

Called To Educational and Formational Ministries:

A Guide for Local Churches, Educators, and Youth Workers

updated and revised by the
Associaton of United Church Educators



<http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Guide.html>



A living,
breathing,
growing
resource —
regularly
updated
online

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



July 2011



Called To Educational and Formational Ministries: A Guide for Local Churches, Educators, and Youth Workers

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The Association of United Church Educators
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To any contributor whose name has not been mentioned, we are grateful for your generous sharing that helped make this resource possible.

Send Us Your Updates!

This third edition of a guide for educational and formational ministries for the United Church of Christ is living, breathing, growing resource. It's availability online through the website of the Association of United Church Educators (<http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Guide.html>) makes it possible to update and revise its contents at any time we become aware of new or more complete information.

If you have or know of a specific resource or document that you believe will be helpful to other educators, youth workers, and local churches, please contact us using one of the methods listed below.

Please note that all submissions are subject to approval by the Coordinating Committee of the Association of United Church Educators.

Thank you in advance for your help.

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The Association of United Church Educators
The Voice of Christian Formation for the 21st Century

Why You Need This Guide



The Association of United Church Educators has brought together the collective wisdom and experience of several of its members to bring you the best practices of congregations throughout the United Church of Christ in this third revision entitled, ***Called to Educational and Formational Ministries: A Guide for Local Churches, Educators, and Youth Workers***. The purpose of this publication is twofold:

1. to help church educators and youth workers who are seeking a call to a local church in their areas of expertise, and
2. to assist local churches in securing the best possible candidates for their Christian education and faith formation ministries.

For the Local Church

This guide provides information and worksheets to help local churches assess their education/formation needs and goals, define position descriptions based on those needs and goals, locate potential candidates, and develop an effective interview process. Creating solid goals, visions, and an effective search process will help a congregation to acquire the quality and committed leadership it needs for education and faith formation if it is to continue ministering in today's world.

For the Educator and Youth Worker

For the educator and youth worker, this guide provides information and suggestions for securing necessary educational background, preparing a resume or Ministerial Profile, networking with other educators or youth workers, and securing an educational/formational or youth ministry position.

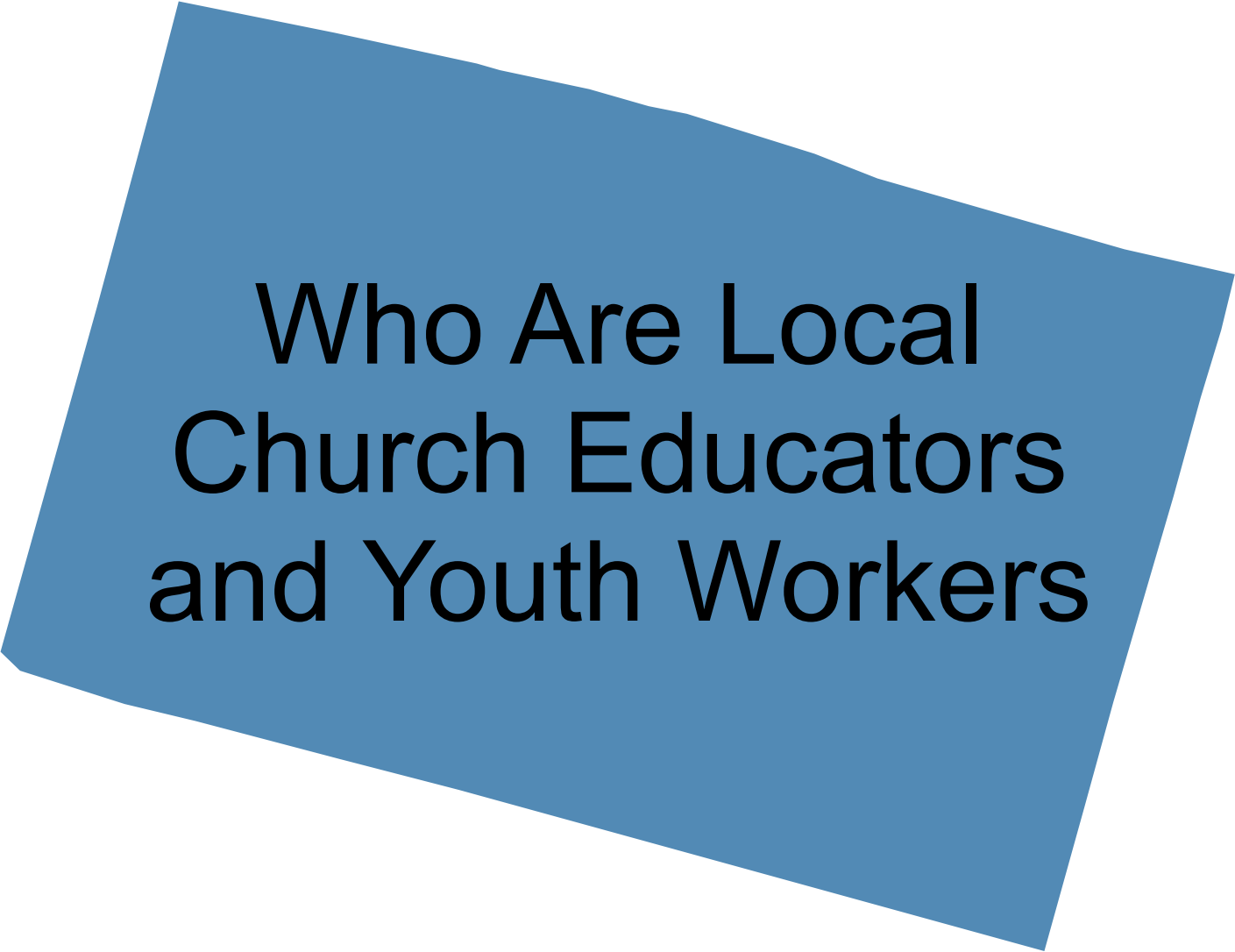
For Both the Local Church and the Educator or Youth Worker

This guide also provides several resources to help local churches and educators and youth workers to work together in supportive ways, to assess their current education/formation ministry, and to set goals for further development of that ministry.

For Other Settings in the United Church of Christ

Committees On Ministry, Associations, Conferences, and the national setting of the United Church of Christ will find this guide helpful in determining the background, education, experience, and qualifications an individual may have in educational/formational ministries. It will also assist these settings in determining the skills and abilities of someone like a commissioned minister meet the requirements for authorized ministry; a national, conference, or association staff position; or other related ministry within the United Church of Christ.

It is our hope that this guide becomes a primary source of information regarding educational/formational ministries for educators, youth workers, local churches, and other settings as they go about doing God's mission through the transformative power of Christian education and faith formation.

A blue parallelogram shape, tilted slightly to the right, serving as a background for the title text.

Who Are Local Church Educators and Youth Workers

Who Are the Local Church Educators and Youth Workers?

The terms "educator" and "youth worker" as they are applied to a local church setting can mean many things depending on that church's individual circumstances. Most congregations have questions regarding the role of the educator or youth worker as part of its staff. Who is the educator and youth worker and what are his other qualifications? What is his or her specific role in the church?

Most educators and youth workers themselves have questions as well about their role in the local church. A common one centers around credentials. How is a person with experience and common sense but no formal education in Christian education/formation to be regarded? Do the educational/formational needs of a specific congregation require a professional or a volunteer? How does one know when one has "crossed the line" from volunteer to professional? How does the church know? And how should these issues be addressed?

This guide will provide some clarity and structure for reviewing the role and function of the church educator and youth worker and offer appropriate steps for individual educators, youth workers, and the churches that hire and employ them.

Church Educator

For our purposes here, a church educator is a person experienced in educational/formational ministry in the local church, having had some education, either formal or experiential, and whose gifts are recognized by a congregation through a formalized agreement. Thus, an ordained person, with a master's degree called to a local church as a minister of education is a church educator, just as a young person who recently accepted a part-time offer from her or his church to oversee the church school is a church educator. Though possessing vastly different education and experience and serving in vastly different roles, both have in common the fact that a local church recognizes its need for a staff educator and selects or calls a person to serve in that role.

Youth Worker

A youth worker is much the same as a church educator except that his or her focus of ministry is on working with and ministering to youth. The definition of "youth" will be determined by each individual congregation.

In order to determine whether your congregation requires a volunteer or paid educator or youth worker, consider the descriptions that follow:

Volunteer

A volunteer educator or youth worker should be considered a member of the church staff, even though he or she is not expected to be paid. The support, training, and communication with the pastor, other members of the church's staff, and this volunteer should be exactly the same as if he or she were a paid employee. The absence of a salary should in no way diminish the value

and quality of the expectations of the volunteer who takes on this important ministry. All expenses and supplies needed must be reimbursed.

If the congregation determines that it requires tasks of the educator or youth worker which need more education and background such as training skills, knowledge of educational and developmental theories, and biblical and theological training, it should consider making this a paid position.

Employed Layperson


Laypersons who serve as church educators or youth workers do not necessarily see their work as a calling, but find enough enjoyment and fulfillment in these positions to willingly dedicate their time and energy to the children, youth, and adults they serve. Depending on the number of hours designated for the specific position, the church educator may have the title of Director (or Coordinator) of Christian Education and Formation, Church School Superintendent, or a similar manifestation of the position. A youth worker may be called Youth Director, Youth Coordinator, Youth Advisor, Youth Leader, or a related title.

Employed Authorized Minister

A minister of Christian education and formation may either be ordained or commissioned. An ordained minister is a minister of word and sacrament having taken a few or no courses in Christian education. Commissioned ministers of Christian education/formation have a similar educational background as ordained ministers, but have focused their ministerial preparation specifically in the area of Christian education and formation, and have chosen to have this calling recognized as an authorized ministry by the United Church of Christ.

A Note About These Categories

Although the descriptions above seem to fit nicely into labeled boxes, the educational background of Christian educators and youth workers can be as different and varied as each individual. Some discover their call to be a Christian educator or youth worker early on, and are able to follow a college (and sometimes graduate school) curriculum that gives them a good academic background in Bible, theology, and educational theory. Others arrive at a position in Christian education and formation much later, but are able to use their life experiences in the church as well as their secular employment experience to carry out their responsibilities effectively.



Strengthening the Leadership of the Educator and Youth Worker

Marks of Faithful and Effective Christian Education/Formation Practitioners

Able to think critically.

Engages the stories of the Christian faith and the stories of God's people throughout time and history.

Engages in sacramental living and recognizes the power of ritual and practice to form and transform the life of faith.

Engages in professional development as time and resources allow.

Knowledge and understanding of human, faith, generational, and spiritual developmental theories and research.

Able to translate theological and biblical concepts across age levels and life stages.

Able to utilize varied teaching and learning styles across age levels and life stages.

Has knowledge and understanding of multiple intelligence theories and cultural frameworks for learning.

Able to present and engage learners in processes of guided discovery that lead to the learners' insights and decisions.

Is self-aware and engaged in his/her own experience and story of faith.

Is committed to and participates in intentional continuing education that develops increased levels of expertise and experience.

Engages in ongoing development of (professional) relationships with peers/colleagues through informal and formal networks and organizations (i.e. Association of United Church Educators, Religious Education Association).

Actively engages in and is knowledgeable of the denomination's expressions of basic history, identity, and ethos, including justice, global, interfaith, and ecumenical perspectives, and is able to relate them across age levels, life stages, and individual faith history.

Advocates on behalf of each group within a congregation for intentional faith formation.

Advocates for appropriate faith formation and engagement which addresses the particular needs of all populations within the congregation.

Engages with and participates in all aspects of a congregation's ministry and mission and advocates for a faith formation perspective throughout all aspects of the congregation's ministry and mission.

Actively engages in a regular practice of goal setting and assessment of the work/ministry in cooperation with the congregation he/she serves.

Able to teach others to teach—not as the sole faith former/educator of the congregation, but teaching with others and beside others.

Able to lead and equip others to lead, develop programs, and fashion faith formation within the congregation.

Models and maintains healthy boundaries in all aspects of the faith community life and in all relationships within the community of faith he or she serves.

