Church. You can receive a yearly subscription for \$9.50 by sending your request to:

UNITED METHODIST RELAY • 1001 Wickapecko Dr. • Ocean, NJ 07712-4733

Atlantic City Pastor Takes Active Role In Movement

The following story is being reprinted with permission from the Press of Atlantic City.

By VINCENT JACKSON
Staff Writer
Press of Atlantic City

The Black Lives Matter movement, which calls attention to the violent deaths of young black men, has become the largest social justice effort among American blacks since the civil rights struggle of the 1960s. And, as in the 1960s, clergy are playing a critical role.

That includes members of South Jersey's religious community, some of whom have taken up the sometimes controversial cause in the pulpit and beyond.

The Rev. William M. Williams III, of Asbury United Methodist Church in Atlantic City, sees the history behind the movement.

"Black Lives Matter is a new name but the same movement throughout history and throughout the African people's existence," he said.

Williams said black Americans have made a great deal of progress, but the struggle for equal treatment continues.

"There is a lot more that can be done, and we want to play a part in being part of the solution," he said.

Williams is part of a new initiative called "Black Lives Matter: Beyond The Slogan," which has organized a series of free monthly forums to bring people together across lines of age, economic and educational levels, race and religion to learn and listen to each other.

The next forum is scheduled for Dec. 19 at Asbury UMC.

The group includes the Rev. Cynthia Cain, interim minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore in Galloway Township, and the Rev. Dr. William Blake Spencer, pastor of Ocean Heights Presbyterian Church in Egg Harbor Township.

The phrase Black Lives Matter arose in 2013 after George Zimmerman was acquitted in the shooting death of teenager Trayvon Martin in Florida.

At first it was just a hashtag on social media. But Black Lives Matter is now a chapter-based, national organization, known for its rallies.

The movement became bigger after the deaths of other black men in the past year and a half — this time at the hands of police — including Eric Garner in New York City, Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., and Freddie Gray in Baltimore. The chant was heard in Minneapolis a week ago after Jamar Clark was shot by officers there. On Monday, five protesters were shot at a Black Lives Matter rally in that city. Three white men have been arrested in connection with those shootings.

Black Lives Matter has expanded its interests to include black poverty, the prison system and black undocumented immigrants. Activists from the group have interrupted speeches by Democratic and Republican presidential candidates.



Photo by Michael Eln/Press of Atlantic City

Pastors Cynthia Cain, of Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore, left, Blake Spencer, of Ocean Heights Presbyterian Church, and Rev. William Williams, III, of Asbury United Methodist Church in Atlantic City, have joined together to start a local Black Lives Matter coalition.

But almost immediately after the hashtag was first used, a backlash came from people who see the phrase as an attack on police or a denigration of non-black lives. They respond to the phrase with the counter slogan "All Lives Matter."

For supporters of the original message, these objections miss the point.

"We're not saying that all lives don't matter. We're not saying police lives don't matter," said Williams, 35. "Black people are dying in a very systematic way. If the systematic destruction of black people continues to happen, then that's going to devastate — that's going to devastate our humanity."

Cain, 60, has preached about the Black Lives Matter movement, and this led to the formation of an anti-racism task force at her church. The congregation put a Black Lives Matter sign in front of the building. The sign was defaced, but it has since been restored.

"We say Black Lives Matter. Well, saying that means we must act on that," Cain said. "If they matter, then all these other things matter. Health matters. Housing matters. All things matter, and we need to be out there talking about and trying to do something about it."

Rather than preach about the interaction of police and minorities and criminal justice reform, the Rev. Collins A. Days Sr., 55, finds dealing with these issues works better in a workshop. In those settings, there can be interaction, as opposed to the pulpit, which is a one-sided conversation.

Days' skill as a preacher at Second Baptist Church in Atlantic City is matched

by the work he has done outside the church in service to his community during his 21 years in the city.

Among other things, Days established the African-American Male Conference and is the president of the Vision 2000 Community Development Corp., which lists the Civil Rights Garden in Atlantic City among its accomplishments.

Second Baptist and other organizations — such as the Coalition for a Safe Community and the Fellowship of Churches of Atlantic City and Vicinity — have been working on justice issues long before Black Lives Matter, Days said.

"For a lot of the younger generation of pastors, they are jumping on the Black Lives Matter for the past two years because that's their experience," said Days. "They grew up in an integrated society with more chances. And so they see it as an opportunity to do something."

The Black Lives Matter organization has parallels to two 1960s groups, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in the South and the Black Panther Party in California, said Patricia Reid-Merritt, professor of social work and Africana studies at Stockton University in Galloway Township.

"There are great similarities. The focus point for organizing now around civil rights issues, around issues related to social justice, is the exact same thing that happened with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee," Reid-Merritt said.

One thing the movements have in common is the heavy involvement of young people, particularly young college

students, she said.

Young people "are far more energetic," Reid-Merritt said. "Some are more idealistic and have been feeling the sense that they have been called to do something."

Rabbi David M. Weis of Congregation Beth Israel in Northfield said he believes the best way to combat racism is to treat each other as neighbors and care for one another even if people physically aren't neighbors.

"I can't pretend that just because of an accident of birth and the color of my skin, that allows me not to feel that fear when I have to deal with a police officer," Weis said. "I can't pretend that if others experience that, that somehow it doesn't have to do with me, too."

This year, Weis joined fellow clergy and civil rights supporters for America's Journey for Justice, a 40-day march that began in August in Selma, Alabama, and concluded in September in Washington, D.C. Weis, 60, walked 18.4 miles one day in the 100-degree Alabama heat and humidity.

After participating in what he calls a life-changing event, Weis came back and talked about his experience in his synagogue and at New Hope Baptist Church in Atlantic City.

"We've come a long way as a nation, but we still have a long way to go, and we can't just pretend that we have done it," Weis said. "We are standing on the shoulders of giants. . . . What's yet to be seen is: Will we bequeath a better world to our children?"

Nominations Being Taken For Church History Awards

The Greater New Jersey Commission on Archives and History is now taking nominations for its three awards:

- The Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award;
- The Ethnicity History Award related to a non-English speaking, or culturally diverse or native congregation;
- The Digital Church History Award.

The nominations can be presented in written, audio or visual media and are due by Jan. 30.

A local church history needs to include historical dates, memorable and/or famous events and people and images of former and present ministers. More details and resources can be found at www.gnjumc.org/archives-history.

The nomination should indicate any or all categories that the church would like to enter in a cover letter. Any prior local church history that is five years or older needs to be updated before submission.

For any information needed from the archives, contact Walt Jones, Conference Archivist, at WaltRetired@optonline.net. All submissions must be sent to Mark Shenise, GCAH, 36 Madison Avenue, Madison, NJ, 07940.


Are you pursuing an education in ministry?

THE EDUCATION SOCIETY
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

Scholarships and loans for those agreeing to serve at least five years as a member of Greater New Jersey.

APPLICATION DEADLINE IN MARCH 31, 2016

CONTACT
Jo D. Malessa • 856.786.0293
ma_malessa@comcast.net • www.gnjumc.org



Denville's Partnership Chance For New Hands

By Rev. Melissa Hinnen
melissa.hinnen@nyac-umc.com

Rev. Ed Carll, Senior Pastor at Denville Community Church, was preparing a sermon this summer when he came across an online video that captured his heart and moved him to develop new mission relationships.

The video was about an arts and crafts class at a Boy Scout Camp that was transformed into a Computer Assisted Design (CAD) 3D printing lab. Carll was amazed by the 3D technology and learned that it is being used to create prosthetic "Raptor" hands to give to people who can't afford them. It wasn't long before he was sold on the concept and became a contributor to *Enabling the Future*, a global network of volunteers who use 3D printing to give the world a helping hand.

"This is the kind of ministry that's contagious," Carll said. "It calls out the best inside of us and we join together to meet the basic needs of others."

According to the *Enabling the Future* website, Ivan Owen co-designed a 3D printed mechanical hand and made the design available on the Internet to start the movement. Jon Schull, a Rochester Institute of Technology research scientist, built on the contribution by developing an international volunteer network to create and distribute the devices.

"What originally started out as a couple of guys who created something to help one child in need . . . has grown into a world wide movement of tinkerers, engineers, 3D print enthusiasts, occupational therapists, university professors, designers, parents, families, artists, students, teachers and people who just want to make a difference," Carll said.

With Carll's passion for the program, that group now includes religious leaders.

Carll's original plan was to raise money through Denville Community Church to purchase a 3D printer. A church member suggested that instead of investing in new equipment, they could partner with others who already have the printers and understand how to use them.

Promising to buy all of the materials and supplies, Carll met with Morris County Vocational Technical School Superintendent Rori Benson and CAD/3D printing instructor Leo Malave, and showed them a four minute *Enabling the*



Photo provided

This girl's 3D produced prosthetic hand has inspired Denville pastor Ed Carll to create a partnership to help people in need of prosthetic hands.

Future video.

According to Carll, "they looked at each other, smiled, and immediately agreed to pursue it as a partnership with Denville Community United Methodist Church."

It was important to Carll that the relationship between the congregation and school be more than just financial and he asked them for a "deeper partnership, inviting parishioners to interact and create the prosthetics with the students at MCVTS."

The school has already printed out a prototype and Carll hopes to turn the initiative into a youth ministry to offer young people in the congregation and the community a way to serve others in need.

Carll pointed out that need by sharing a photo of a little girl with the Denville congregation.

"I have never met this beautiful child, and I don't know her name, but her photo has been inspiring me on my desktop,"

he said. "She has a right hand for the first time in her life! And it costs about \$35-\$50 in materials. It costs a volunteer a bit of time. The computer files to build it were free sourced; and best of all it built a relationship between the person with need and the one who could meet the need."

Carll says the "whole concept revolves around matching families in need in one's immediate locale with an e-Nable worker who develops a relationship with an individual child in need of a prosthetic hand, and whose family cannot afford it."

The partnership with the vocational school is evolving as the health care services students develop a plan to contact families in the region who need prosthetics. The families will then be connected with the Denville church to build the hands in partnership with the CAD/3D printing students.

"It holds all the promise to be a completely collaborative project, linking

church and community agencies for the common good," Carll said. "Very cool."

The relationship possibilities of this program also extend beyond the United States. Carll is in conversation with the president of the Nigerian Royal Prosthetic and Orthotic Clinic who is looking forward to partnering with Denville Community Church. There is an active Nigerian family in the Denville congregation who built a medical center in Nigeria and is interested in bringing the technology to southern Nigeria.

Carll shared his vision, motivation, and commitment in a sermon at Denville.

"You give yourself for others, and maybe you find your best self while doing it," he said. "It's Christ-centered, plain and simple. And if it's Christ-centered, half hearted isn't an option."

