



Christian Education & Formation Newsletter

December 2016 News & Updates

December days can quickly become filled with trying to find that perfect gift, baking, decorating, and getting all those cards in the mail. In the midst of the hustle and bustle, let us not forget that Advent and Christmas are about celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior. Make time to reflect and let Jesus into your heart!

Encouraging Families to be Communities of Faith Practice

Resources for Celebrating Christmas & Advent at Home

- Incorporate prayer into your household this Advent Season using [this guide](#) from [Building Faith](#)
- Rev. Dr. Olivia Bryan Updegrove, ordained in Disciples of Christ, shared a variety of ideas for Teaching the Biblical Stories, Worship in the Home, Mission and Outreach, and activities Beyond the Holiday Season in her 2014 resource [In Home Faith Ideas for Advent and Christmas](#)
- Published in 2011, the *What Is?* series added [What is Advent? Preparing for Christmas](#). This booklet provides an "at home" or "in church" resource for explaining the meaning of Advent to tweens ages 9-12 using puzzles and activities.
- Dr. Elizabeth Windsor, Christian Formation Specialist for the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church, provides ideas for keeping Advent at home on her site [Fun & Faith @ Home](#)



Upcoming Events & Training Opportunities

Digital Stewardship: Churches + Online Giving

Wednesday, December 14, 2016 - 3:00 PM EST

Part of the [Wisdom From the Field Webinar Series](#) sponsored by The Center for the Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminar. [Register Here >>](#)

Claiming Epiphany: Theology, Practice, and Good Ideas

Watch a replay of the Webinar held on Wednesday, November 16, 2016.



e-Formation Bootcamp New England March 10-11, 2017

Sponsored by Province 1, Virginia Theological Seminary and Boston University School of Theology

Have you wondered if your congregation is using the best new tools available to reach out to the community? Does your ministry need better ways to communicate? How can you create a community online that reflects your "in real life" church world? The Center for the Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminary will be sponsoring day-long workshops for church leaders, parish administrators and communicators, clergy, and seminarians interested in social media and digital technology in ministry. In addition to plenary and consultation time, the day will include workshops on:

- Church Website (Re)Design
- Using Online Spiritual Resource
- Basic Social Media: Facebook and Twitter for Congregations and Individual
- E-vangelism 101: Online Newsletters and Digital Advertising
- Faith in Motion: Web Video and Digital Storytelling
- Using Specialized Community Outreach and Communication Tools

For additional information: <http://www.eformationvts.org/learning-opportunities/regional-boot-camps/>

Youth@GeneralSynod Program

June 30 - July 4, 2017

Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD



There will be a new emphasis on integrating youth into the heart of the United Church of Christ's General Synod next summer in Baltimore. Through activities designed to connect faith with daily life and issues of justice, along with leadership opportunities as part of the new

Youth@GeneralSynod program, young people will be directly and visibly involved in the denomination's biennial event. [Read more >>](#)

Youth interested in joining the New Hampshire delegation traveling to General Synod please [email](#) Ann Desrochers.

Learn about [more events](#) on the Christian Formation Ministry [Resources webpage](#).

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.
 - Planning Ahead? Check out [2017 VBS Comparison Chart](#) from Cokesbury.
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Employment Opportunities

Visit the [Classifieds/Help Wanted](#) section of the NHCUCS website or the [UCC Ministry Opportunities webpage](#) (national) for more information on employment opportunities in the field of Christian Education and Faith Formation.

The Word of God

"Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." Isaiah 40:1-5 (NRSV)

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