

# THE RELAY

UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

AUGUST 2022  
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gnjumc.org



## THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN

Challenging the UMC for the full and equal participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church.

## The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women is Vital to the United Methodist Church

By Aileen Jimenez

Each year, bishops and district superintendents reach out to The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) for guidance on how to navigate different situations regarding women, equality, and power.

We know that local churches still struggle accepting clergywomen. We

know that there is sexual misconduct in our churches, and we know that there continues to be inequality and a lack of representation within the church structure. GCSRW exists to challenge The United Methodist Church in the full inclusion and participation of women at all levels of the life and

mission of the church (§2102, BOD). It is also our mandate to hold the church accountable when it fails to live out its purpose. In order to fulfill our calling, GCSRW focuses on four key pillars of service: monitoring, sexual ethics, leadership, and education.

*Continued on page 3*

## The Impact of Breakthrough Worship Series on Ministry

by Emily Wilton

In the most recent GNJ Leadership Survey, 71% of respondents said they have participated in Breakthrough, and it has helped their congregation become more vital. Additionally, 40% say their congregation uses Breakthrough for one or more of its resources such as preaching, small groups, stewardship, and/or social media. With such a high rate of use, what kind of impact is Breakthrough having on churches' ministry?

**“BREAKTHROUGH HAS GIVEN US SO MUCH MORE TIME TO DO MINISTRY IN THE FIELD AND WITH THE PEOPLE INSTEAD OF JUST PLANNING SUNDAY FOR THE ENTIRE WEEK.”**

—Danny Clark, lay leader of Trinity UMC of Tansboro

The most consistent answer to that question is “time.” Breakthrough worship series save clergy and congregational leaders time in worship planning, sermon preparation, and small group preparation. However, that’s not the entire benefit of Breakthrough materials. Time saved has had a ripple effect in all areas of ministry. The Rev. Jennifer

*Continued on page 5*

## Small Church Steps Up in Support OF UKRAINE

By Merlene Taylor

EASTAMPTON TOWNSHIP, NJ

The Smithville United Methodist Church is nestled between farmlands and Historic Smithville Park in Burlington County. Each Sunday, the children share their knowledge of loving and giving during “Children’s Moments”. On First Sundays, they pick up their tin buckets from the communion rail and slowly walk down the aisle to collect their “Noisy Coins” from the eager and smiling members and guests.

Pastor Merlene Taylor of Smithville UMC shared her concern for the families who are experiencing great hardships, and asked parents to explain to their children more about financial difficulties through prayer and giving.

Their prayers turned to action and generosity, and the entire church was on board. In April 2022, a check for \$3,000.00 was sent to UMCOR in support of the relief efforts. As they say at Smithville UMC, “We are small but mighty. We will continue to support families and disasters locally and worldwide.”



Pastor Merlene Taylor prepares the monthly Noisy Coin collection with children from “Children’s Moments” on Sunday morning.

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

## Leaders are born, right?

Bishop John Schol



Everything was coming together for Erica. She had just finished up her next to last day of work and was headed to her obstetrician for her scheduled checkup. She had only one day left with her former employer and then she could focus all of her attention on delivering in two weeks her child. Upon examination, the doctor said, “you are about to deliver, I want you to go to the hospital now.” “I can’t,” Erica said, “I have one day left of work and I need to finish some things up.” “NOW!” the doctor replied. That evening Erica had a baby boy, Kobe. Today, Erica MartinezSantos is the administrative assistant for the Bishop’s office and shares her story as a reminder that in the midst of challenges, God delivers.

Throughout my ministry and leadership, people have invariably asked me how I knew something or where I learned to lead. From that time forward, I have become a student of leadership development. There are many things that are important to the success of a congregation, ministry, or organization but one is key: and that is leadership.

Some leaders are born. Don’t believe them. Leadership is not biological. It is shaped and honed over time. Some rise to be very good leaders. These are generally the leaders that failed early and often and became better by learning, taking on new challenges and open to being coached. These are leaders who are hungry to improve their competency to lead. Leadership is a competency that is learned, practiced, and improved.

## So how do leaders develop competency?

Often the church has relied on providing content and information to develop leaders. We send people to workshops and seminars, provide books for them to read, and the latest videos to view. Many are frustrated after participating in these experiences. They report they already knew the material taught or are things they have tried before. They find the workshops focused on theory and rarely offer practical steps for implementation.

Experience has taught us that providing information alone does not work. Becoming a competent leader takes a lot more than information.

## Do people know how to learn?

YES!!! Ask a person something they do well, and they will tell you how they learned it. Most often they share the same core experiences.

- The individual wanted to learn and had a gold of becoming good at knitting, cooking, bowling, sailing, excel spreadsheets, teaching, writing, or any other trade, role, or hobby you can think of.

*First Key to developing better leaders is that the person wants to improve in an area of leadership. Leadership development begins by identifying what people want to learn about leadership.*

- The individual took time to learn about the subject. Generally, when they learn using methods of their preferred learning style, they learn best. Some like to learn by reading, some by listening, some by watching, and some by doing. We all have our own learning styles.

*Second Key to developing better leaders is letting people tell you how they best learn. Assisting the individual in developing their learning plan that is applicable to their learning style and context has a much better chance of success.*

- The individual applied the information right away. Within the workshop is best.

*Third Key to developing better leaders is applying what you learn right away.*

- The individual encountered a challenge that required practice, a mentor or coach, and further learning.

*Fourth Key to developing better leaders is taking risks and making mistakes, and using a coach to understand and work through the challenges.*

- The individual continues to practice the skill and once the leadership skill is developed, the individual is given a new challenge.

*Fifth Key to developing better leaders is a new and harder challenge once the leader has overcome the initial challenge.*

Ironically, this is the same process Jesus used to disciple his disciples. Jesus taught, challenged, and coached his disciples in living their faith among society. This learning process has been around for thousands of years. Why? Because it works. Unfortunately, the church has relied only on providing information. Not an effective means of developing leaders.

