



John Schol

Bishop

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference
Greater New Jersey Conference



September 1, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference,

Today, I become your bishop, not as one who is over you, but one with you as we together seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I could not be more excited about the opportunity of being your bishop. EPA with its significant United Methodist history, rich diversity, its strong creative faithful leadership and its missional congregations is a beacon of hope and possibility for the church and the world.

I am deeply grateful for the ministry of Bishop Peggy Johnson who has led you for 13 years and has been gracious and helpful to me during this season of transition. In my one-to-one conversations with leadership across the conference, person after person spoke of her warm heart, her presence throughout the conference, and how she led, particularly through a financial challenge. I look forward to building on Bishop Johnson's leadership.

In the coming months, I look forward to continuing to learn more about you and your ministry and how we together can grow deeper in faith, develop transformational leaders and grow vital congregations that are connecting with the people in their communities.

I grew up in Philadelphia and spent 47 years of my life being nurtured and serving in and through The United Methodist Church in EPA. My father was a carpet weaver and my mother worked as a school lunch aid and as a nursery school teacher. Our family was active in ministry and leadership at the Eden and St. James United Methodist Churches. Beverly and I have three children, Mark, Kristin and Rebecca, and three grandchildren, Elise, Nora, and Jakob, with another one on the way.

I have served as a pastor and executive director of the Frankford Group Ministry, the urban ministry director for our denomination, and the pastor of the West Chester UMC. After my election and consecration as a bishop in 2004, I was assigned to the Baltimore-Washington Conference and eight years later to the Greater New Jersey Conference (GNJ), and today I begin as your bishop and the bishop of GNJ. I have enjoyed every appointment I have served in and found I received more blessing than I gave and learned more than I taught.

During my life, I have learned the following.

1. God never gives up on us and is with us through it all.
2. Leadership is essential to the mission of the church, and we are all called by God to lead in and through the various ministries of the church.
3. The church, through the resurrection power of Jesus Christ, has a great opportunity to transform lives and even the world.
4. More than what you say, people will remember how you made them feel.

Today is my first day as your bishop and I could not be more excited about how God will use us together to make a difference. I look forward to all that God has in store for us.

Keep the faith!

- John

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Equipping transformational leaders for
New Disciples | Vital Congregations | Transformed World