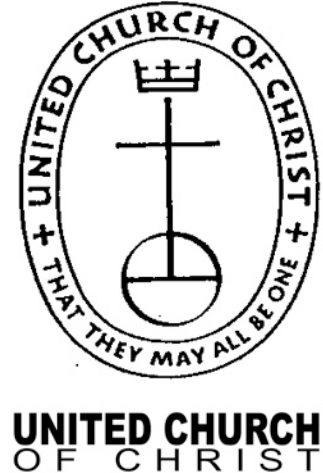
This list was created in the fall of 2010 by AUCE members in consultation with Christy Trudo of the Parish Life and Leadership Ministry Team, and David Schoen of the Congregational Vitality & Discipleship Ministry Team, Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ.

The Association of United Church Educators welcomes feedback regarding these Marks, as this is a document still in process. Please send your comments to us at info@auce-ucc.org.

The Church Educator's Code

The Ministry of Church Education

I believe that God calls the whole church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ; that the privilege and responsibility of witnessing to the gospel in church and society belongs to every baptized Christian; that God empowers the ministry of the church and its members by the Holy Spirit; that the church nurtures faith, evokes gifts, and equips its members for service; and that God calls certain of the church's members to various forms of ministry in and on behalf of the Church.



I have been called by God to be a minister and servant of Jesus Christ in a ministry of education in the United Church of Christ, a church attentive to the Word, inclusive of all people, responsive to God's call, and supportive of one another.

I will seek to witness to the ministry of Jesus Christ.

I will faithfully and diligently perform the work of ministry to which I have been called.

Partnership in Ministry

I will nurture and offer my gifts for the teaching ministry of the church. I will seek to call forth and nurture the gifts of others for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ.

I will seek to understand, support, and interpret the diverse ministries of the United Church of Christ and its members as carried out throughout the world.

I will work cooperatively and collegially with those with whom I serve in ministry.

I will stand in a supportive relationship with, and for the rights of, my staff colleagues, offering and receiving counsel and support in times of need.

I will be an advocate for fair and just employment standards for all employees of the church, particularly in the place where I serve.

I will be a responsible participant in the life and work of the local church, association, conference, and national settings of the United Church of Christ.

I will be a responsible representative of the Church Universal and participate in those activities which strengthen its unity, witness, and mission.

I will seek the counsel of the appropriate body and persons in local, conference, or association settings should divisive tensions threaten my relationship with those with whom I minister.

The Ethics of Ministry

I will regard and minister to all persons with equal respect and concern.

I will honor all confidences shared with me with the exception of times when I am legally bound to share information.

I will honor my legal and moral obligations where appropriate to disclose and report to civil and/or ecclesiastical authorities situations of actual or pending harm to myself or others.

I will not use my position, power, or authority to exploit or harass any person for sexual, financial, or other personal gain.

I will adhere to my setting's policy statements concerning appropriate and ethical behavior.

I will diligently care for the health and safety of those in my charge.

I will not misuse the finance of the institution which I serve.

I will deal honorably with the record of my predecessor.

I will not, upon my termination and departure from a ministry position, interfere with nor intrude upon the ministry of my successor.

Growth in Ministry

I will seek to grow in faith, knowledge, and the practice of educational ministry through intentional continuing education, study leave/sabbatical, membership in relevant professional organization(s), ongoing study, and worship and devotional life.

I will encourage and participate in the periodic evaluation of my ministry.

I will cooperate with the appropriate certifying and/or authorizing bodies in the periodic review of my ministry.

Commitments to Self and Family

I will honor my commitments to my family and to myself.

I will honor my need for time for physical and spiritual renewal, recreation, and vacation.

I will honor my family's need for privacy and time together as well as my own need for privacy.

I will be a responsible steward of my personal and family finances. I will honor and accept responsibility for all debts which I incur.

I will attend to my physical well-being and avoid abusive behaviors and abusive use of substances.

Relying on the grace of God, I will lead a life worthy of the calling to which I have been called.

The Purpose and Use of The Church Educator's Code and

A Guide for Conversation and Planning

may be found, along with The Code, by visiting:

<http://www.ucc.org/education/certified-educators/The-Educators-Code.pdf>

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Adapted from codes for ordained, licensed, and commissioned ministers

*United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry: Perspectives and Procedures for Ecclesiastical
Authorization of Ministry*

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Local Church Ministries

A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ

700 Prospect Avenue

Cleveland, OH 44115-1100

A Covenant for Church Youth Ministries

Background

The Covenant for Church Youth Ministries is a set of eight promises that churches adopt when considering the practices and principles they will use in nurturing and supporting people, both paid and volunteer, who work with youth. (Youth are defined using the United Church of Christ guidelines – ages 13-18.)

We will pray and support.

We believe that our youth workers need spiritual support in their work with young people.

We promise to pray for our youth workers and keep their needs a high priority in church prayer life.

2. We will acknowledge the importance of gifts and God's call.

We believe that gifts and call are best discerned in the context of the faith community.

We promise to provide opportunities for prayerful discernment.

3. We will provide opportunities for retreat and reflection.

We believe that taking time to think and pray is just as essential for our youth workers as organizing events and meeting young people.

We promise to provide opportunities for our youth workers to use part of their schedules for retreat, reflection, worship and personal development.

4. We will provide ongoing training and development.

We believe that maintaining the gifts and skills of the youth workers is an ongoing process and that it is important to continually invest in professional development.

We promise to set aside time and money to provide this for our youth workers.

5. We will give a full day of rest each week.

We believe that taking regular time off helps maintain our youth workers' passion and energy for their work with young people.

We promise to actively encourage our youth workers to take a day away from their role each week.

6. We will share responsibility as a priesthood of all believers.

We believe that having a youth worker does not release the rest of the church from our responsibilities toward young people.

We promise to encourage everyone to play a part in volunteering, praying for and supporting young people.

7. We will celebrate and appreciate.

We believe it is vital to acknowledge what our youth workers are doing and the commitment they have made to work with young people in our church.

We promise to make sure our youth workers know they are appreciated and we will celebrate their achievements.

8. We will strive to be a just employer.

We believe it is important to have clear structures and procedures for recruiting and employing youth workers, and to provide supportive management structures which are fair and just.

We promise to follow non-exploitive practices in the way we employ our youth workers.

This “Covenant for Church Youth Ministries” is inspired by and adapted from “The National Charter,” a similar set of promises promoted in the United Kingdom by two organizations: the Association of Christian Youth and Children’s Workers, and Youthwork, a collaboration of organizations working together to resource and inspire Christian youth work. The Eastern Ohio Association of the United Church of Christ obtained permission from these UK organizations to draw upon and modify the contents of “The National Charter” for use in this covenant.

June 2010






Association of United Church Educators

www.auce-ucc.org



Church educators, youth workers, pastors and other authorized ministers are encouraged to [join the Association of United Church Educators](http://www.auce-ucc.org) as it is the educator's organization concerned with the enhancement of church education and faith formation ministries in the United Church of Christ. It is also the sole remaining voice in support of Christian education and faith formation in the United Church of Christ. With the current economic climate diminishing resources throughout all settings of the church, AUCE continues to support education and formation ministries with the help of its membership dues.

AUCE is —








-  A membership organization of and for lay and authorized (ordained, commissioned, licensed), paid and volunteer educators and youth workers, which has been providing advocacy and support for church education/formation and educators in the United Church of Christ since 1971;
-  A network of collegiality which helps to broaden the scope and depth of faith formation and education/formation ministries in the local, regional, and national settings of the United Church of Christ;
-  A group that works in partnership with all of the education/formation networks of the United Church of Christ;
-  A support community that strives to broaden the scope and depth of education/formation ministries in the United Church of Christ;
-  A national voice that advocates for excellence in faith formation and education ministries for people of all ages.

AUCE's Mission

is to bring together national, conference, local church, and other educators to promote quality church education/formation and a high level of competence among church educators. AUCE members recognize that church education and faith formation is a vital ministry in the life of the church. AUCE members work for growth toward greater competency of persons engaged in that ministry.







AUCE Provides

resources for all church educators and faith formation practitioners on its website:

-  links to curriculum samples
-  job/ministry opportunities
-  updated bibliographies for church educators
-  continuing education opportunities
-  education program guidelines and resources
-  resources for faith formation for every age and stage
-  and much more









AUCE Members Receive

access to a Members Only page on the AUCE website, which includes these downloadable resources:

-  a youth ministry guide
-  a curriculum selection guide
-  a Christian education content guide
-  a faith formation checklist for your church
-  a mission trip guide
-  an adult education guide

A Quarterly Member E-mailing

provides a website link to the Members Only page featuring articles written by nationally known educators, ministers, and professionals such as:

-  Jerome Berryman
-  Don Richter
-  Tony Robinson
-  Ivy Beckwith
-  Karen-Marie Yust
-  Barbara Essex
-  Elizabeth Caldwell
-  Carol Wehrheim

AUCE Serves 7 Regions in the United States

New England
Mid-Atlantic
Southern
Great Lakes
Central
Rocky Mountain
Western

Visit the AUCE website to see what's happening in each region:

<http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Regions.html>

Educational Events and Retreats

Several of AUCE's regions offer strong educational events which are open to any educator. Members of AUCE receive a discount on the registration fees for these events. Click on the [Regions](#) tab on the AUCE website to locate your region.

For More Information

about the Association of United Church Educators, visit www.auce-ucc.org or contact us at info@auce-ucc.org or call 866-247-4421.

Preparation for Educational/Formational Ministries

Preparation for and continuing education in the field of Christian education and formation ministries are critical for church educators and youth workers just as they are in any profession. The best way to remain connected to the current resources, theories, and best practices is to be very intentional about planning for and taking advantage of regular, intentional educational opportunities.

Knowing what is available and how to access it, as well as covering the cost of basic or continuing education takes time and effort. Knowing what is available calls for investigation of various options through several possible sources: 1) your Conference or Association offices; 2) local educator groups, such as the local or regional Association of United Church Educators; 3) nearby seminaries or colleges. The national Partners In Education also offer local educational opportunities from time to time and are another potential source of basic and continuing education for the church educator or youth worker. Ask someone at your Conference or Association office about the Partners In Education in your area.

Covering the cost of such educational opportunities calls for advanced thought and planning. Most churches are willing to set an amount for continuing education in their budgets. If you can estimate what it will cost for you to attend some of the annual events available, it is entirely appropriate for you to request that amount be added to the church's budget. If you work with a board or committee within the church, starting with them and enlisting their help and support will be crucial. Some Conferences and Associations also have limited scholarship funds available for these types of educational opportunities. If you don't ask, you won't know!

In addition to the obvious direct benefits of basic and continuing education is the indirect benefit of spending time with, interacting with, and learning from colleagues working in Christian education/formation and youth ministries. Many times one picks up as much useful information over lunch as in the classroom!

Basic and continuing education are often easy to overlook and yet they are critical for keeping your ministry vital and yourself energized.

Recommended Educational Requirements for a Church Educator

[The Association of United Church Educators](#) recommends the following course of study for full-time local church educator:

- Educational Administration
Leadership; recruiting, training, and supporting volunteers; working with groups; planning for a comprehensive education and formation program; Safe Church
- Educational Theory and Psychology
Behavioral theory, cognitive theory, multiple intelligence theory, general educational theory, teaching and learning strategies, faith and human development theories, generational theory
- Curriculum Resources
Evaluation, selection, and development
- United Church of Christ Studies
History, identity, and polity
- Hebrew Scriptures

- Introduction and interpretation
- Christian Scriptures
 - Introduction and interpretation
- UCC Mission & Justice Education
- Introduction to Theology
- Introduction to Worship

Most seminaries will not have all of these courses, and depending on where you live, you may need to piece together a program of study between seminary and college coursework and church leadership education programs and workshops. However, if you desire to obtain the majority of these course in one setting, AUCE highly recommends the distance learning [Design for Leadership Program](#) at Defiance College, described below.

Recommended Educational Requirements for a Youth Worker

[The Association of United Church Educators](#) recommends the following course of study for full-time youth worker in the local church:

- Introducing the Old Testament
- Introducing the New Testament
- Adolescent Development and Faith Formation
- Forming One's Faith: Theological Foundations
- Building Effective Youth Ministry
- United Church of Christ Studies
- UCC Mission & Justice Education
- Introduction to Worship

Most of the courses listed above are available through the distance learning [Design for Leadership Program](#) at Defiance College, described below. Other courses, such as United Church of Christ Studies, will need to be sought out through your Conference, Association, or a UCC-related seminary.

Distance Learning

[The Design for Leadership Program](#) at Defiance College in Defiance, Ohio is a Distance Learning program created in 1971 to serve persons who seek a career in religious education, but whose geographical location makes it impossible for them to pursue studies in a college offering a major in religious education. The Design for Leadership also serves persons already employed in religious education, but needing formal education in the profession. Most students in the Design for Leadership are re-entry or non-traditional students; that is, they are beyond the traditional college age of 18-25. Design for Leadership offers both certificate and degree programs. Certificate programs available include the Church Education Certificate, the Youth Ministry Leadership Module, and the African American Ministry Leadership Module. Degree programs include an A.A. in Religious Education and a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Education. For more information, visit http://www.defiance.edu/pages/design_for_leadership.html

[LEARN \(Local Education and Renewal Network\)](#) provides local access to the learning resources of the Andover Newton community. LEARN is a partnership initiated by Andover Newton Theological School in order to provide education and renewal experiences for both laity and clergy. It tailors its offerings to meet specific needs related to both topic and delivery.

Partnerships with high quality institutions, such as [The Alban Institute](#), allow the LEARN program to feature instructors who are well versed in their areas of expertise. For more information, visit <http://www.ants.edu/learn>.

UCC-Related Seminaries

More and more seminaries related to the United Church of Christ are offering online courses. Visit their web sites for updated information.

ANDOVER NEWTON THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL
Newton Centre, Massachusetts
www.ants.edu

BANGOR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Bangor, Maine and Portland, Maine
www.bts.edu

CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Chicago, Illinois
www.ctschicago.edu

EDEN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
St. Louis, Missouri
www.eden.edu

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
www.lts.org

PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION
www.psr.edu
Berkeley, California

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE TWIN CITIES
www.unitedseminary.edu
New Brighton, Minnesota

Conference-Based Lay Ministry Education Programs

Visit http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Continuing_Ed..html and scroll down to the bottom of the page for a listing of Lay Ministry Education Programs offered by many United Church of Christ Conferences.

Self-Directed Reading

Visit http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Home_files/CE%20bibliography.pdf for a Recommended Reading List for Christian educators and faith formation practitioners who wish to do some self-directed reading. This bibliography is updated regularly.

A youth ministry bibliography is available by visiting <http://www.ucc.org/education/bibliographies/pfd/youth-ministry-resources.pdf>.

The Association of United Church Educators strongly recommends that any program of self-directed reading be undertaken with a mentor in the field of Christian education/formation or youth ministry. To help you locate a mentor in your area, visit your region's page on the AUCE website: <http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Regions.html>.

Authorized Ministry in the United Church of Christ

An important decision for the lay professional church educator or youth worker is whether or not to pursue authorized ministry. The United Church of Christ recognizes three forms of authorized ministry: ordained, commissioned, and licensed.

Ordained Ministry

An Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ is one of its members who has been called by God and ordained to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites of the church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership. (*Manual On Ministry*, Section 3, p. 1)

Commissioned Ministry

A commissioned minister is a lay person who performs "specific church-related ministry which is recognized by an Association, but does not require" the administration of the sacraments. Typically, commissioned ministers may be engaged in Christian education, parish nursing, music ministry, spiritual direction, community organizing, or other ministries that the church values as part of its mission and ministry. In order to require commissioning these must be ministries over which it is appropriate for the Association to have oversight. In some sense they are also performed *on behalf of* the entire denomination. A commissioned minister is a representative minister of the United Church of Christ and is in ministerial covenant with the local church where the person holds UCC membership, the calling body where the person is engaged in ministry, and the Association acting on behalf of the whole United Church of Christ. More information can be found at http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Commissioned_Ministry.html.

Licensed Ministry

A Licensed Minister of the United Church of Christ is one of its lay members whom God has called and who has been recognized and authorized by an Association to perform specified duties in a designated Local Church or within that Association, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship, for a designated time under the supervision and guidance of that Association. The license may be renewed. (*Manual On Ministry*, Section 7, p. 1)

The specific steps for pursuing one of these authorized ministries are included in the *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ. Your church or your pastor may have a hard copy. It is also accessible on the United Church of Christ web site at www.ucc.org/ministers/manual. Take time to consider these authorizations carefully. Talk to your pastor. Talk to a member of your church who is familiar with your ministry. Talk to your Association or Conference Minister. Talk to commissioned ministers. (A list commissioned ministers is included in the annual United Church of Christ Yearbook; your local church should have a copy). Talk to someone close to you personally. Above all, talk with God, and listen for the still, small voice.

Do You Feel Called By God?

The crucial element in the decision to pursue ministry of any sort is a "call." Do you feel you have a call from God to do this work? In other words, do you believe in your innermost heart

that God wants you to do this? Take time to reflect on this carefully because the issue of call is central to authorized ministries in the United Church of Christ. It is also possible to know you want to be doing a certain ministry in the church and not feel the need for the ecclesiastical authority of a recognized ministry.

If you decide you do have a call and you wish to act on it by engaging in the process to become an authorized minister in the United Church of Christ, contact your pastor and your Association or Conference Minister to get started. If you are considering the commissioned ministry process, it will be helpful for you to know that many Association and Conference Church and Ministry Committees do not have much experience with the commissioning process. Thus it will be extremely helpful for you to become very familiar with Section 6 of the *Manual On Ministry* as you work with your Church and Ministry Committee. However, the process is an invaluable experience offering tremendous opportunities for personal growth through study and reflection in such areas as theology, polity (church governance and structure) and your personal faith journey.

Seeking a Call

Self Assessment

Although the questions that follow in this section are written for a person currently engaged in an educational/faith formation or youth ministry position, persons seeking their first call are encouraged to reflect on the same questions, adapting them to their present employment and/or volunteer setting, even if secular.

Leadership Effectiveness

Achievements

1. List the achievements of the past year in your education/formation ministry or youth ministry. (These may be activities, events, services which occurred for the first time or continuing ministries which were effectively sustained. Be comprehensive.)
2. Identify three things you would do differently if you were facing the same issues and circumstances again. Is there anything you would not do again? Why or why not?

Interactions

3. Reflect on individuals with whom you have interacted in the course of fulfilling your education/formation ministry or youth ministry role. Are you able to identify persons who have responded enthusiastically to your efforts? In what way have they done so?
4. Are you able to identify persons whom you have been able to nurture and encourage to assume more leadership for educational/formational or youth ministry efforts? How did that happen? If it didn't happen, why didn't it?

Goals and Objectives

5. Did you have specific goals and objectives for the previous year? Did you establish them or were they developed by a group assigned to this task? Did you work with that group? List those goals and objectives.
6. Evaluate the goals and objectives in terms of the following:
 - a) Which ones were achieved
 - b) Which ones were not fully achieved, but made progress
 - c) Which ones were abandoned or not achieved
 - d) Which ones (in your judgement) were not helpful to individual
 - e) faith development or to the building of a faith community (whether achieved or not)?
 - f) Which goals were established by sources external to you and were they achieved? Why or Why not?
7. Reflect on the reasons for each of your responses to a) through e) above.
8. List the goals and objectives you would like to propose and implement for the coming year? Make a list.

Leadership Style

8. Examining your own leadership style(s), what would you like to change in order to be more effective in working with people or in coordinating the educational/formational or youth ministries? Why? What do you feel is good and should continue and why?

Visibility and Support

9. How do you sense the people you are called to serve receive your educational/formational or youth ministry? Do you have a network of colleagues, staff, or volunteers to provide feedback on a regular basis? How has it been helpful or not helpful?

10. Is your role visible to the congregation? Is there understanding of what you do behind the scenes? Is that work valued? Is more interpretation needed? If so, how can that be achieved?

11. What is your image as an educator or youth worker within the congregation? In the community? Among youth? Among parents and other adults? Among the children? Within the official board or church council? How are you described?

12. Have you received adequate support from the committees, task forces, and boards which work alongside you? Is there appropriate attendance at the meetings of these groups? Is there a balanced sharing of tasks or did you do much that could be delegated? Is there a healthy flow of ideas and suggestions for programs, procedures and improvements? Is the climate congenial and positive? Are meetings purposeful, well organized, and personally supportive of participants? Is the Christian faith lived out in this support?

Personal and Professional Development

Caring For Yourself

13. Do you have enough time for yourself, for rest, recreation, friends, and family? If not, how can you re-arrange your work patterns to correct those limitations?

Job Description

14. Is your salary and benefit package adequate or do you need to advocate for improvement? Can you identify someone who can help you?

15. What continuing education experiences have you had in the past year? In what areas could you benefit from continuing education opportunities to strengthen your ministry? Where and how can you secure these opportunities?

16. Review your job or position description. Are there changes which need to be made in emphasis or priority? What are they? How can you advocate for these changes most effectively? If the changes are made, will you be comfortable in the new roles or with the revised priorities?

Involvement Beyond Your Current Ministry Setting

17. In what denominational, community, and ecumenical activities were you involved during this past year? How do you feel about your contributions and the effectiveness of these ministries? Are you overly involved? Are questions being raised about the level of your involvement?

Staff Relationships

18. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your relationship with the senior pastor? How could it be improved? In what ways could the senior pastor be more supportive of your work? How could you be more supportive of him or her? Are there some issues of leadership, style, or substance that need attention? What are they? Do you meet regularly (weekly), one-on-one or as a church staff? Do you feel comfortable in your relationship?
19. How is your working and personal relationship with other staff members? Are there issues which need to be resolved? Can you manage those issues or must other persons or committees/boards resolve them?

Developing a Resume

A resume is a concise summary of your skills, background, and credentials. It communicates a maximum amount of relevant information through a minimum number of words. A resume is a capsulized biography designed to persuade an employer to grant you an interview or to request your formal application. In the United Church of Christ, lay educators and youth workers may use resumes when searching for a position on a church staff. (Educators and youth workers who are authorized ministers are encouraged to prepare a UCC Ministerial Profile, as described in the next section.) When desiring to communicate specifically about Christian education/formation or youth ministry experience and skills, a resume is an important tool.

Formats

There are two types of resumes: chronological and functional. The following definitions and sample resumes are provided to assist you in discerning which is most appropriate for your use.

Chronological

The chronological resume format is the most common one used and reveals your employment, education, activities, and other information in chronological order, with the most recent event listed first under each heading. This format is best used when your vocational direction is clear and the position you seek is directly in line with your employment experience and history.

Functional

This format is most often used in cases of career change, redirection, or re-entry when you wish to emphasize areas of ability and potential rather than your work history. A functional resume allows you to highlight major areas of accomplishment and competencies and to organize them in the order that most support your vocational objectives and desired employment positions.

Developing a Strong Resume

Sell yourself. Create a good first impression by highlighting your skills and abilities appropriate to the position you are seeking. Look at your transferable skills and how they can be used in the new position.

Use active language. Always use action words and articulate marketable skills acquired through your previous positions.

Be consistent. Choose a pattern of spacing, an order of information presentation or format of highlighting and be consistent throughout.

Clarify your history. When preparing a chronological resume, present the information in reverse chronological order.

List education and work experience starting with the most recent first.

Check for grammar. Misspellings and poorly constructed sentences communicate negative impressions about a candidate. Have someone else proofread your resume and make comments.

Create a positive impression. Ensure that your resume is neat and visually appealing. Use a simple font. Choose high quality paper in white, off-white or other neutral colors. If possible, have the final version professionally reproduced.

Other Helpful Do's and Don'ts

- Do be honest.
- Do reflect your uniqueness.
- Do design it to pique the curiosity of the reader, rather than answer all questions.
- Do be consistent in format.
- Do write in phrases, rather than complete sentences.
- Do keep it short.
- Don't include personal information such as birth date, height, weight, marital status, number of dependents, or health.
- Don't mail a resume to a prospective church or placement person without an accompanying cover letter.

