



NEXT GENERATION

UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

Next Generation Ministries Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

“Start young people off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” - Proverbs 22:6

Our Purpose

We believe God’s love heals and transforms lives. God’s love is encountered in disciples of Jesus who passionately share faith, hope and justice in the community. Vital congregations form and shape passionate disciples. We recruit and develop transformational leaders to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform the world.

Our 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. 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 respect for diversity of thought.

Purpose of the Next Generation Ministries Plan

Develop a sustainable and fruitful Next Generation youth and young adults’ ministry in GNJ that will nurture new generations of enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ who are connecting, engaging in and leading ministry in their congregations and participating as healthy young people in a global society.

Core Objectives

- Set apart the next 10 years as a time of deliberate focus on building a vital, sustainable, robust ministry to the next generation in and through GNJ.
- Establish clear leadership and coordination for all GNJ initiatives related to youth ministry, camping ministry, and campus ministry by reframing the current GNJ Camping and Retreats
- Board, a separate 501c3, as the GNJ Next Generation Ministries Board, which will lead and coordinate the three areas related to Next Generation Ministries: students (youth grades 6-12), college campus ministry and camps and retreat ministry. As these are operating successfully we will expand to young adults not in college.
- Design and implement innovative, Christ-centered, leadership-development structures for youth and graduate and undergraduate students throughout GNJ.
- Provide for the ongoing financial sustainability of Next Generation Ministry efforts beyond
- Shared Ministry funds through individual, church, foundation, corporation and other funding strategies.

Key 10-Year Goals (to be achieved by 2027)

The following high-level goals provide clear, focused and measurable targets for the plan.

Youth

- At least 5,000 youth from at least 300 GNJ churches will participate in the IGNITE conference.
- 1,000 youth and college students will engage in intentional leadership and leadership development through the churches and initiatives of GNJ.
- At least 60% of congregations in GNJ will have an active youth ministry with 12 or more students.

Campus

- GNJ will be connected to and supporting 10 young adult-focused faith communities in or around college campuses, with at least 75 college students who are sharing in the mission of equipping student spiritual leaders to make disciples and grow vital faith communities to transform the world.
- In collaboration with GNJ Mosaic Initiative, 70 graduate and undergraduate students will be intentionally cultivated for faithful ministry (whether clergy or lay, paid or volunteer), receiving support and training from the GNJ structures and processes, and serving in part-time staff positions in GNJ congregations.

Camping

- GNJ camps will experiment with and incubate 50 or more innovative camping experiences for and with youth and young adults, with a focus on multi-cultural, multi-generational, multi-church and urban initiatives.
- Both GNJ camps will be mission-focused, debt free and generating revenue beyond expenses.

Next Generation Ministries

- The number of children, youth, and young adults in GNJ will increase by 10%.
- 20,000 GNJ Next Generation stakeholders (students, leaders, donors, resource people) will be part of the GNJ Next Generation database, including 8,000 from IGNITE, all of whom will receive regular and timely, intentional and engaging content related to GNJ Next Generation ministry initiatives.

Key 3-Year Goals (to be achieved by Annual Conference 2020):

Youth

- At least 2,500 youth from at least 150 GNJ congregations will participate in IGNITE in the 2020-2021 season.
- 100 youth and college students will be engaged in intentional leadership and/or leadership development through the churches and initiatives of GNJ.
- 150 GNJ congregations will have active youth ministries, each with of at least one leader connected to GNJ support and collaboration systems.

Campus

- GNJ will be connected to and supporting the work of 3 young adult focused faith communities in or around college campuses, with at least 75 college students engaged in each of those faith communities.
- In collaboration with Mosaic, 25 graduate and undergraduate students are being intentionally cultivated for faithful ministry (whether clergy or lay, paid or volunteer), receiving support and training from GNJ and serving in part-time staff positions in GNJ congregations.

Camping

- GNJ camp properties will host at least 25 events for GNJ congregations, committees or initiatives in the 2019-2020 program year.
- GNJ camps will experiment with and incubated over 10 innovative offerings for and with youth and young adults, with a focus on multi-cultural, multi-generational, multi-church, urban initiatives.

Next Generation Ministries

- 8,000 people, including at least 2,500 IGNITE participants will be part of the GNJ Next Generation database, and this group regularly receives timely, intentional and engaging content related to GNJ Next Generation Ministry initiatives.

We believe accomplishing these goals and objectives will bear fruitful outcomes that include new generations of radical Christ-like disciples and transformational leaders, younger and multi-generational vital congregations, changed lives and transformed communities.

Next Steps for the Next Generation Ministries Board

These are the immediate next steps with reasonable estimated times of completion.

- Reframe the current GNJ Camping and Retreats Board, a separate 501c3, as the GNJ Next Generation Ministries board - 09/01/2017
- Finalize full strategic plan and timeline – 10/01/2017
- New Camping and Retreats Committee organizes and creates, in consultation with the Connectional Table, a statement of purpose and goals for 2018 – 11/01/2017
- Hire appropriate staff to move the initial phase of the Next Generation Ministries plan forward – 12/01/2017
- Sell the Tannery Falls property at Aldersgate to provide seed monies to reinvigorate camping and retreat ministries – 05/01/2018