

October 2019



Connected is a publication of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church. This monthly insert is designed put Conference news directly into the hands of our local church members.

Find more at www.neumc.org.

How we can help this hurricane season

Last month, Hurricane Dorian brought devastation to the Bahamas and damaged the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Hurricane season in the Atlantic and eastern Pacific continues through the end of November.

How can we help? The best way is through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). UMCOR uses 100 percent of funds donated for relief and recovery efforts; none is spent on administrative costs. Donations can be made through The Advance - <https://advance.umcor.org>

To respond to Hurricane Dorian
Donations for the Bahamas can be made through UMCOR's **International Disaster Response Advance #982450** at the website above. This fund is used to respond to disasters around the world.

In the U.S., donate to the **U.S. Disaster Response Advance #901670** (at the website above).

At this point, donations are the best way for church members to respond. Placements for volunteer teams will come later.

For updates and to learn more about volunteering, visit our website:

**[www.neumc.org/
disasterresponsenews](http://www.neumc.org/disasterresponsenews)**



Let's talk about race



CCORR leads Vital Conversations training on Sept. 6, 2019 in Vermont.

The theme of the 2017 Annual Conference was "Vital Conversations: Race," and at the session, each church received a copy of the Vital Conversations study series created by the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR).

Not sounding familiar? Maybe those DVDs are sitting in a drawer somewhere?

Well, the Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR) wants us to dust off those materials and put them to use. Get the resources at www.neumc.org/ccorr

To help, members of CCORR are conducting district training sessions to help clergy and laity facilitate these "vital

conversations" in their congregations and their communities.

"We understand that talking about race and racism, white privilege and white supremacy – that's a hard conversation to have," CCORR Chair Rev. Effie McAvoy told those attending the Sept. 6, 2019 Vermont District training at North Ferrisburgh UMC.

"My goal is – we know we're not going to end racism [with one training] – but if we can get people to talk to each other, to listen to each other, to be in community, and if we can get the church to actually act like the church," she said, "then maybe we can start healing."

Continued on page 2



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS TRAINING AND ALL THE RESOURCES AT www.neumc.org/CCORR

Special Sunday

Begun in 1936, it's on World Communion Sunday that we celebrate what binds us together: the love of Christ that empowers us to make the world a better place.



Districts host Lay Servant Ministry training

Many districts are hosting Lay Servant Ministry training this fall.

Those in Lay Servant Ministry serve in many ways: visitation, leading a study, singing in the choir, serving at a lunch program, teaching Sunday School, sending out church or personal prayers, volunteering to clean, go on a mission project, or to lead or preach at a worship service – and more.

Visit our website, click the leadership/learning tab and go to the LSM page to find more information — including links to the districts' pages, which include course offerings, etc.

www.umcdiscipleship.org
Click the worship tab

LAITY SUNDAY 2019

THEREFORE, GO!
WITH HOPE THROUGH
Purpose

Nurture persons in Christian living through worship, the sacraments, spiritual disciplines, and other means of grace, such as Wesley's Christian Conferencing.

Third Sunday in October



Vital Conversations

CCORR helping churches to talk about race/racism

Continued from page 1

At the training, folks participate in three of the exercises from the Vital Congregations curriculum; two videos followed by focused discussion, and the “face” exercise, which helps people visual their experience with diversity growing up.

One of the videos shown at the training features author and academic Dr. Robin DiAngelo, who is white, talking about white privilege. That is a difficult topic for white people DiAngelo says, and Rev. McAvoy agrees.

“People – especially white people – struggle with the concept of

institutionalized racism,” Rev. McAvoy said. “That’s why I love Robin Di Angelo when she says – ‘It’s not my fault, I’m not wracked with guilt. But what can I do to bring awareness and be an initiator of change?’”

“No one’s an expert here – we study, reason, pray,” Rev. McAvoy said. “We are learning from each other.”

The Vital Conversations training is mandatory for all clergy under appointment, and laity are encouraged to attend. Training sessions are coming up in the CT/Western MA District Oct. 12 and Nov. 16. Visit www.neumc.org/events to get specifics.

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