Read more about this program at www.enablingthefuture.com

Annual Conference Schedule Set

"Imagine" will be the theme of Greater New Jersey's 17th Annual Conference Session to be held in Wildwood May 22 - May 24.

The annual gathering to handle the business of Greater New Jersey and celebrate the work achieved has traditionally been attended by clergy and voting delegates. In recent years, the Annual Conference session has been gaining in popularity as hundreds of visitors and non-voting members have joined the celebration. More than 2,000 United Methodists are expected to gather for the 2016 session.

Because of scheduling conflicts with the convention center, GNJ's Annual Conference has been moved up one week and runs from Sunday through Tuesday (as opposed to the traditional schedule of Thursday to Saturday).

This scheduling difference has several effects on preparation and legislation. The most immediate affect is the deadline for submitting reports and legislation has been moved up to Feb. 15. The Pre-Conference Journal will be mailed to members in mid-April.

The change in schedule means that the Commission and Ordination Service,



Photo by Shari DeAngelo

The theme for the 2016 Annual Conference will be 'Imagine' and will be held May 22-24, a Sunday through Tuesday, at the Wildwoods Convention Center.

traditionally held on the last night of the conference, has been moved up to the first night, Sunday, May 22.

Monday's worship will focus on recog-

nizing segregation and racism with The United Methodist Church with a Service of Repentance.

On Tuesday, conference attendees

will join together for a Stop Hunger Now Mission project. More information and a detailed schedule will be released in January.

Bethlehem Comes Alive At West Grove Event

By Jeff Wolfe
jwolfe@gnjumc.org

West Grove United Methodist Church in Neptune gives the people of today a taste of what people may have encountered in Bethlehem on the night of Jesus' birth. The church hosts a Streets of Bethlehem event on the first weekend of December each year. It includes a marketplace with people in period clothes doing what would have been their normal work. This year's event was scheduled for Dec. 5-6.

"There is the hustle and bustle of a typical marketplace," said Judy Bennett, who helps organize the event and also plays one of the characters on the street.

"We are trying to lead people to the true story of Christmas. We are conversing in character and trying to stay within the period to get people to feel the atmosphere of Bethlehem during that time frame."

When people first come to the church they enter into the sanctuary where there is a short introduction about what they will experience.

"The people are taken by a guide from the sanctuary into a fellowship hall that is transformed into the village of Bethlehem," Bennett said. "Then they are free to just walk around. During their walk, the guide will tell them what they are about to see."

Men are dressed as Roman guards and shopkeepers are dressed in period attire. The actors are preparing food and using tools and materials from that time. There is a bakery and honey shop with samples to taste. A weaver hands out tassels and a carpenter hands out ornaments. Outside is a live nativity.

"The guys who play the Roman guards are tall, especially with the helmets they

wear," Bennett said. "But they are really there to just to watch over everybody in case someone needs assistance or if there is a bottle neck of people in the village."

While West Grove isn't a large church, averaging about 50 in attendance each week, it swells in population for the Streets of Bethlehem event each year, just as the city of Bethlehem swelled in population for the census. Bennett said there were between 250 and 300 to attend last year. There are also friends of people in the church who help with the event.

"Counting the angels and choirs, we have 50 to 60 people participate, so that's the whole church and then some," Bennett said. "It's turned out to be a great outreach."

None of the outreach would be possible without taking care of the logistics. The church received a script for the characters from a church in Illinois that once did a similar event and the costumes were created by a seamstress using clothes that were donated. Church members also make accessories as needed.

"We began fairly small," Bennett said. "And by the third year we have added a lot things. It's been collaboration of so many people, not only church members, but family and friends of church members. It's quite a large event now."

One part of the event that is out of their control, of course, is the weather. The first year it worked out well, but in their second year they had to make adjustments.

"Last year we had torrential rain," Bennett said. "We had purchased some very large canopies, so it all worked well."

"But our first year, we had some light snow come down at night. It was almost kind of magical."



Photo provided
A variety of sources contribute to the costumes for the Streets of Bethlehem to make them look appropriate for that time period.

**The Relay January Issue
Deadline is December 10, 2015**



Inspire. **Create.** **Innovate.**



Career Opportunities

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey (GNJ) is growing and developing its ministry and is looking for people who are committed to excellence, want to be a part of making a difference through the church, are curious and passionate and seek to work with a dedicated and welcoming team of people.

**Assistant Director of Development • Property Manager • Administrative Assistant for Regional Manager
3- Regional Administrative Assistants • Administrative Assistant for Congregation Resourcing
Administrative Assistant for Communication • Property Assistant**

Expected start dates for these positions will range from January to March 2016. Applications for all positions are being taken now and will continue until each position is filled.

Find out more and apply at: www.gnjumc.org

Stewardship Foundation Names Hendrickson, Moves to Wespath

By Jeff Wolfe
jwolfe@gnjumc.org

The Stewardship Foundation recently went through an assessment and planning process to determine its future. That assessment has led the board to reinforce its commitment to growing church assets for ministry, offering stewardship training and workshops and providing leadership for stewardship and capital campaigns.

As a result, the Rev. Dr. Rich Hendrickson, who has been developing and growing stewardship in Greater New Jersey churches for the past nine years, will now be assuming the role as executive director of the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey. Hendrickson will continue to serve in his role as Director of Stewardship and Spiritual visioning as he takes on this new responsibility.

