October 2019 News & Updates

"Prayer is an essential practice of faith and tradition. Many of us long for a deeper life of prayer. Prayer may be a conversation with God; prayer may also be activity that permeates all of one’s life. When we live prayerfully we may begin to develop a worldview that understands our daily lives as an extension of our communal worship. By reclaiming familiar rituals, and through exploring new rituals, we may begin to recognize the holy in the ordinary, mark time and space as sacred, and give meaning to the whole of our experience."
-Praying and Making Ritual, Getting Started, Faith Practices

Prayer Styles

Do you wonder how to help people get started with the practice of prayer? Be mindful that prayer is more than just words, it comes from the heart to help us connect with God. Below are some suggestions using different forms of expression to communicate in your loving relationship with God.


- **Praying in Color** - is a visual, concrete way to pray when words seem to escape you. Learn more about this practice from Sybil and Andy MacBeth at: https://prayingincolor.com/.

- **Walking a Labyrinth** -is a way to get in touch with yourself through a whole body experience. Jill Kimberly Hartwell Geoffrion draws upon her experience to introduce you to many resources for using labyrinths in Christian prayer and ministry in her book Christian Prayer and Labyrinths: Pathways to Faith, Hope and Love. Another holistic approach to making a healthy mind, body and spiritual connection can be found in the book Christ Walk: A 40 Day Spiritual Fitness Program.

- **Praying through Music** - You may recall the phrase credited to St. Augustine, "He who sings, prays twice." Music, in this case singing, is another way to praise and worship God using the gifts and talents God has bestowed upon us. The Faith Practices curriculum shares a simple idea of Singing a Prayer as portrayed in the of video: "Standing in the Need of Prayer."

Seasonal Prayer Resources
• Do you offer a prayer or say grace before your Thanksgiving Meal? Check out these 10 ideas from Building Faith.

• A New Earth - Advent/Epiphany Devotional 2019
  The promise of God’s presence and restoration is not just for humanity but for all creation. Keep company with the stars and planets, cattle and sheep for the Advent 2019 season.

  From the writers of the popular online Daily Devotional, A New Earth includes a biblical text, reflection, and prayer for each day. New for 2019: this popular resource now includes daily readings through Epiphany.

• Christmas is Coming! But Waiting is Hard!
  This Advent book contains family devotions that focus on connecting Jesus and the symbols of Christmas. Each day includes a devotional, prayer, questions to discuss, the meaning of a Christmas symbol, and suggested activities to put the scriptures into action. Reproducibles are included to help with the symbol activities.

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Curricula and Group Resources Update

• The Congressional Library & Archives four-part historical introduction and discussion guide, "Plymouth's Pilgrims: Their Church, Their World, and Ours" is now available, free of charge, along with a variety of other online resources—suggestions for further study, some key historical documents to pair with each lesson, a list of helpful websites, and an "ask the experts" feature. They will also be providing a version of the discussion guide specifically geared for youth groups and confirmation classes. Download these resources at: http://www.congregationallibrary.org/PlymouthsPilgrims

• The first volume of Exploring Justice: The Ten Commandments is now available on Amazon. The first volume, called Priorities, will cover three commandments: No other gods, No graven images and Don't take God's name in vain. The social justice issues included are: Protest, The Pledge of Allegiance, Nationalism, Free Speech, Freedom of Religion, American Exceptionalism, Guns, Partisan Politics, Separation of Church and State, Taking a Knee, Removal of Confederate Monuments, the US Flag Code, and America First. Don't forget you'll need both the student book and leader's guide to run a group

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National Youth Event (NYE) 2020
Learn more about the plans for this four day event at: nye.uccpages.org.

If you or youth from your church are interested in being part of a NH group traveling to NYE 2020, please contact Ann Desrochers via email: adesrochers@nhcucc.org before the end of November. Travel arrangements will be made based on the number of youth expressing interest in participating.

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

Local Opportunities

- Lee Church Congregational United Church of Christ is looking for a 15 hour per week Director of Youth Ministries to provide overall leadership in their Christian Education (CE) Ministry, with a specific focus on leadership and development of youth groups and programs, including guidance and resources. To maintain and enhance the Christian Education program for the Lee Church Congregational Community, the person will support the CE Ministry in attaining the goals of Christian education for pre-kindergarten through senior high school youth. The person in this position should be actively supportive and sensitive to the whole mission of this church and guided by his/her own Christian faith. For more information download the Position Profile and list of specific responsibilities.
Visit the [Classifieds/Help Wanted](#) section of the NH Conference UCC website.

**National Opportunities**

Willing to relocate? The [UCC Ministry Opportunities webpage](#) is a great source for Christian Education and Faith Formation openings nationwide.

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**The Word of God**

*(This month I share the Word of God as expressed through prayers written on the Confirmation Retreat.)*

Dear God,
You are our light in the darkness.
I thank you for this day.
I thank you for an opportunity to meet with other communities, have time just to think, and take a break from the chaos-ness of the world.
I pray that you will be with me in the future as I make decisions, trust my instincts, and to keep me safe.
I celebrate your kindness, presence, and openness.
Amen!!
-Richmond Congregational Church, Richmond, VT.

Dear God,
You are Holy Spirit and father.
I thank you for this day!
I thank you for an opportunity to play tether ball, go hiking to Chapel Rock and Randolph Ledge, journey to Horton Center, decorate candles, and make new friends.
I pray that you will be with me in the future as I get confirmed, journey in faith and self-discovery, and go back to school.
I celebrate your caring, loving, giving, generosity, faithfulness and spirit.
Amen!
-First Congregational Church of Pelham, NH.

Dear God,
You are our care giver.
I thank you for this day.
I thank you for an opportunity to learn, make new friends, and to eat food.
I pray that you will be with me in the future as I grow in my faith, and go through high school.
I celebrate your love and your acceptance.
Amen.
-Church of Christ at Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.

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