

# THE RELAY

UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 2021  
Vol. LXV/No. 1

gnjumc.org

## Wespath: Promoting Equity and Fighting Racism One Investment at a Time

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

Since 1908 Wespath Benefits and Investments protected the safety and futures of others. They are diligent in their research on potential investments, adapting to social changes and responsibly choose their investments to be good stewards of the United Methodist Church.

Although sustainable investing has long been part of Wespath's fabric, the company recently has proven that an even broader perspective equals better performance for both their clients and the community as they have committed themselves to condemning racism, making boards more diverse and investing in minority-owned businesses.

"Our primary responsibility as a fiduciary is laid out in the Book of Discipline. That's our guiding light," said Jake Barnett, who is manager, Sustainable Investment Services for Wespath. "Within that there is also an aspiration to support the United Methodist Church's social principles."

He added that Wespath's goal is to build out the common ground between those two by creating a sustainable economic framework that helps support the transition to a sustainable global economy.



"We believe a sustainable global economy promotes social cohesion, long-term prosperity for all and environmental health," said Barnett who added that this includes among other things access to basic human rights, good jobs, affordable housing and resilient ecosystems.

Wespath's longest running impact investment effort—the Positive Social Purpose (PSP) Lending Program—just celebrated its 30th year. The program partners with qualified lending partners and invests in loans that support low- and moderate-income individuals, families and communities.

"We were doing impact investing before it was cool," said Barnett who added that Wespath's CIO Dave Zeller was one of the original signatories of this charter that now represents over \$90 trillion in assets.

As part of this program, Wespath has invested nearly \$2 billion in affordable housing in the United States, leading to the preservation of more than 52,000 units, which benefits higher risk disadvantaged communities including the homeless and those people with special needs as well as seniors and veterans.

These investments support communities who have traditionally been disinvested because of discriminatory lending practices known as redlining that began in the 1930s. For decades, many banks denied mortgages to people, mostly people of color in urban areas, preventing them from buying homes

*Continued on page 7*

## Inclusion, Tradition and Hope this Advent at Morristown UMC

*"Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul—and sings the tunes without the words—and never stops at all."*

—EMILY DICKINSON

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

MORRISTOWN, NJ

Through congregational vitality, boundless hope and passionate faith, United Methodist leaders are cultivating passionate disciples of Jesus Christ. Morristown UMC is one of those leaders.

Since the onset of the pandemic, the church has been ramping up its efforts to broaden outreach so that people across their community and the world feel included and valued. Morristown UMC knew that the Christmas season would be different for their community this year, so they ramped up their efforts with a walk through nativity display that was safe, full of life and rich in different cultures.



One family at a time was led through the narthex to the multi-cultural stations of nativity at Morristown UMC.

Called "Walk to the Manger: A Pathway to Love," the walking presentation of the stations of the nativity one week before Christmas welcomed people from the community to enjoy a narthex

transformed into a light tunnel led by a three-foot illuminated star.

"Our goal is to keep people connected to the season and the church family and

*Continued on page 6*

## A Task Force Hungry to Help Others

IN SOUTH JERSEY

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

HAMMONTON, NJ

*"Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has."*

—MARGARET MEADE,  
A NATIVE OF HAMMONTON, NJ

Hammonton, known as "the Blueberry Capital of the World," sits halfway between Philadelphia and Atlantic City in the Pine Barrens. Although rich in blueber-

ries, it has been a community hard hit by an economic downturn. At the start of 2020 when it was apparent to Cape Atlantic District Superintendent Brian Roberts and some local United Methodist churches that a stronger feeding ministry was needed in the Cape Atlantic District, the Poverty Task Force of Cape Atlantic was revitalized.

"We ended up with a group of people who were hungry to do something, even if it meant giving out peanut butter and jelly sandwiches," said Dave Dorfman of Grace Union UMC who now chairs the organization with the support of Rev. Tim Conaway of First UMC Hammonton and others.

The task force in the district has been feeding the homeless for years every Saturday through Asbury UMC in Atlantic City.

"But it became more important than ever before to do more," Dorfman said, referring to the devastating impact the pandemic was having on Atlantic County due to the large percentage of jobs in the industries most affected by the pandemic like transportation and hospitality.

The Hammonton native and U.S. veteran Dorfman knows all too well how the pandemic has impacted the hospitality industry. He has been a cook at Harrah's Casino for the past 25 years.

*Continued on page 7*



Dave Dorfman of Grace Union UMC led the effort to feed the hungry in the Cape Atlantic District.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

## Building Spirit

Bishop John Schol



On January 17, 1994, I was on a plane headed to California, a day after the 6.7 earthquake in Northridge, CA. At the time, I worked for our denomination's General Board of Global Ministries, and I was part of a team to assess how the church and UMCOR could assist people. While at the scene of the epicenter, I experienced many aftershocks, one a 3.5 aftershock or actually continued earthquakes. It is quite an experience when the ground beneath you shifts and you have no control.

Our nation, culture, communities and even the church are experiencing the ground below them shifting, and we are losing control. Whether it be a pandemic, continued acts of racism, an assault on our capital, a denomination wondering about the future or even financial challenges. Combined, these shifts are seismic, throwing off our equilibrium, causing us to wonder what is happening to my life, what is our world coming to.

Here are a couple of things these changes have in common.

- Leadership makes a difference. Leaders can either ground people in rational thoughtful, hopeful steps forward or can add to the chaos. When I was in Los Angeles and the 3.5 aftershock started, I was in a church not far from where a building collapsed and a number of people died. A leader stood up and said, "This is an aftershock, stay where you are and stay steady, it will pass in a minute or so. Don't run. Stay in your seat. It will pass." We stayed steady and waited, and it passed. Healthy positive leaders make a difference.
- In the worst situations, it will be your internal compass that points you north. If your values are built on the fruits of the Spirit, peace, love, joy,

kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, your north will lead you toward God and the things of God. Without a good compass, chaos, violence, people taking risks that spread disease and attitudes and behavior that hurt rather than heal ensue.

- When the ground shifts, life will be different, not better or even worse, just different and we are called to make choices. We can choose to be difference-makers or we can engage in fracturing life, people's spirits and future possibility. We have a choice.

Leadership, fruits of the Holy Spirit and making good choices are our callings in this time of a pandemic, racism, national upheaval, financial challenges and denominational concerns.

I recently saw a movie that gave a different perspective on the parable of shifts in the ground. In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus tells of the builder who built on sand and another who built on rock. The rains came and the winds blew, and the sands shifted and the house on the sand collapsed. But the house built on rock stood. In the movie, the storyteller asked, what if the builders were actually the same person and

after the first house collapsed, the builder dug through the sand to bedrock and rebuilt the house? I think about that in my own life. I have not always built on bedrock, but God has always given me another opportunity.

We all have another opportunity to lead well, receive

and build on the gifts of the Spirit and choose a new path. As a church, a race, a nation, we have the chance to rebuild on bedrock. I invite you into the rebuilding God is calling us to. Finding common ground, letting go of old defeats and see others through God's eyes, that they matter just like you do. 🇺🇸

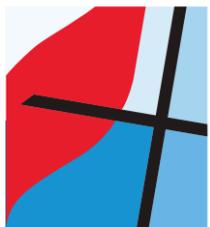
**"LEADERSHIP, FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MAKING GOOD CHOICES ARE OUR CALLINGS IN THIS TIME OF A PANDEMIC, RACISM, NATIONAL UPHEAVAL, FINANCIAL CHALLENGES AND DENOMINATIONAL CONCERNS."**

—Bishop John Schol

**Corrections:**

In the December issue on page 2, the first sentence of Bishop's Schol message should have read the Declaration of Independence, not the U.S. Constitution.

In the December issue on page 4 at paragraph 8, in the article, "Marching Forward in a Brigade of Giving," it should have read Sri Lankan Muslim Association of New Jersey, not the North American Turkish Muslim Association. We regret the errors.



# THE RELAY

UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

**John R. Schol, Bishop**

United Methodists of Greater New Jersey  
205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune, NJ 07753

**Heather Mistretta, Editorial Manager**

732.359.1047 | hmistretta@gnjumc.org

**Carolyn Conover, Director of Communications**

732.359.1016 | cconover@gnjumc.org

**Laura Canzonier, Communications Administrative Assistant**

732.359.1063 | lcanzonier@gnjumc.org

**Brittney Reilly, Online and Digital Communications Manager**

732.359.1040 | breilly@gnjumc.org

**Christopher G. Coleman, The Relay Designer**

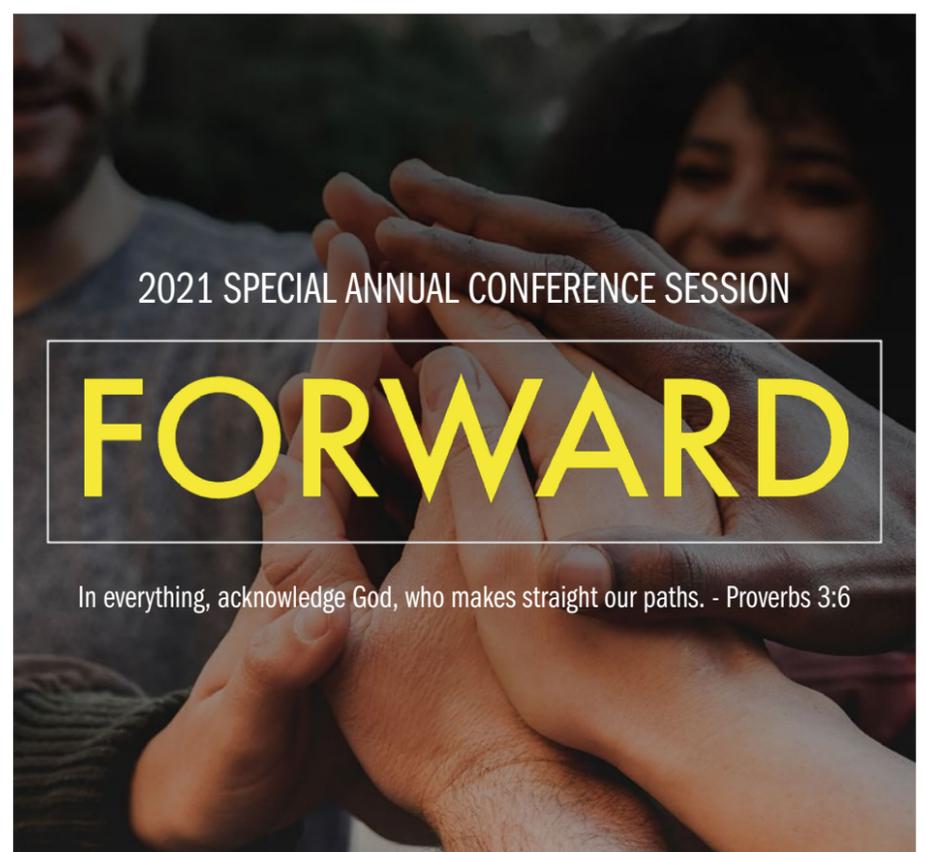
chris@cgcoleman.com

New Subscriptions, renewals, address changes, and corrections should be addressed to Beverly Karlovich, bkarlovich@gnjumc.org or by mail to: United Methodist Relay | 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune NJ 07753

**FOR ADVERTISING RATES, INFORMATION & PLACEMENT**

Contact: communications@gnjumc.org

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 THE RELAY, 205 Jumping Brook Road, Neptune NJ 07753.



2021 SPECIAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION

# FORWARD

In everything, acknowledge God, who makes straight our paths. - Proverbs 3:6

Friday, Jan. 22 | 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

For details go to:

[www.gnjumc.org/january-2021-special-session](http://www.gnjumc.org/january-2021-special-session)



UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY



**RECOGNIZE LEADERS:** This month use the “Order for Installation or Recognition of Leaders in the Church” from *The UMC Book of Worship*. This short litany not only recognizes your leaders but provides the opportunity for the congregation to pray over them and the ministries they lead.

**EMBRACE MINISTRY:** Invite each committee to look back to celebrate what has been achieved in 2020 and look forward to new opportunities in 2021. Develop a summary of their responsibilities, list major events and meeting dates, and set goals for the next year.

**SHARE VISION:** Invite church leaders to share how the church’s mission and vision connects to their committee’s ministry on video, during meetings, in the newsletter, etc. Hearing your church’s mission and vision from a variety of voices reinforces its message.

**SEEK DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP:** Church leaders should reflect the composition of the congregation and community. What next step can your congregation take to live into this vision?

**CULTIVATE A LEADERSHIP POOL:** Burn out is real. Pastors and church leaders should know the congregation, be inviting, build relationships and mentor up-and-coming leaders. Who does this well in your congregation? In what ways can they model mentoring for other leaders?

**CONNECT WITH COMMUNITY:** What groups do you serve alongside in your community? Ask a leader from the organization to share their story with your congregation. A short video clip can go a long way to celebrating the vital ministry your congregation engages in.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**2021 Breakthrough Series**

January: Courageous

Lent: Purple Theory

Lenten Planning Workshop: Jan. 26

**Leadership Academy**

February’s Course: Missional Engagement that Opens Hearts, Minds and Doors

Register by Jan. 27

**Lay Ministry Recognition**

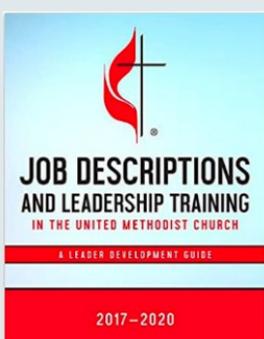
Nominations Due by Feb. 1

**For more information on resourcing opportunities go to: [www.gnjumc.org](http://www.gnjumc.org)**

*“The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches and extension ministries of the Church provide the most significant arenas through which disciple making occurs.”*

*(2016 BOD, ¶120) - 2016 Book of Discipline*

**A Helpful Resource For Church Committees**



**Job Descriptions and Leadership Training in the United Methodist Church 2017-2020**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:**



**Juel Nelson**  
 Director of Leadership Development  
[jnelson@gnjumc.org](mailto:jnelson@gnjumc.org) | 732.359.1059



## Next Gen Summer Camp: A Gateway to New Memories

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

“**C**amp truly changed my life,” one teenager said about his time as a camper at Pinelands Center with Next Gen Ministries. Another camper said, “What I liked about the camp was the way we all connected to each other, even though we were all strangers; we were best friends by the second day.” A teenage girl who took part in all that the camp had to offer, said, “I learned what my purpose in life was; not necessarily in ministry but how I can help others without having to do it under the title of ministry but to still know that I’m doing God’s will. I feel like I’m called to be a helping hand and a voice for those that are voiceless or cannot be heard.”

The mention of summer camp has always churned up memories chockful of singing songs, swimming and hiking and gathering around a campfire for smores and a story or two. Camping in Greater New Jersey has also always devoted plenty of time to give youth the space and opportunity to connect to God and each other. Along the way they learn how to be leaders and how to grow in their faith and discover what is important in their lives. They also learn inclusiveness, fellowship with all and how to be a part of transforming the world. Add in a ton of fun, and it’s no wonder why many adults remember fondly their days in summer camp and often pass on the tradition to their children and why many return to be counselors.

Next Gen’s new Camp Program Director Mekan Payne is relishing this new opportunity to blend the wisdom of the past with the hope of the future. “My hope is that camping ministry would continue to live into its legacy of creating new experiences, amazing memories, lifelong relationships and transformational faith journeys into the lives of families and youth throughout Greater New Jersey and beyond.”

Payne brings with her experience as the former director of youth and young adults at Clinton UMC where she enjoyed the journey of trying new things, meeting new people and offering a space to connect. She has also served as an IGNITE small group leader, and in November 2018 she and her husband, Corbin, welcomed son, Braxtin, which gave her a whole other perspective to infuse into her new role.



**ABOVE: Although Aldersgate closed in 2013 and the difficult decision was made in 2020 to sell the property, the plan is to embrace those traditions and integrate them at Pinelands Center.**

For the past few years, the Pinelands Center has served as the place where memories and new friends have been made. Nestled in the heart of the Pine Barrens in Burlington County, NJ, the camp and retreat center with nearly 150 acres of forest in the coastal plains of southern New Jersey is home to part of the historic National Pinelands Reserve. It is surrounded by the trails of Brendan T. Byrne State Park, cranberry bogs and preserved forestland.

In 2019 the center began a \$200,000 renovation project, which includes upgrades to the cabins and a new multimedia system, thanks to the generosity of local churches through the Miracles Everywhere Campaign.

From theater and photography to music and arts and crafts, campers revel in all there is to do at camp. In between activities, campers have enjoyed making new friends, partaking in archery, learning about Hispanic culture and celebrating the gifts of God. They have even squeezed in some time for hula hooping, kayaking and thoughtful conversation.



### Based in Tradition

Many GNJ clergy and laity leaders found their calling at summer camps. Their tradition in Greater New Jersey started in the 1960s with the introduction of a summer campground in the small Sussex County town called Swartswood, on Sprout Hill Road known as Aldersgate, which now holds years of memories for United Methodists who soaked up all that the camp had to offer.

Although the camp closed in 2013 and the difficult decision was made in 2020 to sell the property, the plan is to embrace those traditions and integrate them at Pinelands Center.

From the fireplace room in Wesley Lodge, Dietz Swimming Pool and lemon meringue pies, to the music and drama camps, the fire circle with the cross and the talent shows in the dining hall, these memories and many more of Aldersgate Center are intact and ones that many GNJers still see as seminal moments in their lives.

“God moved in amazing ways and raised up pastors, missionaries, church leaders and more at Aldersgate,” said Next Gen Executive Director Eric Drew. “I am seeing and hearing so many people who loved that place and participated in God’s transformational work there raise up and want to recapture that Spirit and pass it forward. I think this is a unique God moment, and we have the opportunity to come together again to be a part of God’s next great move through camping and retreat ministries.”

We want to honor and pass on the legacy of joy, generosity, faith and leadership formation through the years at Aldersgate Center,” Drew said, adding,



“We also want to honor and maintain the sacrifice, the prayers and the will of the churches, organizations and individuals who funded the Appenzeller Chapel.”

Drew added that an Aldersgate Legacy Team is working on several projects including an all-encompassing historical piece, with this goal in mind.

The Appenzeller Chapel is still a special place in the hearts of many. It was built and consecrated through the sacrificial donations of about \$600,000 from 85 churches including the Methodist churches in South Korea, Korean United Methodist Churches in the United States, many organizations and many individuals to honor the memory of missionary Henry Appenzeller who in the late-19th century dedicated his life to preaching the Gospel in South Korea. The spirit of his ministry will now travel farther and reach more young people yearning for Christ as the Legacy Team brings his spirit to Pinelands.

Looking forward to 2021, the expectations for an in-person summer camp are realistic but hopeful. The Next Gen Team is taking all necessary precautions as they adhere to the state regulations with the safety of campers being their main priority.

For more details about 2021 summer camp, including how to inquire about becoming a volunteer or counselor, and other Next Gen programs, visit <http://www.pinelandscenter.org/summer-2021/> or <https://gnjnextgen.org/>.

**IGNITE COMMUNITIES**  
**WATCH PARTIES**

God created each child uniquely and with a special purpose.  
Remind them with IGNITE Communities Watch Parties!

Next one is available for download Feb. 7!

To register, get a resource bundle and more details:  
[gnjnextgen.org/ignite-communities](http://gnjnextgen.org/ignite-communities)

# Being Courageous and Aligned for Growth in 2021 and Beyond

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

**W**hen the 2020 Annual Conference overwhelmingly passed *A Journey of Hope* in October, GNJ leadership knew that to live out the mission to end the sin of racism and engage new leaders to move the church forward would require realignment of resources.

“The local church is where ministry happens. Local congregations change lives with their ministry and mission,” said Bishop John Schol. “*A Journey of Hope* will resource local churches with strong regional teams so that our congregations are equipped to make

changed because the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed in very practical ways,” said Gateway North District Superintendent and regional team leader for the Northern Region, Rev. William M. Williams, III.

Five goals have been set for the regions:

- Grow congregational vitality to 51%
- Engage 150 congregations in *A Journey of Hope* plan
- Grow worship attendance in 100 churches to the next worship band
- Achieve 98% giving of shared ministry and billables
- Organize and lead a robust Leadership Academy

The expansion of the Leadership Academy will be key to the success of equipping leaders for their next stage of ministry. The Academy, which has moved online during the pandemic, will be the foundation for training, resources and education and serve as the umbrella for laity leadership including Lay Servant Ministry and clergy resourcing including PaCE and leadership cohorts. Courses will build upon one another and have clear

outcomes that develop Christian leaders and church vitality.

“Our goal is to have the best clergy and congregational leaders for the world who are leading the church forward and into the community with excellence,” said Rev. Juel Nelson, who is GNJ’s director of leadership development.

When John Wesley founded Methodism 300 years ago, his intention was to create a foundation that wasn’t static but one that was adaptable to the changing culture and helped to create deeper relationships with God and each other. As GNJ embraces the regional approach to resource ministry in the local church, we continue to live his out Wesley’s vision. 🇺🇸

“WHEN CHURCHES SUCCESSFULLY CONNECT WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES, LIVES ARE CHANGED BECAUSE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST IS PROCLAIMED IN VERY PRACTICAL WAYS.”

—Rev. William M. Williams, III, Gateway North District Superintendent and regional team leader for the Northern Region

disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.”

As a part of *A Journey with Hope*, each congregation will be encouraged to formulate an ACT plan to develop and pursue actions and accountabilities for who they desire to be. Conference staff and resourcing have been reorganized to provide regional teams that will support congregations on their journeys.

Each regional team will include the district superintendents in that region, a Connectional Ministries staff member and staff administrators to support their work. The teams will also be supported with circuit elders and communication resources.

“When churches successfully connect with their communities, lives are

## Cabinet Begins 2021 Appointments

**J**ohn Wesley was an itinerant preacher, travelling from town to town setting up ministries and his example was followed by Francis Asbury in the United States who used circuit riders to spread the Word of God.

While many things have changed in ministry in the last year, as the GNJ Cabinet resumes in January 2021, they are beginning the appointment process for clergy—modeling the modern-day equivalent of the circuit rider.

The GNJ appointment system reflects the values of the conference and our local churches and is built on clear and direct communication between our congregations, their pastors and the district superintendents. When a clergy vacancy occurs because of retirement or other reasons, the superintendent considers the gifts, missional needs, and personal needs of a community and congregation in making the new clergy appointment.

“Several years ago, the Bishop and cabinet made the decision to publish open appointments so that clergy could prayerfully consider their own itinerancy,” said Rev. Sang Won Doh who serves as the Dean of the Cabinet. He continued that the personal needs of the clergy are important when discerning the appointment process. “Opening the process has been a blessing to our clergy and congregations as it helps the Cabinet match the gifts and talents of our clergy to the needs of the congregation and community.”

The Bishop and Cabinet started announcing clergy retirements, open churches and new appointments on Jan. 24. Each Sunday, new announcements are posted on the GNJ website until all vacancies are filled, usually by May. New clergy appointments begin July 1 of each year. 🇺🇸

## GNJ is Ready for the Next Challenge

*“If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”*

—REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR WHO WOULD HAVE TURNED 92 ON JAN. 15

**G**NJ has worked through significant challenges in the past—2008 financial crisis, Superstorm Sandy and COVID-19—and in each of these instances, GNJ has come back stronger and with a deeper sense of mission by continuing to move forward together.

The next challenge is a \$6 million budget gap and the spending down of \$10 million in designated reserve funds.

“With God’s help and by working together, we will overcome this challenge,” said Bishop John Schol. “I ask that you pray for the staff who have been laid off and for the leadership as they lead us through the challenge.”

Following an extensive review of GNJ’s accounting records by GNJ’s new CFO/Treasurer Robert Zuckerman and others, this budget shortfall was detected. This shortfall is a result of years of underbilling congregations for clergy and lay employee benefits and property insurance and drawing on reserves to meet this deficit.

For instance, the gap between what churches were billed for health insurance and the actual cost to GNJ for health insurance was more than \$6,000. Designated program reserves and property sales were used to make up the difference in the underbilling. As a result, GNJ has \$10 million less in program-designated reserves, and discovered property sales were not being invested as directed by the annual conference. As a result, GNJ has a \$6 million budget shortfall.

However, all clergy pension and health insurance and all congregations’ property insurance are paid in full, and all payments are up to date. No one’s pension, benefits or property insurance will ever be compromised.

In late 2020 and into the new year, a team of GNJ leadership reviewed GNJ’s finances to understand GNJ’s financial position. Based on what they found, GNJ will not hire six open positions and laid off seven staff members, not for performance reasons but to balance the budget.

The leadership has developed a plan to balance the budget, rebuild the reserves and assist churches over five years to meet the full costs of clergy and lay employee benefits.

The report on GNJ finances, a plan to balance the budget and rebuild the reserves, a staffing plan and legislation for the January 22, 2021 Special Annual Conference Session are available on GNJ’s website. The plan was developed by a team of leaders and has been reviewed by CFA, Board of Pensions, Board of Trustees and the Cabinet.

An independent team that includes a lawyer and auditor will review the use of reserves and other financial matters to identify what occurred and how it occurred and report directly to the May 2021 Annual Conference Session with recommended actions to be taken.

