

Christian Education & Formation Newsletter

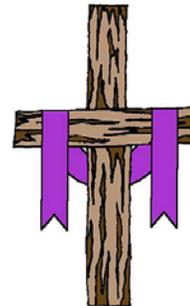
January 2017 News & Updates

Here we are almost a month into the new calendar year, Christmas and Advent in the rear view mirror and the Lenten Season on the horizon. This edition of the newsletter provides some Lenten and Easter resources for use in the home or at church; and some information on events to help you, as Faith Formation Leaders, reflect, refresh and renew.

Encouraging Families to be Communities of Faith Practice

Resources for Celebrating Lent & Easter at Home

- The [Building Faith website](#) provides a variety of ideas for bringing Lent and Easter into the family home. Among them is the [Lent in a Bag activity](#) using symbols of the season to promote dialogue and reflection, including the youngest to the oldest members of the family. Also check out their suggestions for [Holy Week](#) and [Easter](#).
- Participate in the [The Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast](#). The Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ will be re-running the 2016 ELCF. Receive a daily message from Ash Wednesday through Easter with a recommended activity/spiritual practice to do as a concrete way to participate in the stewardship of God's creation.
- Regular prayer and Bible study are an essential part of growing in faith. In this free [2017 Lenten Devotionals booklet](#) Christine V. Hides invites people of all ages to read one psalm per day during Lent. She provides an introduction, and weekly questions to help guide the conversation.



Lenten Resources for Use at Church

- The [Center for the Ministry of Teaching](#) (CMT) has once again teamed up with the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) to bring you a brand new Lenten study called the [5 Marks of Love](#).

- Looking for a Lenten Program where people of all ages can participate instead of just observe? Consider this idea for an [Intergenerational Lenten Fair](#) posted on the [Ministry Matters website](#). Even if you are not inclined to implement the whole program, many of the suggestions (recipes for making pretzels/hot cross buns/pancakes, decorating eggs, making a cross of nails, planting new seeds, preparing a Seder meal or the butterfly craft) could be done as a single stand alone activity.

Find information on additional [resources for Lent and Easter](#) on the [Christian Formation Ministry Resources webpage](#).

Upcoming Events & Training Opportunities

40 Days of Focus: Congregational Formation during Lent

Watch a replay of the Webinar Held on Wednesday, January 18, 2017. This webinar is part of the [Wisdom From the Field Webinar Series](#) sponsored by The Center for the Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminar.

[Learn More >>](#)

Convocation 2017 - "Course Corrections"

January 30-31, 2017

The [BTS Center](#) will continue a century-old tradition of bringing together nationally-recognized speakers to share ideas and perspectives about

contemporary spiritual and religious concerns. Convocation 2017 - "Course Corrections" - will provide participants with opportunities to make meaning of the changes that are transforming 21st century spiritual and religious landscapes. This year's Convocation will feature Bible scholar Pam Shellberg, Guggenheim-award-winning poet Scott Cairns, and spiritual director/social worker Michelle Walsh. [Learn More >>](#)



Prepared to Serve 2017 is scheduled to take place on **Saturday, February 25, 2017**, at Pembroke Academy in Pembroke, NH. This year's theme will be "I Planted, Others Watered, but God Gives the Growth."

This year's event offers a full schedule for the day that includes time for worship, attending workshops, viewing exhibits, and

enjoying food and fellowship with folks from all over New Hampshire. With over 80 workshop options on a variety of topics, we are hopeful that this day will be meaningful and productive for all who attend.

To learn more, [view the event brochure](#), or sign up now by visiting the [event registration website](#). Workshops fill quickly, so don't delay!

46th Annual New England Association of United Church Educators (NEAUCE) Conference

"Toward Common Ground - Living Faithfully in a Diverse World Community"

May 2 - 4, 2017 Pilgrim Pines, Swanzey, NH



Join Christian Educators, Youth Leaders, Clergy, and Lay Leaders for a three day gathering filled with worship, fellowship, music, workshops, fun and relaxation. This year's event will feature a Racial Justice Keynote Address by The Rev. Da Vita D. McCallister; an Interfaith Keynote Address from Dr. Heidi Hadsell; and a Faith Formation/Practical Theology Keynote Address by Dr. Courtney T. Goto. Learn more by [downloading the event brochure](#).

Look for updates when the Event registration opens in early February. New Hampshire Scholarship funds are available to attend NEAUCE. Contact [Ann Desrochers](#) for more information on scholarship fund.

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.

Employment Opportunities

Local (New Hampshire):

- **Atkinson Congregational Church** is looking for a part-time Director of Children and Youth Ministries. Visit the [Classifieds/Help Wanted](#) section of the NH Conference UCC website for more details on this position.
- The **Brookline Community Church** is looking for a [Faith Formation Director](#) to create something from the ground up that helps the church reach out to the children of Brookline.

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

The Word of God

"Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near."
Joel 2:1 (NRSV)

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