



The Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ



Purpose (from the Gospel of Matthew):

To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves

Vision:

United in Christ's love, a just world for all

Mission:

United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all

Weekly E-News Winter "

January 21, 2021

Message from the Conference



Yesterday was a very special day for our country. The inauguration of Joe Biden as our new President and the inauguration of Kamala Harris as our new Vice-President and the first woman to ever be elected to national office speaks to a new day in our nation's history after the terrible events of the past couple of weeks. I had the chance as I know many of you did to watch the inauguration. What a hopeful ceremony it was! Maybe it brought a tear to your eye as it did mine. The music sung by Lady Gaga, Jennifer Lopez and Garth Brooks, the Opening Prayer and the Benediction, and the Poem by our nation's Poet Laureate were all so beautiful and meaningful, as was Biden's speech and call for unity among us.

On our clergy Conference call this week, we talked about the rise of Christian nationalism, and how so many of us are ashamed of this perverted Christianity and its impact on our nation and world. Today's inauguration, which was so full of the "better angels" of Christianity, reminds us that our faith does serve an important purpose in our nation's life and provides so much of our moral calling as a people. Our nation does face a time of great crisis, so let us be in prayer as we were together before the election for our new President and Vice-President and Congress as they seek to lead us into the future, by God's grace.

Faithfully yours,
Paul

**Who doesn't love a great
Podcast!?!?!?**



"Faith in Vermont" is a podcast produced by Rev. Sally May (Pastor of Malletts Bay Congregational Church) and Rev Josh Simon (Associate Pastor of First Congregational Church in Essex Junction). Their most current episode is "part of a series on how a person's faith (in other words, their values) influences their reasons for seeking public office and what motivates them in their decision-making process as elected leaders". You can find that episode (as well as many others!) [here!](#) Huge thank you to Reverends Sally May and Josh Simon for sharing this with us!

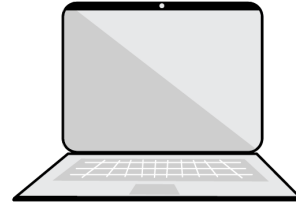


ANNUAL MEETING RESOLUTIONS!

The deadline for Annual Meeting resolutions is February 28th. Please put your resolution in the correct format and remember to number the lines. Resolutions should be submitted by email to both Lynn (llbvct@gmail.com) and Board Chair, Doug Carter (DCarter36@charter.net).

Does your Church have a Website, Facebook, YouTube Channel or Email Blast?

If so, you will want to become more knowledgeable about the Consolidated Appropriations Act which just became a Public Law on December 27, 2020. It applies to copyright infringement not only for photos, but videos and music used in any production without permission of the creator.



You can find the Bill in its entirety [here](#).
You can find an abridged, user friendly version [here](#).

In Addition....

The same Consolidated Appropriations Act provides \$900 billion dollars in stimulus allows churches that have already received PPP loans the ability to apply for a second loan. If you would like to know more, you can read the article published by Christianity Today by Ted Bateson (an attorney and CPA who specializes in Church Law & Tax).

You can find that article [here!](#)



Rev. Barbara Lemmel is going to be offering a *Tending the Fire* series online, beginning in February 2021, offering instruction in systems thinking, resilient leadership, and adaptive change to church leaders.

If this is something that you are interested in, you can find more information and a registration form [here!](#) You can also find more information at her website, www.tending-the-fire.com.



Health and Human Service Sunday is January 31st!

CHHSM (The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries), in partnership with the United Church of Christ, is pleased to provide worship resources to use for your congregation's celebration of Health and Human Service Sunday. Please find a prepared liturgy and suggested scriptures listed below.

Suggested Scripture

Prepared Liturgy



COVID-19 Considerations For Church Employers

The Insurance Board will be offering a webcast on January 29th. It will address issues churches face as employers during COVID-19 and provide best practice policies, and procedures for managing employees and volunteers. Many states may require that employers have specific COVID-19 policies and procedures in place to protect their employees; learn about best practice considerations for your church.



You can register here!

Covid-19 Liability Guidance

Covid-19 Resource Guide



Tax Season is almost upon us!

We have had a multitude of inquiries requesting someone who is spectacular with clergy taxes.

If you have a suggestion, please email the contact information to llbvtc@gmail.com so we can be sure to pass on the information!

EVENTS AROUND THE CONFERENCE

(Please let us know what your Congregation is up to by sending an email to

VermontConference@gmail.com .

You may just see yourself or someone you love in the eKit or our Facebook page!)

REV. DAVID DEAN NEEDS OUR PRAYERS!

Rev. David Dean - former minister of Grace Church in Rutland, now living in Cornwall, CT has been diagnosed with COVID-19. He entered the hospital on Jan. 7th. Please pray for his healing and for his family and caregivers who are now in quarantine. Rev. David Dean also turned 90 on January 12th.



