

January 2021



Connected is a publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church. This monthly insert is designed put Conference news into the hands of our local church members. Find more at www.neumc.org



COVID-19 resurgence calls for vigilance

The [Conference guidelines](#) provide sound protocols for responding to COVID-19, but when areas are facing an increased number of cases, the Maine CDC offers some additional guidance:

- **The recommendations of 6 feet of separation** and no more than 15 minutes of close contact are guidelines, not a guarantee that there will be no spread of the virus. If you are meeting for worship in a closed room (no open windows or doors), the virus can spread.
- **It is crucial to screen people at the door.** Screening should include reviewing specific symptoms (find those on the CDC website), not simply asking "Have you had any symptoms?" Maine CDC investigators are finding someone will say "no" to the general question, but when asked specifically about a symptom — such as have you felt tired, had a sore throat, or a headache, they will realize and acknowledge that they do have symptoms.
- **It is VERY important to have a registration procedure in order to do proper contact tracing.** This ensures that everyone who has been in close contact with a person/s who have tested positive can be told in a timely way to isolate/quarantine, so the virus does not spread further. You can find the guidelines and more at www.neumc.org/virus-reentry. This information includes a section on what to do if someone in the congregation tests positive for COVID-19.

Take CCORR's anti-racism training



From the anti-racism training session in the former Vermont District in 2019

The Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR) is finishing up the 2016-2019 quadrennial anti-racism training that was conducted in each district using the study guide offered through the General Commission on Religion and Race. www.gcorr.org

This training is REQUIRED for clergy. Laity are also invited to participate.

There are two online sessions available:

- **9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 9, 2021** — This is the rescheduled session for the former RISEM District, which was cancelled due to the pandemic.
- **9 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 6, 2021** — This is the FINAL make-up session for this training.

Use the link below to register for either session. The log in information will be emailed to registrants.



FIND THE REGISTRATION FORM UNDER THE EVENT ON OUR CALENDAR
www.neumc.org/events

Explore your call to ministry

Ministry Exploration Summit 2021



The summit is a gathering of folks in the early stages of candidacy or discernment as well as experienced Clergy and Laypersons from the different ministry paths.

Anyone interested in lay, licensed or ordained ministry is welcomed and encouraged to join one of these events.

Participation in a Summit *is required to become a Certified Candidate or a Certified Lay Minister*. Participation in a summit fulfills the "Orientation to Ministry" requirement.

Summits are usually offered twice a year (January and August).

Ministry Exploration Summit Facts

Next Summit Dates: January 30 and January 31, 2021

Next Summit Location: Online **Registration Deadline:** January 10

<https://www.neumc.org/BOMeducationtrainingandretreats>

If you are just beginning to explore your call to ministry, plan to join a New England Conference Ministry Exploration Summit.

We are all family. When we walk past our neighbor who is hiding in plain sight, we limit the gifts and graces that our sisters and brothers in Christ bring to the table. We limit the experiences, the voices and the beloved community that take place through mutual sharing of gifts. With a special offering celebrating Human Relations Day, we join with United Methodists around the world, remembering that the size of the table of divine love is unlimited.

Special Sunday

Across the United Methodist connection we come together to help bridge the gap between church and community by participating in an offering set aside for Human Relations Day. For more than half a century, United Methodists have observed this churchwide special Sunday in recognition of the message Jesus demonstrated during his life: all of God's children are important.

One of the wonderful aspects of The United Methodist Church is that we can do so much more together than we ever could do on our own. On Human Relations Day, we join other UMC congregations in a special offering to support neighborhood ministries through Community Developers, community advocacy through United Methodist Voluntary Services and work with at-risk youth through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs.

Get resources to celebrate Human Relations Day at www.resourceumc.org

Let's Connect

Do you have a story to share? A feature idea? A question to ask? Contact Beth DiCocco, Conference Director of Communications, at communicate@neumc.org or (978) 682-8055 ext. 150