

THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

Volume LXII

SEPTEMBER 2018

No. 9

Summer Camps Make Big Splash in Pinelands

By Josh Kinney
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Mt. MISERY – Spiritual growth and leadership development were at the heart of this year's rejuvenated camping programs at The Pinelands Center in Mt. Misery. Diving deeper in relationship with God and others through worship, Bible studies and a wide range of camp activities under the guidance of mentoring counselors made for matchless and memorable experiences for GNJ's young people.

"We laughed, we cried, we sang loud, we prayed, we read scripture... it was incredible," said Eric Drew, Director of Worship, who led worship during each week of summer camp.

God was at work moving not only through the lives of the youth but the volunteers, young adults, and camp counselors as well, leaving everyone inspired, uplifted and encouraged. Nearly 200 young people enrolled in the three weeks of camps which included Senior High Leadership Boot Camp, Junior High Camp with Barefoot Republic, and Niños y Jovenes Para Cristo in celebration of



With the help of volunteers, counselors and leaders, the lives of youth were changed at this summer's camping programs at Pinelands Center. Pictured above: Youth shout and sing at Pinelands outdoor amphitheater.

Photo by Edison Lee

Latino culture and heritage.

Campers enjoyed swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, low ropes course, soccer, archery, gaga ball, mud hikes, night hikes, hay rides, tether ball, basketball, volleyball, paintball and more. Each day bookended with worship experiences

that included intimate gatherings in nature and large, loud praise sessions with sound systems, lights and electric guitars that captured a taste of the upcoming IGNITE youth conference experience.

Although the camps programs were held in Pinelands Center at Mt. Misery



The fire for Christ continues for youth at this year's IGNITE conference!
For more info on artists see pages 10-11.
Register today!

this year, the Senior High Leadership Boot Camp students got to experience Aldersgate Camp as well. As part of a mission experience, 11 students travelled to Aldersgate and spent the day clearing the soccer field in anticipation of future programming. These students worshipped at the Appenzeller Chapel and spent the night in sleeping bags there.

Campers encountered and discovered God's presence in new and enriching ways they wouldn't have had outside the

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United Methodists Lead Prayer Vigil in Support of Immigrant Families

By Kamelia Ani
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ELIZABETH - Church leaders and dozens of community members from across Greater New Jersey gathered on Saturday, July 28 outside the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Contract Detention Facility in Elizabeth to protest and pray for those being held after trying to seek asylum in the U.S. The crowd heard words of encouragement and calls to action by community activists and faith leaders, including Bishop John Schol. The rally was sponsored by the GNJ Board of Church and Society Immigration Task Force, Hispanic Committee, United Methodist Women (UMW) and Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR).

The crowd of close to 100 protestors held signs and sang along with a choir from Asbury Park. They held hands and bowed heads in prayer; the silence punctured only by amen's as they stood in the scorching heat of the day. Two security



Nearly 100 community members and church leaders gathered outside the ICE detention facility in Elizabeth on July 28, holding signs of solidarity for immigrants being held inside the building and across the U.S. Photo by Kamelia Ani

guards stood at the gate to allow rare visitors into the detention center. When asked how he felt about the rally, one guard said he was just doing his job and it was up to the higher-ups to answer to the public. Across the street, a female guard stood by herself with hands clasped, almost moved to tears by the prayers

and song.

"This is not a protest. This is inspirational," she said. "The other protests we've had here lately have gone violent. People don't understand it's our job. These people are doing the right thing. When I go home I pray for all the people detained here."

"These are the moments when pastors, bishops, and church members show the world that our faith extends beyond our church walls and that justice matters to us," declared Rev. Dave Delaney, Chair of the GNJ Immigration Task Force. "We were blessed to have Mark Miller lead us in song throughout the morning because his song, 'Make the Circle Wide,' reflects what we believe as United Methodists. God's love is for all; we are to love all; and we do care each day for all who are suffering injustices wherever those injustices might be occurring."

Bishop John Schol inspired those gathered with a reflection of how Christians are to live our lives.

"What Jesus was saying is that when you are loving your neighbor you are loving God. They would often ask Jesus who is our neighbor? What he was saying was all are our neighbors. What Jesus was saying is that all means all! It doesn't matter where people come from, all means all," he said. "How could we forget that here in our nation? Jesus said all means all! Jesus also told his disciples to let the children come to me. He didn't say separate them from their parents or

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PaCE Group Leads Clergywomen to Release Year-Long Devotional

By Kayla Harrison
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NEPTUNE - Homemade salsa, the Word of God, and a creative spark brought a group of GNJ clergywomen together to write a year-long devotional. The women: Gabrielle Martone, Frances Noll, Vicki Brendler, Francie Preston, Diane Dyson, June Tamburro, Lynn Mears, Jean Arlea Eriksen, Jana Purkis-Brash, and Gina Yeske, call themselves the Salsa Sisters.

"One of the women, Vicki talked about the homemade salsa she made and that it reminded her of us. We were in different stages of life and different types of

pastors," Noll mentioned. "You put all of these wonderful ingredients together and boom, you get salsa. So that could be us: Sisters Alive in Leadership, Spirituality and the Arts. That covered it. We could be the Salsa Sisters!"

The Salsa Sisters met as a PaCE group, meeting every month for prayer, communion, and creativity. A peer learning resource for developing turn-around spiritual leaders, PaCE (which stands for Pursuing Clergy Excellence) is an initiative to facilitate peer learning groups that help shape pastoral identity, imagination and develop leadership excellence. The program supports clergy excellence by building trust, reducing isolation, ex-

ploring ideas through shared experiences, providing multiple viewpoints, engaging in deep conversation, and in the case of the Salsa Sisters, unlocking creativity.

"We didn't know each other well when we started, but we became very close as we worked on this project together," explained Mears. "It has been a very uplifting journey

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Members of The Salsa Sisters PaCE Group pictured together. The group co-authored a year-long devotional as a result of their gatherings. Photo provided

A Message from the Bishop



The Bible Scripture, Story, Revelation

Today starts a series about the Bible, God's word understood as sacred scripture, story and revelation. Today we will focus on sacred scripture.

While growing up, many of the Bibles I saw were leather bound with gold leafing around the edges. You knew just by looking at it that it was an important book. In my church, a big Bible sat on the lectern in the sanctuary and there were Bibles on the altar in every Sunday school classroom. Sometimes there were pictures in the Bible. The pictures were works of art. Always in color. The paper was quality paper. It had substance to it and was always glossy. There was a sheen to every page. Without reading it, you knew this was an important book that was associated with God. When people read the Bible, they did not speak in their normal conversation tones but in what some call a "stained glass voice", which meant it was read aloud with great seriousness. It was sacred scripture.

I can remember the first time I saw the New Testament edition of the Good News Bible. It was paperback. Its pages were not glossy and the pictures were stick figures. It wasn't King James English either. It was vernacular, more common day language. As a factory worker, my father loved it. It spoke to him. It made the scriptures real. For some, it was too real, too common. It was like every other paperback book. In our household though, it became the scriptures, the inspired word of God. In a sense, this Bible inspired my father to read it and to teach it not only to the youth in Sunday school but also at home.

Scripture is the sacred writings for religious people. Every religion has a book or books that contain their scripture, their sacred texts. For Christians, the Bible is our scripture and we believe it is a book inspired by God for our salvation and living. We believe it records the history and understanding of God's relationship with humanity and our relationship with God and one another. There is a wide range of belief and understanding about the Christian scriptures. For instance, Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians include in their Bible what Protestants call the Apocrypha or 14 additional books written during the inter-testament times, the period between the Old and New Testament.

There are some who view the Bible as "solo scriptura", the scripture itself or the Bible interprets itself and is the only source for Christian teaching. Sola scriptura

emerged, or some would say reemerged at the time of the Reformation, 1517-1648 AD, in response to how church hierarchy used tradition to support teachings, organization and experiences within the church not found in the Bible.

Another word used for the scriptures is the canon, which literally means a collection of sacred texts or the collection of books that make up the Bible. Many misunderstand the unfolding of scripture that became the canon, our Bible as we have it today. Some believe that the Bible was written as it happened rather than as stories passed down from generation to generation. Genesis may have been written as late as the period of exile for the Jews, thousands of years after creation and was written down for fear that the history would be lost while the Jews were in exile. The Gospel of John was written between 90-110 AD. It was the last Gospel in our canon and was written some sixty years or more after Jesus' death.

