

New England Regional Youth Event Leadership

Rev. Maren Tirabassi is the pastor of Union Church in Madbury, New Hampshire and author of sixteen books. She is also a science fiction and fantasy (scholar) and fan!

Rev. Derek White is the Sr. Pastor of the First Congregational Church in Kennebunkport, Maine. He has been involved with youth ministry for over 14 years.

Rev. Mary Angela Davis is currently the Interim Pastor of the First Congregational Church, UCC in Pittsfield, Maine.

Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer is the Associate Pastor at the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, Vermont. He has over ten years of indoor and outdoor climbing experience and has been introducing youth and adults to climbing for nearly as long.

Rev. Dr. Jim Antal is the Minister and President of the Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ. He is a life-long environmental activist.

Rev. Courtney Clayton Jenkins is the founder of HIP 4 HOP Ministries Inc, a non-profit organization committed to helping churches use hip hop culture to train youth leaders, empower young adults and help congregations attract the least and the lost.

Ms. Valerie Tutson is a life-long member of the UCC, having grown up in the First Congregational Church in New Milford, CT. A professional storyteller, she loves to retell old Bible stories and recently has been learning about the Andean spiritual tradition.

Mr. Josh Tinley is an Abingdon Press Youth Editor, and also serves as the managing editor for LinC, a weekly electronic curriculum that draws faith lessons from current events and pop culture. He is the author of *Kneeling in the End Zone: Spiritual Lessons from the World of Sports*, from The Pilgrim Press (2009).

Ms. Carolyn Paulus is an established voice teacher at The Voice Studios in New York City and Stamford, CT, a member of the adjunct voice faculty at The Hartt School at the University of Hartford as well as the Director of the Youth Choir at First Congregational Church of Greenwich, CT.

Ms. Martina Radwan is a movie director, producer and cinematographer. Her documentary *Aliens Among Us* will be viewed during our time together.

Ms. Claudia De la Cruz was born in the Bronx in the year 1980 to first-generation immigrants from the Dominican Republic. She is the pastor of the Iglesia San Romero de Las Americas-

UCC and also works in the Dominican Women's Development Center. De la Cruz works on leadership development and empowerment processes with the Latin@ community as a whole, but particularly with young women.

Mr. Bill Walsh is the ONA (Open and Affirming) Consultant to the Maine Conference, UCC.

Ms. Shelley Abreu is a member of First Church of Christ in Sandwich, MA, and a prose writer whose essays have appeared in national publications such as The Christian Science Monitor, Babble.com, and FamilyFun. She reads and writes poetry as a form of prayer and expression of her faith.

Rev. Obadiah Ballinger serves as pastor of Community United Church of Christ in St. Paul Park, MN. Oby has served on the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries (CYYAM), and the Executive Council of the UCC. He has also worked as a religious organizer in support of marriage equality for same-sex couples in CT.

Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson is the Minister for Racial Justice at the national setting of the United Church of Christ based in Cleveland, Ohio.

Anandi Diane Landall is a certified Yoga teacher specializing in a variety of forms of yoga, including Hatha and Maha. She owns "Yoga with Diane" based in Plymouth, MA. Experienced in a number of yoga styles, she teaches all age groups and specializes in working with people having various degrees of physical limitations.

Rev. Michael Schuenemeyer is the Executive Director of UCAN, Inc. (The United Church of Christ HIV and AIDS Network) whose mission is to build a network of people, congregations and organizations within and beyond the UCC for care giving, education and prevention in response to the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

Rev. Laura Ruth Jarrett is the Minister of Outreach and Evangelism at First Church Somerville, UCC located in Somerville, MA.

Rev. Da Vita McCallister is Associate Conference Minister for Youth and Young Adults in the CT Conference. She is called in this position to support youth and young adults by equipping youth workers and ministers, building multicultural and multiracial youth leadership, and challenging local churches and the Conference in the ways God calls young people to leadership in the Church.

Rev. John Selders is the pastor of the Amistad UCC Church in Hartford, CT. He is a lecturer at Yale Divinity School and a recognized AIDS educator. John is an award-winning songwriter, musician, and performer with local, national, and international credits.

Mr. Tim Brown is the Youth and Young Adult Program Coordinator for the UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns. He works within the United Church of Christ and ecumenically supporting, educating, and advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and young adults - who are not one bit less than *fully loved* by God.