



## Christian Education & Formation Newsletter

### July 2017 News & Updates

Have you ever been called upon to deliver a Children's Sermon? Have you struggled with what to say and/or how to say it to really connect with their world view? This issue of the newsletter provides some guidance on preparing messages that resonate with our younger congregants.

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#### Featured Resources

##### Articles

- [Maximizing the Children's Sermon](#) was originally published in the Winter 1986 issue of *Christianity Today/Leadership Journal*. At that time the author, Richard J. Coleman, was a teaching minister at the Community Church of Durham (UCC), Durham, New Hampshire. This in-depth article explores his personal journey in rethinking what truly matters when sharing the Gospel with children. While the article is dated, his discoveries are still quite relevant.
- The Rev. Michelle L. Foster, Safe Sanctuaries and Family Ministries, Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church, shares her thoughts on the importance of a children's sermon in the article, [Make your children's sermons kid-friendly](#).
- If you are looking for a concise list of things to consider when preparing your children's sermon read the brief article written by Pastor Daniel Flucke, [10 Pieces of Advice for Giving a Children's Message](#).

##### Books

No time to write a children's sermon from scratch, consider acquiring a book to help get you started. [UCC Resources](#) is currently offering the [Children's Sermon Bundle](#), which includes eight of their most popular books of children's sermons bundled together for one low price. You'll get over 225 children's sermons to pick from!

Among the selections included in the bundle are several books from well known authors, Phyllis Vos Wezeman and Anna Liechty, and Randy Hammer.

Vos Wezeman and Liechty are known for their topical children's sermon

books:

- [Taste the Bread: 30 Children's Sermons on Communion](#)
- [Touch the Water: 30 Children's Sermons on Baptism](#)
- [Wipe the Tears: 30 Children's Sermons on Death](#)

Randy Hammer, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, provides children's sermons and activities for the liturgical year:

- [The Dancing Stones: 26 Children's Sermons with Activities](#)
- [The Shining Light: 26 Children's Sermons with Activities](#)
- [The Talking Stick: 40 Children's Sermons with Activities](#)
- [The Singing Bowl: 26 Children's Sermons with Activities](#)

### Websites

- [Sermons4Kids](#) provides free lectionary based children's sermons and object lessons in English and Spanish. Over 300 sermons from which to choose.
- [Ministry-to-children](#) provides a growing collection of sermons for children.

*Note: The collection of resources provided is intended to assist you in exploring the topic of children's ministry. Use these ideas as a starting point, but keep in mind that they may need some modification to be better aligned with the inclusive language and theological perspective of your local congregation.*

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## Upcoming Events & Training Opportunities

### **Make It Plain Authorizing Ministry for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century September 8-9, 2017 - Boston, MA**

The changing landscapes of church and denominational life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century impact the form and function of ministry, including the ways in which the United Church of Christ calls, authorizes and oversees ministers. Consequently, our Manual on Ministry - which saw its last revision in 2002 and its last significant rewrite of content in 1986 - has been due for an intentional re-imagination to meet the needs of the Church and especially of Committees on Ministry.

Learn more about the proposed changes by reviewing the [draft Manual on Ministry](#). Please consider [registering for this event](#) to raise your questions and offer your voice to the conversations, especially around the future of licensed and commissioned ministry, the authorization many Christian Education and Faith Formation leaders hold.

**Registration is Now Open!**  
**"UCC: Is that for Me?" Confirmation Retreat**  
**September 29, 2017 - October 1, 2017**



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 NH Confirmation classes will gather for worship, music, discussion, good food and games.

[Download the retreat brochure](#) or [register now!](#)

# SAVE THE DATE!



## 2018 *EASTERN* REGIONAL YOUTH EVENT

JULY 19-22, 2018



CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

NH Youth, mark your calendars for **next** summer! Join us as we worship, play, pray, learn, serve, sing and dream at the 2018 Eastern Regional Youth Event. For more information, contact Ann Desrochers at [adesrochers@nhcucc.org](mailto:adesrochers@nhcucc.org) or 603-715-9526.

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### 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

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### Employment Opportunities

#### Local (New Hampshire):

- **The Meriden Congregational Church** (<http://www.meridenucc.org>), a spiritually progressive, Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ, is searching for a **Spiritual Formation Coordinator** for our children and their families. We invite the person we call to this part-time position (10 hours/week) to help us live out our church's

mission to "choose life-transforming love as our response to one another and the world around us. . ." Learn more in the [detailed position description](#).

- Visit the [Classifieds/Help Wanted](#) section of the NH Conference UCC website.

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

*(It also includes opportunities here in NH, such as the current opening at the Lyme Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.)*

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## The Word of God

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:14-15 (NRSV)

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