

Recommendation

GNJ Strategic Ministry Plan Midway Affirmation

Whereas the United Methodist of Greater New Jersey’s strategic ministry plan is halfway toward its 2018 completion;

Be it resolved that we thank God for our progress, celebrate the congregations and leadership for their work on the plan, and affirm its direction, strategy and resourcing as outlined below:

GNJ STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN

VISION - We see a church like Jesus Christ—radical spirit and humble, teaching and healing, soul saving and soul tending, leader and servant, unbound and outbound for mercy and justice.

We also see a Wesleyan Church—personal holiness and social holiness, connectional and risk taking, thoughtful and inspirational, small groups and large vision, welcoming all and respectful of all.

MISSION – Recruit and develop transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital congregations *to transform the world*.

DISCIPLES are life-long learners and followers of Jesus Christ, leaving behind safety and complacency to serve like Christ to make new disciples, end poverty, be graceful with those at the margins, connect with people who are different from us, and magnify God’s presence in the world. *This type of disciple is shaped, encouraged, sent and supported through vital congregations.*

VITAL CONGREGATIONS are inwardly transformed and missionally outbound. Vital congregations are Spirit-filled, forward leaning communities of believers that grow over time, welcome all people (Galatians 3:28); make disciples of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20); and serve like Christ through justice and mercy ministries (Micah 6:8 and Luke 4:17-21). Vital congregations engage and shape disciples in five key ministries – worship, small groups, community mission, making new disciples and generous giving. *Vital congregations transform the world.*

TRANSFORMED WORLD is a place where congregations, communities and people are working together to end poverty, eradicate racism, practice good stewardship of God’s creation, seek peace, and draw all people closer to God. This type of world is born through the Great Commandment, *love God and your neighbor* (Matthew 22). It begins with the church engaging its neighbors and working toward a peaceable kingdom as described throughout the scriptures. *A transformed world, vital congregations and new disciples require transformational leaders.*

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS assess the gifts and needs of the congregation and community, set a courageous vision and goals, and inspire and equip the congregation to make new disciples, grow worship, grow disciples’ faith through small groups, engage the congregation in life changing mission, and increase giving to mission and ministry (Ephesians 4:11- 12). *Transformational Leaders have high expectations of themselves and for their congregations.*

LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS include but are not limited to: 1) **Connect and relate** well with church leadership and membership and community residents, 2) **Develop leaders** within the congregation, 3) **Lead** the congregation to deeper faith and service in the world, 4) **Increase vitality** through inspiring worship and relevant messages, attracting and making new disciples, and engaging disciples in small groups, community hands-on mission and generous giving, 5) **Raise** sufficient funds for community and world mission, ongoing congregational ministry, shared ministries, and salary and benefits.

Recommendations to the 2016 Annual Conference

1 **CONGREGATIONAL EXPECTATIONS** include but are not limited to: 1) **Connect with and welcome** all people in
2 the community, 2) **Engage passionately and grow** in the five key ministries of a vital congregation, 3) **Create** an
3 environment for risk taking and innovation, 4) **Support** the growth and development of transformational leaders
4 and radical disciples, and 5) **Share generously** including 100% of shared ministry and billables.

5
6 **GNJ EXPECTATIONS** – To achieve our vision and mission, GNJ is compelled to shift how it thinks and carries out
7 its ministry. These shifts include:

- 8 1. From *managing* clergy and congregations **to being in relationship with** clergy and congregations.
- 9 2. From Conference *programming* **to** Conference *resourcing* leaders and local congregations.
- 10 3. From *telling* clergy and congregations *what to do* **to supporting** clergy and congregations *to innovate*
11 *and create* how they will make disciples, grow vitality and transform the world in their context.

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13 *Therefore GNJ will focus on recruiting and resourcing transformational leaders to make disciples and grow vital*
14 *congregations to transform the world.*

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16 **GNJ RESOURCES** congregations and transformational leaders that are *ready* and *desire* to become vital and
17 more like Christ. Our primary resources are coaching, PaCE and Laity Pursuing Excellence groups, Team Vital,
18 and Communities of Hope. These resources come alongside and center leaders and congregations in their
19 calling, help them assess their present gifts and challenges and set a vision, create a ministry action plan and
20 provide support and technical assistance to achieve a God sized vision.

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22 *Fruitfulness, faithfulness and effectiveness will be evaluated each year.*

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24 **GNJ EVALUATION** includes three types of evaluations:

- 25 1. GNJ progress toward our vision, mission and developing vital congregations and its commitment to and
26 quality of its resourcing leaders and congregations. This evaluation will be done in February and
27 September and results will be reported to the annual conference session.
- 28 2. Congregational progress toward the five expectations will be evaluated every September and a report
29 given and discussed at the charge conference.
- 30 3. Clergy's leadership in the areas of the five expectations will be conducted in April. This month is chosen
31 so that it is not connected with salaries or appointments. The evaluation is a tool to help assess a
32 pastor's progress and develop a plan for continued development.

GNJ GOALS

GNJ will grow from 14% to 41% vital congregations as it:

- 33 1. Increases the percentage of churches growing in worship attendance from 33% to 51%
- 34 2. Starts 90 new faith communities.
- 35 3. Decreases the number of worshipers it takes to make a new profession of faith from 17 to 15
- 36 4. Increases the percentage of worshipers in small groups from 43% to 75%
- 37 5. Increases the number of young adults in small groups from 2820 to 3200
- 38 6. Increases our racial ethnic worshipers from 20% to 25%
- 39 7. Increases the percentage of worshipers engaged in mission from 8% to 40%
- 40 8. Increases local church dollars spent on mission 15% to 17%
- 41 9. Raises \$12 million through a mission campaign

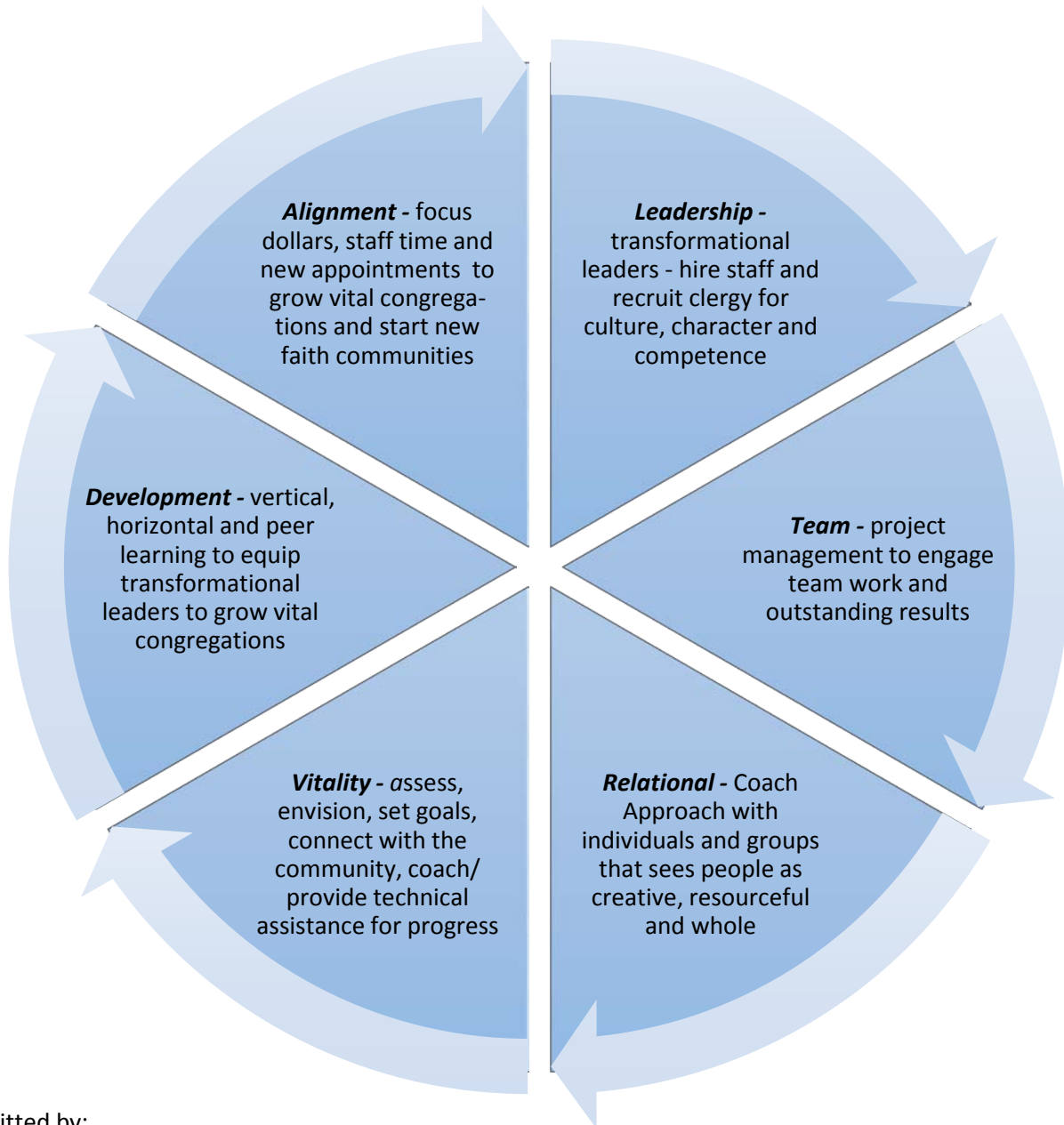
We believe accomplishing these goals will bear fruitful outcomes that include transformational leadership,
radical discipleship, vital congregations, and a transformed world as described above – all for the glory of God.

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

We recruit and develop transformational leaders
to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform the world

The Path to Vitality

The ministry of GNJ is to fulfill its mission -
Our mission is a spiritual mission that requires a journey toward health and vitality.
As the staff and GNJ leadership prayerfully and faithfully travel the Path to Vitality, we see more
transformational leaders, disciples of Jesus Christ, and vital congregations transforming the world.



Submitted by:

The Connectional Table of the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey