

THE RELAY

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Annual Conference Imagines New Possibilities

By Josh Kinney
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(Wildwood, NJ) – It wasn't hard to imagine a packed auditorium of high-spirited church leaders, but no one imagined they would be blowing bubbles at the 2016 Annual Conference. From May 22-24, over 1,400 people converged on the Wildwoods to reconnect, celebrate, and adventurously envision new things for the church's future.

The conference theme of "Imagine" was comprised by the colorful imagery of spherical lanterns throughout the Wildwoods Convention Center and the use of bubbles to close out the opening worship, which, due to a schedule shift, was combined with the Commissioning and Ordination Service Sunday evening. Based on the Bible verse of Ephesians 1:18, where Paul, writing to the Church in Ephesus, asks God to give discernment and a clear vision to see the hope of his call, the theme was present throughout the conference.

"Imagine the possibilities ahead of us!" Bishop John Schol exclaimed, asking God to grant grace and wisdom to stir up imagination. He called the conference to imagine a church with tremendous vision and diversity which will grow vital congregations to transform the world.

"What we know needs to be abandoned sometimes," Bishop Schol said. "Sometimes the church is too familiar with what it is rather than what God is calling it to be." The sermon went on to describe vacating the comforts of security to embrace trust instead.

Twenty-three candidates participated in the ordination and commissioning ser-



vice. The Bishop called the candidates to be imaginative people who dare to live into God's dream for the world.

Charles Seele from Manchester, whose son-in-law Blair Goold was commissioned, said the sermon challenged him. "We all need to be moved out of our comfort zones," he said. Seele's grandson and Goold's son, Matt Goold of Haddon Heights, was moved by the "thoughtful and mindfulness" of the message. "As a millennial, I really appreciate that," he said.

San Orekoya, from Jersey City UMC, loved the use of the bubbles at the end. "That was very exciting," he said, "I've never seen anything like that." The sermon also inspired Orekoya's wife, Ola. "We shouldn't let security get in the way of imagining things," she said.

More than \$63,000 was collected for the mission fund during the service, helping to eliminate death from malaria and rebuild homes for people with damage from Superstorm Sandy.

The theme of imagination wove itself throughout the conferences various speakers and services. Robin DiAngelo, a former Associate Professor of Education and two-time winner of the Student's Choice Award for Educator of the Year, addressed the church with a compelling

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Bubble blowing closed out the Commissioning and Ordination Worship Service at the 2016 Annual Conference. Photo by Shari DeAngelo

Bishop asks "Can The Church Imagine With Me?"

By Rev. Melissa Hinnen
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(Wildwood, NJ) - A spirit of imagination filled the Wildwoods Convention Center as more than 1,400 people sang, prayed, and worshiped at a Service of Commissioning and Ordination. The service opened the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey's Annual Conference session on May 22, 2016.

Native American Christy Piece Maisonneuve, whose name means "Quiet Water," welcomed the participants to the Lenni Lenape land on behalf of Mr. Mark Gould, the chief of the Lenni Lenape Tribe, and her pastor, Rev. Roy Bundy, of St. John's

UMC, a federally recognized Native American church in Bridgeton.

As a representative of her tribe and of her church, she offered scriptural reference from 1 Corinthians 1:10 saying, "Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose."

Bishop John R. Schol, accompanied by retired bishops, Solito Toquero, and Ernest S. Lyght, led the gathering in the Service of Commissioning and Ordination. They ordained nine elders to "preach the good word of God and to

administer the holy sacraments" and one deacon to "lead in ministries of compassion and justice" into full membership. An additional twelve candidates were commissioned as provisional elders and one as a provisional deacon.

Imagination Begins in the Dark

Bishop Schol framed his message around Ephesians 1:17-19. He encouraged risk taking, telling those gathered that, "the light of God shines through us best when we are stepping into the darkness."

He asked them, "Can you imagine a church that sees its neighbors as parishioners and is in ministry with those who are homeless, hungry, incarcerated?"

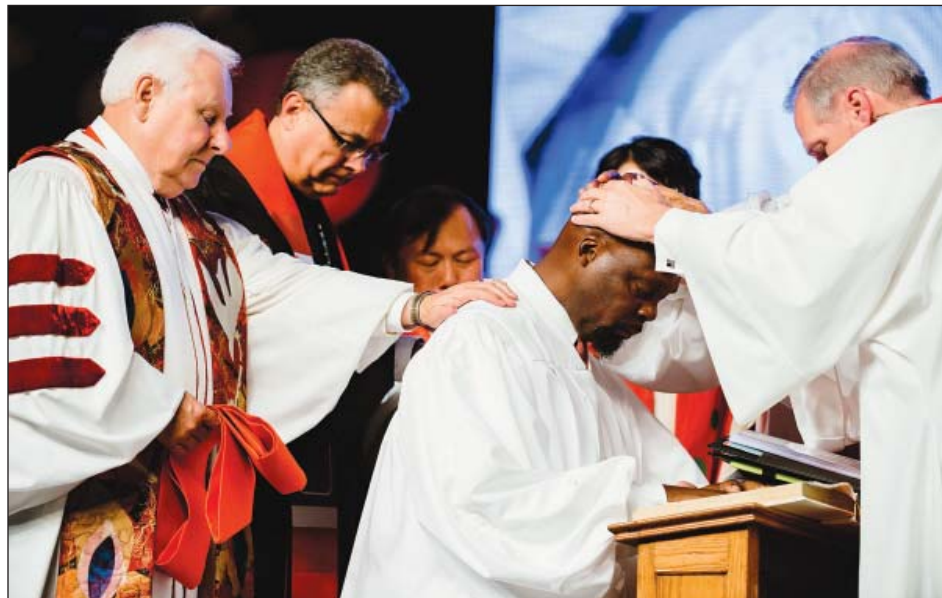
While churches love to talk about Jesus and praise God, Bishop Schol re-

minded the congregation that they often want to stay in that space. "They want to live in the light and talk about Jesus all day long rather than meeting Jesus." He preached, "Imagination doesn't begin with what we know but with what we don't know. It doesn't begin in the day but in the night."

Funding Imagination

Praising the generous contributions to the Mission Fund, Bishop Schol shared that with the work of Imagine No Malaria, deaths from the disease are being cut in half. Because of the Mission Fund, more than 11,000 volunteers rebuilt 234 homes that were affected by Superstorm Sandy through A Future With Hope. "You have imagined how to gift our Mission

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Bishop Schol ordains John E. Randall, Sr. to be an Elder at the 2016 Annual Conference in Wildwood. Photo by Shari DeAngelo

Greater New Jersey is Making Headlines!

Check out the May/June issue of the United Methodist Interpreter Magazine.

2016 Episcopal Address



**The United Methodist Church of
Greater New Jersey
May 23, 2016
John Schol, Bishop**

Have you ever looked into a kaleidoscope in a dimly lit room? Not very fascinating or inspiring. But then you hold it up to the light and the colors and shapes came alive. Imagination is having enough light to see God's unfolding story for the church in all of its hues and shapes. That light is the light of Jesus Christ, illuminating our way to a future with hope.

In 2013, together through our strategic ministry plan, we imagined a God-sized future for The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey and God has not disappointed us. This vision and strategic ministry plan are rooted and growing in our congregations. All across the conference, congregations are going deeper and further to develop worship, small groups, mission engagement, making new disciples and generous giving.

Morristown UMC is an example of who we are becoming in GNJ and how vital congregations are pursuing God's call. Morristown has a rich tradition that is exploring what God has next for them. This primarily Anglo congregation has a Korean pastor and is starting a Hispanic ministry. Together they have engaged in Team Vital, assessed their congregation and community, grown their small group ministry to 17 groups and launched a new Hispanic ministry on Pentecost Sunday.

Morristown UMC along with many other congregations are the reason Greater New Jersey moved from the middle of the pack in vitality to number four, and why we had the second highest increase in vitality among conferences in the United States. Come, imagine with me what more God wants to do through your congregation.

We imagined a God-sized goal of starting 90 new faith communities by 2018. Now that's imagination.

In the last 10 months we chartered a new Ghanaian congregation with more than 200 singing and dancing worshipers, and we engaged a new Egyptian faith community that now has more than 60 worshipers. It is our second GNJ Egyptian congregation.

Conference leaders also recently met with a group of young people that are preparing to launch Greenhouse, a new faith community that will be a second site of Calvary Korean Church. I imagine Greenhouse will be worshiping with more than 200 new disciples in the near future.

Since 2013, we have started 24 faith communities. Come, let us together imagine starting another 40-60 faith communities.

We imagined a God-sized ministry after Superstorm Sandy that would renew, repair and rebuild houses, communities and lives. We are renewing Frank and Mary Ellen Azack's lives. Both have health concerns and found that after the storm their home could not be repaired and had to be torn down. They did not know where to turn.

When we learned of their plight, our A Future With Hope Ministry turned their frustration and pain into joy. When God is involved, weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes in the morning (Psalm 30:5), weeping may tarry during the storm, but joy comes when A Future With Hope shows up.

This week, we are setting a new home on their property. Joy showed up this morning for the Azack's.

Through our A Future With Hope Ministry, GNJ has now worked with 441 families, teamed up with 11,004 volunteers, and repaired or built 234 homes. Through A Future With Hope, we created one of the most robust and resilient organizations that is one of the last organizations on the ground working with families recovering from Sandy.

In 2013, I shared with you that United Methodists were one of the first on the scene after Superstorm Sandy, and we would be one of the last still working to repair, rebuild and renew homes, families, and communities.

As United Methodists, we cannot imagine people who need help going without help, people who need hope going without hope. When people hurt, GNJ United Methodists help. Come, together let us imagine what God has next for us.

Today, I announce what's next for our A Future With Hope Ministry. We are preparing to resource and support you through Hope Centers. We anticipate that our Sandy relief and recovery ministry will come to an end in 2017. This has been a remarkable ministry, and we developed capacity and resources that are recognized in the region and across the nation.

Instead of disbanding this ministry and organization, we will retool and use our current capacity to create Hope Centers to provide training, strategic community planning, and develop affordable housing.

While A Future With Hope began through a tragedy, it has become a force for hope and renewal. While it began in Sandy-damaged communities, it will be an organization that will now work with churches that want to extend and deepen their mission in any community in GNJ.

I am excited about Hope Centers that will provide community development and human services in the name of Jesus Christ. It will work through our congregations and church sponsored community centers.

We are presently developing a joint venture with C.A.M.P. YDP, a community center started by a United Methodist pastor 60 years ago and is supported by GNJ and a number of our congregations. A new partnership will emerge in which GNJ, A Future With Hope, and Hope Centers will work together, so more mission and ministry is happening in the community. This is imagination, and I am grateful for the leaders of A Future With Hope and GNJ for shedding light on what God has next for us.

I can imagine at least five Hope Centers in every county which will create more than 100 Hope Centers throughout GNJ.

We have been imagining the congregation as the primary source of mission. We have focused GNJ resources on making disciples and growing vital congregations to transform the world. We said we will do everything we can to keep more dollars in the congregation. For three years in a row, we kept the Shared Ministry budget flat or decreased it.

The Council on Finance and Administration has proposed a 2017 budget that again decreases the Shared Ministries budget. By not increasing or even decreasing the shared ministry budget for four years, we saved the churches \$1,407,000. Imagine that!

We developed and are implementing new resources for our leaders through coaching, PaCE groups, Team Vital, Communities of Hope, and The Laity Academy.

We implemented all of these resources and lowered the Shared Ministry budget while paying 100% General Church Apportionment for the ninth year in a row. Now that's imagination.

This type of imagination is saving our churches \$1,407,000. Come, imagine with me how God will continue powerful and life changing ministry, keeping more of the financial resources in the congregation.

While we are speaking of money, which God uses to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform the world, let's not forget what we are doing through our Mission Fund.

We have raised \$5.5 million and with it, we have repaired 234 homes, cut deaths from malaria in half and supported community mission through our congregations. It is most astounding that The United Methodist Church, one of the first three partners in the fight against malaria, which now has more than 100 partners, has cut deaths by malaria in half.

Our efforts are saving nearly one million people a year, sometimes just through a bed net. Let's continue to work together and imagine cutting deaths from malaria in half again and again and again until people are no longer suffering and dying from malaria. With God's help and your gifts, we can do this.

We also imagine how to do things better to support our laity, clergy, and congregations. I already mentioned how coaching, PaCE groups, Team Vital, Communities of Hope and the Laity Academy are serving the mission.

We have strengthened our foundation and assets under management that will grow to more than \$20 million this year.

We are also making our larger events like the Annual Conference session, IGNITE and Bishop's Clergy Convocation, a better experience. This year more than 90% of you had your Pre-Conference Journal one month before Annual Conference. IGNITE registrations started at the end of last year, and we expect to have more than 1,000 students attend IGNITE this year.

We are offering outstanding learning experiences like The Coach Approach to Ministry, Leading Through Conflict, and the clergy transition workshop. We have also seen our communications ministry create new resources and improve our existing resources. We are not the only ones to notice. The United Methodist Association of Communicators gave five awards to GNJ. These awards were for the advertisements we placed on NJ Transit buses during Lent last year that directed people to our local churches, and for the design of nametags for Annual Conference, which saved us money in production costs and is now being duplicated by other conferences across the country.

We are not imagining how to do things better for awards, but to do things with excellence for God. We want to further our mission to make disciples and grow vital congregations to transform the world. We believe excellence attracts excellence and we strive for excellence, because we serve a great God.

Six years ago we imagined a new conference center that would be a resource for GNJ mission and ministry. While the church is consolidating, while many conferences are cutting resources, while many within the church are saying we need to conserve, we heeded the words of Isaiah, who prophesied in a very difficult time. "Stretch out your tent," he told the people, "drive the stakes deeper, and lengthen the tent cords."

Our new Mission and Resource Center is a testimony that God is not done with us yet. God's imagination far exceeds what we see, and God is willing to light the way. The building came in slightly under budget, and the \$5 million project is paid for. The \$5 million dollar project is paid for!

The vision for this new facility is already creating mission and ministry opportunities. We have started a new partnership with Drew University, and this fall a seminary course will be taught at the Mission and Resource Center. Imagine with me the possibilities that we will open as we become a satellite campus for one of the premier theological schools.

I see hope rising across GNJ, and I imagine a God-sized vision and ministry in which hope springs eternal out of our congregations and into our communities. God is doing a new thing, an important thing among us. Come imagine what God has for us next.

While imagining what God has for us next, we cannot deny we have present and future challenges. We experience here at home and have witnessed at General Conference that there are deep differences among us.

It is painful, and it is unsettling. It creates fear and talk of division and even separation. It moves some to the edges and others to the center. I do not want to mislead you. This is serious. At the core, we have different understandings of how to interpret the Bible. Can we serve God together knowing there are sharp differences among us?

Yes!

The movement of God has never depended on our agreement with one another but our willingness to unite to serve God.

Do you think the family that sleeps under a United Methodist malaria bed net wonders what side of an issue we are on?

Do you think the Azack's, who we are building a new home for, care whether we are to the left or right of an issue?

2016 Episcopal Address

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Do you think the children at C.A.M.P. YDP, who have a place to go to because we stepped into the breach, care about our vote on a particular issue?

I dare say no in each of these cases. When they saw and experienced the love of Jesus in us, all differences melted away.

Look at all God has done through us. Growing congregational vitality, repairing 234 homes, creating new faith communities, cutting deaths from malaria in half, building a new Mission and Resource Center, and reducing the shared ministry budget. This happens because God is at work through us in the midst of our differences.

It happened because the disciples of GNJ agreed to be hope for the hopeless, love for the loveless, relief for those in the midst of disaster and faith for those who doubt.

Did we first ask the hopeless, the loveless and those in the midst of disaster if they agreed with us? No! Our engagement with others only depended on our love for God and our love for one another.

History tells us we are stronger together than we are on our own. Imagination tells us we are better, more excellent for God when we imagine together.

In no way does this negate that on a few things we have sharp disagreements, but it is a witness that we are willing to allow God to work through us in the midst of differences. Our unity will not be uniformity but faithful commitment to God and scripture, allowing for difference.

I pledge to be a bishop of the whole church and for all the people. Our mission is too important to pick and choose who we serve. You are too valuable to God and to me to only select you because we share the same beliefs. Every time the church has split, the witness has weakened and the mission has suffered. Every time a congregation leaves the denomination, we all hurt and we all grieve.

In the last four years, three congregations contemplated or left the denomination. It is one of the most troubling experiences for me as a bishop. These are hard conversations and they are spiritual conversations bathed in prayer and discernment.

In all things, I seek to glorify God and seek reconciliation and oneness in Christ. These are prayerful and spiritual journeys.

In the midst of differences, our clergy also have a very difficult challenge in leading the church today. I want us all to pray for and support our pastors as they seek to serve God, the church and the community.

I also call our pastors to refrain from harsh judgment, leave that for God. Refrain from being certain, leave room for mystery and faith. Love your people even when they do not show love for you. There is nothing more Christ-like than to love when you are misunderstood.

I can imagine us becoming a church in which the world admires us not because we agree but because we love each other in the midst of our disagreements. Then we will have truly become like the variety of disciples Jesus gathered, like the peaceable kingdom Isaiah describes, like the Shalom community Jeremiah depicts, and like the kingdom of God that Jesus inspires us to become.

As we live the words of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Jesus, we have a greater possibility to tackle some of the deep challenges we are facing. The following are challenges that we will need to pray, imagine and work together to address.

- While our vitality is increasing, we are decreasing in worship attendance. This may mean that we are going deeper, and it will be some time before we start to grow wider again.
- We imagine a greater and larger mission than we have capacity, people, systems and dollars to do.
- There are injustices that we must address. Last annual conference session we committed to learn about incarceration and how laws and attitudes have used privilege to disadvantage African Americans and Latinos particularly. We have held a joint criminal justice reform forum with Senator Cory Booker. The cabinet and others have studied the book, "The New Jim Crow" to broaden our understanding of these issues. I have sought to learn by traveling throughout the conference, meeting with prison personnel, inmates, judges, lawyers and police officers. We have offered PaCE groups about incarceration. There is still more for us to learn and do.

- The final challenge I would like to lift up is that we are discontinuing churches. At this Annual Conference session, we will close five churches. Last session we discontinued five churches. The study we commissioned to develop our strategic plan indicated that we will discontinue 20-30% of our congregations within the next 20 years.

In the midst of these challenges, let's talk about how we will imagine something different. Something different than closing churches. Something other than allowing injustice that rises out of privilege. Something more than declining worship. Let's talk about how to build our capacity to catch up to the big vision and mission we continue to imagine. Let's talk about how we build a church and community for all people.

We have already begun to imagine, pray and work together, and we see the results. In 2013 we imagined a new future through our strategic ministry plan and today while we have significant challenges, we are making progress on our plan and addressing our challenges. Let's review how we are doing to achieve our strategic plan goals. We said by the end of 2018 we wanted to accomplish nine goals:

1. Increase the percentage of churches growing in worship attendance from 32% to 51%. Today 30% of our churches are growing. This is a concern for the health and vitality of GNJ. We have important work to do together.
2. Start 90 new faith communities. We have started 24. This is a good start and with God's help, we can achieve this goal.
3. Decrease the number of worshipers it takes to make a new profession of faith from 17 to 15. We have slipped on this one and are at 18 worshipers to make one profession of faith.
4. Increase the percentage of worshipers in small groups from 43% to 75%. We have already exceeded this goal.
5. Increase the number of young adults in small groups from 2,800 to 3,200. Today we stand at almost 2,900. There is work for us to do.
6. Increase our racial ethnic members from 20% to 25%. We now stand at 21%. There is more work for us to do.
7. Increase the percentage of worshipers engaged in mission from 8% to 40%. We have already exceeded this goal.
8. Increase local church dollars spent on mission 15% to 17% of their budget. We exceeded this goal and are in the top 10 conferences in our denomination.
9. Raise \$12 million through a mission campaign. We have raised \$5.5 million which is a tremendous start and has exceeded many expectations.

On five of our nine goals, we have exceeded or made strong progress. With God's help and every congregation working to grow vitality, we will see growth in the other four by 2018.

We are also making progress on a strategy and action steps to develop greater cultural competence throughout GNJ, addressing injustices and recruiting more transformational leaders to grow vital congregations.

I imagine every time we discontinue a church somewhere, we will start a new Hope Center and also start a new faith community; beginning two new ministries for every church we discontinue. While we may not be able to turn every congregation around, we will imagine new possibilities through Hope Centers and new faith communities.

We have imagined and made strong progress. We are experiencing renewal in our congregations and the lives of people. We have made progress on our goals, built a new Mission and Resource Center, repaired more than 230 Sandy-damaged homes, reduced deaths from malaria, reduced the shared ministry budget, welcomed a new Ghanaian Congregation and an Egyptian faith community, and became one of the most vital United Methodist Conferences.

GNJ in the midst of very challenging times is making progress because this is a movement of the Holy Spirit that has been bathed in prayer each step of the way. We are seeing and experiencing transformational leaders throughout GNJ, we have a clear plan and focus, there is greater trust throughout GNJ, and we are using our resources in alignment with our mission and strategic plan. Our future course is to continue the good work we are doing and strengthen our other areas of ministry.

When we do all of this, God sightings emerge from unsuspecting sources and in unsuspecting places. Doug Card is a councilperson in Highlands New Jersey; a town hit hard by Superstorm Sandy. He met a man in town this year who had no way to rebuild his home. The man needed a total rebuild and didn't have the resources. He had multiple sclerosis and struggled with health concerns. Doug told him about our A Future With Hope.

Today the man has a new modular home built by United Methodists.

Councilman Card told this story to Nicole Caldwell-Gross, Director of Mission for Greater New Jersey because she is leading the Community of Hope training with the Highlands church and community.

Highlands, under the leadership of Pastor Jill Hubbard Smith and seven laity, is one of our first Communities of Hope. They have been trained and have a plan for revitalizing their community. Their imagination and clear plan have attracted members of the town council, the president of the chamber of commerce, the chairs of the Garden Club, the recreation committee, the art society, and 100 other community leaders and residents to work with the congregation.

Councilman Card, who is not a United Methodist but we are working on him, said: "A Future With Hope and the Highland's Community of Hope, has no agenda but to help people. This group gets things done and is making a difference."

As United Methodists, God is giving us all the light we need to see hope, to see an engaged disciple, a vital congregation, and a transformed world.

Like looking through a kaleidoscope, the disciples, the congregations, and transformation will look different in different places. But this I am convinced of: in these places there will be faithful GNJ laity and clergy leading the way.

You are a courageous, imaginative people who are faithful and fruitful. Come, let's imagine together what God will do next. Thank you and God bless you and your ministry.

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Boy Scout Eagle Project Marks Fresh Start for Hunger Project

By Karen Ravensbergen
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After months of planning and preparation, a garden space on the grounds of Calvary United Methodist Church was finally ready for planting, with a new irrigation system and other upgrades to increase efficiency and conserve resources. On a recent Sunday afternoon, Derek Ravensbergen, a Life Scout with Troop 64, Dumont, and member of the church, supervised and worked side-by-side with fellow scouts to fill the space with a variety of vegetable seedlings as part of his Eagle Scout project.

The improved garden space is expected to yield a significantly greater supply of fresh, healthy vegetables for food insecure families in the region. Ravensbergen, a Dumont High School sophomore, chose an Eagle project to benefit CUMAC – Center for United Methodist Aid to the Community, a mission partner of GNJ, that served over 38,000 New Jersey residents in 2015.



Fresh, organic, and nutritious vegetables are a luxury many New Jersey residents cannot afford. As summer approaches, supporting food insecure families will become even more challenging. According to CUMAC Executive Di-

rector Patricia Bruger, "The current food supply at CUMAC is low and expected to become more of a crisis as summer recess leaves thousands of children without healthy meals otherwise provided in school."

Calvary has been growing organic vegetables for CUMAC for approximately seven years, yielding several hundred pounds of vegetables for CUMAC annually. Bruger's husband Carl and other members of the congregation were faithful tenders of the garden known as "Garden for the Hungry." Recognizing the potential for a more abundant crop and other improvements to minimize the need for volunteer time and effort, Ravensbergen researched and planned garden upgrades.

The roughly 25'x50' garden was cleared of excess weeds and an old, unproductive fruit tree to make space for more planting. Water collection tanks were installed to collect and store rainwater, serving as a secondary water supply. A new irrigation system is hooked up to the building's water supply and water collection tanks, with 15 rows of drip tubing to provide efficient watering of plants, thus conserving water. Aging, deteriorating edging stones were removed and new ones installed around the perimeter of the garden, along with deer fencing. A solar timer will also be installed to regulate the water supply to the irrigation system.

Ravensbergen is quick to credit Carl Bruger for his help and support. "Mr. Bruger planted and grew every seedling at his home," he explained. "We just had



Rev. Elaine Wing, Calvary UMC (far left) and CUMAC Executive Director Patricia Bruger (far right) with Eagle Scout candidate Derek Ravensbergen (center) and fellow scouts after the garden planting.

to plant them! He is an expert gardener." Bruger also provided a tilling machine, offering instruction and supervising tilling of the soil. "It's not an easy machine to use," he added, "but Derek picked up quickly and handled it very well."

Now fully planted, Ravensbergen looks forward to watching the garden thrive and produce an abundant vegetable supply which will be brought to CUMAC on a consistent basis. "We planted collard greens, peppers, tomatoes, green beans and eggplant," he explained. "Collard greens take up most of the garden space because they are in great demand by the families served

by CUMAC, and because they are very nutrient-dense."

As the Eagle Project comes to a close, Ravensbergen looks forward to supporting the project in the future. "No garden is completely self-sustaining," he explained. "We still need people to weed, harvest and monitor the irrigation system throughout the season. I hope to help by inspiring community members to join in the project by volunteering some of their time to accomplish these things."

Individuals or groups interested in helping to maintain the garden may contact the Church Office at 201-384-3630 or email calvary185@verizon.net.

Churches See Progress and Possibilities Working with Team Vital

By Paige Chant
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Admittedly, Team Vital involvement is an intensive and thorough experience.

As Eric Drew, Greater New Jersey Director of Worship and a Team Vital facilitator, says, "Every month I'm working with one church or another to get through challenges and obstacles to vitality. That's a reality for any organization in our quickly changing world. But each month I also see many celebrations of progress and vitality growth."

That "vitality growth" is just what Team Vital is all about.

Session 1 of the process focuses on intense learning about the church community and the five markers of church vitality (worship, small groups, new disciples, missions and stewardship). Churches also perform gap assessments to evaluate which areas are in need of improvement, and to go about prioritizing the steps of their action plans.

Session 2 shifts the focus to a discussion about changing church culture, buy-in and communication as churches concentrate on developing Strategic Action Plans for their ministry. For meaningful change and increases in vitality to take place, communication and implementation are critical pieces of the puzzle. The Strategic Action Plan equips churches

with the practical tools and timeline for that kind of effective communication and implementation to take place.

Drew describes the Team Vital process this way: "There is so much to take in. But as we shift our time towards the right people who need to help us move forward, churches are really able to see great possibilities through Team Vital."

As of May, 2016, a year in from the launch of Team Vital, 55 GNJ churches have joined. The original pilot group of Team Vital churches is beginning to witness those great possibilities for themselves. In June, churches will meet for their second six-month check-in since the program's launch in May 2015, where they will share the concrete changes and progress they've seen in their churches' vitality.

Churches will discuss their progress toward vitality as recorded quantitatively with VitalSigns, a significant and meaningful measure of growth. But as important as quantitative data can be, says Rev. Beth Caulfield, Director of Small Groups, numbers alone are not enough to tell the story of churches' ministry.

"In the end," explains Caulfield, "our focus is on measuring Team Vital's success in growing the church and making disciples through changed lives, changed hearts, changed minds. And that is not captured through quantitative data alone.

The anecdotal information that is shared is also crucial."

Caulfield says stories are coming in from participating churches that reflect new and exciting ways of doing ministry. For example, churches are developing new plans for worship to better reflect the worship styles of their communities. They are becoming creative in finding ways to engage and attract new people to small groups and mission. People

are becoming more comfortable with stewardship discussions and ways of making disciples.

An important goal of Team Vital is to gather and document these experiences so that church communities can learn from one another.

Currently, the Team Vital Project and Planning Teams are in the process of creating an easily accessible system

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The Greater New Jersey Team Vital Project Team and facilitators at the 2016 Annual Conference in Wildwood, NJ. Photo by Josh Kinney



It's all about working together.

Team Vital helps leaders create a strategic ministry plan using the 5 markers of vitality. Churches learn from each other, collaborate, support and hold each other accountable to pursue their ministry plans.



START PLANNING NOW FOR 2017

MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT:

www.gnjumc.org/team-vital



THE CONNECTION

A blog on the 5 markers of vitality by the
Connectional Ministries Team

www.gnjumc.org/connection



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2016 GNJ Annual Conference Snapshots



Workshop topics including white fragility, worship services, coaching, branding, discipleship, and finances were held during the 2016 Annual Conference in Wildwood. Pictured above is Rabiah Duncan from St. Mark's UMC in Montclair, Robert Christophel from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and GNJ Worship Director Eric Drew. Photos by Shari DeAngelo

Annual Conference Imagines New Possibilities

Continued from page 1

and thought-provoking presentation imagining the world without racism. She challenged United Methodists to develop the skills and mindset necessary to create a just society, asking the body to submit their hopes and suggestions for the church to the Greater New Jersey task force developing a ten-year plan on cultural competency.

"When was the first time you had a teacher of the same race as you?" DiAngelo said. "How often did it happen? When did you first have a teacher of a different race? How often did this happen and why is it important?"

Rev. Dr. Virginia Samuel led the Service of Remembrance, sharing her personal trials of loss and reminding attendees that having faith does not mean you do not feel emotion.

"Time doesn't heal all wounds," Samuel said, "It's what we do with the time." She went on to say how clinging to God makes us grow in our faith.

The worship band, led by Director of Worship Eric Drew, was a creative and imaginative collaboration that brought together musicians and singers from Haddonfield, Camden, Pleasantville, Ridgewood, Bridgewater, Newark, and Ventnor. The group showcased the diversity and talent of Greater New Jersey.

Lay Leader Rosa Williams and four young leaders: Lakesha Groover from Mosaic Ministries, Andrew Ryoo from Greenhouse Church, Charles Perez from Dover UMC, and Joy Foley from A Future With Hope, shared personal testimonies of church plants, innovative ministries, and mission.

"I believe that the church can support its leaders by encouraging risk," said Ryoo, "not necessarily by making risk less risky."

James Lee, Manager of Visual Arts, imagined stepping outside the norm to film a humorous and informational video on making a new disciple. The video showed the Connectional Ministries team explaining how each of the five markers of vitality contribute to making a disciple and deepening faith. The light-hearted film was among many powerful videos shared during conference, and was met with laughs and applause.

"The goal was to portray how to make a new disciple," Lee said. "To a lot of churches, that might seem like a mystery. But there's actually a method."

More than 875 people attended six workshops at the conference, 150 of which worked in unison to systematically pack 30,000 meals to support the efforts of Stop Hunger Now, a non-profit with a bold mission that imagines the end of world hunger in the 21st century. Founded in 1998 by United Methodist minister Ray Buchanan, the organization set up tables inside the convention center where the streamlined meal packaging took place.

"We're currently working towards the United Nation's sustainability goal of ending world hunger by 2030," said Stop Hunger Now regional coordinator Richard Armenia. "The way we plan to do this is by shipping meals, packed by volunteers, to school feeding programs to drive children and families into the classroom."

Bishop Schol also reminded the conference of a famous, intelligent man who believed imagination was more important than knowledge. "Albert Einstein said that knowledge will get you from A to Z," he said, "but imagination, that will get you everywhere."



Conference volunteers helped pack 30,000 meals for the non-profit group Stop Hunger Now. Photo by Shari DeAngelo



Clergy pray before the Commissioning and Ordination Worship Service. Photo by Shari DeAngelo



A colorful stage beautifully captured the 2016 Annual Conference theme of "Imagine." Photo by Shari DeAngelo



Bishop Schol delivered a powerful sermon challenging the church to imagine new possibilities. Photo by Shari DeAngelo

More 2016 Annual Conference Snapshots



Left to right: Bishop's Lyght, Schol, and Toquero stand together at the Annual Conference Commissioning and Ordination Worship Service.

Photo by Shari DeAngelo



Bishop Schol ordains Relay contributing writer Jessica Sara Stenstrom as an Elder. Photo by Shari DeAngelo



Praises were lifted during worship at the 2016 Annual Conference.

Photo by Shari DeAngelo



A light-hearted Connectional Ministries Team video brought smiles and laughter to Annual Conference. Photo by Shari DeAngelo

Bishop asks...

Continued from page 1

Fund so that we can continue imagining no malaria. We can continue rebuilding homes destroyed by Hurricane Sandy."

Many responded to his challenge and an offering of more than \$63,000 was collected during the Ordination and Commissioning Service to support the Mission Fund.

Imagining New Ministries

Bishop Schol highlighted new ways of being in ministry. He lifted up a church with a primarily Anglo congregation that is led by a Korean pastor who is leading a new Hispanic ministry in Morristown. He encouraged church leaders to approach ministry with an imagination that stretches into new areas and has a new voice.

Challenging the church to ask new imaginative questions, he suggested that instead of asking, "What's our favorite hymn," ask 'what is the new song God is playing in our heart?' Instead of asking if the worship should be contemporary or traditional, ask 'how will our ministry keep people soaring to praise and worship God?'"

Imaginative Leadership

"Tonight we invite others to begin the journey with us," Bishop Schol said, naming each of the candidates for commissioning. And then naming each clergy being ordained, he asked, "Are you ready to imagine what the church can be through your ministry and leadership? This night I ordain you to be the imaginative leader. I ordain you in the darkness, and invite you to step into the light of God."

At the close of the ordination service, Bishop Schol urged those gathered to open the bottle they were given when they arrived and blow bubbles "praising God for this group of new clergy, sending them prayers for the future of the church,

imagining what God wants to do with the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey.

As bubbles filled the hall, dozens came forward for prayer and discernment responding to Bishop Schol's invitation. "Maybe during the worship service you began to feel a movement and God's calling in your heart for a future of hope. This church imagines you as God's hope for the future of the church."

Commissioned as Provisional Member, Elder Track:

- Elizabeth Jane Ealie
- Blair Goold
- Katelyn Nicole Hillis
- Michael Anthony Howard
- David Lee Ledford, III
- Jongin Lee
- Sarah Borgstrom Lee
- Dale 'Daeil' Min
- Alison VanBuskirk Philip
- Richard Romero
- Joshua Bernon Shuster
- William B. Wilson Jr.

Commissioned as Provisional Member, Deacon Track:

- Maylis de la Fe Amores-Rodriguez

Ordained as Elder:

- Anna Katharine Gillette
- Peter Van Ness Jamieson
- Woo Min Lee
- Christina Lelache
- Ayn M. Masker
- Cameron P. Overbey
- John E. Randall Sr.
- Brian David Rhea
- Jessica Sara Stenstrom

Ordained as Deacon:

- Sharon Capron Yarger



The colorful and imaginative stage was set for a powerful and moving 2016 Annual Conference. Photo by Shari DeAngelo

For more Annual Conference Information, Wrap Up, Videos, and Photos, visit our website at: www.gnjumc.org

Holy Conferencing: Imagine a World Without Racism

By Rev. Melissa Hinnen

Melissa.hinnen@nyac-umc.com

(Wildwood, NJ) - How racially diverse was your neighborhood growing up? What messages did you get about race from your neighborhood? What does it mean to be white in a society that proclaims we don't see race?

These are some of the provocative questions that anti-racism expert, Dr. Robin DiAngelo asked those who had gathered for Greater New Jersey's Annual Conference in Wildwood on May 23.

In 2015, Greater New Jersey committed to a ten-year plan to address cultural competency and eradicate racism. DiAngelo was invited to speak to the conference to broaden the discussion about racial justice. She led a plenary session workshop.

Offering his own experience of privilege, Bishop Schol noted that he recognizes that his voice is often heard in a way that other voices are not. "When I became a bishop, my status changed and suddenly it seemed that my jokes were funnier and my sermons were better. Even though my jokes and my sermons were the same, the perception was different."

On a more serious note, he said, "I am aware that people address me or move me into leadership before others in the room who are more qualified. That's what we call privilege." He continued, "It's bestowed on me because of my title, ethnicity, race, and gender."

The Barrier of White Fragility

According to DiAngelo, whose scholarship is in white racial identity and race relations, one of her goals is to address the sense of fragility on issues of race and to help white people receive feed-

back with "revolutionary grace." When she later asked workshop participants who were people of color to share a positive experience about giving racial feedback to a white person, the response in the room was nervous laughter.

"White people are necessarily limited on their perception of race," she said. When talking about racism, she suggests that white people often respond from a defensive position because society teaches that racism is "bad." She said, "We believe that to be complicit with racism and to be a good person is mutually exclusive."

However, one problem with being afraid to confront racial injustice is that it "colludes with someone else's oppression. Your silence is maintaining white solidarity," she said.

DiAngelo explained that racism is a form of institutional oppression. It is an all-encompassing system that works on multiple levels in education, politics, media and popular culture. "When we look at the interlocking network of barriers, you can predict what will happen," she said.

Even though many people believe they are taught to treat everyone the same regardless of race, DiAngelo stated the reality is that by age three or four children understand the power of whiteness. Noting that churches are ten times more segregated than the neighborhoods they are in and twenty times more segregated than the public schools in their area, she pointed out, "This idea that we are 'color-blind' does not hold up because we see racist systems at work across every institution. By every measure, across every institution, there is inequity."

According to DiAngelo, white fragility functions to block the challenge of racial



Dr. Robin DiAngelo led the 2016 Annual Conference's Holy Conferencing session and a workshop imagining the world without racism. Photo by Shari DeAngelo

stress. One of the triggers that challenge white fragility is when people of color talk directly about race, which is often perceived as a challenge to white racial silence.

Because this fragility is a barrier to a racially just society, DiAngelo suggests resisting the sense of feeling attacked, silenced, or shamed and to get beyond good intentions. "All white people are invested in racism. Denying it doesn't

resist it," she said. "How can we rewrite our underlying beliefs into an anti-racism framework?" she asked.

Instead of responding with defensiveness, shame, or anger DiAngelo suggested responding from a place of humility and gratitude. "When we begin to reflect, listen, and engage, we get stronger, recognizing that we didn't choose it but we are responsible for it."

From the white pastor who said he only had two African-American students in his high school, to the Haitian pastor who didn't recognize U.S. racial inequality until she went to college in the states, to the retired white man who says he now understands why it was harder for him to connect with an African-American colleague, participants welcomed the opportunity to discuss their experiences and build deeper understandings.

Jose Cardona, a youth director at Wesley UMC in Trenton, shared how it's important for church leaders to understand and begin to break down the dynamics that get in the way of racial justice. He noted that the youth in his group often segregate themselves by race and leaders must be intentional about bringing them together.

Building Cultural Competency Over Ten Years

Greater New Jersey is one of the most diverse conferences in the denomination. The objective of the ten year cultural competency plan is to leverage the diversity of United Methodists in the region to have deep conversations, shift attitudes and perceptions, and build up what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called, "the beloved community."

He announced, "Over the next ten years we will actively work for greater cultural competency among clergy, laity, and conference leadership in order to eliminate racism and grow our ability to engage cross-culturally. This is a lifetime journey."

Conference delegates and visitors were asked to submit their hopes and suggestions for the United Methodist Church to the GNJ task force to help develop the ten year plan on cultural competency.

Bishop Schol shared with the conference, "All of my life I have received images and phrases and messages that reinforced white privilege. I am not living with the fullness of who God created me to be. The images, voices, and messages we have received have damaged us, resulting in a very narrow worldview." He offered encouragement saying, "There's good news. We don't have to continue to live that way. We have a God who is a big God and is ready to work with us."



Challenging discussions were had confronting the realities of racial undertones in our society and churches.

Photo by Shari DeAngelo

Churches See Progress with Team Vital

Continued from page 4

to analyze what Caulfield terms "bright spots, where new areas of ministry are developing, to see what's working and why it's working."

Rev. Bernie Khaw, a Team Vital facilitator and pastor of Thiells UMC in Thiells, NY, chimes in with his thoughts about evaluating progress in ministry.

"Before I answered my call into the ministry, I worked in the research division of a manufacturing company. As a chemical engineer, I used to tease the research chemists that without engineers all their ideas would not become products. Of course, both were needed for the company to be successful," says Khaw. "Similarly, the church needs both the ideas and the practical work in order to be successful. Team Vital has given us a 'methodical' way to put our ideas into action to produce fruit of the Spirit."

"Sometimes," Caulfield says, "church-

es have done strategic planning before, but those plans often ended up stuck in a file somewhere, never to see the light of day again after a lot of work has been put into them."

Team Vital changes all of that.

Implementing the strategic plans and witnessing the fruitfulness of Team Vital is part of what makes the process so transformative, both for churches and facilitators.

"Team Vital's plan," says Caulfield, "is an action plan: you receive resourcing to continue to meet your goals, and we work as accountability partners to one another."

For Rev. Derrick Doherty, a Team Vital facilitator and pastor at Middletown UMC, Team Vital has served as an effective way for his community to communicate openly about their ministry goals.

Doherty says, "Team Vital has given

us the avenue to discuss and make progress towards our vitality. With Team Vital we have been able to have fruitful conversations and have developed detailed plans, and we are looking forward to implementing [them] and experiencing the fruit."

"Partnering with each church as a facilitator," says Drew, "I get to see the importance of connecting with the influencers and committees to move Ministry Action Plans forward. As churches focus on the right schedule, the right first steps, and the right people to help, it is fun for me to see everything line up and imagine the great things that are to come."

More Team Vital sessions are planned for the future as program momentum builds and more churches join. For more information, please go to: <https://www.gnjumc.org/team-vital/>

Vietnam Veteran Realizes Dream Just Before Memorial Day

By Jan Carrato

JCarrato@Umcommunities.org

(Ocean City, NJ) — Although published in 1917, the words in Wilbur D. Nesbit's poem, "Your Flag and My Flag" continue to resonate in the hearts of service veterans, especially George Benner, a resident of United Methodist Communities at Wesley by the Bay. His dream for the Ocean City senior community to proudly display the American flag came to fruition on May 17.

Benner, a Vietnam Veteran who served in the U.S. Navy and describes himself as "very patriotic," reached out to civic, veteran, healthcare and other organizations. He also wrote a letter to United Methodist Communities President and CEO, Lawrence Carlson, who responded favorably. For almost two years, the Resident Council of United Methodist Communities at Wesley by the Bay discussed ways to secure a flagpole for the Bay Avenue side of the complex.

Over the winter, Gary Engelstad, annual giving officer of the United Methodist Communities Foundation, reached out to Wesley by the Bay's vendors. AllRisk generously responded with \$2,500 donation for the flagpole, setting plans in motion for a spring dedication.

The May 17 dedication ceremony began with a welcome from United Methodist Communities at Wesley by the Bay, Housing Administrator and emcee for the program, Deede Bolger. St. Peter's UMC senior pastor Rev. Stephen Donat offered an invocation recognizing the flag as a historic symbol of freedom, truth and one nation under God. Bolger thanked Benner, who read "Your Flag and My Flag."

"We are celebrating today primarily because of George Benner's unending

effort to secure a flagpole. Congratulations on a noble vision coming to fruition," she announced.

During the remarks segment, New Jersey State Senator Jeff Van Drew stated, "It represents an extraordinary nation with religious freedom and opportunities for education and mobility." He further cited, "The flag is one of the most visible ways to let others know we stand by our country and tell men and women veterans we support and appreciate them." He spoke of sacrifice and his esteem for Assemblyman Robert Andrzejczak, a legislative colleague and Army veteran who lost his left leg while serving in the Iraq War.

Mr. Carlson thanked Christine Messina, AllRisk's senior vice president of sales and marketing, and her team. "They give back to the neighborhoods and regions they serve by supporting diverse organizations which improve the quality of life."

Messina thanked guests and quoted President Harry S. Truman, saying, "Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices."

Ocean City American Legion Post 524 Adjutant Jack Hagan, and Service Officer Tom Tumelty, presented and raised the flag. Led by John Pimpinelli, a Wesley by the Bay associate, attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance while all joined in "The Star Spangled Banner" directed by Pam Walker, care coordinator of United Methodist Communities at The Shores.