"Personally I am very excited about the future of the Stewardship Foundation as it is an opportunity to strengthen the stewardship and health of our congregations," said Hendrickson, whose previous title was Director of Stewardship and Giving. "We will strive to grow the foundation in order to equip transformational leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform the world."

Another major change is that the foundation board has moved its assets to Wespath Investment Management, which is the largest faith-based investor in the U.S. and manages \$21 billion.

"I am pleased that we are investing through Wespath because I believe it will further enhance the assets of participating churches," Hendrickson said.

Wespath also invests using United Methodist social principles and therefore does not invest in companies that produce alcohol and tobacco, operate sweat shops or give executives large bonuses while employees are being laid off.

During the assessment process, the board reviewed the practices of United Methodist foundations across the U.S. and explored a merger with one of four foundations in other conferences. After careful analysis, the board concluded the best interest of GNJ congregations was to continue the foundation independently and broaden services to include stewardship which aligns with the strategic plan goals of Greater New Jersey.

"The Foundation is poised for great things," said Stewardship Foundation Board Chairperson Ed Bowen. "We recently brought on Rich Hendrickson as director and this is the first time this position has been filled. The Stewardship Foundation has been operating for years without a 'person' to lead and direct its activities."

Several new board members have been added with strengths in investing,



HENDRICKSON

marketing and financial management. The foundation has nearly doubled its assets and anticipates to be at \$20 to \$30 million by the end of next year. The assessment process showed that the GNJ Stewardship Foundation has realized better returns for congregations than other area foundations as well.

"The Stewardship Foundation currently helps more than 50 churches with their long-term investments," Bowen said. "Those investments offer great returns and are managed so that the money is invested in full compliance with the socially responsible requirements of the conference."

That makes the move to Wespath a natural one. Wespath was started by the United Methodist Board of Pensions which invests the pensions of United Methodist pastors and lay employees. It has achieved excellent returns and is rated as a top 10 social investor in the U.S.

That will also fall in line with Hendrickson's new position. While his title has changed, how he serves GNJ won't be significantly different.

"My role will be to provide stewardship education, resources and consulting services for year round stewardship and for planned giving and capital campaigns," Hendrickson said. "I've been providing all of these in my role with Greater New Jersey and now they will be coming from the foundation."

"This is a win-win for the Stewardship Foundation and GNJ," Bishop John Schol said. "We will continue to benefit

from Rev. Hendrickson's experience and knowledge and work to grow the assets of our congregations. Within the next five years the Stewardship Foundation will pay for Rev. Hendrickson's salary and benefits meaning the conference can redeploy the resources for other ministries or save on shared ministries for congregations."

Part of what Hendrickson has already been doing is promoting stewardship with local churches by having them tell their congregations' stories of how their giving is making a difference within the congregation and community.

As the Stewardship Foundation continues to grow more congregations will be served.

"More pooling creates more services we will be able to offer," Hendrickson said.

The Stewardship Foundation was started in 2000 and manages investments and builds endowments for church ministries. It also helps members plan distribution of their assets. Socially responsible and compassionate stewardship allows members to thoughtfully consider their family while they are growing assets and providing for human needs served by the church's ministries.

For more information about how your congregation can invest through the Stewardship Foundation or strengthen your congregation's stewardship, contact Rev. Dr. Rich Hendrickson at RHendrickson@gnjumc.org

Northeastern Delegation Seeking Bishop Candidates

The Greater New Jersey Delegation to the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference invites any Elder in Full Connection in the United Methodist Church to apply for consideration and endorsement to become a bishop in the Northeast Jurisdiction. GNJ is seeking to discover the leaders of tomorrow who have the vision and leadership to help the UMC navigate its way to the future God intends. The deadline to apply is Jan. 15.

"The saying is sure: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task," writes Paul in his first letter to Timothy. Bishops in the UMC are tasked with the spiritual and temporal leadership of the church. In order to be properly equipped for this task, the United Methodist Book of Discipline describes bishops as having:

- a vital and renewing spirit
- an enquiring mind and a commitment to the teaching office
- a vision for the Church
- a prophetic commitment for the transformation of the Church and the world
- a passion for the unity of the church
- giftedness in the ministry of administration.

If you believe you possess these qualities and that God is leading you to become a bishop, submit a one-page, single-sided CV including your contact information as well as responses to the following questions:

1. Describe call to the episcopacy and what gifts and graces others have identified in you that affirm this calling.
2. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the United Methodist Church in this time and how your leadership would react to them.
3. Based on the issues facing the 2016 General Conference, describe your vision of the United Methodist Church 10 years from

now; 20 years from now.

4. What else would you like the delegation to know about you as we consider our support of your candidacy?
5. List the names and contact information of five lay persons and 10 clergy persons in full connection who support your candidacy for the episcopacy. (Do not list any members of the Greater New Jersey Delegation as supporters).

The application must be sent to Rev. Tom Lank, Clergy Chairperson of the Delegation, at tlank@haddonfieldumc.org and Lynn Caterson, Laity Chairperson of the Delegation, at jecaterson@verizon.net.

The entire application should not exceed six pages (one page CV plus five pages of responses). Please use 12-point font and single spacing.

Receipt of an application does not necessarily mean that a candidate will be interviewed by the delegation, nor does an interview imply endorsement. The delegation reserves the right to endorse multiple candidates, a single candidate, or no candidate based on assessment of fruitfulness in ministry and readiness for the episcopacy. Any candidate(s) endorsed will be presented to the Annual Conference Session in May 2016 and will be voted on by the conference at that time.