“I want to thank everyone who has worked together to assess the problem and work toward a solution,” said Schol. “I especially want to thank Rob who identified the problem and was instrumental in developing the path forward.” 🇺🇸

EMBRACE THE JOURNEY TO END THE SIN OF RACISM TODAY

*A Journey of Hope*

LEARN HOW TO GET INVOLVED

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



# Rolling up Our Sleeves and Being Like Jesus, Disciples of Jesus Christ

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

**H**uman Relations Day falls on the Sunday before the national observance of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, this year on January 17 when we remember that God's love is limitless for all and is manifested in many ways. Falling on the second Sunday after the Epiphany, it is a day when United Methodists broaden their outreach to communities encouraging social justice and work with the marginalized including at-risk youth, much like Dr. King did 60 years ago.

Dr. King's legacy gives us hope that one person can make a difference, and that when that action is shouldered by many other people, the impact is magnified which reflects the power of connectionalism of the United Methodist Church.

Ministries across GNJ demonstrate the vastness of God's love. From the 70,000+ meals given out each month and the shelter given to the homeless to the free legal services for immigrants and the thousands of diapers given to mothers living in underserved communities, local churches and mission partners care for all God's children each day.

In the United Methodist Church, Human Relations Day is dedicated to support social justice and outreach ministries and involve congregations in community and youth outreach through community developers' programs, volunteer services and youth offender programs. All congregations are encouraged to take an offering for Human Relations Sunday to support these programs, which are administered by the General Board of Global Ministry and the General Board of Church and Society.

Eleanor Roosevelt, who led the efforts to enact the Universal Declaration of Human Rights said, "Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. [...] Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without



**GNJ continues to live into the dream of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to be the people who work toward ending racism and expanding the God's beloved community with A Journey of Hope.**

concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world."

These "small places" are our churches where step by step lives are transformed.

Offerings received on Human Relations Day are distributed to Community Developers Program: 57 percent (General Board of Global Ministries); United Methodist Voluntary Services Program: 33 percent (General Board of Global Ministries); and Youth Offender



Rehabilitation Program: 10 percent (General Board of Church and Society).

Digital promotional materials can be found here: [www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/umcsgiving?category=2745](http://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/umcsgiving?category=2745).

## Morristown UMC

*Continued from page 1*

beyond. We want them to know that everyone is invited," said Rev. Luana Cook Scott, who is in her first year as senior pastor at Morristown. Scott, who has

served at both urban and rural churches, made the recent decision for her church to tithe a portion of the PPP funding toward shared ministry.

"We believe the connection we have is so important, and for those who can afford it should give back," she said.

Upon arrival to the "Walk to the Manger," pre-registered guests received printed bulletins with scripture in three languages—English, Spanish and Korean—to reflect the diversity of the congregation and the community and were greeted in the doorway by the 900 lights that represented the lost lives due to COVID-19 in Morris County.

The pews were removed to allow social distancing, accessibility for the handicapped and give room for the sequential displays. Jennifer Yang played the organ and a liturgist read scripture in Braille.

The many displays included a Columbian Bethlehem scene made by a church family and quilts from Appalachia. The smell of frankincense also wafted throughout the sanctuary. The last display, immediately before the exit was a celebration of Easter.

"We tried to infuse culture wherever we could," said Scott who also noted that outside the church, stretching for four blocks to allow for social distancing, were carolers who sang Christmas carols.

"We wanted to meet the needs of our community the best way we could," said Scott, who praised the efforts of the new church administrator, Regina Heater, a fellow alumna of Drew Theological School. Heater has worked tirelessly to expand and strengthen their ministries, including creating an entire Advent playlist (<https://adobe.ly/2LWTOFU>) to be played and shared.

This new creation was a nice compliment to Morristown UMC's One Candle virtual Advent event, part of a worldwide program that focuses on the power of one candle to unite neighbors for hope, for peace, for joy, for love and for Christ-with-us.

"We light a candle to remember they can be a witness during difficult times," said Scott who added that a liturgy accompanies each lighting. Starting around Thanksgiving, signs were distributed to congregants to display in recognition of the ministry.

"I have been amazed by the participation," said Scott.

A West Virginia native and champion...and warrior...of social justice, Scott has a passion to create pathways for all. "I strive to be the pastor I never had, one who can relate to "unchurched" people and can find common ground on which to tell the story of God's love."

Looking forward to 2021 with hope and a renewed and bold spirit, the church is introducing "Exploring Music with Maestra Sarah," a new YouTube series launching this spring and hosted by Sarah Michal, director of music ministries. Geared primarily toward the youngest members of the church, it will also include content for parents and anyone who wants to practice experiencing music and God in their daily life.



Discover your spiritual discipline with Breakthrough's new Lenten Series!

*With PurpleTheory, there's always a new day to nourish your soul.*



DOWNLOAD SERMON SERIES  
AND RESOURCES:

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



Different cultures were infused throughout the sanctuary through displays made by congregants.

## Wespath

*Continued from page 1*

in certain neighborhoods or getting loans to renovate their houses. In 1977 the Community Reinvestment Act was passed to discourage this discriminatory and debilitating practice and to encourage reinvestment in these disinvested communities. Investing in these communities helps to stem this tide that still exists today.

As part of the PSP program, Wespath invests in institutions that provide micro-finance loans to individuals in developing regions—including Latin America, Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia and Africa—who have little or no access to traditional financial services. By stretching their outreach globally, Wespath is able to offer its participants a diverse portfolio that recognizes human rights throughout the world.

For the past 14 years, Wespath has also actively participated in the Principles for Responsible Investment, an investor coalition formed by the United Nations in 2006 to promote the incorporation of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors into investment decision-making. Wespath was the only faith-based

racial and ethnic diversity among senior leadership and boards of directors.

It is estimated that women now hold a little over 20 percent of the board seats in the United States, which is up from about 16 percent in 2017, but Wespath recognizes that encouraging more women and minorities into leadership positions remains critical in our era and given the fast-approaching challenges of the future.

Stressing the importance of investing in the growth of women- and minority-owned investment managers for more than 25 years, Barnett said, “Wespath has always been motivated by the belief that these were managers who had different perspectives.” These diverse managers have also contributed some of the strongest long-term performance in the Wespath portfolio.

In fact, by mid-2020 Wespath funds invested more than \$2 billion through women- and/or minority-owned investment managers. These managers include Baltimore-based Brown Capital, founded by Eddie Brown, an African American who in 1983 was entrusted with \$200,000 from Geraldine Whittington, former secretary to Pres. Lyndon Johnson. Today, Brown Capital manages more than

\$12 billion in assets including Wespath funds. Another is Zevenbergen Capital Investments, a woman-owned portfolio manager that has consistently outperformed their peers.

Also in support of racial justice and its plight toward a sustainable global environment, Wespath continues to address environmental racism and its harmful impact on minorities. Wespath actively engages companies and public policy makers to promote environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Barnett said Wespath is investing in the just transition toward a low-carbon environment, actions that reflect the Social Principles’ philosophy that “All creation is the Lord’s, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it.”

Throughout 2020 Wespath continued to bolster responsible stewardship through its words and actions.

In June, Wespath signed the “Investor Statement of Solidarity and Call to Action to Address Systemic Racism,” a measure led by the Racial Justice Investing Coalition, of which Wespath is a member, to address systemic racism through their portfolios, corporate engagements and policy advocacy. The statement said, “We recognize that the investor community has contributed to, and benefited from, racist systems and the entrenchment of white supremacy. We therefore take responsibility and commit to hold ourselves accountable for dismantling systemic racism and promoting racial equity and justice through our investments and work.”

Barnett added that Wespath is committed to amplifying Black voices and reinvesting in communities with humility and courage by making sound investments where they have the biggest impact toward equity.

“We are not at the end of our journey. We see lots of overlap between the UMC Social principles and fiduciary duty. There’s still a lot of work to do.”

To find out more about investing with Wespath through the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey, contact Rev. Jana Purkis-Brash [jpurkisbrash@gnjumc.org](mailto:jpurkisbrash@gnjumc.org).

## Hammonton

*Continued from page 1*

Hammonton is home to a large migrant population, so the concern among task force members was that some of them would not be receptive to accepting handouts. But the concern did not dissuade members from moving forward with the ministry.

The task force worked hard to understand the wider needs, through surveys of congregations across four counties. In September, five United Methodist churches (Central UMC, Oasis UMC, Grace Union UMC, Winslow UMC and First UMC Hammonton) came together in connectional ministry to prepare more than 200 sandwiches and distribute about 150 meals in Hammonton.

“Several meals were given out at our distribution site, but the majority of the meals were given out door to door,” said Dorfman. “With the door-to-door efforts came a unique opportunity to provide food for the soul as well as food for the body. Prayers were offered and through scripture, the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ was delivered.”

It worked so well the first time that the team repeated its effort in October as the food insecurity problem intensified in the community. On Thanksgiving First UMC Hammonton provided about 200 meals at its annual holiday dinner.

On December 19, the small but mighty team of churches distributed 65 bags of groceries to 30 families, providing around 10 days of meals for a family of four.

“It is exciting to see the district feeding ministries expand and serve a wider area, involving new volunteers and congregations,” said Superintendent Roberts. “The need is great during this time, and God is

providing through hearts stirred to action and generosity.”

The task force is only getting stronger in 2021. On January 23 the team is planning to distribute more food in both Hammonton and Egg Harbor City as its outreach broadens to neighboring towns.

The Hammonton site will be distributing a hot takeaway meal, and the Egg Harbor City site will have bags of groceries, hot soup and crackers being distrib-



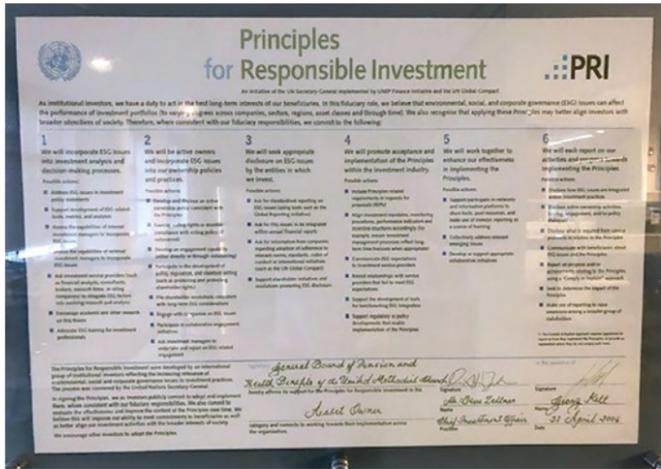
**The Poverty Task Force is broadening its focus in January to include Egg Harbor City.**

uted by a new task force partner, the Korean UMC of South Jersey.

“We believe that the church should shine the light of Jesus Christ in the community by serving the people in the community,” said Rev. Leo Park of Korean UMC who added that both adult and youth members of the church will be part of the ministry. “The holistic mission must include not only evangelism but also relief works.”

Park made sure to thank both Dorfman and Kathy Yon who said “yes” to the call as a coordinator for this project.

As Dorfman reflected on the mission and its spread of hope for 2021, he said, “I am blessed to be serving alongside these amazing mission and outreach teams.”



**Wespath proudly displays the certificate for the Positive Social Purpose Lending Program that was signed by CIO Dave Zeller 30 years ago.**

founding signatory to the UNPRI, which it helped co-author.

Within the UMC’s Social Principles, there is a condemnation of racism and a call to embrace diversity. “The tie back to social principles is pretty clear,” said Barnett.

“When it comes to fiduciary duty, it’s actually pretty easy to draw that line as well. There is a lot of research out there talking about how more diverse boards, more diverse workforces tend to create more value for companies over time because you have more perspectives that challenge norms to create a more holistic view of obstacles and opportunities in the marketplace.” In early 2020 when the pandemic hit, the lack of equity became amplified, and Wespath was there to listen to those voices.

“We know that a “business as usual” response to COVID-19 will be insufficient, and we think the same thing can be said for long-term systemic issues such as climate change or social inequality, as has emerged amid global protests calling for racial justice in recent weeks,” Zellner said.

In response to this unrest and call for change, Wespath tightened its focus by joining the Human Capital Management Coalition to strongly advocate for healthy essential workforces.

“Diversity is one of the important tenets that is being supported through that work,” said Barnett who added that the work needs to be done at all levels of employment, not just the board level.

In congruence with this initiative to develop more diverse staffs, Wespath is also part of the Thirty Percent Coalition, an investor group focused on engaging portfolio companies to encourage gender,



## THE ALL NEW GNJ LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

*Partnering laity and clergy to engage in new ministries for a changing church.*

### Missional Engagement that Opens Hearts, Minds and Doors

Learn best practices for engaging in mission that is relational, transformative and taps into the strengths of your church

**Feb. 3, 10 & 24 | Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

*Registration closes Jan. 27*

*Facilitated by: Ashley Wilson, Director of Mission, Rev. Luana Cook Scott of Morristown UMC and Andrea Wren-Hardin, Hope Center Developer*

**FOR DETAILS AND REGISTRATION:**  
[www.gnjumc.org/2020-leadership-academy](http://www.gnjumc.org/2020-leadership-academy)

# Embracing History and Meeting God Wherever You May Be

*“With courage, born of success achieved in the past, with a keen sense of the responsibility which we shall continue to assume, we look forward to a future large with promise and hope.”*

—MARY CHURCH TERRELL (1863-1954)\*

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

We continue our series on GNJ Clergy Families with a profile on the Terrell Family of Newark, NJ.

The city of Newark was named in the 1600s after the New Ark of the Covenant, that gold wooden chest described in the *Book of Exodus* that holds the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. Following many transformations over the years, Newark is the most populous city in New Jersey with nearly 300,000 residents and second only to Jersey City in diversity.

But in the past several months the pandemic has strangled the city with death and food insecurity. At one point, Newark became the number one city in New Jersey with COVID-19 cases. But the city rich in history and cultural diversity is shouldering the burden with strength and courage as many leaders of the city open their hearts and minds to the radical change facing it.

Rev. Dr. Lloyd Terrell is one of those bright leaders. He looks at every day as a good day, one full of opportunity. As the pastor for the historic Franklin-St. John’s UMC in Newark for the second time in his nearly 40-year career, he embraces the challenges he faces but appreciates the hope that each day brings.

When asked where his optimistic attitude is derived from, Dr. Terrell said, “I was born Black.” He fondly recalled his days as a child growing up in Akron, OH, surrounded by a group of pastors who inspired him and imparted in him the passion he has for ministry still today. “Those memories keep me motivated to serve God.”

This dedication and sincere heart clearly rubbed off on the four children he and his wife, Margarite, had, including his son, Rev. Dr. Ralph Terrell, who now leads both St. Matthews and Trinity UMCs, two churches also in Newark with distinctly different congregations. He said, “The church is so much a part of my life. I’m having the time of my life at churches in the city I grew up in.”

Now the father of five with his wife, Radeyah, who he turns to often for inspiration and guidance, Ralph looks back on his childhood with gratitude, grateful for the wonderful experiences as well as the lessons learned.

“My father and mother always told me, ‘remember that you’re Terrell!’” as he recalled the biggest piece of advice his father gave him and his siblings. “He told us that before you do something, ask yourself these three questions: does it shame God; does it shame your parents; and does it shame me. I still follow this advice today.”

After moving from Akron to serve in a church in Iowa and then back to Newark to continue his education at Drew University, Lloyd served the church on Maple Avenue from 1984 to 2001 before becoming a district superintendent for the Gateway North District for five years. During this time, he grew the church to about 500 people and added one of the first church credit unions. He encouraged congregants to embrace the church’s rich history, part of which included the merger of two churches, one predominantly White and the other predominantly Black.

“It was never fully integrated. They needed to know their history,” said Lloyd.

He noted also that although the more famous W.E.B. DuBois may have been the first Black to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard, John Wesley Edward Bowen, or J.W.E. for short, was the first Black in the United States to earn a Ph.D. in theology in 1887. The son of a slave, Bowen was the pastor of St. John’s Methodist Episcopal Church in the late-1880s. (see Note below).

With deep pride for those whose footsteps he follows, Lloyd also told his congregation about the courageous church member, Mary Colson Woody, who was the first woman funeral director licensed by the State of New Jersey in Orange, NJ.



**The Terrell Family has been living, preaching and helping others in Newark since 1984. Now father and son are serving God and three different congregations.**



“St. John’s didn’t know their history, and they needed this to move forward,” said Lloyd, who also noted that many of the doctors at Beth Israel Hospital when it first opened in 1889 were also members as was Emily Miles, known as the “the grand dame of black style in Newark.”

With that history to carry him, Lloyd leads his congregation toward outstanding outward ministry. Every Wednesday they distribute food from their pantry to about 100-200 people, most of whom are the working poor who are struggling to put food on their tables.

“I’m grateful we can be there to help these people,” Lloyd said, adding that every family receives about \$75-125 worth of emergency food.

On the other side of town, Ralph is also doing ministries through his two churches by identifying needs in the community and then meeting them with their hard work and blessings.

