The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: “Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” So, I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him. Jeremiah 18:1-4

50th Anniversary NEAUCE Conference
New England Association of United Church Educators

Join us for a two-day interactive virtual event for faith formation leaders and pastors, both seasoned or just starting on the journey. This is our 50th anniversary year learning and laughing together! On Friday night, take a deep dive with the Rev. Dr. Gay Byron into “Racism and Ethnicity in the Bible”. On Saturday morning, the Rev. Dr. Jason Santos will lead us in a discussion on how we can take what we’ve learned and make positive changes in our Faith Formation programs, including intergenerational applications. Later, engage your heart and mind with Rev. Suzi Townsley in a workshop for innovative thinking. We are also excited to have musician, Daniel Brownell, Val Tutson’s storytelling, Rev. Amy Bruch’s artistry, and special appearances from NEAUCE’s Skip & Dip friends, Rev. Sue Remick and Rev. Ruth Martz. This virtual experience will bring us together once again in a new way and most importantly, help us all to move towards racial justice, and begin to build up a transformed world into God’s realm.
Keynote Speaker: Rev. Gay L. Byron, Ph.D

The Rev. Dr. Gay L. Byron is Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at the Howard University School of Divinity in Washington, DC. Her scholarship focuses on the origins of Christianity in ancient Ethiopia. She is the recipient of several fellowships for her research, which identifies and examines ancient Ethiopic (Ge’ez) sources for the study of the New Testament and other early Christian writings. She is the author of Symbolic Blackness and Ethnic Difference in Early Christian Literature (Routledge Press) and co-editor of Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse (SBL Press). Rev. Byron is an ordained minister of the Word and Sacrament (Teaching Elder) in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and currently serves as the Stated Supply Pastor at Northminster Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. She preaches and leads workshops throughout the country for a variety of denominational bodies, and lectures at theological schools and universities on topics dealing with race, ethnicity, and the Bible; African American and womanist hermeneutics; Ethiopic manuscripts; and early Ethiopian Christianity. She holds degrees from Florida State University (B.S.), Clark Atlanta University (M.B.A.), and Union Theological Seminary in New York City (M.Div. and Ph.D.). She has two sons and enjoys sporting and cultural activities.

Keynote Speaker & Worship Leader: Rev. Jason Brian Santos, Ph.D

The Rev. Dr. Jason Brian Santos is an American practical theologian and the pastor of Community Presbyterian Church, a small mountain congregation located in Lake City, CO. For the last five years, he served as the national director for Christian Formation for the Presbyterian Church (USA), where he is an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament. He holds a Ph.D. in practical theology from Princeton Theological Seminary, where he also earned his Masters of Divinity. He is the author of A Community Called Taiz (IVP, 2008) and co-author of the forthcoming revised edition of Inter-generational Christian Formation (IVP Academic, 2012). Jason currently resides in an almost 150 year old historic church manse in Lake City, with his wife, Shannon and his two sons, Judah and Silas (aka Tutu). In his spare time, he plays and designs board games.
Blue Sky Workshop Leader: Rev. Susan Townsley

Rev. Susan Townsley is the Pastor of South Church in Kennebunkport, Maine. Formerly the Associate Conference Minister for Innovation, Leadership, and Change in the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, Suzi uses creative and playful approaches to visioning and futuring. Rev. Suzi is known for her leadership development, the creation of "Blue Sky" spaces for innovative thinking, and her work to enhance church's capacity for change. She is a graduate of Smith College (Mathematics) and Harvard Divinity School. She has been ordained for 27 years and is also a PCC certified Coach.

Music Leader: Daniel Brownell

A native of southern Connecticut, Daniel Brownell is an accomplished professional musician and trained music educator. Since 2015, he has served as Minister of Music at the First United Church of Christ, Congregational of Milford, CT, where he directs six music ensembles, serves as principal organist and accompanist for all worship services, guides the long-term vision of the ministry including its community outreach, and coordinates the Annual Concert Series. During the pandemic, he has been instrumental in transforming the music ministry for online worship and programming, and helping to shepherd the whole church through this new reality. Before Milford, he served as Director of Music of Terryville Congregational Church for 4 years, after holding a number of small church positions while still an undergrad. He also holds nearly ten years of professional experience as a music educator, having taught in the public and private schools of CT in a variety of instrumental and choral positions. Daniel holds degrees from Ithaca College (BM, Music Education), and the University of Hartford’s, Hartt School of Music (MME, Music Education and Wind Conducting). He is active as an organ recitalist, and a performer of various mediums across the state. You can find out more about him from his personal website (dabrownellmusic.com) and his professional activities on the YouTube page of First UCC Milford (YouTube search: First UCC Milford). He lives in Wallingford with his wife, and their beautiful Belgian sheepdog.
Guest Storyteller: Valerie Tutson

Valerie Tutson graduated from Brown University with a self-designed major, Storytelling As a Communication’s Art, and a Masters in Theatre. Since 1991 she has traveled the country and world teaching storytelling and gathering and sharing stories and songs. Her repertoire includes folktale, personal and historical stories with an emphasis on black traditions, and first person Bible stories. A lifelong member of the UCC, Valerie has been featured at numerous UCC events across the country both as a storyteller and workshop/retreat leader. Valerie has also shared her gifts in interfaith gatherings and settings for other denominations. She volunteers each summer at Silver Lake, the Connecticut Conference Outdoor Ministry Program, as one of the deans of SING PRAISE, a conference during which 40 middle schoolers write and perform an original Biblical musical in 5 days. In addition to telling stories herself, Valerie provides opportunities for others tell their stories, as well. For 12 years she hosted Cultural Tapestry, an award-winning show for COX Communications. Valerie is a founding member of the Rhode Island Black Storytellers, director of FUNDA FEST: An Annual Celebration of Black Storytelling, and serves as the Executive Director. Valerie served on the board of the National Association of Black Storytellers and twice was Co-Director of its annual Festival and Conference, once in Providence, RI. Valerie has been a featured teller and EMCEE at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesboro, Tennessee and the National Black Storytelling Festival and Conference. In 2013 Valerie received the Legacy Award from Big Brothers and Sisters of the Ocean State, and, in 2014, she received an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Rhode Island College, where she was also the Commencement Speaker.

Guest Artist: Rev. Amy Bruch

Rev. Amy A. Bruch has served both churches and preparatory schools as an ordained UCC minister and teacher for almost 30 years. Throughout her life and ministry, Amy has felt called to be a “maker”, specifically working in clay, primarily on the wheel. Amy feels profoundly grateful for the gift of her hands. One of Amy's favorite quotes comes from a fellow potter named Carla Needleman, who said, “the work of craft is a preparation, one of many.” Amy believes that her many years spent in studios of all kinds, making objects from clay, wood, paper, straw, metal and more, have had a profound impact on her life... in the ways she has learned to express creativity, to problem solve, to develop habits of skill, to teach others and to minister to communities of faith. She believes we are all makers at heart.
Schedule

Note: all times are estimated and may vary. Many surprises are hidden within, including a 50th year celebration, picture slideshows, storytelling, artistry, special guest comedians! Also, the first 50 registered receive a free gift!

FRIDAY, April 30, “Tear Down”
✦ 6:30 PM Welcome! NEAUCE 50 Years Celebration!
Worship & Communion (prepare your own elements) Rev. Dr. Jason Santos, Dan Brownell, Rev. Amy Bruch, Val Tutson, Keynote Rev. Dr. Gay Byron (Racism & Ethnicity in the Bible)
✦ 8:30 - 9:00 PM Hospitality Breakout rooms (optional)

SATURDAY, May 1 “Transform”
✦ 8:30- 9:00 AM Hospitality Breakout Rooms (optional)
✦ 9:00 AM Welcome, Business Meeting, Worship & Plenary - Rev. Dr. Jason Santos
✦ 11:05 AM Break
✦ 11:25 AM Blue Sky Workshop- Rev. Suzi Townsley
✦ 12:40 PM Call to Action Ceremony “Transcend” - Rev. Dr. Jason Santos
✦ 1:00 PM Conclusion of Conference

To Register: https://www.auce-ucc.org/new-england

NEAUCE Coordinating Team

Chair: Kristin Putney - putneyk@sneucc.org
Kristin serves part time as the Minister of Faith Formation, Children and Families for the Southern New England Conference UCC and also serves part time at the Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC, MA, as the Director of Faith Formation, Youth and Family Ministries. In all settings, Kristin enjoys engaging, equipping and empowering parents and children of all ages. She has been utilizing her creative ways for learning and experiencing faith formation for over 30 years. Kristin is also a mural artist and designer.

Registrar: Rev. Jessica Moore - jreginamoore@hotmail.com
Rev. Jessica Moore is currently the settled Minister at First Congregational Church, UCC, in St. Albans, VT. She was previously a Street Pastor for Grace-Street Ministry, a ministry that works with the homeless and marginalized in Portland, ME.

Treasurer: Stacy Inman - stacyann7@comcast.net
Stacy is the chairperson of the Board of Christian Education at the Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC, in Seekonk MA. She also serves as an educator in their youth ministries program where she attends with her three teenage boys.
**SNEUCC Conference Rep:** Debby Kirk - kirkd@sneucc.org

Debby is the conference representative to the NEAUCCE planning team and is the Faith Formation Team Leader for the Southern New England Conference, UCC. where she organizes leadership development programs for youth, including Thinking About Working for God for a Living for those considering ministry, and wider church trips such as Youth @ Synod and the UCC National Youth Event.

**CT Rep:** Dawne Quinn - dawne.quinn@whfirstchurch.org

Dawne is the Director of the First Church Academy for Young Children. She previously served First Church West Hartford, UCC as the Commissioned Minister of Faith Formation. Dawne has served on the NEAUCCE coordinating team as both the CT Rep and Registrar.

**ME Rep:** Rose Stansfield - rstansfield216@gmail.com

Rose is the Director of Christian Education and Community Outreach for High Street Congregational Church, UCC in Auburn Maine. She leads a small group of multi-age and multi-cultural children via Zoom with "Breakfast and Blessings".

**MA Rep:** Amy Middleton - amydaremiddleton@gmail.com

Amy is the Director of Christian Education and Family Ministries at the First Congregational Church of Chatham on Cape Cod. This year marks her 17th in that role. Her position includes faith formation for all ages, leading intergenerational worship services, confirmation, VBS and women’s spiritual gatherings. She is also an elementary art teacher and an active artist-painter, exhibiting frequently in local shops in her area.

**NH Rep:** Kristin Forselius - kristinf@ccdurham.org

Kristin is the Education and Faith Formation Director for the Community Church of Durham, NH where she has the privilege of working with all ages on ways to grow in service and faith. She created and runs the church Changemaker programs where youth and children are encouraged to explore their faith foundation by leading and participating in social justice work and team building. In addition, she volunteers in local schools and non-profits, collaborating on ways to build a more compassionate and equitable community.

**RI Rep:** Rev. Chontell Nelson Washington - chontellnw@gmail.com

Rev. Chontell is a native Rhode Islander and is ordained in the United Church of Christ. She is a member of Beneficent Church in Rhode Island and an active member of the SNEUCC Outdoor Ministries. She has been recently called as the new pastor of the First Congregational Church of West Springfield, MA.

**VT Rep:** Jenny Cummings - jbent717@gmail.com

Jennifer is the youth leader at the United Federated Church in Williamstown, Vermont. Between Sunday school and youth fellowship she has been involved in Faith Formation in their church for 30 years. She has had the pleasure of attending NEAUCCE for 10 years.