Amid the festive mood, Mike Allegretto, director of community service, representing Ocean City Mayor Jay Gil-



American Legion Post 524 Adjutant Jack Hagan and Service Officer Tom Tumelty, raise the flag on the newly-dedicated flagpole at United Methodist Communities at Wesley by the Bay in Ocean City.

lian, reflected, "Many Wesley by the Bay residents are veterans of World War II."

During an informal outdoor reception after the event, resident Clair Delaney

beamed, "I think it's fantastic. It brings a tear to my eye. Thank God for it and all the people who set down their lives for their country."

Community B.A.S.H. in Delaware Bay



Resources for healthy living included blood pressure checks, dietary information, and exercise options.

By Nancy Walters

Families discovered that church fellowship extends beyond the walls of a building in Delaware Bay at a district event held at the First UMC of Glassboro on May 7.

The Community B.A.S.H. offered family resources, crafts, entertainment, games, prayer, Bibles, pony rides and food to more than 200 people who came out for the event.

One of the hits of the day was a human foosball game. "I was looking for a church that would have something of interest for my 8-year-old son," said one mother. "I never imagined that the youth program would be so much fun."

Other children learned about gardening and helped plant vegetables in the community garden. The children plan to return to watch their peppers grow and pick them when ripe for the Samaritan Center food pantry.

One person heard about the food

pantry in town for the first time. Other community resources encouraged people to develop healthy lifestyles through nutrition, exercise, and emotional and economic guidance.

Many churches came together in the district to help make the event a success. Volunteers from churches provided prayer partners, staffed the games, gave out bibles, painted faces and organized giveaways. FUMC in Glassboro, led the planning and preparation through Operation Miracle/C.L.O.W.N. squad, their outreach ministry.

B.A.S.H. stands for Believing, Acting, Sharing and Helping. Music and laughter were heard throughout the 3-hour afternoon event. Glassboro's praise band performed, a DJ had the group dancing and Job Mixson, a Christian comedian, closed the day so that everyone left with big smiles.

Drop In and Take a Spin



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All nine senior resource hubs welcome older adults to socialize, take a class, access resources, learn to use technology, engage in discussion, mingle, and have fun. For information about a specific hub, call the numbers below or visit UMCommunities.org/HomeWorks.

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Connections on Broadway at Pitman United Methodist Church, Pitman • 856-589-7800

Gatherings at Francis Asbury, Ocean Grove • 732-774-1316

Mix and Mingle at Covenant Place, Plainfield • 908-791-9430

Savvy Seniors at Collingswood, Collingswood • 856-854-4331

Senior Space at the Montclair Public Library, Montclair • 973-746-0003

The Wesleyan Café at The Wesleyan, Red Bank • 732-736-0760

Coming Soon

Connections at the Shore at The Shores and Wesley by the Bay, Ocean City • 609-399-8505

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Recycled Furniture Moves Mission, Meets Needs

By Josh Kinney
jkinney@gnjumc.org

Being good stewards of the church can take on many forms.

When the staff at the Greater New Jersey conference office was planning their move to the Mission and Resource Center, they knew there would be functional and valuable furnishings and supplies that would not be moving with them.

"We knew that we would not be able to bring most of the furnishings with us for the move," said John Cardillo, Treasurer and Director of Finance and Administration, "And we also knew that the furniture and supplies could be put to good use in our churches and agencies."

Announcements were placed in The Relay and Digest and Lida DeNardo, Executive Assistant in Finance and Administration took charge of setting up tours and keeping inventory of what was available.

Dozens of church leaders took advantage of the free furniture including Montgomery UMC, Hamilton UMC, First UMC Westfield, Good Shephard UMC, Church of the Master in Howell, Park UMC in Bloomfield, St. Paul's in Ocean Grove, Atlantic Highlands UMC, and C.A.M.P. YDP in Paterson.

"In an effort to spruce up camp, we wanted to clear out some of our more worn furnishings. We didn't have funding for new furniture," said Cassandra Ferrigno, Acting Director of Camping and Retreat Ministries. "Being able to use some of the outgoing furniture from

Wickapecko Drive was an answer to our prayers."

"We have also renovated the offices creating clean, organized work spaces and a beautiful new break room for our employees," added Ferrigno.

"Hamilton UMC was blessed with several file cabinets, desk chairs, office chairs and general office supplies," said Pastor Jessica Campbell. "The furniture helped transform the Pastor's office and church office in remarkable ways. Receiving all of these items really helped our congregation replace and upgrade what we had."

Chair of Trustees at Atlantic Highlands UMC Karen Kaasmann said, "We had just finished some updates in our church when the news of the furniture from the conference move became available."

Atlantic Highlands was able to put in new kitchen cabinets for their food pantry and upgrade the office furniture for the administrative assistant.

"We've transformed our library into a small meeting room by obtaining nice conference chairs," said Kaasmann.

C.A.M.P. YDP Board Chairperson Patricia Francis was "extremely grateful" for the donated furniture used to help the organization's mission to improve the overall physical look of the facility. Francis said the donations were "an asset and a blessing."

"Nothing was wasted in the move," said Cardillo. "We are thrilled that our move could provide new opportunities for our congregations."



Fred Farwell, Karen Kaasmann, Matt McLiverty, Nicholas Donahue, Walter McGrail, Chris Donahue and Gary Smith help unload furniture at Atlantic Highlands UMC.

History Lives On Through Pastor's Mission

By Josh Kinney
jkinney@gnjumc.org

Sifting through the weathered handwritten pages of a missionary's lost diary sent a thrill through former Greater New Jersey pastor Paul Hyoshin Kim. He had in his possession the faded photographs and journal entries of George Jones, the first missionary to Korea.

In 1887, a 20-year-old Jones from Utica, New York, heard the voice of God telling him to go to Korea as a missionary. He didn't have a college or seminary education, lacked qualifications, and didn't even know where Korea was on a map.

Within six months he was sent to Korea as an assistant missionary, and the rest is history. Kim mulled over and researched the physical pieces of this history for his book, "Jesus of Korea" which was published posthumously this year.

With over 20 years of devout, selfless ministry under his belt, Kim's untimely death in 2014 deterred the book's publication, but due to his wife, Christie Huh's perseverance, it's now been made available in print.

"Paul wrote and rewrote the book many times to turn it from academic and scholarly into a rare, storytelling narrative filled with research," said Christie. "The

book is about when God calls a person for a purpose for His own plans; He makes sure the person can do the work."

The story follows Jones' ministry in Korea where he was ordained and planted one of the largest United Methodist Churches in the country and how the missionaries planted seeds for robust church growth in the 20th century. Knowing the value of his grandfather's diaries, Jones' grandson kept the entries stored away until he passed them on to Kim for the sake of his research.

Kim, who was born in the small countryside of Korea, moved to the small countryside of Lima, Ohio, when he was ten years old. His father was a Presbyterian Minister. A bright and vibrant Kim went on to attend Bethany Bible College and was accepted into Princeton Seminary where he met many Korean Americans. From there, he went back to Korea for a year, re-learned the language and got involved with urban ministry.

Even when he didn't, Christie knew her husband's calling was to be a minis-

ter. After his elder ordination, Kim served as Senior Pastor at Little Falls UMC for seven years, Ridgefield Park UMC for ten years, and the Korean Community Church in Leonia for three years.

Kim and his wife moved to Mountain View, California, where he was eventually appointed to serve Campbell UMC.

After his death, his wife sifted through the notes and pages of her husband's unpublished book with regret, wishing she could've helped him get it published. Following her husband's hard work, she struck a deal with Fortress Press for publication.

"The book is a gift that he left us," she said. "It's how I want people to remember him."

