

THE RELAY

UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

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TURNING POINT UMC *Celebrates 250 Years*

By David Loerke

TRENTON, NJ

On Sunday, May 1, 2022, Turning Point United Methodist Church is commemorating a significant event in the life of Methodism. 250 years ago — in 1772 — Turning Point’s ancestor, First Methodist Church of Trenton was founded. Turning Point is the result of a 2007 merger between First UMC of New Jersey and St. Paul UMC. This foundational church is a direct descendent of that 1772 historic church. The name Turning Point was chosen for two main reasons: not only was Trenton, NJ a turning point in the Revolutionary War, but also because of the mission to lead people to a turning point in their spiritual lives.

TURNING POINT UMC IS AN ANCESTOR TO WHAT IS BELIEVED TO BE ONE OF THE OLDEST METHODIST CHURCHES IN NEW JERSEY, AS WELL AS ONE OF THE OLDEST IN THE COUNTRY.

Bishop John Schol, District Superintendent Hector A. Burgos, and Pastor Rupert A. Hall, Jr. will lead the celebration on May 1 with a worship service at 3:00 pm. The event will be held at Turning Point UMC: 15 S. Broad St. in Trenton, NJ. All living former pastors and spouses,



The front steps of Turning Point UMC, an ancestor of one of the oldest Methodist churches in New Jersey.

including those of the former St. Paul UMC, have been invited and will participate in the opening processional. This celebrational event is open to the public. Those in attendance will have the opportunity to observe a display of archives from the church and its history. The oldest archives date back to the late 18th century and also include

memorabilia from the 19th and 20th centuries, with some through the early 21st century. Following the worship service, there will be a reception in the fellowship hall of the church.

This Trenton church is believed to be one of the oldest Methodist Churches in New Jersey, as well as one of the

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As Easter Approaches, Be Prepared for the Follow Up...

By Lan Wilson

The high and holy season has come, and Easter is quickly approaching. While most of us have great things underway for Easter, I offer the reminder that this is the time of year when we see newcomers and the return of people we haven’t seen in quite some time. Many churches are also reopening their sanctuaries for the first time since 2020. This is an exciting time for both the church and community!

As we prepare to welcome these new and familiar faces, I encourage you to put a plan in place for visitor follow-up. A major goal in receiving visitors, both in-person and online, is not just to track their attendance, but to gather contact information, follow up, and stay in touch with them. People are far more likely to return if you thank them for their visit, and twice more likely to keep coming back if someone remembers their name the next time they visit.

A simple way of offering a note of thanks is a postcard or email. In the last church I served, we found great success in having those who serve in hospitality

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

Mission — A Key Ingredient for Successful Leadership

Bishop John Schol



Successful leaders lead toward something. Churches, ministries, and organizations without direction flounder and eventually fail. There are three things that are essential to successful leadership: *vision*, *mission*, and *goals*. Last month I shared with you about vision. Today I will talk with you about mission.

While vision provides direction and inspiration, mission provides purpose, focus, and alignment.

What is Mission

Mission is used in different ways. We use the word *mission* to describe an activity when helping others, or a cause, a purpose we give money to, or the purpose of a church or organization. In this article I am using the word mission to describe the purpose of a church, organization, or ministry.

A mission is a brief phrase that describes the key activity or purpose of a congregation or ministry. It provides what leadership focus on achieving and aligns people, resources, and activities to accomplish the purpose of the church or ministry. The following are examples of mission statements.

Recruit and develop transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital congregations for the transformation of the world. This is the mission statement of the collective United Methodists of Greater New Jersey (GNJ). The mission statement is the first five words, *recruit and equip transformational leaders*, and the remainder of the phrase is what transformational leaders do. Recruit and develop transformational leaders focus and aligns people, resources, and activities of GNJ. GNJ is shaping its budget, staffing, and activities with the singular question, will this recruit and develop transformational leaders. GNJ as an organization does not directly make disciples or grow vital congregations. This work is done by congregations. Instead, GNJ develops lay and clergy leaders to be transformative leaders so that disciples are being made, congregations grow in vitality, and world transformation is experienced in and through congregations.

“MISSION PROVIDES WHAT LEADERSHIP FOCUS ON ACHIEVING AND ALIGNS PEOPLE, RESOURCES, AND ACTIVITIES TO ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH OR MINISTRY.”

—Bishop John Schol

Maximize disciple making. This is the mission statement of the cabinet, our district superintendents, and bishop when making appointments. When the cabinet considers different churches and pastors for an appointment, it asks the questions: which churches have the greatest probability of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and which pastor will maximize this possibility? Sometime the cabinet is faced with the difficult decision of whether a particular pastor will better serve the overall mission of the church, making disciples and world transformation in one church over another church, but the question becomes: which pastor will better maximize making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?

To know and serve God. This is a congregation’s mission. It focuses the time, treasure, and talents of people to deepen their relationship with God, and equip and support them to serve God. This is a mission statement that can adapt with the congregation and people as they grow and mature in their faith with an ever-changing community mission field. Some churches would like to expand a mission statement by providing further descriptors of what people are to know or the types of service, but this leads to narrowing God’s possibility for the congregation, or its ministry groups, or its individuals. The concise nature actually expands possibilities based on an individual’s level of faith development and talent, passion, and ability for service. It also

provides a powerful question for focusing resources and ministry — *will this better help us know and serve God?*

Gather for fellowship and learning and support members in daily living. This is a mission of a small group and while a little long at 11 words, it clarifies why the group meets. It also provides a paradigm for what they do when they meet — begin with fellowship, engage in learning, identify life commitments in the coming week, and covenant for how the group will support one another in their living during the week.

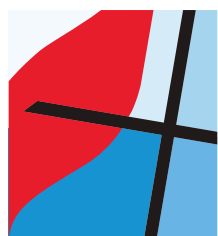
While vision provides direction and inspiration, the mission statement provides what you will do to move toward God’s preferred future. The mission statement focuses and aligns how you will use the resource of time, talent, and treasure to accomplish the purpose of the congregation.

