



CONFIRMATION RESOURCES

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UCC Curriculum Resources

Affirming Faith | Revised and Updated

Author/Editor: Thomas E. Dipko

Age Level: Youth ages 12-16

Summary: This thorough, multifaceted resource is designed to assist congregations in leading youth in Confirmation & Faith Formation. It is based on the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith.

Affirming Faith consists of two coordinated components. The *Congregation's Guide* is for leaders, complete with session plans, retreat plans, biblical and theological helps, music, liturgical resources, and a glossary of terms. For youth, there is the *Confirmand's Journal* which presents stories, quotes, illustrations, and questions, as well as space for journaling and reflection.

Learn More/Order: <https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/affirming-faith-resources-revised-and-updated>

My Confirmation

Summary: *My Confirmation* has been used by United Church of Christ (UCC) congregations for confirmation instruction since the early 1950s. This newly revised edition includes updated information on the organization of the UCC denomination; the Collegium of Ministers; the work the UCC is doing in each covenanted ministry; and more.

Designed as a workbook, it provides youth with insight into: the Bible, its origins, and how to use it; Christian beliefs; understanding God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit; and the Christian church.

This book also addresses some vital questions regarding the importance of church and the meaning of confirmation, and contains a helpful resource section.

Author/Editor: Thomas E. Dipko

THOMAS E. DIPKO is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and the former executive vice president of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.

Learn More/Order: https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/my-confirmation-a-guide-for-confirmation-instruction-revised-and-updated-dipko?_pos=1&_sid=9c4af54f5&_ss=r

UCC Denominational Resources

Resources specific information on the United Church of Christ Faith Traditions and providing background on what it means to become a member of a UCC church.

About the United Church of Christ

Summary: Describes the history of the United Church of Christ -- how four different denominations merged, and how members today continue to strive for ecumenical unity. Also explains U.C.C. beliefs, practices, and more

Publisher: Channing Bete Company, Inc.

Learn More/Order: <https://www.channingbete.com/human-services/faith-guides/exploring-other-denominations/the-united-church-of-christ/p-CBC0428>

Who We Are What We Believe United Church of Christ Leaflet

Summary: This popular brochure interprets the United Church of Christ and is suitable for distribution to congregations. A great resource for new church members.

Publisher: United Church Press

Learn More/Order: <https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/who-we-are-what-we-believe-brochure>

So You're Thinking About Joining the Church

Summary: A concise guide for those considering membership in a United Church of Christ congregation. The brochure reflects on the kinds of questions people ask about joining the church, including:

- What does joining the church mean?
- I don't get why I would need to join the church. Isn't it fine to simply come to worship?
- What exactly will I be asked to say when I join?

Learn More/Order: https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/so-youre-thinking-about-joining-the-church?_pos=1&_sid=639c3ba13&_ss=r

What Matters to You? Matters to Us

Summary: *What Matters to You Matters to Us* Engaging Six Vital Themes of our Faith by Sidney Fowler provides essential reflections on core themes of the United Church of Christ, while inviting new and long-standing members alike to consider their own identity and faith formation.

Learn More/Order: https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/what-matters-to-you-matters-to-us-engaging-six-vital-themes-of-our-faith-fowler?_pos=1&_sid=94fecaa3a&_ss=r

Practices of Faith in the United Church of Christ

Summary: The Practices of Faith resource can be used individually or in groups. Possible uses: New members; confirmation (faith formation) groups; discussion groups on any of the 15 titles; candidates for baptism or parents/guardians bringing their child or children for baptism; and existing adult study groups.

This set is available for purchase, which includes one copy of each of the following titles:

- Baptism
- Communion
- Confirmation
- Gifts of Ministry
- Healing and Reconciliation
- Marriage
- Membership
- Mission
- Prayer
- Scripture
- Stewardship
- Working for Justice

Learn More/Order: <https://www.uccresources.com/products/practices-of-faith-in-the-united-church-of-christ-set>

Other Confirmation Curriculum Resources

Making Disciples (Coordinator's Guide, Mentor Guide and Confirmand's Journal)

Updated Edition: 6/2018

Summary: *Making Disciples* is a mentor-based confirmation program that pairs confirmands with adult mentors and guides them through a variety of learning experiences that will strengthen the student's understanding of the faith while connecting him or her with the community of believers in a personal way. It can be used as a stand-alone program, or in conjunction with your current curriculum as a special experiential unit.

Author/Editor: William Willimon

William Willimon is one of the foremost preachers in the English-speaking world. He and his Christian education committee decided to change the way they would provide confirmation. Willimon and co-writer, the Rev. Mark Flynn, designed a confirmation program that would be more like a process and less like a reading assignment, more engaging and congruent with the nature of the Christian faith than existing programs.

Willimon used an "apprenticeship" approach to confirmation, pairing adult mentors from the congregation with confirmation students. He produced a series of learning experiences where adult mentors and confirmands are both teachers and learners at the same time.

Learn More/Order: <http://www.abingdonpress.com/>

re:form

Publisher: Spark House, a division of Augsburg Fortress (publishing arm of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

Summary: From the Spark House website: "You said it was time to jettison those crusty, sleep-inducing programs of the past. And we listened. You said youth ministry should be about exploration, not indoctrination. And we agreed. re:form is a totally new approach to youth ministry that trusts youth to wrestle with the historic Christian faith and theology."

re:form features two DVDs with 40 hilarious animated short films that frame the theological questions that youth really ask, an Anti-Workbook that's chock full of individual and group activities, and a fully reproducible Leader Guide."

The re:form Traditions material is currently available for Methodist, Lutheran, and Reformed. See the UCC Denominational Resources section of this file for supplementary material on the United Church of Christ Faith Traditions.

Learn More/Order: <http://wearesparkhouse.org/teens/reform/core/>

Talking Faith

Author: Heather Kirk-Davidoff, Nancy Wood

Publisher: Chalice Press

Methodology: Experiential

Summary: From the Chalice Press website: “*Talking Faith* is not about teaching people what to believe or about going door-to-door in an evangelism campaign. It is about helping people to better understand and develop their own faith and helping them to be comfortable in sharing their faith with others.”

Learn More/Order: <http://www.chalicepress.com/>

Becoming and Belonging: A Practical Design for Confirmation

Author: William Myers

Summary: This long-awaited resource for church leaders is inspiring in concept and exhilarating in execution. Designed to revitalize the experience of confirmation--for youth as well as those dedicated to nurturing the faith of the church's youth--this guide is a practical and an enlivening approach to confirmation. Contributors include Gary Halstead, Timothy Nelson, Richard Wolf, and others.

Learn More/Order: <https://www.amazon.com/>

Confirm not Conform

Summary: The extravagant welcome of the United Church of Christ includes welcome to those of all ages, recognizing that God is still speaking through young and old alike. Confirm not Conform UCC empowers youth for ministry and helps your congregation recognize youth as full members of the Church of Christ.

In addition to more general sessions on Scripture, church history, the Nicene Creed, the Lord's Prayer, worship, world religions, and social justice, Confirm not Conform UCC includes sessions on:

- The history and structure of the UCC
- The meaning of Sacraments in the UCC tradition
- The church year
- The priesthood of all believers

Learn More/Order: <http://www.confirmnotconform.com/cnc-youth-ucc>

Head to the Heart

Summary: Head to the Heart (H2H) is a holistic approach to confirmation ministry. More than a program or curriculum, H2H connects the head (knowledge) to the heart (personal faith). The H2H faith formation system creates critical thinking, deeply caring, faithful young people while building connections at church and at home.

Learn more: <https://faithink.com/about-head-to-the-heart-confirmation>

Faith Development and Confirmation Curriculum for Teens and Adults with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (UMC)

Summary: This faith development and confirmation series, from the United Methodist Church, engages and prepares people of all abilities to participate in worship and church life. This series is intended for classes for teens and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It can also be used to supplement materials in typical student classes which are written at a functional reading level.

Learn more and/or download materials FREE at:
<https://www.umdisabilityministries.org/curriculum/>

Supplemental Resources

NOOMA® DVD SERIES

Author: Rob Bell

Summary: From the former nooma.com website: "Jesus lived with the awareness that God is doing something, right here, right now, and anybody can be a part of it. He encouraged his listeners to search, to question, to wrestle with the implications of what he was saying and doing. He inspired, challenged, provoked, comforted, and invited people to be open to God's work in this world. Wherever he went, whatever he did, Jesus started discussions about what matters most, because for Jesus, God is always inviting us to open our eyes and join in. **NOOMA** is a series of short films that explore our world from a perspective of Jesus. **NOOMA** is an invitation to search, question, and join the discussion."

