The Southern Conference Presents: Educating, Equipping and Empowering Series

Webinar...

Thursday, June 25, 2020, 6:00 pm (ET)

Topic: You Cannot Pour from an Empty Cup

Webinar Presentation: Join the Rev. Edward Davis (D.Min.), Conference Minister and Staff for a Self-Care Webinar. Over the past three to four months, we have had to shift to meet the challenges of pandemic, protest, and problems. We have all been locked inside doing everything virtually, non-stop. And many of us are exhausted, tired, and out of gas.

In this relaxed, easy going, armchair webinar, the staff will share their self-care practices that they are undertaking to breathe new life into their sails. We ask that you also would journey with us to share, explore, and commit to spiritual and self-care practices to refill your cup.

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.
When: Jun 25, 2020 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: SOC Staff Webinar Series Recap and Self Care for the Summer Months

Please click the link below to join the webinar:
https://zoom.us/j/95321665722?pwd=UENZcXRrNktCR2FndTNDS0hUZi8yZz09
UCC Sacred Conversations to End Racism Summer Institute 2020

The United Church of Christ has a long history of working towards addressing systemic and institutional racism. In 2003 General Synod 24 adopted a resolution calling for the UCC to be an anti-racist church stating that "racism is rooted in a belief of the superiority of whiteness and bestows benefits, unearned rights, rewards, opportunities, advantages, access, and privilege on Europeans and European descendants."

The Restorative Racial Justice Summer Institute Dates:
Wednesday, 6 pm - 7:30 pm Eastern Standard Time

- July 8th - 15th - 22nd - 29th
- August 5th

Read more

Subscribe to SOC e-News / add names here

ALL persons are invited and welcome to receive the Southern Conference e-News. Churches may submit names, or share this invitation with their members for individuals to self-subscribe.

To add names, submit by e-mail to editor: stumb@boone.net
Please include 1) name, 2) e-mail address, 3) church or other affiliation, and 4) role in church, agency, etc. (i.e. council president). #4 category is optional.

Celebrating LGBT+ Pride

submitted by Rev. Micah Royal

Life's Journey UCC would like to welcome our fellow Open and Affirming Churches and those who stand with LGBT+ people in their work for equal rights and dignity to join us in celebrating LGBT+ Pride month. We will be hosting two celebrations of LGBT+ Pride.

Sunday, June 28th, the 51st anniversary of the Stonewall protests in New York City that sparked the modern LGBT+ rights movement, we will host a special worship service celebrating LGBT+ Pride at our 10:30 AM Sunday worship service on Zoom.

Also, that Monday night, June 29th, at 6:30 PM, we will host a special
celebration of LGBT+ Pride and of the significance of Stonewall at our Social Justice meeting on Zoom. For both events, we are inviting LGBT+ community groups and members of our fellow open and affirming churches in the area to join.

Zoom information is the same for both the 10:30 AM Pride Sunday service on June 28th and the 6:30 PM Stonewall / LGBT Pride Celebration at the Monday, June 29th, Social Justice Meeting:
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2491624089?pwd=enRFWFH5ZIIit7OZHvMSsrcGIOZz09
Meeting ID: 249 162 4089
Password: 828206
Dial by your location
+1 301 715 8592
Meeting ID: 249 162 4089
Password: 828206

If any of you would like to share about your experience of how LGBT+ acceptance, rights, and pride has been meaningful to you personally, or how our open and affirming stance has been meaningful at either event, please contact Pastor Micah at micahbroyal@yahoo.com.

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Pandemic grants for churches added to UCC National Setting COVID-19 relief response

The National UCC is offering various grants. You can apply for as many as you want but timing is of the essence as all UCC Conference churches are invited to apply. If you need your church id #, contact Belinda Sledge at sledgebb@aol.com with your church name and city and state. Please put in memo Church ID # needed for UCC Grant.

If you have questions concerning the grants contact Rev Davis via email at edavis@soc-ucc.org

The United Church of Christ National Setting is offering financial assistance to local churches whose ministries have been challenged by the novel coronavirus pandemic.

As one, the national officers have collectively identified $2.6 million in COVID-19 relief, $1.5 million in loans that will be administered through the Cornerstone Fund and another $1.1 million in micro grants. The grant application process opens June 1. Grant money will be available through the process detailed below by the UCC executives.

Details and application links available on UCC website
Associations continue virtual check-ins with various schedules and topics. If you are not aware of options in your Association, contact the ACM or other named person in your region.