Does your congregation have a clear mission statement, vision, and goals? Are they shaping and focusing your congregation’s time, talent, and treasure? GNJ has people ready to assist your congregation and ministry shape a mission statement. Contact the Director of Connectional Ministries, Eric Drew at EDrew@gnjumc.org for more information about how your congregation can develop identify and carry out its vision, mission, and goals.

Be purposeful and fruitful, lead toward a vision, mission, and goals.

Keep the faith!

John



THE RELAY

UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE

May 23 & 24, 2022

DELIVER

Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.

He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
— Luke 4:16-19 (NRSV)

Registration opens
April 26, 2022

www.gnjumc.org

 UNITED METHODISTS
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY



**This Mother's Day, give a gift
to struggling mothers**

in honor of mom

**Donate to the Maker's Place, a United
Methodist diaper bank in Trenton, in
honor of a mom in your life, and she'll
make a difference in their lives too.**

**VISIT WWW.MAKERSPLACE.ORG/GIVE
OR WRITE TO P.O. BOX 54, TRENTON NJ 08601**

Donate before Mother's Day (May 8th) and we'll send a letter
in recognition of your donation to you for your loved one.



Pastor Jay Brown from Wesley UMC Shares the Heart of the Church

By Denise Herschel

WEST BERLIN, NJ

Wesley United Methodist Church in West Berlin, NJ may be representative of a small church congregation, but it is indeed a mighty one at heart. This church has been able to make a big impact in their local community, whether it be their food pantry, prayer shawls to the sick, or new technology to reach out to others. Striving to bring people back into the life of the church, they have been able to welcome 12 new members into their church home, according to Jay Brown, Certified Lay Minister — SY Pastor/Order of St. Luke of Wesley UMC.

“FOR A SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD CHURCH, WE TRULY OFFER ‘RADICAL HOSPITALITY’ TO ALL VISITORS AND ATTENDEES.”

—Jay Brown, Certified Lay Minister — SY Pastor/Order of St. Luke of Wesley UMC

“Our church currently has 40 active members on its rolls. Due to COVID-19, attendance has averaged between 25 to 30 people. Some of the new members are transfers from local churches that I have served in the past such as Glendale and Lucaston and some are Associate members from other UM churches who regularly attend our services. Most came by word of mouth because of the openness and welcoming nature of the Wesley congregation. For a small neighborhood church, we truly offer ‘radical hospitality’ to all visitors and attendees,” he said.

Jay, who has been at Wesley UMC since July 2020, was District Superintendent Rev. Myrna Bethke’s last appointment. He has served as the supply pastor at the following churches since 2008: Frances Childs in Collingswood, Glendale and Lucaston in Voorhees, Mt. Zion in Wenonah, and prior to his current assignment served at Billingsport UMC in Paulsboro, NJ for 6 years.

“I was the GNJ Conference Lay Leader from 2000 to 2008 and served as a Director on the General Board of Global Missions and the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters from 2008 to 2016. In 2008, I started and coordinated the GNJ CLM Program for ten years,” he added.

According to Jay Brown, Wesley UMC has a long, rich history, dating back to when the church began in the spring of 1899. At that time, it was called Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church.

“Luke Bate had donated the property to the church and Harry Minck was the attorney and realtor who donated his time to make it happen. The church building was dedicated on November 20, 1899. In 1903, the church building

was rebuilt. The church building is located on the corners of Bate and Pine Avenues in West Berlin,” said Jay.

Today, church members reside in various South Jersey towns including Atco, Bellmawr, Berlin, Glendora, Clementon, Lindenwold, Glassboro, Runnemede, West Berlin, and Williamstown.

“Our older but very spirited church members engage in many local mission projects such as its own local food pantry that serves the community and beyond as needed. During the recent tornado events this past year, the church provided for families in the Mullica Hill area as requested by families and friends,” he said. “We also have a prayer shawl ministry as well as a blanket ministry who handmakes blankets for low-income seniors in the community. We collect gently used footwear for a project called ‘Soles for Soles’ and we have recently become the storage site for the Conference Disaster Relief trailer in South Jersey for emergency supplies.”

In addition to these ministries, Wesley UMC has a weekly Bible study and prayer group on Tuesday nights at 7pm and a Monday meeting of the former “UMW”, now known as “Women in Faith.”