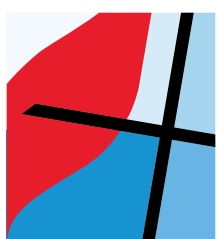
## Leadership Development Process

GNJ continues to strengthen our ministry to develop leaders using the following process:

- People learn what they feel motivated to learn. Beginning with the leader’s interests about their role and work assists in the learning process.
- Clarity about a leader’s role and outcomes helps a leader focus their learning on things that matter to their effectiveness.
- Content, information, and understanding are essential for a leader but do not develop competency. People develop leadership skills and competency by practicing, executing, and receiving feedback.
- Challenges accelerate learning and competency when matched with support such as coaching, consultation, cohort groups, and mentoring.
- A leader’s competency grows through the following process and the process does not necessarily occur in the same order for every person.

- ✓ A leader identifies an area they want to improve.
- ✓ A leader engages in learning about a particular leadership area by any of the following: reading, attending a workshop or seminar, watching videos, observing others.
- ✓ A leader challenges them self or receives a challenge from a supervisor, coach or mentor to make progress in their leadership by helping their church/organization improve in an area of ministry.
- ✓ The leader develops a personal plan and/or an organizational/ministry plan with the congregation/organization to improve an area of ministry.
- ✓ The leader and the congregation/organization leaders receive coaching, consultation, and problem solving to achieve the goals of the plan.
- ✓ Successes are celebrated.
- ✓ Successes and challenges are evaluated for continual improvement.
- ✓ The leader is given another opportunity to grow through the next right challenge.
- ✓ The development process of (a) through (h) start over again.

GNJ leadership is prepared to assist your congregation through our discernment process as we emerge from the pandemic to assist your congregation to become an even more vital sustainable mission congregation. All of our Pathway programs develop leadership skills as we assist you in developing your congregation. You can find more information here on our webpage at <https://www.gnjumc.org/disaffiliation-discernment> or contact Resource Manager, Megan McKay, [MMckay@gnjumc.org](mailto:MMckay@gnjumc.org)



## THE RELAY

UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

## John R. Schol, Bishop

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## Women in the UMC

*Continued from page 1*

Let's bring this to perspective with some questions and exercises:

- Think of a time when your Annual Conference received an equity or inclusivity report at the end of a session. Can you remember what the data presented stated? The resources used to gather and present that data were more than likely provided by GCSRW.
- Additionally, many people need assistance in navigating the complaint process for sexual misconduct. Do you know where to find it or how to point people to it? Our [UMSexualEthics.com](http://UMSexualEthics.com) website has multiple resources that assist different parties in the complaint process. GCSRW has also developed an interactive "Do No More Harm" module to make all of our information easily accessible.
- Finally, list the number of churches in your area who have never been led by a Senior Pastor who is a woman. Has your congregation been in a similar situation? What would you say to one that is currently struggling to be welcoming and humble with a woman pastor? We encourage you to use an upcoming resource, "Welcoming a Woman Pastor", that tackles just that. This resource will be an online, interactive module designed to assist the local church in embracing a woman pastor.

While GCSRW does provide educational resources, tools for analyzing conduct and inclusivity at gatherings, leadership development trainings, and guidance in the prevention and response to sexual misconduct, we acknowledge the individual women and men that work to hold our church accountable.

We are proud of the work Greater New Jersey COSROWS do. We recognize their talents, time and efforts in creating an inclusive and equitable community of faith. We also

We also challenge you in the following areas:

- ✓ Conduct a salary study and challenge charge conferences to ensure equal pay
- ✓ Encourage women into leadership—especially young laywomen
- ✓ Monitor other leadership meetings besides Annual Conference to advocate for inclusion

**GCSRW EXISTS TO CHALLENGE THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN THE FULL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AT ALL LEVELS OF THE LIFE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH (¶2102, BOD)...IN ORDER TO FULFILL OUR CALLING, GCSRW FOCUSES ON FOUR KEY PILLARS OF SERVICE: MONITORING, SEXUAL ETHICS, LEADERSHIP, AND EDUCATION.**

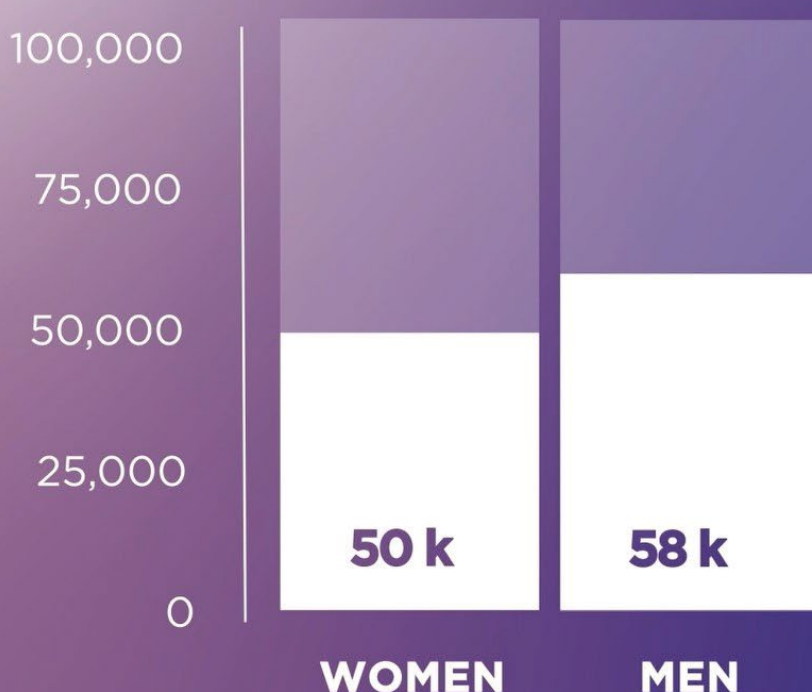
encourage their prophetic witness to stand up for injustices and take tangible steps in preventing them from occurring in the future. As a church, we must pray for a humble heart to recognize our wrongdoings and an openness to accountability, while striving to be a reflection of Jesus Christ.

