



Tending the Fire

Wise, resilient leadership for a changing world

Your church has shifted in so many ways as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also demands more of you than ever. How can you survive?

Leading a church is no longer a debate about *whether* to engage 21st-century change. That change is here, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only raised the stakes. Leaders face intense pressure for answers and plans and solutions, which are then sabotaged from all sides. How can you move forward with hope and resilience?

Tending the Fire will teach you how to manage yourself and your church so that you can:

- Be a healthy, non-anxious leader
- Manage difficult emotional relationships
- Avoid overwork and “underwork”
- Recognize and handle sabotage
- Discover the “next right steps” for your churches and yourself.

“Tending the Fire *demystified some of the hilariously complicated webs of ministry and inspired me to live fully and courageously into God’s calling.*”

- Rev. Kelly Jane Forbush
First Congregational Church
East Hartford, CT

“Have you ever found yourself wondering ‘What happened? What went wrong? What’s *really* going on?’ then Tending the Fire will give you new tools for understanding yourself and your church.”

- Rev. Keith Beasley-Topliffe
Susquehanna Conference, UMC

Tending the Fire is a course of three 3-day sessions offered in 2021-2022 for UCC, Episcopal & ELCA clergy across New England.

Opening Intensive:

Friendly Crossways Retreat Center, Harvard MA November 2-4, 2021

Series Four

Deepening Session:

Friendly Crossways Retreat Center, Harvard MA January 11-13, 2022

Sending Session:

Silver Lake Conference Center, Sharon CT March 15-17, 2022

Current plans are for in-person retreats; if necessary, this Tending the Fire series will shift to an online format as mandated by state restrictions due to COVID-19.



Tending the Fire

Director / Retreat Leader

Rev. Barbara Lemmel is an ordained elder in the New England Conference of the UMC. She has served congregations in Vermont and upstate New York, facilitated conference re-structuring, and offers programming and spiritual guidance to churches and pastors. Barbara studied Family Systems Theory with the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center in Chicago and the Center for Pastoral Effectiveness in New Orleans. She has led *Tending the Fire* retreats for clergy, laity and judicatory leadership since 2003. Barbara also offers one-on-one leadership coaching and coordinates the Parish Consultants of the New England Conference UMC.

For more information, visit www.tending-the-fire.com or email barblemmel@mac.com.

Sessions begin at 1:00 on the first day, and end by 4:00 on the third day.

Participation at all sessions is required.

Participants earn 9 CEUs.

“How can I become the leader my church needs?”

No one has to tell you that this is a hard time to lead the church: congregations are worried; money is tight; leaders are stretched thin. The old ways don't work, and the best new practices aren't clear.

Yet even in these times of deep change, when you lead by staying true to core principles and also stay flexible in your approach, it makes all the difference.

Tending the Fire draws on the wisdom of family systems theory as developed by Murray Bowen and Edwin Friedman, combined with the adaptive leadership insights of Ron Heifetz and the powerful research of Brené Brown.

Tending the Fire gives you tools to manage the ongoing chaos of life and leadership.

“Tending the Fire’s spirit-filled retreats are personally and professionally transformative: coaching for effective leadership and invitation to self-discovery all rolled into one. Don’t miss this!”

- Rev. Alison Patton, Saugatuck Congregational Church, Westport CT

Tending the Fire Registration

Cost for all three sessions is \$600 (\$800 for non-affiliated clergy) & includes meals and materials. Lodging is available at each location for an additional fee; see online registration for details. Scholarship assistance may be available. Questions? Contact Martha Whyte at whytem@sneucc.org.

Register online:

<https://sneucc-reg.brtapp.com/TendingtheFireSeriesFour20212022>

Registration Deadline:

October 19, 2021

“I can see more clearly what I need to do and be, and I feel better equipped to live in the messy life of the church.”

- Rev. Katrina Wuensch, South Acton UCC, MA

This program is part of the “Together We Thrive: Nurturing Pastoral Leadership” initiative, a collaboration of the Southern New England Conferences of the United Church of Christ, The New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts. This initiative is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc.