



2017 Journal and Yearbook

Containing the Proceedings of the Eighteenth Session of the

Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

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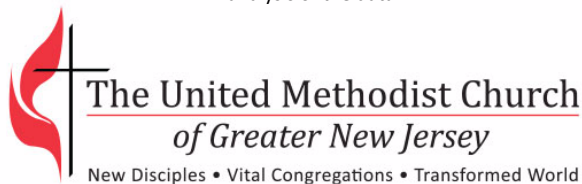
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John R. Schol
Bishop





The United Methodist Church
of Greater New Jersey

New Disciples • Vital Congregations • Transformed World

“Rejoice always” – 1 Thessalonians 5:16

God has, is and will continue to guide our ministry and progress

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We rejoice in all God is doing through us here in GNJ. This past conference year we have continued to accomplish our strategic plan goals as we recruit and equip transformational spiritual leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world. We have transformed lives by reaching over 20,000 children through child care and after school programming. We continue to rebuild homes and lives after Superstorm Sandy, now completing more than 256 homes. We continued to make progress ending malaria with gifts now totaling more than \$800,000. God has richly blessed us and we rejoice!

During the 2017 Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey, we rejoiced over our future by putting forth a Next Generation student ministry plan. We rejoice that we deliberately committed to and took steps toward developing intercultural competency to strengthen and grow diversity, inclusion and collaboration. We rejoiced over a new shared ministry formula that keeps funds at the local church level for the purpose of regenerative initiatives; bolstering our vitality and witness for Christ by forming new disciples to transform the world.

We rejoiced in our commitment to a new strategic ministry plan so we can go further into the future. We rejoiced in our vitality markers and the areas in which we're growing. We celebrated bold apostolic leadership that ignites hopes, builds bridges, and connects church with community.

We rejoice as well in the work of our churches, the service of our laity, our clergy, our congregations, and the world rippling effects of our ministry together. The details are in this journal where you will find bold endeavors and thoughtful analysis of our progress, challenges, and our goals for the future. We have great reason to rejoice! God is on the move in GNJ, and we are a part of a profound story.

This is just the beginning. In all that God is doing through us, we have a future, and I am encouraged.

I also rejoice in all that this conference journal represents. It has the names of conference leadership and members who faithfully lead GNJ and its congregations and it has the reports of our ministry and progress. I thank each of you for your ministry.

I invite you to pray that in all circumstances we can rejoice in our diversity, our differences, and celebrate our unity in Christ, so our mission shines, vital congregations are grown, and the world is transformed.

Again I tell you, rejoice!

Keep the faith!

John Schol, Bishop
The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey