



UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

# THE WAY WE GATHER MAKES A DIFFERENCE

A Resource for Leadership/Congregation 100 and  
Greater New Jersey's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan





**MISSION AND RESOURCE CENTER**  
**205 JUMPING BROOK RD., NEPTUNE, NJ 07753**

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**Be authentic to who  
you are today, while  
you prepare for growth  
tomorrow.**

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**Greater New Jersey  
equips spiritual,  
transformational leaders  
who make disciples  
who make disciples.**

This guide will assist you and your church in being authentic to who you are today, while preparing for growth tomorrow.

Groups of people (churches included) tend to behave differently based on the number of people gathered. A church of 50 people will have different expectations than a church of 500 people. *The Way We Gather* will help you and your congregation identify where you are along a spectrum of growth measures. This guide will also provide lists of resources and best practices for taking the next step in developing clergy leaders, lay leaders, congregational vitality and community engagement.

United Methodists in Greater New Jersey have committed to Leadership/Congregation 100: developing 100 new lay and clergy leaders as a part of our 2019-23 Strategic Plan. We are measuring our progress together by helping our congregations move from one level of worship to the next. This guide will help you and your congregation make the move to the next level.

In these pages, you will find best practices on worship, small groups, discipleship, mission, and stewardship. There are resources for young people, hospitality, new church plants, and staff development. If you have questions or want to go further, you are encouraged to work through your district superintendent, circuit elder, the connectional ministries staff or one of our vital mission partners: The United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey, A Future With Hope, Nehemiah Properties and Next Generation Ministries.

## HOW TO USE

1. Locate your church based on average worship attendance.
2. Consider how your congregation resonates with the characteristics listed from churches of similar size with similar resources.
3. Review the best practices and resources with congregational leaders including church council and committee chairs.
4. Pay close attention to the “grow in impact” sections, as these are key ways a congregation can proactively increase its capacity for mission.
5. Set goals for one or two areas of pastoral and congregational growth in the next three to six months based on the best practices.
6. Create a timeline to assess your progress and continue the spectrum of growth.
7. Celebrate every increment of growth.

A glossary of the resources is listed in the back pages in order to provide more details about each resource and where to find more information.

Thank you for your transformational leadership.

# SMALL FAMILY CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 1-49

281 or 53% of GNJ churches are small family congregations.

Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 10 new worshipers.

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Congregants have a fierce loyalty to local church

Mission/outreach are personal contributions

Comprised of several families

Traditional worship style and organization

Decisions heavily influenced by matriarch/patriarch

Relationships may be prioritized over worship quality, length of meetings, decor, etc.

## STRENGTHS

Shorter pastoral appointments lead to stronger, more involved laity

Safe space for more traditional worship

Well-established rhythmic schedule for special service times, styles, annual activities

Kids are welcomed in as part of the family

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Building relationships with key leaders in the community

Encouraging worshipers to increase roles in worship

Identifying strengths and spiritual gifts of congregation

Making decisions and moving forward without unanimous agreement

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

Chaplain who cares/advocates for the people who are already there

Part-time (bi-vocational or multi-point charge)

Local Pastor or Certified Lay Minister

## CHALLENGES

Conflict may be taken personally

Difficult to implement most change

Worshipers and pastor come from outside the surrounding community

Low trust of outsiders, including pastors

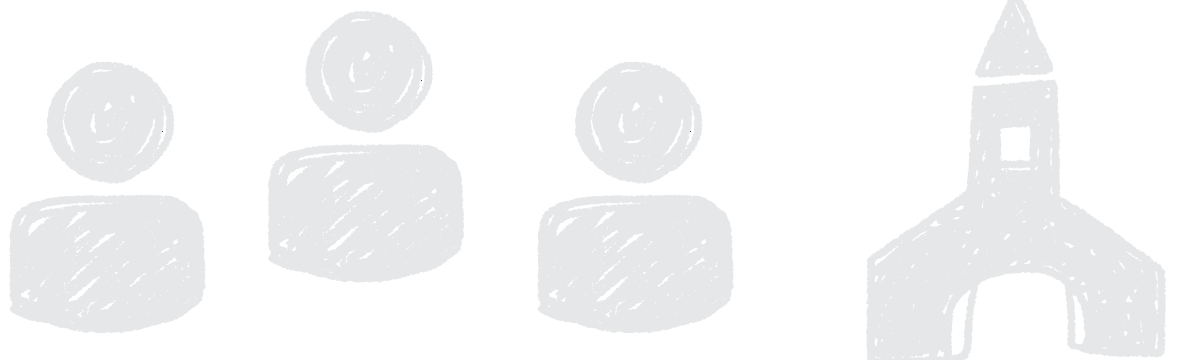
Pastor has limited time to be present

## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Establishing healthy norms and leadership within committees

Implementing best practices in the 5 markers of vitality

Committing to 1-2 training opportunities annually for example: *continuing education, conference resourcing, seminary, course of study or exploring the ordination process*



# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Help guests feel a part of the family

Commit ample time to delivering a great sermon every week

Create a quarterly worship planning calendar

Involve laity in the service

Use stories and examples in sermon to relate to the congregation and community

Encourage congregational singing

## NEW DISCIPLES

Create space for evangelism/invitation

Connect special events and social/fellowship to invitations to go deeper

Ask congregants to share faith stories in an accessible, non-churchy way

Learn who is living in the community

## GIVING

Receive the offering with joy

Follow proper accounting procedures for the offering as per the Book of Discipline

Tell stories of using resources in missional ways

Talk about the budget for ministry and not survival

## SMALL GROUPS

Train a lay person to lead or co-lead small groups

Create a system to keep the pastor connected

Meet at church and at homes

Keep atmosphere casual and flexible

Plan your ministry with one or two adult volunteers

## MISSION

Learn about the community by connecting with key local leaders like council members, the police chief, and school principals

Include specific needs of missions in weekly prayer time

Celebrate mission accomplishments

## RESOURCES

- Back to Basics/Foundational Days
- Breakthrough
- Clergy Coaching
- Days of Learning
- Discipleship Ministries finance and stewardship resources/webinars
- Discipleship Ministries worship resources/webinar
- Discipleship Pathways workbook and video
- Laity Leadership Academy
- Lay Servant Ministry
- Ministry Matters
- Miracles Everywhere
- Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands
- PaCE Groups
- Small Groups on GNJ web pages
- Stewardship Foundation

For more information about these resources, go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).



# FAMILY CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 50-84

123 or 23% of GNJ churches are family congregations  
Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 15 new worshipers

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Members act like a family

Most gatherings include entire church

Mostly homogeneous

Leaders often serve for long periods of time

Comprised of extended family

## STRENGTHS

High commitment from core church families

Strong pastoral care

Participants feel “known”

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Developing a clear mission and vision

Long-range planning

Moving from all-church gatherings  
to small group gatherings

Connecting with the community at local events

Developing at least one new community mission project

Mentoring and developing new leaders

Developing an online presence

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

Shepherd who is more relational than administrative

Chief worship leader/designer

Avoids conflict

## CHALLENGES

Low threshold for change

Difficulty maintaining a full-time pastor

Difficult for outsiders to feel connected

## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Developing a clear mission and vision

Setting benchmarks for growth

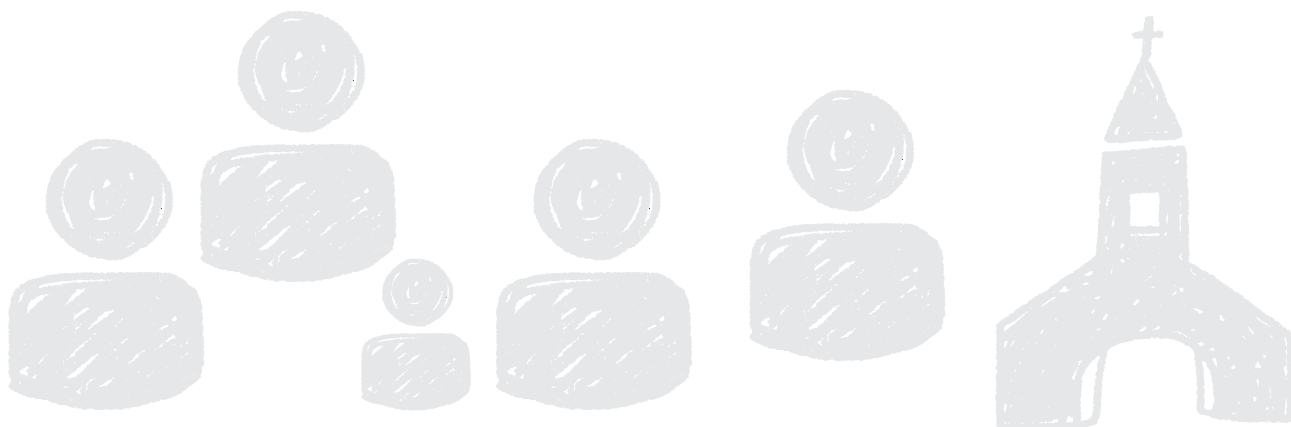
Connecting with the community  
to understand their hopes

Championing small group ministry

Developing preaching skills

Training worship leaders: *liturgists, ushers, greeters, etc.*

Establishing a stewardship rhythm



# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Invite guests into the life of the church

Have a consistent, quality music program that includes a paid part-time musician

Create a yearly preaching plan that includes series

Involve laity in worship

Plan for youth/children even if there are only a few who regularly attend

## NEW DISCIPLES

Create space for evangelism/invitation

Connect special events with invitations to go deeper in faith

Ask congregants to share faith stories in an accessible, non-churchy ways

Actively learn about those living in the community

Set up weekly meetings (1 on 1s) with different community leaders to discuss challenges and offer support

## GIVING

Receive the offering with joy

Follow proper accounting procedures for the offering

Talk about the budget for ministry and not survival

Work with the Stewardship Foundation to develop a 12-month stewardship plan

Use personal testimony (or video) monthly to inspire giving

## MISSION

Set church-wide goals

Increase hands-on mission opportunities

Use one sermon series focused on missions

Establish discretionary fund to take care of emergency needs in the community

Collaborate with other churches or organizations in mission projects

## SMALL GROUPS

Budget for small group materials

Expand groups to care for those outside the church, such as grief support

Train a lay person to lead or co-lead small groups

Create a system to keep the pastor connected but not central to the small group program

Meet at church and at homes, and group young people together by age ranges rather than grades

Keep atmosphere casual and flexible

## RESOURCES

- Back to Basics/Foundational Days
- Breakthrough
- Clergy Coaching
- Cokesbury
- Days of Learning
- Discipleship Ministries finance and stewardship webinars
- Discipleship Pathways workbook and video
- Discipleship Ministries worship resources/webinar
- IGNITE Youth Conference
- IGNITE Youth Leaders Day
- Laity Leadership Academy
- Lay Servant Ministry
- Ministry Matters
- Miracles Everywhere
- MissionInsite
- Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands
- PaCE Groups
- Small Groups on GNJ web pages
- Stewardship Foundation
- Team Vital
- Vital Mission Partners for GNJ

For more information about these resources, go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).

# EXTENDED FAMILY CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 85-124

56 or 10% of GNJ churches are extended family congregations  
Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 15 new worshipers

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Members know each other

Affinity groups around members' interests

Fellowship is high priority

Children and youth ministries are often identified  
as key growing edge

## STRENGTHS

Strong relational bonds

Sustains full time pastor

Has the critical mass necessary to feel welcoming

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Focusing on ministries to reach new people

Being more multicultural

Welcoming and meeting the needs of new people

Long-range planning

Increasing small groups

Growing leaders to manage programs and ministry

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

Cultural fit who attends most or all church activities

Resolves conflict

Does all visitation

Leads worship well

Preaches to multiple subgroups

Highly relational

## CHALLENGES

Strong relational bonds

Visitors struggle to find their place

Reluctance to think creatively

Conflict avoidance

Financially challenged to meet full-time pastoral needs

## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Introducing and leading change

Expanding mission into the community

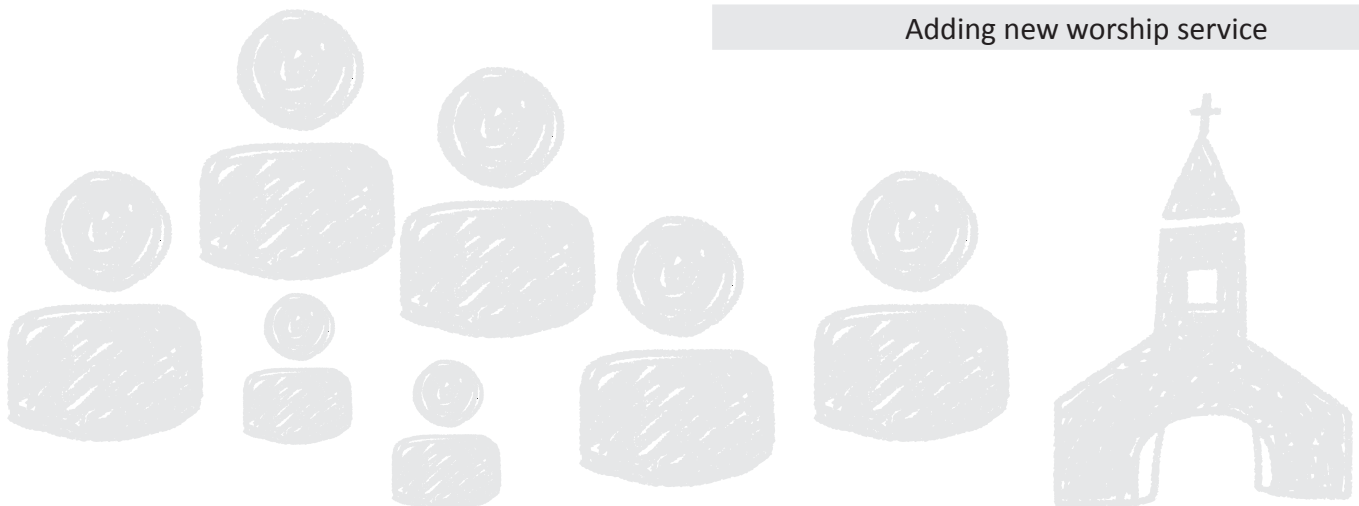
Improving administrative skills

Long-range planning

Increasing small groups

Introducing program ministry

Adding new worship service



# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Focus on preaching and worship planning

Utilize a wide range of input (music staff, worship committee, creative congregants) to create a 12 month worship plan overview

Relate preaching to a variety of backgrounds

Maintain paid, part-time music positions who collaborate in worship planning

Host special music groups (choir, children's choir, liturgical dance, etc.)

Ask congregants to share their faith stories in an accessible, non-churchy way

## NEW DISCIPLES

Build an integrated process that moves guests into the life of the church

Create space for evangelism/invitation

Connect special events and social/fellowship to invitations to go deeper

Set up weekly meetings (1 on 1s) with different community leaders to discuss challenges and offer support

Make baptisms and rites of passage significant, memorable and invitational

Launch one ministry that connects well with non-church goers

## GIVING

Contact the Stewardship Foundation for an initial assessment and to develop an action plan

Conduct annual stewardship campaign

Develop a narrative budget to tell the story of ministry

Use personal testimony (or video) monthly to inspire giving

Establish an online giving program

## SMALL GROUPS

Budget for small group materials

Provide small groups intended to care for those outside the church, such as grief support

Train a lay person to lead or co-lead small groups

Create a system to keep the pastor connected

Meet at church and at homes

Offer small groups that focus on growing deeper in faith

Form affinity groups and task oriented groups

## MISSION

Schedule mission trips each year

Use one sermon series focused on missions

Weave missions into children's programming

Build missions partner support into the annual budget

## RESOURCES

- Breakthrough
- Clergy Coaching
- Cokesbury
- Days of Learning
- Discipleship Ministries finance and stewardship resources/ webinars
- Discipleship Ministries worship resources
- Discipleship Pathways workbook and video
- Hope Centers
- IGNITE Youth Conference
- IGNITE Youth Leaders Day
- Laity Leadership Academy
- Lay Servant Ministry
- Miracles Everywhere
- MissionInsite
- Mission U
- Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands
- PaCE Groups
- Small Groups on GNJ web pages
- Stewardship Foundation
- Team Vital
- Vital Mission Partners for GNJ

For more information about these resources,  
go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).

# PROGRAM CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 125-249

52 or 10% of GNJ churches are program congregations  
Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 25 new worshipers

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Multiple possible connection points for involvement  
Highly established systems and habits  
Quality programs connect with people  
Programs often led by long-time members of the congregation  
Less commitment for average worshiper

## STRENGTHS

Financial stability  
Connection points for a wide demographic  
Programs make the church more resilient

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Practicing “change”  
Shortening the time it takes to go from idea to implementation to habit  
Launching a new opportunity to connect  
Starting a new service with clear onramp to discipleship  
Improving media, online and promotional presence

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

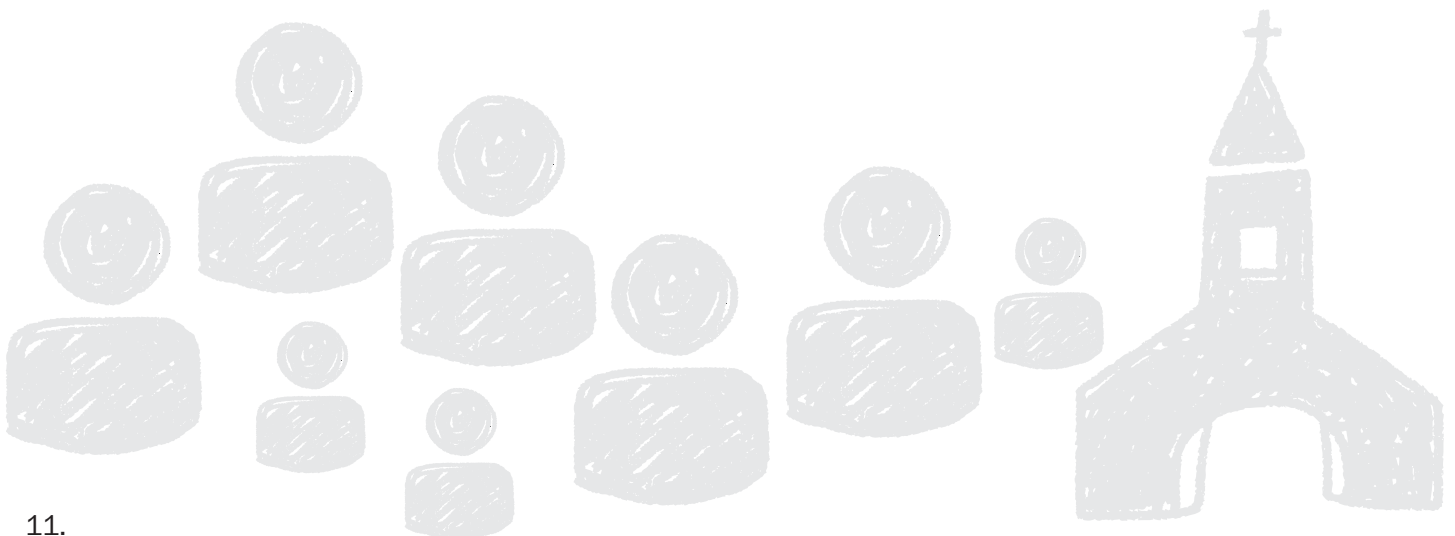
Administrator who makes disciples  
Strong coordinator of multiple leaders  
Manages ideas through committees resulting in action

## CHALLENGES

Programs are working and not changed  
Increasing costs and limited resources  
Large demand for programs but can't afford all of them  
Structure makes change slow

## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Working with existing leaders and bringing on new leadership  
Growing the vision to reach new people with congregation buy-in  
Updating policies to support vision  
Fostering cooperation across multiple committees  
Developing new and next leaders for small groups, worship and other new initiatives



# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Hire part-time, paid musician for each worship service, with regular participation from special musical groups

Utilize a wide range of input (music staff, worship committee, creative congregants) to create a 12 month worship plan overview

Raise new leaders to become next leaders

Use new worship songs and sounds | Raise up young musicians

## NEW DISCIPLES

Build an integrated process that moves guests into the life of the church

Schedule faith steps: *profession of faith, confirmation process, baptism Sunday and testimony days*

Regularly celebrate rites of passage in congregants' faith lives

Experiment with creative venues for connecting with new people

Consider a new service like dinner church

Make it easy for visitors to get involved

## GIVING

Have a strong 12-month stewardship plan

Develop a narrative budget to tell the story of ministry

Develop a planned giving strategy that will ensure ministry funding for the future

Develop a stewardship team to focus on growing generosity and stewardship, not finances

## SMALL GROUPS

Make small groups a core part of church life

Include staff and laity as leaders

Meet in church, at homes and in the community

Make small groups a lifestyle

Develop an easy process for joining a small group

Hire a part-time youth director who develops a team of volunteers to maintain one adult for every 3-5 youth

## MISSION

Map your community assets

Identify a primary mission partner to focus impact

Let small groups focus on smaller initiatives

Increase budget to support annual, hands-on mission experiences

## RESOURCES

- Clergy Coaching
- Cokesbury
- Discipleship Ministries finance and stewardship resources/webinars
- Developing an Intentional Discipleship System by Junius Dotson
- Hope Centers
- IGNITE Youth Conference
- IGNITE Youth Leaders Day
- Laity Leadership Academy
- Lay Servant Ministry
- Miracles Everywhere
- MissionInsite
- Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands
- PaCE Groups Stewardship Foundation
- Team Vital
- UMVIM
- Vital Mission Partners for GNJ

For more information about these resources, go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).

# LARGE PROGRAM CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 250-349

6 or 1% of GNJ churches are larger program congregations  
Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 25 new worshipers

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Good quality in major programs: *worship, small groups, music, hospitality, education, mission, children and youth*

Maintains 30 capable leaders

Programs mostly run by volunteers

Church council has long-term vision

## STRENGTHS

Programs provide faith development

Diverse groups of people

Good quality for preaching, worship and hospitality

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Establishing excellent, automated follow-up and integration system for guests

Identifying and leveraging key programs (in addition to worship) that attract first time guests

Cultivating stewardship and budgeting habits for spending associated with growth

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

Generalist with strong preaching abilities

Associates have areas of focus, but are still generalists

Does not know everyone in the church

Recruits, develops and retains leaders

Casts vision and garners enthusiasm from leadership

## CHALLENGES

Finding enough quality leaders in the congregation

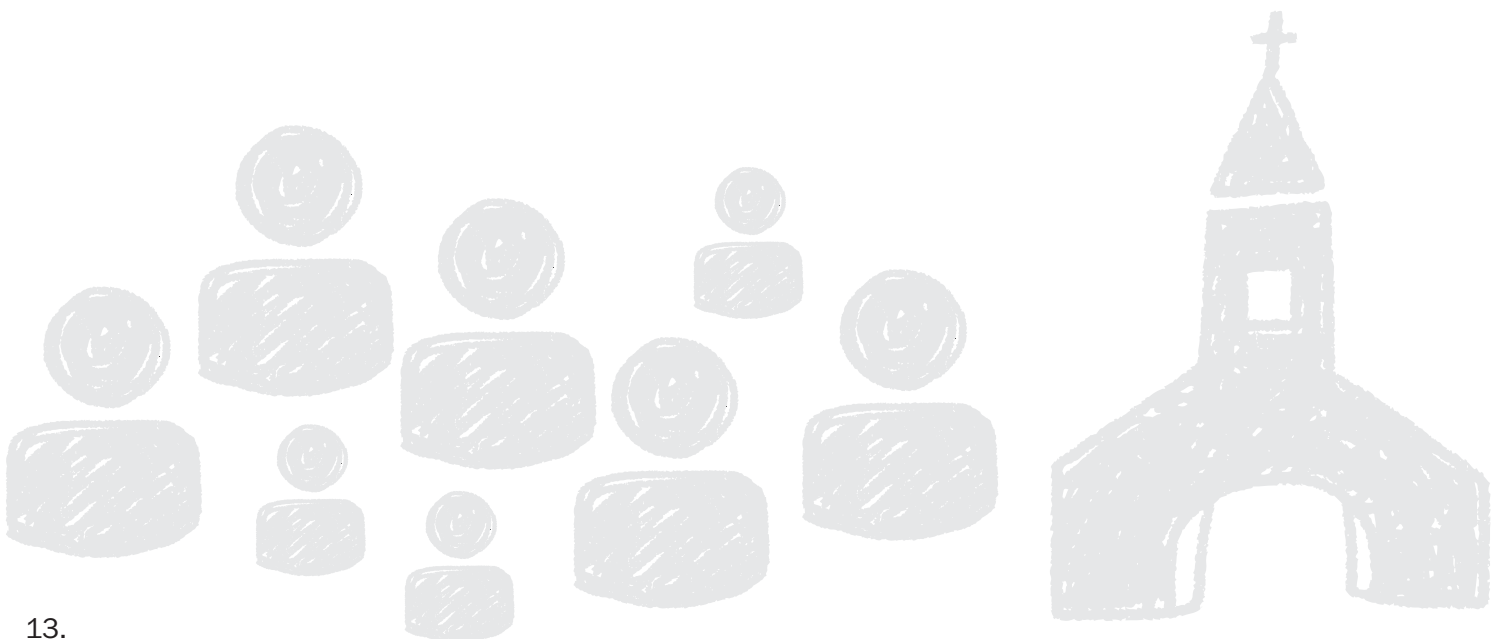
Setting a clear discipleship path

Hiring excellent part-time staff specialists

## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Actively offloading responsibilities to well-trained volunteers and support staff as a way of freeing up time to invest in new growth

Fundraising and building a budget for a staff/space that is designed for a congregation that isn't yet there





# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Fully plan worship services 3 months in advance

Use audiovisuals

Increase focus on great preaching and church leadership, allowing staff and key leaders guide significant areas of church life

Consider an additional service or second location

Raise up new, younger musicians and experiment with new styles

## NEW DISCIPLES

Establish an organized, automated process for visitor follow-up

Promote a clear, integrated discipleship pathway

Invest in a service that more easily connects with unchurched people

Consider launching a new worship site

Equip leaders to disciple and raise up additional leaders

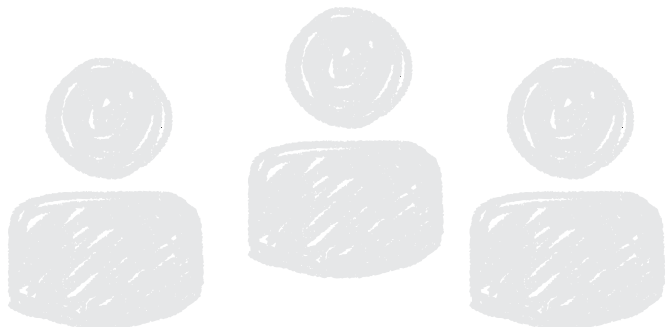
## GIVING

Establish a 12-month stewardship plan

Develop a narrative budget to tell the story of ministry

Develop a planned giving strategy

Develop a stewardship team to focus on growing generosity and stewardship, not finances



## SMALL GROUPS

Hire a coordinator of small group ministries

Ensure groups vary in style, leadership and location

Emphasize small groups as a lifestyle

Establish process for formation, materials and leaders

Create system for leaders to report to staff

Make joining a group easy

## MISSION

Budget for multiple multi-day mission experiences

Identify a primary mission partner to focus impact

Let small groups focus on smaller mission initiatives

Practice long-range planning with mission partners for lasting relationship

## RESOURCES

- Clergy Coaching
- Developing an Intentional Discipleship System by Junius Dotson
- Discipleship Ministries finance and stewardship resources/webinars
- Hope Centers
- IGNITE Youth Conference
- IGNITE Youth Leaders Day
- Laity Leadership Academy
- Lay Servant Ministry
- Miracles Everywhere
- MissionInsite
- Hope Centers
- Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands
- PaCE Groups
- Pushpay or Subsplash
- Retreats at Pinelands Center
- Stewardship Foundation
- UMCOR
- UMVIM
- Vital Mission Partners for GNJ

For more information about these resources, go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).



# CORPORATE CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 350-499

8 or 2% of GNJ churches are corporate congregations  
Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 25 new worshipers

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Professional and operationally sound

Commitment to long-range vision

Excellent volunteer systems

Small groups drives connections

## STRENGTHS

Variety of excellent programs

Clear discipleship pathway for spiritual growth

Staff leadership and ownership of programming

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Launching a significant new faith community