We encourage all members of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference to get involved by contacting your COSROW Chair. Read our "Women by the Numbers" resource and analyze your own Annual Conference.

As we celebrate our advancements, we look forward to the next 50 years of full and equal participation of women at all levels of life and mission of The United Methodist Church. We believe that a fully engaged and empowered membership is vital to our mission of making "disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." 🌍

Learn more at [GCSRW.org](http://GCSRW.org)  
Contact: [info@GCSRW.org](mailto:info@GCSRW.org)

## AVERAGE SALARY COMPENSATION ACROSS JURISDICTIONS



**14%  
DIFFERENCE**

In some jurisdictions, gender was still a significant predictor of salary





**A FUTURE WITH HOPE**  
UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

# Christian Outreach Project

By Andrea Wren-Hardin



**Rev. Dr. Steve Bechtold,**  
pastor at Sparta UMC



**Participants from Sparta UMC,  
New Dover UMC and Morrow UMC  
replacing a floor**

**A** Future with Hope and its parent organization, the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey, work to identify and support Hope Centers: An ideal way of tackling social challenges in a sustainable, transformative way.

Hope Centers are new, emerging, or established community partnerships between and among United Methodist congregations, non-profit organizations, area businesses, and local government agencies. These Hope Centers tackle local problems through shared resources and strategic volunteerism, all on a foundation of asset-based community development.

Christian Outreach Project, a 501c3, is a Hope Center that has been operating in northwestern New Jersey for 40 years. According to the director, Dave Kihm, their mission is to provide free home repairs and renovations for people who do not have the means or resources to complete the work themselves. High school youth and adult chaperones donate their care and skills while learning and growing in the process.

Planning for the weeklong program, held the last week of June, begins in early September. Christian Outreach Project connects with social service agencies and churches throughout Warren, Sussex, and western Morris counties to identify potential homeowners.

This summer, 22 houses were recommended for repairs, but only seven were able to engage with the program due to volunteer capacity, logistics, and safety issues, among other factors.

48 participants from seven United Methodist churches (Branchville, Milton, Sparta, Morrow, New Dover, Succasunna) and two other non-

Methodist churches, repaired roofs, built a deck and stairs, installed kitchen tile, repaired masonry, built a well house, fixed a porch, built a mini ramp for accessibility, painted, and completed other carpentry repairs.

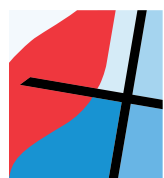
Volunteers stayed in cabins at Camp Hoover, a Girl Scout camp, and Frankford Plains UMC, Sparta UMC, Branchville UMC, Milton UMC, and Succasunna UMC generously prepared delicious homestyle meals such as barbeque chicken, spaghetti and meatballs, and macaroni and cheese each evening.

Every year, youth volunteers share that Christian Outreach Project is an extremely rewarding experience, and this summer was no exception. Despite the long hot days, the high school youth volunteers described highlights of the week as building relationships with other volunteers and homeowners, developing real home improvement skills, and the expansion of their world through helping neighbors and engaging in new situations.

Funding for Christian Outreach Project is raised through grants, donations, and participant fees. If you would like to donate or find out more about volunteering with the program next summer, visit [christianoutreachproject.org](http://christianoutreachproject.org).

In celebration of Christian Outreach Project's 40th year, all alumni and participants are invited to a barbeque at Sparta United Methodist Church on August 28, from 1pm-5pm. For more information and to register for the event, please go to [christianoutreachproject.org](http://christianoutreachproject.org).

If your church is interested in becoming a Hope Center, or to learn about other Hope Centers in GNJ, kindly visit [afuturewithhope.org](http://afuturewithhope.org).



# UNITED METHODISTS OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

## GNJ 2022 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

The Conference Board of Higher Education and Ministry has announced the 2022 scholarship recipients.

### FRANCES NELSON SCHOLARSHIP



**Ezra Kyusang Shim**  
Wall UMC (Wall Twp., NJ)  
*Rutgers New-Brunswick*



**Kori G. Isaac**  
St. Mark's UMC (Montclair, NJ)  
*Seton Hall University*

### REV. RALPH A. KAPPLER SCHOLARSHIP



**James Thomas Spangler**  
St. Andrews UMC (Cherry Hill, NJ)  
*Rowan College of Burlington County*

### CONFERENCE TRUST SCHOLARSHIP



**Joshua Lopez-Marte**  
Oasis UMC (Pleasantville, NJ)  
*Penn State Abington Campus*

## Breakthrough

*Continued from page 1*

Williams of the Susquehanna Annual Conference says because of time saved using Breakthrough she is “able to spend more time in mission.” Danny Clark, lay leader of Trinity UMC of Tansboro, says “[Breakthrough] has given us so much more time to do ministry in the field and with the people instead of just planning Sunday for the entire week.”

Extra time is always needed; a 24-hour day or even the standard window set aside for pastoral work never seem like enough time. The Rev. Joe Monahan, lead pastor of Medford UMC, noted how

**“BREAKTHROUGH HELPED  
BRING INSPIRING AND  
APPLICABLE MESSAGES  
TO THE PEOPLE.”**

—Rev. Scott Clifton, pastor  
of Groveville UMC and  
Debows UMC

his church, which “traditionally developed all its own stewardship materials,” (including graphics, logos, customized letters, and commitment cards) found it difficult, especially during the pandemic, to “mobilize people to create all of those resources.” He says, “Having a ready-made package that could be quickly and easily tailored to our congregation was incredibly helpful.” Ohio pastor,



Cassie Newhouse ministering a special song, “Psalm 42” during a final Sunday using the “Celebrate” worship resource provided by GNJ Breakthrough

Amy Gruber Ochier, said Breakthrough helped her manage being a ¼ time pastor while also working extra shifts at the hospital through COVID-19. Now that she is beginning a full-time appointment, she plans to use that time learning about the needs of the community where her new church is located.

Breakthrough also impacts the *quality* of ministry—from preaching to small groups to community outreach. The Rev. Scott Clifton, pastor of Groveville UMC and Debows UMC, says the series have, “helped bring inspiring and applicable messages to

the people,” and “given me a tool and outline for sermons in times when I am not using a Breakthrough series.” Pat Smith, Certified Lay Servant and member of Titusville UMC notes how the Breakthrough small group materials have enriched her weekly Bible study. “It is eye-opening and remarkable to dig deeper into the Bible passage that was preached on the preceding Sunday,” she says. “I’ve learned a lot from the people [at the Bible study],” she says, “and it makes you feel closer [to your community].” In Pastor Gruber Ochier’s last appointment, the Summer of Love

series sparked an incredible community outreach event that included worship, an ice cream social, a tie-dyeing activity led by college students, and the dedication of a new “blessing box” where community members can give and receive food and other needed items.

These are just a few of the bright spots of doing ministry using Breakthrough materials. If you haven’t explored GNJ’s Breakthrough resources yet, check them out now on our website, [www.gnjumc.org/breakthrough](http://www.gnjumc.org/breakthrough) and find out how Breakthrough can impact ministry in your church. 🇺🇸

## OVERVIEW OF IGNITE 2022 | SEPTEMBER 30 – OCTOBER 2

# LIMITLESS

**Isaiah 55:9:** "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts"

Our God is creative. Our God is powerful. We believe in a God who brings the dead to life and is making all things new. We believe in a God who gathers all people together—no matter who they are, where they are from, or what they've been through. We believe in a God that is **LIMITLESS**.

In anxious times, we know this: God isn't finished with us yet. God has been faithful through trials before and will bring us through whatever challenges we face going forward. The Giver of Life, our Sustainer, the Spirit of Fire, Lion of Judah, and Prince of Peace is with us. God is with us and is breaking through the limits that world continues to set.

Our God brings people together. When people from all nations, all races and all tongues gather – they worship, they make an impact, and they are **limitless**.

At IGNITE 2022 we will safely join in community together, to learn about and be inspired by a God who is **limitless**. We're going to worship. We're going to grow in faith and community. We're going to have a blast!

When we seek God, we can break through the things that limit us. We're excited for you to join us in Wildwood this fall. We'll see you at IGNITE 2022!

### LOCATION

Wildwoods Convention Center | 4501 Boardwalk, Wildwood, NJ 08260  
September 30 – October 2

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# LIMITLESS

IGNITE CONFERENCE

# Ministry Matters Sew Much at Branchville UMC

By Nancy Robinson

A dedicated group of crafters at Branchville United Methodist Church meet monthly to use their sewing skills and brighten their community. They gather to make colorful pillowcases to donate to the emergency departments at Newton and Hackettstown Medical Centers, and the Sparta Cancer Center. Incoming patients, both children and adults, are asked if they would like to select their own pillowcase. The pillowcases are usually cute and fun patterns, reflect a hobby or interest, or are seasonal prints.

This ministry of providing a personalized level of comfort during high-stress times is a gentle way of letting the patients know that someone they don't even know cares about them. The staff rave to the sewing group frequently about how much kids and the adults love them!

During Covid, the group made pillowcases at home, and distributed almost 1,000 face masks to local hospitals, nursing homes and senior living centers. After a period of sewing at home, the group is thankful to be back in person at the church, making pillowcases together again. They are also making fabric tote/shopping bags for the patrons of the Branchville food pantry.

Some of the monthly crafting members sew, cut fabric, pin, or press. When possible, the pillowcases are blessed during a Sunday worship service or other gathering before being delivered to the hospital. They also accept donations of fabric and funds to defray the costs of supplies.

In addition to pillowcases and masks, their crafters have made prayer quilts over many years to be given to family and friends of the church who are going through illness, surgery, or an especially emotional event. The impact of a hand-made gift provides comfort on a personal level. The quilts are made up of squares which each have a length of yarn in the center. Each quilt is prayed over during worship and the yarn strings are tied by members of the congregation after church as they say a silent prayer.

It is their great hope that these small gifts of time and talent will reach out to the community and reflect Jesus' love for them. 🙏



Prayer quilts are presented for congregational prayer and blessing during Sunday worship. At the end of worship, the congregation is invited to come and say a personal prayer for the quilt recipient by tying a bow on the quilt.



Brightly colored and seasonal pillowcases are created by the sewing group for distribution to the area hospital emergency rooms and the local cancer center. We hope they bring some color and lift the spirits of those hospitalized and are given to the patients to take home with them when discharged.

Atlantic Health—Newton Medical Center—  
Chaplain Randy Parks receives a supply of  
pillowcases for the hospital from Mark Hallock.

## CLERGY BENEFITS

### Announcing In-Person CBA/revitup! Events This November

Be sure to inform clergy about Wespeth's two in-person clergy events to be held in beautiful Broomfield, Colorado this November. Clergy will gather with other clergy (and clergy spouses), learn more about their benefits through engaging educational sessions and be inspired to reinvigorate all dimensions of their well-being. Clergy Benefits Academy (CBA) will be held November 14-16, providing benefits information and inspiration for clergy at all ages and stages of ministry. revitup! (November 16-18) is tailored to clergy up to age 39 and focuses on equipping young clergy for a lifetime of ministry. Attendees will leave refreshed and restored! First 50 people who register for either event receive a \$50 resort credit.



Your Personal Mission:  
**POSSIBLE!**

## Clergy Benefits Academy

Be inspired to review your benefits and improve your financial, emotional, social, spiritual and physical health.