The canon, the 66 books that make up our Old (Hebrew Bible) and New Testament was not finalized until a little after 400 AD or some 360 years after Jesus' death. Clarity about the Hebrew Bible emerged much earlier but the New Testament took much longer. There were more Gospels written than the four found in our Bible that were considered. Other books were considered. And during the 360 years that the Bible was being shaped, there were different configurations of the New Testament books under consideration. The last book to be included in the Bible was the Book of Revelation. There were differences of opinion about the book's efficacy for the church and Christian faith.

Some ask, how we can be sure about the authority of scripture if it was not known as scripture immediately or if there were debates about what books to include. Others want to know about what the church did before the New Testament was finalized. What was considered to be the Word of God?

In the next editions of The Relay, we will look at questions like these, as well as why people interpret scriptures differently and what is the Sacred Story and Sacred Revelation.

My faith and study of the Bible leads me to believe that my earliest notions concerning gold leaf and stained-glass voices were accurate; the Bible is God's inspired Word and essential for my faith and living. The Bible has revealed God's salvation for my life, guided me into a relationship with Jesus Christ, taught me how to be a disciple and leader in the church, and inspired me to serve God all my days. Thanks be to God.

Keep the faith!

John

Bishop John Schol
The United Methodist Church
of Greater New Jersey

Summer Camps Make Big Splash in Pinelands

Continued from page 1
camp experience.

Reintroducing students to camps is one of the first steps in fulfilling GNJ's 2019-23 Strategic Plan which calls GNJ to cultivate and mobilize a new generation of enthusiastic disciples. The Miracles Everywhere Campaign rolling out this fall to congregations support this effort with a goal of raising \$3,197,000 for

Next Gen Ministries to grow the faith of GNJ's youth. One of the goals is to grow GNJ's camping ministry to include 1,000 youth in the next five years. See page 3 for details on the Miracles Everywhere Campaign.

Find out more about summer camps and Next Gen's Engagement Specialist on Pages 6-7.

THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

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PEACEMAKING: RESOLVING THE HEART OF CONFLICT

BISHOP'S CLERGY CONVOCATION

NOVEMBER 12-14, 2018

If we have a heart at peace, we see others as people - with hopes, needs, cares, and fears that are as real to them as ours are to us. If we have a heart at war, we see others as objects - obstacles to our goals, or even irrelevant.

At the 2018 Bishop's Clergy Convocation, we will explore in depth how as leaders we can effectively engage and facilitate peacemaking in times of uncertainty, and lead through change in a diverse mission field as presented in The Anatomy of Peace by the Arbinger Institute.

Save the date and look for the registration information in September at:

Register online at: www.gnjumc.org

INSPIRING
WORSHIP

REST &
RENEWAL

FELLOWSHIP

LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT

"Blessed are the
peacemakers,
for they will be called
children of God."

- Matthew 5:9



Miracles Everywhere

Churches Annual Stewardship Campaigns and the GNJ Miracles Everywhere Campaign work together to fund ministry locally, regionally and globally!

Use Miracles Everywhere Campaign resources for the theme of your churches annual Stewardship Campaign.

Download the Miracles Everywhere Guide and share with your church leadership.

Set a timeline for your campaign and explore available resources.

Download graphics, sermon series, small group resources, print materials, social media toolkits, videos and more! All the materials your church needs to run their campaign can be found at www.gnjumc.org/miracleseverywhere.

Your congregation is invited to experience a miracle.

- Miracles Everywhere will raise \$3,197,000 for Next Gen ministries to focus on faith formation for youth and young adults.
- \$1,000,000 for A Future With Hope to develop 100 Hope Centers.
- \$500,000 for hurricane relief in Puerto Rico, Texas, Florida, and Cuba.
- \$500,000 for Tanzanian pastors and congregations to make new disciples for the transformation of the world.

If you or your congregation would like help with scheduling, logistics or implementation of the campaign, please contact:



Jana Purkis-Brash, Executive Director of the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey
732.359.1057 | jpurkisbrash@gnjumc.org

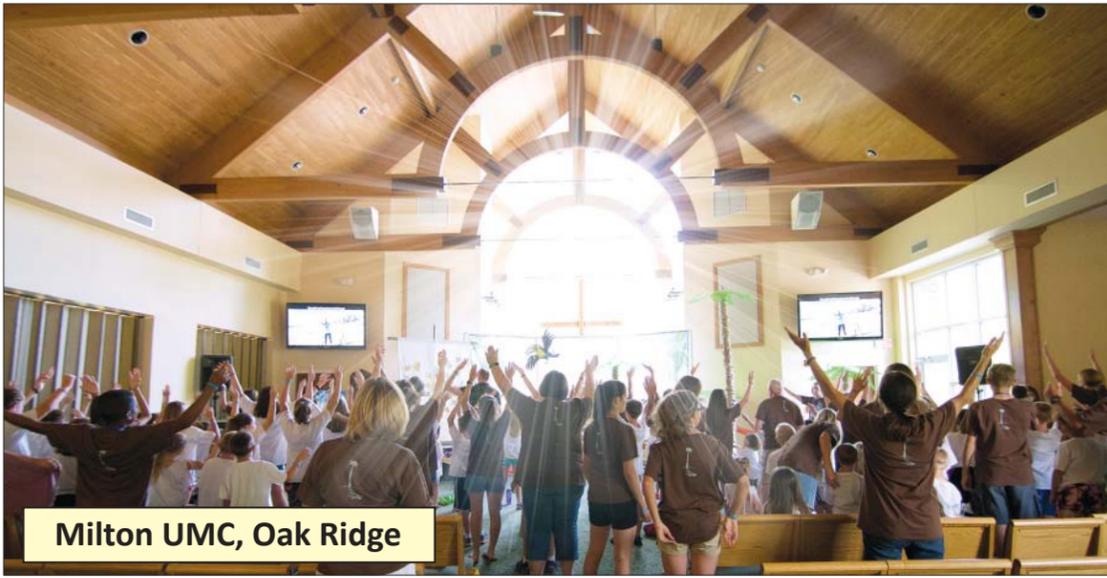


UNITED METHODISTS
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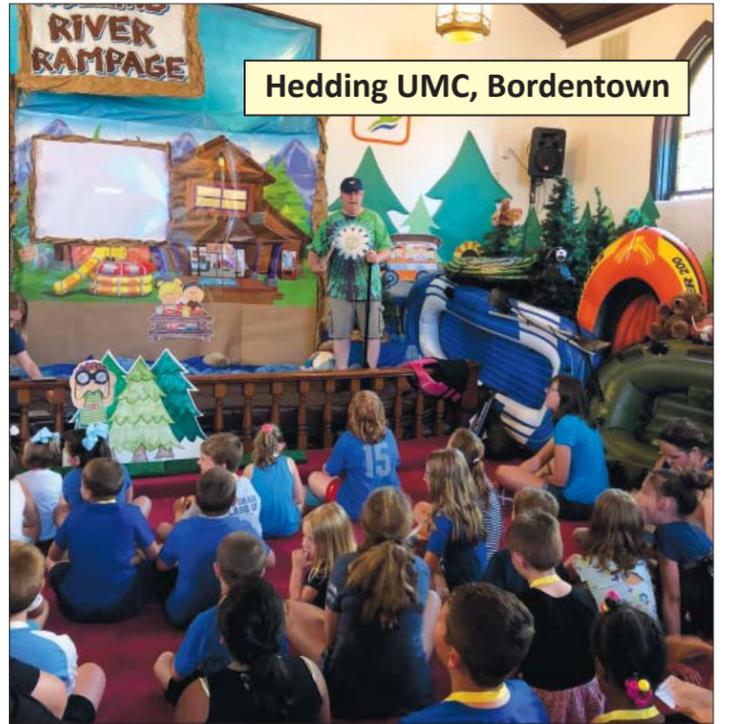


UNITED METHODIST
STEWARDSHIP FOUNDATION
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2018



Milton UMC, Oak Ridge



Hedding UMC, Bordentown



Almonesson UMC, Deptford



First UMC of Hightstown



Centenary UMC, Metuchen



Haddonfield UMC



Haddon Heights UMC



Belvidere UMC



Good Shepherd UMC, Bergenfield



Hamilton UMC, Neptune



Quakertown UMC

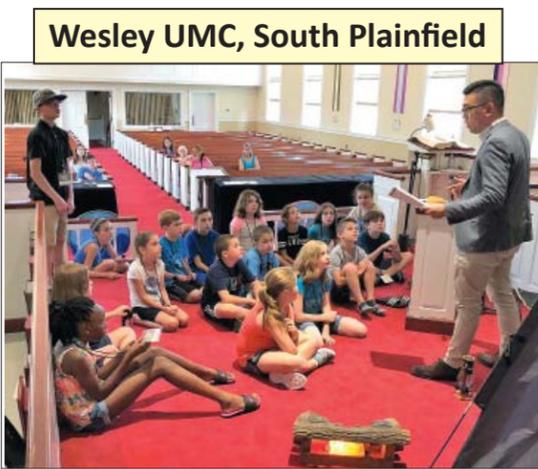
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2018



Kingston UMC



Central UMC, Point Pleasant



Wesley UMC, South Plainfield



Vineland UMC



South Vineland UMC



St. John's UMC, West Berlin

St. John's Methodist Church

WE ARE GOD'S WORKMANSHIP. CREATED IN JESUS CHRIST TO DO GOOD WORKS, WHICH GOD PREPARED IN ADVANCE FOR ALL TO DO.

