



**IOWA
CONFERENCE
UNITED
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

**CENTER
LEARN
SEARCH**

**Lay Education
Programs**

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CENTER/LEARN

(see p. 10 for SEARCH)

CENTER/LEARN is a lay ministry study program of the Iowa Conference United Church of Christ, and is designed for persons of all educational backgrounds. Started in 1991, the program offers biblical, theological and historical study opportunities, along with practical courses covering many aspects of local church life and ministry.

CENTER/LEARN invites members of the Presbytery of Des Moines PC (USA) and the Mid-American Baptist Churches ABC/USA to participate in the programs.

These courses offer:

Seminars by leaders in their field of study

Practical ideas applicable for local settings

Reflective questions that can clarify learning

Evaluations of growth, knowledge, and skills

Education and skills in group dynamics

***How are the programs organized?
What is expected of students?***

CENTER & LEARN offer four courses during each school year. Each course meets two weekends, Friday night & Saturday, held four to eight weeks apart. Course requirements might include: homework done in preparation for the first session, special projects developed and carried out between sessions, follow-up written reflection, and a brief summary. Full-time attendance is expected. *Should an absence occur, a student must get approval from the instructor and the Director for acceptable alternate activities if credit is desired.*

Program requirements:

CENTER—Attend a regional/national education event and hand in a written reflection.

LEARN—Attend three Pilgrimage retreats and hand in a written reflection.

What topics are presented in the courses?

**YEAR 1 Education: Models, Skills, Theories
Old Testament Studies
New Testament Studies
Developing Theological
and Ethical Perspectives**

**YEAR 2 Designing for Education (CENTER only)
UCC History and Polity (LEARN only)
Celebrating Worship and Sacraments
Beyond the Course book (CENTER only)
Preaching (LEARN only)
Planning for Mission and Program**

**YEAR 3 LEARN STUDENTS ONLY
Church History
Parish Assessment and Planning
Methods of Biblical Interpretation
Pastoral Care**

I graduated from the University of Iowa in 1987 with a Master's Degree in Social Work. This program has instructors that are just as scholarly with their approach to teaching as the graduate program I was a part of. They will challenge you to think and grow spiritually. Whether you are interested in a ministry career or just wanting to increase your knowledge and discernment with your faith, this program will help you to get there. It has helped me to grow with my faith and ministries that I do with my church.

**Jim Judkins
UCC Congregational
Grinnell, Iowa
June 2007**

Carol Wehrheim talks with students in the first year course titled Education: Models, Skills, Theories.



What is CENTER?

CENTER (Christian Educators, Nurtured, Trained, Enriched, Resourced) is a two-year track for those who wish to be better prepared as church educators. CENTER was developed for persons who desire to be involved in the education program of a local church, either as an employed lay educator or as an informed volunteer.

Successful completion of the CENTER program fulfills the educational requirement for those who choose to apply for certification as an employed church educator in the United Church of Christ. Certification is a denominational credential for those employed in church education. Completion of CENTER is not a guarantee that the national church will automatically grant this certification.

What is LEARN?

LEARN (Lay Education for Adults in Religion for Now and the future), a three-year track for non-ordained persons, is designed in response to laity who are interested in opportunities for spiritual growth and theological study. In addition there is a recognition that some persons might become "license-able" upon completion of the LEARN program. The associations in the Iowa Conference have determined that the LEARN program meets appropriate educational criteria for persons who might apply for licensing to serve in a setting where ordained leadership is not available and/or affordable. It is clear however, that successful completion of the LEARN program is not a guarantee of employment or of licensing.

Those hoping to serve in a licensed capacity *must follow the formal process outlined in the United Church of Christ MANUAL ON THE MINISTRY and must be in early contact with their association's Committee on Ministry.*

NOTE: Members of the Presbytery of Des Moines PC (USA) and the Mid-American Baptist Churches ABC/USA need to check with their denomination about any added expectations, processes and procedures.

Orientation: Please be aware that an orientation meeting for new students will be held. The tentative date is July 26, 2008. Details will be provided in a separate mailing.

CENTER/LEARN CLASS CALENDAR

2008-2009

1st Quarter Aug. 22-23 & Oct. 3-4, 2008

First Year Students

Education: Models, Skills, Theories

Second Year Students

UCC History & Polity (LEARN Students ONLY) Designing for Education (CENTER Students ONLY)

Presbyterian and Mid-American Baptist Students: Please contact your church office for requirements and information concerning polity education.

