



Tending the Fire

Wise, resilient leadership for a changing world

Leadership that heals. Change that lasts.

Healthy leaders create healthy congregations — and healthy congregations have the capacity to transform their communities.

Tending the Fire equips clergy leaders to:

- ◆ Understand the emotional and relational systems that shape church life
- ◆ Manage anxiety and resistance to change
- ◆ Lead adaptive, faithful transformation
- ◆ Build resilience and renewed spiritual focus

“In Tending the Fire I learned how to understand people and situations in the church better, have greater compassion, and be a non-anxious presence. I've also learned how to understand myself and my personal life better so that I can be healthier when I show up for the church.”

— Rev. John Lucy, Charlton City UMC, MA

“Tending the Fire’s spirit-filled retreats are personally and professionally transformative: coaching for effective leadership and invitation to self-discovery all in one. Don’t miss this!”

— Rev. Alison Patton
Saugatuck Congr. Church, Westport CT

Tending the Fire 2026

Wesley UMC, Concord NH

Opening Session:

February 10-12, 2026

Deepening Session:

March 17-19, 2026

Sending Session:

April 21-23, 2026

“I can see more clearly what I need to do and be, and I feel better equipped to live in the messy life of the church.”

— Rev. Katrina Wuensch, South Acton UCC, MA

Presented by the United Methodist Foundation of New England’s Leadership Program



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Registration and Participation Details

- ◆ *Tending the Fire* sessions will be held in person at Wesley UMC, 79 Clinton St., Concord NH 03301.
- ◆ Each session schedule will be: Tuesday noon-6:00 pm; Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm; Thursday 9:00 a.m. to noon.
- ◆ Participation in all three sessions is required to complete the course and receive 9 CEUs.
- ◆ Cost for all three sessions is \$800, and includes lunch each day.
- ◆ MEF Short Term Grants are available to cover up to \$500 of tuition and lodging costs:
www.neumc.org/financial-support

[Register here for "Tending the Fire" through UMFNE](#)

Director / Session Leader

Rev. Barbara Lemmel is an ordained elder in the New England Conference of the UMC. She has served congregations in Vermont and New York and currently serves as co-pastor at Harvard-Epworth UMC in Cambridge MA.

Barbara studied Family Systems Theory with the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center in Chicago and the Center for Pastoral Effectiveness in New Orleans.

In 2003, Barbara and Rev. Alan Delamater established *Tending the Fire*; Barbara continues to offer *Tending the Fire* for clergy, laity and judiciary leadership in multiple denominations. She also offers church and clergy coaching and coordinates the Parish Consultants of the New England Conference UMC.

For more information, visit www.tending-the-fire.com or email barblemel@mac.com.

"The concepts, perspective and self-knowledge gained from Tending the Fire are as valuable as any I've come across in my 25 years of active pastoral ministry. I wish I had experienced Tending the Fire years earlier."

- Rev. Henry Frueh, Upper New York Conference UMC