Example of a Chronological Resume

Name

Street or P.O. Box address

City, State, and Zip

Telephone

E-mail

Vocational Objective (be as specific as possible)

Brief description of the type of position for which you wish to be considered. If you are unwilling to relocate, your geographic preference should be indicated in this section.

Summary of Qualifications (Work experience and Education)

Name of Seminary, College/University, Technical/Vocational School, and/or High School, dates attended, degrees received, and major field. List significant information about related coursework relevant to the vocational objectives. Also, include any relevant information about thesis, related research work, field experiences, workshops and seminars, special skills, etc.

Activities

Organizations, memberships and other pertinent information. Be sure to include any areas of service and/or committee memberships beyond your local church (i.e., camp directing, Association, Conference, or national committee memberships).

Special Skills

If you have other assets, skills or experiences significant to your career objective which may not be easily organized under another heading, they may be included here.

References

Furnished upon request.

Example of a Functional Resume

Name

Street or P.O. Box address

City, State, and Zip

Telephone

E-mail

Vocational Objective (be as specific as possible)

Brief description of the type of position for which you wish to be considered. If you are unwilling to relocate, your geographic preference should be indicated in this section.

Professional Skills

List three or four functional skills in order of importance. The skills most related to your present job objectives should be listed first. Within each skill area, stress the ones most directly related to accomplishments, results produced and tasks performed that indicate you do indeed possess each stated functional skill.

Employment History (or Work Experience)

List position title, organization, institution or company, and dates of employment.

Education

Name of Seminary, College/University, Technical/Vocational School, and/or High School, dates attended, degrees received, and major field. List significant information about related coursework relevant to the vocational objectives. Also, include any relevant information about thesis, related research work, field experiences, workshops and seminars, special skills, etc.

References

Furnished upon request.

Preparing a Ministerial Profile

All United Church of Christ authorized ministers (ordained, commissioned, licensed) are encouraged to use the UCC Search and Call process and prepare a Ministerial Profile.

The following information has been taken, with permission, from the United Church of Christ website (www.ucc.org/ministers/profile).

Introduction to the Search Processes

The purpose of the Ministerial Profile is to provide ministers within the United Church of Christ an opportunity to present themselves to the search committees of calling bodies toward the end of obtaining an interview and receiving a call to a place for ministry. The United Church of Christ Ministerial Profile is for those persons engaged in ministry in the following ways:

1. Ministers holding ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ.
2. Ordained Ministerial Partners of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who are qualified to seek a call in the United Church of Christ.
3. Ministers holding Commissioned Ministry status in an association of the United Church of Christ.
4. Ministers who are Licensed and want their profile sent to the association which has granted the license.
5. Graduating seminarians In Discernment (formerly known as In Care) of an association of the United Church of Christ.
6. United Church of Christ laypersons who are not commissioned or licensed and are seeking employment in the United Church of Christ for which they are eligible to be considered.
7. Ordained ministers of other denominations with privilege of call in the United Church of Christ.

Profile software for ministers and congregations

The "Search and Call" process of the United Church of Christ provides the means to help UCC congregations conduct a nationwide search among UCC clergy for pastoral leadership. The process also helps UCC clergy who are seeking a call to service within the United Church of Christ. It is expected that both clergy and local churches will work closely with UCC Conferences and Associations while engaged in Search and Call.

To participate, clergy prepare a Ministerial Profile while congregations prepare a Local Church Profile. These documents can be completed on your computer. If you have any questions or need help using the software, please use the contact information posted below.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Darrell Ludwig
Profile Operations Secretary
Parish Life And Leadership
Local Church Ministries
700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44115
216-736-3847
ludwigd@ucc.org

Note that this Search and Call process is open to several kinds of ministers and is not limited to those commonly referred to as “clergy.” The placement system in the United Church of Christ is designed to promote an open search, and to give every individual the same opportunity for a particular position. Traditionally, many church educators or youth workers have not taken advantage of this process and many Conferences and Associations usually work only with ordained clergy. However, it is in the interest of church educators and youth workers to become part of this placement process.

You are not obliged to complete the profile in one sitting. You may return to any of its 10 sections whenever you are ready to actually enter your prepared information. Helpful instructions and guidelines are included at www.ucc.org/ministers/profile.

The Ministerial Profile consists of 10 sections:

- **Basic Information:** Provide information about your current position and your previous three positions.
- **Statement of Consent:** Print, sign and date the Statement of Consent within the designated space on the bottom of the form. Parish Life and Leadership will not circulate any Ministerial Profile without the appropriate signatures.
- **Personal History:** Provide information about what sort of ministries and positions interest you; salary, benefits and expenses expectations; current authorization information; certifications and accreditations; your local church membership and involvement.
- **Statement on Ministry:** Provide your statement on how you understand ministry and any supplemental information that might be valuable to searching churches, institutions, and agencies.
- **Appraisal:** Includes an opportunity for self-appraisal and a place where you are presented with a forced-choice list in which you select your 12 strongest qualities. If you check more than 12, or less than 12, the form will not accept your submission.
- **Background Disclosure:** Use of this portion of the Ministerial Profile is an integral part of the covenantal character of the relationship between the church and its called leadership.
- **Information Summary:** List your most recent position, ministerial authorization date, geographic preferences, types of positions and ministries in which you are interested, and settings for ministry including size of church
- **Authorization to Circulate:** Check “circulate now”, or “hold until further notification”.
- **Profile References:** Provide the names of three telephone references; and ask eight people to provide written references for you. Be sure to ask permission of each reference prior to submitting these names.
- **Submit Profile as Complete:** Click “submit button” when you are ready for your profile to go to the Parish Life and Leadership offices in Cleveland.

Networking for a Job Search

Your credentials are set. Your resume or Ministerial Profile is finished and polished to your satisfaction. Your references are all lined up. Now what?

Talk To People

The best way to find a good job is through talking to people with contacts and connections in your chosen field. Networking is a process of developing and involving contact persons to research and solve problem issues, like finding a job. It is a simple process of talking to people who refer you to other people. There are a number of ways to begin to network as a part of your job search; several are listed here.

Local Educator Meetings

First, do your homework by checking to see if there is a local gathering of church educators or youth workers. These gatherings can take a variety of forms. The Association of United Church Educators may have a regional, conference or local chapter in your area that holds periodic gatherings of educators and youth workers for study and renewal. These gatherings are excellent opportunities to meet other educators and youth workers to find out current information on everything from curriculum to the best new youth group practices. These people are also in the best position to know about current and potential job openings.

Conference/Association Staff

Network with Conference or Association staff. Do your homework and identify staff responsible for placement and whether their responsibilities include lay professional educators. Even if they don't, these people will still be good persons to talk with to see what's happening in local churches. Other staff persons to talk with are those whose responsibilities include Christian education/formation, youth ministry, and/or other aspects of local church life. They will have a good grasp of what is going on in local churches. Be persistent!

Partners In Education

Another networking source is the United Church of Christ Partners In Education resource consultants. These people are part of a national network which has been developed to assist local churches in finding and utilizing the most current educational and formational resources available. Certain Partners In Education will also have some idea of local church staffing plans and needs.

Talk To Your Pastor

If you intend to begin networking with the goal of leaving your current position, you will want to give careful consideration to talking with the people at your church, especially the pastor. It would not be good for your pastor to hear from someone else that you were considering making a change. Your pastor may be the perfect person to start with, especially if she or he has been encouraging your professional development. She or he may be in the best position to give you advice and direction on how to make the changes you feel you need to make. However, if one of

your reasons for making a change is that your relationship with the pastor is not a good one, you may want to defer that conversation while networking quietly and in a confidential manner.

The Website of the Association of United Church Educators

The AUCE website posts Christian Education and youth ministry opportunities when they are available. These are submitted by congregations from across the country that are seeking educators and youth workers. The list of positions is an ongoing feature of the web-site and is regularly maintained and updated. Visit www.auce-ucc.org and click on “Job Listings.”

EXPRESSING THANKS

A key part of networking is acknowledging the assistance you received from your contacts. A note or card is one way to express your gratitude but even a phone call or e-mail will be appreciated.

Signing a Contract or Letter of Call

Whether a church educator or youth worker is called or hired, a written contract is signed. The position may be part-time or full-time, but careful attention should be given to the terms of the contract to avoid future conflict and misunderstanding.

Several key questions have to be answered and/or clarified by the educator or youth worker and the local church before signing the document. The written document has to be carefully studied and all items considered conscientiously.

Expectations and commitments of both the educator or youth worker and the local church or the calling body should be in the document, to serve as a guide for both parties in the performance of the responsibilities and accountability of everyone involved.

Job Description

- Are the areas of primary and secondary responsibility clearly defined?
- If the position is part-time, are the hours expected specified? Is compensation provided for extra hours worked?
- Could accountable extra hours be applied as compensated time off?
- Will there be time off for weekend seminars and conferences?
- How will involvement with the association, conference, national and ecumenical settings be addressed?
- What are your responsibilities for worship, calling, meeting with committees and boards?
- To whom are you accountable? Who will sign your contract on behalf of the church?

Compensation

- Are all terms, salary and benefits agreed upon and understood?
- If part-time, what benefits will the church provide?
- What has been determined with regard to insurance, annuity, vacation time, educational allowance (books, publication materials, professional association, and seminar dues and travel expenses to seminars and conferences), mileage?
- If you are ordained or commissioned, is there a housing allowance? (This is only available for those with authorized ministerial standing.)
- How many weeks of paid vacation are provided? Is there a required time of the year when vacation must be taken? or may not be taken?

Evaluation/Assessment

- Is there an evaluation process established for all staff? What is the process and who is part of it?
- Is this process separate from any salary negotiations?
- Is there a provision in the agreement for you to meet with the evaluation committee privately?
- How often does the evaluation takes place?

Support

- Is there a support system for all staff?
- Who makes up your support network or committee? Do they understand their role in caring, giving affirmations of appreciation, clarification, and constructive criticism?
- Are they comfortable being the channel of communication between the educator or youth worker and the congregation?

Administrative Office Support

- Although most educators and youth workers are familiar with the use of computers, it is necessary to clarify how much administrative support will be provided.
- Will preparation outside the actual performance of the responsibility be counted as part of the contractual time?

Separation Issues

- How much notice is required by either party to terminate the agreement?
- In the event of termination without cause, what does the severance package provide? How are benefits handled?
- Who will represent the church in the event of a separation?

Extending a Call

Developing a Church Profile

Church Profile Worksheet

A. Name of the Church _____
Address: _____
Phone number: _____
E-mail address: _____
Website: _____

B. About the Church

How might a member or visitor describe your church?

What are the long range goals of your church?

What joys, frustrations, key events or celebrations illustrate what it's like to be a part of this congregation?

C. About your neighborhood

Describe the area in which the church is located.

In what ways does the church interact with the community, especially educationally?