“We have a sincere heart for the community,” said Ralph. “People want to be part of a church that is making a difference.” Ralph added that in 2020 they provided more than 375 boxes of fresh fruits and vegetables and fed an entire meal to more than 50 families in the community. Their ministries also included raising \$3,000 so that they were able to hand out laptops to children in their congregation. Other donations have included book bags, school supplies and grocery store gift cards.

In August, Ralph and his congregations stretched their missional limits all the way to Houston where Rev. Dr. Rudy Rasmus, who is also the editor of *I’m Black. I’m Christian. I’m Methodist* (see page 9), organized a fundraiser with singer Beyonce who once sang in his church’s choir. Sales of her album enabled the congregations in Newark to provide diapers to single mothers in Newark.

Like his father, Ralph is both pastoral and vigilant, always searching for creative ways to help others with his own conviction and voice. This circuitous route has been part of his life since childhood as his curiosity and his “mischievous and gregarious” ways, as described by his father, led him down different paths along the way.

As a child, Ralph recalled, his father’s church thrived. “Our church could rival anything the community was doing. I held every position there was. You name it, I did it.”

At home, he and his siblings, Lloyd, Alice and Zelma, would play “church,” with Ralph often playing the role of preacher.

“He would play the preacher with fire and brimstone, like telling them to clean their rooms,” Lloyd recalled with a laugh. “I didn’t want them to hear my voice, but rather the voice of God...He was just trying to find his way.”

After graduating high school at only 16, Ralph attended his father’s alma mater, Paine College in Augusta, GA.

“Although I had a calling all my life, my calling was more of a gradual one,” said Ralph who later went on to receive a M.Div. from Drew University and a D.Min. from

the Graduate Theological Foundation in Mishawaka, IN.

“I was rebelling and trying to find my way. In the end, I had to meet God for myself. It was in those years in Augusta that I had my come to Jesus moment. I came home as an alcoholic.”

He added, “I called my dad ‘the fixer,’ but he couldn’t fix this one. Only one who could was God,” said Ralph who now as a recovered alcoholic helps those in his congregations and communities who have been plagued with addictions by sharing his story. “It resonates with many, and there’s a level of accountability for me that I need. And I have my own voice,” something his parents always wanted for their “live wire” who managed to bring laughter to delicate situations.

Known affectionately as “Daddy Terrell” by his five grandchildren ranging in age from four to 17, Kyla, Yohan, Ralph Jr., Preston and Ronald, Lloyd seems to treasure his memories and relish those moments when he can be with his family while he serves God.

Although his heart is heavy recently from doing so many funerals and mourning the loss of former Trinity UMC pastor, Rev. Sherrie Dobbs Johnson, Ralph is still hopeful for the future and sees Newark as a city poised to accept some radical change. And like rapper Jay-Z, who Ralph also names as one of his influences in ministry because of his courage and amazing endurance in the face of adversity, “Life is for living.”

Full of vitality, both Lloyd and Ralph seem to be in the best place where they can transform lives, in the city that has been called Gateway City and Renaissance Newark as they look toward “a future large with promise and hope.”

**Note:** In 1893 John Wesley Edward Bowen began teaching historical theology at Gammon Theological Seminary, soon becoming Gammon’s first full-time African American professor. As secretary of the Stewart Missionary Foundation for Africa at Gammon, he edited the *Stewart Missionary Magazine*. Bowen envisioned a new and liberated “Negro” to build a new nation. As part of that vision, he launched and edited *The Voice of the Negro* in 1904 with Jesse Max Barber. Bowen served as president of Gammon from 1906 to 1910. He witnessed a race riot his first year as president, during which he offered the seminary as shelter for blacks and was, himself, beaten and arrested. He became head of the Church History department, retired in 1926, and continued to teach until a year before his death in 1933.

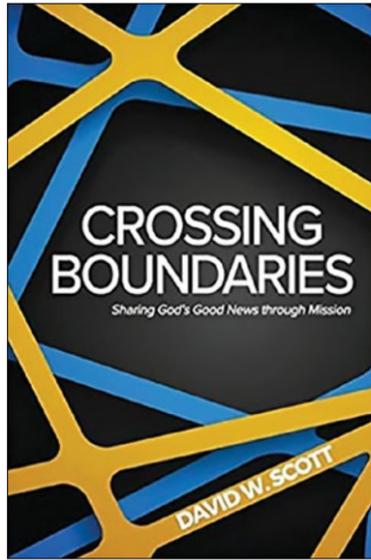
\*Although Ralph and Lloyd are not related to Mary Church Terrell, one of the first African American women to earn a college degree who was a national activist for civil rights and suffrage, Ralph is the nephew of Judge Mary Gooden Terrell of Washington, DC.

## ON THE BOOKSHELF FOR JANUARY

### Crossing Boundaries: Sharing God's Good News Through Mission

(Wesley's Foundry Books, 2019) by David W. Scott

*Crossing Boundaries* looks at mission in a new way. With many concerns facing churches, mission is often dismissed as an extraneous add-on or treated as simply another program among many. This book advocates for a new understanding of mission, one that connects it to the very heart of what it means to live the Christian faith in its fullness as we experience and share the Good News. The book leads readers to think more deeply about their own contexts, others' contexts and offers practical steps about how to cultivate relationships that lead to conversations about good news across differences in context. The author includes reflection questions suitable for group study.



David W. Scott, Ph.D. is the director of mission theology for the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. Prior to his current position, he taught religion and leadership at Ripon College in Ripon, WI. He is also the author of *Mission as Globalization: Methodists in Southeast Asia at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, along with several scholarly articles on mission.

### Race and Prayer: Collected Voices, Many Dreams

(Morehouse Publishing, 2003) by Malcolm Boyd and Bishop Chester Talton

*Race and Prayer* explores the anger and frustration of racism through poems, prayers and prose in hopes of promoting reconciliation and healing. It is divided into five sections: Suffering and Anger; Prejudice and Hatred; Diversity; Reconciliation and Healing; and Growth in Understanding and Sharing. Contributors to this collection range in age from teenagers to the elderly and include men and women from a wide variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, all of whom speak honestly of their own experiences, heartbreaks, and hopes. Twelve cartoons from three-time Pulitzer Prize winner Paul Conrad, editorial cartoonist at the *Los Angeles Times*, add to the power of this collection.

Malcolm Boyd was ordained an Episcopal

priest in 1955. Soon afterward he became a freedom rider in the civil rights movement, serving as a college chaplain in two interracial parishes. He currently serves as Poet/Writer-in-Residence at the Cathedral Center of Saint Paul in Los Angeles, where he also served as chaplain of the AIDS Commission. He is the author of 26 books, including *Running with Jesus: The Prayers of Malcolm Boyd* and *Simple Grace: A Mentors Guide to Growing Older*.

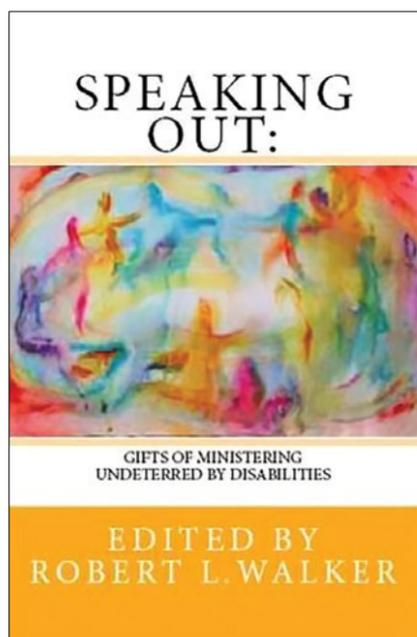
Chester L. Talton, born in Arkansas, grew up and attended school in California. Following his ordination in the Episcopal Church in 1971, he served parishes in Chicago, Minnesota, and New York. He is the first African American Episcopal bishop in the western United States and is currently Bishop Suffragan of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles.

### Speaking Out: Gifts of Ministering Undeterred by Disabilities

(CreateSpace, 2012) Edited by Robert L. Walker

*Speaking Out*, which is sponsored by the United Methodist Association of Ministers with Disabilities, unveils many facets of coping with incurable injuries, accidents at birth, physical or mental illnesses, and genetic disorders. Blindness, deafness, ambulatory challenges, brain injuries, and specific illnesses are discussed. Several of the contributors divulge their personal experiences of discrimination by church members and leaders who harbor prejudices. Above all else, the book tells of the importance of demolishing physical and attitudinal barriers that prevent both a full acceptance of ministers with disabilities and a willingness to make churches, parsonages, and other facilities wholly accessible. Each of the 25 writers is a living testimony that will surprise, inspire, and remind readers that all of them have God given gifts and were spiritually strengthened during their individual life-journeys, all the while remaining faithful to their respective calls to church ministry. The book's cover and the inside title page is "Circle Dance," a painting by Donna Fado Ivery who is one of the 25 authors. The Introduction was provided by Tim Vermande, likewise an author of a chapter.

