

# THE RELAY

UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

MAY 2019  
Vol. LXIII/No. 5

gnjumc.org

## Way Forward Team and Connectional Table Start Work on Renewing Methodism in GNJ

By Carolyn Conover  
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NEPTUNE

The GNJ Way Forward Team, met April 25 with a focus on renewing Methodism in Greater New Jersey, in the wake of deep disagreement and conflict in the denomination on the issue of homosexuality, which was not resolved at the February Special Session of General Conference.

The focus of the GNJ Way Forward Team meeting was on renewal with a goal of growing faith and commitment by turning the church outward. "An out-

ward Methodism can offer a renewal that comes not by changing people but by freeing them for witness and mission in the world," said the Rev. Sang Won Doh, convener of the team. Together, the team sees a possibility that new expressions of United Methodism can provide disciples the freedom to focus on the greater mission of the church while holding together the key values all United Methodists have in common such as history, relationships, mission and administration.

judicial council rulings may determine polity but will not change people, and that fundamentally the divide in the denomination goes deeper than disagreements about how to be in ministry with the LGBTQI+ community. The divide stems from fundamental differences in theology and interpretation of scripture. The team met with a sense of urgency and a commitment to be part of the solution. They agreed most people of Greater New Jersey do not want solutions decided for them. National and global groups are working on these issues, and those present expressed that the work at the local and regional level will provide solutions that fit within GNJ's context.

conference commissioned the team to propose a plan to the GNJ Annual Conference that:

- Supports congregations in different contexts to be in ministry with the LGBTQI+ community
- Respects and honors one another based on theological and cultural differences
- Shares hopes, concerns and learnings with other conferences around the world.

The Way Forward Team was joined at the April meeting by the GNJ Connectional Table which is comprised of the elected leadership in committees, commissions and agencies.

During their time together, The GNJ Way Forward Team centered themselves on receiving and listening to the Holy Spirit. The Rev. Shawn Callender Hogan, who serves as spiritual director for the team, opened and closed the session with prayer, times of silence and reflection from selected biblical passages. Each member of the group also agreed to a covenant, based on the denomination's Way Forward covenant, to honor confidentiality and respect one another's differences. The team will be using the tools of the Aringer Institute's Outward Mindset to facilitate their discussions.

The Way Forward Team is at the very beginning stage in exploring different expressions. The next meeting is scheduled for May 13. They will report to the Annual Conference session in May so that members can provide feedback on plans for the summer.

**"AN OUTWARD METHODISM CAN OFFER A RENEWAL THAT COMES NOT BY CHANGING PEOPLE BUT BY FREEING THEM FOR WITNESS AND MISSION IN THE WORLD."**

— Rev. Sang Won Doh

ward Methodism can offer a renewal that comes not by changing people but by freeing them for witness and mission in the world," said the Rev. Sang Won Doh, convener of the team. Together, the team sees a possibility that new expressions of United Methodism can provide disciples the freedom to focus on the greater mission of the church while holding together the key values all United Methodists have in common such as history, relationships, mission and administration.

The group recognized two keys to finding a way forward. Legislation and

GNJ has been a historical pace setter for the Methodist movement. GNJ's Annual Conferences dismantled segregation before the General Conference acted to dismantle the Central Jurisdiction (a policy to separate African American churches from the White churches from 1939 to 1968). The leaders at the April's meeting affirmed they are prepared to work together to lead the church forward once again.

GNJ's Way Forward Team was formed by the Special Session of Annual Conference held in March and the members were elected to participate. The annual



### Hoboken Church Receives Mayor Proclamation

The Community Church of Hoboken was awarded a proclamation by the City of Hoboken and the historic preservation commission for efforts to re-beautify and restore the exterior of the 163 year old brick house of worship. Friends, neighbors, elected officials and local businesses joined in the celebration. To see more from Conference Happenings, see page 11.

## Cultivate: Students Exploring Ministry this Summer

By Chris Carter  
ccarter@gnjumc.org

This summer, Next Generation Ministries is empowering churches across Greater New Jersey to raise up students to lead the church today. The 'Cultivate: Summer of Exploration' internship is a partnership between Next Gen and local churches that will provide opportunities for high school students to learn about ministry by engaging in it.

Eleven churches representing all three regions of GNJ have been selected for the program. Eric Drew, Executive Director of Next Generation Ministries is excited by its launch, "One of the unique aspects about the cultivate internships is that they foster discipleship for our youth and provide resources for our churches." Participating churches nominated a student who will work 20-25 hours a week to help strengthen their congregation's vital missions during this summer. Student-interns will set goals for the ministries they're working in, as well as their own growth, and work with mentors who will serve as both supervisor and spiritual counselor. Mentors (mostly pastors or associate pastors) will work with student-interns to implement personalized jobs and responsibilities tailored to the church's needs and each student's strengths.

Cultivate interns will be working to develop diverse ministries from food pantries to youth soccer outreach to the preservation of Native American heritage. It is that continuing spirit of innovation and discipleship that GNJ, Next Gen and local churches are looking to kindle in the Cultivate interns.

## Shoes, Pies and Clowns: The 2019 Laity Recognition Awards

NEPTUNE

What do shoes, pies and clowns have in common? They are representative of unique ministries led by GNJ laity which were recognized on April 13 at the Mission and Resource Center.

"Twenty-four ministries shared how God continues to work in GNJ," said GNJ Lay Leader Rosa Williams who hosted the event, "We are grateful for all of those folks who are reaching out to spread the Good News"

The Laity Recognition Awards are given each year to honor creativity and innovation in transforming lives and making disciples of Jesus Christ. United Methodists throughout Greater New Jersey have the opportunity to nominate people in their congregation who are leading ministries that reach out into communities in a commitment of Christ's outreaching love.

Honorees represented all nine districts and their service provide models for all GNJ congregations. Juel Nelson, Director of Leadership Development noted the diversity of the leaders, "There were youth and young adults to long term members. One honoree was in his 90's. This is the church alive for Christ no matter what your age. God is making things new and vibrant in our local churches."

"Laity, through these ministries, are addressing the needs and concerns of people living in our communities," said Williams, "They provide a place of hope and bear much fruit." *Continued on page 6*



**Evelyn Carson runs the Growing Graceful Ministry at St. Paul's UMC, a monthly program on wellness, volunteering and spirituality.** Photo by Biho Chung, Monmouth Grace UMC in Eatontown

*Continued on page 8*

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

## Turning the Church Outward



**H**ave you ever gone to a car dealer to buy a car and a salesperson greets you and begins to engage you in conversation? You soon realize the salesperson is not really interested in you but just making conversation in order to get you to buy a car. I am not picking on car salespeople. I imagine we all have been guilty of having conversations in which the real agenda of the conversation is to achieve our aims. From time to time I hear from visitors of a church who indicate people seemed more interested in getting them to become members, than understanding the real reason of why they came to the church.

Today is the second part of a series about turning the church outward. Last month, I talked about an outward vision and today, I want to talk with you about outward conversations.

The church has been engaged in conversations and even debates that more often begins inward rather than outward. Inward conversations begin with seeing people as objects rather than as people. When we see people as objects, we are seeing them as either allies that will support our aims, or vehicles to help us accomplish our objectives, or obstacles getting in the way of our accomplishing objectives.

When we see people as objects, we diminish not only the individual, but the Creator. God is reduced to a maker of objects, objects that were created to serve ourselves. This is part of the original sin: we wanted to have mastery over everything so that it was made to serve us. You may think this is an overstatement, but it is really not when we look at others as allies, vehicles and obstacles. We see people through the lens of: you are here to serve my aims and not the aims of the Creator.

Listen to people, listen to yourself and ask, how do I see this person? As an ally, vehicle, obstacle or person?

When we see people as people, we recognize that their aims and their objectives are important too. We go deeper than the vehicle or obstacle mindset and seek to understand their deeper desires.

In our present difference over how we will engage in ministry with the LGBTQI+ community, if we sought to understand more fully, we would recognize that even though there are different understandings, the deepest desire is to follow God and to be faithful to the word of God. What if our first move was not to try to correct or to try to teach people about why they are wrong, but to develop a relationship? Not a relationship like the car salesperson or the church member trying to convince someone to become a member, but a relationship that begins with recognizing we are both created by God as people of sacred worth, both fallen and redeemed through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What if our relationship was one of humanity created by God rather than relationships of two objects?

**“Outward conversations begin with seeing the other as a person, a child created by God and not an object that supports us or works against us.”**

As I read the Gospels, this is what the writers wanted us to see in Jesus. With the woman by the well, Jesus neither saw her as a woman or a Samaritan, but as a person. Jesus treated her with dignity and respect which opened her to a greater understanding of God and God’s grace through Christ. Jesus didn’t see her as an object, a vehicle or obstacle, but as a person he by chance met at a well, both coming for the same thing, water that ultimately became living water that they both sought.

When people who want to see full inclusion meet people who support the traditional plan, they see someone who is trying to hurt them or prevent them from following God as they feel called. They see them as an obstacle, not a person.

When people who support the traditional biblical view about homosexuality encounter a person who wants to change our *Book of Discipline* to allow weddings and ordination, they see a person who is trying to change their core beliefs and understanding, someone who wants to take away from them their deeply held beliefs. They see people as obstacles not as human beings.

There is another way and that is to see each other as people, followers of Jesus, both searching for truth and to follow God. What then does it look like for each to help the other be faithful and to follow God? Not to change, God does the changing, but to prayerfully care about each other.

Have we come to the place where the greatest care we can provide for one another is to allow each other to explore different expressions of what is next for Methodism? To release each other from trying to convince each other of who is right and wrong and instead, with conviction, to bless, yes bless each other (Luke 6:28) to pursue the mission to which we have been called?

I believe with the GNJ Way Forward Team that we have reached a point in which it is time to bless each other and release each other for the mission of Jesus Christ. Presently in our differences, we are seeing one another more and more as objects and in so doing we live the greatest sin, to reduce the Creator to be a creator of objects, not humanity in the image of God.

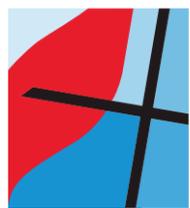
Outward conversations begin with seeing the other as a person, a child created by God and not an object that supports us or works against us.

I will be leading to help two or more expressions of Methodism emerge in GNJ so that we can bless each other and pursue the convictions God has laid on our heart. These will be challenging days, even more challenging than we have

already experienced. But I am convinced that if we remain centered in the Creator, see one another as people of sacred worth created by God and try not to change or convince people that they are wrong, we have the opportunity to create paths for new and different expressions that seek to follow different convictions about how we love God and one another. May God be our helper.

Keep the faith!

Bishop John Schol  
United Methodists of Greater New Jersey



**THE RELAY**  
UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

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The United Methodist Relay (USPS 343-360) is published monthly by the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey. Office of Publication: Office of the Bishop, 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune NJ 07753. Periodical Postage Paid at Red Bank, NJ and additional entry offices. Mailed free to selected lay leaders and clergy of each church. Others may subscribe at the rate of \$9.50 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to UNITED METHODIST RELAY, 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune NJ 07753.

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**The June 2019 issue deadline is May 17, 2019**

# rites of passage

The next few months hold a lot of momentous possibilities if we pause and notice them. The end of a school year, the last Sunday school class of the semester and the beginning of summer vacation are just a few key moments. Other important events are more subtle and take a little more creativity: a new congregant's 12th visit to worship, a Sunday school teacher's 100th class taught, or the 100th joy/concern of the year shared on Sunday mornings.

Often the memorability of our worship experiences and strength of our church's relational bonds are dependent upon our ability to memorialize key moments in the life of our congregants. Here are four types of "peak moments" that Chip and Dan Heath suggest we take advantage of in *The Power of Moments*.

## 1. ELEVATION

These are moments of joy or surprise that stand out from the regular rhythms of church life. Consider "breaking the script" to create something momentous and help people out of their rhythmic ruts: confetti and a balloon drop celebrating the 100th joy/concern of the year.

## 2. PRIDE

Build pride by creating moments of recognition and gratitude. Choose unusual milestones that are often overlooked (a Sunday School teacher's 100th class taught).

## 3. CONNECTION

Create scenarios of unusual relational depth: start your trustees meeting by inviting people to share a story from their teenage years or start your vision retreat with an "escape room challenge."

## 4. INSIGHT

Moments of insight require trust and risk. We allow people to discover insights by attempting difficult tasks and reflecting: let a 9 year old and her grandmother co-preach the sermon or challenge your United Methodist Men's group to run Vacation Bible School.



**For more information about making new disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world, contact:**

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**UNITED METHODISTS**  
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# Greater New Jersey Awards



**The Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award:**  
Eve Casey, Phyllis Casey, Susan Champion and Betty Inglis, First United Methodist Church of Dover

*Sponsored by the Commission on Archives to recognize the best overall church history from United Methodists of Greater New Jersey*

The Commission on Archives and History is proud to present the 2019 Robert B. Steelman History Award to the First United Methodist Church of Dover, NJ and their team of local church historians Eve Casey, Phyllis Casey, Susan Champion and Betty Inglis. The co-chairs submitted a thorough and engaging history of 180 years of Christian ministry and service, from 1838 through 2018. The anniversary co-chairs and historians are life-long members of First Church and together they represent 251 years of First Church membership. Based on Betty Inglis' 1938: *100 years of Methodism in Dover*, the current team researched and crafted a history of church events and ministry with snippets of local history for nuance. In the later twentieth century disciples of First Church recognized a growing influx of Hispanic persons and planned accordingly for worship and other ministries to meet and welcome this growing population. Today English and Spanish speaking services are only a part of this multi-lingual church with Rev. Dr. Charles Perez serving as pastor.

Church histories were judged by Morgan Glossbrenner, Nikolay Petrov, Todd Lattig, Ben Ridings and Donald DeGroat.



**The Helenor Alter Davisson Award:**  
Rev. Dr. Eunice Vega-Perez

*Sponsored by the General Commission on Status and Role of Women as the outstanding woman for leadership and influence in the Greater New Jersey Conference of the United Methodist Church.*

Rev. Dr. Eunice Vega-Perez has served in four churches where she demonstrated her deep love for God and for people. She built a strong Hispanic ministry to serve the community including worship, Bible study and ESL programming. She is also a mentor and has guided several people to ministry through ordination and as licensed local pastors. Eunice has a deep passion for social justice. She champions the causes of immigrants and women with great fervor and energy. She has led mission trips to Costa Rica, Haiti, Puerto Rico and Red Bird Mission.



**The Francis Asbury Award:**  
Rev. Dr. Drew Dyson

*Sponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) board members of Greater New Jersey*

District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Drew Dyson has been dedicated to youth and young adults throughout his ministry, bringing to GNJ a new structure for the Next Gen local church and campus ministry. He has served as Executive

Director of Shared Mission Focus on Young People of the General Board of Discipleship, as Team Leader and primary author of General Conference legislation creating the Board of Discipleship's Division on Ministry to Young People in 2004, is James C Logan Chair in Evangelism at Wesley Theological Seminary and teaches at both Princeton and Memphis Theological Seminaries. Drew is also the author of several books on the practice of youth ministry. Drew has guided the Raritan Valley District, GNJ churches and Conference in ministry to youth and young adults. Drew's vision and commitment to ministry at the New Brunswick-Piscataway campus of Rutgers University has led to a pastor-chaplain being appointed to the New Brunswick campus at Rutgers University.



**The Harry Denman Evangelism Award:**  
Douglas K. Bull

*Sponsored by The Foundation for Evangelism to recognize a clergy member, lay person or a youth pastor who has an outstanding personal evangelism ministry.*

Douglas Bull grew up in Jefferson Township and attended Milton UMC as a child. His faith journey found him both questioning and adventuring as a youth and young adult. In more recent years, Doug has returned to being active in living out his spiritual journey by bringing witness and leadership to several areas in the church community. His commitment was key in MUMC's involvement with the Christian Outreach Project, a youth/adult housing repair ministry for people unable to afford it in local communities. Doug helped launch ongoing Adult Bible studies and brought praise music alive to Milton in coordinating the church Praise Band SPIRIT. Doug is gifted in producing multimedia to support worship and illustrate the tone of worship. His leadership has been blessing and his faith commitment strong as many lives have been touched by his lived witness to Christ.



**Harry A. Seese Memorial Scholarship:**  
Rev. Brendan Galvin

*Given to a pastor whose plans for continuing education will lead to strengthening his/her ministry in the local church. Guided by Rose Seese of Gibbsboro, his widow and supported by ongoing gifts, the scholarship honors her late husband, the Rev. Harry A. Seese, who died while serving the Medford UMC.*

Rev. Brendan Galvin is currently serving First Passaic UMC and Leonia UMC. He received a Master of Divinity from Duke and is originally from Los Angeles. His passion for innovative urban ministry has taken him from a community house in LA to justice ministries in Chicago, and now a new home in Greater New Jersey.



**Harry A. Seese Memorial Scholarship:**  
Rev. Ji Sun Yang

*Given to a pastor whose plans for continuing education will lead to strengthening his/her ministry in the local church. Guided by Rose Seese of Gibbsboro, his widow and supported by ongoing gifts, the scholarship honors her late husband, the Rev. Harry A. Seese, who died while serving the Medford UMC.*

Ji Sun Yang is currently serving Repaupo UMC and St. Paul's UMC in Bridgeport. Ji Sun is passionate about sharing God's love story for all people in scripture and today. She is gifted in music and loves to learn something new. Her husband, SungWoo Aiden Lee, is her best friend and supporter.



## EDITORIAL MANAGER

The Editorial Manager is responsible for all content and publication of written communication for United Methodists of Greater New Jersey. This position helps elevate the communication of GNJ by bringing relevant, recent and dynamic content to all publications.

## DATABASE MANAGER

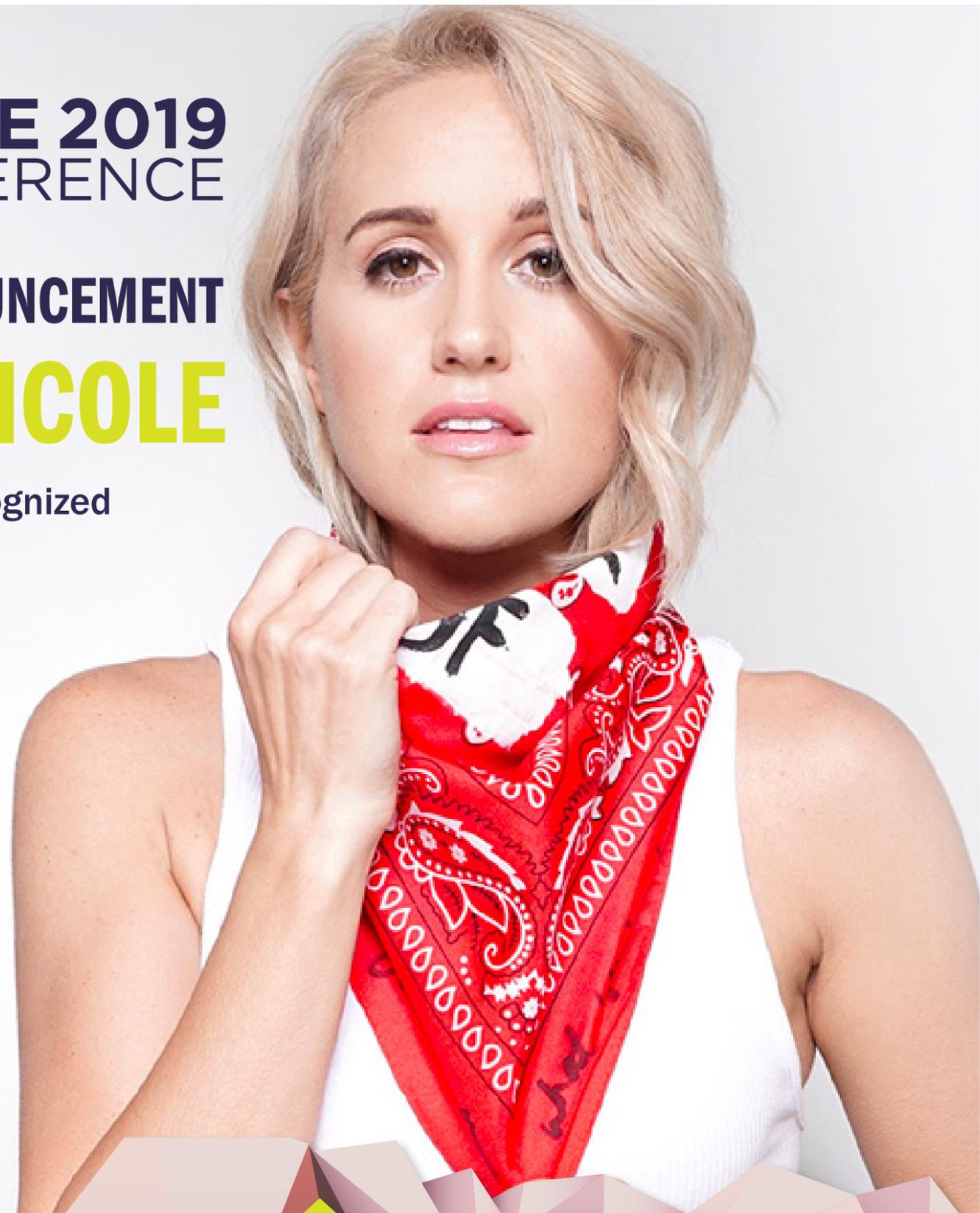
The Database Manager acts as a vital link between the United Methodists of GNJ's information technology capabilities and its mission and the work of the vital mission partners. The position also provides accurate reporting to the various departments to support informed decision making.

**GOD HAS A POWERFUL STORY TO TELL IN GREATER NEW JERSEY**

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# Shoes, Pies and Clowns: The 2019 Laity Recognition Awards

Continued from page 1

All photos by Biho Chung, Monmouth  
Grace UMC in Eatontown



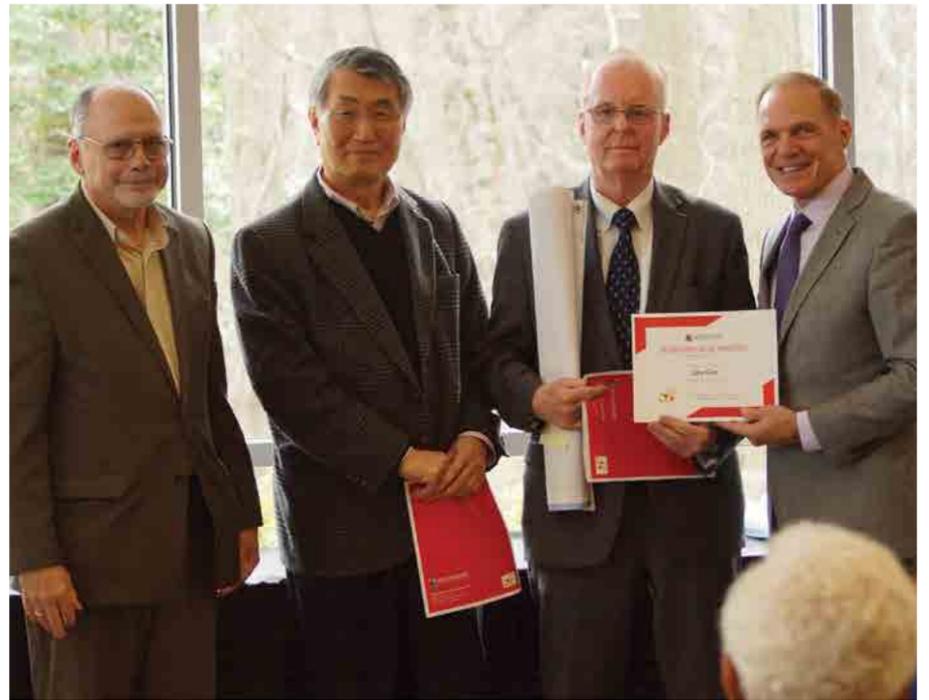
Carole Trimmer makes over 350 pies annually with the proceeds going to support mission at Central UMC.



The IGNITE Youth Ambassadors from Community UMC have engaged young people in their community by combining exercise and scripture studies for both spiritual and physical wellness.



Karen Caesar from Haven UMC received her award for Youth and Young Adults Community Outreach.



Lou Cox from Rutherford UMC leads the youth ministry, coaches young people in college and facilitates the Christmas concert.



Christ UMC in Lakewood recognized Harold and Anna Payne for demonstrate their discipleship in all they do for Christ UMC including serving as a trustee, donating fruits and vegetables, caring for the alter and sharing financial resources and Molly Kirman who serves and volunteers in the food pantry and for Vacation Bible School.



William Schober, who is a Christian comic and clown, volunteers for charities, hospitals, nursing home and VBS, received an award for his ministry at Evangelical UMC.

# The Future Is NOW at Confirmands Day

By Carolyn Conover  
cconover@gnjumc.org

**O**n March 23, more than 300 confirmands and their church leaders flocked to Red Bank to learn about Methodism and ask Bishop John Schol questions about faith and the denomination.

The 2019 Confirmand's Day with the Bishop was the second annual of its kind in Greater New Jersey and its popularity demonstrates that young discipleship is growing.

"This year, we had to move from the Mission and Resource Center to Red Bank UMC because of space. In the end, nearly 200 students and 100 leaders from 30 churches attended and some groups drove over 2 hours to arrive," reported Eric Drew, Executive Director of Next Generation Ministries, who hosted the event.

Confirmands Day included a time of sharing from Charles Perez, pastor of First UMC in Dover and associate pastor of Morristown UMC and a Next Gen workshop to help students and leaders of students to connect with God, grow in faith and lead their church and community.

"We want our young people to know that it is ok to be curious," said Carla



Rev. McWilliam Colon from Bound Brook UMC serves communion at Confirmands Day.

Bishop grows his faith, the differences between Protestant denominations and the current UMC conversation around human sexuality. Others asked fun questions, like what does the Bishop do from day to day and even what has been his most embarrassing moment.

The Bishop's Q and A was the most popular part of the day. "I believe we send a powerful message to our confirmands' that we care for them and we are listening," said Vanzant.

Jessica Campbell, pastor of Hamilton UMC in Neptune was inspired by the students themselves. "It was a breath of fresh air to gather with youth from across GNJ. In seeing the rich diversity of students, in hearing the depth of their questions for the Bishop and in feeling their passion to be the Church, I was deeply inspired," she said. "Bishop Schol did an excellent job at connecting with the youth and answering their questions thoughtfully and thoroughly."

Pastor of Central UMC in Linwood, Gabrielle Martone, couldn't agree more, "My hopes for Next Generation Ministries are that we get our students connected to their faith, connected to their neighbors and connected to the church and that we actually use their energy and their connectedness to bring about growth in the church now- not just when they're older."

She continued, "I am excited about the energy of the students, and I look forward to us trying to figure out how to harness and use the excitement and energy they have for the church in the here and now."

Next Gen Ministries has plans for that.

In the fall 2019 and spring 2020, Next Gen plans to host Confirmation Retreats. These retreats will be an opportunity for confirmation classes from different churches to come together, learn and have fun. The retreats will be scheduled at Pinelands Center at Mt. Misery over a weekend.

Next Generation has growing momentum within Greater New Jersey. With the launch of an expanded Summer Camps program and the continued success of IGNITE in the fall, youth and youth leaders have a year round pathway to plug into opportunities to connect and grow.

In fact, Confirmands Day has already spun off a new cohort. Twelve leaders joined a new learning cohort to develop student faith and leadership.

**"We want our young people to know that it is okay to be curious."**

—Carla Vanzant, Engagement Specialist for Next Gen.

"My hopes as this event grows, is that it helps confirmands connect their experiences in confirmation classes to the wider church and that they continue to know, love and serve God throughout their lives," said Drew.

Martone believes that future is now, "I pray that NextGen helps local churches and the annual conference- and thus the global church to understand and use the youth in the church and the kingdom now- not just when they're 'adults'."

**"My hopes for Next Generation Ministries are that we get our students connected to their faith, connected to their neighbors and connected to the church."**

—Pastor of Central UMC in Linwood, Gabrielle Martone

Vanzant, Engagement Specialist for Next Gen. "From profound questions pertaining to our faith, to the current state of the United Methodist denomination, to fun questions about pizza preferences, healthy curiosity is not only a part of our humanity, but it is also a gift."

The focus of the day was a question and answer session led by Bishop Schol. The students asked deep and challenging questions including about how the



Carla Vanzant, Engagement Specialist for Next Generation Ministries Healthy says the confirmands asked questions about everything from pizza to the denominations impasse over human sexuality.



Rev. Jessica Campbell with confirmands from Hamilton UMC in Neptune.



Next Generation Executive Director Eric Drew and Bishop John Schol serve communion at Confirmands Day in Red Bank, NJ.

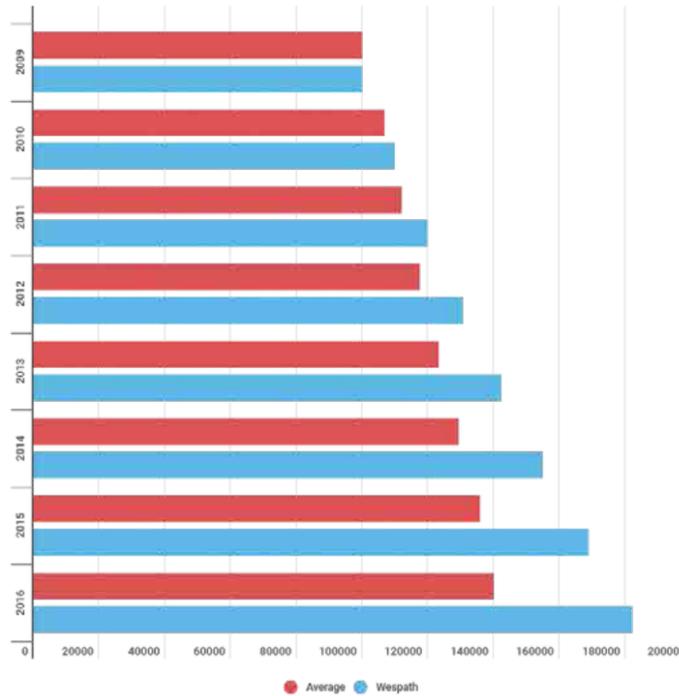
# Stewardship Foundation Offers Higher Stock Returns, Social Value Investing

By Michaela Murray-Nola  
mmurray-nolan@gnjumc.org

As the GNJ Stewardship Foundation approaches its 25th anniversary, a new study featured in The Wall Street Journal demonstrates why so many churches are finding success with their investments in the Foundation. The Stewardship Foundation works with local churches to develop endowments, manage reserve funds and encourage planned giving. The investment management is handled by Wespath Institutional Investments and follows the socially responsible investing practices of the United Methodist Church.

The WSJ article “Why Charities Have Been Such Bad Investors” (Zweig, Jason, November 2018) found that non-profits, including churches and faith-based organizations, generated an average return of only 6.7% in the stock market from 2009-2016. During this time of extraordinary global growth, the poor investment strategies of most non-profits and their financial advisors caused them to make gains below even that of Treasury funds, historically the lowest yield producer in the market.

By contrast, during the same time period, as the U.S. markets earned 9.88% overall, The Stewardship Foundation via Wespath produced an even greater 10.05% return.



For those churches who are not invested in the stock market, but instead use bank accounts to hold large balances, savings accounts in this period averaged a return of only 0.18%.

The Stewardship Foundation also offers a major advantage in reduced fees. The typical financial advisor charges an initial 1.02% of the assets, and additional third party fees subtract another 0.5-

2%. The average all-in fee nationwide is 1.65% for accounts up to \$1 million.

By comparison, The Stewardship Foundation's total fee is 1.00% regardless of account size. The difference of 0.65% can quickly rise to thousands of dollars saved each year, which a local church can re-invest, use to boost mission or clergy salary, or spend on capital needs.

A church which invested \$100,000 with the GNJ Stewardship Foundation in 2009 would have seen their account grow to \$182,210 by 2017, compared with the average non-profit invested with a financial advisor, who would have seen growth to only \$140,144.

The “bottom line” is clear: local churches earn a significantly greater return on their investment and save on fees when they place their savings, capital accounts and endowments with The Stewardship Foundation. In addition, they have the confidence of knowing they are entrusting their future to Wespath, a century-old institution which holds over \$30 billion in assets.

Additionally, Wespath shares the United Methodists Wesleyan ethics and invests church dollars in accordance with the *Book of Discipline* (§ 7:17 and § 247:20), in corporations and funds that adhere to safe environmental practices and pledge to maintain human rights for their workers. Wespath also does not invest in any companies where tobacco, alcohol, gambling, military or the like constitute more than 10% of their activities or revenue.

If your church is interested in gaining better returns with lower fees through socially responsible investments, contact Jana Purkis-Brash, Executive Director of The Stewardship Fund, for a presentation to your leadership. 📄



## SAVE THESE DATES!



**LAY SERVANT GRADUATION: Saturday, June 1, 2019**

*Celebrating the milestones of our new Lay Servants.*

**LAITY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY: Saturday, September 28, 2019**

*Providing tools for leaders to meet the challenges of a 21st century church.*

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT LAITY EVENTS AT:  
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The June 2019 issue deadline is May 17, 2019

## Cultivate: Students Exploring Ministry this Summer

*Continued from page 1*

Beverly UMC has enrolled over 100 children in its Vacation Bible School in the past three years. This year, they will be introducing two weeks of day camp as well—a flourishing ministry that will nourish new leaders. Beverly's intern will be working to cultivate this new and exciting program, and as Pastor Heidi Bak puts it “This is the perfect year to have a summer intern!”

Some interns will also be working in youth ministry for their congregation and lending their generational insight to make church more welcoming and vital for kids as well as adults. As digital natives the student-interns will also be a source of wisdom when it comes to managing the social media presence of UMC's as they seek to engage a new generation.

Student-interns will have a variety of duties common to many churches. Visiting homebound or hospitalized members of the congregation, assisting in preparation for weekly worship services and performing administrative duties are all responsibilities that Cultivate interns will undertake this summer. They will also attend meetings of the council, trustees and other committees. Students interested in pursuing a career in ministry can assist in worship and preach about their experience. All interns will be meeting regularly with their mentors, to document and discuss their growth in experience, skill, and faith.

“We're thrilled about the response GNJ churches have had to high school internships,” added Drew. “We had so many applications that we could not fund them all. There are 8 additional churches who will create their own version of a summer, high school internship and use Cultivate materials.” All materials for a high school internship experience are available online at [www.gnjnextgen.org](http://www.gnjnextgen.org).

Plans do not end there. Cultivate: College Experience will start in October and last thru the school year. Funds for both programs have been made possible by a grant from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) to cultivate young people for ministry. The grant supports initiatives committed to encourage, recruit and train Christian leaders from ages 16-30.

Cultivate: Summer of Exploration officially begins June 15th, when all mentors and students will meet at the Mission and Resource Center to set their goals for the program, roll up their sleeves, and dig into the dirty, rewarding world of ministry. 📄

**These young people are becoming the leaders of the next generation of United Methodists:**

**Ahnika Aberl**  
Elmer UMC, Elmer

**Victoria Broadbent**  
Bergen Highlands UMC, Upper Saddle River

**Braedon Dobrynio**  
Wesley UMC, South Plainfield

**Lena Holt**  
Trinity UMC, Highland Park

**Dalton Kaye**  
Island Heights UMC, Island Heights

**Allie Mosely**  
St. John UMC, Bridgeton

**Casey Phillips**  
Beverly UMC, Beverly

**Sarah Schall**  
First UMC of Avalon, Avalon

**Kayleigh Transue**  
LifeGate UMC, Somers Point

**Emma Voorhees**  
Madison UMC, Madison

**Nathaniel Yanez**  
Morristown UMC, Morristown



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# CREATED TO CREATE



## 2019 SUMMER CAMPING PROGRAMS

### FINE ARTS CAMP: CAMP INSPIRE | JULY 22 – 27

Creativity and performance! Celebrate God's gifts with music, theater, photography and video. *Open to students in grades 5 through 10.*

### HIGH SCHOOL CAMP | JULY 29 – AUG 3

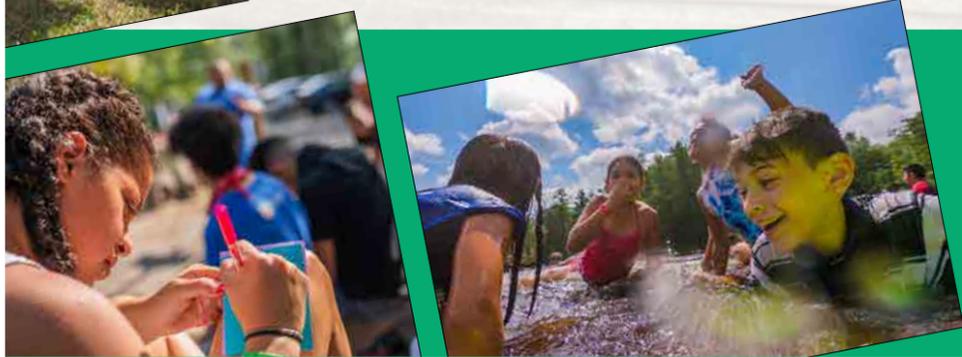
Connection and leadership! Connect with God and each other while building leadership skills and preparing for God's call. *Open to students in grades 9 through 12.*

### MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP | AUG 5 – 10

Multicultural fun and discovery! Grow in faith and build bridges between different cultures. *Open to students in grades 6 through 8.*

### NIÑOS Y JOVENES PARA CRISTO | AUG 12 – 16

Faith and Hispanic heritage! Dive into faith and celebrate Hispanic heritage. *Open to students in grades 1 through 12.*



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# Protecting Against Email Fraud and Internet Scams

By Laura Canzonier  
lcanzonier@gnjumc.org

**C**hurches, clergy and congregations are vulnerable targets for scammers, phishers and frauds who use high tech means to solicit money and play on the grace and caring that is a part of being a United Methodist.