Candidates may be nominated from the floor of the conference apart from the endorsement process. Any candidates approved by the Annual Conference will then be interviewed at the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference in Lancaster, Pa., convening from July 11-15, 2016. The Jurisdictional Conference will elect new bishops to begin service on Sept. 1, 2016.

If a person reaches age 68 on or before July 1, 2016, they are not eligible to be nominated.



God bless your Christmas Season
 with happy days of cheer.

God keep His richest favors and
 all His blessings near.

God grant you after Christmas a bright
 and blessed New Year.

-Unknown

- Bristol Glen**
 Newton, NJ
www.bristolglen.org
 973.300.5788
- Collingswood Manor**
 Collingswood, NJ
www.collingswoodmanor.org
 856.854.4331
- Francis Asbury Manor**
 Ocean Grove, NJ
www.francisasburymanor.org
 732.774.1316
- Pitman Manor**
 Pitman, NJ
www.pitmanmanor.org
 856.589.7800
- The Shores at Wesley Manor**
 Ocean City, NJ
www.theshoresretirement.org
 609.399.8505



Independent Living | Residential Living | Assisted Living
 Memory Support | Respite | Short-Term Rehab | Skilled Nursing | Hospice



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/gnjumc

PaCE Groups Giving Clergy Way To Connect

By Jeff Wolfe
jwolfe@gnjumc.org

Rev. Erik Ostrow knew what he had been missing. Now he's glad to have it back.

Ostrow is one of approximately 130 clergy who are participating in Greater New Jersey's Pursuing Clergy Excellence (PaCE) peer learning groups that began this fall. The groups were formed by region and topic and each group meets once a month for 10 months.

"Personally I am grateful for this," said Ostrow, the pastor at Olivet Methodist Church in Pittsgrove, N.J. "I had a clergy small group I was in for a couple of years and we did do a curriculum together and completed it. Then one of our members retired and another moved out of state, so we stopped meeting.

"It was something I had lost and I missed it. I am glad to have this opportunity again."

Ostrow is part of a group facilitated by Cape Atlantic District Superintendent Brian Roberts that is focusing on worship. In all, there have been 16 PaCE groups of between six and 10 pastors formed in GNJ with most of them having their initial meetings in November. Some of the other topics being explored are leadership excellence, fishing in new frontiers, spiritual visioning and effective time management.

"I love the PaCE model," said GNJ Director of Worship Eric Drew, who is also facilitating a group on the topic of worship. "I'm a big fan of group learning and each person sharing what they know and their expertise. I've been a part of a lot of these and I see so much value in coming together with people who have different experiences, places and perspectives. There is something we can all learn from each other."

For many clergy, the only times they see each other in large groups are at

GNJ events such as Annual Conference, the Bishop's Convocation, Bishop's Day in a District or Region or the Mid-Lenten Gathering. A more regular meeting time is something many pastors anticipate.

"I always value our clergy gatherings," said Eric Helms, the pastor of St. Paul's UMC in Thorofare, who is also in Roberts' group. "Whether it be in a PaCE group now or during the District Days of Learning."

Helms said he is now more enthused to know he will spend time with other clergy on a regular basis.

"The idea of getting together with clergy who are working on similar types of projects and feeding off of one another is a good plan," he said. "In some ways we were already doing this, but in a less structured way."

Helms believes the early discussions and worship curriculum they are using will be helpful in examining his church's service.

"For most of our people, that hour they spend in church is the most significant and intentional effort they are going to make to open themselves to the word of God and work of God in their lives," Helms said. "Sometimes they will only do that once a week, or once every two weeks or three weeks. We need to make sure that hour is powerful and meaningful and does what it needs to do."

And much like pastors hope those who attend their churches feel inspired and motivated when a service is finished, Drew hopes group members feel the same way throughout the PaCE meetings.

"I think this is all very encouraging," Drew said, "because we can at times start to feel isolated and that we are doing this on our own. I know in our first meeting we had a great time with all really good people. It's fun to connect with other people and we are going to learn a lot, too."



Photo provided
GNJ Director of Worship Eric Drew is leading one of the PaCE Groups on worship that began meeting in November.

Hope UMC Offering Full Coaching Training In A One Week Course

By Jeff Wolfe
jwolfe@gnjumc.org

The leadership at Hope UMC in Voorhees believes coaching can make a difference in a person's life. That's why Hope is hosting an intensive one-week Coach Approach Skill Training Fast Track from Jan. 4-8.

The training, first introduced to GNJ at the Bishop's Convocation last January, will allow both clergy and laity who participate to complete most of the four steps of training in that one week. An additional 17 hours between January and March will be needed to finish training.

Hope UMC Director of Small Groups Heather Mandala believes it will be time well spent.

"I think for us, so much of ministry is about coaching people, whether it is about raising up new leaders or helping them realize the gifts that God has given to them," Mandala said. "This gives us tangible goals to achieve and when working with the general congregation, they can look introspectively and see where God is with them."

Registration for this coaching training is available at www.coachapproachskilltraining.com. The cost for the entire four-level training is \$1,900 which is \$100 cheaper than doing each level separately. Also, the registration allows full payment to take place in 2016, when pastors and laity may have more continuing education funds available.

The goal is to have more pastors and laity available to help others.

"We are really passionate about coming alongside people," Mandala said. "It is an awesome opportunity for people already in leadership positions to hone skills and bring new people alongside



Photo by Brittney Reilly
Pastor Ellen Bechtold and Coach Approach Skills Trainer Chris Holmes have a discussion during last year's Bishop's Convocation.

of them."

Many pastors in GNJ have already participated or are participating in coaching as a result of 2015's convocation and GNJ's coaching resource. GNJ pastors can sign up to be coached by emailing coaching@gnjumc.org. Coaching

registration is open on a rolling basis. Coaching lasts for eight months, with a one-hour session once per month or two half-hour sessions a month. The sessions can be done by phone or in person.

"The ability to be trained in a more compact time period will help those who

don't have three days here or there," said Gateway South District Superintendent Myrna Bethke said, who is leading GNJ's coaching initiative. "This is a concrete block of time and then you have got it all done. It's not less work, you're just getting it all done in a shorter amount of time."

United Methodists Lead Effort In CROP Hunger Walk

Eight Monmouth County United Methodist churches participated in the 35th Annual Red Bank CROP Hunger Walk on Oct. 18. Red Bank UMC, Middletown, Atlantic Highlands, Navesink, Embury, Oakhurst, Matwawan and St. John's in Hazlet all had participants in the event.

The Crop Walk drew a large crowd that was not kept away by 30 degree temperatures. It raised more than \$110,000 and collected 10,000 pounds of food that will be distributed to local pantries.

"I had never been part of such a large Crop Walk before," Red Bank UMC pastor Jessica Naulty said. "Joining with other congregations and schools for this walk is an invitation to imagine the impact we can have in the community and the world when we work together."

Along with the United Methodist churches, 75 other faith groups, schools, civic groups and clubs, and local partners who run food pantries and homeless programs participated. The five mile walk is hosted by Red Bank Regional High School and goes through three towns with the assistance of police, fire, Garden State Amateur Radio members, mayors and town councils. These volunteers were recognized and received certificates of appreciation.

Pre-event activities included art displays, a children's art project, information tables on how climate change is affecting the poorest in our world, and fresh organic bulbs to plant and herbs to use from Oasis Backyard Farm. Live music from J & J Music sent runners and walkers out past water stops staffed by Trinity Hall High School, Marine Academy of Science and Technology, Rumson Fair Haven Key Club, Tinton Falls and Red Bank Rotarians, United Methodists, and friends along the way.

The Red Bank team was led by George Schildge, with a number of Red Bank UMC members as the church had the largest turnout of walkers and runners in this community event. Janie Schildge of RBUMC coordinates the event with Church World Service (CWS), which sponsors 1,300 similar walks around the country with a goal of raising funds



Photo by Janis Iwanyk

One of The Minions was on hand to encourage participants at the 35th Red Bank Annual Crop Hunger Walk, which had eight GNJ churches represented in the fundraising and food donation efforts.

to end hunger.

During the day, CWS led volunteers to create a "Refugee Camp and Journey of Hope" to help participants visualize and better understand the choices that have to be made by displaced people, not knowing where they will end as they flee war, hunger, and drought in their homeland.

The Director of the Church World Service Refugee program, Mahmoud Mahmoud, was there to help interpret the partnership of CWS and the United Nations. This program assists in resettling refugees in the U.S.

CWS began as a ministry in 1946 in the aftermath of World War II. Seventeen

denominations came together to form an agency to do in partnership what none could hope to do as well alone. The mission is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, comfort the aged

and shelter the homeless.

Donations to the Red Bank Crop Walk can be made by sending a check to Red Bank United Methodist Church, PO Box 8022, Red Bank, NJ, 07701.

Cokesbury UMC Seeks Help With Peace Arch

When Cokesbury UMC pastor Lynn Mears visited her sister in Washington State recently, a troop of Boy Scouts changed her life.

The Boy Scouts were marching side by side through the Peace Arch that straddles the international border between Canada and the United States. They were part of a large event called the "scout walk thru" and thousands of scouts from both countries marched through the arch together, mingled and traded badges.

That gave Mears an "a-ha" moment. Instead of hearing again and again about conflict, it was time to create peace. When she returned to Cokesbury in Tewksbury Township, she began working with her congregation to build their own peace arch over a walkway that leads to the church. This arch, although smaller in scale than the one in Washington, has the same purpose of promoting peace. The Cokesbury UMC peace arch has messages and scriptures written on wooden ornaments and placed on the walls of the arch. Their goal is to have the walls completely covered with these messages and ornaments.

The Cokesbury congregation is inviting all GNJ churches to participate as a way to offer peace throughout the conference. They will send an ornament (with instructions for decorating) to congregations wanting to share messages



Photo By Arthur Harrell
Cokesbury UMC's Dot Klitsch and pastor Lynn Mears (right) hope the church's Peace Arch will help promote the importance of peace throughout all of Greater New Jersey.

of peace on the arch. Congregations may also send their messages to the church and a member of the Cokesbury congregation will decorate the ornament. To participate, email Judy Hankinson at judyghs@yahoo.com or call the church office at (908) 236-6151.



Photo by Norman Cetuk

Progress on construction for the Mission and Resource Center continues with the building expected to open in late February.

Preparations Continue For Move To GNJ Mission And Resource Center

Progress on the Mission and Resource Center building is proceeding on schedule and as Greater New Jersey staff are preparing for the move, good news was received last month. The Board of Trustees announced that it signed an agreement in November with a buyer for the Wickapecko Drive building in Ocean, N.J. The sale is a key step enabling GNJ to fund the Mission and Resource Center without a mortgage.