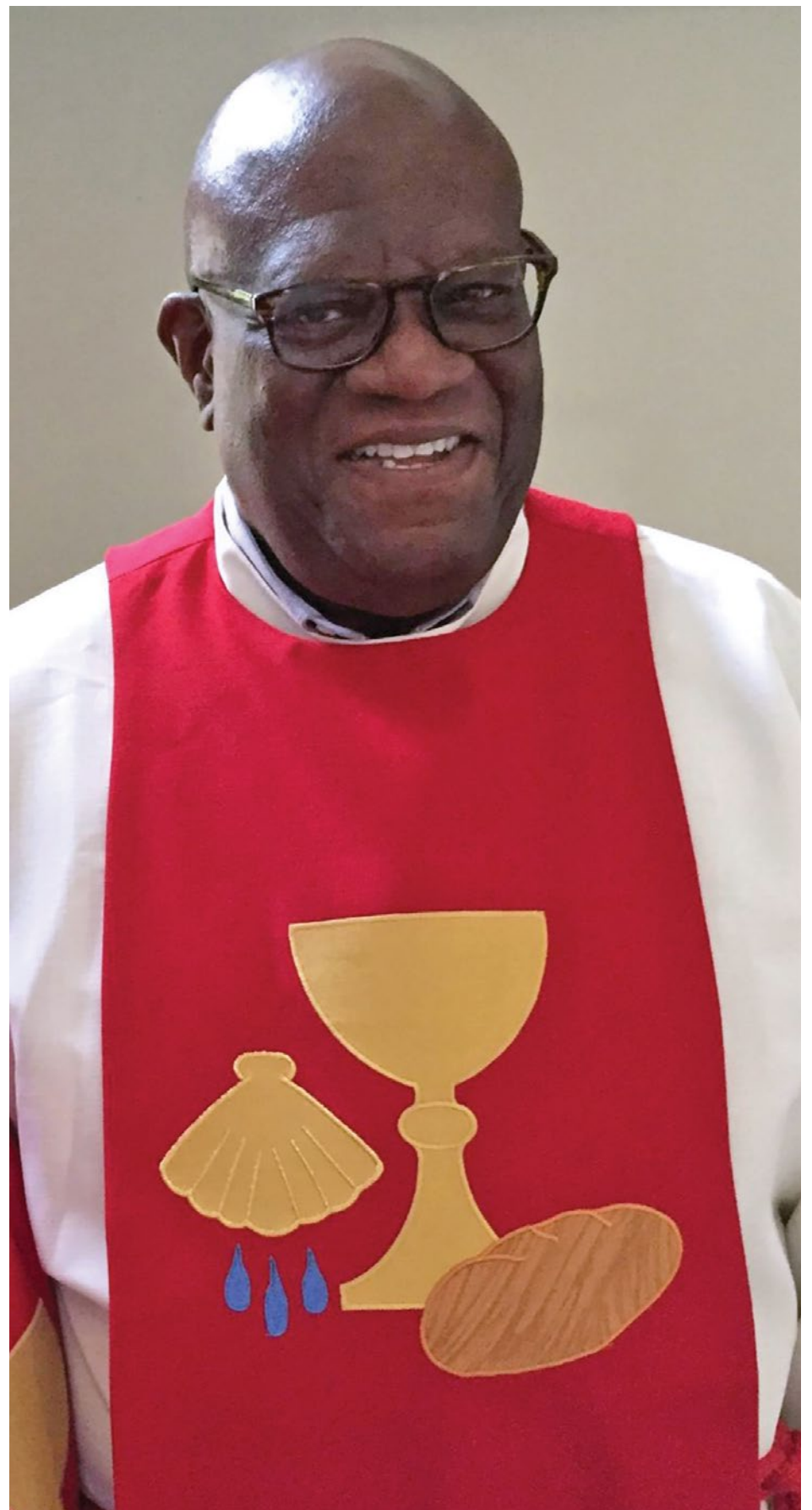
Jay said that his greatest joy at Wesley UMC has been having a congregation who has been very receptive to having a CLM as a pastor.

“They are open to change and new ways of doing ministry in the 21st century. I personally love blended services and they allowed me to share my conference and general church experiences with them to help them grow,” he added.

Jay Brown continued that Wesley UMC is always looking for new members and is “very open and loving and want to share the love of Jesus Christ with all we meet.”

“Hopefully we are not that different from other churches in that we have the same goals of helping others to be spiritually fed and grow, and would like to serve in some humble way to help make disciples of Jesus Christ.” 🇺🇸

Wesley UMC is located at 159 Bate Avenue, West Berlin, N.J. Phone number is 856-767-9269. Visit their website at wesleyumcwb.wixsite.com or contact Jay Brown at jaybrown57@gmail.com



