

May 2020



New England Conference
The United Methodist Church

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

Find more at www.neumc.org.



Connected
The New England Conference of The UMC



daily prayer
during the COVID-19 crisis

A daily prayer from Conference leadership

During these difficult days of COVID-19, Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar and the members of the Extended Cabinet (the District Superintendents and members of the Conference executive staff) are sharing a daily prayer based on the Revised Common Lectionary for the week.

You are welcome to use these in worship or in your own devotions.

You can find the prayers on our website www.neumc.org; look for the link on the lower right side of our homepage.

Or you can receive the daily prayer right in your email. Go to the bottom of the homepage and sign up for our UMCatalyst weekly email newsletter and you will receive the daily prayer as well as all the latest Conference news.

The Zarephath Fund

Helping those who fall through the safety net

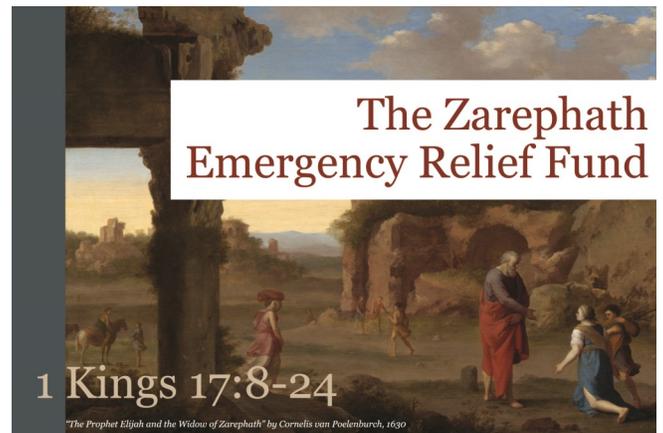
The impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) is extending deeply into our life together as the church.

In this unprecedented time, the blow to the U.S. economy is having a profound impact on clergy and lay people in the New England Conference.

While government actions are providing assistance to many, there remain gaps; many faithful pastors and people in our pews are unable to benefit from the safety net of governmental action.

The Zarephath Emergency Relief Fund is intended to assist the conference's most vulnerable congregations in this moment.

Applications for urgent assistance may be made by a local church pastor, church treasurer, or lay leader via email or letter to their District Superintendent.



**The Zarephath
Emergency Relief Fund**

1 Kings 17:8-24

"The Prophet Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath" by Cornelis van Poelenburch, 1630

Find the application form on our website.

To donate:

Give electronically on the Foundation website at www.umfne.org

OR

Send a check payable to "UMFNE" with "Emergency Relief Fund" in the memo line to the Foundation at:

16 Route 111
Building 3, Suite 102
Derry, NH 03038

Thank you for your support of our pastors and congregations.



FIND MORE ON OUR CONFERENCE WEBSITE:

www.neumc.org

Camp and Retreat Ministries

Our camps and retreat center take their programs online

There's no canoeing or lighting campfires (at least for those of you inside!), but you can still go to camp – or rather camp can come to you.

New England's camping and retreat ministry is adapting to the new normal of COVID-19 by bringing "that camp essence" to kids and adults with a variety of online activities including crafts, virtual lunch gatherings, and spiritual retreats.

Wanakee United Methodist Center in New Hampshire and Camp Aldersgate in Rhode Island both offer traditional summer camp for kids.

But Wanakee Executive Director James Tresner says he understands that families are not thinking about summer right now.

"Camps specialize in engaging kids, and we know that's what parents need more than ever," Tresner said. "Right now, what we can do best for our community is create space for finding connection – just like we do in the summer."

They began "[Wanakee from Home](#)" with a photo scavenger hunt on March 18, and have been offering 7-10 activities a week since March 23.

Camp Aldersgate Program Director Megan Lynch said that when thinking about launching their Virtual Camp, reproducing what it feels like to be at camp was just as important as the activities themselves.

"For me, it's trying to make sure the camp essence or the camp feeling transfers from our property onto a computer," said Lynch.

Aldersgate's Virtual Camp started April 10, and uses a combination of videos and live virtual gatherings that in-



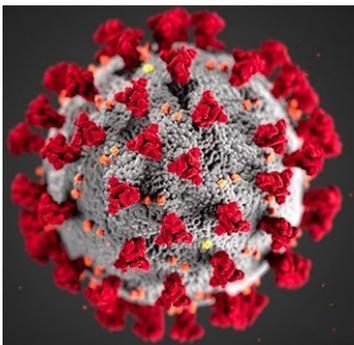
clude science activities, crafts, yoga, and virtual lunches.

For now, rather than trying to offer full retreats online, Rolling Ridge Retreat and Conference Center in Massachusetts has worked with its scheduled presenters to create shortened "taste of" versions – 90 minutes or so – on the topics such as "Cultivating Hearts for Discernment" and "Time Management on Purpose."

Lawrence Jay, Rolling Ridge executive director, said: "It does allow people to be able to connect from a distance ... so that will hopefully allow us to be able to expand our community and our network. And I think the thing is that people are now getting more familiar with making those online connections, relating with people across a device ... Now that people are getting more familiar with it, I think that there may be more interest [in online offerings]."

**Find out more on each camp's website:
www.neumc.org/campsandretreatcenters**

Share your story ...



COVID-19: How is your church continuing in ministry and mission?

We know that despite social distancing, our churches are continuing to fill vital roles supporting those in need in their communities.

We are asking churches to share the good news about how you are continuing to do ministry and mission amid the COVID-19 crisis.

Send your photos and stories to communicate@neumc.org and we'll share them.

Let's Connect

Do you have a story to share? A feature idea? A question to ask? Contact Beth DiCocco, Conference Director of Communications, at communicate@neumc.org or (978) 682-8055 ext. 150