Greater New Jersey clergy and office staff have already experienced this. Scammers send emails from fake accounts that look like they are coming from conference staff or GNJ clergy. The emails ask for money or try to engage in an exchange about a problem which will lead to a request for money.

While this activity is almost impossible to stop, in April, GNJ staff participated in *Security Awareness Training* with Kokua Technologies to learn how to identify and protect against email fraud, identify scams and malware.

GNJ is actively working to minimize this problem. In addition to regularly including email fraud alerts in the Digest and putting resources on the website, Kokua continues to adjust and monitor email filters. They also recommend the following guidelines for churches.

- **Be wary of giving away confidential information:** This can be either an email or phone call requesting confidential information or a tech support company posing as Microsoft or Kokua Technologies requesting you to initiate a remote login session from your device.
- **Don't use an unprotected computer:** Avoid accessing sensitive information from a non-secure computer or while on an open-network such as a free-Wi-Fi hotspot, as your data is visible to anyone. You can determine if the website you are accessing is secure by reading the URL. Secure web addresses begin with https: or with a lock symbol visible in the address bar.
- **Don't leave sensitive information in the open:** Secure your passwords, private documents and confidential files while in your workspace. Prevent fraud by keeping your passwords hidden and not in plain view such as a label or sticky note on your device.



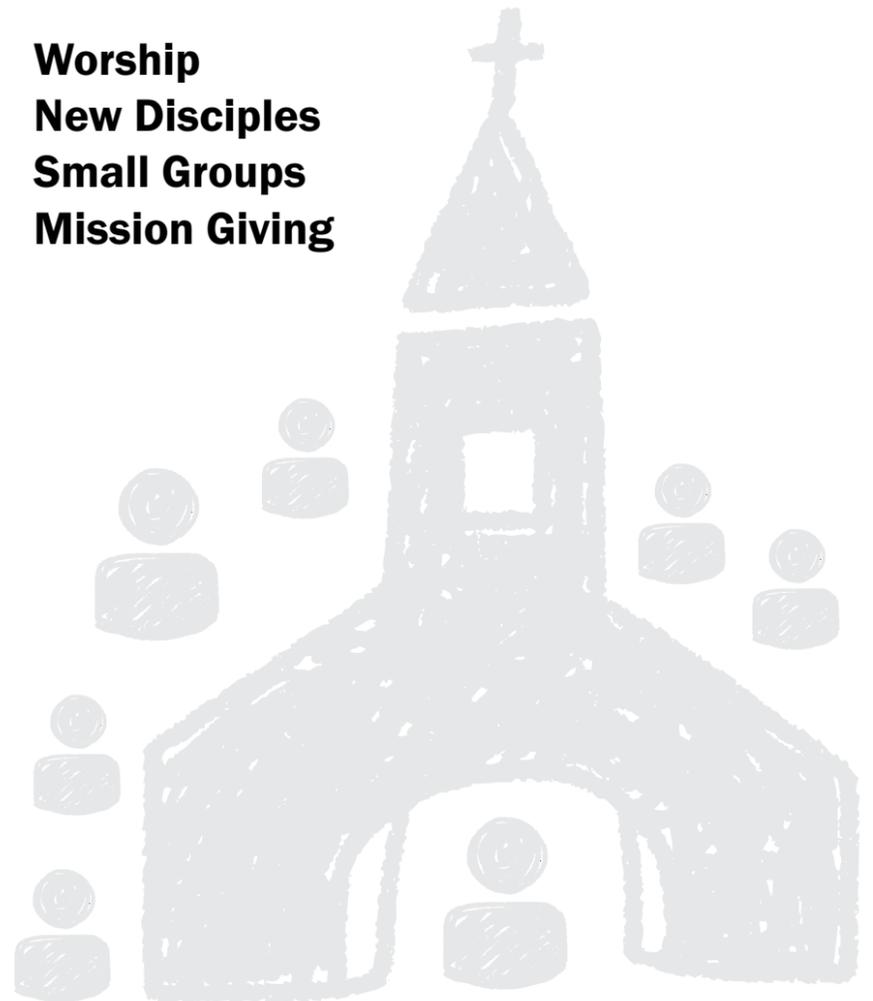
- **Beware of suspicious emails and links:** Delete suspicious emails and do not click on links unless you can verify the email is not fraudulent. Hackers try to steal email lists from organizations, as most email addresses are available through an online search.
- **Lock your computer and mobile device when not in use:** Keep your important work safe and secure while you are away. Don't rely on your screen saver to protect your data.
- **Password protect sensitive files:** Protect your information from threats by opting for password protected files on your device and when using removable storage such as USB drives. Losing a device can happen at any time.
- **Create Complex Passwords:** Use different passwords for each account or website and make them complex by using characters and numbers that are not common words or catch phrases.
- **Don't install unauthorized programs on your work computer or device:** Malicious applications can pose as antivirus software, games and computer programs. These applications infect your computer and put your information at risk. For example, conference office computers have Webroot Anti-Virus software that automatically updates twice a day to protect against threats.
- **Back up your important data:** Save your files and documents on the cloud or a hard drive for retrieval if your computer is infected with spy-ware.
- **Stay alert and report any suspicious activity:** Verify unusual requests that come through email independently. Instead of replying to the email, call the person or send a new message to the person to a trusted email address. Emails and phone calls can easily be faked with graphics and wording that appear to be from a legitimate source. 📧



## THE WAY WE GATHER MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The Way We Gather Makes A Difference equips those ready to move to the next level. Resources curated for small, medium and large congregations that include best practices for the five markers of vitality:

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- **New Disciples**
- **Small Groups**
- **Mission Giving**



Download a copy of *The Way We Gather* and start preparing for what's next.

[www.gnjumc.org/congregationalvitality](http://www.gnjumc.org/congregationalvitality)

# Morrow is Latest GNJ Church to Go Solar

By Brenda Wheeler Ehlers  
Reprinted with permission

## MAPLEWOOD

**T**he sun will begin generating about half of Morrow Church's electricity needs thanks to a solar panel system. The system will dramatically reduce Morrow's carbon footprint over its expected 25-year life. Morrow is inviting community members to cut their electricity bills and move to renewable energy.