BOB'S FURNITURE



Manasquan UMC



Masonville-Rancocas UMC, Mt. Laurel



Tabernacle UMC

Next Gen Summer Camp Snapshots



Meet Next Gen Engagement Specialist, Carla Vanzant

By Melissa Hinnen
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Non-profit management professional, Carla Vanzant is bringing her skills and passion for Christ-centered youth development to the Next Gen Ministries of GNJ. Her background in working on college campuses, co-founding and directing a summer camp and involvement in the local community, uniquely positions her to serve as Engagement Specialist. In this position, she is developing innovative initiatives to expand the number of students, parents, youth leaders, volunteers and others in ministries that

are developing and nurturing the next generation of disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Relay recently had the opportunity to sit and chat with her.

Relay: Welcome to GNJ! What was it that interested you about working with Next Gen Ministries?

Carla Vanzant: Well really I have to say that the position called to me because it infuses faith and a passion for youth. The three focus areas of Next Gen are a perfect fit with my background. So many people don't have a relationship with God. This work allows me to help create spaces to position Christ as a focus in young people's lives and equips them to carry that focus with them and refresh it throughout their lives.

Relay: What have been some of the highlights since coming onboard?



Aldersgate Mission Project

11 high school students did a service project at Aldersgate during the High School Leadership Boot Camp.

"The kids cleared trees to make room for a soccer field in anticipation of more activities next summer," said Ryan Clements, Next Generation Ministries Coordinator. "It was great. We worshipped in the Appenzeller Chapel, had a camp fire and s'mores and then slept on the floor in sleeping bags."



CV: I immediately think of the connections with so many different types of ministry partners. As Ryan Clements, Next Generation Ministry Coordinator, and I travel church to church and coffee shop to coffee shop meeting with pastors and youth leaders we are beginning to build relationships. I am excited about the possibilities to help make youth ministry easier and more effective. There is a range of ministry already happening and we are here to resource pastors as they look to launch youth ministries or want deeper engagement with their existing programs.

Relay: In a year, what are some ways you hope to have made an impact?

CV: I hope that we will see more thriving youth ministries. As youth transition from high school to college, I hope to see them engage in campus ministries so they stay connected with their faith. And

United Methodist camps offer such an incredible and underutilized opportunity for students to be in nature and connect with Christ. By next year, I hope to see increased enrollment.

Relay: What does thriving mean to you? Would you share some examples of thriving ministries you have experienced in GNJ?

CV: Thriving is not a numbers game. It can be any size but the goal is that it meets the needs of the young people in their area. In addition to meeting with pastors, I visit existing ministries and community events. There are thriving ministries throughout the area including Hamilton UMC in Neptune and Morrow UMC in Maplewood.

Rev. Jessica Campbell, who is the pastor at Hamilton, started a young adult Bible study on Wednesday evenings at

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Next Gen Summer Camp Snapshots



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Bradley Beach. Youth and young adults gather and discuss God's word. They have a nice sized group and the leader makes sure there is time to talk through their questions.

Rev. Brenda Wheeler is the associate pastor at Morrow and the youth are engaged not only in understanding themselves but actively look outward to explore how to make this world better. They are intentionally focused on seeing, understanding and building relationships with people from different backgrounds. Among other activities, they recently went on a Civil Rights pilgrimage in the south; a journey that we are replicating in GNJ with the Joshua Generation.

Relay: Are you anticipating any challenges in this work?

CV: Both the geography and the mission are big for a role like this. I recently went to Flemington, Asbury Park, and Denville in the same day! So I need to be strategic. I have found it helpful to meet pastors and youth leaders at the district level in small groups.

Relay: Can you explain the process for an initial consultation? Do you have any tips for churches that want to start a youth ministry?

CV: Pastors and youth leaders who are interested in meeting with me can schedule an appointment by cell phone

732-759-7049 or email, cvanzant@gnjumc.org. I'm happy to come and meet where it is most convenient for the pastor. We discuss the resources available through Next Gen ministries and explore where the church fits in. Based where they are in development, I connect them with existing opportunities and help develop programming for their context. I also want to introduce them to leaders of nearby thriving ministries. Newly appointed pastors in particular may not be aware of potential partnerships in their area. IGNITE is a great place to start or expand a youth ministry. Invite the youth and get them engaged and excited and then let them help build on that excitement. A challenge for smaller churches is that often there are not enough children or youth to start a meaningful program. One way to build critical mass is by partnering with neighboring churches to develop regional and community ministry groups.

Relay: Are there upcoming youth opportunities that you want to be sure people are aware of?

CV: I would love to see IGNITE explode September 28-30 with every church sending students to start the school year with worship, community, inspiring speakers and great music. This fall we are beginning the Joshua Genera-



tion thanks to a grant from the General Commission on Religion and Race. A small group of students will meet monthly and deeply engage in conversations based on readings by leading thinkers about race and civil rights. In November they will travel to Washington, D.C. for extensive training to prepare them for a June pilgrimage when they will journey through the south to learn about the civil rights movement.

All pastor and youth leaders should attend the Youth Leaders Day on February 9 with guest speaker, Aqueelah Ligonde from Ministry Architects.

Confirmation Day with the Bishop in the spring is a great way for youth to get to know Bishop Schol and see the work of the conference up close. They can ask questions and spend time with other confirmation students from across GNJ.

As we look ahead to next summer, we want to help pastors promote the various camps offered at the Pinelands Center. When I speak with adults of all different

ages, it is clear that GNJ camps have had a long lasting impact for generations.

Relay: Do you have words of encouragement for pastors and for youth?

CV: I want pastors to know that you are not alone. You have a heart for reaching youth but it is difficult especially if you haven't had the resources. I am committed to working with you to help your ministries thrive. Students, you are seen and valued. I want to help you become disciples of Christ by making sure you have opportunities to grow through your church and GNJ.

About Next Generation Ministries

Next Generation Ministries is a Vital Mission Partner with United Methodists of Greater New Jersey. A separate 501c3 organizations, Next Gen has a mission of cultivating and catalyzing new generations of enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ that connect, engage, and lead in their congregations and communities to transform the world.



Photos by Edison Lee

Helping Churches Go Deeper in Faith at the Laity Leadership Academy

By Josh Kinney
jkinney@gnjumc.org

NEPTUNE - How can your church improve its spiritual tone? According to Betty Quackenboss, Rev. Erica Munoz and a team from Aldersgate UMC, the answer is by helping create an environment more conducive to going deeper in faith and by infusing a more intensely expressive spirituality centered on Jesus.

"We can improve our church's spiritual tone by testifying through word and deed that Jesus is alive in our lives and our churches," said Munoz, who along with her church team and Quackenboss will be facilitating a track entitled "A Closer Walk" at the 2018 Laity Leadership Academy on October 6 at the Mission and Resource Center in Neptune.

The interactive workshop will engage participants to improve their church's spiritual tone by using the small group model, looking at specific tools and "means of grace" to increase faith commitment, examining ways to engage people with the Bible as a transformational tool and expanding prayer time.

This year's day-long academy for GNJ laity will feature 'A Closer Walk' and four other track total of five tracks titled: "Building up God's Beloved Community", "Understanding Diversity", "Generosity vs. Funding" and "Digital Strategies for Salvation".