Learn More/Order: <https://www.christianbook.com/nooma-complete-collection/>

Discover your Spiritual Gifts the Network Way

(Note: related resources include the Network Kit and Participants Guide)

Author: Bruce L. Bugbee, Don Cousins

Summary: This is a small booklet containing five assessments in the areas of traits, observation, experience, conviction, and ministry fit to help people understand their spiritual giftedness.

Learn More/Order: <https://www.zondervan.com/9780310257462/discover-your-spiritual-gifts-the-network-way/>

What You Do Best in the Body of Christ

Author: Bruce L. Bugbee

Summary: In this resource, Bugbee shows Christians how to discover and apply their unique passion, spiritual gifts, and relational style within the church. Expanded Edition.

Learn More/Order: <https://www.zondervan.com/9780310305439/what-you-do-best-in-the-body-of-christ/>

Your Spiritual Gifts Inventory

(Note: related resource is Rediscovering Our Spiritual Gifts)

Author: Charles Bryant

Summary: A companion to Bryant's *Rediscovering Our Spiritual Gifts*, this easy-to-use, 32 page inventory uses 160 questions, a scoring grid, and lists of biblical references to help ascertain spiritual gifts such as hospitality, intercessory prayer, and leadership.

Learn More/Order: <http://bookstore.upperroom.org/Products/819/your-spiritual-gifts-inventory.aspx>

The Unofficial Handbook of the United Church of Christ

Author: Quinn G. Caldwell, Curtis Preston

Summary: A lighthearted, humorous book about the United Church of Christ (UCC) denomination.

The co-authors—two young UCC ministers who are lifelong “UCCers”—have written this useful resource for all UCCers, but particularly for millennials: confirmation-aged youth and teens. Readers will learn about, appreciate, and be proud of their denomination—while not taking themselves too seriously.

Learn More/Order: https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/the-unofficial-handbook-of-the-united-church-of-christ-caldwell-preston?_pos=3&_sid=5f418079e&_ss=r

Words for the Journey: Letters to Our Teenagers About Life and Faith (Revised and Updated)

Authors: Martin B. Copenhaver and Anthony B. Robinson

Summary: First published in 2003, the book includes an original collection of letters written by Copenhaver and Robinson to their teenagers. They discuss a wide variety of topics - God, church, Bible, vocation, relationships, difficult matters, faith, doubt, prayer, sex, abortion, race, and homosexuality - and share what God and their faith means to *them*. This revised and updated edition includes a new introduction and afterword. The book will appeal to parents, teenagers, and those in youth ministry and is an excellent supplemental confirmation resource or meaningful confirmation and graduation gift.

Learn More/Order: https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/words-for-the-journey-letters-to-our-teenagers-about-life-and-faith-revised-updated-copenhaver-robinson?_pos=1&_sid=697588826&_ss=r

To Begin at the Beginning: An Introduction to the Christian Faith (2017 Edition)

Author: Martin B. Copenhaver

Summary: Christian faith, says Martin Copenhaver, is not a subject to be mastered like calculus or Shakespeare; it is a story to be told and a life to be lived. No matter how much or how little you know, *To Begin at the Beginning* tells the story of Christian faith and invites you to take part in it.

In this book Copenhaver covers basic themes—the Bible, church, ministry, sacraments, prayer, ethics—in a clear and inviting way. His approach creates a valuable resource for pastors, an accessible guide for seekers and new Christians, and a "refresher course" for longtime Christians who want to engage anew with what they believe

Learn More/Order: <https://www.christianbook.com/begin-the-beginning-introduction-christian-faith/martin-copenhaver/9780802874160/pd/874160>

Best Practices

Visit Other Faith Communities.