This long-held ambition of the church's Green Team was made possible by a generous donation by Fred and Sue Profeta. The Profeta are long-time, devoted members of the congregation. Fred also served as Mayor of Maplewood from 2004-2008, was a founder of the Maplewood Township Green Team, serves on the Board of Directors of GreenFaith and was awarded the 2010 New Jersey Governor's Environmental Leadership Excellence award. Other members of

the congregation are also contributing to the initiative and hope it will inspire others to follow Morrow's lead.

Rev. Dr. Brad Motta, Morrow's Sr. Pastor said, "We want to be a part of the energy revolution. We read John Cassidy's piece in *The New Yorker* last month, reporting that solar energy prices will soon be comparable to natural gas. Some members have already received electricity bills of \$0. Affordable renewable energy allows us to continue our earth-care work and not divert financial resources from important work such as supporting schools in Sierra Leone, the Achieve Foundation, IHN, MEND and so many other programs."

To encourage neighbors to join the solar movement, Morrow Church will hold an event on Sunday, May 5 at 12:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall with representatives from EZ Energy, the partner installing Morrow's solar system. "Morrow Church is a community building, providing space for scouts, classes, community meetings, groups



of all types. We want to expand that hospitality in a healthy, sustainable way," said Rev. Brenda Wheeler Ehlers of Morrow Church.

The solar project is another milestone in Morrow's concerted efforts to be responsible stewards of the earth. Last

year, after many years of actions ranging from reducing energy usage, meat consumption and food waste to studying the connections of faith to sustainable living, to marching on Washington, Morrow was awarded the GreenFaith certification. In 2017 a renovation of the church's sanctuary replaced all the lighting with LED and reduced energy consumption from 60,000 to 5,000 kWh annually. By participating in New Jersey's Direct Install program, Morrow replaced most of the remaining fixtures and cut another 23,000 kWh. Together the reduction in CO2 emissions from these initiatives equal the amount absorbed by 50 acres of forest every year.

Morrow Church will install a monitor on its Baker Street side of the building to show how much energy is being drawn from the sun instead of dirty energy sources. Morrow Green Team members are available to speak with neighbors about their work to move to clean energy; please email Jennifer Nielsen: [opendoors@morrowchurch.org](mailto:opendoors@morrowchurch.org). 🌱

## CONFERENCE HAPPENINGS

### Vanessa Wilson to speak at Harvard

Vanessa Wilson, JD, Senior Pastor at Magnolia Road and St. Paul UMC will be speaking at Harvard Medical School on May 25 about the intersection of Health and Religion/Spirituality.

### Judy Colorado — One NJ's Top Nurses

Judy Colorado, GNJ lay delegate, CF&A vice chair and Gateway North District Lay Leader, was recognized as one of NJ's top 13 Nurses for her role as Chief Nursing Officer & Vice President, Patient Care Services, RWJ Barnabas Health.

### All Things Annual Conference

The Pre-Conference Journal is on line and in the mail. Members should be receiving hard copies around May 10. Go to [www.gnjumc.org/2019-annual-conference](http://www.gnjumc.org/2019-annual-conference) for more information.

## OBITUARIES

**Bishop C. Dale White** died on March 29. Bishop White served as a United Methodist Bishop in NJ from 1976-1984 and in NY from 1984-1992. Services will be June 1, 2019 at 11:00 am, Sudbury UMC, 251 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA.



**Bishop C. Dale White**

**Carl J. Catts**, retired associate member, died on March 24, 2019. A Memorial Service was held on March 29 at Asbury UMC in Woodstown, NJ. Expressions of Sympathy may be sent to Kathy Schutz, 570 Quaker-Neck Road, Mannington, NJ 08079.

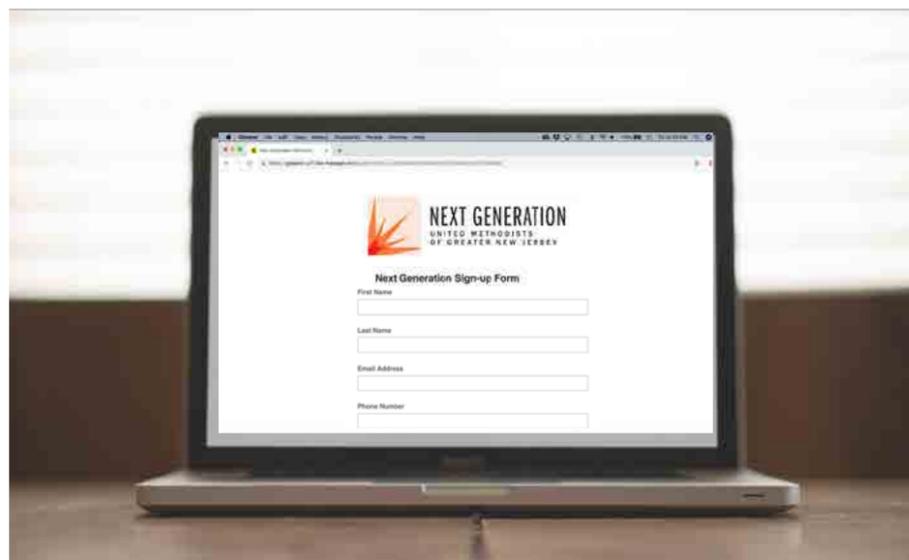
**Keita D. Blinn**, Lay Member, died on April 16, 2019. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, June 8, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at McKendree UMC, 224 Owego Street, Candor, NY 13743. Expressions of Sympathy may be sent to the Family of Keita D. Blinn, [www.emfaheyfuneralhome.com](http://www.emfaheyfuneralhome.com).

**Rev. Harold W. Smith**, Retired Full Elder, died April 23, 2019. A Memorial Service will be held on May 30, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at Saratoga Springs UMC, 175 5th. Ave., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Expressions of Sympathy may be sent to Camilla Smith, 156 Lawrence St., Apt 103, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-1350.



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# STEWARDSHIP SEASON MAY SEEM FAR AWAY...

but now is the time to connect with The Stewardship Foundation for trainings, resources, and strategizing your fall campaign!



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- ✘ DON'T spend another stewardship season wishing it was just over.
- ✘ DON'T miss the opportunity to engage your leadership in the process.
- ✘ DON'T wait until the fall to make a plan – or use the same one as years' past.
- ✓ DO learn how to enter stewardship season excited to share the joy of giving with your members.
- ✓ DO get resources and training for you and your Stewardship/Finance Council to grow generosity all year long.
- ✓ DO learn how incorporating The Miracles Everywhere Campaign will increase stewardship for years to come.
- ✓ DO have a step by step action plan in place by the end of summer.

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AND HOW WE CAN HELP YOU.**

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