"It's an inspiration to witness the faithfulness of the laity that attend this training event," said Juel Nelson, Director of Leadership Development. "People are just so excited to be invested."

Helen Hunter and Arthur Harrell, who both have healthcare backgrounds, will be returning this year to facilitate "Vital Ministries with Older Adults" due to the amount of congregants in GNJ who are aging and have family members responsible for taking care of them. Their workshop session will provide an overview of the aging process, including physical, mental, and social changes. Participants will learn strategies in the support for elderly parishioners and families.

"We will identify available community resources and services, understanding how faith communities can partner in ways that bring value to God's people in response to their needs," said Hunter. "We'll engage in vital conversation and resourcing around leveraging older adults and develop an action plan to implement ministry of elderly caring."

"There's a lot of stress associated with the aging process and we want to try to address some of the stresses and effectively alleviate them for care givers," said Harrell. "We seek to provide participants with local resources for both care givers and the people they're caring for."

Churches are encouraged to send a team of congregational leaders to develop an action plan to implement a new ministry in their church. Attendees will be able to apply for seed grants to enact these ministries in their churches. Certified Lay Servants who successfully complete the Laity Leadership Academy and implement the action plans will receive re-certification recognition. Registration is \$50 and the deadline to sign up is September 7.

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

APPLICATIONS DUE OCT. 6

United Methodists of Greater New Jersey is committed to resource and support the development of congregations and lay and clergy leadership!

Applications may be submitted for new worship services, new small groups and mission ministries, congregational development, cooperative parishes, supplemental our equitable clergy salary and planning. Grants will be allocated based on demonstrated willingness and readiness to grow vital congregations.

FIND OUT MORE AND APPLY AT:

www.gnjumc.org/grants-for-ministry

2018 LAITY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2018

The Mission and Resource Center | 205 Jumping Brook Rd. | Neptune NJ



The 2018 Laity Leadership Academy provides tools and skills for leaders facing the challenges of the 21st century. Tracks will help laity and their churches go deeper spiritually, go wider in the community, grow older with grace and support, go farther with generosity and share the Good News with excellence.

Churches are encouraged to send a team of congregational leaders to develop an action plan to implement a new ministry in their church. Attendees will be able apply for seed grant to enact these ministries in their churches. Certified Lay Servants who successfully complete the Laity Leadership Academy and implement the action plan will receive re-certification recognition.

FIND OUT MORE AND REGISTER AT:
www.gnjumc.org



UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

LAITY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY TRACKS:

Track 1: A Closer Walk

Betty Quackenboss, Rev. Erica Munoz and a team from Aldersgate UMC

This workshop will engage participants to improve the spiritual tone in our churches; by helping to create an environment more conducive to going deeper in faith.

Track 2: Building up the Beloved Community of God

Rev. Dr. Grace Pak, Director of Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural Leadership, General Commission on Religion and Race

This track will explore how we can build up the beloved community of God as we seek ways to minister across racial and cultural boundaries.

Track 3: Vital Ministries with Older Adults

Helen Hunter & Arthur Harrell

This track provides an overview of the aging process, including physical, mental, and social changes. Learn strategies to engage in the support for elderly parishioners and families.

Track 4: Generosity Vs. Funding

Helen Hunter & Arthur Harrell

Help your church better understand the importance of "generosity" and not just fundraising. This track will discuss taking the 4-point starter stance to get it right from the start.

Track 5: Digital Strategy for Salvation

George Lagos, Director of Lay Servant Ministries and Debbie Bruce

Morning Session: This track provides guidance on how to determine a powerful church brand through sharing your "Unique Church Story."

Afternoon Session: This website building track is designed to help your congregation and their leaders understand the critical decisions for the church website.



BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

DJ VOW



IGNITE 2018

WORLD CHANGERS

You are the light of the world - Matthew 5:14

SEPTEMBER 28 - 30, 2018

WILDWOODS CONVENTION CENTER | WILDWOOD, NJ

Join nationally recognized speakers, artists and Christian youth from Greater New Jersey and beyond as we learn what it means to recognize the divine spark within us and change the world.

FIND OUT MORE AND REGISTER AT:

www.IGNITENJ.org

 /IGNITEGNJ  @IGNITEGNJ  @IGNITEGNJ



UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY



NEXT GENERATION
UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

DJ Vow to Return to IGNITE, Inspiring Youth for God

By Kamelia Ani
kameliaaniphotography@gmail.com



WILDWOOD - When thinking of Christian music, hip hop and electronic dance music don't immediately come to mind. That is, unless you're Bryan "DJ Vow" Martinez, who has built a career spreading the word of God through music.

Martinez has been spinning for over ten years in hopes of bridging the gap between church culture and millennial culture. The DJ believes that "[his] speakers can effectively communicate with someone who otherwise wouldn't have cared to engage. God can use anything and anyone for his glory, including something as taboo as electronic dance music or hip hop." This year, he brings his talents back to the IGNITE stage for the second year in a row, by popular demand.

Martinez is no stranger to youth conferences, having spun at many as well as attended as a participant in his own youth. Growing up in inner city Fort Worth, TX, in the 90s was challenging to say the least. Gangs were prevalent and many of his friends and family fell into dangerous lifestyles. Luckily for Martinez, he was invited to church by

an acquaintance and immediately saw the light. At the tender age of 12, he decided to follow Jesus wholeheartedly. He began attending church regularly as well as youth conferences just like IGNITE. It was here that he felt he was able to block out all distractions and focus on communicating with God.

There was no shortage of music in the Martinez household. The DJ's father was a musician and as a little boy he would sneak into his father's stash of music and play disco records. He grew up with a surplus of musical influence; everything from hip hop, to rock, to traditional Latino music. When he was 12, DJ Vow's older brother bought him a cheap turntable DJ set, and he was instantly hooked. He did his first show at 14, nervous as could be, and remembers that he couldn't ever make eye contact with the crowd. The more shows he did, the more comfortable he got and he continued to work hard at his music while still working his regular job.

When he was 24, Martinez met a hip hop artist named Tedashii, and thus began a series of events which led to him quitting his day job to pursue music full time. Now he spins shows with the ultimate hope of spreading the message that "it's ok to have a good time, we can live a relevant lifestyle that also pursues holiness." He believes that what is lacking with today's youth is a passionate love of God, and he hopes to ignite that in their hearts through music.

For Martinez, conferences like IGNITE hold a special place in his heart as the



DJ Vow is pictured above spinning his music for the youth of the 2017 IGNITE conference in Wildwood. Due to popular demand, Vow will be making an appearance at the 2018 conference where he hopes to ignite the hearts of youth for God. Photo by Josh Kinney

memories he made as a youth at similar events have stayed with him to this day. For that reason, every year Martinez and his wife make it a priority to anonymously sponsor a student to attend a youth conference.

He firmly believes that "no matter how hard we try, we cannot measure life change, we cannot create a formula for salvation. However, we can choose