D. Membership

Average attendance at worship: _____

Current church membership: _____

E. Demographic Profile (fill the pie chart)

1. Age Category:

Infants
Preschool
Elementary
Middle/Senior High
Young Adults
Mid Adults
Older Adults

2. Education:

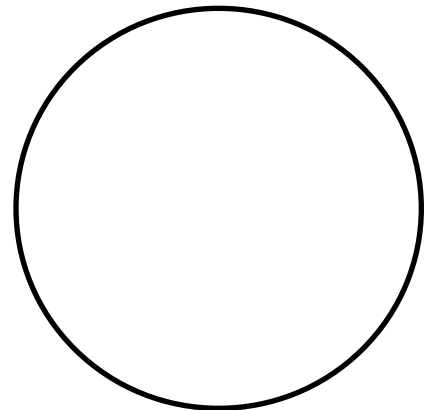
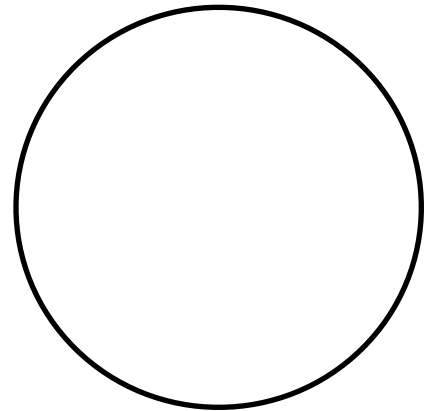
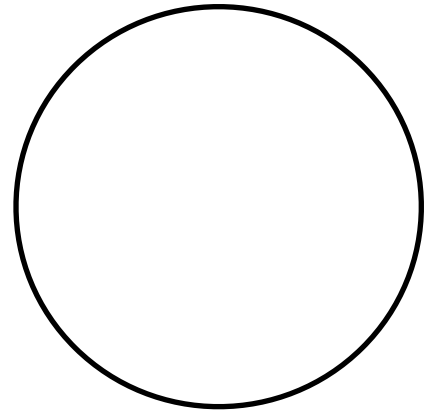
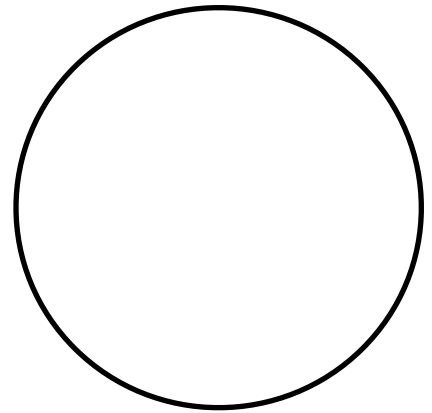
High School
Education beyond High School
Advanced degree

3. Family Units

% couples with children at home
% couples without children at home
% single
% single parent/grandparent/caregiver with children at home

4. Occupation:

Business
Professional
Farmer/Rancher
Laborer/manufacturer
Homemaker
Service Industry
Retired
Other



5. Describe the racial and ethnic makeup of your congregation.

F. Pastor and other professional staff

Name and position for each staff member:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>

G. How does the church plan to fund this position over the next three years?

Developing a Position Description

Expectations Questions to Consider

Does this congregation need a full-time or part-time educator or youth worker? (Some determining factors are: the size of the congregation, the church's financial health, the size of the church school and youth programs, the demographics of the congregation, the congregation's overall commitment to education.)

A congregation seeking a church educator or youth worker should examine carefully its needs and priorities for education/formation and/or youth ministries. This will help the prospective educator or youth worker to better understand the church and the role that she/he will have. It will also help the church to clarify its own needs and expectations.

On the next page is a checklist to help you determine what tasks you will include in the educator's or youth worker's job description, along with an estimation of how many hours each task will take. In preparation for filling out this checklist, first address the following questions:

- ✓ Do we need a person who will lead us in envisioning what our education youth program should be, in planning and developing programs that will make our vision a reality, and in overseeing the implementation of the program we plan? OR
Do we need a person who will administrate our existing programs and supervise volunteer teachers and leaders?
- ✓ Do we need a person who will have oversight of the total educational/formational ministry for all ages? OR
Do we need a person to oversee a special area such as children's education/formation, youth ministry, adult education, or intergenerational programming?
- ✓ What qualifications are we looking for in a staff person in education/formation or youth ministry?
- ✓ Which board or committee will the educator or youth worker be responsible for?
- ✓ What support will be provided for the church educator or youth worker (e.g., administrative, work space, resources, committee support)?
- ✓ What will be the relationship of the church educator or youth worker to the rest of the church staff (other ministers, employees, volunteers)?
- ✓ For each event or task, will the educator or youth worker need to attend a meeting(s) and/or equip/train personnel? If so, how many meetings will be needed and how long will each one be?
- ✓ Will he or she need to find resources, create publicity, and/or recruit personnel? Most preparation of this type requires at least 1-2 hours for every hour of contact time, depending on the type of event/project.
- ✓ Will he or she need to provide set-up & clean-up?

Developing a Position Description

Education/Formation Expectations Checklist

Check the tasks you expect the educator or youth worker to undertake, then write the number of hours estimated to complete the task. A Staff Meeting example has been provided.

<u>Task</u>	<u># of hours</u>	<u>Circle one:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Meeting	1	<u>week</u> /month
<input type="checkbox"/> Worship (actual worship time plus 1 hour beforehand, coffee hour, and any preparation time needed)	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Education/Formation Committee meetings (and at least 1 hour preparation time)	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Other committee meetings as a staff/resource person (and at least 1 hour preparation time)	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Community agency/program/school liaison	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Research/purchase/develop curriculum materials and resources	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Recruit teachers, leaders, and sponsors (or provide guidance/oversight to recruitment volunteers)	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Development/support/evaluation/appreciation of teachers, leaders, and sponsors	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentor to children, youth and families	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan programs	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Work directly with youth groups	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit in homes of the congregation	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain regular e-mail/phone/social networking communication with children, youth and families	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep regular specified office hours	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Do his or her own administrative work	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Lead or participate in retreats, mission trips/projects, camps	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular reports, newsletter articles, web content, etc.	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain/oversee/order/purchase educational supplies	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Childcare for education programs (or all church functions?)	_____	week/month
<input type="checkbox"/> Other specific expectations of this congregation include:	_____	week/month
_____	_____	week/month
_____	_____	week/month
_____	_____	week/month
_____	_____	week/month
_____	_____	week/month
_____	_____	week/month

Developing a Position Description

Special Areas of Educational Responsibility Worksheet

Place a 1 beside the activities on which the congregation places highest priority.

Place a 2 beside the activities that have intermediate priority.

Place a 3 beside the activities that have lowest priority.

Note that this list includes areas of specialty above and beyond what a typical Church School Superintendent would cover.

- _____ Leadership development
- _____ Administration of education/formation or youth programs
- _____ Designing new educational/formational and youth ministry models or programs
- _____ Curriculum development
- _____ Education about worship and/or leadership in worship
- _____ Education in evangelism
- _____ Family ministries
- _____ Mentoring programs
- _____ Prayer groups, support groups, spiritual retreats
- _____ Seasonal programming (Advent, Lent, etc.)
- _____ Parish program development (in/for the local community)
- _____ Stewardship education
- _____ Youth ministry
- _____ Participation in regional/national/denominational programs/committees
- _____ Interdenominational educational programs
- _____ Counseling
- _____ Crisis visitation
- _____ Mission education/administration
- _____ Weekday children's programs
- _____ Music ministry
- _____ Confirmation education
- _____ Other areas of program important to your congregation:

Developing a Position Description

Skills or Special Interest Worksheet

Check the items which you hope the educator or youth worker will have particular interest or skill.

Age Groups

- ☐ Infants
- ☐ Early Childhood
- ☐ Elementary
- ☐ Youth
- ☐ College
- ☐ Young Adults
- ☐ Singles
- ☐ Middle Adults
- ☐ Older Adults

Intergenerational Activities

- ☐ Camping
- ☐ Retreats
- ☐ Recreation
- ☐ Folk Dancing
- ☐ Crafts
- ☐ Recreation for Persons with Disabilities
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Mission
- ☐ Other:

Arts

- ☐ Choral Music (Adults)
- ☐ Choral Music (Children/Youth)
- ☐ Organ/Piano
- ☐ Visual Arts (banners, graphics, etc.)
- ☐ Liturgical Dance
- ☐ Theatre Arts
- ☐ Media/Communications
- ☐ Other:

Languages

- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ European
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Other Asian
- ☐ Mid-Eastern
- ☐ Other:

Compensation Guidelines

for Those Engaged in Christian Education/Formation and Youth Ministries

The following United Church of Christ conferences have information about compensation guidelines on their respective websites. Other conferences may be adding this information soon, or may have it in their offices but not posted online. Call or e-mail them to inquire. A list of UCC conferences is found at <http://www.ucc.org/about-us/conference>.

Connecticut

http://www.ctucc.org/resources/pdfs/CT_CE_2009_Guidelines.pdf

Massachusetts

http://macucc.s3.amazonaws.com/F0CF8E57C0674D6886E1D0D4B21A4CED_Guidelines%204-7-2011.pdf

New Hampshire - on page 11 of their Clergy Compensation Guidelines

http://www.nhcucc.org/Resources/ClergyCompensationGuidelines/Guidelines/downloads/2010_Guidelines.pdf

Penn Northeast

<http://www.pnec.org/leadership/pdf/compGuideline2011.pdf>

Rhode Island – on p. 15 of their Clergy Compensations guidelines

http://www.ricucc.org/guidelines_2011.pdf

Vermont– on p. 13 of their Clergy Compensations guidelines

http://www.vtcucc.org/docs/Annual%20Meeting/2010/second_mailing/MinisterialCompensationBooklet2011.pdf

Wisconsin <http://www.wcucc.org/index.asp?menuID=412&firstlevelmenuID=180>

Check your own conference's Clergy Compensation Guidelines; it may have a section specifically for those engaged in Christian education/formation. If your conference does not include guidelines for this group, ask why and encourage them to do so in their next yearly update of their guidelines.

Another way to calculate a just and fair salary for your educator or youth worker is to use percentages related to secular salaries in your area, as follows:

The compensation for Christian education/formation staff should be appropriate to the individual's education and experience. Persons with experience in complementary fields (such as art, music, and drama, for instance) should have this expertise considered in the discussion of the compensation package as well. The following are basic guidelines with which to start creating a compensation package. The number of years of church ministry experience and the number of Christian education and/or youth ministry workshops and continuing education

courses taken also should be considered when determining the salary for a Christian educator or youth worker.

For a **full-time** Christian education/formation or youth ministry position in the church:

- A person who is ordained or commissioned should be compensated according to the conference's guidelines for clergy.
- A person who holds a master's degree in religious or public school education should be compensated relative to the equivalent of a public school teacher in the church's district with the same education and same years of experience.
- A person who holds a bachelor's degree in religious or public school education should be compensated relative to the equivalent of a public school teacher in the church's district with the same education and same years of experience.
- A person who has completed the equivalent of a denominational noncredit program of training in church education should be compensated at least 80% of the salary of a first year public school teacher in the church's district.
- For those who have organizational skills and some educational background but little training or experience in Christian education/formation, we recommend compensation at no less than 60% of what a public school teacher in the church's district receives. We also recommend that the church pay for this person to complete a program of training in Christian education and formation.

As a person receives more training, the salary package should be adjusted annually with a pay raise that recognizes this achievement.

*Salary for **part-time** positions would be the appropriate percentage of the full-time salary guidelines.*

Developing a Job Description

The job description should be flexible enough to allow for change and to make use of the gifts and interests of the person being called. Consideration should be given to the following issues:

Salary and Benefit Guidelines

Professional educators and youth workers deserve to be adequately compensated for their work in the church with salary and benefits. Consideration needs to be taken to include enough benefits for Christian educators and youth workers to accomplish their jobs effectively with a physically and spiritually healthy lifestyle. Compensation varies greatly across the country for educators and youth workers. Some conferences have guidelines for their own educators (see page 46). You are encouraged to seek these conference guidelines to determine salary ranges for your particular area. The following factors should be considered:

- Academic background (certification), ecclesiastical standing (ordained, commissioned)
- Experience in teaching and the teaching ministry
- Median income of the congregation
- Salary levels of equivalent positions in your community (public school teachers, administrators)
- Years of experience
- Proportionality to other professional staff salaries

In addition to salary the following benefits should be considered:

- Social Security
- Continuing education funds and time
- Vacation (four weeks per year - paid)
- Mileage
- Professional expenses (books, literature, supplies, memberships)
- Sick leave

Strongly recommended:

- Health and dental insurance
- Annuity - UCC Retirement Fund for Lay Workers
- UCC Health/Dental Insurance for Lay Workers
- Sick leave
- Other leaves of absence
- Sabbatical time and compensation

Job Related Expense Allowances to include:

- Books, magazines, and other resource materials
- Organization dues
- State and National Memberships
- Conferences
- State and National Ecumenical Events
- Continuing Education Costs
- Travel Expenses - at the IRS allowable rate

Salaries for a part-time position need to be adjusted according to hours but should reflect professional standards of compensation.

Job Description Worksheet

Name of Church: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Website: _____

Title of the Position: _____

Purpose Statement of the Position:

A. Responsibilities - For what specific tasks, assignments and program areas will the educator or youth worker have responsibility?