Cards of birthday greeting or wishes for good health can be sent to:

Rev. David J. Dean
52 Missionary Road
Cromwell CT 06416

How has the Conference made use of the Basic Support (OCWM) contributed by our Local Churches in 2020?

You can learn all about how your generous donations have been utilized throughout the conference [HERE!](#)



COVID-19 NEWS

In light of: the growing number of Covid-19 infections in Vermont, increased hospitalizations, the onset of flu season, the potential spreading of the disease during holiday gatherings and the advice of our Governor and experts in infectious disease, we strongly urge that **worship not be held in person until criteria for safe in person gathers have been meet.**

[For more info click here](#)

The Vermont Department of Health has provided new guidance specifically for Communities of Faith including holidays, services, and events. This includes (but is not limited to) precautions and actions for organizational leaders. It can be found [here.](#)

Need Extra Support During the Pandemic?

During these difficult times, could you use some emotional support and a listening ear? Are you looking for connections to community resources during the pandemic?

COVID Support VT is a statewide program offering free and confidential emotional support and connections to resources for anyone needing help. They offer a wide range of supports on their [website.](#)



If you or someone you know could use some support coping with the pandemic, reach out to COVID Support VT. Call 2-1-1- to reach a Support Counselor. You can also access their **self-care tips and resources flyer**, **daily stress management plan** and their online **Weekly Wellness Groups**.



UCC launches "Recovering Hope,"

Emotional Care in COVID-19

[click here for more info](#)

SAVE THE DATE!

The UCC Just Peace Committee is inviting you to the next quarterly Just Peace Webinar to take place on January 27 (7 p.m. ET/6 p.m. CT/5 p.m. MT/4 p.m. PT/2 p.m. HT). More information can be found [here!](#)

"We now need to put as much effort into defining a just peace as we have done in the past in defining a just war."
-Dr. Robert V. Moss



STRETCH OUT YOUR  WITH

PRIDE!



ucc.org

Open and Affirming Zoom Gathering
Jan. 30th!

The ONA Concerns Mission Group of the NH Conference of the UCC has sponsored a Zoom Gathering on Saturday, January 30, 2021 from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

ALL are invited to join us!

[Click here for more information!](#)

Calling all Andover Newton Seminarians and their Congregations!

Posted on the [Andover Newton Seminary at YDS Alumni/ae](#) page

MISC. (But equally important!!!) NEWS!

New Deadline for eKit!

Any information you would like to have in the eKit must be received by the **Tuesday prior to the eKits release by noon** at the latest! Please send any and all information to Elise at vermontconference@gmail.com.

She looks forward to hearing from you!

Time to Update Your Church Membership Records!

This week is a reminder to update your church membership lists. UCC Yearbook reporting is scheduled to open January 8, 2021, and it is important that your church report current and accurate membership information. For churches that are affiliated with more than one denomination, the membership number should only reflect members who identify themselves as UCC.

The membership number is used to determine the amount of dues that your church gives to your association and the Vermont Conference.

The numbers you report also help determine how many delegates the Vermont Conference can designate for General Synod, which is one of the essential ways your voice is heard on important issues.

UPDATE 01/14/2021

The Data Hub was opened on January 6th for church use as was scheduled. They have run into a few issues on their end that we are working to resolve. Please use **this redirect** or find further instruction [here](#).

[Click here to find your church number \(listed by town\)](#)

Per Capita Dues 2020

Vermont Conference	\$ 13.00
Addison	\$ -
Champlain	\$ 1.10
Grafton-Orange	\$ 0.50
Northeast	\$ 1.00
Southwest	\$ 1.00
Washington	\$ -
Windham-Union	\$ 0.25
Windsor-Orange	\$ 1.00

Per Capita rate for 2020

The Vermont Conference per capita rate has been established at \$13.00 per member. Association dues are *in addition* to the Conference per capita rate of \$13.00.

You can find an easy to use calculator [here!](#)



Beyond Belief: A Marcus Borg Retrospective

50% off for Vermont Conference Churches

Beyond Belief is a six session DVD study. The series contains favorite moments, core teachings and extensive never-before seen material of Marcus Borg from the LtQ archives plus commentary from Rev. Marianne Borg. More information can be found [here!](#)

Don't Forget!

Order your UCC Stewardship Theme materials.

Due to the increasing COVID-19 pandemic, the Vermont Conference Office will be closed beginning Monday, November 23rd, 2020. Staff will continue to work remotely.

Thank You for Your Support!

Our Churches Wider Mission Basic Support, Association Dues, and Friends of the Vermont Conference make this communication possible.

Donate

Connect with us



visit our website at <http://www.vtcucc.org/>

Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

Create a great offer by adding words like "free" "personalized" "complimentary" or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take an action, so think about inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining!"

Vermont Conference, UCC | 36 N Main St, Randolph, VT 05060

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