If your Confirmation programs runs over a long period of time, you might consider scheduling a visit once a month. Recommendations include:

- a Jewish Temple (for our heritage from the Jews)
- Participation in Shabbat Across America - contact a local synagogue for details (<http://njop.org/programs/shabbat/shabbat-across-america-canada/>)
On March 4, 2022, out of an abundance of caution due to the Covid pandemic, this was observed at Shabbat Across America at Home
- a Mosque (for the world we live in)
- an Islamic Society (contact information for the Islamic Society of New Hampshire:
73 S Willow Street D2-3, Manchester, NH 03103 or <https://www.isofnh.org/>)
- a Greek Orthodox Church
- other very different expressions of Christian Worship (to give them something to use to figure out how they best worship and if this worshipping community is where they belong)

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Every Christian is gifted for ministry. Helping our Confirmands to discover how God has gifted them to serve will reinforce the concept that Confirmation is not a graduation (end), but rather a milestone on their life long faith journey. Encourage them to use these newly discovered gifts to serve in the local church and community. (Refer to the Supplemental Resources for tools to assist in discerning gifts)

Participation in Annual Meeting

Participation in the Annual Meeting is an excellent way to introduce Confirmands to the polity (operational and governance structure) of our church.

Mentoring

"This modeling of care for the other, illustrated by mentors in their care for confirmands, also teaches confirmands that we are not independent Christians, but part of an interdependent body of Christ." Learn more in the article by Kate Siberine entitled, "[Mentoring: The Missing Key to Confirmation?](#)" found on the buildfaith.org website.

Community Service Ideas

Common Cathedral

Common Cathedral is the heart of Ecclesia Ministries. It is our church - and it takes place outdoors on the Boston Common at 1:00 pm every Sunday, rain or shine, sleet or snow. Roughly 100 people gather at the now defunct (but still beautiful) Brewer Fountain for worship each week. While most of our congregation is homeless, many who call our church home are also professors, business people, clergy, students, care-givers and professionals. Most weeks, members of suburban parishes from across New England join us as well. Together we sing and pray, reflect on the Gospel and break bread. This diverse and supportive spiritual community provides the basis from which many garner the strength and hope necessary to soften hearts, counter despair, and make positive choices

For more information visit the websites: <http://commoncathedral.org/> and <http://www.ecclesiaministriesmission.org/>

City Mission Society of Boston

Founded in 1816, City Mission Society of Boston (CMS), a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, is the oldest multi-service social justice agency in New England. **Our services reach over 35,000 people each year**, both directly and through the volunteer efforts which CMS directs. CMS's purpose is to meet the educational, economic, social, and advocacy needs of impoverished residents in the Boston neighborhoods. CMS partners with congregations and community agencies to fulfill its dynamic vision of providing services in the context of empowering residents to be active participants in changing their neighborhoods and their lives.

Learn more: <https://citymissionboston.org/>

Field Trip Ideas

Plimoth Plantation

Plimoth Plantation is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit museum supported by admissions, contributions, grants, and generous volunteers. For more information visit their website at: <http://www.plimoth.org>

The United Church of Christ came into being in 1957 with the union of two Protestant denominations: the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches. Each of these was in turn the result of a union of two earlier denominations.

The Congregational Churches organized when the Pilgrims of Plymouth Plantation (1620) and the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (1629) united in 1648. The Christian Churches sprang up in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The Reformed Church in the United States traces its beginnings to congregations of German settlers in Pennsylvania founded from 1725 on. The Evangelical Synod of North America began in an association of German Evangelical pastors in Missouri in 1841.

(UCC history from <http://www.middletonucc.org/about-us/our-story/>)

Activities

Lateral Thinking Exercises

- Use this type of exercise as a meeting opener, encourages youth to “think outside the box”

Ways to Involve Other Members of Your Congregation (build community/relationships)

- Mentoring
- Invite parents of newly Baptized infants to talk about their experience
- Panel Discussion with other adults from the church (oldest member of congregation, newest member, people in key leadership positions) – what it means to be a church member

Retreats

UCC: Is That for Me? New Hampshire Conference, UCC Confirmation Retreat

Calling all Confirmands to join us at **Horton Center** the **last weekend in September!**
Confirmation Retreat: Friday evening, September 30– Sunday, October 2, 2022

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 an overnight 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. This is a great opportunity to meet other youth and Confirmation leaders.

Watch the Horton Center website for more details and registration information:
https://hortoncenter.org/summer_camp_sessions/fall-confirmation-retreat/