"I am grateful to Treasurer John Cardillo, his team and the Board of Trustees who helped in the sale of the building," Bishop John Schol said. "This is an answer to prayer."

The move to the Mission and Resource Center is expected to occur

in late February. The final sale of the Wickapecko building is expected to be completed in late March.

Most of the current office furniture at Greater New Jersey will not be able to be used in the new facility. All local churches and staff have the opportunity to choose from and request office furniture and supplies from the current building. Walk-throughs can be scheduled between Dec. 7-18 with Lida DeNardo by emailing her at ldinardo@gnjumc.org or calling her at 732-359-1026. Furniture is held on a first come, first serve basis. Churches will be responsible for removing the requested furniture between Feb. 20-29.

CONFERENCE HAPPENINGS

Buckshutem UMC Gives Prayer Blankets

Buckshutem UMC in Millville is presenting American Flag afghans and red, white and blue blankets to veterans. So far this year the church has presented five blankets to Vietnam veterans, one to a World War II veteran and one, on Veteran's Day, to a young man who served two tours of duty in Iraq. The group of four ladies averages one blanket per week.



Photo provided
Women at Buckshutem UMC are making prayer blankets for veterans.

Trunk or Treat Event Outreach for Sicklerville

More than 800 children and their families participated in Sicklerville United Methodist Church's Third Annual Trunk or Treat on Oct. 30. The event began three years ago when Sicklerville Children's Ministry Director Christine Gossard decided she wanted to reach children in the community with a fun and safe family event. Several local businesses and groups participated. Besides the elaborately decorated trunks, the event included an inflatable slide, buckets of popcorn, fresh cider donuts, hot chocolate and a prayer tent. The Sicklerville congregation also gave out 120 Bibles and prayed with people in attendance.

Leonia UMC honored as 2015 Peace Site

New Jersey Peace Action honored Leonia United Methodist Church as its 2015 Peace Site of the Year. Leonia has partnered with New Jersey Peace Action in the past by providing hospitality for 25-30 peace walkers who spent two nights in Tyson Hall last spring en route to the United Nations to support the renewal of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This fall the Leonia peace pole and garden were the site for Leonia's annual UN International Day of Peace observance that included several houses of worship and community groups.

Red Bank UMC - Four Years of Solar Power

Four years ago, on Dec. 1, 2011, Red Bank United Methodist Church turned on its solar power system for the first time. With congregational blessings and the financial backing of a group of church investors, the panels were installed for a 55 kilowatt system, which in spite of Hurricanes Irene, Superstorm Sandy, and countless snow storms, has been producing faithfully ever since. Through this November, a CO2 emissions amount of 472,547 pounds (about 214 metric tons) has been avoided. If your church wants to consider a solar project contact umcredbank.org.

Bethesda UMC Holds Funfest

Bethesda UMC in Swedesboro held a "Family Fall Funfest" on Oct. 31 for the children of the church and community. Activities included pumpkin painting, face painting, doughnut bobbing, a giant bouncing inflatable and other games. A costume parade was also held. Refreshments included hot dogs, chili and various snacks as well as hot chocolate and a lot of candy, all at no cost. A flyer with information about the church's programs, Sunday school and worship schedule was shared with parents, who shared their names, emails and phone numbers for follow up opportunities in the future.

Bristol Glen Exec Ur Wins Leadership Award

Sarah Ur, executive director at Bristol Glen, has been awarded the inaugural ATHENA Young Professional Leadership Award through the Greater Monmouth Chamber of Commerce (GMCC). Bristol Glen is a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) that is part of United Methodist Homes of New Jersey. The ATHENA Young Professional Leadership Award was established in 2007 to honor emerging leaders under 40 years of age. As one of the three nominees under consideration, Ur was named for demonstrating excellence, creativity, and initiative in a business or profession, providing valuable service by contributing time and energy to improve the quality of life for others in the community and clearly serving as a role model for young women personally and professionally.



SARAH UR



CLOWN MINISTRIES
Loving All Under God's House



Let Shobo, Shady and Pearl help to bring joy to your next church service or event. We are Christian entertainers for all ages.

www.LAUGHCLOWNMINISTRY.com

Scholarships Awarded To 44 Students In GNJ

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry recently released its list of 2015 scholarship winners. The Office of Loans and Scholarships will be awarding over 2,200 students a total of \$4.5 million in financial assistance for 2015. These funds come partly as a result of contributions made on United Methodist Student Day, World Communion Sunday and Native American Sunday. The remaining funds for these awards come from gifts, annuities and endowments GBHEM has invested and administered for decades. Here is the list of the 44 from Greater New Jersey who were awarded, with the churches and colleges they attend and the type of scholarship received.