Third Year Students (LEARN)

Church History

2nd Quarter Nov. 7-8, 2008 & Jan. 9-10, 2009

First Year Students

Old Testament Studies

Second Year Students

Celebrating Worship and the Sacraments

Third Year Students (LEARN)

Parish Assessment and Planning

3rd Quarter Feb. 6-7 & March 13-14, 2009

First Year Students

New Testament Studies

Second Year Students

Preaching (LEARN Students ONLY) Beyond the Course Book (CENTER Students ONLY)

Third Year Students (LEARN)

Methods of Biblical Interpretation

4th Quarter April 17-18 & May 29-30, 2009

First Year Students

Developing Theological and Ethical Perspectives

Second Year Students

Planning for Mission and Program

Third Year Students (LEARN)

Pastoral Care

CENTER/LEARN CLASS CALENDAR

2009-2010

1st Quarter Aug. 21-22 & Oct. 2-3, 2009

3rd Quarter Feb. 5-6 & March 12-13, 2010

2nd Quarter Nov. 6-7, 2009 & Jan. 8-9, 2010

4th Quarter April 16-17 & June 4-5, 2010

The Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is a series of three retreats over the course of a year. The three retreats are opportunities to commune with God and rest from the normal pace and activity of your daily routine. The disciplines prayer, devotional reading of scripture, solitude, meditation, centering silence, spiritual journals and recognizing the presence of God in ordinary life experiences are explored. Pilgrimage is a tool to help you along your spiritual journey.

PILGRIMAGE SABBATH 1	Nov. 21-22, 2008 November 2009
PILGRIMAGE SABBATH 2	Feb. 20-22, 2009 February 2010
PILGRIMAGE SABBATH 3	May 8-9, 2009 May 2010

Pilgrimage is a separate program from CENTER, LEARN or SEARCH. Please contact the Pilgrimage Registrar at 515.277.6369 for more information about the program and how to register.



LEARN students, Barb Ross and Brian Dugan, listen intently to discussion during their Education: Models, Skills, Theories class with Carol Wehrheim.

**CENTER/LEARN/SEARCH Oversight Committee
Members 2008-2009**

Sharon Guffey-Lewis — Walnut, IA Charles Kniker — Ames, IA

Mike Johannsen — Muscatine, IA

CENTER/LEARN/SEARCH Staff Members 2008-2009

Dianne Prichard, Director

Lee Hood, Coordinator

SEARCH

S E A R C H

SEARCH (Seekers Exploring, Acting, Reconciling, Conversing, Hoping) is for those who are interested in exploring a particular topic of study. It may be for you, if you are a “searcher.”

‘I am not a Christian, I am always becoming a Christian.’ So said a wise theologian of the past. The Iowa Conference recognizes that its congregations have members and friends who are at different places in their faith journeys. Believers frequently have more questions than answers. Disciples-in-training may feel that there has been a gap in their spiritual education. If you wish to explore faith issues, this could be just the opportunity you have been seeking.

Considering the talented faculty of CENTER/LEARN that is available in the Iowa Conference eight weekends a year, the Conference will make individual courses available for interested persons in area churches. [If successful, this opportunity may be extended after the 2007-2008 year.]

If you are interested in SEARCH, please fill out the regular application form, but state clearly you are interested in audit only. Indicate which weekend(s) you wish to attend. The price is the same as that for CENTER/LEARN students. A SEARCH learner will usually not be expected to meet all course assignments, but the decision on what is expected for all students rests with each course instructor.

If you have questions, please call the Iowa Conference Office and speak with Lee Hood or the Director.

What is the cost of CENTER/ LEARN? And SEARCH?

Costs are preliminary and subject to adjustment once the Conference budget is adopted.

The Iowa Conference UCC, The Presbytery of Des Moines PC(USA), and the Mid-American Baptist Churches ABC/USA help subsidize the program.

Fees per session are as follows:

tuition & leadership fees	\$75.00
meals	\$15.50
housing	each student arranges

(Sessions will be held at Plymouth Cong'l UCC in Des Moines until further notice. Should the location of classes change, the fees might also change.)

Persons from other denominations, conferences, presbyteries and areas must call the conference office for tuition information.

**In addition, students are responsible for:
course materials (ordered through the Coordinator)
transportation to and from sessions
lodging (students make their own arrangements)**

SEARCH students pay the same costs as LEARN/CENTER students. They do not have to participate in the Pilgrimage or other requirements of the CENTER program.

We hope local congregations and others will share a part of the cost. Check with your church leadership to see if your congregation, association, presbytery or area has a policy or precedent for educational scholarships.

CENTER/LEARN/SEARCH APPLICATION FORM

All students complete the application below & send it to Lee Hood at the address shown on the bottom of this form.

CENTER & LEARN Students - Applications due June 30, 2008

Include the following items with your application:

* A one-two page paper, single-spaced, answering these questions:

- What is your church/denominational background?
- How are you currently involved in your local church?
- What is your educational background?
- What calls you to participate in CENTER, LEARN, or SEARCH?
- What do you hope to gain from this experience?

A letter of recommendation from your church's governing board should be sent directly to Lee Hood. [Not for SEARCH students.]

SEARCH Students: Apply at least 6 weeks before the course you want to take is scheduled to begin. Please use a separate page to list the courses you want to take.

Name: _____ Program: _____
(CENTER, LEARN or SEARCH)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

My church membership is at _____
(Church name)

Church Address (Town) _____

Please mail this form and other application materials to: (Do not send money now!)
Lee Hood, CENTER/LEARN Coordinator
Iowa Conference U.C.C. 600 42nd Street Des Moines, IA 50312-2799