

Greetings Families of UCC Norwell!

As I have been settling in here at UCC, I have had the blessing of being extravagantly welcomed by many of you. This journey along the road of youth and family ministry is one that I have had the privilege of calling my vocation for almost 20 years! I have found such great joy in leading and planning Christian youth programs – especially youth groups. It is truly a delight to be able to serve the community here at UCC Norwell in the role of Minister of Youth Education and as a Third year Boston University School of Theology Master of Divinity Student.

I have recently moved the youth ministry office, to the youth room (Room One). It is here during the week, that I will hold office hours on Thursdays and Fridays and on Sundays from 12-2 pm. Being in Room one during the week allows me the gift of also being able to be greeted by the young ones attending the Nursery School here. Such a joyful and creative experience it is to be around those so fresh from God!

Recently, one of the nursery school children quietly walked up to me and asked what my name was. After a moment, he asked if I would like to meet his mother (who was close on his trail) and then shared with me his age (4years old) . I took a chance and asked him what he loved most about being four years old. He responded without hesitation, “Well, my Ninja moves and eating lollipops of course!”

...Of course!

I share this moment with you because it inspired me as I reflected upon the youth ministry programs here at UCC. Both the “Happenings Group” (9 a.m. Sunday -- formerly known as The Breakfast Club) and Junior and Senior High youth group meetings this past month focused on taking a journey back to our childhoods. We reflected upon our most favorite memories from preschool and kindergarten, and we discussed what we treasured most about those years. It is our hope that in helping the youth to remember their pasts, they will be able to better navigate their journeys towards the future! This is a life treasured skill!

These years of junior high and high school are years that sometimes cause moments of doubt, worry and of a searching for what defines one’s “self”. It is my hope to intentionally create space for moments in the lives of our youth, where they are given the opportunity to reflect upon their gifts and talents and celebrate the very fact that they are each uniquely and wonderfully made children of God – ninja moves and all! (As a matter of fact, Ninja tag is one of my most favorite youth group games!) Maybe, one day, as they look back, the youth will remember how important these youth group years were to them and it will help them navigate their own steps as they venture forward into their adult lives. For the hundreds of youth that I have walked alongside, I know that youth group has had a significant influence on their lives.

In terms of schedules, our Youth will have the opportunity to meet every Sunday morning! We will gather together from 9-9:45 a.m. on Sundays over donuts and hot chocolate/coffee and experience a time of reflection, learning and journeying together as we try to figure out, just what our faith journeys are all about in our “Happenings” group.

The UCC Youth Group (UCCYG) will gather on Sunday evenings. Junior High UCCYG will meet from 4-5:30 and our Senior High will meet from 6 - 7:30 on Sunday evenings unless otherwise noted. Our theme is built upon the “Power of Words”. We have some awesome programs planned for our youth group –

including an overnight in a rock climbing gym ! Please be sure to check out our program flyer as found on the UCC Facebook Page!

We are eagerly looking for folks who have a heart for youth ministry and wish to serve as part of our youth advisor ministry team. The team will meet monthly and plan, pray together, and discern just how UCCYG might best serve the families and the youth of our church and of the surrounding communities – and maybe even have some fun doing it all!

I look forward to journeying alongside the youth and families of our youth ministry programs as we spend the next year together discovering what God has in store for the community of UCC Norwell!

Peace and Joy,

Anne Marie Holloway

Minister of Youth and Education

Third Year Master of Divinity Student Boston University School of Theology

508-404-0287