

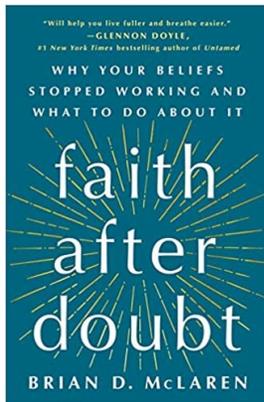
November 2021



**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](http://www.neumc.org).



## Catch up on discussion of 'Faith After Doubt'

After recommending his book "Faith After Doubt" to NEAC members, Bishop Devadhar invited author Brian McLaren to lead a four-part online discussion series about the book in September and October.

If you missed a session or the series, you can find video recordings and McLaren's presentation materials as PDFs on our website:

[www.neumc.org/news](http://www.neumc.org/news), headlined: Follow-up materials for 'Faith After Doubt' book discussion.

Watch the news as there may be more opportunities to hear from Dr. McLaren coming up.

## Bishop's Days on the Districts

# Support of the laity is critical

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar has been making his annual visits to the districts, and Oct. 2, 2021 brought him to the Katahdin District in northern Maine.

There the bishop encouraged laity, particularly those in leadership positions in the church, to "continue to support your pastors."

Some tangible ways to offer that support, the bishop said, are to have adequate continuing education funds available for pastors to continue their training and to ensure that pastors can take two days off each week.

"Laity, you have been amazing in supporting the local churches. Your constant support made a big difference in this conference," Bishop Devadhar said. "I am hearing about wonderful things that are happening in local churches with the support of the laity."

The bishop told a story of his days as



Bishop Devadhar in the Katahdin District

a local church pastor. He was appointed to a church that had a lot of challenges and he had not been there long when he asked his District Superintendent to reappoint him. The DS rejected his request.

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FIND PHOTOS AND STORIES FROM EACH DISTRICT ONLINE  
[www.neumc.org/news](http://www.neumc.org/news)

## Get the latest Information on the Boy Scouts bankruptcy

In February 2020, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) filed for bankruptcy reorganization to protect itself against a growing number of sexual abuse claims made against it.

Many United Methodist churches are or have been chartering organizations for the Scouts and may be affected by this proceeding.

The United Methodist Church has formed an ad hoc committee to work on this issue on the denominational level and regularly shares information with the conferences that we share with our churches here in New England.

To do that, we have created a page on the Conference website [www.neumc.org/bsa](http://www.neumc.org/bsa) where you can find the latest information we have.

We know this has been a tremendous challenge for our churches that have had long and strong relationships with Scouting. We appreciate your cooperation and faithfulness as we work through this proceeding together.



**W**hen you give to the special offering on United Methodist Student Day, you invest in a channel of hope for young leaders who bring their Wesleyan values into their schools and professions.

For example, Katrina Lewis says she struggled with her self-worth when her parents divorced. "I saw myself as a mistake and unloved," she recalled. Then her mother introduced the children to First United Methodist Church, St. Mary's, Pennsylvania, which, she said, "completely changed the trajectory of my life."

When she was preparing for college, Katrina's pastor and church family encouraged her to apply for a Gift of Hope Scholarship, funded by the United Methodist Student Day offering. "Their belief in me and what God has in store for my life," she said, "empowered me to apply, knowing I could not fund college alone."

Receiving the scholarship permitted her to follow God's direction for her life. "I know that God is calling me to team with him in restoring his beautiful creation," she said.

Katrina is pursuing a bachelor of science degree in statistics and predictive analytics at Robert Morris University, Moon Township, Pennsylvania. Her classwork and extracurricular experiences have given Katrina a deeper appreciation of natural resources and "our collective obligation to protect and defend those resources," she said.

"The scholarship," she said, "has blessed me beyond comprehension. God has used that money in my life to truly transform my college experience and allow me to pursue opportunities I never thought possible. I will always remember the generosity poured out to me by my church, and the fruits God has grown through that. A scholarship provides true hope and testimony to God's generosity and goodness."

Thank you for your generous gifts that give students a financial boost to help them realize their dreams while giving them a spiritual boost knowing that United Methodist congregations are supporting them and their dreams.

Please give online at [UMC.org/SSGive](http://UMC.org/SSGive) or mail checks to United Methodist Student Day, GCFA, P.O. Box 340029, Nashville, TN 37203. Checks can also be directed to your local church by writing "UMSD" in the memo line.

### Laity support ... Continued from pg 1

Following his first church conference, the Pastor Parish Relations Committee chairperson delivered a handwritten letter of support.

"When I read this, it was like getting a million-dollar check, because of that support," said Bishop Devadhar, who added

that he still has the letter all these years later.

"When the laity gets excited with the pastor's ministry and when it becomes a team spirit, that makes a big difference," the bishop said.

Find stories and photos from each district on our website [www.neumc.org/news](http://www.neumc.org/news)

### 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](mailto:communicate@neumc.org) or (978) 682-8055 ext. 150