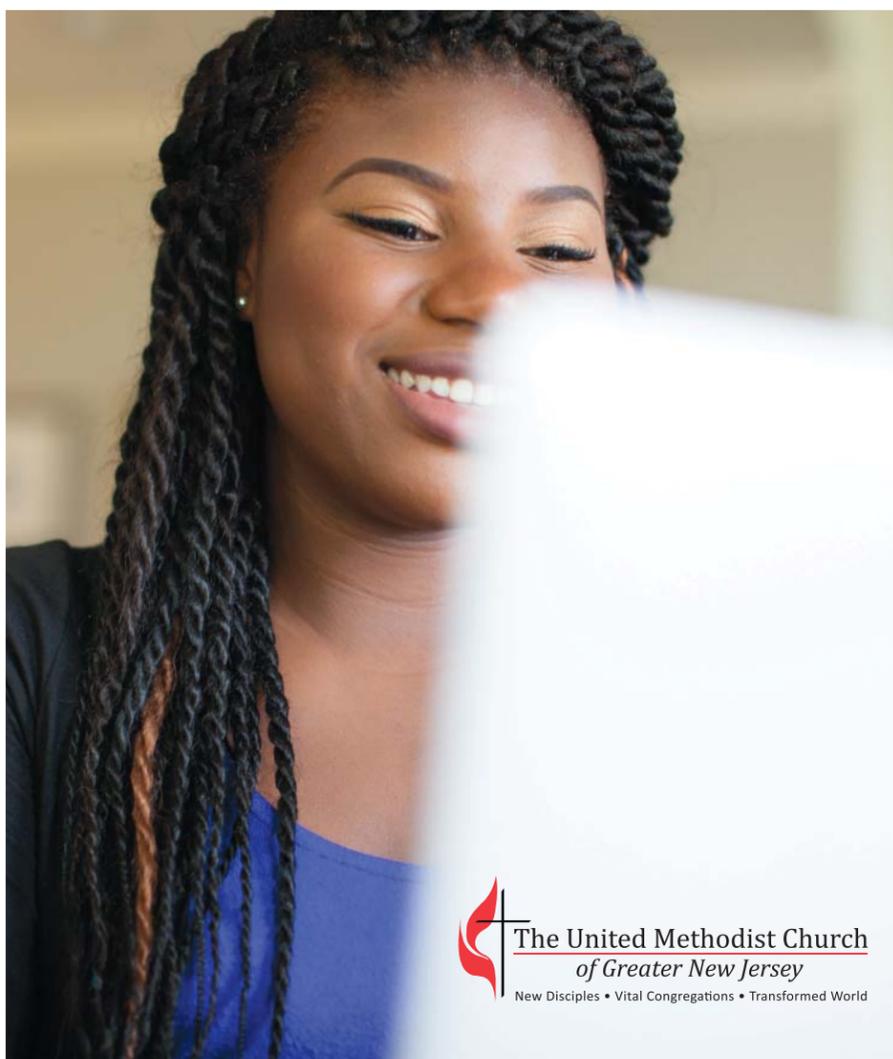
to invest into our next generation, we can cast our nets, we can pray, we can be obedient, we encourage and support the work of God through ministries that make it their main goal to communicate Jesus to young people."

Don't let your youth miss out on IGNITE's world-changing experience. Register today at www.ignitenj.org and invest in the Next Generation.

NEED INSPIRATION?

Read "The Connection" blog at:
gnjumc.org/connection

Plug in and connect with the 5 markers of vitality and hear from the GNJ Connectional Ministries Team.



 The United Methodist Church
of Greater New Jersey
New Disciples • Vital Congregations • Transformed World



We sometimes misunderstand the Bible when certain verses are taken out of context. To help avoid this, Pastor Bernie Khaw has led small groups to study the Bible in its wholeness.

Upon going into retirement from Thiells Garnerville UMC, he continues to pursue this passion and will be taking it online.

- The study will take 24 weeks (3, 8-week sessions) based on the Covenant Bible Study see www.covenantbiblestudy.com.
- Participants will spend up to 30 minutes a day reading and journaling.
- The first online meeting will be at 7:30 pm, Sunday October 7, 2018.
- The group will meet online weekly after that.
- There will be breaks between sessions to allow for Christmas and Easter.

For more details, contact

Bernie Khaw at: berniekhaw@gmail.com

Get out of Your Comfort Zone with Bread of Stone at IGNITE

by Ed Allegretto
eallegretto@gnjumc.org



WILDWOOD – “There is something to be said about events like IGNITE,” said Ben Kristijanto. “They bring people together and take everyone out of their comfort zone for one unified purpose. Together, we can change the world! Are you a world changer?”

Neither Ben nor Bill knew how to play any instruments or sing for that matter, but through the guidance of the Lord they began to learn how. Their band, Bread of Stone, is a contemporary Christian rock and pop rock band from Sioux City, Iowa, formed in 2004. Their members are lead vocalist, Ben Kristijanto, guitarist, Bill Kristijanto, bass guitarist, Tim Barnes and drummer, Jason Ferris. The band began back in the early 2000s by what they describe as “a simple calling.” They’re taking that calling to the 2018 IGNITE stage in Wildwood, Sept. 28-30.

“The Lord spoke through Bill and Ben’s dad many years ago when their dad shared with them at dinner one night, ‘The Lord wants you boys to start a music ministry’” said Barnes. In 2004, the boys officially named their band ‘Bread of Stone.’

Many musicians say the thrill of performing or the love they have for their music is what drives them to the stage. But for Bread of Stone, they love their fans and sharing stories with them.

“The best part about performing is getting to interact with the fans on stage

and afterwards. We love hearing testimonies and stories of their life – it always blesses our hearts. We definitely look forward to talking and sharing with our fans,” the band explained. They believe that is what music is really about, sharing testimonies and what’s impacted your life while using the medium to influence the world around you.

Bread of Stone believes in taking their career one day at a time saying, “We just take it day by day and just try to follow the Lord’s lead with decisions that have to be made.” They follow God’s plan and realize that “if it’s meant to be, then it will be.”

Freedom is the message Bread of Stone wants to convey at this year’s IGNITE youth conference.

“Recently our message is declaring freedom over our lives and in the lives of the crowd we are playing for,” stated Ferris. “Declaring that there is freedom over any situation you may find yourself in – our God has already won and is living proof of freedom.”

Their message of freedom shows that through God anything is possible and there’s freedom to choose one’s path.

“God gives you great and plentiful opportunities to succeed in life, the choice is yours, just follow him and he will lead you,” said Barnes.

The band hopes that everyone at IGNITE will leave knowing Jesus better and understanding their freedom.

“We hope that we all (band included) come away from this conference with knowing Jesus more deeply than we ever could have imagined and realizing the magnificent art of learning how to let go of ourselves more and more so that Jesus can have all of us with nothing holding us back,” Barnes explained.

The band believes that the importance of events such as IGNITE are paramount; helping youth leaders, kids, pastors and



Bread of Stone, a contemporary Christian rock and pop band from Sioux City, Iowa will make their way to New Jersey to take the stage at IGNITE 2018 in Wildwood, Sept. 28-30. Photo provided

church members celebrate Jesus in their lives.

“There is something special about getting away from your comfort zone for a couple of days and immersing yourself in an environment that is all about falling more in love with Jesus. This gives everyone involved the opportunity to grow deeper in their relationship with the Lord – or maybe meet Him for the first time,” stated Ferris.

This year’s IGNITE slogan is “World Changers” with a goal of inspiring youth to change the world and celebrate Jesus.

“This is a life changing event that we love getting to be a part of. Conferences such as IGNITE do not just impact our hearts for a few days, but for eternity,” said Barnes.

Bread of Stone will soon be releasing new songs. To follow them or hear news and updates, visit breadofstone.com or follow them on social media.

Come see Bread of Stone live at IGNITE 2018, Sept. 28-30 in Wildwood, NJ. Don’t miss out on this life-changing experience. Register your youth today at ignitenj.org

Preston Inspires IGNITE World-Changers

By Josh Kinney
jkinney@gnjumc.org



WILDWOOD - For IGNITE emcee and New Jersey native Preston Centuolo, IGNITE has always been as much for leaders as it is youth.

“We want the youth to feel unified and the leaders to feel reinvigorated,” Centuolo said, emphasizing the breakout sessions held for leaders to develop strategic planning and vision for their groups.

“It’s easy to get caught up in the drift unless you’re intentional about keeping your eyes on where you want to be and where you’re going,” he said.

This year, The Wildwoods Convention Center hosts the IGNITE World Changers Conference, bringing together over 1,000 students grades 6-12 throughout the Greater New Jersey region. For Centuolo, the excitement of being in a beach town he loves, coupled with the powerful experience of IGNITE has been nothing short of world changing.

Since his days as a college intern, Centuolo has continuously immersed himself in youth programming and development. After graduating from Valley Forge University with a BA in theology, he became a successful youth minister, serving in East Brunswick and Vineland.

Wishing to raise his level of impact on children, families and the community, Centuolo founded The Youth Alliance in 2000, a faith-based nonprofit specializing in cutting edge, customized school and community-based programs. The Youth Alliance now spans the country and the globe.

Centuolo has become a reputable international communicator, motivating



Preston Centuolo, longtime IGNITE emcee, is pictured above addressing the crowd at IGNITE 2017 where he vulnerably shared his own personal testimony. Centuolo is thrilled to be a part of this year’s World Changers IGNITE conference and hopes that students will leave inspired to do exactly that. Photo by Josh Kinney

crowds of young people and youth group leaders with his contagious energy. Traveling extensively as a speaker, school assembly motivational communicator and event host, Centuolo considers it a privilege to have shared at events and organizations such as Creation Festival, Youth for Christ, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and professional NBA and NFL chapels.

“I want every person to recognize they have immeasurable, irrevocable purpose and value no matter what their past or present circumstances,” said Centuolo. “Their special gifts and even their struggles can be transformed into platforms of world-changing success.” He hopes to diffuse societal messages that misconstrue success and to challenge young people to chase after meaningful, authentic dreams.

With a keen ear to absorb and process, Centuolo’s gift as an emcee allows him to draw connections, fill in gaps and

tighten the overall message while at the same time rallying, motivating and inspiring both youth and leaders through masterful storytelling.

“I want students and pastors to leave with tools and to feel empowered on how to disciple,” he said. “IGNITE is a time for leaders to plan strategically and grow their vision.”

For Centuolo, strategic planning means getting rid of distractions and a willingness to have tough conversations.

“A lot of youth group leaders tend to think implementing their ideas are the answers and keys to success,” he said, “but that’s not always true. It’s their character.”

Centuolo believes world-changing youth groups are team-led. He urges leaders not to get distracted by their circumstances but to focus on where they’re headed. “That can go for most things in life, not just youth ministry,” he added.

“Preston’s ability to share hope and love for young people is phenomenal,”

said one school social worker. “So many kids had a spark in their eye reignited because they saw so much of themselves in him.” One student said that he felt like he could “actually be somebody” after Centuolo’s motivational talk.

Centuolo addresses common issues facing students in an effort to demystify confusing messages in today’s technological era. His words have resonated with youth struggling to find balance in a chaotic, high-pressure age of information overload.

“IGNITE is not just an event,” he said, “It’s a world-changing movement.”

Can’t make it to IGNITE? Change a life anyway. You, your church or organization can be a part of changing the life of a young person by giving the gift of IGNITE. Visit www.ignitenj.org to donate to the IGNITE scholarship fund and invest in the spiritual growth and formation of the Next Generation.

Student sees 'Greatness in Spite of Divide' on Holy Land Pilgrimage

By Rev. Melissa Hinnen

Melissa.hinnen@nyac-umc.com



JERUSALEM - Jack Tironi, a GNJ student at Drew University, reports that a recent trip to Israel and Palestine has transformed his life on many levels. The trip deepened his understanding of scripture, brought new insights about the conflict in the region, reinforced his call to ministry and helped him grow as a United Methodist. The Young People's Ministries, a unit of Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church, led the journey in May with partial funding from the Young Clergy Initiative.

The pilgrimage was designed to connect United Methodist young adult leaders from around the world to increase their Biblical understanding, engage them in the global church context and learn lessons in conflict leadership.

Chris Wilterdink, who is the Director of the Young People's Ministries Program Development in the U.S. says, "The mixture of lay and clergy young adults led to the reaffirmation or discovery of calls to ministry, and I think Jack is a great example of that dynamic to the trip."

After coming together and traveling with other young United Methodists from the Philippines, Mozambique, Russia, Germany and the U.S. including Colorado, Texas and Tennessee for the ten day exploration, Jack says, "We all became very close and I'm so happy to now call all of them good friends."

The participants bonded especially in the evenings when they reflected together on the day's activities.

The group journeyed throughout the region, including from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, Jericho to Nazareth, and a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Because they were constantly on the move, they got to visit many sites in the Holy Land. Tironi says that "Each of the places had a clear connection to religion and history and many related to the history, people, culture and the sacredness of stories

we've read from the Bible."

In a presentation to his home church, First UMC of Blairstown, he said, "Seeing each of these sites throughout the week, I truly felt God guiding me through the story of not just Israel, but of Jesus Christ. How he would have lived, his environment, where he went to pray and worship and teach."

The group prayed, worshipped, and learned together exploring the holy sites from their Christian heritage while reflecting on the centuries of conflict and occupation in the land.

One of the stops was the Tent of Nations, a Palestinian farm owned by the Nassar family. The group camped out on top of the mountain overlooking Israeli settlements. Tironi says that hearing first hand of a personal Palestinian experience about how the Israeli government has tried to claim his family's land offered him a helpful perspective.

"Palestinians are usually portrayed in the U.S. media as terrorists," he said. "But we had the opportunity to sit and learn from Palestinian people who are actively working for peace."

Noting the complexity of the Palestinian and Israeli conflict, Tironi said that visiting a Palestinian refugee camp outside of Bethlehem had a significant impact on his understanding.

"The camp was a disaster zone. We took a walk through the streets and saw empty metal shells. There were tear gas cans that had been shot at children." He continued, "I understand that there are two sides and that Israeli Jews have suffered from deep persecution and discrimination. But it is clear, even by just driving around and seeing the disparity in the homes and neighborhoods, that one side has more power and privilege than the other and that the Israeli government treats Palestinian people cruelly."

Much of the journey was led by Mejd Tours using "a multiple-narrative guided experience." According to Wilterdink, "The model allows for leaders of different backgrounds and opinions to both present information and engage in discussion during the tour, allowing for open-ended questions and engagement with the trip participants."



Jack Tironi, a GNJ student at Drew University, is pictured hiking up the Snake Path at Masada during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Israel and Palestine through Young People's Ministries, a unit of Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church. Photo by Chris Wilterdink

The tour guides were Palestinian and Israeli, and each guide lives in Jerusalem. Tironi says they took turns showing participants the sites and teaching about the history.

"They debated in front of us about the land, people, and what people want. It was a rare opportunity to witness and learn because they didn't avoid each other but found mutual respect."

Making a connection with the multiple narrative model and the future of The United Methodist Church, Tironi says, "I see a lot of greatness in spite of the divide. I wish it wasn't there. But we need to work around our differences."

Wilterdink agreed saying, "We at YPM think this multiple-narrative model can be helpful for the UMC. Since we have a big tent, we have lots of different backgrounds and experiences. It is important to experience healthy and respectful dialogue among leaders. That way, young people can bring this model into disagreements at whatever level of leadership they find themselves in the future."

Expressing gratitude, Tironi explains

that through this journey he deepened his love for The United Methodist Church as a global community. As he built relationships with United Methodists from around the world on this Holy Land trip and saw the general church at work, he recognized the many ways The United Methodist Church is engaged in strong kingdom building.

"We are flourishing and will continue to flourish," he said. "There is so much more happening than we know. I am grateful for the opportunity to see the strength of the connection."

Planning to continue sharing what he experienced on the Holy Land pilgrimage Tironi says he will use what he saw to expand his understanding of scripture and ministry to serve God. He told the congregation at his home church, "Let's remember our paths as we go out into the world to share the good news. Let's not become so embroiled in conflict and confusion that we lose sight of our faith and let our fears get the best of us. Let's work on that... so that we can all live in this place with an even greater peace than ever."

PaCE Group Leads Clergywomen to Release Year-Long Devotional

Continued from page 1

for me and I think for us all. God has blessed us as we have become connected through the love of Christ in this devotional."

Mears also shared that the women encouraged each other and discovered their creativity along the way. They had fun cooking together, eating, taking creative classes and supporting each other through personal life experiences.

"During our first meeting, Lynn received news that her mother-in-law had passed away. We surrounded her with a prayer circle," Noll elaborated. "We were there for one another's life experiences. Jean had her first child during that time period. We were at her baby shower cheering her on in this new adventure. Three of us retired during that time and we went to each other's celebrations. We were there for one another in prayer, support and encouragement."

The devotion writing project, funded by a PaCE grant, took about two years to complete and was inspired by the lives and faith journeys of the Sisters. The devotional follows the church year and the lectionary. Each week features a different theme and includes daily devotions, recipes, hymns, reflections and photos.

"One week was about weddings. I said, 'I love to preside at weddings so let me do that week.' Another would say, 'I have a picture of me doing a wedding, let's put that in,'" said Noll. "So we all knew the themes and submitted our stories, pictures, recipes and prayers. Gabby and Gina put all the pieces together."

When asked what their hopes were for those reading the devotional, the Salsa Sisters had a variety of answers centered on inspiration, connection and joy.

Eriksen hoped the devotional would help people have a deeper relationship with God, while Purkis-Brash wanted to inspire those who read it to a sense of creativity in their spiritual lives.

"My hope is that people see God in our stories and our experiences," said Martone. "I hope that those that read it can deepen their relationship with God and with the women in their lives."

Mears added that she hoped "that people will find joy, encouragement and Jesus within the pages of this devotional as we found Jesus within each other."

In celebration of the devotional's completion and release, the Salsa Sisters held a launch party with family and friends on August 9 at the Mission and Resource Center in Neptune.

"We each read our favorite story that we had written. We shared food, fun and fellowship. The room was filled with people, and of course Vicki brought us homemade salsa and chips," Noll shared. "How could you have a launch party with the Salsa Sisters without eating salsa! We were so happy that all of our hard work had finally come together."

Salsa Sister's One Year Devotional: Sister's Alive in Leadership, Spirituality, and the Arts can be purchased on ibooks and Amazon.

Register now for PaCE groups starting this fall. Registration is open until September 15. To find out more and register online at www.gnjumc.org/pace



2018 SPRING PACE GROUP REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN.

Clergy will meet monthly for a period of 8-10 months to support excellence by building relationships, exploring ideas, expanding horizons, creating synergy, unlocking the imagination and engaging conversation.

Grants of up to \$2,500/annually will allow PaCE groups to engage in extended learning in a retreat format or in intensive learning with outside expertise.





SMALL GROUPS FOR SCHOOL DESEGREGATION.

As children return to school, take time to go deeper with your congregation on exploring solutions to desegregating N.J. schools. Use the curriculum and resources for small groups in your church at: www.gnjumc.org/congregationalvitality/smallgroups

There you will find Small Group study resources, video, podcast, news, statements and other information regarding GNJ and the New Jersey Coalition for Diverse and Inclusive Schools.

United Methodists Lead Prayer Vigil in Support of Immigrant Families

Continued from page 1

put them in bondage. He said let them come to me. What has happened to our nation? All means all!"

Harriett Olson, General Secretary of United Methodist Women, travelled from Washington, D.C. to take part in the vigil. She encouraged the group to act, attend rallies, and contact their government representatives.

Two women in the crowd seemed particularly invigorated by Olson's words. Julia Aberget and Joanne Booth from Pennington are not new to the idea of protesting.

"We grew up in 60s and have that tradition of getting our feet on the ground, showing up and showing dismay and disappointment for what's happening," said Aberget. "There's a vacuum in leadership in the country and the church can fill that vacuum. Rallies like this fill a need for people in the church to show loyalty to immigrants and to the gospel. Along with other neighboring churches, we've sponsored race and diversity forums discussing local issues. We can and should use the church as a tool for empowerment for those who do not have a voice."

The crowd heard several speakers including Bishop William Stokes of the Episcopal Church of New Jersey, bowed in prayer as GNJ clergy lifted up prayers, and joined together in song as Drew University's Mark Miller led music along with a choir from Asbury Park's Spirit of Truth Vision Outreach Church.

One of the Prayer Rally's most powerful moments occurred when one of the speakers asked the crowd to touch the wall of the detention center during a prayer. More than one hundred pairs of hands touched the walls sensing those who were on the other side and felt God's Holy Spirit flowing amongst their neighbors who gathered with them for justice and for God.

"As United Methodists of Greater New

Jersey, along with other people of faith and people of good will, we recognize, embrace, and affirm all persons, regardless of country of origin, as members of the family of God," said Rev. Hector Burgos, GNJ's Director of Connectional Ministries. "We are here because we care!"

Burgos encouraged attendees to continue advocating for children, young people and immigrant families and to develop awareness programs to educate congregations and communities about the importance of advocating for immigrants.

The speakers denounced the mistreatment of immigrants being held in facilities across the U.S. including the facility in Elizabeth. The crowd urged federal representatives to take steps toward the adoption of a fair and just comprehensive immigration policy that respects human beings who are escaping from torture, potential death, and inhuman conditions in their home nations.

"In our State of New Jersey, in Elizabeth, 'strangers' in our land are being held by our government's Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency at a 'for profit' detention center," stated Delaney. "These individuals came to our nation believing that there was hope here, a possibility for a future, and a people believing the words of the Statue of Liberty have not been welcome. In ever increasing rates, human beings who have struggled to get to our nation have been arrested and detained."

Leaders urged the crowd not to remain silent as those less fortunate themselves were mistreated, citing "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39) and "You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 23:9). They also encouraged the power of prayer. Drew Theological School Dean Javier Viera put forth a



Did you know coaching is available to clergy in GNJ?

A coach will assist in achieving leadership goals and action plans over an eight month period and can be comprised of eight one hour sessions, or sixteen half hour sessions.

Don't miss out. Registration for coaching is now open!

Visit gnjumc.org/clergy-coaching or contact Diana Picurro at: 732-359-1064 | dpicurro@gnjumc.org

prayer calling those in government power to have an awakening and change of heart; that they should "allow the love of God to reflect in their treatment of all his children."

GNJ's Immigration Task Force remains committed to ensure United Meth-

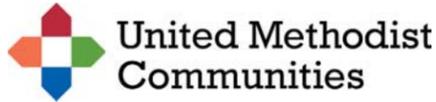
odists in New Jersey and other people of faith continue providing prayerful witness to faith traditions which consistently teach to love all and be welcoming. Those interested in working with GNJ's Immigration taskforce can e-mail Delaney at pdattstpauls@gmail.com

United Methodist Communities Certified as a Great Place to Work

By Janet M. Carrato

jcarrato@UMCommunities.org

NEPTUNE - United Methodist Communities, a multi-site senior care organization in New Jersey, announced that it has been certified as a Great Place to Work® by independent analysts at Great Place to Work Institute. The certification process considered anonymous and confidential employee surveys from across United Methodist Communities' 11 locations.



"The secret of happiness is not in doing what one likes, but in liking what one does" (James M. Barrie). Great Place to Work® certification provides undeniable support that the associates at United Methodist Communities love what they do.

Great Place to Work®, an independent research and consulting firm, evaluated more than 60 elements of team members' experiences on the job. These included employee pride in the organization's community impact, belief that their work makes a difference, and feeling their work has special meaning. Rankings are based on employees' experiences, no matter who they are or what they do. Activated Insights, an independent firm, conducted the survey and analyzed the results.

President and CEO, Lawrence Carlson, affirmed, "My job as a leader is to provide opportunities for all our associates to have a meaningful impact in the lives of our clients, residents and families. Our journey to person-directed living has been instrumental in providing an empowering environment in which to work. The extent to which our associates are engaged directly impacts the quality of life of those we serve. It's a win-win."

Attaining the Great Place to Work® certification for 2018-19 has affirmed associates' great pride (95%), great atmosphere (92%) and sense of challenge (91%) they have experienced at United Methodist Communities. Great Place to Work® certification also provides undeniable proof to potentially the best new associates that UMC has been vetted as a great place to further their careers.

"We expect that this certification will lead to much higher associate retention, greater resident satisfaction and higher regard throughout New Jersey for UMC's brand. I am so proud to work with so many passionate and committed people with a heart for serving seniors and look forward to other like-minded individuals joining us at all levels of our organization," stated David Glenn, vice president of human resources.

About Great Place to Work

Great Place to Work is the global authority on high-trust, high-performance workplace cultures. Through its certification programs, Great Place to Work® recognizes outstanding workplace cultures and produces the annual Fortune "100 Best Companies to Work For®" and Great Place to Work Best Workplaces lists for Millennials, Women, Diversity, Small & Medium Companies, industries and, internationally, countries and regions.

Through its culture consulting services, Great Place to Work® helps clients create great workplaces that outpace peers on key business metrics like revenue growth, profitability, retention and stock performance. Learn more at Greatplacetowork.com and on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

About United Methodist Communities

United Methodist Communities is a not-for-profit organization guided by a volunteer board of directors affiliated in ministry with the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey. The mission of the United Methodist Communities is compassionately serving in community so that all are free to choose abundant life.

With over 110 years of continuous operation, the organization has grown to nine communities offering affordable senior housing; independent, residential and assisted living; memory support; respite; rehabilitation; long-term care; and hospice and palliative care to persons of all faith backgrounds. In 2016, United Methodist Communities expanded its services to include in-home personal care through HomeWorks. For additional information call 732-922-9800 or visit UMCommunities.org.

CONFERENCE HAPPENINGS

MIRACLES AT WORK

Tanzania Hope Center Underway

The dining room of the Dar es Salaam Hope Center is currently under construction. Through the Miracles Everywhere Campaign, GNJ is funding a miracle in the Tanzanian capital. To be a part of the miracle and find out how your church can get involved in a specific area of the campaign, turn to Page 3.



Celebrating 50th Anniversary of The United Methodist Church

The GNJ United Methodist Historical Society invites all to a special morning presentation by Rev. Fred Day, General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History on Sept. 29 at the historic Evangelical UMC, 14 West Cohawkin Rd., Clarksboro, NJ 08020. Day's interactive presentation will be on celebrating the 50th anniversary of The United Methodist Church which is this year's Heritage Sunday theme. Contact Mark Shenise at mshenise@gcah.org or call him at 973-408-3194 for more info.

Join GNJ Water Filtration & Medical Team in Haiti

Join a GNJ Water Filtration and Medical Team to Haiti, April 6-13, 2019. The cost is \$1,600 per person. Note that the environment in Haiti is hot, rough and often unpredictable. Please be aware that you should be in good health and able to navigate mountainous terrain. Email UMVIM@gnjumc.org to obtain application and find out more.

49th NEJ BMCR Annual Meeting

The Northeastern Jurisdiction of Black Methodists for Church Renewal will hold its 49th annual meeting "Building Bridges Together with Love and Unity" on Oct. 11-12 at St. Mark UMC in Hanover, MD. Visit nejbmcr.org for more info and to register.



Abundant Choices For Seniors

United Methodist Communities brings compassionate care to New Jersey's seniors with our full suite of living and care options. This includes affordable senior housing; home care with HomeWorks; and assisted living, memory care, long-term care, rehabilitation, and hospice and palliative care in our full service communities. We offer independent living for active seniors in our continuing care retirement community.

Reach out to us for all of your senior living or care needs.

Call 732-922-9800 for additional information or visit our website, UMCommunities.org.



Home Office
3311 State Route 33 | Neptune, NJ 07753
732-922-9800 | www.UMCommunities.org



SEEKING CHURCH HISTORIES

Greater New Jersey Commission on Archives and History seeks church histories for the annual Local Church History Contest.

Church Histories may be submitted under one of three categories:

- The Steelman Methodist History Award** (For best local church history)
- The John C. Goodwin Multi-Media Church History Award** (For electronic or PowerPoint history)
- The Morris L. Smith Ethnic Church History Award** (For a GNJC ethnic church history)

All histories must conform to the guidelines and be received by January 16, 2019.

Submission guidelines may be found at:
www.gnjumc.org/our-history-and-values

For more information, contact:
Don DeGroat, Vice-chair | dfdegroat4@aol.com or 570-646-9298

CONFERENCE HAPPENINGS

2018 Dunkle-Mackey Preaching Seminar

The 2018 Dunkle-Mackey Preaching Seminar will be held Tues, Sept. 11 at Grace UMC in Wilmington, DE and will feature Rev. Otis Moss, III. To register, email Rev. Douglas Ridley at dougridley@comcast.net or visit pen-del.org for more info.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Seeking Part-Time Worship and Ministry Design Coordinator

GNJ is seeking a part-time coordinator to produce resources for congregations for worship, small groups and local mission opportunities. The coordinator will also work collaboratively to promote, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the resources. Visit gnjumc.org for more info and to apply.

Director of Development

Applications for the position of Director of Development for the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey are being sought. The position will further the mission and ministry of GNJ by organizing and leading fundraising campaigns, cultivating and raising large gifts, and planning, and encouraging congregational investment in the Stewardship Foundation. See the position description and application at gnjumc.org

OBITUARIES

Matthew V. Labriola, Retired Elder, died on Aug. 9. A Memorial Service will be held Sept. 22 at Northside UMC in Brewster, MA. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent in Memory of Matthew V. Labriola to Northside UMC, 701 Alpine Rd., Brewster, MA 02631. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Sandra Labriola, 30 Pine View Dr., Brewster, MA 02631.

Wayne Wentworth, Spouse of Retired Full Elder, Patricia Wentworth, died on Aug. 20. A Memorial Service was held Aug. 26 at Mahaffey – Milano Funeral Home in Mt. Ephraim, NJ. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Rev. Patricia Wentworth, 37D Crestwood Pkwy, Whiting, NJ 08759-3565.

Elizabeth (Betty) Barrett, Surviving Spouse of Rev. Ralph L. Barrett, died on Aug. 20. A Memorial Service was held Aug. 30 at United Methodist Communities at The Shores in Ocean City, NJ. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to United Methodist Communities at The Shores, 2201 Bay Ave., Ocean City, NJ 08226, toward: Fellowship Fund or Associate Christmas Fund. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Patricia Barrett, 2149 Brookview Dr., Nashville, TN 37214-2033.

Margaret Moore, Surviving Spouse of Rev. James H. Moore, died on Aug. 20. A Memorial Service will be held Sept. 15 at Southern Hills UMC in Lexington, KY. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to Christian Friends of Korea, 129 Center Ave., Black Mountain, NC 28711. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to William Moore, 4709 Matthew Crt., Lexington, KY 40514.

Shirley E. Reasner, Spouse of Retired Full Elder Robert Reasner, died Aug. 15. A Memorial Service was held Aug. 24 at Johnson – Gloschat Funeral Home Chapel in Kalispell, MT. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent in Memory of Shirley E. Reasner to Epworth UMC, 329 2nd Ave., Kalispell, MT 59901 or a Multiple Sclerosis Foundation of your choice. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Robert Reasner, 674 West Valley Dr., Kalispell, MT 59901.

Rev. Williard (Bill) Albertus, Retired Elder, died July 29. A Memorial Service was held Aug. 3 at United Congregational Church in Middletown, RI. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent in Memory of Rev. Willard (Bill) Albertus to CUMAC, P.O. Box 2721, Paterson, NJ 07509 or United Congregational Church, 524 Valley Rd., Middletown, RI 02842. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Cornelia (Connie) Albertus, 600 Valley Rd., Apt. 220, Middletown, RI 02842.

Anna L. Davis, Surviving Spouse of Rev. William A. Davis, died on July 14. A Memorial Service was held on July 20 at Eglington Cemetery in Clarksboro, NJ. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Carol Baston, 695 SE Pin Oak Terrace, Stuart, FL 34997.

Rev. Charnell Kolm, died July 17. A Memorial Service was held on Aug. 4 at Wayside UMC in Ocean, NJ. Expressions of sympathy may be sent in care of Wayside UMC to P.O. Box 177, Oakhurst, NJ 07755.

Rev. Richard Workman, Retired Elder, died on July 18. A Memorial Service was held on July 30 at Trinity UMC in Hummelstown, PA. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent in Memory of Rev. Ricgard Workman to the National Adoption Center, 1500 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Debora (Debbie) Workman, 119 E. High St., Hummelstown, PA 17036

Gail Brown, Surviving Spouse of Rev. Donald H. Brown died on July 17. A Memorial Service was held July 21 at Archer UMC in Allendale, NJ. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent in Memory of Gail Brown to CUMAC, 223 Ellison St., Paterson NJ 07505. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Kathy Griffiths, 158 Island Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430

Have Questions? We're Here to Help

Let the Mission and Resource Center in Neptune, NJ serve you. Have a question about ministry, registrations, forms or events? The first place to start is with your Regional Administrator.

- For the **Northern Region**: *Gateway North, Palisades, Skylands*, email Krystina Michalopoulos: kmichalopoulos@gnjumc.org or call 732-359-1075
- For the **Central Region**, *Capital, Northern Shore, Raritan Valley*, email Megan McKay: mmckay@gnjumc.org or call 732-359-1070
- For the **Southern Region**, *Gateway South, Delaware Bay, Cape Atlantic*, email Jen Creran: jceran@gnjumc.org or call 732-359-1080



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ONE DAY SEMINAR
COPING WITH GRIEF
SEPTEMBER 29, 2018
8:30AM - 12:30PM
~GUEST SPEAKER~
CARLEY TSAGIOS
VALLEY HOSPICE BEREAVEMENT COUNSELOR
HAVE YOU LOST SOMEONE YOU LOVE? DO YOU FEEL AS IF THE REST OF THE WORLD HAS MOVED ON AND YOU ARE JUST NOT READY?
JOIN US AS WE:
LEARN MORE ABOUT THE STAGES OF OUR GRIEF
SHARE OUR STORIES
CONNECT WITH OTHERS ON THE JOURNEY
BEGIN THE ROAD TO HEALING
~NO REGISTRATION NEEDED~
GRACE CHURCH COMMUNITY
UNITED METHODIST
555 RUSSELL AVENUE, WYCKOFF NJ 07481
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The October 2018 issue deadline is September 16, 2018

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