

FROM: PATHWAYS Theological Education

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PATHWAYS Theological Education announces three course offerings to begin the new year. With a start date of January 10, 2018, these courses will provide local church leaders and Members in Discernment with knowledge and expertise needed for ministry today. The January courses include:

Dynamics of Difference

Many congregations today have members with backgrounds in various religious and faith traditions. Because of these backgrounds, congregants bring different understandings and expectations about faith, dogma, and spirituality. Can local church leaders respect the diversity of beliefs among congregants? How can those differences help to form a cohesive community in which diversity of belief is honored? What do these differences mean for sacraments, preaching, faith sharing, marking holidays, and day to day life in the church?

The Rev. Julius Jessup, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, with experience working with individuals who hold a variety of both traditional and non-traditional beliefs, will facilitate this course which includes video and audio streaming and engaging discussion.

Christian Faith Formation

What does it mean to grow in faith and to live as an active disciple of Jesus? At heart, this is the focus of faith formation. From childhood to older adulthood, congregations are called and challenged to support the journeys of their members as they grow in faith. This course will explore the role of faith formation, beginning with childhood and Godly Play, through adulthood, while helping participants consider how the local church can support the spiritual growth of its

members in programmatic ways. The course is ideal for those involved in education-related programs in the local church as well as Members in Discernment.

Commissioned Minister *Debbie Gline Allen* facilitates this course. Debbie currently serves as the Consultant for Christian Education and Youth Ministry for the Massachusetts Conference UCC and has for Defiance College's Design for Leadership program. She brings great experience and enthusiasm to PATHWAYS.

Small Church Administration

One of the greatest challenges for small congregations is maintaining the administrative functions of the church. Often, small congregations depend on administrative models developed for larger congregations and organizations. Financial planning, budgeting, church council meetings, and personnel issues are often nuanced in small congregations which are relationally based and often informal in operation. This course, ideal for pastors, church council members, and other leaders in small churches will provide practical tools that can be used to manage the business of a small congregation.

The Rev. June Boutwell, who has served the National Church and in ministries including small congregation, Interim Conference Ministry, and director of a church camp, will facilitate this course. June brings wisdom and experience to administration and planning that helps to support vitality and health in congregations.

These PATHWAYS courses are online using an asynchronous format, allowing participants to access the course room based on each person's schedule. The courses are six-weeks in length and require six to eight hours of work each week. Learning objectives for each course are reflective of the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers in the United Church of Christ. The tuition for each course is \$375.

PATHWAYS Theological Education is a program of the Southeast Conference UCC and open to church leaders.

For more information, visit: <https://www.pathways-ucc.org/>

Or email <pathways.ucc@gmail.com>