



Pilgrim Lodge
2026 CONFIRMATION RETREAT
May 8-9

Living the Questions

“I want to beg you, as much as I can...to be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to *love the questions themselves* like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. *Live the questions* now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.”

-Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*

May 3, 2026

Dear Confirmand,

Welcome. We're excited to welcome you to Pilgrim Lodge this weekend for the Confirmation Retreat. Allow us to introduce ourselves. Revs. Reba, Chrissy, and Debbie are United Church of Christ pastors in Maine.

Arrival: Plan to **arrive at Pilgrim Lodge at 5:30pm** on Friday, May 8. We will share dinner at camp.

Departure: Pick up us 5 PM on Saturday, May 9

Directions: When you come into camp, drive down the dirt road ½ mile till you reach a large building called Quitobaquito, we'll meet you there. There will be some Pilgrim Lodge volunteers arriving as well. To get there set your GPS to: 103 Pilgrim Lodge Lane, West Gardiner, ME. 04345

-If you need more detailed directions or can't find us, call 865-773-511 (Pastor Chrissy's cell)

Goals for this retreat: We know that our campers and mentors might be in lots of different points on their confirmation journeys. Some might just be starting. Some are in the middle. Some are near the end. What we hope for our time together is:

- that campers and mentors will have the opportunity to spend time with people from other churches, strengthening covenantal relationships across the Maine Conference
- We will build connections with Pilgrim Lodge, a vital site of spiritual formation in our Conference
- We can really consider what it means to be a part of a church, following Jesus, at this moment in time.

Preparation: We would like you to reflect on a few things before arrival. Our theme for the event is “*Living the Questions.*” Please read the quote on the top of this letter and take some time to think about it. Considering your upcoming decision to be confirmed or be a mentor to a confirmand, we'd like to invite you to take a couple minutes to think about any questions you might have. You might have questions about how things would change after confirmation, what it means to be a member of a church, or other questions about Christianity itself. We'd like you to bring two questions you have about confirmation.

Remember, questions are an important part of our religious journeys. We hope this retreat will be a time when we can practice asking questions and listening to one another's questions. There isn't a wrong way to do this other than to not take it seriously. We'll have some time to hear each other's questions (for those who feel comfortable sharing). Don't be afraid to write as much as you need to to get to questions that are important for you.

Things to bring

- Your list of question
- A sleeping bag, or sheets and blankets (overnights are cold in May!)
- A pillow
- Toiletries
- A towel
- Your Bible (if you have one, no stress if you don't, we have some)
- Water bottle
- Bring layers of clothes because it can be cool outside

Things to know:

- At some point, you should thank the adults that accompany you.
- Be prepared to meet and get to know people outside your own group.
- Be respectful. If someone else's questions or reflections don't sit right with you, remember we are aiming for enlightening discussion, not agreement, or arguing. Everyone has a right to their opinion and beliefs and it's OK if they are not the same.
- Cell phones: You are welcome to bring your phone to camp, but we will decide during our covenant time if there will be times that phones will be gathered in baskets (for those of you who are familiar with summer camp standards at Pilgrim Lodge, this is a shift from usual camp policy for the sake of this condensed retreat).
- If an adult, even one outside your own group, offers you direction, please be respectful.
- Do **not bring** tobacco, vaping items, lighters, matches, illegal drugs, or alcohol.
- **All** medications (prescription and over-the-counter) need to be turned over at check-in (except epipens and inhalers). An adult at camp will distribute them.
- We care for each other's spirits and bodies at camp. No bullying, sexual activity, or "spirit-breaking" communication are permitted.
- Please don't wander. We need to know where you are and you should plan to stay within sight of an adult.

Thank you for joining us, see you shortly!

Faithfully yours,

Rev. Reba Delzell, Williston-Immanuel United Church, Portland
Rev. Chrissy Cataldo, Winthrop Congregational Church UCC, Winthrop
Rev. Debbie Duval, High Street Congregational Church, UCC, Auburn