



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 28, 2021

Message from the Conference



Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

There were many moments of last week's inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris that I found inspiring. One thing was seeing the very visible diversity in participants. They were young and old, black, brown and white, religiously diverse. For me it was watching the best of what we as Christians proclaim on display. Nothing touched me more than the young Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman. I have chewed on her poem many times since I heard her recite it. There is beauty, courage, hope, challenge, a desire for unity and a celebration of the diverse richness of one another.

The words from Matthew 5:14-16a came to mind:

*You are the light of the world.
A city set on a hill cannot be hid.
No one after lighting a lamp
puts it under a bushel basket
But on a lamp stand, and it
gives light to the whole house.*

In the same way, let your light shine...

*In the words of Amanda Gorman:
When day comes we step out of the shade,
afire and unafraid
The new dawn blooms as we free it
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it
if only we're brave enough to be it*

Let it shine!

In hope and peace,
Lynn

The 50th Annual AUCE Conference!

The Association of United Church Educators will be holding their 50th Annual Conference Virtually this year!

It will take place February 13th with guest speaker Melvin Bray! You can find more information [here](#) or register [here!](#)



SAVE THE DATE!

Virtual 50th Celebration

Saturday, February 13, 2021
12:00-3:30 PM ET
registration January 2021

Guest Speaker : Melvin Bray
Worship : Rev. Molly Baskette
with music by Mark Miller
reading by Kessie Runsbowe
closing song by Walter Runsbowe

AUCE members \$25
NON members \$35



auce-ucc.org



Update on Rev. David Dean!

Quote from his daughter Mary:

"Covid is in the rearview mirror. Let the 90th birthday celebration begin. "

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

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



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!

The 50th Annual NEAUCE Conference!

The 50th Annual New England Association of United Church Educators Conference is Virtual this year! The

Keynote speaker will be Rev. Dr. Gay Byron addressing "Racism in the Bible". You can find more information [here!](#)

New England Association of United Church Educators
registration February 2021 auce-ucc.org

SAVE THE DATE
Friday April 30 6:30-9:00 pm
&
Saturday May 1 8:30am-1:30pm

keynote
Rev. Dr. Gay L. Byron

worship & plenary
Rev. Dr. Jason Brian Santos


music
Dan Brownell

workshop
Rev. Suzi Townsley

NEAUCE 2021
Tear down, Transform, **Transcend**,
A Call To Action

Virtual 50th Celebration!
Jeremiah 18:1-4 The Potter and the Clay

AUCE members \$50
non-AUCE members \$55
Scholarship fee \$25



[ONA WEBINAR SERIES STARTS FEB. 4!](#)

Whether your church is just beginning its journey towards an Open and Affirming covenant, or you've been ONA for many years, you'll find a webinar that meets your needs! The UCC's Open and Affirming Coalitions' popular webinar series has helped congregations plan for an ONA journey that builds consensus and reduces the risk of conflict, and existing ONA churches have learned how to breathe new life into their ONA commitment. The UCC's ONA Coalitions' services are priced to fit almost any budget, and there are deep discounts when you buy a season pass.

You can find all ONA Webinars [here!](#)

You can find more information on starting your ONA journey [here!](#)

MLK DAY OF SERVICE

Join Chuck Alphin, Certified Kingian Non-violence Trainer for two, 2-hour teach-in sessions to explore:

- The Myths and Facts of Nonviolence
- Types and Levels of Conflict
- Six Principals of Kingian Non-violence
- Six Applications of Kingian Non-violence

February 15 & 16, 2021
6:00 - 8:00 pm
Two, 2-hour sessions

 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



[MLK Day of Service](#)

The UCC's MLK Day of Service will be held February 15th from 6pm to 8pm.

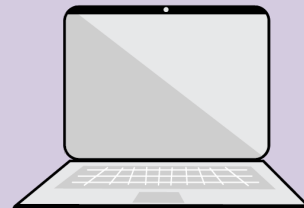
Join Chuck Alphin, Certified Kingian Non-violence Trainer, in two, 2-hour teach-in sessions as we explore:

- The Myths and Facts of Nonviolence
- Types and Levels of Conflict
- Six Principals of Kingian Non-violence
- Six Applications of Kingian Non-violence

You can register for this event [here!](#)

[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!](#)



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!)

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!



Tending the Fire

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.



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).

Heath and Human Service Sunday is January 31st!

CHSM (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](#)



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

“Andover Newton seminarians are offering a virtual worship service that can be shared with congregations either on Sunday, January 31st or Sunday, February 7th. The service will be a communion service so a lot of folks are opting to use it on Sunday, February 7th. If you are interested in using this service - please contact Ned Parker at Andover Newton Seminary at YDS. His email is [ned.parker@yale.edu!](mailto:ned.parker@yale.edu) I think this is a wonderful gift from the seminarians and also gives them experience as well!”



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](#)

RESOURCES FOR ONLINE MINISTRY!

Do you need help with getting your church services online?
Find resources and help here:

[Click here for WorshipWell information and resources](#)

[Worship Resource Links for How to Live Stream- from the Southern New England Conference UCC](#)

[Free-Use, No-Licensing Music and Worship Materials here](#)

[Zoom Worship Laboratory Video Tutorial](#)

[How to prevent Zoom Bombing](#)

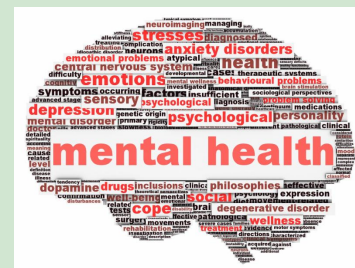
If you have additional resources to share please email the conference office at
VermontConference@gmail.com !



NAMI FaithNet Debut!

The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Vermont (NAMI Vermont) is reaching out to faith communities to offer customized mental health presentations, resources, and information, known as NAMI FaithNet to create more welcoming, caring, and supportive faith communities for persons and families affected by mental illness. Trained NAMI Vermont members are breaking the silence and eliminating stigma surrounding mental illness by sharing education and their lived experience stories virtually by zoom.

You can find more information [here!](#)



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 \(listed by town\)](#)

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!"