**November 14-16, 2022**  
The Omni Interlocken  
500 Interlocken Boulevard  
Broomfield, Colorado

# revitup!

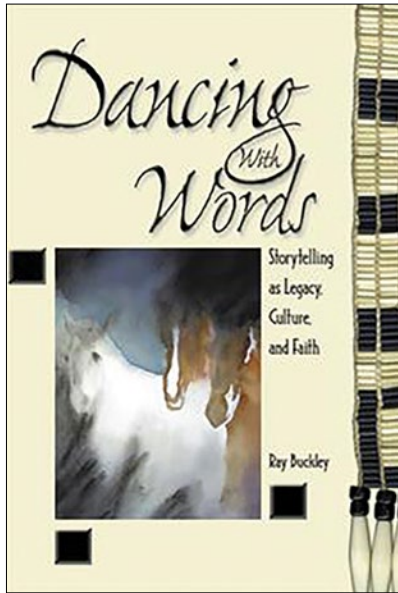
## A Benefits Journey for Young Clergy

**November 16-18, 2022**  
The Omni Interlocken  
500 Interlocken Boulevard  
Broomfield, Colorado





## AUGUST BOOKSHELF



### Dancing with Words

Storytelling as Legacy, Culture, and Faith  
Ray Buckley

In *Dancing with Words* you will discover that storytelling can enable hearers to view history, values, culture, faith, life lessons, and other critical elements in ways that may be easily assimilated in memory. Through an understanding of the history of storytelling and of storytellers as keepers of beliefs, traditions, history, and values, you will:

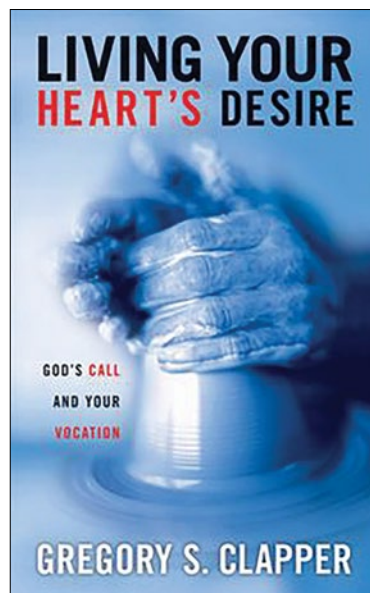
- find new meaning in the stories and the storytellers of the Bible and of the Christian faith
- learn what makes a good story
- discover your own style as a storyteller
- learn the techniques of effective storytelling
- practice creating stories from your own experience

### Living Your Heart's Desire

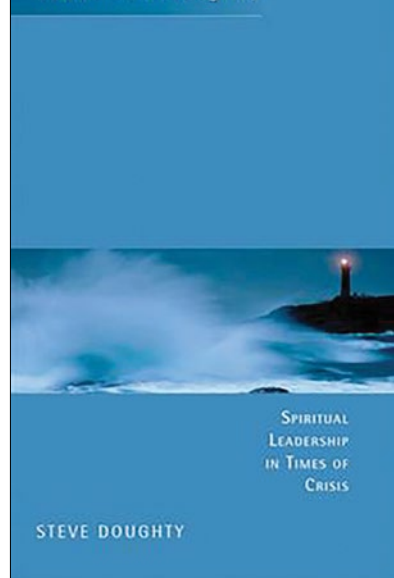
God's Call and Your Vocation  
Gregory S. Clapper

Easy to read and relevant to today's economy and world (with many references and lessons from movies), this book can help you lead a more fulfilled, rewarding, and joyful Christian life—regardless of how you earn a paycheck. Discussion questions at the end of each chapter make this perfect for small group discussions.

Learn to see your "Office Space"-like world as a Spirit-filled and vital calling in Christ. As one reviewer has said, *Living Your Heart's Desire* will help you "understand the connection between faith of the head and faith of the heart, as well as the next step on your faith journey." Take comfort in knowing that God has a plan for your life. Revel in it.



### To Walk in Integrity



### To Walk in Integrity

Spiritual Leadership in Times of Crisis  
Stephen V. Doughty

Our troubled world needs spiritual leadership now more than ever. Doughty's *To Walk in Integrity* provides a model for spiritual leadership in times of crisis. Examining the biblical understanding of integrity, he identifies 9 key qualities. He tells powerful stories of people who acted with integrity in difficult situations despite great personal cost.

Each chapter includes guidance for personal meditation and group reflection. Clergy and lay leaders will find inspiration and challenge in this timely book.

By examining patterns of daily living and choices, readers not necessarily involved in leadership roles also will be encouraged to follow the practical ingredients for a life of integrity.

Each chapter ends with two sets of questions: one for personal reflection and one for group reflection.

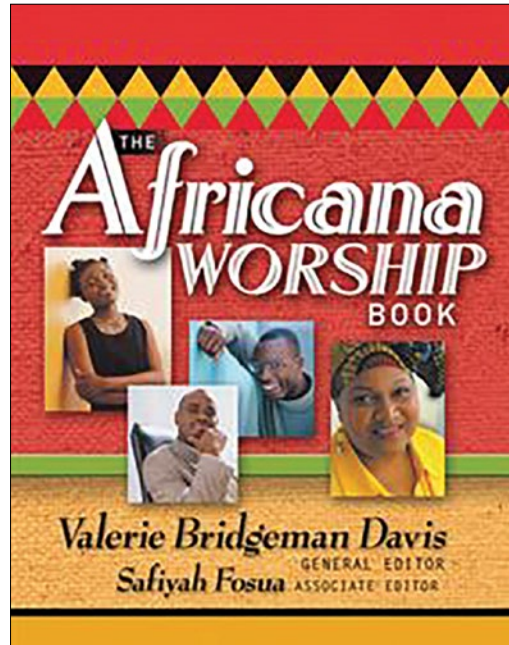
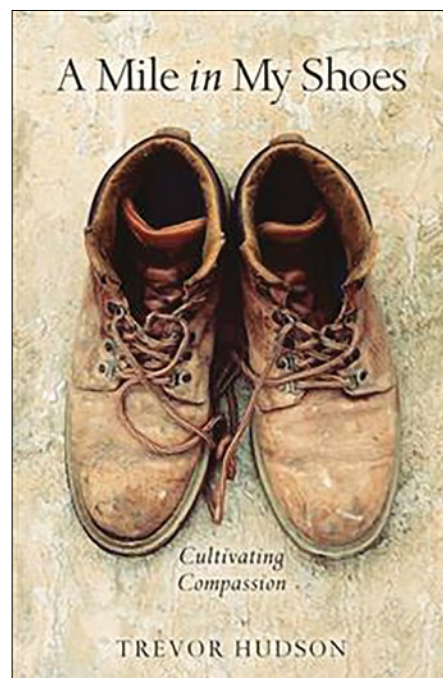
### A Mile in My Shoes

Cultivating Compassion  
Trevor Hudson

We can be quick to pray for people around the world in times of trauma, but has prayer become a way to avoid taking real action? Are we reluctant to be fully aware of the suffering around us?

Trevor Hudson challenges us to see, hear, and respond to the needs of others, recognizing the living Christ in all things.

Hudson designed an 8-day program—a pilgrimage—to help all Christians cultivate the depth of compassion Jesus demonstrated. Through this program, pilgrims learn to be present wherever they are and with whomever they meet.



### The Africana Worship Book (Year A)

Valerie Bridgeman Davis,  
Safiyah Fosua

Celebrate the joyful spiritual spark found in Africana worship!

Worship is the lifeblood of the church. To Africana worshippers, God is very present in the service, and the response is heartfelt, jubilant and authentic.

*The Africana Worship Book* uncovers the "best-of" from the African-American church as well as from the Caribbean, American, and African shores.

The collected works found in this resource, which are based on Year A the Revised Common Lectionary, include profound and grace-filled liturgies for prayers, calls to worship

and giving, choral readings and credal statements—all written by 16 African-American contributors to represent the rich worship cultural heritage of this community.

### Talking in the Dark

Praying When Life Doesn't Make Sense  
Steve Harper

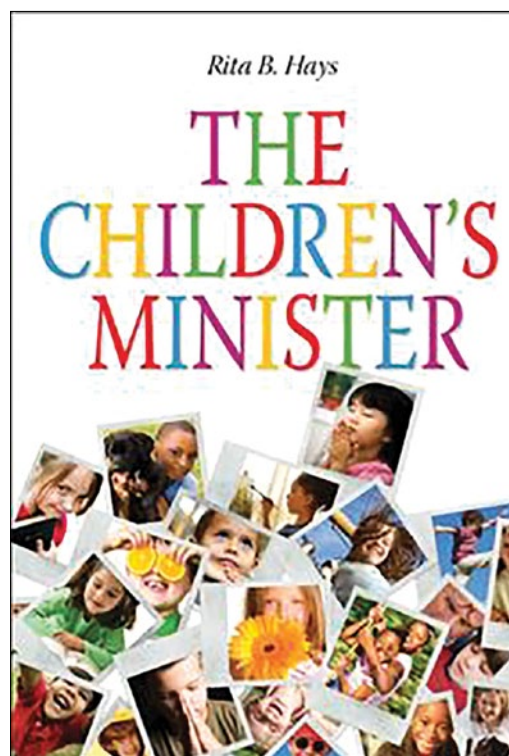
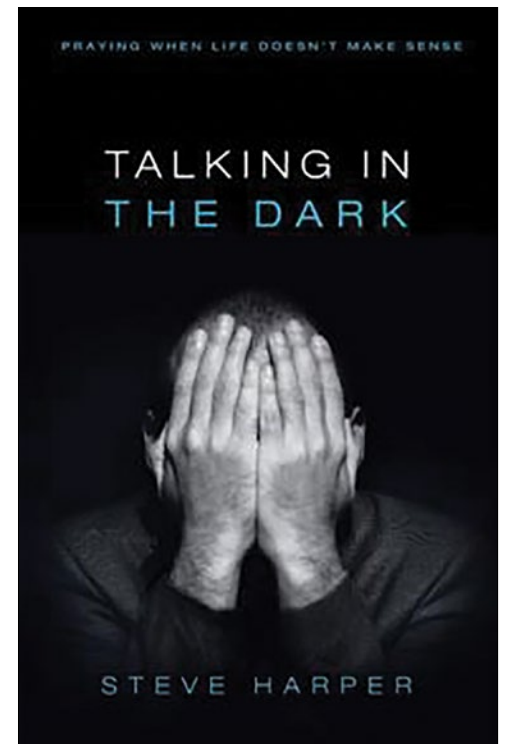
Steve Harper

Have you ever stopped praying?

When life seems unfair and prayer doesn't seem to make any difference, you may quit praying. Most people who admit that they stopped praying for a while, including the author, say they felt as if they were suffocating after a period without prayer.

If you're frustrated in your prayer life and wonder whether prayer is worth the effort, this book is for you. Nothing daunts Harper in this wrangle with God. No doubt, experience, or unholy feeling is out of bounds as he considers life and prayer's dark patches.

No matter how lost or lonely you feel, he offers assurance. During days when you feel the number one problem with prayer is an unresponsive God, you'll have the strength to dig deeper and surrender to the mysterious sustenance God offers.



### The Children's Minister

Rita B. Hays

Your church's outreach to children and their parents are top-notch. The nursery and Sunday school classes are full and offer great faith-learning experiences. The daycare and parents-day-out services are thriving.

But what if a child who's a part of your church family reveals his dog just died? Her mom and dad are divorcing? The family is moving to another city? These are pastoral (not programming) issues.

Is your church prepared to be in ministry with children? To relate with children where they are?

Children yearn to be noticed and recognized as individuals who have an important place in the church. Remember the vow the congregation takes at a baptism or dedication of a child? The church declares a commitment to be a part of the lives of the children in their midst.

Sadly, children often are treated as objects of church programming rather than as persons of sacred worth. Shelves bulge with creative instructions for teaching children about God through activities but few exist about relating with children about their daily spiritual concerns. The *Children's Minister* fills the resource void to help you connect with the lives and pastoral needs of children.

## CURRENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES

### Director of High School Ministry Grade 9-12

Trinity UMC in Hackettstown

This position's mission is to share the love and word of Jesus Christ with High School aged youth (grades 9-12). We seek a person who has a genuine love of God and all of God's people; has high energy and strong communication skills, including technology and social media. The goal for this position is to invite, train, develop and deploy Christian disciples. 15 hours weekly.

Interested candidates should contact Rev. Jisun Nam, Associate Pastor at 213 Main Street, Hackettstown, NJ and/or Phone, Office: 908-852-3020 x19 | Cell: 914-330-7412.

### GNJ Video Producer

GNJUMC

The Video Producer is responsible for producing video content and managing the media production studio for United Methodists of Greater New Jersey and its vital mission partners. The Video Producer oversees all aspects of production from communication and creativity to lighting, camera angles, editing, and audio mixing. To be qualified for this position you must have strong editing skills on Adobe Creative Suite and/or equivalent, deep and current knowledge of video equipment, professional use of social video: YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, Instagram and body of work that includes promotional and documentary video. A Bachelor's Degree is preferred or related experience.

Visit [www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/](https://www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/).

### Sunday School Program Director/Teacher

Newfoundland UMC

Newfoundland UMC is looking for a Sunday School Program Director/Teacher to serve on our church's staff. The individual will have experience working with children, be organized, creative, have good computer skills and strong communication skills. They will work 2 hours Sunday morning, 1-2 hours during the week. They will work with the Pastor planning curriculum, overseeing volunteer assistants/teachers and be responsible for communicating with families and children.

Interested parties should send their resume to [newfoundlandumc@gmail.com](mailto:newfoundlandumc@gmail.com).

### Grant Monitor and Evaluator

A Future With Hope

AFWH, seeks a Full Time, Limited Term Grant Monitor and Evaluator. The Grant Monitor and Evaluator is responsible for tracking data collection, program indicators and financial expenditures to ensure that so that they adhere to grant compliance requirements. They are responsible for completing all grant progress reports. They will work closely with the bookkeeper and GNJ's accounting department, ensuring grant compliance for a successful Greater New Jersey Ida Recovery. To be qualified for this position you must be competent and skilled in Microsoft Office Suite and Adobe Acrobat, experienced in financial software, and minimum of two years of grant monitoring and evaluation experience. You must have a Bachelor's Degree in finance, accounting or related field or similar job experience.

Visit [www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/](https://www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/).

### Case Manager

A Future With Hope

A Future With Hope, Inc, a non-profit with the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, is seeking exceptional individuals to join their Hurricane Ida Recovery team. The Disaster Case Manager position for Hurricane Ida through AFWH will be the first of its kind in all of New Jersey. This is a pivotal opportunity in the state of NJ and a great opportunity to work with a compassionate team of individuals at Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. If you are passionate about people and eager to serve disaster impacted communities, please consider joining our team.

Interested parties can apply at <https://www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/>.

### Disaster Case Manager Supervisor

AFWH

AFWH, seeks a Full Time, Limited Term Disaster Case Manager Supervisor. The Disaster Case Manager Supervisor manages a team of four disaster case managers who serve as a survivor's primary point of contact, assisting individuals in coordinating necessary services and resources to address the individual's complex disaster recovery needs to reestablish normalcy. The Disaster Case Manager Supervisor ensures that case managers are completing accurate needs assessments and recovery plans and partnering effectively with disaster affected individuals so that they achieve realistic goals for recovery. To be qualified for this position you must be competent and skilled in Microsoft Office Suite and Adobe Acrobat. You must have a Bachelor's Degree in field of social work, human services, or behavioral sciences or minimum of five years' experience in disaster recovery and managing teams is required.

Visit [www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/](https://www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/).

### Bookkeeper

AFWH

AFWH, seeks a Full Time, Limited Term Bookkeeper. The Bookkeeper is responsible for documenting and recording financial transactions, managing revenue and expenses, managing accounts payable and receivable, and preparing reports for GNJ's recovery project. They will be the primary liaison to GNJ's accounting department, ensuring accurate financial reporting, and monitoring and evaluation of grant awards to meet compliance for a successful Greater New Jersey Ida Recovery. They will seek additional grant opportunities to support Ida recovery. To be qualified for this position you must be competent and skilled in Microsoft Office Suite and Adobe Acrobat, experienced in financial software, and knowledge of bookkeeping principles. You must have a Bachelor's Degree or minimum of 3 years in related job experience is required.

Visit [www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/](https://www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/).

### Education Coordinator

First UMC in Delran, NJ

First UMC in Delran, NJ is in search of an Education Coordinator. The role is to coordinate, communicate to families, and lead the educational program for our children and youth (pre-school -12th grade); currently approximately 15 students. It is anticipated that the time commitment will be 10-12 hours per week. Serve as Educator Coordinator directing the overall teaching-learning experience, including scheduling and technology insertion. The coordinator is expected to teach Sunday School for any grades that require services in the absence of an assigned teacher. The ideal candidate will have a college degree or pursuing Christian Ministry.

Interested candidates should contact Terri Pagani, SPRC Chair at [pagani5@comcast.net](mailto:pagani5@comcast.net).

### Director of Christian Education Ministries

Grace UMC in Wyckoff, NJ

The Director of Christian Education Ministries is responsible for overseeing Grace Church's Christian Education for youth and children. This includes being responsible for initiating, developing and enabling (resourcing) the Christian education ministries of the church in accordance with the educational philosophy and policy determined by the Church Council. To be qualified for this position you must be available to work 15-20 hours per week, especially Sunday's, 2-3 years' experience preferred, Proficient in basic computing (e.g., Internet, Microsoft applications, Google Suite), and excellent communication skills.

Interested candidates should contact Pastor Brian Neville at [pastor.brian@gumc.org](mailto:pastor.brian@gumc.org) with an introduction and resume attached by July 31st, 2022.

### Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministry (Part-time)

United Methodist Church in Chatham, NJ

The United Methodist Church in Chatham, NJ is looking to hire the right person to serve as Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministry. It is a part time job of 25-27 hours per week (remote/in person hybrid), with salary commensurate with experience. The Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministry will be responsible for coordinating and overseeing Sunday school activities (ages 3-18) and leading youth mission activities. We are a congregation that values social justice, commitment to serving others, teamwork, full inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community, welcoming of different Christian spiritualities and styles which include traditional mainline, contemplative, perennial, praise and ecumenical.

Questions, interest, and resumes can be sent to: Rev. Jeff Markay, Senior Pastor, or call 973-635-7740.

### Host & Hostess

Methodist Missionary Vacation Home, 34 South Lake Road, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, NY

Seeking a Host and Hostess Couple to open and close the Home, process reservations, supervise a staff of four, and all operations of the house, including kitchen, laundry, maintenance, and care of the lawn. Host and Hostess should be on site from May 15 to September 15.

Please send resumes to: Marie Follett, 331 West Academy Street, Albion, New York 14411 by August 15, 2022. Phone 585-589-4202. Email: [mfollettny@yahoo.com](mailto:mfollettny@yahoo.com). A more detailed list of duties will be available to interested parties.

## GNJ is Looking for Freelancers & Volunteers

Calling all  
Graphic Designers,  
Copywriters,  
and Copyeditors:

GNJ is looking to expand  
freelancers and volunteers  
to support communication projects,  
writers for The Relay, and more.

For more information on collaborating  
with the communications team,  
please email our Communications Manager,  
Meg Sizemore: [msizemore@gnjumc.org](mailto:msizemore@gnjumc.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sep. 30 - Oct. 2

IGNITE Conference

Oct. 4, 11, and 18,  
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Faith Sharing in Innovative Ways

Additional details can be found on the GNJ website at [gnjumc.org](http://gnjumc.org).

## OBITUARIES

Our thoughts and prayers are with these families and friends.

**Mildred Ann Peterson**, Spouse of Retired Elder, Rev. James Peterson, passed away on June 22, 2022. A memorial service was held on Thursday, June 30. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent by visiting: [https://www.hoffmanfuneralhomes.net/store/Category.aspx?CategoryId=319&icn=desktop\\_memorial\\_obituary\\_link#chooser](https://www.hoffmanfuneralhomes.net/store/Category.aspx?CategoryId=319&icn=desktop_memorial_obituary_link#chooser). Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Rev. James D. Peterson, husband at 194 Main St. Heislerville, NJ 08324-2003.

**Margaret Jane "Pat" Stiles**, Retired Full Elder, passed away on June 22, 2022. A memorial service was held on Friday, July 1. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to: Heart and Hand 212 D Street, South Charleston, WV 25303. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Margaret Young, daughter 1781 Woodward Dr. Charleston, WV 25312.

**Marilyn K (West) Sainsbury**, Retired Full Elder, passed away on July 5, 2022. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to: Malaga Camp 4488 Arbutus Ave., Newfield, NJ 08344 for the repair, and needed equipment to reopen the Ice Cream Store, 'Tis So Sweet. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Rev. James Sainsbury and Family 4020 44th Ave. N. St. Petersburg, FL 33714.

**Nancy Lyn Geyer**, Surviving spouse of Rev. Roger Geyer, passed away on July 8, 2022. A memorial service was held on Saturday, September 24. Memorial donations (in lieu of flowers) may be sent to: First United Methodist Church 566 S. Haywood St., Waynesville, NC 28786. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Kathy Geyer McNeil, daughter 210 Cokesbury Cir. Lake Junaluska, NC 28745.

## JOB OPENINGS

Check out all the latest job postings at:  
[www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities](http://www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities)

## FOR UNITED HEALTHCARE PARTICIPANTS

Direct Path-Your Support for Retiree healthcare is changing its name.

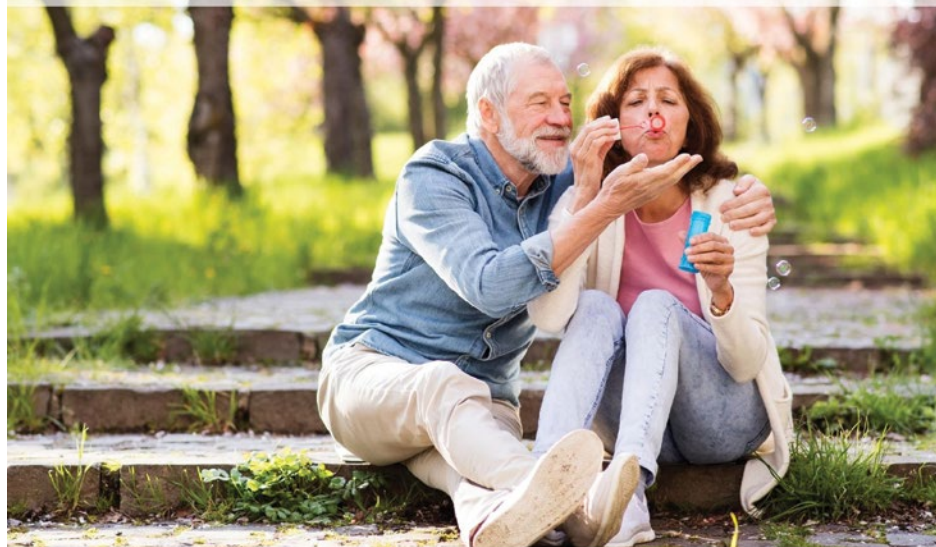
By the end of this year, Direct Path will transition to a new name: Optavise

They will still be your trusted partner delivering a cohesive suite of year-round services including, voluntary benefits, benefits administration, benefits communications, and healthcare advocacy.



DirectPath is becoming Optavise

## DO YOU KNOW ALL THE BENEFITS OFFERED BY A DUAL SPECIAL NEEDS PLAN?



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## Chart Your Own Future

Are you seeking rewarding, meaningful work to fit around your lifestyle? Whether you are a Certified Home Health Aide or looking to become a care Companion—Find a career that's right for you at United Methodist Communities.

**HomeWorks is now hiring in-home care Companions.**

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Sussex, Morris, and Warren



# NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

A Future With Hope is looking to expand, with many open positions. If you are passionate about people and eager to serve disaster impacted communities, please consider joining our team. Interested parties can apply at <https://www.gnjumc.org/job-opportunities/>

**To learn more about A Future With Hope's Ida Relief Fund, go to:**

[www.gnjumc.org/afwh/ida-relief-effort](http://www.gnjumc.org/afwh/ida-relief-effort)



**A FUTURE WITH HOPE**  
UNITED METHODISTS  
OF GREATER NEW JERSEY