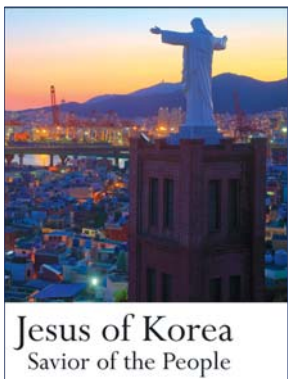
George Jones didn't know it at the time, but his diary would eventually fall into the hands of a faithful Greater New Jersey pastor, who saw it as a gift and turned that gift into something more to carry on both of their missions. More information about the book "Jesus of Korea" can be found at Fortresspress.com

JESUS OF KOREA SAVIOR OF THE PEOPLE by Paul Hyoshin Kim

The American Christ becomes the Jesus Of Korea

Explore the rapid growth of Christianity in modern Korea.

Rediscover the story of the American missionary enterprises of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.



Many people look to the 1970s and 1980s to find the cause of the rapid growth of Christianity in Korea. But to understand the real story behind the growth of the Korean church, we need to rediscover the story of the American missionary enterprises of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There, we will learn how the story of the "American Christ" came to Korea and gradually

became a part of the Korean people's story. After the missions, he is no longer the American Christ, but Jesus of Korea.

Paul Hyoshin Kim served various academic institutions, including New York Theological Seminary and United Methodist churches in New York, New Jersey, and California. He also served as the first executive director of National Campaign for Peace and Reunification of Korea sponsored by the National Council of Churches, and was at the forefront of promoting dialogue and reconciliation among people of faith in North Korea, South Korea, and the United States.

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CONFERENCE HAPPENINGS

UM Communities Appointment

United Methodist Communities is pleased to announce the appointment of Amy Covello to the position of corporate director of sales. In this role, she works closely with the five full service communities' sales teams and executive directors, and the corporate director of marketing. Focusing on sales, Ms. Covello coaches and strategically leads the teams.

Ms. Covello comes to United Methodist Communities with more than 25 years' experience in sales and marketing, many in senior care. She also has demonstrated skill in driving census, client relations and needs assessment, financial management, administration, and staff training.

Prior to joining United Methodist Communities, Ms. Covello was director of sales and marketing at Arbor Glen in Bridgewater. A New Jersey real estate license and education at Stonybrook University, add to her leadership skills.

Vice President of Operations, Carol McKinley, to whom Ms. Covello reports, states, "Amy loves sales and arrived at United Methodist Communities with much excitement, energy, skills, and talent."

"The emphasis on strong human connections at United Methodist Communities' campuses has impacted me both emotionally and spiritually," Ms. Covello reflects.

Historical Society Annual Meeting

The Historical Society of Greater New Jersey Annual Conference invites everyone to its Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 12, 2016 at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, 134 South White Horse Pike, Lawnside, NJ 08045.

Fellowship and gathering will be from 9:45 – 10:15 a.m. Devotions at 10:15 a.m.

Bishop Ernest Lyght will share the history of the former Delaware Conference in the morning session.

Bishop Lyght is a retired United Methodist Bishop who, prior to election to the episcopacy, was a District Superintendent in Northern New Jersey and also pastored Old Orchard UM Church in Cherry Hill. His late father was a pastor in the Delaware Conference.

Following lunch and the business meeting, an opportunity will be provided to tour historic places in Lawnside, one of the few towns in America founded as an African American community.

If you would like to register to receive a mailed registration form in September, please send an email with your name and address to JuneMcCullough5@aol.com

Archives and History Update

A delegation from Greater New Jersey's Commission on Archives and History attended a recent Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History, May 24-26 at Dover, Delaware. This year the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church met concurrently.

The annual meeting allows Annual Conference commissions to share their respective work, talk over issues and visit historical sites and is hosted by the Commission on Archives and History of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference. In attendance were Mark Shenise, executive secretary, John Callanan, conference historian, Bill Wilson, commission chair, Walter Jones, conference archivist, and Don DeGroat, jurisdictional member-at-large. They stood before historic Barratt's Chapel, site of the 1784 first meeting of Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury. Barratt's Chapel was site of the planning meeting that led to the Christmas Conference in Baltimore and created the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. Barratt's Chapel is the oldest intact United Methodist Building in continuous use since 1780.



Pictured here from left to right are Mark Shenise, executive secretary, John Callanan, conference historian, Bill Wilson, commission chair, Walter Jones, conference archivist, Don DeGroat, jurisdictional member-at-large.

The July Issue Deadline is June 15, 2016

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OBITUARIES

Rev. Ralph Leon Barrett, retired Elder, died on May 20. A Memorial Service was held May 26 at Shores at Wesley Manor.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his wife Elizabeth "Betty" Barrett at 2201 Bay Avenue, Apt 170, Ocean City, NJ 08226.

Vern Arthur Jensen, retired full Elder, died on May 3. A Celebration of Life Service was held on May 6 at Seacoast Church.

Memorial donations, in lieu of flowers, may be sent to Seacoast Church at 750 Long Point Road, Mount Pleasant, SC 29464

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his spouse, Mignonette S. Jensen at 650 Enterprise Blvd., Apt 9101, Charleston, SC 29492.

Ethel Mary Brodie, retired full Elder, died on May 8, 2016. A Celebration of Life Service will be held on June 25, at 1:30 p.m. at Trinity UMC, Hackettstown. A reception will follow. A Celebration of Life Service also took place on May 20 at St. Anne's Catholic Church in Byron, CA.

Memorial donations, in lieu of flowers, may be sent to the Ethel M. Brodie Memorial Scholarship Fund at 7558 West Thunderbird Road, Suite 1-413, Peoria, AZ 85381. The mission of this non-profit is to provide educational support for students and schools, a fitting tribute to the legacy of this amazing woman who left us much too soon.

Fritz (Fred) Harz, lay member at large to Annual Conference, died on May 2. A viewing and service took place May 6 at Elmer UMC.

Memorial donations, in lieu of flowers, may be sent to Ranch Hope at P.O. Box 325, Alloway, NJ 08001 or The Gideons International at P.O. Box 140800, Nashville, TN 37214.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his widow, Joan Harz at P.O. Box 1030, Elmer, NJ 08318.

Rev. Constance A. Martin, retired Elder, died on April 30.

Memorial donations, in lieu of flowers, may be sent to the Center for Animal Health & Welfare at 1165 Island Park Road, Easton, PA 17042.

Expressions of sympathy may be shared at www.JamesFuneralhome.org.

Edwin Jay Amey, retired Elder, died on May 26. A Memorial Service was celebrated on May 31 at Trinity UMC, Clayton.

Memorial Donations, in lieu of flowers, may be sent to Handi* Vangelism Ministries International at PO Box 122, Akron, PA 17501 or The Malaga Camp at 4488 Arbutus Ave., Newfield, NJ 08344.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Rev. Daniel Amey at 213 Maude Ave., Brooklawn, NJ 08030 and Rev. Paul Amey at 312 N Delsea Dr., Clayton, NJ 08312.

Lillian G. Lopez, retired local pastor, died on May 26. A Memorial Service was celebrated on June 2 at Ladentown UMC, Ladentown, NY.

Memorial donations may be sent to the Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, IL 60601

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Cathy Cunniff at 281 Berkshire Rd., Southbury, CT 06488.

Betty A. Carter, retired local pastor, died on May 18. A viewing was held on May 21 at the Chatsworth UMC.

Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to Chatsworth United Methodist Church, PO Box 475, 3950 Route 563, Chatsworth, NJ 08019

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Kathy Pepper at PO Box 466, Chatsworth, NJ 08019

THE RELAY

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

John R. Schol, Bishop

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