**Eastern Virginia Association:**
Rev. John Myers (D.Min.) / (ACM) / johnmyers2122@gmail.com

**Eastern North Carolina Association:**
Rev. Eddie Weathers (ACM) / eandaweathers@hotmail.com
Rev. Micah Royal (ENCA president) / micahbroyal@yahoo.com

**Western North Carolina Association:**
Rev. Colleen Samson (D.Min.) / ACM / revsamson@wnca-soc.org

**Conference Call-in Prayer Line is available to ALL**

Beginning April 27, persons can call any of three chaplains anytime on Mondays through Thursdays between 9:00 am and 9:00 pm (until we determine a closure regarding this prayer support).

- Rev. Weathers: 336-392-0866
- Chaplain Nancy: 919-949-4617
- Rev. Whitlock: 336-688-5076

*See also SOC web page: "Prayer Practices during this Pandemic" for call-in numbers.*

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**United Church of Christ Links for helping churches respond to COVID-19**

- **Coronavirus and the church** (updated almost daily) / ucc.org

**Links from previous SOC Zoom Webinars**

Resources and links for previously aired webinars can be found on the Southern Conference web site
Rev. LaShauna Austria noted the sign in this 1950's video, and asked cohorts in her White Privilege session, "Where is the Church today?"

view video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/veiJhXdwn8?t=1

See below - links to 3 Part Series of:

**America on Fire!**
* A racial equity conversation

*Featured Presenter: Rev. LaShauna Austria is the Southern Conference Minister for Racial Equity and Justice.

**America On Fire Part 1**
https://youtu.be/DHPwAdcQlFc

**America on Fire Part 2**
https://youtu.be/DMMhN1JfhE8

**America on Fire Part 3**
https://youtu.be/LVIj_nguSpM

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**Spiritual Practice and Self-Care Corner #13**

**Learn a Language**

by Rev. John T. Myers, (D.Min.)

It seems like I have been learning a language for years. In middle school and high school, I took Latin and Spanish. Growing up in Wilmington, Delaware near a vibrant Latino community; my mother thought it would be great for me to learn Spanish to converse and get to know our neighbors.

Then in the US Navy traveling all throughout the Mediterranean, I would often buy phrase books in different languages to be able to get around. The citizens of that country really loved that I was trying to connect with them. In Italy, I practiced how to say basic phrases. In France, I did the same thing. Wherever I went I tried to converse with those around me. One time a friend and I, boarded a bus in Marseille, France. The only phrase that I practiced was "Ou est la plage." Which means where is the beach. Well that bus driver took me and my friend to all the beaches in Marseille. We had a blast!

Learning a language is a great spiritual and self-care practice because it connects us
with others. It aids us in learning about another culture. This builds empathy and compassion which are important components of any spiritual and self-care practice. Learning a language as a spiritual and self-care practice also has many other benefits. I will just name a few:

1. Learning a language exercises your mind. There have been some studies within the last few years that suggest that learning a language can be a preventative for dementia and Alzheimer. Additionally, learning a language exercises your memory, imagination, and creativity.
2. Learning a language focuses the mind. It keeps the mind in the present moment. It keeps the mind in the "I am." This is the place where peace, joy, love, and happiness reside. When you are practicing a language, you will not be able to worry, stress or be anxious. Learning and practicing keeps your mind on something positive and helpful.
3. Learning a language helps you to see the world globally. In learning a language, we see, embrace, and connect with others. Mental health experts have extolled connecting with others as a counter to the loneliness that many people experience today. It also breaks down division and builds community.

Finally, I am back to practicing my Spanish. There is a great app that I am enjoying and recommend called Duolingo. It is free, fun, and fast. Just 5 to 10 minutes and you will be on your way to receiving all the benefits of learning a language. Adios!

About the author:  Rev. John T. Myers, (D.Min.) Associate Conference Minister, EVA, is founder and CEO of Fruit of the Spirit, LLC, devoted to sharing spiritual practices that heal and transform. Rev. Myers is available for zoom calls to discuss and share spiritual practices and perform life coaching. www.fruitofthespirit.life.

Read this entire spiritual practice #13 - Learn a Language
Download Spiritual Practice series #1 - 13

A statement from Karen Richardson Dunn

Over the past two Thursday evenings the Rev. LaShauna Austria, the SOC's minister for Racial Equity and Justice, has led a remarkable webinar series discussion titled "America on Fire!" In this three-part series, Rev. Austria explores the roots of our country's systemic racism up to the present-day unconscionable killing of George Floyd and the resulting worldwide protests. If you are able, I hope
What strikes me in listening to Rev. Austria's presentation is that -- just as white supremacy has brought upon the oppression and destruction of black and brown lives, black and brown bodies -- so has the concept of humankind's supremacy over Creation wrought terrible destruction upon the earth. And as is so often tragically the case, those human beings who suffer most from the degradation of our earth are these same black and brown people, further exploited and yes, killed, under an unjust system.

Both the concept of white supremacy and that of "dominion" twisted into "exploitation" are born from hubris and greed, and are ongoing poisons that must be eradicated--and no place more especially than in our pews. My hope is that our churches will rise up as in no other time in history to face down and call out these evils -- in our own hearts, in our families, in our communities, in, yes, our pews -- and work together for the transformative change that is God’s Kingdom on Earth.

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**Read below FINAL update for DISCOVER 2020 program**

**Virtually: July 5-10**

**Virtually: July 12-17**

Can register as an individual or as a group

[www.catawba.edu/discover](http://www.catawba.edu/discover)

ASHEBORO, N.C. -- Middle and High School Students are invited to join us for Virtual Discover 2020 as we explore God's vision for us and for the world. Due to recent trends with COVID-19 all our sessions will now be online using Zoom to facilitate small group discussions, theological reflection, crafts, worship, and games. Participants will receive a box with all the items they need to participate. Please register by June 30 to ensure you get your supplies on time. For questions please contact samartin12@catawba.edu.

**Called to the Common Good Launching June 22 on Instagram**

In the midst of this pandemic... where is God? Am I called? Is there hope?

Journey together. Join the conversation on Instagram, where daily posts take an honest look at what the Christian tradition has to say about faith, vocation, and the
common good in the face of crisis. Called to the Common Good is a summer institute for high school youth who are theologically inquisitive and civilly minded. Catch a glimpse of the institute here.

Reach out to Ian at ian.carr.mcpherson@gmail.com for more information.

Johns River Valley Camp offers lodging as vacation destination

COLLETTSVILLE, N.C. -- Did you cancel a summer vacation due to COVID-19 concerns? Are you still hesitant to go near crowds? We might have a place for you to travel this summer.

As many of you know, we felt compelled to cancel our summer camping schedule for the summer of 2020. While we are saddened by the need to make such a decision, we are looking for the bright spots. Our unique location in the remote and scenic Johns River Valley makes it possible to offer you a safe space to travel this summer.

Contact Phil Hardy at 336-266-1617 or phardy.jrvc@gmail.com to learn about rates, open dates and to begin planning your family's vacation.

***This event has been re-scheduled

Johns River Valley Camp is launching a "Connect" program for Middle and Senior High youth.

Caring for planet Earth, our shared home
Re-scheduled for September 25-27 - Cost / $120.00
in 2020 with Brooks Berndt, UCC Environmental Justice Minister

Each year we will turn our thoughts to our connections to the Creator, to Creation and to one another. With minds for justice we will ask in what ways we are connected, what those connections mean and what they require of us?

This weekend will concentrate on being good stewards of the Earth and encountering God in Creation. Saturday will include a bike trip on the Virginia Creeper Trail. Read more

Betty Griffin, CWSC President
bbg9@bellsouth.net
2020 Church Women Calendar

SAVE THE DATES!

2020 and 2021 Church Women of the Southern Conference Summer Conferences: Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) our traditional Summer Conference (June 18-20, 2020) has been postponed until June 2021. We will still have our Annual Business meeting for this year via Conference Call (see below).

September 12, 2020 (Saturday)
Fall Enrichment - EVA-CW

June 2021
2021 CWSC Summer Conference

October 15-17, 2021
Southern Region Women's Retreat - Live Oak, Florida

June 27, 10:00 - 12:00
Southern Conference Board meets via Zoom

July 22-25
United Church of Christ's National Youth Event postponed until 2022.

September 25-27 (Re-scheduled from original date of May 15-17)
Johns River Valley Camp will welcome Rev. Brooks Berndt, Environmental Justice Minister of the United Church of Christ. "Connect: Caring for Planet Earth; Our Shared Home" will invite Middle and Senior High Youth to reflect upon their connection to Creation and their role in providing it care. Cost will be $120 and will include meals, lodging and a bicycle trip on the Virginia Creeper Trail. Read more / Register.

October 5-7
Please save the date for the Tenth Annual UCC Retired Servants' Retreat at Blowing Rock Conference Center

June 27-30, 2022
Due to the unforeseeable impact of COVID19 on the health, social, and physical distancing behaviors of the world, National Youth Event (NYE) at Purdue University is postponed until June 27-30, 2022.
How long must I bear pain
in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart
all day long?

– Psalm 13:2