Samuel Arroyo, Kingston UMC, Inter American University Puerto Rico, HANA Scholarship;

Keunsik Lee, UMC in Madison, Drew University, HANA Scholarship;

Anson Wilson, Magnolia UMC in Pemberton, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Ethnic Minority Scholarship

Nadine Ilunga, Morrow Memorial in Maplewood, Drew University Theological School, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Anudeep Alberts, Christ UMC in Jersey City, Boston College, Ethnic Minority Scholarship;

Jee-Eun Heo, Disciple Korean UMC in Dumont, Northeastern University, HANA Scholarship;

Blair Goold, Monmouth Grace UMC in Eatontown, United Theological Seminary, E. Craig Brandenburg Scholarship;

Daniel Ulrich, Sicklerville UMC, Palmer Theological Seminary, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Akash Parmer, Hackettstown Trinity UMC, Rutgers, Ethnic Minority Scholarship;

Yeh-Eun Heo, Disciple Korean UMC in Dumont, Pratt Institute-Main, Rev. Dr. Karen Layman Gift of Hope Scholarship;

Hyun Hui Kim, Monmouth Grace UMC in Eatontown, Drew University Theological School, Women of Color Scholars Scholarship;

Natalie Burr, Waretown UMC, Lebanon Valley College, Miriam Hoffman Scholarship;

Victoria Fulmer, Allerton UMC in Annandale, Centenary College, UM Allocation Award;

Caleb Orr, UMC in Branchville, Clemson University, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Shivonne McKay, Princeton UMC, Princeton Theological Seminary, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Catherine Williams, Princeton UMC, Princeton Theological Seminary, Women of Colors Scholars Scholarship;

Caly McCarthy, Waterloo UMC in Stanhope, Dickinson College, UM Allocation Award;

Ji Sun Yang, Leonia UMC, Drew University Theological School, HANA Scholarship;

Jieun Kim, Calvary Korean UMC in East Brunswick, Claremont School of Theology, HANA Scholarship;

Tyler Clark, Asbury UMC in Woodlyn, Montclair State University, Ethnic Minority Scholarship;

Pearl Lee, Long Branch St. Luke's, Drew University, UM Allocation Award;

Savannah Pearson, Church Master (UMC) in Howell, Harrisburg University of Science and Technology, Ethnic Minority Scholarship;

Brian Tipton, Summit UMC, Drew University Theological School, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Eunice Chang, Grace Korean UMC in Westwood, Rutgers, Ethnic Minority Scholarship;

Nikolay Petrov, Port Morris UMC in Landing, Drew University, United Methodist General Scholarship;

William Wilson, Chews UMC in Glendora, Emory University and Candler School of Theology, Special Seminary Scholarship;

Ju Hee Jun, True Light Korean UMC in Bayonne, Rutgers University-Newark, Ethnic Minority Scholarship;

June Hee Yoon, Grace Korean UMC in Westwood, Drew University Theological School, Women of Color Scholars Scholarship;

Kevin Kaufman, Bridgewater UMC, Carnegie Mellon University, Rev. Dr. Karen Layman Gift of Hope Scholarship;

Jamel Flag, First UMC in Moorestown, Princeton Theological Seminary, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Terry Frazier, Old First UMC in West Long Branch, Drew University Theological School, Georgia Harkness Scholarship;

Hannah Davis, UMC Absecon, East Carolina University, Rev. Dr. Karen Layman Gift of Hope Scholarship;

Claudia Santa Cruz, New Canaan UMC in Kearny, Drew University Theological School, HANA Scholarship;

Pedro Souza Junker Silva, New Caanan UMC in Kearny, Rutgers University-Newark, Rev. Dr. Karen Layman Gift of Hope Scholarship;

San Kang, First UMC Ridgefield Park, Drew University Theological School, HANA Scholarship;

Seth Orr, UMC in Branchville, Seton Hall University, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Anuroop Alberts, Christ UMC in Jersey City, Rev. Dr. Karen Layman Gift of Hope Scholarship;

Peggy Holder-Jones, Roselle UMC, Drew University Theological School, United Methodist General Scholarship;

Donna Netram, Roselle UMC, Drew University, E. Craig Brandenburg Scholarship;

J. Albert Barchue, Clair Memorial UMC in Jersey City, Drew University Theological School, E. Craig Brandenburg Scholarship;

Brooke Boetticher, Hurdstown UMC in Lake Hopatcong, Centenary College, Baxter Roelfson Sands Scholarship and UM Allocation Award;

Ian Burgess-Linden, Avon UMC at Avon by The Sea, Allegheny College, UM Allocation Award;

Samuel Tatem, Galilee UMC in Englewood, Seton Hall University, Ethnic Minority Scholarship;

Rebecca Vares-Ebert, Bridgewater UMC, Drew University Theological School, United Methodist General Scholarship.

OBITUARIES

REV. DOUGLAS DORCHESTER, retired Elder, died on Sunday, Nov. 1. A Memorial Service will be scheduled for a future date. A private burial service was held in the Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne. Memorial Donations (In lieu of flowers) may be sent to South Yarmouth United Methodist Church, 324 Old Main Street, South Yarmouth, MA 02664 or UMCOR, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. Expressions of Sympathy may be sent to Mrs. Janice Dorchester, 237 North Main Street, Apt. 237, South Yarmouth, MA 02664.

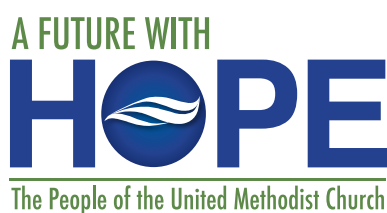
DOROTHY KIRK, surviving spouse of retired Elder Rev. Robert E. Kirk, died on Wednesday, Oct. 14. A Memorial Service was held on Friday, Nov. 6, at 11 a.m. at First UMC in Somerville, NJ. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to K-9 Comfort Dogs. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Carol Mollica (daughter), 81 Louis Avenue, Middlesex, NJ 08846.



HOME *for Christmas*



Since 2013, A Future With Hope has helped repair 193 houses that were damaged by Superstorm Sandy so that 193 families will be home this Christmas.



FIND OUT MORE AND DONATE AT:
www.afuturewithhope.org