Pastor Jay Brown of Wesley UMC



Wesley UMC in West Berlin, NJ

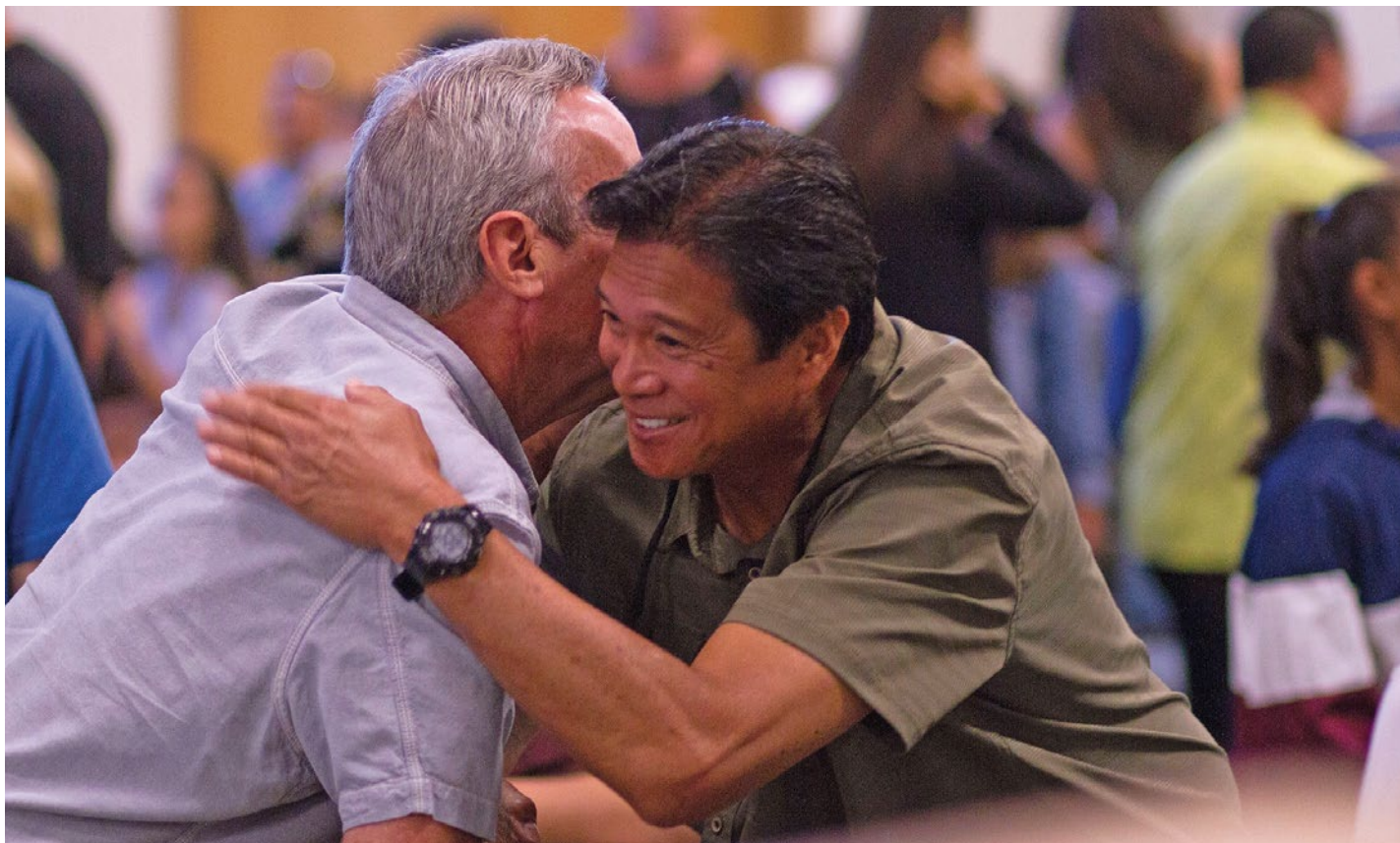
Easter Planning

Continued from page 1

each week fill out the thank-you notes. We placed blank postcards (with the church’s information) in the office and the hospitality area. We trained volunteers that if they met someone new, they would offer them a connect card to fill out, and after church, the volunteer would write a 2 or 3 sentence personal note to thank them for coming and invite them to return.

This formed new relationships with new attendees, that volunteers were in direct contact with and offered the chance to add a personal touch (Ex. We’d love to have your grandson in children’s church; or next time we’ll make sure we have enough decaf around.). The personal notes should be simple, short, and sweet.

This same method works for your on-line hosts/ushers who are greeting people online in the chat and comments of the service. Invite people to complete an online connect card (which can be made easily using a free google form) and have the online hosts draft personal messages to visitors they’ve connected with during the service. Have designated volunteers and/or staff ready to compose and mail out thank-you postcards or emails within 48 hours of the service. Then what?



Church attendees greeting one another.

Having a workflow in place for the visitor response process in your church is a very helpful tool. Many membership databases have capability to do workflows. If not, or if you don’t have a membership

database, Planning Center People is a great and free option to use and implement workflows through. Workflows help get the “every-member commitment” active in growing the church. An example of basic visitor response workflow is:

- 1: Thanks for Visiting Message — Expected Response Time: 48 hours
 - 2: Join us for worship — Expected Response Time: The Saturday before the next service
 - 3: Email/Text about Small groups — After 2nd Visit
 - 4: 1 month follow up — Ask if they have questions about the church or would like to meet with a pastor
- After they’ve attended three times, a workflow would look like:

- 1: Phone call from Group Leader or Staff
- 2: Update Profile Information
- 3: Invite to Membership Class
- 4: Follow Up Email

The fact remains that the average return rate for visitors is only about 10%. A large part of that is because people feel they weren’t noticed, their presence wasn’t appreciated, or they left feeling as much like an outsider as when they arrived. So, I invite and encourage you to put some energy behind what happens next after first time visitors. The church of Jesus Christ can and will grow if we continue to be intentional about embracing those we are encountering and welcoming them into the fold. 🇺🇸

“WORKFLOWS HELP GET THE ‘EVERY-MEMBER COMMITMENT’ ACTIVE IN GROWING THE CHURCH”

—Lan Wilson, Director of Resourcing, Coastal Plains Region of United Methodists of Greater New Jersey

Honor the humanity, racial identity, uniqueness and sacred worth of everyone as we live out our baptismal vow.

JOURNEY of Hope

LEARN MORE ABOUT JOURNEY OF HOPE.

www.gnjumc.org/journeyofhope



We are LIMITLESS – Get Ready for IGNITE 2022!

By Mecan Payne

The IGNITE youth conference is known as a high-energy experience of worship, games, messages, breakout sessions, and of course, countless laughs and memories, all crammed into one fun weekend in Wildwood, NJ! This experience is open to any and all stu-

dents, grades 6-12, as well as their fearless and dedicated pastors and youth leaders.

This month, we are excited to reveal our 2022 IGNITE Theme: *Limitless!*

Isaiah 55:9 says, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

As we prepare to gather again after a long season of isolation, may we be continually reminded that our God has no limits and that we pursue him, anything is possible! We believe that God moves without limit, and we KNOW that God

is going to move in incredible ways at IGNITE 2022.

Youth leaders are starting to ask, “What is my next step in preparing for IGNITE 2022?”. We recommend that you share the IGNITE Theme Release video with your students and your congregation! Remind students to save the date (September 30 to October 2, 2022) and ask those who have attended before to share their favorite IGNITE memory on social media and tag us! Stay tuned for registration and other details to come in May.



If you find that you need support, resources, or prayer leading up to IGNITE 2022, please reach out to the Next Generation Ministries Program Specialist, Mecan Payne at mpayne@gnjumc.org. 🇺🇸



*Pathways for Congregational Development has launched!
Discover how your congregation can have a great future.*

www.gnjumc.org/pathways

A Pandemic-Born Nonprofit Supports NJ Community with Food, Clothing, and More

By Rev. Elaine Wing

Rev. Elaine Wing, a pastor at Calvary United Methodist Church (CUMC), has a long history of working with churches and street ministries to combat food insecurity. Early in the Covid-19 Pandemic, she was approached to help families in the area by Karen DeMarco, president of the Food Brigade. It was an easy “Yes!” for both Rev. Elaine and the church council. Karen had a contact who was willing to provide boxes of fresh produce to people in need. She connected with CUMC and asked the church to serve as a distribution site. With CUMC and church volunteers ready to go, produce was organized so that families could come to shop for free.

“IT WAS AN AMAZING EFFORT BY INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS – ALL WORKING TOGETHER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES IN THE GREATER DUMONT AREA...”

Karen and her husband, Carmine DeMarco, continued to make connections with food distribution programs and boxes of produce were replaced by USDA and NJ State boxes of food, including gallons of milk. Every week, regardless of the weather, pallets of food boxes and milk were distributed from the church parking lot. The average distribution was well over 1,200 boxes and nearly 800 gallons of milk. Individuals, families, and representatives of food pantries would fill their cars, trucks, and vans with boxes of fresh food and milk. The church refrigerators became a mini dairy, the freezers became meat lockers, and the kitchen counters served as a produce store.



Produce being sorted at The Food Brigade

Members of the two churches Rev. Elaine serves, CUMC in Dumont and Church of the Good Shepherd in Bergenfield became part of the distribution chain. They brought food to neighbors and co-workers who could benefit from a little help and support through the blessing of food. The church congregations and the DeMarco’s worked together, expanding the circle wide to include more recipients and volunteers.

Dumont’s Social Services department became a partner in the process during the height of the pandemic. CUMC enlisted a local scout troop to distribute flyers in English and Spanish throughout the Borough of Dumont, informing families of the available food assistance.

“It was an amazing effort by individuals and groups — all working together to

meet the needs of families in the greater Dumont area. Recipients became volunteers and one person connected us with a Spanish-speaking community of immigrants who desperately needed our help.” Said Rev. Elaine Wing.

program. In 2020, the sanctuary pews were filled with coats and families were given a time of private shopping to find what they needed. The next year in 2021, the fellowship hall became the distribution site for clothing do-

“...RECIPIENTS BECAME VOLUNTEERS AND ONE PERSON CONNECTED US WITH A SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY OF IMMIGRANTS WHO DESPERATELY NEEDED OUR HELP.”

—Rev. Elaine Wing, a pastor at Calvary United Methodist Church (CUMC)

When the weather turned cold, the two UMC congregations expanded their annual winter clothing distribution to accommodate the larger list of recipients connected through the food

nated and organized by a plethora of interfaith organizations, Dumont Social Services, and church congregations.

The DeMarco’s made the decision to create a non-profit organization: The Food Brigade. Rev. Elaine served as a member on the initial Board of Trustees to further connect the church, the Food Brigade, and the community. The Food Brigade was given space within the church, which they quickly outgrew, and a larger room was turned into an exclusive space for their growing needs. Food distribution methods evolved with the availability of food programs and grants. When the school lunch program was stopped in the Dumont public schools because of the pandemic, the Food Brigade and CUMC stepped in and distributed boxes of food geared to provide breakfast and lunch to school children in the area.

The Food Brigade Inc. is a nonprofit corporation of the State of New Jersey incorporated on 10/1/20, and is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charity. Please visit their website at <https://foodbrigade.org> to learn more on their background, mission, programs and services, and recent news. Those interested in keeping up on the latest happenings of The Food Brigade can check out their Facebook page at <https://facebook.com/foodbrigadeUSA>.



Donated boxes of food and produce at the Food Brigade Distribution Center

GNJ Resource “Breakthrough Worship Series” Goes Global

By Emily Wilton

Breakthrough Worship Series are created by Greater New Jersey (GNJ) staff and leaders for GNJ churches. When you’ve got a good thing going, why keep it to yourself? All over the United States and even into Canada, churches of different sizes and denominations are discovering how the GNJ resources, replete with sermon outlines, small groups, and worship resources, can transform their worship and ministries.

When the resource of Breakthrough Series was originally launched, the idea was to provide consistent worship and small group experiences across our GNJ conference, while also freeing up time for clergy and congregational leaders to do more hands-on ministry. Existing as a large time-saver, Breakthrough was expected to be most useful to smaller churches with part-time pastors in GNJ.

Little did we know that churches across the country would be picking it up. In the South, Beulah UMC in Valley, AL, pastored by Rev. Katrina Paxson. In the Mid-West, Rev. Trevor Vaughn’s two United Methodist churches outside of Des Moines, IA. In the Pacific Northwest, Trinity UMC in Wenatchee, WA, pastored by Rev. Julie Price. Breakthrough is making its way across our United Methodist connection, largely by word of mouth and the magic of Facebook support groups for clergy!

Yet, it is not only United Methodists who deeply appreciate the sharing of resources. Breakthrough is currently being used across several denominations, including churches that belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the United Church of Canada.

The foundation of the series is strong enough that, as noted by Rev. Debora Rolls of St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church, Peterborough, Ontario, “They help to spark creativity in us and then we make it our own.” This Lent, Rev. Rolls’ church is working together to create a mosaic from



The nearly-completed mosaic that will be unveiled to the congregation on Easter Sunday morning.

broken pottery. The idea was inspired by the Breakthrough 2022 Lent series *Drink from the Fountain of Grace*.

When asked about using a United Methodist resource in a Lutheran church, Rev. Paul Block of New Song Church, NV says that while occasionally he needs to

make tweaks for his context, the series provide a good starting point and help tremendously with planning. The Rev. Paul Hutchison of Eglinton St. George United Church in Toronto, Ontario likes Breakthrough because, he states, “most ‘packaged’ worship bundles do not honor inclusivity and diversity of individuals and images of God. Rather than invest in something with a poorly laid foundation, I often throw it away. Breakthrough

er into the series with them. It definitely helps save time with the materials ready for you.” Likewise, Rev. Block noted using the small groups alongside the worship series makes the service more meaningful. Rev. Rolls appreciates how the small groups can be easily led by laypeople— an important design feature in all Breakthrough series.

With the changing demographics of churches all over North America, it seems

“WITH THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS OF CHURCHES ALL OVER NORTH AMERICA, IT SEEMS THAT CHURCHES OF ALL SIZES AND DENOMINATIONS ARE HUNGRY FOR WAYS TO SHARE NEW, CREATIVE, AND HIGH-QUALITY MATERIALS WITH ONE ANOTHER.”

resources speak well of the world and life of faith for me.” Both Rev. Block and Rev. Hutchison pastor medium to large multi-staff churches, demonstrating Breakthrough’s versatility across churches of different sizes.

When asked about why they like Breakthrough, one of the most common responses from pastors across various places and denominations was the small group resources. Rev. Katryn Heintz Dougherty, pastor of the Lutheran Church of Guam, says, “We really love the small group lessons and going deep-

that churches of all sizes and denominations are hungry for ways to share new, creative, and high-quality materials with one another. As Rev. Block says, “No church would have the resources to develop something like this on their own. It is incredibly helpful.” We are blessed that Breakthrough is serving that need for many. 🇺🇸

Breakthrough Worship Series is available on the GNJ website at <https://www.gnjumc.org/breakthrough/> with updates throughout each year.



Elaine and Betty, two congregants at St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church in Peterborough, Ontario.

APRIL BOOKSHELF

This month, the bookshelf features several incredible books for mothers in every stage, a family read with adult and kid versions, and spiritual direction for all. As we celebrate Mother's Day next month, we recommend these books ahead of time — they would even make a great gift to a special mother, family member, or friend in your life this upcoming Mother's Day.

The Well-Watered Woman: Rooted in Truth, Growing in Grace, Flourishing in Faith

By Gretchen Saffles

Gretchen Saffles knows what it's like to feel overwhelmed and unable to flourish. In *The Well-Watered Woman*, Gretchen leads us to the Well of fullness, the Word of freedom, and the Way of fruitfulness. She teaches that God's Word will satisfy us for all eternity.

Using Scripture and her own personal story of surrender, Gretchen offers spiritually hungry women tangible tools to not only know Jesus more but to live a life that thoroughly enjoys Him, seeks Him, and follows Him into freedom.



“next time” and instead find your place of imagination, whimsy, and wonder today; and that God usually chooses ordinary people to get things done. When love does, life gets interesting. Light and fun, unique and profound, the lessons drawn from Bob's life and attitude in this collection of stories just might inspire you to be secretly incredible, too. If you love *Love Does*, don't forget to check out *Everybody, Always* and *Dream Big* for more of Bob's delightful and inspiring stories!

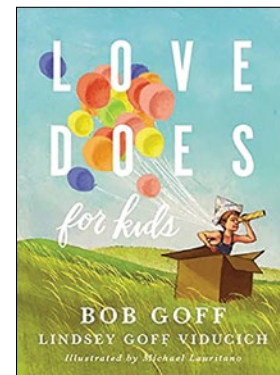
Love Does for Kids

By Bob Groff

Kids everywhere will love Bob and Lindsey's stories about how love *does*. With childlike faith, enthusiasm, and great whimsy, young hearts will feel instantly connected to a love that acts as much as it feels. Children will walk away with a sense of wonder at how great God is and will feel empowered to do things that will make a tangible difference in the world.

As a little boy with a big personality and even bigger dreams, Bob Goff had lots of questions, and they didn't go away when he grew up. It wasn't until he learned just how big and wild and wonderful God is that he began to find answers. Once Bob learned about the deep goodness of God, he began to learn about the great power God gives His kids when they live a life full of love for others.

Bob and Lindsey invite kids to get to know God better and to see the world as a place designed to be changed as we put our faith in action.



Mothers in Waiting: Healing and Hope for Those with Empty Arms

By Chrystal Bowman

You Are Not Alone. From the moment you cradled your first baby doll, you imagined yourself a mom. Now here you are, a member of the club no one wants to join — the ten percent of women who struggle to fulfill their motherhood dreams because of infertility.

Meghann Bowman knows what it's like to be part of that club. Along with best-selling author Crystal Bowman, Meghann has compiled 30 hope-filled stories of women who received the same diagnosis and experienced the heartache she did. Contributors include Valorie Burton, Katie Norris, Shay Shull, Stephanie Tait, Kathe Wunnenberg, and more — women whose journeys through everything from infertility and miscarriage to adoption and miracle births will buoy your faith.

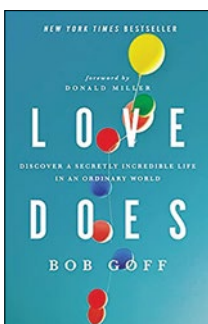
Your story may not look the same, or have the same ending, but you don't have to suffer alone. You are surrounded by a club of *Mothers in Waiting* — women willing to come alongside you to offer comfort and peace as you wait.

Your story may not look the same, or have the same ending, but you don't have to suffer alone. You are surrounded by a club of *Mothers in Waiting* — women willing to come alongside you to offer comfort and peace as you wait.

Love Does

By Bob Groff

The runaway New York Times bestseller! Can a simple concept shift your entire world? Bob certainly thinks so. When it comes to loving your neighbors, rather than focusing on having the “right answers” or checking the “right boxes,” what if you decide to simply DO love? To shamelessly show love and grace to those around you? What would that look like? It might look like spending sixteen days in the Pacific Ocean with five guys and a crate of canned meat. It might look like taking your kids on a world tour to eat ice cream with heads of state. It might look like taking a road trip with a stressed-out college student — even though you just got married a few days before. In *Love Does*, Bob shows you how to live a fully engaged life; how to stop putting things off until



Sacred Conversations

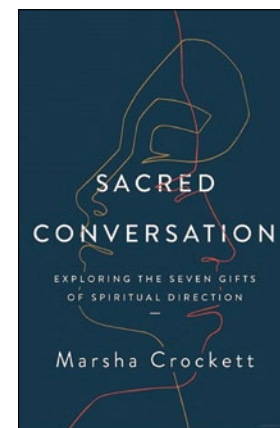
By Marsha Crockett

God created humans with the desire to both know others and be known. People weren't meant to go it alone on their spiritual journeys, and God has provided many fellow travelers to accompany us.

Some of these fellow pilgrims — spiritual directors — are called to walk the spiritual path with others. The spiritual director, however, does not seek to tell their counterpart how to live out the faith. Instead, the spiritual director accompanies others on their spiritual journey and helps them discover how God may be working in their lives. The spiritual director listens, notices, encourages, asks questions, and prays for the person receiving spiritual direction.

In *Sacred Conversation*, readers will learn what spiritual direction is and what it isn't. They will explore spiritual practices that have helped people for hundreds of years develop a closer relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Marsha Crockett introduces readers to seven gifts of spiritual direction: awakening, hospitality, story, pilgrimage, silence, meditation, and belonging.

Each chapter contains reflection questions for individuals to use in conversation with their spiritual director, as prompts for journaling, or for sharing with small groups.



FAITHFUL
PEOPLE
OF GOD

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WHAT IS AN UMVIM CONFERENCE COORDINATOR?



Annual Conference Coordinator Responsibilities

MISSION



- Have working knowledge of UMVIM projects and programs
- Add Conference projects to the US Mission Opportunities List
- Maintain record of incoming/outgoing UMVIM teams annually
- Recommend projects to local churches, districts, and Annual Conference

COMMUNICATION



- Respond in a timely manner to UMVIM related questions
- Work with Conference Director of Communications to maintain UMVIM page on Conference website
- Promote and assist in development of UMVIM Awareness Sunday
- Share success stories of UMVIM teams across the Conference

RELATIONSHIPS



- Match volunteers with mission opportunities
- Speak (or coordinate speakers) to local churches and groups about UMVIM
- Assist the Annual Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (including having input on the Disaster Response plan)
- Attend annual meeting of UMVIM Conference Coordinators



TRAINING

- Train and mobilize volunteers through promotion/hosting of UMVIM training events (such as Team Leader training or others)
- Work with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator to mobilize ERT trained volunteers in event of a disaster

UMVIM.ORG

UMVIM, 2020

EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE that God is Good

By Meg Sizemore

As a creative, I've always envisioned a physical "place" in my mind to talk to God. I tend to mentally go there when I'm feeling sad, angry, happy, excited, or sometimes in need of comfort. This is my safe place, my sanctuary to pray.

At any event when prayer requests are asked for, I have never been known to be shy with sharing. I believe in the fellowship of sharing your heart and mind... and joining together to lift our prayer requests before our Savior. Prayer is SO powerful, and there is true comfort in knowing you are not alone in prayer.



In the same mindset, it's important to share our PRAISE, proclaiming the goodness of God. Whether I'm in a season of waiting or reflecting on God's faithfulness to answered prayer, I'm always drawn back to that place in my mind. I find God in my visual mind space, in a field of rolling hills, blue skies, and endless, golden sunshine. It is there, where I sing and shout of all the good things God has done.

I invite you to join me in the power of prayer and praise! In the following monthly issues of The Relay, we will share prayer requests and praises together as GNJ. No matter the role you play in the conference, whether you are wishing to share anonymously or comfortable to share your name... it's time to come together.

Let's share together of the EVIDENCE of God all over our lives. 🇺🇸

All prayer requests and stories of praise should be submitted directly to Meg Sizemore, Communications Manager, at msizemore@gnjumc.org

Turning Point UMC

Continued from page 1

oldest in the country. Francis Asbury, one of the first Bishops in Methodism, was part of the laying of the cornerstone. Turning Point UMC is a direct descendent of that original church.

The church building where worship currently takes place every week was built in 1894. In 1956 it sustained an arson fire that destroyed much of the interior, but the main walls of the building were not damaged. By 1958, the interior had been rebuilt. It is the fourth building in the history of the church and the second building at this Broad Street location. The former brick building was torn down to make way for its present structure. The first two buildings were smaller and at a different location in Trenton, on Broad Street and Academy Street.

Among the nineteen original members of the church were Conrad Kotts, Alexander Carr, George Ely, Joseph Toy, John Fitch, and other UMC familiar names. John Fitch, the inventor of the steamboat, was memorialized by the City of Trenton.

Today, Turning Point UMC is very active in helping those in Trenton who need food and clothing. Every week, people are welcome to come for meals at the church and receive groceries to take home. In addition to food, the clothing ministry strives to help those who need something to wear. Twice a month, diapers are handed out to parents of young children. Turning Point's congregation is most grateful to the many churches and organizations who regularly contribute food, clothing, and monetary gifts.

To further celebrate the anniversary year, the church is planning a gala banquet in the fall, as well as a special concert. You can also read a recap of the May 1st celebration in the May issue of *The Relay*. 🇺🇸

CURRENT JOB POSTINGS

Nursery Care Associate (Part-time) | Princeton UMC

Princeton United Methodist Church, located in the heart of Princeton and adjacent to Princeton University, seeks a part-time Nursery Care Associate. The duties will include caring for children aged 2 and younger before, during, and after the weekly Sunday worship service (with the support of church volunteers). Hours are Sundays, 9:30-11:30 a.m., with occasional extra hours to support other events. Applicants must be 18+ and have related experience working with young children. To inquire, please contact evangeline@princetonumc.org.

Part-time Music Director | Trinity UMC, Highland Park NJ

Trinity United Methodist Church in Highland Park, NJ is seeking a part-time music director to lead Sunday worship services, occasional mid-week services and other special programs. The individual would work with the pastor to identify both traditional and contemporary music selections and would also hold choir rehearsals. The ability to read music is required. This is a great opportunity for someone starting out in the field of music ministry. For further information, please contact Rev. Alicia Grey at aliciagrey@hotmail.com.