Robert L. Walker is a former special education teacher. He is also the co-author, along with Eastern Pennsylvania Conference's Bishop Peggy Johnson, of *Deaf Ministry: Make a Joyful Silence*.

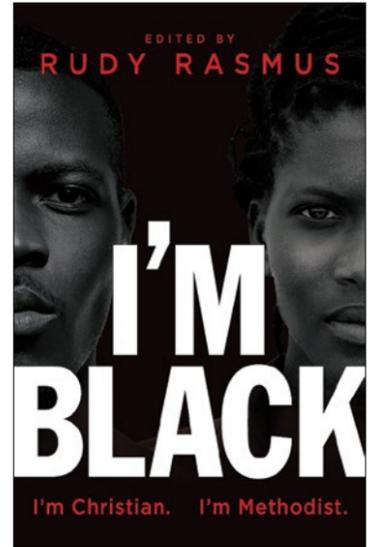


### I'm Black. I'm Christian. I'm Methodist.

(Abingdon Press, 2020) by Lillian C. Smith, Rudy Rasmus, Vance P. Ross, Justin Coleman, F. Willis Johnson, Pamela R. Lightsey, Rodney Lorenzo Graves, Tori C. Butler, Erin Beasley, Jevon Caldwell-Gross

*I'm Black* is a collection of 10 personal narratives that reveal the shared and distinct struggles of being Black in the Church, facing historic and modern racism. Featuring former GNJ pastor Jevon Caldwell-Gross, this book addresses personal accounts of marginalization, apartheid, separate and unequal and violence. Each starts with the fact, "I'm Black," but for these writers and Black Christian leaders, resolving the conflict of being Christian and Methodist means confronting aspects of White theology, White supremacy and White racism in order to ground an oppositional experience toward domination over four centuries in America.

To read about the authors, visit [www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781791017095/](http://www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781791017095/).



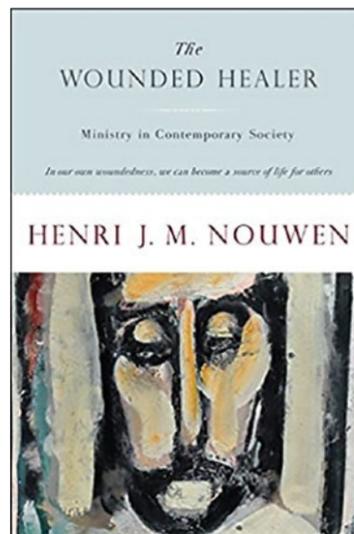
### The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society

(Image, 1979) by Henri Nouwen

*The Wounded Healer* is still relevant 41 years later. It combines creative case studies of ministry with stories from diverse cultures and religious traditions in preparation for a new model for ministry. Keen cultural analysis is woven together with psychological and religious insights that results in a balanced and creative theology of service that begins with the realization of fundamental woundedness in human nature. Emphasizing that which is in humanity common to both minister and

believer, this woundedness can serve as a source of strength and healing when counseling others.

Henri Nouwen, who died in 1996, was ordained a Catholic priest in 1957. He obtained his doctorate in psychology from Nijmegen University in The Netherlands and taught at Notre Dame, Yale and Harvard. He experienced the monastic life with Trappist monks at the Abbey of the Genesee, lived among the poor in Latin America with the Maryknoll missionaries and was interested and active in numerous causes related to social justice. He settled in Canada where he became a pastor of L'Arche Daybreak—where people with intellectual disabilities and their caregivers live together in community. Nouwen wrote over 40 books on spirituality and the spiritual life that have been translated into dozens of languages.

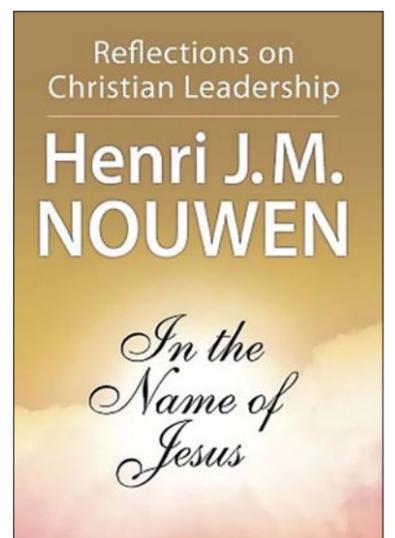


### In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership

(Crossroads, 1992) By Henri Nouwen

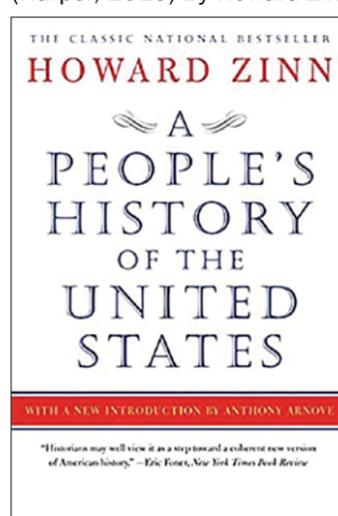
*In the Name of Jesus* is a rich guide to Christian leadership. For a society that measures successful leadership in terms of the effectiveness of the individual, this book offers a counter definition that is witnessed by a "communal and mutual experience." For Henri Nouwen, leadership and community are intertwined. His wisdom is grounded in the foundation that we are a people "called."

Henri Nouwen, who died in 1996, was ordained a Catholic priest in 1957. He obtained his doctorate in psychology from Nijmegen University in The Netherlands and taught at Notre Dame, Yale and Harvard. He experienced the monastic life with Trappist monks at the Abbey of the Genesee, lived among the poor in Latin America with the Maryknoll missionaries and was interested and active in numerous causes related to social justice. He settled in Canada where he became a pastor of L'Arche Daybreak — where people with intellectual disabilities and their caregivers live together in community. Nouwen wrote over 40 books on spirituality and the spiritual life that have been translated into dozens of languages.



### A People's History of the United States

(Harper, 2015) By Howard Zinn



*A People's History of the United States* chronicles American history from the bottom up, throwing out the official narrative taught in schools—with its emphasis on great men in high places—to focus on the street, the home, and the workplace. Through a combination of prose and scholarly research, this book tells the story from the point of view of—and in the words of—America's women, factory workers, African-Americans, Native Americans, the working poor, and immigrant laborers.

Howard Zinn (1922–2010) was a historian, playwright, and social activist. In addition to *A People's History of the United States*, which has sold more than two million copies, he is the author of numerous books including *The People Speak*, *Passionate Declarations*, and the autobiography, *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train*. 🇺🇸



## Finding Hope and Servant Hearts at Sharptown

*"Let there be light,  
and there was light.  
God saw that the light was good."*

—GEN 1:3

By Heather Mistretta  
hmistretta@gnjumc.org

PILES GROVE, NJ

Located in the small rural town of Pilesgrove, NJ, sits a church that has extended the love of God by

making clean drinking water possible for people over 7,500 miles away. Sharptown UMC, whose people often remark how missions are their heartbeat, has not let the recent pandemic stop them from continuing this vital mission.

"We have been doing this for several years. It grew out of a heartbeat of someone in our congregation," said Kristen Raine, a former biochemist who since 2014 has been the church's director of ministry. Prior to this role, she served as the director of children's ministry. Along the way she has discovered

her calling and is now studying to be a pastor.

In early October, the congregation carried buckets of water from the Delaware River for a mile and a half as part of The Zambia Well Project, a partnership between the church and The Living Water Project, to raise funds and awareness for needed water wells in a country where more than half of the population lives below the poverty line.

The fundraising effort made enough money to provide five new wells, which will provide about 2,500 people with access to clean drinking water, particularly girls and women who are often in charge of collecting water for their villages and homes. Women and girls sometimes walk extremely long distances to fetch water, leaving little time for studies, and subjecting them to violence along the way.

"The connection with the Sharptown Church is nothing short of a 'God thing,' where they had it on their hearts to help people with safe drinking water, and they literally just came across our organization by some combination of listening to the Holy Spirit and Googling," said Kevin Colvett, a board member for the Zambia Well Project.

By raising money for this organization, Sharptown Church are helping improve the health and safety of the residents of people in Zambia who have been proactive by setting up handwashing stations at the village wells; and designating a person to be the sole pumper of the wells so that there can be some amount of social distancing and fewer hands touching the well pump.

