

# The Authentic Ambassador Toolbox



*Resources to help you tell your  
UMC & UMCF story in your own voice*

Updated January 2026

## How To Use This Toolbox

This toolbox is designed to support – not script—your conversations about UMC and the UMC Foundation when you’re networking or introducing our mission to a new audience. You do **not** need to use everything in this toolkit. Treat it like a menu and select the elements that are applicable to the situation, feel natural to you, and reflect your own connection to the mission.

As you choose elements to incorporate into your own UMC/UMCF story, remember these basics:

- Start with your why
- Use our shared language as anchors
- Choose one impact example
- End with an invitation

## Our Shared Language – Common Anchor Points

*These are core facts about UMC and UMCF we should all be aligned on.*

### WHO We Are

UMC = United Methodist Communities

UMCF = United Methodist Communities Foundation

*Appendix Resource #1: Mission, Vision, Values*

## WHAT We Do

- Senior living
  - Independent living, assisted living, memory care, rehabilitation, respite, long-term care, hospice
- Senior affordable housing
- HomeWorks homecare services
- Community-driven programs
- BEAM consulting services

## WHERE We Serve

### Full-service locations

- Bristol Glen (Newton, NJ)
- Collingswood Manor (Collingswood, NJ)
- Pitman Manor (Pitman, NJ)
- The Shores (Ocean City, NJ)

### Senior Housing locations

- Bishop Taylor Manor (East Orange, NJ)
- Covenant Place (Plainfield, NJ)
- PineRidge of Montclair (Montclair, NJ)
- The Wesleyan (Red Bank, NJ)
- Wesley by the Bay (Ocean City, NJ)

### HomeWorks

- Can serve any county in NJ
- Companions and Certified Home Health Aides

## HOW We Fulfill Our Mission

*Everyday language, no jargon or acronyms*

UMC serves older adults by offering a full continuum of senior living and care from independent living to assisted living, memory care, affordable housing, hospice, and in-home services. Rooted in a faith-based tradition and open to people of all backgrounds, UMC focuses on compassionately serving in community so that all are free to choose abundant life. We grow our impact through creativity, innovation, and gracious hospitality, and we meet seniors where they are and respond to what they truly need.

**The UMC Foundation (UMCF)** strengthens and expands that work by building meaningful partnerships and securing critical resources. Through the generosity of individual donors, business partners, government funders, philanthropic foundations, churches, and community supporters, the Foundation helps fund resident assistance, housing, innovative healthcare, and community-driven programs - ensuring that quality care and connection remain accessible, sustainable, and responsive for both today's seniors and those we'll serve in the future.

**Together, UMC and UMCF bring people together** - residents, families, teammates, board members, and community partners - to grow our impact and help older adults live their most abundant lives.

## Words We Use

Key words & phrases

- Abundant life
- Connection
- Community
- Choice
- Compassion
- Dignity
- Purpose
- Innovation
- Hospitality

*Appendix Resource #2: “This, not that” Words We Use document in appendix*

## Impact Examples

Choose one or two and make them 1-2 sentence mini examples to spark conversation.

Sharing a personal experience you’ve had will **always** be the most authentic and natural way to communicate UMC/UMCF’s impact. But if you’re looking for another option or way to expand...

Retell a...

- Resident experience
- Family’s peace of mind
- Teammate’s growth
- Community partnerships
- Donor’s impact
- Special event

*Appendix Resource #3: Impact Story Reference Materials*

## And the most important part of crafting YOUR ambassador story...Your WHY!

Communicate your “Why” as a board member, donor, and supporter by sharing one of the following:

- “I serve on the board because...”
- “I connected with the mission of UMC/UMCF because...”
- “What surprised me most about UMC was...”
- “Working with the UMC/UMCF board opened my eyes to...”
- “One thing I’m proud of...”

### Important Note!

The core of your “Why” will likely always stay the same, but you can tailor what details you share and which prompt you use based on the audience you find yourself in front of.

Looking for a point of connection and leading with something your audience can relate to is always a good idea!