B. Working Relationships - Describe the line of accountability. List persons, boards and/or committees with whom the educator or youth worker will work most closely. Describe any special relationships to the community. (The most effective oversight of an educator or youth worker is accountability to the appropriate board or committee.)

C. Basic and Specific Qualifications - Personal and Professional

D. Evaluation and Review - Which board or committee is responsible for performance and salary review? How often are they held?

E. What office arrangements are made for the educator or youth worker (office space, equipment, administrative assistance, etc.?)

F. Work Schedule:

How many hours are required? _____

How is the time to be distributed among task areas?)

Is this position considered: Full-time or Part-time?

If part-time be aware of the amount of preparation time for an area. For example, the time needed for mentoring and equipping leaders/teachers/volunteers needs to be included in many of the educator's or youth worker's task areas.

The educator or youth worker will be granted the following time off:

_____ days per week

_____ weekends per year

_____ weeks per year vacation

In addition, the educator or youth worker will receive _____ weeks per year for continuing education.

G. Salary and Benefits:

Salary range: _____

Social Security

Retirement Annuity

Health/Dental Insurance

Group Life Insurance

Family Protection Plan

Parental Leave

Sick Leave

Personal days

Reimbursable Expenses:

Moving Expenses

Auto/Travel Expenses

Telephone/Internet Expenses

Books and Resources

Continuing Education

Supplies for programs including food, etc.

Sample Full-Time Job Description

Title: Director of Educational and Formational Ministries

Purpose of the Position: To provide overall leadership in educational and formational ministry, including guidance and resources for all aspects of education and faith formation in the congregation.

The Director of Educational and Formational Ministries will provide nurture and guidance for all aspects of the educational/formational program in accordance with the goals, objectives, and policies established by the Board of Christian Education or other appropriate body.

He/she will provide counsel and recommendations to the Board of Christian Education or other appropriate board or committee for programs, resources, and leaders.

He/she will oversee the administration of all programs; work with the Board of Christian Education or other appropriate board or committee in the enlistment and training of volunteers and work with clergy and other staff in the planning and coordination of the church's program and mission.

He/she will maintain communication with the congregation to interpret the church's educational/formational opportunities and needs and to enlist their participation and support.

Responsibilities

I. CHURCH SCHOOL AND YOUTH

A. Functionally

1. Establish regular office hours for availability to staff, teachers, and parents.
2. Be physically present on Sunday mornings to administer the Church School; arrange with the ministers and Board of Christian Education(board or committee for coverage of the position on Sunday mornings when absent.
3. Attend meetings of the Board of Christian Education or other appropriate board or committee and coordinate with the Chair in arranging the agenda.
4. Attend meetings of the Church Council if needed.
5. Attend staff meetings with the ministers as required.
6. Work with other adults to plan and administer (and to be present at) the activities of the youth groups as needed.

B. Contact with Families

1. Register new students; tabulate weekly attendance; keep up-to-date records of enrollment data; and weekly inform the ministers of data on new families.
2. Contact families to express interest after a child's attendance of three weeks or other designated time period determined with the ministers or the Board of Christian Education or other appropriate committee or group..
3. Provide ongoing communication with parents by way of the church newsletter, email, and other media, letters and memoranda, newsletters, booklets, and through parent groups.

C. Administratively

1. Oversee the recruitment of teachers, leaders, and establish a list of substitutes.
2. Be a resource person for the support and training of teachers and leaders.
3. Provide professional leadership in the evaluation and selection of curriculum and resources, and order same as needed.
4. Order supplies and maintain an inventory of resource materials.
5. Have available all supplies previously requested by teachers and leaders.
6. Order Bibles for appropriate students each year, and see to their proper inscription.

II. PROGRAM

- A. Initiate, coordinate, participate in and evaluate efforts in the development of sustained experiences in form, content, methodology and scheduling of Religious Educational experiences, both for children, youth, and adults.
- B. As approved by the Board of Christian Education and with the knowledge of the Church Council, implement, coordinate, and supervise special programming (such as Advent programs, Lenten programs, and Adult and Family education and faith formation programs).
- C. Coordinate the efforts to develop the Church Resource/Computer Center as a viable resource.

III. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

The Director of Educational and Formational Ministries will avail him/herself of further educational opportunities (seminars, courses, workshops, continuing education) to update his/her experience as time allows.

IV. EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE AND COMPETENCE

The Director of Educational and Formational Ministries will participate in the annual process of review of the staff carried out by persons delegated to that task by the Church Council and with the senior pastor.

Qualifications

Personal:

Commitment to the Christian faith

Enthusiastic and optimistic about educational/formational ministry

Ability to work with people and have concern for their nurture as persons and as disciples of Jesus Christ

Professional:

Academic training in education and theology, or equivalency through conferences, institutes, courses, and workshops. Such training should include work in theology, biblical studies, human development, and educational theory.

Experience:

Experience in the church in either volunteer or professional positions and/or experience in teaching, leading, administration and supervision. Again assisting in finding mentoring or group.

Sample Part-Time Job Description

Title: Director of Children's Ministries

Purpose of the Position: To provide overall leadership in the educational/formational ministry, including guidance and resources for all aspects of the church school.

Functions

Administration

Supervision

Leadership Development

Nurture

Planning

Resource Development

Communication

The Director of Children's Ministries will provide nurture and guidance for the educational program of the Church School (birth through 8th grade) in accordance with the goals, objectives and policies established by the Board of Christian Education or other responsible body.

She/he will oversee all church school programs. He/she will work with the pastor to incorporate children in worship and oversee special programs during the year to meet the specific needs of the Church School. He/she shall work with clergy and other staff in the planning and involvement of children in the church's program and mission.

She/he will coordinate enlistment of teachers, and leaders for church school and other programs for children, plan, and conducting training sessions.

She/he will maintain communication with the congregation to interpret the children's educational/formational opportunities and needs and to enlist their participation and support.

Specific Responsibilities

1. Supervise the Church School.
2. Provide teacher/leader training, support and nurture.
3. Study, evaluate, and present curriculum and resources to Board or committee for approval.
4. Attend all Christian Education Board or other appropriate board or committee meetings and work with the them in the formation, coordination, promotion, and evaluation or programs and policies.
5. Coordinate children's involvement in worship.
6. Submit yearly budget to Board for approval.
7. Prepare annual report for church school and other program areas.
8. Serve as a resource person in the area of curriculum and related materials.
9. Keep abreast of the latest methods in children's education/formation and bring them to the attention of the staff, Boards, leaders, and teachers.

Time requirements: 20 hours per week or other hours per week, 48 weeks per year.

Supervised by and directly responsible to: Board of Christian Education.

Sample Part-Time Job Description for a Youth Position

YOUTH COORDINATOR

Purpose of the position: To provide overall leadership for youth ministries including guidance and resources for all aspects of the program.

Functions:

Administration
Supervision
Leadership Development
Planning
Resource Development
Communication

Responsibilities

Participation:

Attend all youth group meetings, leader meetings, and planning sessions, other church meetings and other events/activities as appropriate and/or necessary for effective program leadership.

Leadership:

The Youth Coordinator will provide leadership, training, resource evaluation or development & selection, and support for youth ministry programming, and assist youth advisors with program planning and implementation.

Communication:

- The Youth Coordinator will:
- Provide regular communication of youth ministry activities, issues, and programming to the C.E. Board.
- Provide communication of community, church, and wider UCC activities, issues and programming to the youth.

Relationship to the C.E. Board/Pastor:

- The Youth Coordinator will maintain a relationship with the C.E. Board/Pastor so as to be provided with (semi) annual evaluations of programming, leadership style, etc.
- The Youth Coordinator will maintain a relationship with the pastor and with the appropriate board or committee appointed to assist with church school programs or other assigned duties.
- The Youth Coordinator is directly responsible to the C.E. Board.

Time required: 20 hours per week

Where To Find Applicants

Talk to People

The best way to find a good applicant is through talking to people with contacts and connections in the field of Christian education and faith formation. As you seek applicants, be aware that in the 21st century, the language of the church is shifting to some new terminology that better conveys the current thinking about the nature of the process. More and more you will find the term "faith formation" in use when referring to those who are skilled, experienced, and educated for the ministry of assisting the entire range of people in churches as they grow and form in their faith. Education is one of many aspects in the process of faith formation.

UCC Conference and Association Staff

Network with your UCC Conference and Association staff. Do your homework and identify staff members responsible for placement and whether those responsibilities include lay professional educators. The Conference website is a good place to start. Even if they don't have someone with specific faith formation responsibilities in their job description, these people are still good persons to talk with to see what's happening in local churches. For instance, recent staff cutbacks based on financial shortfalls may have left some very skilled educators seeking new positions to serve. Other staff persons to talk with are those whose responsibilities include Christian education/formation, youth, outdoor ministries, and local church life. Ask them to contact you as new possibilities come to mind.

Partners In Education

Another networking source is the United Church of Christ Partners In Education. These are resource consultants trained by national staff and a team of UCC Education Consultants on an on-going basis through regional and national training opportunities. These educators are part of a national network which has been developed to assist local churches in finding and utilizing the most current educational resources available. This group is another one which should have some idea of available educators in your area. Some Partners In Education may also host monthly or bi-monthly gatherings for UCC church educators, as they share resources, methods, tested ideas and assist one another with problem solving and join in celebration of each others successes. They too may have leads to colleagues who are searching for new ministry opportunities.

Local Church Educator's Meetings

First, do your homework to see if there is a local gathering of church educators and/or youth workers in your area. These can take a variety of different forms. The Association of United Church Educators may have a regional, conference or local chapter in your area which holds periodic gatherings of educators and youth workers for study and renewal. These people are in good position to link you with educators or youth workers who are searching for a new setting for their ministry.

Watch for the presence of both **AUCE** and **Partners In Education** at your next Conference or Association Meeting. They often overlap and work together to serve your conference and region.

Seminaries In Your Area

Often seminary students are looking for churches/settings where they can fulfill their field education/internship requirements. Call the seminary and speak with someone in charge of this program. They are eager to identify and list as many settings nearby as possible where their students can learn and serve “in the field.”

- Begin by looking at a UCC-related seminary first, if possible (see the listing on page 21). Then move to other accredited seminaries in your area that are related to mainline Protestant denominations, such as American Baptist, Christian Church—Disciples of Christ, Episcopal, Lutheran, United Methodist, Presbyterian, and Unitarian. UCC candidates for ministry very often study at seminaries other than UCC institutions, simply because of the geographical convenience.
- Learn whether any professors at the seminary are members of the United Church of Christ. Contact them and explain your church's need; they might have a lead for you.
- Independent seminaries, non-accredited seminaries, and those that seem unrelated to larger church organizations may not be a good match theologically for a UCC church, generally speaking. But during an exploratory phone call, you might ask where the seminary stands on some specific social and theological issues that are important to your particular congregation. The answers they provide may help you sort out the likelihood of finding a compatible candidate from that school.
- Another revelatory exercise would be to drive through the parking lot of the seminary and read the bumper stickers on the cars. Notice whether the sentiments expressed are compatible or incompatible with the beliefs, commitments and culture of your congregation. This is not fool-proof because there are always theological renegades of one sort or another in every school, but it might tell you if you are more or less likely to find an applicant on that campus.

Colleges and Universities which have a religious studies department

Many college students look for part-time jobs, so you may benefit from posting your position description where the students can find it. Also seek out and post with the school's off-campus religious organizations, if available.

If you wish to expand your search across the wider United Church of Christ:

Website of the Association of United Church Educators

The AUCE website posts Christian education/formation and youth ministry opportunities as they are received. These are submitted by congregations from across the country that are seeking educators and youth workers. Visit http://www.auce-ucc.org/AUCEhomepage/Job_Listings.html for more information and instructions for posting your job listing.

United Church of Christ Classified Ads

The United Church of Christ lists employment opportunities on its website for a wide variety of ministries within the UCC, which often included openings for educators and youth workers. Visit <http://www.ucc.org/classifieds> for more information and instructions for posting your job listing.