But the church's mission does not stop there. Sharptown also continued their spread of kindness and discipleship through the Operation Christmas Child project this year, collecting more than a thousand shoeboxes from the congregation and another thousand from the community filled with gifts for impoverished children throughout the world. Since 1970, Samaritan's Purse, who runs Operation Christmas Child, has helped meet needs of people who are victims of war, poverty, natural disasters, disease and famine with the purpose of sharing God's love.

"People need signs of hope more than ever before. We have a lot of people with

servant hearts who share that hope," said Raine who stressed that the boxes were packed in one-hour intervals over the course of several days so that all state guidelines and recommendations for social distancing could be followed. "We required pre-registration and sanitized between each session."

Closer to home, Raine said that in addition to lending their space to the Red Cross for monthly blood drives, the church's food ministry drops off boxes of essential food to about 15-20 families. For Christmas, they ramped up their efforts, delivering to nearly 70 families.

The people of Sharptown have always embraced mission. From supporting foreign missionaries from Africa to Guatemala with financial support as well



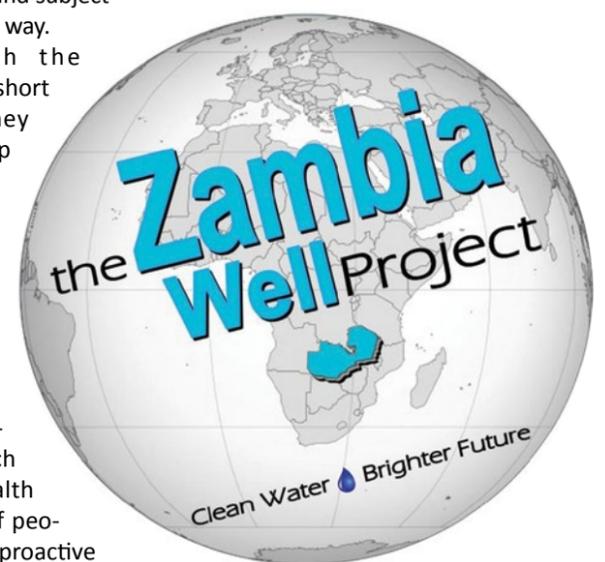
**In 2021, please consider a Special Offering for The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society at your UMC.**

The role of the Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society is to:

- Subsidize all retired GNJ pastors' healthcare costs
- Offer emergency financial assistance to retired pastors and the families of deceased pastors for funeral, medical or family needs
- Provide a stable source of funding to support GNJ's annual budget

**The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society is expanding their emergency assistance fund this year and needs congregational support to meet the needs of our clergy and their families. Please host a Special Offering for CFPAS on your 2021 calendar.**

To contribute to this excellent cause or apply for an assistance grant, go to: [gnjumc.org/The-Centenary-Fund](https://gnjumc.org/The-Centenary-Fund) today!



as prayer, to impacting the lives of homeless people through Family Promise. They have sent short-term teams to China to teach; to Argentina, Guatemala and Haiti to build; and to Louisiana to support those struck by a hurricane. Youth have also spent weeks in the summer working in Mexico, Kentucky and Ireland helping to build the lives of others by sharing the Gospel of Christ.

"Our objective is to reach out through the love of Christ to our town, county, nation and world," said Raine. "It is our prayer that God will use us to be His witnesses in Jerusalem [congregation], Judea [Salem County], Samaria [United States] and the world."

To learn more about their missions, visit <https://sharptown.org/get-involved/outreach-and-missions/foreign-missions/>.

## CONFERENCE NEWS

### Special Session Planned for January 22

A Special Annual Conference Session will be held virtually from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Jan. 22 to review a shared billing plan and adopt any necessary budget changes. For more details, visit [www.gnjumc.org/january-2021-special-session/](http://www.gnjumc.org/january-2021-special-session/).



### First UMC Hightstown Takes Over Elf Role for Christmas

First UMC in Hightstown hosted its annual toy drive in December for families in their community. The church also provided food for its community through its Blessing Box, a mini food pantry.

Check out its FB page for more info and photos.

### Deerfield UMC

Deerfield UMC in Elmer, NJ, created a living nativity in December as part of its Advent celebration that also included refreshments, Christmas hymns and ornament making.

Until January 10, Sunday worship services will be held virtually on Facebook and YouTube, premiering at 10 a.m. For details, visit <https://deerfieldumcnj.org/>.



### Feeding the Hungry in South Jersey

Pennsauken UMC is working with the Food Bank of South Jersey to provide weekly free breakfast and lunch to all school age children and their siblings on Monday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

A recent article in the Philadelphia Inquirer highlighted their efforts on December 22.

### Three Day Training for Annual Conference Leadership this Month

Connect with other annual conference committee chairs and members from Jan. 26-28 while receiving custom training tracks from the General Council on Finance and Administrations' staff and special guests who support the UMC connection.

The virtual sessions are intended for newly elected and returning office holders. Chairpersons and members of conference committees are encouraged to attend.

More details and registration are available on the GNJ website.

## OBITUARIES

**Rev. Eileen Murphy**, retired elder, died on November 19, 2020. Memorial donations may be sent to: St Andrew UMC, 1528 Church Rd., Toms River, NJ 08755. Funds will be allocated to music, children's ministry and missions in her memory.

**Geraldine Elizabeth Schiermeyer**, retired full elder, died on December 4. Memorial donations may be sent to Asbury UMC, 1533 Springhouse Rd., Allentown, PA 18104.

**Raymond Jones**, surviving spouse of Beverly Jones, died on December 5, 2020.

**Morris L. Smith** died on December 9, 2020. He served as president of numerous boards, including the United Methodist Homes of New Jersey.

**William Louis Dike**, retired full elder, died on January 3, 2021. Memorial donations may be sent to McKendree University, 701 College Rd., Lebanon, IL 62254. Send expressions of sympathy to Gloria Wenberg at 777 Middle Rd., Unit 58, Portsmouth, NH 03801. 📧



### Winter Storm Doesn't Stop Mission at Galilee UMC

When a winter storm dumped several inches of snow in Bergen County, NJ, just days before Christmas, stores closed, and schools were cancelled. But at Galilee UMC in Englewood, the food ministry and evangelism continued.

The snow hampered their efforts for one day, but on Christmas Eve just hours before its worship service, church members served over 100 meals to the needy in their community.



"We knew we weren't going to be able to let people know that the distribution would be delayed, so we pushed our worship service one hour back, so we had time to serve," said Rev. Elouise Hill-Challenger, who added that they also handed out gifts to the children and grandchildren of the congregation.

She added that their mission has been enhanced by the incorporation of evangelism into the ministry by handing out prayer cards for each day of the week, which includes scripture, a prayer and a way to connect. Also, a woman from the community who offered her help is now distributing about 10 meals each week to homeless people in the nearby park.

"People like her can continue and extend the mission," said Hill-Challenger.



**UNITEDforSAFETY™**  
Assures Your Safety

 **United Methodist Communities**  
Abundant Life for Seniors

United Methodist Communities' comprehensive response to COVID-19 includes **UNITEDforSAFETY™**. It's our industry-leading standard of infection control and cleanliness, reflecting our commitment to keep the health, well-being, and safety of our residents, associates, and volunteers at the forefront.

To discover the benefits of **UNITEDforSAFETY**, visit [umcommunities.org/unitedforsafety](http://umcommunities.org/unitedforsafety) or email questions to [info@umcommunities.org](mailto:info@umcommunities.org).

Home Office  
3311 State Route 33  
Neptune, NJ 07753  
[umcommunities.org](http://umcommunities.org)





# Miracles Everywhere

**Last year dozens of churches used a Miracles Everywhere campaign to grow mission, improve generosity and reengage their congregation.**

***Make 2021 your year of Miracles!***

If you didn't run a stewardship campaign last fall, or it didn't go as well, start anew for 2021 with a "Miracles and More" Campaign. Ask members to step up their generosity journey and dedicate half of their increased gift to the Miracles Everywhere campaign, and half to your church.

**Through the Miracles Everywhere campaign, GNJ churches are:**

- Serving 71,000 meals per month to families impacted by COVID-19 and the economic recession
- Introducing 1,500+ young people to Jesus' love each year at Pinelands Camp, 10 campus ministry groups and multiple IGNITE events
- Continuing support of clergy training in Tanzania and the rebuilding of Puerto Rico
- Lifting up hundreds of our fellow churches and their ministries to God's most vulnerable through the COVID-19 Relief Fund

***Start Your Stewardship Year Strong!***

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES, GO TO:**

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