

THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

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Young Justice Leaders Begin Sacred Journey

By Josh Kinney
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NEPTUNE – They're here in our midst, and they're stepping out in faith. Scattered across Greater New Jersey United Methodist Churches are bold, confident and courageous high school leaders who are committed to journeying together toward an understanding of racial justice in the U.S. and their lives. They're called 'The Joshua Generation,' and they've embarked on a Civil Rights Pilgrimage through historical places, encountering the people that made equality happen and meeting those who continue the work in some of the most challenging spaces.

Thanks to a generous grant from The General Commission on Race and Religion, GNJ is sponsoring this pilgrimage for a group of 15 diverse high school students from across the conference who have already begun sharing their hearts, building bonds, and having deep, difficult and life-affirming conversations with one another.

Led by Rev. Brenda Ehlers, Associate Pastor for Children, Youth, and Educational Ministries at Morrow Church in Maplewood, the group began their first monthly meeting on September 15 at the Mission and Resource Center where they



GNJ students gather as part of the 'Joshua Generation' Civil Rights pilgrimage on Sept. 15 at the Mission and Resource Center in Neptune. Photo by Josh Kinney

were given writings by some of the leading thinkers on race and civil rights. The group brainstormed, discussed, shared stories and opened up about experiences dealing with issues of race and social justice in their own lives.

"I think this is a fantastic opportunity," said Vivienne Diaz of Sussex UMC. "I really do want to be a change maker who builds community in the church. I hope to grow as a person and remove my biases

and prejudices and make myself a better person."

Diaz's mother first learned of the Joshua Generation through the GNJ Digest weekly e-newsletter who passed the information onto her daughter.

"I'm already a leader," declared Diaz when asked how she could lead in her present context and circumstances. "I try very hard to make sure people get heard and have their say. I know I can do more.

Now it's just about finding people who can help me do that."

In the Joshua Generation, Diaz has found a team of like-minded students committed to social justice.

"Imagine boarding a bus with a diverse group of other students to embark on a journey through the places of our country's most significant Civil Rights events," said Ehlers. "Imagine walking

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Journey to Beloved Community: A Conversation on Race

By Rev. Dr. Brandon Cho and Dr. Lillie Edwards

MORRISTOWN - In our growing diverse community, how do we get along with each other and share a good life together? This question led the leaders of Morristown to organize a community-wide conversation on race called 'Journey to the Beloved Community.'

The Juneteenth celebration in Morristown was a marvelous and moving day remembering Freedom Day (June 19, 1865) and the historic announcement of the emancipation of people enslaved in the former Confederate States. The event was made possible thanks to Bethel AME Church in Morristown which envisioned a community-wide Juneteenth celebration as part of its 175th anniversary. The General Commission on Archives and History of the UMC, Drew University's Special Collection Archives and Drew Theological School were excited to help resource the day and Morristown UMC hosted the conversation on race.

Dr. Lillie Edwards, Professor Emerita of History and African-American studies at Drew and a member of the St. Mark's UMC in Montclair, organized the conversation.

"Loving humanity requires us to heal the nations, including our own local communities, by engaging in conversations about race—past and present—to foster a future in which we love our neighbors as ourselves," said Edwards.

Led by facilitators, small groups discussed how the human family can live together peacefully as we journey together towards a community of hope, love and mutual respect. Edwards testified, "As 75 people launched into lively conversations about race, the church fellowship hall reverberated with energy and excitement. The cacophony



Small groups at Morristown UMC discussed how the human family can live together peacefully as they journey together towards a community of hope, love and mutual respect. Photo provided

of voices reminded me of the disciples receiving the power of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem. On a Saturday afternoon at Morristown UMC, I witnessed the power of the human spirit to embrace humanity and embark on a journey to the 'beloved community.'"

"Marking the day, I'm reminded that just because freedom is proclaimed doesn't mean it is practiced," said Rev. Fred Day, General Secretary of The United Methodist Commission on Archives and History. "Freedom, in the post-Civil War era and to this day, is something that requires continuing vigilance, determination and action. One of the things that made the day especially meaningful and transformational was not the pageantry on the Morristown Green, but dialog

among community leaders held at the Morristown UMC. These roundtable discussions gathered many community leaders to talk about what's still needed for people to live into Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of all living and experiencing the 'beloved community.'"

After developing a list of more than 30 potential action-steps, the participants accepted the challenge of successfully implementing just one of them in their respective houses of worship, organizations or communities.

"The depth and breadth of these action steps reveals how much work awaits those who embark on the journey to the 'beloved community,'" Edwards noted.

There are historical connections

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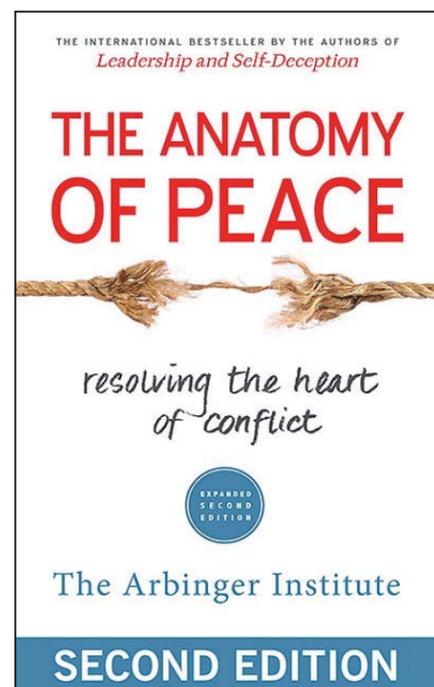
Clergy to Discover Anatomy of Peace at Convocation

By Josh Kinney
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LONG BRANCH – *The Anatomy of Peace* by the Arbinger Institute diagrams a way of being that starts with a heart of peace which is necessary to address conflict and change. It is based on the idea that people put themselves in boxes that become barriers to affecting change and that the most important part of helping things go right is getting out of the box.

GNJ clergy will go deeper with these ideas to engage in peacemaking with Jim

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A Message from the Bishop



The Bible Scripture, Story, Revelation

One of my good friends and mentors, Rev. Fred Day is a great story teller. We grew up in the same church and served together for three years in Philadelphia. I loved to hear Fred preach because of the rich stories he told. Sometimes he would portray characters in the Bible. Like a good storyteller, Fred embellished the stories, filled in

the gaps, but most of all, Fred helped you find yourself in the story. The Bible is filled with stories. Each story reveals something of God and how the people of God are called to live lives set apart for the purposes of God. The entire Bible is a story itself of the movement of God in and through creation, and especially through humanity.

This is the second part of a series on the Bible. Previously I talked about the Bible as scripture, the holy writings for Christians. Sixty-six books, 39 in the Hebrew Bible and 27 in the New Testament that make up the Bible. The Bible wasn't fully formed until 405 A.D. In other words, more than 350 years after Jesus' death. The Bible was an unfolding document that was shaped after years of prayer, conversation and even controversy about which books would and would not be included.

Today I want to focus on the Bible as story, sacred story. Stories are important because they carry key messages about purpose, meaning, values, traditions and how to be better. Stories tell us why our life is worth living.