Neighboring UCC Conferences

If your church or setting is located close to the border of a neighboring conference, you can contact that Conference Office to see if they are aware of any available educators/faith formers that are looking for a position. A list of UCC conferences is found at <http://www.ucc.org/about-us/conference>.

Interview and Selection

For information about educational background for an educator or youth worker, refer to the Preparation for Educational/Formational Ministries section beginning on page 19.

Many thanks to Karen Ziel, C.M.C.E. and the Connecticut Conference for the following discernment document.

Calling a Christian Educator: Determining Preparation, Gifts and Skills

In the search for a Christian Education staff member, a congregation may need to move beyond its initial expectation of finding a seasoned professional. Using these guidelines, you may find a person of faith with related experience who possesses the appropriate gifts and skills and depth of faith for the work, but has not yet had the opportunity to serve as a paid church professional.

Today we speak of Christian education, Christian formation or faith formation in regard to the teaching ministry of the church. Below are some hints or ideas about how a search committee or group tasked with finding the appropriate candidate might match its perceptions or insights regarding a candidate and discern an individual's preparation to step into this role with greater intention and purpose. We strive to discern core competencies and affirm certain standards of excellence.

A seasoned candidate who is aware of and currently engaged in a call to the ministry of Christian formation should be able to articulate his /her knowledge of the field including a familiarity with best practices, with recently published scholarship or literature, and be able to clearly articulate an understanding of the relevance of this ministry to the life of the faith community and the individuals the community serves.

A candidate new to Christian education/formation with the appropriate gifts and skills who is a person of faith may be able to meet the criteria below but may answer particular questions differently than a seasoned educator.

To determine the candidate's suitability for this work, a process of crafting good (sometimes open-ended) questions and careful reflective listening must be utilized.

You will want to determine that he or she:

- Is engaged by and in the stories of the Christian faith and the stories of God's people throughout time and history. (Have a candidate share a favorite verse or story and share why it is a favorite.)
- Is self-aware and engaged with his / her own experience and story of faith. Can articulate the power of stories to shape our lives and the life of faith and is willing to share something of his / her story. Is he / she able to be present to the stories of others? (Have a candidate tell you of both a high and / or low point on his / her journey.)

- Is engaged in Sacramental living and recognizes the power of ritual and practice to form and transform the life of faith. (Have a candidate talk about a ritual or faith practice in his / her own experience that has shaped their life of faith in a particular way.)
- Is engaged in Sabbath keeping and liturgical experiences. (Have a candidate speak about the importance of worship for people of all ages; about Sabbath keeping or about the way the liturgy expresses our connection to God.)
- Is engaged in the community of faith and recognizes the importance of community and whole relationships to form and transform the life of faith. (Have a candidate relate their understanding of the importance of the faith community.)
- Models and maintains healthy boundaries in all aspects of community life and in all relationships within the community of faith he/she serves. (It is important that references speak to a candidate's ability to keep confidentiality, about their style of collegiality if applicable and about how he/she generally relates to others.)
- Engages in personal and professional development as time and resources allow. (Inquire about recent workshops or educational opportunities, etc.)
- Is engaged in and maintains the boundaries of healthy collegial relationships. (Whether or not the individual has worked as part of a staff team before, ask him or her to relate some ideas about building collegiality, beginning a new position, etc.)
- Actively engages in a regular practice of goal setting and assessment of the work / ministry in cooperation with the congregation he / she serves. (Whether or not the candidate has been working in Christian formation, inquire of the candidate about the concepts of personal goals for work, what they understand to be important about setting goals for the work within a congregation, etc.)
- In the United Church of Christ, a candidate is actively engaged in and knowledgeable of the denominations' basic history and identity. (Inquire about their use of denominational resources, understanding of basic polity, etc.)

Practically—

1. A person of faith who demonstrates an ability to articulate his/her own faith with clarity.
2. A candidate who has knowledge of and is engaged in the best practices of faith formation and a personal foundation basic to the work. (Basic biblical knowledge, basic understanding of faith development, basic knowledge of church identity and history, etc.)
3. Demonstrates an awareness of and a willingness to participate in the best practices of a creating a safe and nurturing environment .
4. Demonstrates social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing with an understanding of healthy boundaries in all relationships within the church and without.
5. A candidate who is a well-rounded individual with hobbies, relationships and interests outside the church, as well as having experience and connections within the local church setting.

The Contract or Letter of Call

A Sample Form for the Call of a Church Educator or Youth Worker

The _____ Church of [town, state], having heard the recommendations of its Search Committee on [date], has voted to extend to [name of educator/youth worker] a call to become its [title of position] effective [date].

Specifically, the congregation calls [name of educator/youth worker] to:
join the congregation in its life as stated in [covenant, declaration, or statement of faith], and
assume the duties of leadership and to serve this congregation as [title of position].

The congregation agrees to support [name of educator/youth worker] with prayers, periodic evaluation, and stewardship of time.

In addition:

The Church agrees to pay a beginning salary of \$ _____ and to review the salary annually.

The Church agrees to provide the following benefits as specified:

Social Security

Annuity

Family protection plan

Health and dental insurance

Continuing education funds and time

Vacation weeks days/weeks

Mileage or compensation

Professional expense

Parental leave days days

Sick leave days days

It is mutually agreed that this arrangement may be terminated by either the [name of] Church or the [title of education/formation/youth position] upon _____ months notice.

Signed

[church clerk, president, or moderator]

[Date]

for the [name of church]

Having prayerfully considered the call of the (name of church) of (town, state), I do accept that call and the conditions included in it. In accepting the call, I covenant to join with the Congregation in its faith and ministry, and to carry out the *educational/youth* ministry with love, faithfulness, and prayer.

Signed

[educator/youth worker]

Date

This sample form should be adapted according to your church's specific situations. It is suggested that two copies of the Contract/Call be printed on church stationery and signed by both the church moderator and the educator/youth worker—one copy to be retained as part of the church records and one copy to be retained by the educator/youth worker.

Supporting the Relationship Between the Educator or Youth Worker and the Local Church



Sample Service of Covenanting for the Church Educator or Youth Worker

This service of worship and covenanting should be welcoming of children by incorporating the arts and as many of the five senses as possible, as well as leadership by children at appropriate times.

PRELUDE

OPENING STATEMENT:

The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. (Deut. 6:4b-7)

HYMN: Called as Partners in Christ's Service NCH #495

or

Jesus Loves Me NCH #327

INVOCATION

STATEMENT

A member of the Christian Education Committee or other appropriate group shall interpret the purpose of this service of covenanting. He or she should tell the congregation something of the person's background and welcome him or her on behalf of the congregation.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE

[Choose from Deuteronomy 4:12,6-10; 6:17-25; Psalm 25:4-10]

CHILDREN'S OR YOUTH CHOIR ANTHEM

CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE

[Choose from Ephesians 4:1-16; Romans 1:1-18; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31]

Covenant

Pastor: Dear friends, _____ Church has declared that, having gathered under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it has called _____ to minister in this place as [title of position] and that it now receives [him/her] as appointed by God for this ministry.
_____, are you willing to enter this covenant with _____ Church?

[Educator/Youth Worker]: I am willing, and I promise to serve this church faithfully, teaching the word of God, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Pastor: Members of _____ Church, will those who are able rise and affirm your covenant with your commissioned minister?

Local Church Members: We, the members of _____, receive _____ as our [title of position], promising to labor with [him/her] in the ministry of the gospel and to give [him/her] due honor and support.

CHARGE TO THE EDUCATOR and the Congregation

A charge by the pastor with whom the educator or youth worker will be associated, utilizing visuals and symbols of educational/formation or youth ministries.

RESPONSE BY THE EDUCATOR (optional)

A statement of faith incorporating the educator's or youth worker's understanding of and hopes for the educational ministry of the church, utilizing visuals and symbols of educational/formation or youth ministries.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN: You Are Called to Tell the Story NCH #357

BENEDICTION

Order of Installation of a Commissioned Minister

Based on the Order for Commissioning and the Order for Installation of a Pastor from the *United Church of Christ Book of Worship*

Greeting

Association Representative: The _____ Association of the _____ Conference of the United Church of Christ, greets you in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church, who calls us to the ministry of reconciliation. Hear these words from the apostle Paul: My sisters and brothers, I want you to know the truth about gifts from the Holy Spirit. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same God is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to each of us for our particular service. The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

Presentation

Local Church Representative: _____ Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has called _____ as a Commissioned Minister of _____ and respectfully requests that the _____ Association install [him/her] in this ministry among us, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Association Representative: The _____ Association has reviewed the request of _____ Church. We have prayerfully examined _____, and we are pleased to install [him/her] as a Commissioned Minister of _____. _____, servant of God, we invite you to come forward as a sign of your acceptance of the call to this office.

Installation is the action of an association of the United Church of Christ in cooperation with a local church. Installation confirms and celebrates the covenantal relationship among a local church, its ministers, and the United Church of Christ. Installation is a sign that these covenantal partners are committed to share mutually in the mission of the United Church of Christ and of the ecumenical church.

Exhortation

Association Representative: Hear these words from the apostle Paul: At all times make it your aim to do good to one another and to all people. Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants of you, in your life in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Covenant

Association Representative: Dear friends, _____ Church has declared that, having gathered under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it has called _____ to minister in this place as Commissioned Minister of _____ and that it now receives [him/her] as appointed by God for this ministry. The _____ Association of the United Church of Christ has declared that [he/she] has met all the necessary conditions for installation to this office.

_____, seeing that you are called to commissioned ministry by the grace of God and that _____ Church, United Church of Christ has been led to call you as commissioned minister, are you willing to enter this covenant with its members who are one in Christ with us in the _____ Association?

Commissioned Minister: I am willing, and I promise to serve this church faithfully, teaching the word of God as a Commissioned Minister of _____, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Association Representative: Members of _____ Church, will those who are able rise and affirm your covenant with your commissioned minister?

Local Church Members: We, the members of _____, receive _____ as our commissioned minister, promising to labor with [him/her] in the ministry of the gospel and to give [him/her] due honor and support. We gather with [him/her] and with the United Church of Christ as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Association Representative: Members of _____ Association, will those who are able rise and affirm your covenant with _____ Church and its commissioned minister?

Association Members: We, the members of the _____ Association of the United Church of Christ, gather with you, the people and the commissioned minister of _____ Church as a sign of our covenant and in celebration of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Prayer of Installation

Association Representative: Let us pray. Almighty God, who out of your great love gathered one church by the power of the Holy Spirit to be the light of the world, we thank you for those in all ages who have given their lives to tend it, to care for it, to lead it, and to serve in every way to forward its ministry. Now we thank you especially for _____ whom we install for the ministry to which you have called [him/her]. Guide, inspire, empower _____, and keep [him/her] faithful to your call that by [his/her] life, your church may continue to be blessed and its mission brought closer to the fulfillment you intend; through Jesus Christ, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

All: Amen.

Declaration Association Representative: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the _____ Association of the _____ Conference of the United Church of Christ, I declare you duly installed as commissioned minister of _____ Church.

Ongoing Nurture and Support

Support Group Establish a support group and meet regularly from the start. Crisis intervention can be managed with greater success if relationships have already been established. A committee including a person chosen by the educator or youth worker will be most helpful in providing a receptive and open environment for discussion of strengths and weaknesses.

Personnel Committee If there is a separate personnel committee, be sure that new staff members are connected and have regular meetings with that group. The policies of your congregation will act as a guide to the frequency of the meeting. These meetings should always include time for meeting with a staff person without other staff members present. This will help to build an atmosphere of trust and ensure honest communication between individual staff members and the committee. The evaluation process should be clearly defined (see periodic review page) and a personnel file begun. Confidentiality must be respected.

Communication Issues Affirm and support the educational ministry of your congregation by intentionally keeping the educator's role and work site visible. Educational events can be publicized in your newsletter, bulletin, and on your church's website. Announcements can be made during worship. Determine how frequently and in what role the educator will participate in worship to encourage the congregation to see the educational dimension of worship life and affirm the validity of the educator's ministry. Do the same for youth ministry and the youth worker.

