

Christian Education & Formation Newsletter

June 2017 News & Updates

The scripture passage from 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 reminds us that we are all part of one body, the body of Christ, and individually members of it. Each member brings their special gifts and their special needs or challenges. This month's Newsletter offers resources to help you understand and better minister to people with special needs and their families.

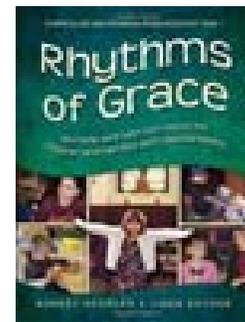
Featured Resources for Worship and Faith Formation

- [Red Fish Theology | Parables - A How-to Guide for Offering a Radically Inclusive Worship Service with the Special Needs Community](#)

A community of people with special needs deserve an option for a totally inclusive service where they are welcome to be themselves completely - without apology. Wayzata Community Church, United Church of Christ, in Wayzata, Minnesota identified and created an opportunity for that option. This guide shows you how you can re-create this radically inclusive worship service for those with special needs in your community.

- [Rhythms of Grace: A worship and faith-formation curriculum resource for children with autism.](#)

[Rhythms of Grace](#), co-founded by Rev. Dr. Audrey Scanlan and Linda L. Snyder, is a non-profit organization which offers a unique, innovative and cutting-edge program resource designed to meet the spiritual needs of children and families living with autism-spectrum disorders. Participant families gather monthly with program leaders and volunteers for sessions that are a hybrid of worship and faith formation.



Learn more about this approach by attending a service at:
St. Christopher's Episcopal Church
187 East Road Hampstead, NH
(First Saturday of Every Month at 2:00 p.m.)
or visit the [church website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

- [Every Child Welcome: A Ministry Handbook for Including Kids with Special Needs](#), by Katie Wetherbee and Jolene Philo (2015).

Jesus set a high standard when He said "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." The call is not limited to children who will sit quietly at His feet and listen, who color between the lines, who raise their hands and wait to be called upon, and who work at grade level. Children's ministries are responsible to be ready to bring children with disabilities to Jesus' feet too. Every Child Welcome is the guide for leaders and volunteers to assist in purposeful planning and skill development for a ministry inclusive of children with unique needs



- [Leading A Special Needs Ministry: A Practical Guide to Including Children and Loving Families](#) by Amy Fenton Lee (Updated 2016). This book serves as a practical "how-to" handbook for the family ministry team working to welcome one or 100 children with special needs. Easily referenced guidance is offered for expressing care for parents who are learning that their child has a diagnosis all the way to developing programs, policies and education for volunteers working with children with disabilities. Example ministry documents are provided throughout this resource guide.

General Information

Articles

- Children's Ministry Magazine has a [special section](#) on their website with articles devoted to providing insights, strategies, and expert help as you minister to children with special needs. These articles cover ministry to children with special needs ranging from allergies to diabetes, seizures to hearing impairments, and intellectual, emotional and physical challenges.
- The [Winter 2012 issue of Lifelong Faith](#) was devoted to the theme of "Faith Formation & Special Needs."

Books

- [Same Lake, Different Boat: Coming Alongside People Touched by Disability](#) by Stephanie O. Hubach (2006). When the church attempts to function without all of its parts, the body of Christ becomes disabled. Same Lake, Different Boat is a transformational work--designed to renew our minds to think biblically about disability in order that our lives, our relationships, and our congregations might wholly reflect Christ. Learn more about this resource in an [interview with the author](#).

- [Dancing with Disabilities: Opening the Church to All God's Children](#)

by Brett Webb-Mitchell (Updated 2008).

In this book the author presents his passionate thoughts about what the church could be if those who are "disabled" and those who are "able-bodied" were to understand themselves to be equal partners in the faith community.

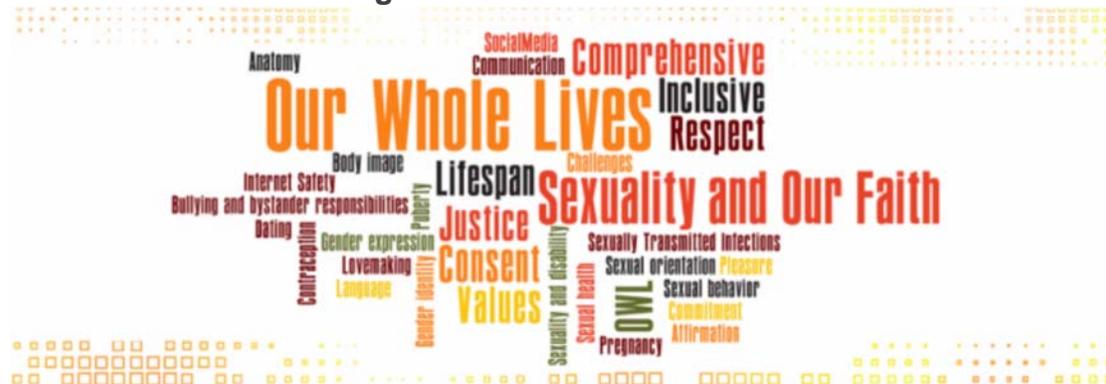
Websites

- Non-denominational Friendship Ministries: www.friendship.org
Friendship Ministries is a not-for-profit organization that exists to help churches and organizations around the world share God's love with people who have intellectual disability. Their Mission is to provide resources that support faith formation and congregational inclusion for individuals with intellectual disability. Their Vision is people with and without intellectual disability growing deeper in their relationship with God and with each other in community together.
- National Organization on Disability: www.nod.org
The National Organization on Disability (NOD) is a private, non-profit organization that promotes the full participation and contributions of America's 57 million people with disabilities in all aspects of life.

Learn about more resources in the [Students with Special Needs document](#) found on the [Christian Formation Ministry webpage](#).

Upcoming Events & Training Opportunities

Our Whole Lives Training



Our Whole Lives is a comprehensive, kindergarten through adult sexuality education curriculum series. It provides people of all ages with accurate information on sexual health, human development, sexual behavior,

relationships, and personal skills in the supportive setting of their faith community. This workshop trains teachers in how to teach participants about sexuality in age-appropriate ways.

A local training event Training Educators to teach Human Sexuality to **Grades 7-9, 10-12** will be held **July 14-16, 2017** at The First Church, UCC, 1 Concord Street, Nashua, NH 03064. [Learn More >>](#)

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!](#)

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.
- Working on your summer plans? Check out the [2017 VBS Comparison Chart](#) from Cokesbury or watch a replay of the March webinar *from Wisdom From the Field, VBS 2017*.

Employment Opportunities

Local (New Hampshire): 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.)*

The Word of God

"For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed."
Psalm 139:13-16 (NRSV)

Ann Desrochers | Christian Education Resource Consultant | New Hampshire Conference
UCC adesrochers@nhcucc.org

New Hampshire Conference UCC, 140 Sheep Davis Road, Pembroke, NH 03275-3711

SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}

[Forward this email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by adesrochers@nhcucc.org in collaboration with

Constant Contact 

Try it free today