Moving to specialized staff

Hiring a full-time communications person

Addressing property needs to promote church growth

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

Head of staff who maintains focus on vision

Fundraiser

Maintains an emphasis on discipleship process

## CHALLENGES

Aligning the budget and ministry and vision

Finding and affording excellent part-time and full-time specialized staff

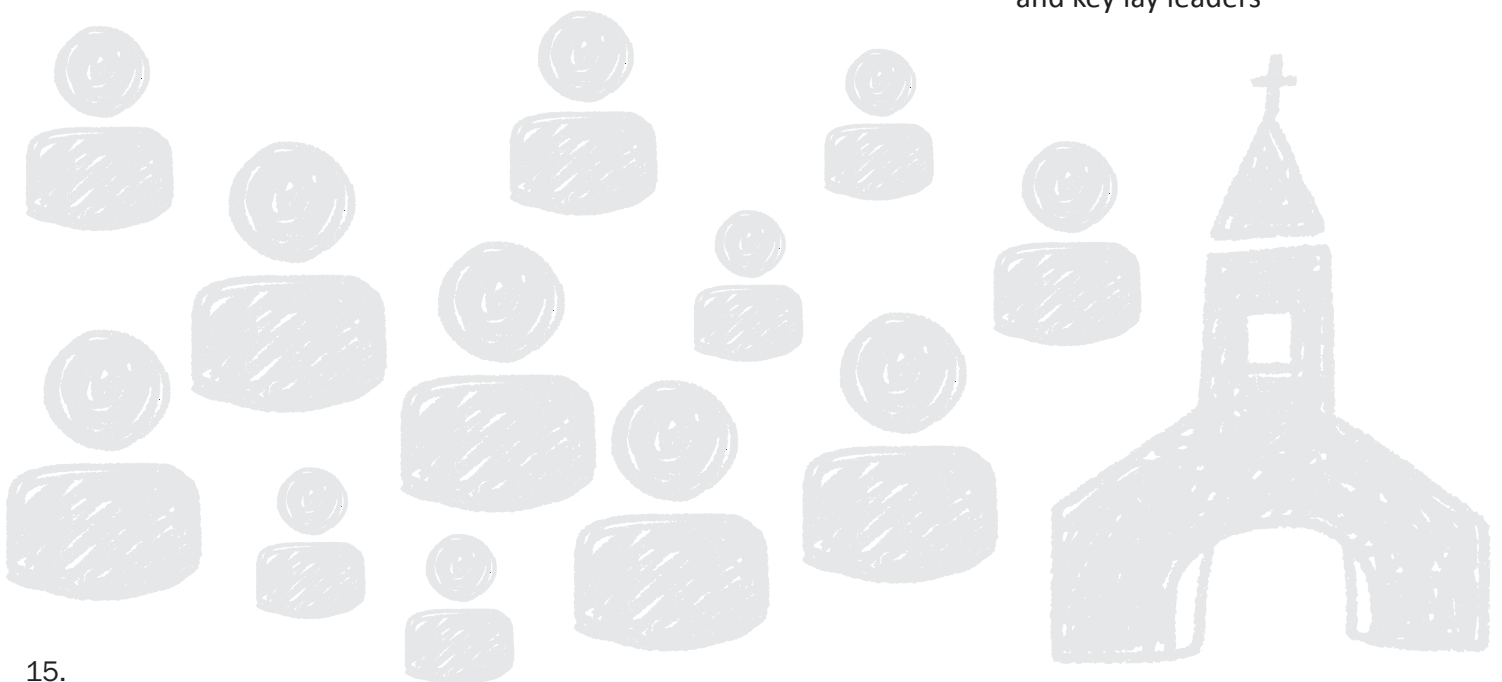
## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Investing significant time managing key lead staff to ensure the mission and vision are being lived out in all areas of the church

Separating preaching from executive work

Understanding the culture and demographics of the region to identify a place to plant a new faith community

Shifting the focus of care to the staff team and key lay leaders



# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Focus on great preaching and church vision while other staff lead the remaining areas of church life

Hire professionals for music leadership and A/V staff

Invest in cohesive, attractive branding for worship content

## NEW DISCIPLES

Develop the core leadership to launch a new location or more services

Offer a monthly inquirers' class or dinner to invite people to take a step into the discipleship process

Actively "give away" your church's best volunteers and active congregants to new initiatives and planting teams

Regularly invite people to serve on volunteer teams (hospitality, music, children's, etc) with training opportunities built into the rhythm of church life

Each week, invite attenders into next step of faith or service

## GIVING

Offer a range of personal financial seminars including debt management, building a strong financial future and, estate planning for different age levels

Offer small groups focused on living generous lives

Direct stewardship communication to different generations

Teach and preach tithing as spiritual discipline

Address summer slump in giving

## MISSION

Establish an ongoing local or international missions partnership

Focus on hands-on and not just financial mission

Hire a part-time director of missions

Refocus resources to invest in fewer things with more impact

## SMALL GROUPS

Hire a coordinator of small group ministries

Coordinate groups and curriculum materials by a staff position

Use guidelines to maintain alignment with the denomination

Budget \$1500 per student per year for a youth group for staff, programming and retreats

Designate time for small groups for children, youth and adults

Develop and equip new groups as to not disrupt connections in established groups

## RESOURCES

- [Exponential.org](http://Exponential.org)
- [Hope Centers](#)
- [IGNITE Youth Conference](#)
- [IGNITE Youth Leaders Day](#)
- [Laity Leadership Academy](#)
- [Lay Servant Ministry](#)
- [Miracles Everywhere](#)
- [MissionInsite](#)
- [Multiplication Cohort](#)
- [Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands](#)
- [PaCE Groups](#)
- [Pushpay or Subsplash](#)
- [Readiness360.org](#)
- [Retreats at Pinelands Center](#)
- [Specialized Coaching for Large Churches](#)
- [Stewardship Foundation](#)
- [UMCOR](#)
- [UMVIM](#)
- [Vital Mission Partners for GNJ](#)

For more information about these resources, go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).

# MID CORPORATE CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 500-799

7 or 1% of GNJ churches are mid corporate congregations  
Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 25 new worshipers

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Executive team handles vision and strategic plans

Staff is specialized and equips leaders

Church Council serves as board of directors

Sub-groups drive connections

Independent campuses and departments

## STRENGTHS

Draws newcomers to high quality ministries

Facilities are maintained but not modern

Vision, mission and values drive the congregation

Creative and excellent worship

Growth emerges in different areas at the same time

Strong departmental leadership

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Building independent ministry teams

Investing financially for future ministry

Welcoming guests who are from your church community, denomination or even faith

Relinquishing management to the staff team

Focusing on vision and direction

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

Manager and communicator

Clarifies vision and values to leadership

Delegates decisions to staff and laity leadership

## CHALLENGES

Facilities keep church from growing

Difficulty finding like minded, similarly-sized churches in the UMC

Launch of new campuses can destabilize what is already working

## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Increasing accountability to financial stability and growth

Investing in multisite growth

Narrowing focus



# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Focus on great preaching and church vision while other staff lead the remaining areas of church life

Hire professionals for music leadership and A/V staff

Invest in cohesive, attractive branding for worship content

## NEW DISCIPLES

Develop leadership to launch a new location or more services

Offer a monthly inquirers' class or dinner to invite people to take a step into the discipleship process

Offer multiple series that are specifically designed for people to bring an unchurched friend and roughly designed with the unchurched in mind

Launch a new site or partner church

Constantly train new leaders so that staff focus on developing leaders instead of running ministries

Each week, invite attenders into some next step of faith or service

## GIVING

Offer a range of personal financial seminars for young adults (debt management), young families (building a strong financial future), estate planning (tailor to different age levels)

Have a strong endowment fund and team that manages the fund

Run a ministry fund campaign to endow future ministries i.e. youth, music, missions

## MISSION

Ensure mission is hands on and relational

Hire a part-time director of missions

Refocus resources to invest in fewer things with more impact

## SMALL GROUPS

Hire a coordinator of small group ministries

Coordinate groups and curriculum materials by a staff position

Use guidelines to maintain alignment with the denomination

Budget \$1500 per student per year for a youth group for staff, programming and retreats

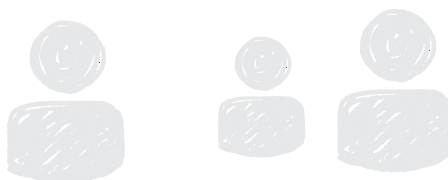
Designate time for small groups for children, youth and adults

Develop and equip new groups as to not disrupt connections in established groups

## RESOURCES

- Exponential.org
- Hope Centers
- IGNITE Youth Conference
- IGNITE Youth Leaders Day
- Lake Institute
- Miracles Everywhere
- MissionInsite
- Multiplication Cohort
- Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands
- PaCE Groups
- Pushpay or Subsplash
- Readiness360.org
- Retreats at Pinelands Center
- Specialized Coaching for Large Churches
- Stewardship Foundation
- UMCOR
- UMVIM
- Vital Mission Partners for GNJ

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# LARGE CORPORATE CONGREGATION

Average Worship Attendance | 800+

2 or  $\geq 1\%$  of GNJ churches are large corporate congregations  
Benchmark progress and celebrate success for every 25 new worshipers

## CHURCH ARCHETYPE

Multisite

Excellent worship experience

Small groups drive connection

Full-time staff required for each ministry

Staff recruits and leads teams

Leadership development is necessary  
to sustain ministry

## STRENGTHS

Facilities are exceptional

Excellent programs and systems

High value on making new disciples and launching  
new communities of faith

Leadership pipeline actively identifying and  
training new ministry leaders

## CONGREGATIONS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Building a regular rhythm of planting new  
faith communities

Developing and hiring leadership for excellence

Focusing on strategic decision-making and  
accountability for the staff

## PASTOR ARCHETYPE

Public face of church to the community

Dynamic persona and excellent communicator

Preaches and casts vision

Launches major initiatives

Delegates maintenance

## CHALLENGES

Finding and maintaining a space for everyone  
can be a chronic issue

Decentralized programming and leadership

Large staff struggles to identify as one team

The rhythm and resources for new faith  
communities is irregular

## PASTORS GROW IN IMPACT BY

Leading the executive staff team, who take  
responsibility for strategic direction

Keeping the staff and church leadership in the habit of  
asking, "what's next" in all areas of church life

Creating and sharing resources for the broader church  
through writing and publishing



# BEST PRACTICES

## WORSHIP

Focus on excellent preaching, the church's vision, and developing core staff members

Ensure music leadership and A/V staff are lifting up new leaders

Invest in cohesive, attractive branding for worship content

## NEW DISCIPLES

Offer a monthly inquirers' class or dinner to invite people to take a step into the discipleship process

Offer multiple series that are specifically designed for people to bring an unchurched friend

Launch a new site or partner church

Constantly train new leaders so that staff focus on developing leaders instead of running ministries

Each week, invite attendees into some next step of faith or service

## GIVING

Hire a part-time pastor of generosity

Run a ministry fund campaign that will endow future ministries i.e. youth, music, missions

Designate a budget line to explore the next ministry possibility

## SMALL GROUPS

Budget \$1500 per student per year for youth ministry to include staff, program and retreats

Hire a small groups leader to train and keep leaders accountable

Provide guidelines to assure the materials reflect the beliefs of the church

Develop and equip new groups so to not disrupt connections in older ones.

## MISSION

Focus on hands-on mission both locally and internationally

Hire a full-time director of missions

Refocus resources to invest in fewer things with more impact

## RESOURCES

- Exponential.org
- Hope Centers
- IGNITE Youth Conference
- IGNITE Youth Leaders Day
- International or Local Mission Partnership
- Lake Institute
- Miracles Everywhere
- MissionInsite
- Multiplication Cohort
- Next Generation Summer Camp at Pinelands
- PaCE Groups
- Pushpay or Subsplash
- Readiness360.org
- Retreats at Pinelands Center
- Specialized Coaching for Large Churches
- Stewardship Foundation
- UMCOR
- UMVIM
- Vital Mission Partners for GNJ

For more information about these resources, go to [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).



# GLOSSARY

A brief description of the resources listed for each church size is included below with website links as appropriate. More information can also be found on Greater New Jersey's website: [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org).

**BACK TO BASICS/FOUNDATIONAL DAYS** | Annual trainings for specific leadership roles in the congregation.

**BREAKTHROUGH** | Worship resource that include best practices so that GNJ congregations can focus on what really matters - preaching the gospel to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.

**CLERGY COACHING** | Coaches walk beside GNJ clergy to help achieve leadership goals and action plans.

**CLERGY LEADERSHIP SEMINAR** | Monthly seminar for clergy that focuses on experiential learning, practical application and implementation focusing on leadership and congregational competencies.

**COKEBURY** | The retail division of The United Methodist Publishing House which provides quality services and resources to churches. | [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com)

**DAYS OF LEARNING** | Regional programs that equip congregational leaders to grow in vitality and impact.

**DEVELOPING AN INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP SYSTEM** *by Junius Dotson* | A simple 6-step workbook defines discipleship and communicates a church's discipleship pathway in a simple and compelling way.

**DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES WORSHIP RESOURCES** | Quality United Methodist music, liturgy and preaching resources for faithful and vital local church worship. | [www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship)

**DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP RESOURCES/WEBINARS** | Regularly updated materials on stewardship and church finances. | [www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/stewardship](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/stewardship)

**DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAYS** | A workbook and video developed by the GNJ Connectional Ministries Team that helps church leaders define, outline and implement a clear discipleship pathway within the congregation.

**EXPONENTIAL CONFERENCE** | Church planting and church growth conference with unique tools for larger church growth. [www.exponential.org](http://www.exponential.org)

**HOPE CENTERS** | Asset based community and congregation partnerships that bring hope to people within and outside of the church. Hope Centers are located throughout GNJ and offer mission opportunities for churches. | [www.afuturewithhope.org](http://www.afuturewithhope.org)

**IGNITE YOUTH CONFERENCE** | Three day conference the first week of October that brings together hundreds of youth from around GNJ. | [www.ignitenj.org](http://www.ignitenj.org)

**IGNITE YOUTH LEADERS DAY** | Training day for leaders of youth groups. | [www.ignitenj.org](http://www.ignitenj.org)

**INTERNATIONAL OR LOCAL MISSION PARTNERSHIP** | A way to increase mission impact by building a sustainable long-term relationship with a local nonprofit, GNJ Hope Center or international mission group through UMCOR.

**LAITY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** | An annual program sponsored by the GNJ Board of Laity to develop best practices in the areas of worship, small groups, new disciples, mission and giving.

**LAKE INSTITUTE ON FAITH & GIVING** | A division of the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, the Lake Institute offers an Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising, an intensive course with applications and practices unique to religious institutions. [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/institutes/lake-institute](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/institutes/lake-institute)



**LAY SERVANT MINISTRY** | A pathway for GNJ laity to focus on growing their witness and leadership within their congregation and beyond. Classes are offered for Basic Lay Servants, Lay Speakers, Certified Lay Servants, Lay Missioners and Certified Lay Ministers.

**MINISTRY MATTERS** | Articles, blogs, books, sermon guides and worship resources for Christian leaders.  
[www.ministrymatters.com](http://www.ministrymatters.com)

**MIRACLES EVERYWHERE** | A three year GNJ mission fund to raise \$6.2 million for Next Generation, A Future With Hope, hurricane recovery and making disciples in Tanzania.

**MISSION U** | An annual education opportunity cosponsored by GNJ's United Methodist Women to study effective mission and ministry.

**MISSIONINSITE** | Tool to provide demographic data for your church and community, customized and available for all GNJ churches.

**MULTIPLICATION COHORT** | A group of GNJ pastors identified as likely to innovate and launch new faith communities.

**NEXT GENERATION SUMMER CAMPS** | Opportunities for middle and high schoolers to participate in week-long camping programs at Pinelands Center.

**PACE GROUPS** | Cohort groups for GNJ clergy that meet monthly to focus on a particular theme for growth in worship planning, leading change, fundraising, self-care and other topics.

**PUSHPAY OR SUBSPLASH APPS** | Platforms for churches to use for communication, small group leadership, giving and more.

**READINESS360** | An in-depth church evaluative process that identifies behaviors, patterns and attitudes that contribute to success or failure when developing new places for new people or stepping out in bold risk-taking mission.  
[www.readiness360.org](http://www.readiness360.org)

**RETREATS AT PINELANDS CENTER** | Year-round facilities at Mt. Misery in the Pine Barrens suitable for adult and youth spiritual retreats. | [www.gnjnextgen.org](http://www.gnjnextgen.org)

**SMALL GROUP RESOURCES FROM GNJ** | Dozens of free resources for small group leaders that have been curated and recommended by the Connectional Ministries Team.

**SPECIALIZED COACHING FOR LARGE CHURCHES** | Advanced coaching for clergy at large churches arranged by contacting the district superintendent.

**STEWARDSHIP FOUNDATION** | The United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of GNJ is a GNJ vital mission partner which has tools for stewardship, capital and endowment campaigns, planned giving, financial planning and investment.

**TEAM VITAL** | An intensive training for leaders in congregations of 75 or more in worship to create a strategic ministry plan using the five markers of vitality.

**UMCOR** | The humanitarian relief and development arm of The United Methodist Church that offers mission and giving opportunities for congregations to connect with the global community. | [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org)

**UMVIM NEJ** | United Methodists Volunteers in Mission the Northeastern Jurisdiction train, equip, connect and mobilize for short-term mission in locally, nationally and internationally. | [www.umvimnej.org](http://www.umvimnej.org)

**VITAL MISSION PARTNERS** | GNJ's strategic non profit partners including, A Future With Hope, Next Generation Ministries, The United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey, Nehemiah Properties and Resurrection Gardens.





**UNITED METHODISTS**  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

**MISSION AND RESOURCE CENTER**  
**205 JUMPING BROOK RD., NEPTUNE, NJ 07753**

**[WWW.GNJUMC.ORG](http://WWW.GNJUMC.ORG) | 732.359.1000**