Part-time Administrative Assistant | Milford UMC

Milford United Methodist Church, 206 E. Ann Street, Milford, PA has a part-time, year-round position for administrative assistant. Qualifications include but are not limited to; people and phone skills, strong knowledge of computer applications, have Criminal and Child Abuse History Clearance, be self-motivated and able to multi-task. Hours are 9-1 M-F, at an hourly rate. Please call 570-296-6124 or send resume to mumc@ptd.net.

Bilingual Staff Attorney | JFON-Delaware Valley

A "Justice for Our Neighbors" (JFON) staff attorney is responsible for the provision of immigration legal services at each immigration clinic and for the supervision and training of volunteers and support staff assisting with this provision of legal services. In addition, the staff attorney may work in coordination with each clinic to promote community education and advocacy of immigrants' rights and "know your rights" popular legal education. Interested parties should email their resume and a brief writing sample to tom@jfondv.org

Part-time Bilingual Legal Assistant | JFON-Delaware Valley

Legal Assistant is responsible for providing legal support to the Executive Director and the Managing Counsel and volunteer legal professionals (Attorneys), as well as administrative assistance in the JFON-DV Office. The Assistant will support the Managing Counsel, other Legal Assistants, and Attorneys with casework and internal legal team communication and coordination. Under the supervision of the Executive Director and the Managing Counsel, the Assistant will carry out assigned tasks to maintain efficient, high-quality legal office operations for JFON-DV and act as back-up support to reception and hotline activities. Interested Parties should send a cover letter and resume to tom@jfondv.org.

GNJ JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- **AFWH Volunteer Coordinator (Part-time)**
- **AFWH Disaster Case Manager**
- **Staff Accountant**
- **Director of Resourcing**
- **Executive Director of the U.M. Stewardship Foundation**

All details can be found at www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/. If you'd like to have your job published, please contact communications@gnjumc.org. Your posting can also be placed in the weekly Digest.

OBITUARIES

Our thoughts and prayers are with these families and friends.

Helen McCahill, Deaconess, passed away on Jan 7, 2022. A memorial service was held on March 26, 2022. Memorial donations (In lieu of flowers) may be sent to www.townclockcdc.org, Town Clock Community Development Corporation, 11 Bayard St., #301, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, This organization exemplifies Helen's dream of providing permanent, affordable, safe housing to survivors of domestic violence and their children. Send expressions of sympathy to her daughter, Sue Zahorbenski, 13 No. Dover Ave., Somerset, NJ 08873.

Neil O. Eriksen, Surviving Spouse of Rev. Marjorie Eriksen, passed away on March 6, 2022. Memorial service details will be shared at a later date. Memorial donations (In lieu of flowers) may be sent to The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society In memory of Neil O. Eriksen. Send expressions of sympathy to his son Christopher Eriksen, 16 Lime Rock Lane, Califon, NJ 07830.

Margaret (Maggie) Reid, Local Pastor, passed away on March 7, 2022. A memorial service was held on March 12, 2022. Maggie served Quinton UMC and Hancock's Bridge UMC in the Delaware Bay District from 2012 until her passing. Please be in prayer for Maggie's family and her congregations as they grieve this loss.

Rev. Dr. Malcolm J. Mc Veigh, Retired Full Elder, passed away on March 6, 2022. A private memorial service will be held at a future date for family only. Send expressions of sympathy to his daughter, Deborah Bartlett, 10426 Pelican Oak Dr., San Antonio, TX 78254-6727.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 15	GNJ Leadership Appraisal closes
April 15 & 18	MRC offices closed for Easter
April 21, 28 and May 5	Leadership Academy Courageous Conversations: Racism
April 25	Annual Conference HymnSing Recordings
April 25 & 26	"Delivered to You" virtual benefits webinar
May 9	Annual Conference Information Sessions (Virtual)
May 12	Annual Conference Clergy Session (Virtual)
May 23 & 24	Annual Conference Session (Virtual)

Additional details can be found on the GNJ website at gnjumc.org.

United Methodist Communities HomeWorks

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Serving Monmouth, Ocean, and Middlesex counties

Newton
Serving Sussex, Morris, and Warren counties

Mission u: Save the Dates

Adults, Youth, and Children

(entering K-12th grade)

3-Day School Hybrid

July 14-15, 2022 virtual 6:45pm - 9:15pm

July 16, 2022 in-person 9:00am - 3:30pm

Aldersgate UMC,

568 Ryders Lane, East Brunswick, NJ

\$40.00 (includes lunch)

1-Day Korean School

July 16, 2022 in person 9:00am - 3:30pm

Aldersgate UMC,

568 Ryders Lane, East Brunswick, NJ

\$30.00 (includes lunch)

3-Day School Virtual

July 14-15, 2022, virtual 6:45pm - 9:15pm

July 16, 2022 virtual 9:00am - 3:30pm

\$25.00

1-Day School Virtual

July 23, 2022, virtual 9:00am - 3:30pm

\$15.00

Lay Servant Re-Certification is Available for 3 DAY SCHOOL ONLY

Registration will be coming soon at gnjumw.org

TOPIC IS LUKE 13

A Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Adults, Youth, and Children

These are tumultuous times. Chaos dots our history, including those days of Jesus' earthly life. What are the lessons we can take from his teaching, especially found in Luke 13? The chapter opens and closes with a community trying to make sense of and navigate their way through times of turmoil and tragedy. What can be learned as we discover what type of community we can build together?

If you are wondering what would be possible if we tend to the needs of our communities in small and often disruptive ways as Jesus did in Luke 13, this is a must study for individuals and churches!



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in Faith



Who Can We Be Together?

Building Communities
of Hope and Joy