



NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Dear Companions in Christ,

I bring bittersweet news to the members and friends of the New England Conference. The Rev. Larry Peacock, Executive Director of Rolling Ridge Retreat and Conference Center, has announced he will retire June 30, 2016.

While we celebrate this next chapter in Larry's life, we will certainly miss his leadership and the many gifts he brings to Rolling Ridge and the New England Conference. Larry leaves this post after 11 years and retires with 40 years of service to The United Methodist Church.

A search committee is in place to select a full-time Executive Director, with the expectation that an interim will be assigned to the role for up to six months.

Bishop Peter Weaver (retired), charged Larry with making Rolling Ridge "the premier retreat and conference center in New England." During Larry's tenure at Rolling Ridge, the facilities have been improved, restored and transformed. The programs have expanded with many more day retreats and a nationally known two-year training in spiritual direction.

The Annual Peace Conference, the new Center for Spirituality and Leadership, and the monthly contemplative worship service broaden the Ridge's reach and ministry. Interfaith and community connections make Rolling Ridge a sought-after place for meetings and events. The award-winning landscape and historic estate are being restored, and have been appreciated by a wide circle of people seeking peace and beauty. The capital campaign has enabled major improvements to the buildings, landscape, and programs.

"After 40 years of ministry, it is time for me to take a long sabbatical to listen to the new nudges of God: to move west to be near our children and to spend some more time on other projects like leading retreats, offering spiritual direction, writing, gardening and yoga," Larry wrote of his decision. "I celebrate the achievements made and pray for the Ridge's continued growth and expansion. There is more to come, and it is time for another leader to guide that next stage of expansion."

We, too, celebrate the many achievements at the Ridge under Larry's careful watch.

"Rolling Ridge is one shining gem in the beautiful New England Conference, and we have Larry and his dedicated staff and volunteers to thank for that. May we build on this legacy and continue to develop this excellent resource for spiritual formation and leadership development," said Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar in expressing his appreciation for Larry's ministry. "Larry has given his best to Rolling Ridge, and I always appreciated his leading from a spiritual center. He and his wife, Anne Broyles, will be greatly missed; we wish him a blessed retirement."

Please pray for the staff and board of Rolling Ridge as they continue to support the program and mission during this transition and for those involved in the difficult task of calling the next great leader to this work.

Connected in Christ,

Rev. Erica Robinson-Johnson
Director of Connectional Ministries