## Ways to Invite Others into the Mission

*End with a “call to action” that encourages someone to take the next step in learning about UMC/UMCF.*

- Tour a community
- Attend an event
- Watch Mark’s TEDx
- Visit the website
- Connect with a teammate
- Follow on social

## Important Note!

You'll notice that we did **NOT** include "Ask for a donation" in the suggestions.

We **never** want to kick off a new relationship by asking for a donation. Let your audience get to know UMC/UMCF and have a chance to buy-in and get excited about our mission.

Once they've expressed interest and have taken some next steps to learn more, **then** it's the appropriate time to consider involving a member of the UMCF team to begin donor cultivation.

## Cheat Sheet

If you ever get stuck or have a **very** limited amount of time to convey UMC/UMCF's mission, stick to the basics with these templates:

### UMC Board of Directors

"I serve on the UMC Board of Directors because [personal reason]. UMC is [one-sentence mission in plain words]. Recently, [specific impact example or program story] showed me how [what changed for seniors/families]. If you ever want to learn more or get involved, I'd be happy to connect you with [name/next step]."

### UMCF Board of Trustees

"I'm a UMC Foundation Trustee because [personal reason]. The Foundation [one-sentence mission: sustains/grows UMC's impact through philanthropy]. A recent gift funded [specific program/item], which [clear outcome]. If you'd like to hear how gifts and volunteering make a difference [invite to a conversation/event/website]."

## Appendix

### 1. Mission & Purpose, Vision, Values, Etc.

#### UMC

- Mission: Compassionately serving in community so that all are free to choose abundant life
- Vision: Growing through creativity, innovation, and gracious hospitality
- Values:
  - Compassion – demonstrating love in our daily interactions
  - Respect – seeing and valuing sacred worth
  - Stewardship – faithfully managing the resources entrusted to us
  - Service – finding joy in caring

#### UMCF

- Mission: The UMC Foundation (UMCF) advances sustainable community living and compassionate care for seniors by raising critical funds for United Methodist Communities (UMC).
- Purpose: The role of UMCF is to create and maintain strong partnerships and secure critical funding to support residents with limited financial means, and fund UMC's housing, innovative healthcare, and community-driven programs and projects that help older adults live their most abundant lives. Together with our community of individual donors, business partners, local churches and groups, and other friends of our mission, we are advancing UMC's excellence in senior care and sustainable senior living.

## 2. Words We Use – an excerpt from our “This, Not That” Guide

Instead of...	We say...	Because...
Activities	Community Life	Activities feels one-dimensional, while talking about life is holistic.
Admission	Move-in	Admission is medically oriented. People are making a lifestyle choice to <b>move in</b> to our communities.
Alzheimer’s unit	Tapestries neighborhood	We have branded our memory support services as Tapestries, and unit is medically oriented.
Associates, employees	Teammates	We are a team, so we have teammates!
Care type	Style of living, service line	Care type puts the emphasis on care we provide, rather than the more holistic view of residents living their lives in our communities.
Dietary	Dining Services	Dietary is an institutional term.
Discharge	Move-out	Discharge is medically oriented. Residents <b>move out</b> of our communities.
Facility	Community, campus, site	Facility is medically oriented and historically has many negative connotations.

Patient	Resident, client, person	Patient is medically oriented.
Person-centered care	Person-directed or resident-directed living	“Centered care” focused on just one element of a resident’s life, while “directed living” is more empowering and holistic.
Unit	Apartment, home, neighborhood	Unit is institutional and medically oriented. People live in apartments, homes, and neighborhoods.

### 3. Impact Story Reference Materials

*If you don't have your own personal impact story, feel free to share a recent impact story that resonates with you!*

- Mark’s TEDxCapeMay talk, [Re-envisioning Aging Successfully](#)
- 2025 Spring Appeal featuring Ginny Scheetz, resident at The Shores  
[Link to letter on SupportUMCF.org](#)
- 2025/2026 Year End Appeal featuring Deb’s experience with her mom Sue, a resident at Bristol Glen  
[Link to letter on SupportUMCF.org](#)
- Recent United in Philanthropy newsletters
  - a. [Winter 2025 Issue](#)
- Recent Engage magazines
  - a. [Summer 2025 Issue](#)
- [News & Events section of SupportUMCF.org](#)
- [UMC’s YouTube Channel video library](#)