May 2019 News & Updates

Refresh, Renew, and Rejuvenate!

Now that the unofficial start of summer is here, my hope is that you give yourself permission to enjoy life at a slower pace. Pause for a moment to appreciate the longer daylight hours, the sound of the chirping birds, the warmth of the sunshine, the smell of freshly cut grass, and the beauty in the vibrant colors of the day-lilies. As your senses become aware of all that God's creation has to offer, let the experience fill your mind, body and soul.

Take time to reflect on your personal faith journey, reminding yourself that Christian Formation is a lifelong process of growing in relationship with God, self, and others. Does your summer include time for yourself? time shared with others? quiet time with God? If not, consider renewing your relationships. I think you will find it is a gift that brings a special blessing upon your day.

If you need help getting started in renewing your relationship with God, I recommend adding or recommitting to a daily devotional as part of your routine. Here are a few of my favorites:

- **Still Speaking Daily Devotional** (sign up to have it delivered by e-mail every morning)
- **Our Daily Bread** (a scripture selection and brief devotional thoughts provide an avenue for connecting with God even on the busiest days.)
- **Guidepost** (true stories of hope, faith, personal growth and positive thinking, plus inspiring quotes, daily devotionals and prayers)

Other Summer Recommendations

**Christ Walk: A 40-Day Spiritual Fitness Program**
([https://www.churchpublishing.org/christwalk](https://www.churchpublishing.org/christwalk))

What's better than feeding your soul while developing healthy practices for your body and mind? Christ Walk outlines a 40-day program for individuals and groups to focus on improving physical health while engaging in spiritual and mental reflection and growth.

**Wisdom Retreat at Hallelujah Farm, June 20-23**
([http://www.hallelujahfarm.com/62019-wisdom-retreat.html](http://www.hallelujahfarm.com/62019-wisdom-retreat.html))

Participate in a weekend retreat (The Embodied Heart: Finding Presence in Daily Life) that offers a unique opportunity to explore and begin to develop a relationship with our heart. Through guided contemplative and body-based practices drawn from Taoism and Christianity, you will explore the space of your heart in a variety of ways and contexts: from the depths of your prayer lives to
chopping vegetables to conversation with one another.

**Barbara Harris Center Open Guest Weekend, July 12-14**
(http://www.bchcenter.org/retreats)
A weekend designed to unwind from the usual routine, unplug the computers, TV’s and phones, and refresh the body and soul at this wooded retreat center located on the scenic shoreline of Otter Lake, in Greenfield, NH. There will be optional group activities scheduled throughout the weekend, so guests may enjoy themselves however they choose. They will take care of the cooking and cleaning, while you enjoy a much needed recharge.

**Engage on a spiritual journey with guidance from Henry Nouwen in the book *Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith***
As a priest, pastor, and professor of spirituality at Notre Dame, Yale, and Harvard, Nouwen offered spiritual direction to many students, but his famous course on spiritual direction was never recorded during his lifetime. Now, in *Spiritual Direction*, the first of a series, one of Nouwen’s students (Michael Christensen) and one of his editors (Rebecca Laird) have developed his courses and practice of spiritual direction into a book of profound wisdom for living a deep spiritual life.

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**Webinars**

**Youth Formation in Cultural Humility & Diversity**
Original Webinar Date: May 21, 2019 - 7:30 - 8:30 pm

We know that cultural humility and embracing diversity are key to living life to its fullest as we seek to Become Beloved Community through the Way of Love. We know that children as young as 3 years old have developed racial preferences. Thus, we need to start teaching children at an early age about cultural humility and embracing diversity so they don’t continue the tribal behavior we see in our society today.

But is it realistic to think that young people can be taught cultural humility and appreciation of diversity? And if so, how should we do so?

In this webinar Linnae Peterson, Formation Network Coordinator for the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire, shared her thoughts on how to teach young people these crucial life concepts and skills and resources available to do so.

This webinar is part of a monthly series hosted by Province I’s Cultural Competency and Multicultural Awareness Task Force. The series is designed to raise awareness, provide resources, and offer hopeful approaches for talking across difference and celebrating diversity.

Previous conversations are recorded for continued access and can be found on the Province I website at: [https://www.province1.org/exploring-diversity-videos](https://www.province1.org/exploring-diversity-videos).

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**Upcoming Events**
**Project Learning Tree and Project WILD Workshop**

Conversation and Environmental Education  
Cost: $30.00, includes 2 manuals and snacks  
Wednesday, June 19, 2019, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm  
11 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH

Project WILD and Project Learning Tree are international activity-based, supplementary curricula that support the teaching of conservation and environmental education concepts. If you are looking for quick activities to do with your summer or after school program this workshop is for you. We will be doing activities that can be done outside and that help reinforce ecological concepts about ecosystems and habitats in a fun way. You will be introduced to a variety of activities, as well as have time to practice leading an activity. While the workshop is designed for use in camp, nature center and after school program settings, it is appropriate also for classroom teachers. Participants will receive a copy of each guide. The workshop is supported by the Durant Fund-NH Fish and Game Department and the NH Division of Forests and Lands.

For more information:  
Mary Goodyear at 271-6649 and [mary.goodyear@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:mary.goodyear@wildlife.nh.gov);  
Judy Silverberg at 568-2503 or [info@nhplt.org](mailto:info@nhplt.org)  
To register and pay: visit [www.nhplt.org](http://www.nhplt.org) by June 17

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**Senior High Youth Canoe Trip**

July 26 - Aug 3, 2019  
LaVerendrye, Quebec, Canada

South Congregational Church, Newport, NH, invites you to join them on their annual Voyageurs Canoe Trip. Spend a week in Canada with 11 other people, adult leaders and teenagers, like you. Paddle and camp in the wilderness of the
Provincial Park, "LaVerendrye". Learn how to work together and be self-sufficient. Have fun! Work Hard! Learn about yourself! Discover what you are REALLY able to do!!

For more information: download the flyer or visit the Canoe Trip website at: http://www.thesouthchurch.org/canoe/.

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**Our Whole Lives (OWL) Facilitator Training for Grades 7-12**  
Aug 23 - 25, 2019  
The Walker Center for Ecumenical Exchange  
Auburndale, Massachusetts

![Sexuality and Our Faith](images)

*Our Whole Lives*, together with *Sexuality and Our Faith*, helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their relationships, health and behavior in the context of their faith. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. It provides not only facts about anatomy and human development, but helps participants to clarify their values, build interpersonal skills and understand the social, emotional and spiritual aspects of sexuality.

[Click here](url) to visit the registration site and learn more about Facilitator Training.

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**"UCC: Is That For Me?" 2019 Confirmation Retreat**  
September 27 - 29, 2019  
Horton Center  
Pine Mountain, Gorham, NH
What does the United Church of Christ have to do with my life and my church? Do my beliefs and dreams fit with the UCC? What does the phrase "God is still speaking" mean anyway? Come join us for a weekend retreat so that we can talk about questions like these! Youth from New England Confirmation classes will gather for worship, music, discussion, good food and games. Download the retreat brochure to learn more about the retreat, including how to register!

Quick Links

- The Association of United Church Educators (AUCE). A membership organization, of and for lay and ordained, paid and volunteer pastors, educators, and youth workers, which has been providing advocacy and support for church education and educators in the United Church of Christ since 1971.
- "The Guide" Called to Educational and Formational Ministries: A Guide for Local Churches, Educators, and Youth Workers

Employment Opportunities

Local: Visit the Classifieds/Help Wanted section of the NH Conference UCC website.
**National:** Willing to relocate? The [UCC Ministry Opportunities webpage](https://www.ucc.org) is a great source for Christian Education and Faith Formation openings nationwide.

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**The Word of God**

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Matthew 11:28-29 (NRSV)