Personal and Professional Growth Encourage and support the personal and professional growth of your Christian educator or youth worker. Make available resources (time and money) for the educator or youth worker to attend professional seminars and workshops as well as personal retreat time for spiritual nurture. Provide an allowance for books and other resources. Provide money to join professional associations such as the [Association of United Church Educators](#), which will also acquaint him or her with colleagues in the profession and solid professional development opportunities.

Certification and/or Commissioning Encourage your educator or youth worker to pursue certification and/or commissioning and provide incentive for the completion of either in the form of increased compensation or benefits. For more information about commissioning and certification, visit www.auce-ucc.org.

Periods of Interim Ministry When a senior pastor or head of staff leaves, the change will affect other staff members including your educator or youth ministry staff member. Contact your association or conference staff person for assistance and guidelines. Clarify the church's policy regarding the resignation or continuation of the remaining staff members. Be intentional about maintaining communication between all remaining staff members, the governing board, and the congregation during the interim period. Clarify any changes in expectations and/or job descriptions during the interim. If an interim head of staff is called, clarify with him/her their expectations for other staff.

Periodic Review Process

Review is a process for assessing what is of value. The review or evaluation process is not a substitute for conflict resolution. Rather it is a means of identifying growth and growth goals and affirming the church educator or youth worker. This review guide has been arranged in three sections so that the Board or Committee and the educator or youth worker can work separately, then together, to compare expectations and deal with any discrepancies.

Questions and areas for the Board or Committee to address:

What are the strengths of our educator/ youth worker?
Is support for your educator youth worker adequate? Not adequate? In what ways?
List the goals the committee considers important to implement for the coming year.
Which goals could our educator or youth worker plan/coordinate/implement?
For which goals might other staff take responsibility?
For which goals might volunteers take responsibility?
List possible ways to implement these plans.
What are areas in which our educator/youth worker might consider continuing education in the coming year?
How will participation in continuing education be facilitated?

Questions and areas for the educator or youth worker to address:

What are some major personal accomplishments of the past year?
List the goals you see as important to implement for the coming year.
Which goals could I plan/coordinate/implement?
For which goals might other staff take responsibility?
For which goals might volunteers take responsibility?
List possible ways to implement these plans.
What are the areas in which I might engage in continuing education in the coming year?
What will I need in the way of resources and time to do so?
How has the Board or Committee been most helpful? Least helpful?

Questions and areas for both the Board or Committee and the church educator or youth worker to address together:

List the strengths of the educator or youth worker.
What are the highlights of our church's educational youth ministry in the last year?
Which previously set goals were met? Which were not? Which goals were changed or modified?
Are the position description expectations still realistic? What might be added? Deleted? Changed?
How can the support for the educator or youth worker be improved?

Recommendations for the coming year:

Compensation issues
Resources for ministry (volunteers, program and expense money, facilities, etc.)
What goals for the coming year could strengthen the church's educational youth ministry?
Be specific and realistic!

Recognizing Stress and Burnout

Definitions

All people who work on a daily basis with human beings at one time or another may experience stress or burnout. Stress is the result of having to deal with too many crises that break the balance we have in our lives. Burnout can produce exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Burnout is the result of our inability to deal with stressful situations in our work, in our lives or in our family life.

Crisis

Life brings with it certain levels of crisis. The two main classifications of crisis are developmental and accidental. A developmental crisis is one that is produced by our own maturation. Such events include marriage, birth, graduation, retirement, new jobs, and other changes that are part of the life cycle. Accidental crises, on the other hand, include sickness, accidents, surgery, moving, unemployment, and/or natural disasters. Both types of crises produce stress in our lives. If we are not able to deal with the levels of stress produced by various types of crises, burnout can result. Psychologists and psychiatrists agree that stress is cumulative. When you keep adding too many crises together, the level of stress increases and the ability of the person to cope is diminished.

Church educators and youth workers are continuously dealing with different types of crises in their work environment. Just a telephone call from a Sunday school teacher saying that she or he can not be present on Sunday creates a certain level of stress if the ministry team is not functioning well. If parents are complaining about a program or about any specific activity, stress is created. How much stress a person can handle at a particular time depends on how well equipped that person is and what support is available and utilized by him or her.

Let's look at the previous example. When the church educator receives that telephone call and knows that there are other people she or he can count on, the level of stress is reduced. On the other hand if there is nobody she or he can call at the last minute, it creates a stressful situation.

Sources of Stress

- How many hours a week do you work?
- Do you see your work growing and your time shrinking?
- Who is in charge? To whom do you report?
- What kind of relationships do you have with your colleagues?
- What are the things you do not like to do, but are expected of you?
- Do you feel well compensated for the work you do?
- Who cares about your work?
- What are the sources of support for your work?
- How do you balance your work with your family life and your leisure time?
- What support do you receive from your Conference, Association or national offices?
- How do you renew your skills?
- How do you adapt to or resist change?

These and many other questions can help determine if the situation you work in creates levels of stress that can lead to burnout. Stress is dynamic and can change from one moment to the other. However, burnout is a sense of failure that is more difficult to deal with because it radically diminishes coping mechanisms.

Burnout

- Are you frustrated with your ministry situation?
- Do you think you are at the end of your rope?
- Do you feel emotionally drained?
- Have you lost the passion for your educational or youth ministry?
- Do you care what happens to the participants?
- Are you having problems relating to other people?
- Do you feel everybody blames you for what is wrong and nobody recognizes what is right?
- When you wake up in the morning, do you dread going to work?
- Do you feel that you are pounding your head against the wall?
- Has your health been affected?

If you answered yes to two or more of these questions, you are a candidate for burnout. But this does not necessarily mean you are at the end of your rope. There is hope.

Steps for Dealing with Stress and Burnout

- Take a break. Create distance between yourself and the situation. Take time for spiritual renewal through prayer and biblical reflection.
- Explore and identify the situations creating stress. Try to boil down the problem to just the specifics. What is going on? What is the real problem or situation? Break down the problem into its parts.
- What resources do you have available to help you deal with the particular problem? Consider personal strengths, a problem solving process, and communication skills.
- Identify the problem or situation. Define all the possible alternatives, evaluate the alternatives and choose the best options, and act on them.
- Celebrate the value of personal relationships and the support network you have. Take time to seek support and other points of view. Contact your Association, Conference or national office for networking and support. [Regional representatives of the Association of United Church Educators](#) are also a good source of support.
- One of the strengths of human beings is to learn by our mistakes or our challenges. Take time to articulate in writing what you have learned. These learnings can be helpful in a future situation.
- God will not abandon you. Pray. God will provide you with the peace, patience, and endurance to work through those situations that create stress and burnout in ministry.

Resignation or Dismissal

You love what you do. You love being a church educator or youth worker. However there are times a person needs to move on, and there are times when a church needs to move in a different direction. Separation can take two different forms. One is resignation from the position; the other is termination by the employer. Each one requires a different approach.

Resignation

Resignation is considered a voluntary action. Changes in personal circumstances, the discovery of incompatibilities with the persons you work with, or marked theological differences that make you uncomfortable could all be issues leading to your resignation.

The issue of separation is a stressful one to deal with, even if you are resigning on good terms. You have developed special relationships with people in the congregation, staff, children, youth, and adults. What should you do?

Create opportunities to express your feelings to those who will be missed. Provide some kind of closing, perhaps during a worship service, or the church may want to have a special reception for you. Events like this help in the separation process for all concerned. Once you leave a position, ethics requires you to respect the church's new beginning without you.

If resignation is provoked by particular situations in the work environment, and you feel that the best way out is by resigning, you should be honest. Learn from your experience. It may be time to make an assessment of yourself and set new goals.

Dismissal

The other type of separation is dismissal by your employer. This type of separation creates high levels of stress for all involved.

Questions to assess your situation:

- Were there any early signs that termination might happen? Did your evaluation show possible signs of dismissal?
- Was there an unusual amount of criticism about you and your work? If so, how did you respond?
- Were your relationships with other staff members deteriorating?
- Were there major theological or philosophical differences between you and the congregation and/or the staff?
- Was the church cutting staff because of financial support or budgetary losses?
- Do you feel the dismissal was unfair, or you have been mistreated?

Dealing With Reality

Responding to some of these questions may help you put reality in perspective. Do not jump immediately to conclusions before you have examined the total context of the situation. Try to get some responses from the pastor, your supervisor, the education committee or the church board. An exit interview with church representatives can be helpful to you and the church.

Face Your Feelings

Whenever dismissal occurs there are a lot of feelings on both sides. You may feel anger, bitterness, guilt, confusion, loss of identity and low self-esteem. Remember this type of news creates imbalance in your life and emotions need to be addressed in a healthy manner. Remember to be intentional in retaining your professional demeanor.

An unexpected dismissal can create financial setbacks, loss of health insurance, separation from loved ones, and can threaten your personal stability in many different ways. Refer to your contract. What does it say about termination? Does it guarantee any type of compensation in such cases or continuation on the health insurance for a reasonable time? Be sure to check if you are eligible for unemployment.

Planning Your Future

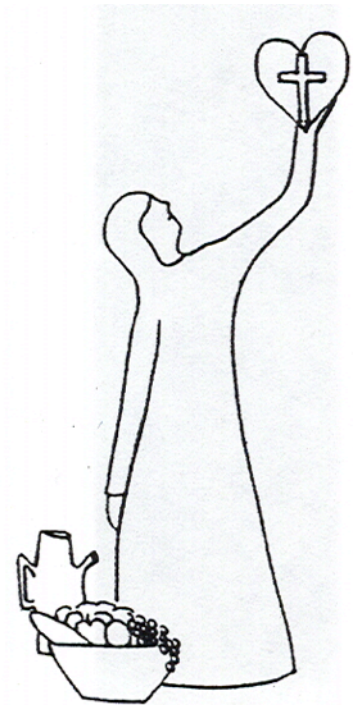
Your next step is to take responsibility over your life. Life must continue. This is not the end of the world, although it might seem like it to you now. These are some of the steps you can take:

- Pray
- Do something good for yourself.
- Make an assessment of yourself and your personal resources.
- Set continuing education goals, if needed.
- Find support from people doing the same type of ministry.
- Do not let your bitterness sever relationships with people closest to you.
- Take steps to promote your spiritual growth.
- Prepare new goals for your ministry and your life.
- Update your resume or Ministerial Profile.
- Develop a network leading to your next position.
- Try to learn the most you can from this temporary setback.
- Trust God. Trust in the One that can lead you forward.

Parting Words:

The Joy of Discipleship in Education and Faith Formation

The "costs" of discipleship as an educator or youth worker may have become all too apparent to you after reading through this Guide. We have explained what to do and how to do it. We have taken care to include practical strategies for when a position becomes unusually stressful or even ends. We have also carefully outlined the church's side to get the most from educational and formational ministries. What we have not done as much is talk about the *joys* of discipleship in ministry, as there are many!



The list of joys from educational and formational ministries are different for each educator and youth worker, as well as for each church. However, the common thread is the joy which comes from sharing one's faith in God, the difference it makes in your life, and in someone else's life in an immediate, direct, and tangible way. Any list would have to include teaching young children how to use their Bibles so they can read about Moses and Joseph and Jonah and Jesus for themselves, and then hearing from the parents of those children about how the Bible has become their child's favorite bedtime reading. Another would have to be those moments when you are able to make faith come alive in the eyes of those skeptical middle schoolers, even if it's just for an instant. Learning more from the members of the adult class than you could ever hope to teach them is a special gift anytime. Struggling with the privilege of serving as mentor and role model in the faith for all the children and volunteers in the church school, youth ministry programs, and adult Bible study is both a joy and an awesome responsibility. All these and more would have to be on any list of the joys of the church educator and youth worker.

Usually, though, the true joy and the real sense of accomplishment in this life's work is summed up in those moments when you are not working and are not even in the church. These moments can happen anywhere—the grocery store, the pharmacy, the mall, the beach, or maybe even a crowded hotel lobby hundreds of miles away. They are times when you run into one of your church school or youth families and the children run up to you with joy in their eyes and a big hug to share with that special person from the church who made it possible for them to know God. Those are the moments that make it all worthwhile. Those are the moments when God is saying directly to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant."