

## January 2025

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. **For more news and events, visit [www.neumc.org](http://www.neumc.org).**



## Disaster Ministry

### Survey: ERT and VIM training opportunities

In response to the recent series of disasters throughout the United States, there has been a significant increase in interest in the Conference offering Early Response Team (ERT) and Volunteer in Mission (VIM) training.

These trainings represent an excellent opportunity for individuals to develop essential skills that contribute to disaster response and relief efforts.

**ERT training** – Are you ready to help your community or others in the event of a disaster? Early Response Teams (ERTs) are the core groups of United Methodists helping disaster survivors. These responders are the ones on the frontline helping to put a tarp on the roof or comforting a survivor.

**VIM Training** – This training includes why and how we serve – whether it’s in our local communities, elsewhere in the U.S. or internationally. When you answer the call to lead a team in the short-term mission field, you are assuming responsibility that is much more than

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## New name & logo for our Episcopal Area



## NEW HOPE EPISCOPAL AREA

THE NEW ENGLAND AND NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCES

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

In July 2024, the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference (NEJ) reconfigured the jurisdiction into six new episcopal areas – most comprising two annual conferences.

This new “creative arrangement,” as Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton has termed it, has brought the New England Conference and the New York Conference together under his leadership.

It is important to note that this is not a merger of the two conferences, however intentional work is being done to

discern how the two Annual Conferences can collaborate through best practices and shared resources.

When delegates from New England and New York gathered for the first time at the site of the Jurisdictional Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, they came up with a simpler and more inspiring name for this creative arrangement: the New Hope Episcopal Area.

Above is the new logo. This change also means a new configuration of the Episcopal Office. Find more online.



READ BOTH OF THESE STORIES ON OUR WEBSITE  
[www.neumc.org/news](http://www.neumc.org/news)

## NEAC Board of Discipleship to focus on spiritual formation in 2025

# God Unbound: Webinar series with Elaine Heath

A Year for Spirituality — the New England Conference Board of Discipleship will focus on re-sourcing our Conference in the area of Spiritual Formation in 2025.

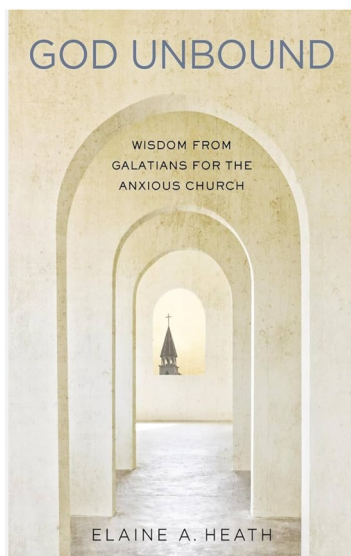
The board invites you to start off the year by joining us in a **special 3-week webinar led by Elaine A. Heath** based on her book *God Unbound: Wisdom from Galatians for the Anxious Church*.

### God Unbound: Webinar series with Elaine Heath

When: 7-8 pm on Thursdays  
Feb. 6, 13, and 20

Cost: Free to participants

Where: Online via Zoom



**Consider inviting your congregation to come together for a 3-week study**

Questions?

Contact Board Chair  
Heather Josselyn at  
[hjosselyn@hotmail.com](mailto:hjosselyn@hotmail.com)

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information, including the Zoom link, in our weekly e newsletter or on the website at

[www.neumc.org/events](http://www.neumc.org/events) or by scanning the QR code



## Share your gifts with the NEAC

Christmas may be over, but there's still some gift-giving you can do for Christ.

The Conference Committee on Leadership/Nominations (COLN) is inviting you to use your leadership gifts, experience, and interests for The UMC by serving the New England Conference.

COLN will use info gathered through the Leadership Gifts/Interest Form to discern and invite leaders who will work together for our shared vision and mission.

Here are some key points :

- The primary goal is to learn how deeply and widely God has blessed us with gifts, talents and passion.
  - Filling this form doesn't automatically mean you will be invited into a leadership role.
  - Anyone in our connection as NEAC is invited to fill out the form with no obligation unless they choose to be available to serve.
  - All clergy and lay leaders are strongly encouraged to fill out the form.
- Please share the form among people in your church.

Find the Leadership Gifts/Interest Form at [www.neumc.org/boards](http://www.neumc.org/boards)

**Questions?** Contact Karen Cassidy, COLN chair, at [kdcassidy@msn.com](mailto:kdcassidy@msn.com) or Director of Connectional Ministries Rev. We Chang at [dcm@neumc.org](mailto:dcm@neumc.org)



## ERT and VIM training survey

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handling logistics and making decisions. Safety is an important aspect of our team leader training along with the nuts and bolts on how to lead a mission team and train the members.

The office of the Conference Disaster Response Coordination (CDRC) recognizes the critical importance of equipping more individuals with these essential skills and is actively engaged in coordinating training sessions in multiple locations.

Training sessions will be

organized based on the level of interest and the number of registrants in each location.

By completing our online survey, you will assist us in identifying the locations and resources for the effective coordination of these training sessions.

**We ask that you complete the survey by Jan. 12, 2025.**

Questions? Contact Pastor David Arruda, NEAC Disaster Response Coordinator at [CDRC-NE@neumc.org](mailto:CDRC-NE@neumc.org) or 978-

682-8055 ext. 140.

## 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