An Unfolding Story

While the Bible is a collection of stories, it is also an unfolding story. For instance, Deuteronomy and Leviticus talk about dietary laws. What you can eat and what you can't eat. You can eat beef but not pork. You can eat fish with scales but not shellfish. Jesus followed these dietary laws. Then the epistles, the letters of the New Testament, tell us you can eat pork and shellfish. The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) also talked about not eating meat that was more than two days old and you should never eat any animal that you find that was already dead, although you could sell it to someone that was not part of your family and community (Deuteronomy 14). If you ate the wrong animals or seafood it was considered unclean and that by eating it, you were defiled and separated from God.

Why the change? It doesn't give us a clear reason. This is why sometimes you have to fill in the gaps as we retell the story. Maybe, people who were eating the wrong kind of animals or seafood were getting sick and even dying. Maybe eating meat that was three or more days old made people sick, even to the point of death. Maybe several thousand years later in the New Testament, people had learned better techniques for preparing, cooking and preserving food and people were no longer getting sick from pork and other foods.

We also find that early in God's story with humanity, people of God like Moses, Esau, Solomon and others had more than one wife. Various rational have been given for this. In the epistles, it indicates that church leaders should not have more than one wife (1 Timothy 3 and Titus). Following the New Testament period, the church taught that not just church leaders, but all men should not have more than one wife.

The Bible unfolds and deepens with the growth and development of humanity. Like the Bible, the Creator's expectations for our living matures as we mature in mind, body and soul.

Message More Than History

Biblical stories were not bound to historical ordering either. The Gospel of John is a good of example of faith story being more important than history. John orders stories differently than Matthew, Mark and Luke. For instance, John tells the story of the cleansing of the temple in the second chapter of his book while the other Gospels all speak of it in the last week of Jesus' life. Did Jesus cleanse the temple twice? Probably not. I imagine if Jesus turned the tables over in the beginning of his ministry, the temple guards would not let him back in. Likely, John is telling the story of Jesus' life and leads with this story to signal to the reader that Jesus came to turn things upside down, including religious practices and abuses.

Many of us who like to tell stories understand that sometimes we order things in the story to carry the message and meaning. Sometimes the story grows as new understanding emerges. Either way, the story, the biblical story continues to drive toward one purpose, the salvation of humanity, coming into a relationship with God through grace found in Jesus Christ and living a Godly life now. The stories teach us about who God is and that it is an unfolding story.

As I shared in the first article of this series, United Methodists are not literal in their interpretation of the Bible. In fact, Orthodox religions and other smaller sects are literalists. Dress, diets and Sabbath observance are lived literally, just as the Bible states. I do not know of any United Methodists who follows the Bible literally. Instead, our Wesleyan heritage says God has gifted us with intellect, experience and tradition which are lenses through which we read and interpret scripture. The Bible was an unfolding story that changed as life experiences grew. The Bible wants us to understand God's message without getting lost or tripped up by the details.

My faith and study of the Bible leads me to believe that the Bible is inspired story, God's 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. I find myself and the story for my life in the Bible. Thanks be to God!

Bishop John Schol
The United Methodist Church
of Greater New Jersey

The November 2018 issue deadline is October 16, 2018



Church Serves Veterans in Hazlet

By Maggie Nordt

HAZLET - "Our veterans must never be forgotten!" These were the words of Veterans' Ministry leader Sgt. David Nordt at St. John's UMC in Hazlet, as he led a group of volunteers to special veteran events in August. Following church service on August 19, the group travelled to NJ Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park to spend time with veteran residents. During the visit, veterans enjoyed the opportunity to share stories and photographs of their military service, as well as their lives after their service. Prayer shawls crocheted and prayed over by the members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry at St. John's were offered to veterans during the visit. The volunteers found it a privilege to spend time with these patriots, including many from WWII. The Veterans' Ministry supports the Veterans Home with ongoing visits during which they distribute small gifts such as word

searches and puzzles.

On August 20, a group of volunteers from St. John's accompanied Sgt. Nordt to Operation Jersey Cares in Raritan. OJC supports deployed military, proud veterans and military families. During the visit, volunteers participated in the packing of care cartons for active military. They shared that it was wonderful to witness the tremendous work being done by so many volunteers of different ages and from many different places in New Jersey. The Veterans' Ministry continues to support Operation Jersey Cares with much needed items for shipment as well as monetary donations, all made available through generous contributions from members of the church congregation as well as others.

Sgt. Nordt invites participation from all who are interested in this ministry. You do not have to be a veteran to be a part of this important cause. He can be reached at 732-703-0064.

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FOR ADVERTISING RATES, INFORMATION and PLACEMENT

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ADVENT SMALL GROUPS

Advent is a busy time. How will we fill our days with activities that prepare us for the arrival of Jesus? Consider these interactive ideas.

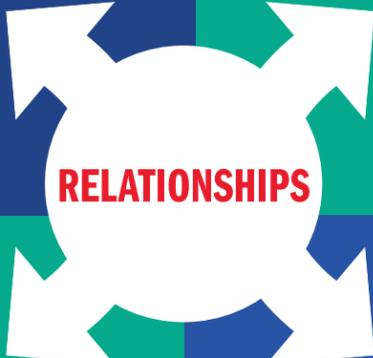
ACTIVITIES

Rather than a typical group meeting, center your small groups on several activities:

- **Adult Advent Calendar:** Engage creatively in daily prayer as you move towards Christmas. Add a name or a word then doodle and color each day.
- **Holiday Concert:** Take in a holiday concert in your community. Stop for coffee and share how the music adds to your appreciation for the holiday.
- **Read your favorite children's Christmas books:** Discover the joy of Christmas through the eyes of a child. Close by reading Luke 2: 1-20.
- **Share your experience:** Holiday time is often rushed, let someone feel valued by giving the gift of your time.

MISSION

- Create and send Christmas cards to shut-ins, college students and military personnel.
- Adopt a child or a family for Christmas – shop for gifts and food treats.
- The prophets have a powerful message for Advent, read the proclamation of Malachi, Jeremiah, Isaiah from the lectionary, discuss how these themes are relevant today.
- In the midst of anxious times, Advent offers a promise of hope. Where have you seen some of your hopes fulfilled? What do you hope for the year ahead?



RELATIONSHIPS

CHILDREN

- *Deep Blue Bible Storybook*, the Christmas edition contains eight Nativity stories retold for children ages 3-6. Each story invites the reader and listener into the experience. Available in Spanish.
- *One Starry Night* allows families to come together to experience the sights and sounds of Bethlehem. Revised and updated for all church sizes.
- *Random Acts of Kindness*, encourage children to share their gifts this Advent – help a sibling to a chore, invite someone to sit at your lunch table.
- Rev. Brenda Ehlers will be sharing Advent and Christmas ideas for children's ministry on Zoom, Oct 10 at 7 p.m. Register at: gnjumc.org/children-ministries-connections

BOOKS

- *Home for Christmas:* Justin Coleman shares the real-life stories of those facing hard times and are searching for the hope, love, peace and joy.
- *The Gift of The Nutcracker:* Matt Rawle takes a look at this Christmas classic helping us discover God's greatest gift.
- *Faithful Leader:* Adam Hamilton unfolds Joseph's place in the nativity story and his great example of humbly obeying God even when we don't understand.
- *A Thrill of Hope:* The artwork of John Swanson inspired by the story of Christmas as told in the gospels of Matthew and Luke is paired with commentary of biblical scholars for a easy to use small group discussion.

TIPS: Use the talents and gifts of the group members to guide your plan. Consider mixing and matching some of the ideas. For more information and links to different resource check out www.gnjumc.org/congregationalvitality/smallgroups

Or reach out to Gina Yeske, Director of Small Groups: 732.359.1042 | gyeske@gnjumc.org

Miracles Everywhere

Leadership Gifts Top \$640,000!

Thanks to a commitment from church leaders in Greater New Jersey, the Miracles Everywhere leadership gifts have topped \$640,000! Praise God! Miracles Everywhere will raise \$5.2 million for Next Generation Ministries, A Future With Hope, hurricane disaster relief and a new partnership.

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.

Campaign Guides and Week by Week Resources

You can access week by week resources for your church's Miracles Everywhere campaign at www.gnjumc.org/miracleseverywhere.

What you will find:

Commitment cards, graphics, newsletters, social media announcements, sermon series, small group curriculums, videos, announcement scripts, bulletin inserts, PowerPoints and ProPresenter templates, tally sheets and more. We have you covered with all the materials your church needs to run their campaign.

- Use these 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 all the available resources at your fingertips.
- Schedule a Guest Speaker: Guest preachers or speakers are available for the Miracles Everywhere Campaign during your service or at an event or group gathering. Some can address the overall campaign while others have experience with the specific areas of the campaign and provide personal testimony or a moment for mission.

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
www.gnjumc.org/miracleseverywhere



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OF GREATER NEW JERSEY



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OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

Safe Sanctuaries Certification Quick, Easy, and Required

By Josh Kinney
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NEPTUNE – Feeling confident and at ease concerning the safety and security of youth in GNJ churches should come naturally to parents and families. That's why the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey is committed to helping every church enact a Safe Sanctuaries policy and be compliant with its regulations.

On October 10 at the Mission and Resource Center in Neptune, a GNJ-wide

training event will be held to ensure all local church volunteers are compliant in current required best practices in keeping young people safe.

"God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse," said training facilitator Rev. Erica Munoz. Currently serving as the Senior Pastor of Aldersgate UMC in East Brunswick – a vital congregation doing profound ministry with children, youth and young families, Munoz has also served as the GNJ Safe Sanctuaries Coordinator since 2008. She

has helped local congregations reduce the risk of child abuse in the church and is passionate about raising up young disciples.

"I believe every church should serve as a safe and encouraging place for young people to learn and grow in God's love," said Munoz.

Anyone interested in being a part of young people programming within GNJ, whether through youth groups, IGNITE, or VBS, is required to become Safe Sanctuary qualified. Certification is simple, requiring only a miniscule fee and submitting oneself for a background check.

"It's easier than you think and important to all," said Munoz.

On October 10, training participants

will learn requirements for Safe Sanctuaries procedures in GNJ and obtain a firm grasp of importance and the biblical mandate for having a Safe Sanctuaries policy in the local church. Workshop attendees will learn how to create and implement a Safe Sanctuaries policy for their local church ministries and will receive certificates of completion.

Churches are encouraged to promote themselves by publicly indicating that their volunteers and or staff are Safe Sanctuary certified; helping to build continued trust within their communities.

Churches that have a Safe Sanctuaries policy that need to be certified are invited to bring their policy to the training. Register for the workshop at gnjumc.org

Journey to Beloved Community: A Conversation on Race

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between Bethel AME and Morristown UMC. The Morristown United Methodist Church gave Bethel its first church building in 1843. Today, these congregations and three other United Methodist congregations are conducting a joint Rainbow VBS for all young people in the region. Dr. Brandon Cho, Senior Pastor of Morristown UMC, said that this year's Juneteenth celebration and Bethel's anniversary gave his church an opportunity to enhance its work with other churches and community leaders on issues affecting Morristown, such as race, social and economic justice and immigration.

"This particular historical celebration became a magnet for bringing all these issues and people together, so we can work on a deeper level to generate a greater sense of community," Cho said. "Through this conversation, we are led to take a fresh look at what is really going on



Rev. Dr. Brandon Cho of Morristown UMC and Fred Day. Photo provided

in our national conversation, our national discourse, on race."

For more information, please contact Dr. Lillie Edwards at ledwards@drew.edu

Clergy to Discover Anatomy of Peace at Convocation

Continued from page 1

Ferrell, one of the authors of the book and a leader at the Arbinger Institute, at the 2018 Bishop's Clergy Convocation on Nov. 12-14 at the Ocean Place Resort in Long Branch.

The Arbinger Institute provides training, consulting, coaching and implementation tools that move individuals, teams and organizations from the default self-focus on an inward mindset to a results focus of an outward mindset.

"With an outward mindset, organizations and individuals focus on collective results. They can have difficult conversations about resource allocation, roles, and responsibilities without feeling the need to protect their silos, defend their decisions, or appear in certain ways," explained Ferrell. "They might frame the problem differently, allowing them to see new possibilities for solutions and new directions for problem-solving."

The Anatomy of Peace will be given free of charge to all Convocation registrants to help prepare for deep discussions and new insights. It has been widely read in UMC circles.

"The book was so powerful for me as a leader that I read the book three times and participated with colleague bishops in discussions on how we will use the principles in our leadership," said Bishop John Schol. "I believe Greater New Jersey clergy will find the discussions and resources presented to be invaluable as we move forward in our 2019-23 Strategic Plan to equip leaders who make disciples who make disciples."

"With an inward mindset, we are blind to what others need and therefore can frustrate others or create conflict, continued Ferrell. "We might blame others for our frustrations or failures. Focused only on our own objectives, we might even hamper our effectiveness or results while thinking we're doing a good job!"

In his role as Arbinger's managing partner, Ferrell directs the development of the institute's training and consulting

programs and the development and customization of its intellectual property. He has provided training and consulting internationally to leaders and organizations across a broad range of industries.

For the past three decades, Arbinger has been a leader in public and private sector organizational and cultural transformation, leadership training and consulting, and conflict resolution and transformation. Arbinger has helped thousands of organizations to institutionalize the change from an inward to an outward mindset while developing leaders, staff, teams and organizations that maximize responsibility and become more effective in daily operations.

"With an outward mindset, difficult conversations take on a new light," said Ferrell. "They are seen as important for the success of the team and the organization. With this framing, the range of possible solutions expands dramatically."

GNJ clergy have come to love the annual Convocation as a time for renewal, learning and fellowship. Some have described it as a "gift." A 2017 participant stated that the event's theme "confirmed many of the things I had already been wrestling with in my own spirit and ministry as we work toward vitality. Not only did it affirm where God has been leading in my own ministry and the trajectory my church is on, but it also made me proud to be part of GNJ."

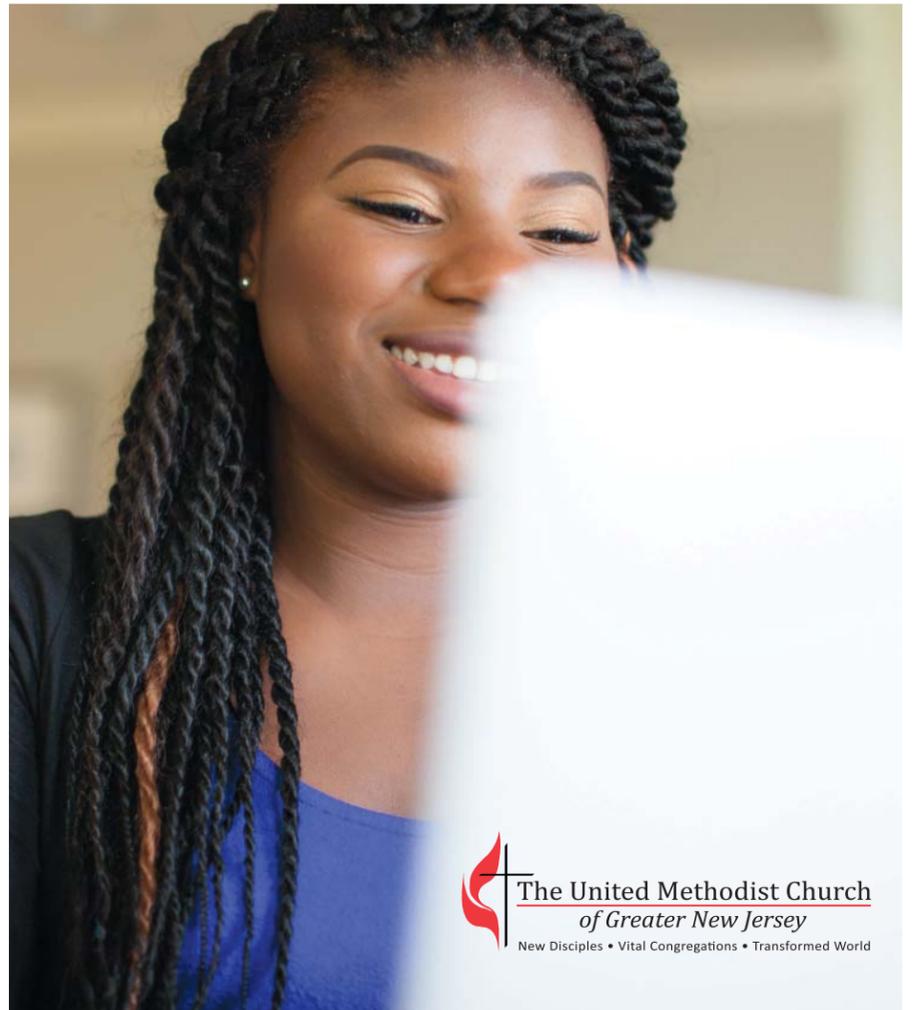
From the comforts of a beachfront hotel, a kind and helpful staff and delectable food, the accommodations provide clergy with a place to relax, seek rest and focus in an environment that doesn't detract from the overall message of the three-day retreat. Childcare for clergy will be provided at no cost (pre-registration required). Spouses are children are encouraged to accompany clergy.

To find out more and register for the 2018 Bishop's Clergy Convocation, visit gnjumc.org. The event will be held Nov. 12-14 at the Ocean Place Resort in Long Branch, NJ. Cost includes registration fee, two-night stay, and meals.

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

The November 2018 issue deadline is October 16, 2018

WE'RE ON

YouTube

Check out a video resource archive of GNJ produced videos!

YOUTUBE.COM/GNJUMC

Young Justice Leaders Begin Sacred Journey



NEXT GENERATION
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the grounds where middle and high school students held hands and protected each other from attack dogs and fire hoses and took bold steps forward toward their own and each other's freedom. This is what the Joshua Generation Civil Rights pilgrimage is all about."

From in-person and online gatherings to travels to the cities of Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Birmingham, Jackson, Selma, and Montgomery, students will come face to face with history and return supported in their own efforts to bring about justice in their schools, churches and communities.

"I hope from my experience I will become more aware of the history of our country, how the past has influenced the present, and gain confidence in being able to go out into the world looking at things critically," said Jessica Canning of Morrow Church.

For Canning, having this unique pilgrimage experience before college was something she wanted for herself; heeding a call of "responsibility to be a change and a force for good in the world."

Emma and Elizabeth Deery of Sparta UMC expressed their excitement to meet new friends from across GNJ with similar interests and a desire to "take charge of their lives."

"I find hope and meaning in connecting with other people and hearing their stories and learning about their experiences," said Elizabeth. She believes the best quality a leader should have is confidence.

"You have to be confident with who you are and with the fact that you can help other people branch out and change lives," she said.

"I'm most excited about the travel," said Emma. "We learn about Civil Rights in history, but we don't actually get to go see what happened, and I'm so blessed to have that opportunity. I hope to grow as a person and make new friends but also learn more about myself. It will be a hard journey, but one that's worth it."

Nhammo Flomo of St. Mary's UMC in Burlington expressed a hope to grow in his faith and character through the Joshua Generation pilgrimage as well as learn about the courage of Civil Rights leaders and activists. Colette Mutetke of Grace Union UMC echoed Flomo's sentiment.

"As soon as I heard about it I thought it would be amazing because in the world we live today, learning about other cultures and societies and the ways in which they carry themselves and have been treated in this country and others is something I think is awesome to know and will get you far in life," she said. "I want to come away from this experience with a new light. I hope I'll be able to confront and talk to people in ways I never thought of before that will ensure the safety and respect of everyone."

Wheeler was impressed after the group's first meeting by how each student dove deep and stayed engaged.

"It really speaks to their commitment and the importance of this in their lives and faith and the work that needs to be done," she said. "The students were so good at acknowledging where we are. Their honesty and willingness to take chances in a grace-filled way, especially within a new group speaks not only to them but to the work of GNJ, their pastors and their parents."

Wheeler believes the group's upcoming readings will speak to the students in different ways, putting them in a good place to think about what they want to do in their local communities.

Having always been interested in social issues, Myleah Estes of Hamilton UMC sought ways to connect her faith.

That pursuit led her to the Joshua Generation where she hopes to learn from others and share with her church community.

"I'm white, so I don't really have personal experiences dealing with problems of race but I have learned about it and I want to learn how to properly have conversations about this and fully understand it more," said Estes. "I see hope in people rallying around the world and coming together to make the world better."

To find out more about the Joshua Generation pilgrimage visit gnjnext-gen.org



Joshua Generation students gather to read and discuss issues of race and Civil Rights at the Mission and Resource Center in Neptune on Sept. 15. Photo by Josh Kinney

Join Jim Ferrell of The Arbinger Institute at the:

2018 BISHOP'S CLERGY CONVOCATION

NOVEMBER 12-14, 2018
Ocean Place Resort in Long Branch, NJ

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”
- Matthew 5:9

Clergy can go deeper to learn and apply concepts from the Arbinger Institute and their work Anatomy of Peace.

Come for renewal, learning, and fellowship. Cost includes registration fee, two night stay, and meals. All registrants receive a copy of the book Anatomy of Peace to prepare for deep discussions and new insights.



BISHOP'S CLERGY CONVOCATION

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LEARN MORE OR HERE TO REGISTER TODAY

gnjumc.org/2018-bishops-clergy-convocation

Finding Miracles Amid Tragedy In Frenchtown

FRENCHTOWN - On Monday August 13 at approximately 10:40 p.m., a truck driver entering the tiny Hunterdon County town of Frenchtown lost control of his truck and slammed into Galasso's Pizzeria. The truck exploded into a fireball awakening the tiny town on the banks of the Delaware River. Thankfully, no one was seriously injured in the accident, although many people living in nearby apartments lost their homes and possessions, and employees of two local businesses were suddenly closed.

About 20 minutes after the fire, Frenchtown United Methodist Church Pastor Peter Mantell was about to turn in for the night about 450 miles away in Toronto, Canada. Mantell and his wife Anna were preparing to drive home to New Jersey the following morning after a week's vacation. Before Mantell went to bed he checked his Facebook feed and was shocked to see the Frenchtown page blowing up with discussion of the fire. Mantell recounted the sequence of events that followed:

"As soon as I saw the first pictures being posted I called my daughter Jackie and she walked the two blocks to the fire and showed me via facetime. I knew right away that the church needed to get busy! I then placed a phone call to Leslie Stintzman, Frenchtown UMC Council President and Lay Leader, and we soon had a plan of action. By 11:30, less than an hour after the fire started, Leslie

had the church doors open and the lights on."

Mantell went back onto the town's Facebook page and let everyone know that the church was open in case anyone needed shelter for the night. He also suggested that donations of bedding, clothes or any other essential items be brought to the church. From his Airbnb in Toronto, Mantell followed the events of the town live on social media and continued to communicate with people about what the needs were.

Frenchtown UMC quickly became the central drop off site for fire relief supplies. Clothes, toiletries, bedding, furniture and food was donated by community members throughout the following week. Over the next two weeks, more than \$8,000 in monetary donations and \$1,500 in store gift cards had been brought to the church, and an astounding \$20,000 was donated

via the church's GoFundMe page set up by Mantell hours after the fire.

Several days later, Frenchtown UMC invited the community to come together for a prayer vigil for the town. Mantell's message to the community was simple.

I believe that it is a miracle that no one was killed in this accident," he said. "I believe that it is a miracle that the only physical injuries were minor ones. But the real miracle is the way this commu-

nity came together and cared for one another, fed one another, and gave to one another. The love of Jesus was on full display this past week."

Donations for Frenchtown Fire Relief can be mailed to Frenchtown UMC, 16 Third Street, Frenchtown, NJ 08825. Please put "Fire Relief" in the memo section, or you can go to the church's GoFundMe page at gofundme.com/updated-frenchtown-fire-relief-fund.



Members of Frenchtown UMC came to the rescue of their community following a devastating fire raising funds and supplies and bringing the neighborhood together in service. Photo provided

Caravan of Hope Feeds 5,000

By Rev. Dr. Frank Fowler III
ffowler@catchthespirit.org

HACKETTSTOWN - Taking inspiration from Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 long ago, Trinity Church in Hackettstown spent last summer planning to feed 5,000 people in two days, in a Caravan of Hope. The mission brought together hundreds of parishioners, community residents and food ministries in the tri state area, and when the last meal was served on September 9, they had fed 5,532 people a generous and nutritious boxed lunch.

The Trinity leadership was invited to take on this large mission when in June Pastor Frank Fowler put two fish and five loaves before them on a table, and explained the concept. They enthusiastically said yes, and went about the task of inviting people to participate. Donations of many sorts came in, partners in food ministries around the region signed up to receive meals, and on the night before the distribution, 225 people filled the church gym to assemble the boxed meals that included a turkey sandwich, piece of fruit, raisins, and much more. The event took about two and a half hours to complete, in what was a model of Methodist organization.

"One numbers guy figured out that the group assembled 43 boxes a minute,"



Trinity Church in Hackettstown worked to feed 5,000 people in two days bringing together hundreds of parishioners, community residents and food ministries in the tristate area. Photo provided

said Fowler.

That weekend, 45 driver teams went to 40 locations such as Philadelphia, New York, Atlantic City, Allentown, Trenton and elsewhere. Each partner had "ordered" a set amount of meals, with the largest delivery being 400 meals taken to Camden. In local settings, ministry partners distributed the food through their regular methods.

In addition, local residents from the

Trinity neighborhood were invited to sign up for a meal and 192 boxes were distributed on the church campus.

One special part of the mission was that each box included a personal handwritten note of encouragement and blessing parishioners wrote during the summer. Some boxes included a child's hand written note, as kids in summer VBS ministry were invited to participate. Senior citizen members of the church

who live in a residential care facility did their part by placing labels on the boxes.

Commenting on the Caravan, Fowler noted, "This was a powerful ministry in which many people participated, including numerous community residents. God blessed us with people who caught the vision, gave as they could, and in the end, we had just what we needed to accomplish the mission. Where God guides, God provides."

Generous \$10,000 Gift Helps Launch 'Maker's Place' in Trenton

STOCKTON - On Sunday, Aug 18, Kingwood United Methodist Church donated \$10,000 to the Maker's Place, a new mission initiative of Greater New Jersey in Trenton. Rev. Michael Reed was there to receive the donation and introduce the Maker's Place to the congregation.

"We believe that we can do more when we do it together," Reed said. The Maker's Place, which takes its name in part from the famous 'Delaware River bridge with the sign 'Trenton Makes - The World Takes', exists to connect neighbors in Trenton with neighbors in the surrounding area of central New Jersey.

Reed was appointed to the ministry in July.

"We'd like the Maker's Place to become the foremost location for local mission and outreach for United Methodist

Churches across central New Jersey," Reed said. "The goal is to see people excited and engaged by loving their neighbors in Trenton--through volunteer opportunities, service projects, and generous giving."

Reed said the money will be put towards laying the groundwork for the initiative. The Maker's Place plans to offer services for low-income families, including afterschool programming and the distribution of winter clothing, later this year. The Maker's Place is being built on the concepts learned at the Church of All People in Columbus Ohio. The plan is to establish the mission initiative and launch a worshipping community from that foundation.

"We want to create a place where differences are bridged by real relationships," Reed said, "and where lives are



Rev. Michael Reed graciously receives a special gift from Kingwood UMC for a new mission initiative of Greater New Jersey in Trenton known as Maker's Place. Photo provided

changed by empowering people to use the gifts and assets God has already given them, in order to find abundant life."

After Kingwood UMC in Stockton received a generous bequest in 2017, Rev. Peter Mantell challenged his congregation to identify several United Methodist ministries they wished to support.

"We cannot stop being the church simply because our bank account is enriched," he said. Mantell led the congregation through a time of discernment, in which money was set aside for various mission and outreach programs.

"I learned that the Maker's Place is a new Central Region missional initiative, and share Michael Reed's heart for ministry with the poor and marginalized," Mantell said. "Even though we're in a rural area, it's great to know we're partnering in urban ministry."



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CHRISTIANITY AND THE ART OF WHEELCHAIR MAINTENANCE

A DIALECTICAL INQUIRY AT THE END OF THE WORLD

STEPHEN FALLER

After twenty years, Stephen Faller shares his journey into seminary and ordained ministry. This book reveals the story of how someone with a lifelong disability, cerebral palsy, might find his way into ministry as a hospital chaplain; there is a certain irony in that. While particular in its own right, this story will speak to anyone in college or graduate school studying one of the many disciplines hoping to make the world a better place.

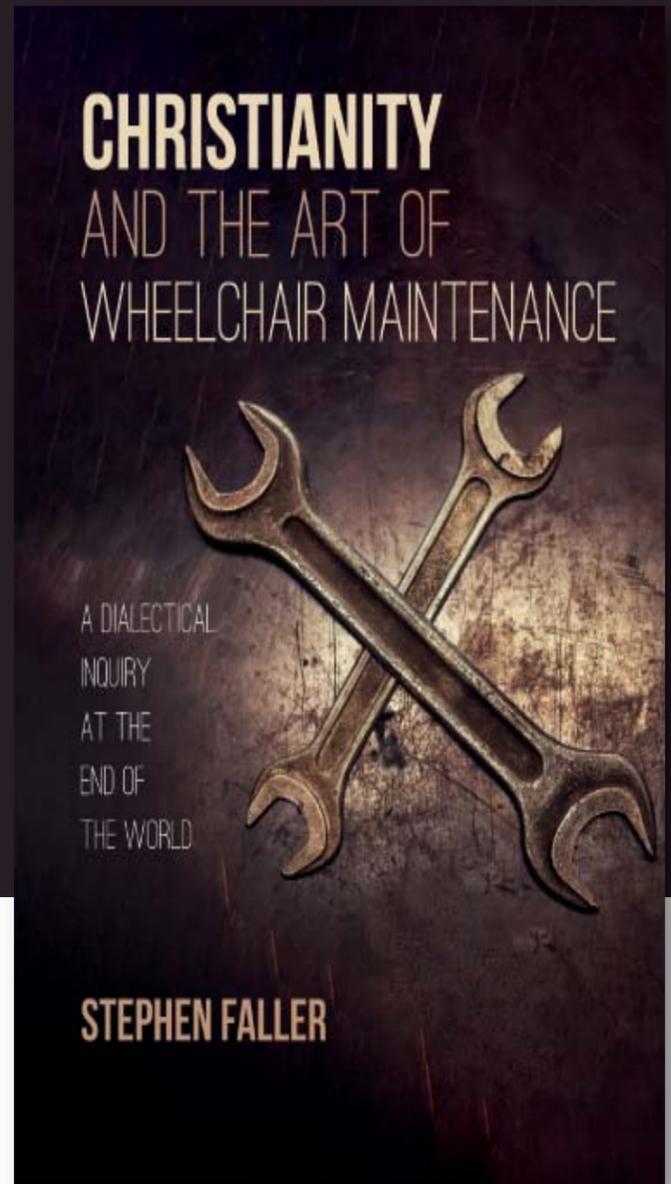
Through both narrative and dialogue, Faller engages philosophers and theologians alike. This is an intimate text that seeks to integrate mind, body, and spirit that situates itself more beyond the margins than as marginalized.

Just as Faller's own narrative is contextualized by disability, this personal work is contextualized in our polarized and politicized culture, as it considers the meaning of ministry for a contemporary time. Faller's is an embedded text that speaks to a multicultural society, even if that body carries brokenness and even if that society is divided.

"Stephen Faller is a theologian of life. He is someone who understands that theology is deep, complex, and mysterious, but first and foremost it is something that is lived and that points towards that which we live for. In this wonderful book Stephen shares some deep insights into the nature of disability, the presence of God, and the nature of diversity and the good life. Beautifully winding together personal narrative and deep biblical and theological experience, he takes us on a wonderful and insightful journey into humanness. No one reading this book will emerge unchanged. This is an important contribution to disability theology."

—John Swinton, University of Aberdeen

978-1-5326-3466-6 / \$25 / 206 PP. / PAPER



"This really interesting book lives up to its title, which is a reminiscence of Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. It is an acutely observed, unsentimental account of life in a wheelchair, so engaging as to make an almost insider of the reader. It is also an account of the author's spiritual and philosophical experiences. Although he is very well-read in both popular and weighty literature, his philosophizing is of the 'do it yourself' sort, which means it's the real thing. So too is his wrestling with his Christian vocation. It's an instructive as well as moving piece of literature."

—Eva Brann, Dean Emerita and Senior Faculty, St. John's College, Annapolis, and author of *The Logos of Heraclitus*

STEPHEN FALLER is a Board Certified Chaplain and a Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor as a Diplomate of the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy at the Center for Pastoral Care at Capital Health in Hopewell, NJ. He is the author of *Beyond the Matrix* (2004), *Reality TV* (2009), and *The Art of Spiritual Midwifery* (2015). He has a Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School and a Master of Theology from Princeton Theological Seminary.

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Music Ministry Draws Community, Relationships

by Denise Herschel

HOPEWELL - Hopewell UMC is making space for the arts community to come to church. During the last four years, they have used the tools learned during Team Vital training to create a First Friday Open Mic night in the church building which has recently expanded into a regular concert series.

Paul Bejgrowicz started First Friday Open Mic and the HUMC Concert Series "as a way to show our support for the artists who have supported us during the past four years."

Bejgrowicz began the concept for First Friday Open Mic when his daughter Ava was taking piano lessons and he started to take guitar lessons to encourage her to practice.

"I thought it would be a great way to play in public in a non-judgmental environment. Many of the surrounding open mics are in bars where the crowd is not necessarily there to listen. The artists and the musicians who attend Open Mic are there to support each other and provide encouragement," he said.

Bejgrowicz credits the church's work with the GNJ's Team Vital program as inspiring this outreach to the local and surrounding communities.

"There is a large demographic of people interested in the arts of all kinds and specifically in Hopewell borough. This is a way to open our space and let people know we are here. There are four other churches and three of them are on main thoroughfares and this gets people down the side street to our church," he said.

First Friday Open Mic takes place

the first Friday of every month from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. Performers sign up for a 15-minute slot beginning at 6:30 p.m. which is typically enough time for three songs.

"We provide mics and our grand piano as well as lighting. The Open Mic is free and open to anyone of any age and any level of talent. Our youngest performers were 10-years-old. We have had performers come from Pennsylvania, North Jersey, and the Jersey Shore. On average there are 30 people in attendance and approximately 16 performers but as of late the numbers have been increasing as everyone has been playing more into the evening," he said.

"We have mostly music but we have had spoken word, stories, poetry and some comedy. We also have performers from the Hopewell Valley High School and a local 'Pops' orchestra," he added. "We have families with young children who come out to perform so we started to do our Children's Open Mic time where members of HUMC entertain the children by doing crafts or other activities to allow their parents time to perform. Most



Having used the tools learned during Team Vital training, Hopewell UMC created a First Friday Open Mic night which has expanded into a regular concert series. Photo provided

recently, the children decorated bags that are used by the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen to make bagged lunches. The children also create holiday cards and other mission related support."

As the success of Open Mic has grown, Bejgrowicz was asked to join the board of a local Meet Up group called

Einstein Alley Musicians Collaborative (EAMC) and together they have grown the presence of the HUMC First Friday Open Mic as well as the EAMC hosted Open Mics. The EAMC has also partnered with the Princeton Public Library and the McCarter Theater in Princeton to provide shows at all three venues.

"We accept donations for the Open Mic and that money goes toward our mission support. We tie into our other ministries and will have canned food drives for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. We did a diaper drive to support the UMW Mission for the local women's shelter," he continued.

This fall's new Saturday evening concert series will explore different musical styles and sensibilities. A portion of the proceeds will go toward assisting children with special needs to receive scholarships to attend a week at the Elks Camp Moore.

"This new series will draw on individuals and groups who have incredible musical abilities but may be undiscovered talents in the area. Tickets are \$20.00 and our doors open at 6:30 p.m.," he said. "In the past HUMC has taken a specific collective for this mission. This year we hope to raise enough money to send even more kids to camp. The night is mission-focused so while the venue is targeted to the performers they are also interested in supporting ministries and the outreach to the community; it's really a win-win situation for HUMC, the artists and the missions we support."

Hopewell UMC is located at 20 Blackwell Avenue, Hopewell, N.J. For more information visit www.hopewellmethodist.org



UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

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.

VBS Serves as Native American Immersion Experience

By Ginny Underwood

BRIDGETON - When children walked into St. John United Methodist Church's vacation Bible school in Bridgeton on Aug. 13, many could identify with the lessons. The curriculum is tailored around the traditional teachings of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape and other Native American tribes.

"We didn't want to use packaged curriculum because our children couldn't identify with it," said Cynthia Wilkes-Mosley, VBS coordinator. On average, 40 children from the community, many of them tribal members, participate in the weeklong program.

"We wanted to help the children learn how to walk in the Christian culture and Native culture at the same time," she said.

Through storytelling, games and activities, the curriculum brings culture and Scripture together. The first part of the week was geared toward stories of creation using The Book of Genesis.

The children also heard tribal creation stories such as the Wasca tribal legend about how the coyote placed the stars. Coordinators even added a math component where they measured distances in the universe. Another day was spent focused on musical instruments in the Bible. The children learned how the Native flute is made and then crafted their own flutes out of water bottles.

"Being able to show these diverse traditions makes a huge difference with the children because it exposes them to

things they have never learned about or possibly never even heard of or seen," said Mary Wilks, a member of the Lenni-Lenape tribe and a vacation Bible school teacher.

"As a teacher, this means I am making these children more culturally aware and to avoid being ignorant to the world that may be different than their own," she said.

The Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape descendants primarily live in Delaware and a large township in Fairfield, NJ. The VBS program has successfully built bridges of understanding among other ethnic groups in the community.

Tay' Shawn Bowman has attended the church's vacation Bible school for three years. He attends a different United Methodist church where members are primarily African-American.

"I like playing Native American games outside," said Bowman, who plays football. He especially enjoyed lacrosse, based on the Native game stickball, which he had never heard of before attending VBS. Coordinators said he also enjoyed Native drumming and learning about Native ceremonies.

"Through storytelling, I learned to not be greedy," he said.

"Many of these children go to school together and the VBS has become a way to teach about Native traditions and for their peers to become much more respectful about the culture," said Wilkes-Mosley.

The highlight of the week was an elders' honor ceremony. This year, more



Children participate in Native American games such as stickball (lacrosse), crafts, storytelling and other activities during vacation Bible school at St. John United Methodist Church in Bridgeton, New Jersey. The curriculum is based on the traditional teachings of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape and other Native American tribes. Photo provided by UM News

than 25 elders visited with vacation Bible school students to share their wisdom and to participate in the ceremony.

"We have six elders who attend the VBS every day," said Wilkes-Mosley. "The elders' honor ceremony is an institution at our VBS. The connection is an important part of our Native tradition."

This year, the vacation Bible school curriculum included the topic of dreams. Students studied Scripture such as Daniel 1:17 and 7:1-3, where God gave Daniel the ability to understand visions and dreams. They read "Coyote and the Dream" and "Grandmother's Dreamcatcher" stories. They also heard the Anishinaabe legend of Nokomis and the spider.

The dreamcatchers were traditionally hung on cradleboards to catch bad dreams and allow good dreams to pass through. The children wrote down their scary dreams on colorful paper feathers and attached the feather to the web as

part of the activities.

"I love to see the children become so engaged with learning about the Native traditions that they go home and tell their family and friends," said Wilks.

Members of St. John United Methodist Church have developed three weeks of curriculum that they rotate and refresh each year. The church recently acquired a 7-foot wampum cross for the altar that they plan to include in new curriculum. Wampum — decorative shell beads used by Native Americans in belts, sashes and other crafts — was used as currency by the original colonies.

Church members also said they hope to format the curriculum in a way that could be published in the future.

Ginny Underwood is a freelance writer and communication consultant with ties to the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. She is a member of the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma.

Changing Lives on Paterson's North Side

By Adrian Diaz
adiaz@cumacecho.org

PATERSON - It's a warm summer day and CUMAC's van pulls up to the corner of North 1st and Arch Street in Paterson. A handful of clients stand outside, eagerly awaiting the mobile pantry's arrival. The CUMAC team is greeted with warm smiles and hellos. Jeni, Marvin, and Isaiah begin unloading their equipment and get to work.

Every Wednesday one can find CUMAC's mobile pantry on the north side of Paterson. It's part of CUMAC's ongoing efforts to reach underserved populations and ensure that none of their neighbors go hungry. For many residents in the north side of the city, transportation is limited and that makes accessing community resources a huge challenge. Having services brought directly to their neighbors provides them with some much-needed relief.

"This is a real blessing. I don't know what I'd do without CUMAC," says one of the regular clients as he waits to pick up his groceries. The CUMAC team starts to process his paperwork, but it feels more like friends catching up. They talk about their lives and share stories while Jeni types away at the computer.

The client talks about his recent trip to the hospital while CUMAC's team carefully listens and offers encouragement. Fortunately, he's fully recovered and feeling much better. After a few minutes of chatting, he thanks the team one last time, picks up his food, and goes on his way.

"As he walks out, I think about what I just witnessed," said CUMAC team member Jeni. "It's hard to describe, but it just feels like community. This kind of



Isaiah is pictured carefully helping an elderly woman load her shopping cart beside CUMAC's grocery distribution van. Photo provided by CUMAC

attention and care is something that's commonplace at CUMAC. Whether it's in our building or on the streets of Paterson, CUMAC strives to serve our clients well and make them feel supported."

As the morning goes on, clients filter in and out. Jeni and Marvin handle the intake process while Isaiah stands ready by the CUMAC van, distributing groceries. Isaiah loves making clients smile, and he can be heard cracking jokes and finding ways to brighten a person's day. Between jokes, he carefully helps an elderly woman load her shopping cart, which she walks over from a senior residence down the street.

"She wouldn't be able to make it to CUMAC," he says. "Nice that we can come to her."

Isaiah looks down the road as she crosses the street toward her apartment. She's got a big smile on her face and a cart full of groceries to take home. She won't have to worry about going hungry this month because there are people around her that care.

"That's what being part of a community is all about, isn't it?" Isaiah said.

CUMAC is one of GNJ's Hope Centers. More information about CUMAC can be found at www.cumac.org.



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

Safe Sanctuaries Workshop

Join us for a GNJ wide Safe Sanctuaries Training on **Oct. 10** at the Mission and Resource Center in Neptune, to ensure that all local church volunteers are compliant in current requirements in keeping our young people and vulnerable persons safe. Visit gnjumc.org for details.

Children's Ministry Connections

Children's Ministry Connections is a bi-monthly Zoom call featuring children's ministry leaders from GNJ. Rev. Brenda Ehlers, Associate Pastor for Children, Youth and Education Ministries at Morrow Church will be sharing Advent and Christmas ideas for children's ministry on Zoom, Oct. 10 at 7 p.m. Visit gnjumc.org/events to learn more and register.

Church Women United of N.J. State Fall Meeting

Church Women United of N.J. State Assembly General Fall Meeting will be held Saturday, **Oct. 13** at Faith Community UMC Fellowship Hall in Bayville, NJ, featuring speaker April Foster on "Interrupting the Cycle of Poverty." Registration is \$5 and food pantry item. Bring a bag lunch and dessert will be provided. Visit gnjumw.org to learn more.

Neighborhood Center Annual Benefit Dinner

On **Oct. 13**, all are invited to The Neighborhood Center's Annual Dinner benefit for the organizations teen programs in Camden which focus on academics, arts and athletics. Tickets are \$75 and can be reserved by calling 856-365-5295.

Property Tax Exemption Filing

Be sure to file your triennial property tax exemption form with your local authorities by the **Nov. 1** deadline to avoid any possibility of losing your church's property tax exempt status and becoming liable for thousands of dollars in property tax assessments. Visit gnjumc.org/taxes for more information and to access forms that need to be filed.

Laity Sunday, Oct. 21

Laity Sunday focuses on the celebration of the ministry of all lay Christians. Visit umcdiscipleship.org for more information about Laity Sunday including an order of worship, preaching notes, hymn suggestions, planning notes and downloads.

RevitUp! Young Clergy Event

Wespath is hosting a revitup! for a Lifetime in Ministry educational event for young clergy ages 25-39, **Nov. 12-14** in Pensacola Beach, FL. The event serves to strengthen personal, financial and leadership skills to sustain a lifetime in ministry. Scholarship opportunities and childcare are available. Visit wespath.org/events for details and to register.

Job Opportunities

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

Database Manager

GNJ is seeking a full-time Database Manager to act as a vital link between GNJ's information technology capabilities and its mission and work of vital mission partners. Visit gnjumc.org to learn more and apply.

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 job description and to apply.

Disaster Relief

UMVIM: Opportunities to Serve

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) are seeking teams to sign up for hurricane recovery trips to Puerto Rico in 2019. If interested in leading a team from your church or district or are interested in attending a leadership training for all types of mission trips, contact Brittany Rusk, GNJ's UMVIM Coordinator at UMVIM@gnjumc.org

Haiti Mission Interest Meeting

Join a GNJ Water Filtration and Medical Team to Haiti, **April 6-13, 2019**. The cost is \$1,600 per person. An interest meeting will be held **Oct. 27** from 1-3 p.m. at First UMC Moorestown. Email UMVIM@gnjumc.org to obtain application and find out more.

New ERT Training Class, Oct. 13

An Emergency Response Training (ERT) class will be held Saturday, Oct. 13 at First UMC Moorestown. Visit gnjumc.org/disasterresponse for more information, cost and to register.

Hurricane Readiness

Is your church prepared for hurricane season? Check out these resources at gnjumc.org/insurance

Obituaries

Melva J. Matlack, Retired Local Pastor, died on Aug. 20. A Memorial Service was held on Aug. 27 at Saul Colonial Home in Hamilton Square, NJ. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to the family at saulfuneralhomes.com

Anita M. Sinclair, Retired Local Pastor, died on Aug. 28. A Memorial Service was held on Sept. 1 at Bell-Hennessy Funeral Home in Williamstown, NJ. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent in memory of Anita M. Sinclair to Cross Keys UMC, 1644 N. Main St., Williamstown, NJ 08094. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Joseph J. Short, 43 Washington Ave., Williamstown, NJ 08094.

Traci Callender, Spouse of Rev. Clark L. Callender, died on Aug. 28. A Memorial Service was held on Sept. 8 at St. John's UMC in Hazlet, NJ. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent in memory of Traci Callender to the Memorial Fund at St. John's UMC in Hazlet or SPLC Southern Poverty Law Center at splcenter.org, 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Rev. Clark L. Callender, 4 Idaho Ln., Aberdeen, NJ 07747-1504

United Methodist Celebrates Being 'A Great Place to Work'



Great Place to Work® celebration photo booth fun included Covenant Place associates, India Santos, housing administrator; Desmond Q. Green, maintenance; Tamika Green, administrative assistant; Tammie Forbes, social service coordinator; and Clark Armstrong, superintendent.

By Janet Carrato

JCarrato@Umcommunities.org

United Methodist Communities was recently certified as a Great Place to Work by independent analysts at Great Place to Work Institute. On August 15, we surprised and thanked our associates by announcing this achievement and holding simultaneous celebrations at all locations.

"The festive atmosphere was enhanced by great food, music, and a photo booth, which prompted some fun team photos. It was a fabulous day and a proud moment for UMC," shared Robbie Voloshin, corporate director of marketing.

Attaining this certification shows the world what we already know to be true. UMC associates are proud of where they work and love the working atmosphere. They value their associates and love their residents.

"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.

This certification also provides undeniable proof to new associates that UMC is a great place to further their careers. Catrina Morroni, sales counselor at The Shores, says, "My favorite part about coming to work every day is feeling that I make a difference in the lives of residents and their family members."

With roughly 1,200 residents and clients and more than 850 associates United Methodist Communities serves the entire state of New Jersey and holds this ministry as a sacred trust, which connects us with Wesley's directive to care for the most vulnerable and Jesus' command to "care for the least of these."



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
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732-922-9800 | www.UMCommunities.org





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Asbury UMC, Atlantic City

Venice Park UMC, Atlantic City

Hamilton UMC, Atlantic City

Morristown UMC



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OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

How can you or your congregation get involved? Find out more at:

www.afuturewithhope.org