



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 Spring Edition

July 8, 2021

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Message from the Conference



Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

Next week the UCC General Synod is meeting. Nine delegates, Paul and I will participate in this virtual meeting that will contain workshops, deliberation on important issues of justice and our life together, keynote addresses and fabulous worship.

Because this is a virtual meeting it is accessible to anyone who wishes to attend. If you want to experience all of GS you can, for the modest fee of \$100.00. If you are interested in the worship, those services will stream free of charge through the UCC You tube channel and also their Facebook page.

I love our theme for this year's meeting. "Rooted in Love," is based on Psalm 1:3a incorporates not only the scriptural theme – "they are like trees planted by streams of water" – but certain UCC values as well, said the Rev. Penny Lowes of Rochester, Mich., moderator of General Synod 33.

"The beautiful image of a colorful tree rooted near living water is a perfect logo for the challenging times in which we find ourselves," Lowes said. "As diverse members of the United Church of Christ, our many roots entwine to give us resilience and strength. Together, we spread our branches of love, offering shades of faith and hope to a weary world. I believe this scripture and image will resonate deeply with the people of Christ as we strive to build a new creation of righteousness through a just world for all."

It is good for us to be together! We have learned how to do so virtually in our churches and in the Conference. Now we can expand that circle to include our whole UCC family.

In peace,
Lynn



New News!!!



Hybrid Worship- What are your thoughts?

Please take a moment to complete this super quick survey if you have ever attended an online church service by any VTCUCC church OR if you have ever helped produce/been featured on a VTCUCC church service that has been streamed online or broadcasted otherwise.

The survey can be found here!

Thank you so much!!



United Church of Thetford featured on VPR!!

"When Erika Hoffman-Kiess first heard about people applauding for frontline workers in big cities, she didn't think that would work so well in her town of Thetford. "There are some places in Vermont where you can go outside your door and bang a pot and pan and nothing's going to happen because nobody hears you," she said. "But we do have a lot of churches."

And those churches have bells."

**Read "These Vermonters Came Together To Help Their
Neighbors During The Pandemic. But When Can They Stop?"
by reporter Lexi Krupp here!**

The Second Marathon: A Thought For Pastors On Walking the New Normal

by Jenny Smith

" I'm hearing this refrain in every corner of my pastor world.

Today felt like a day to name it out loud.

Pastors are tired. On a soul level.

It's tempting to think we can solve it with a few days off.
But we know we can't.

This is bigger than individuals.

This is systemic.

The oppressive thing about capitalism and consumerism (and white supremacy culture, for that matter), is our utter inability to listen to our need to rest. More on that in a moment.

But first, my brother runs marathons. It's amazing to see the training and preparation that goes into this accomplishment. I ran 20 minutes without stopping a year or two ago and it felt like I crossed the finish line at the Olympics! I cannot even imagine what it feels like to run for 26.2 miles and feel absolutely depleted at the end.

Well, maybe my soul does know that feeling. Maybe yours does too.

We just ran a marathon."



[Continue reading this moving piece here!](#)

2021 Clergy Convocation Registration is OPEN!!!

***Monday, Oct 4th – Wednesday, Oct 6th
At The Craftsbury Outdoor Center
(***note the NEW location***)***

***Theme: "Leaning Into Change When We Don't Know
Where We Might Land"***

Just like riding a bike, when the roads ahead of our communities shift, we need to both turn and lean into the turn to keep our balance. In this post-Covid season, we know we need to turn, but knowing how and which way to lean is both essential and hard to imagine when we can't see the path ahead. This convocation is about learning how to lean into a turn in community, discerning the path together and building the muscles and practices to stay balanced and agile in the face of turns.

You can currently register at *Early Bird* prices, however these will go up by the end of the summer.

Read 2021 Clergy Convocation brochure **[here!!!](#)**

[REGISTER HERE!!!](#)

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES

EVERYONE HAS A CALLING. OURS IS HELPING YOU.
WWW.PRCLI.ORG



COVID-19 LIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR MINISTRIES

Insurance Board recognizes the important role churches play in their communities and that many are eager to resume their ministry's activities and outreach. This workshop will provide guidance on current COVID-19 HR and liability considerations for all ministries.

The presenter, Dean Rocco, Attorney and Partner from Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP, is a Chair of the firm's National Employment & Labor Practice Group and will share his expert insights about COVID-19 liability considerations for ministries.

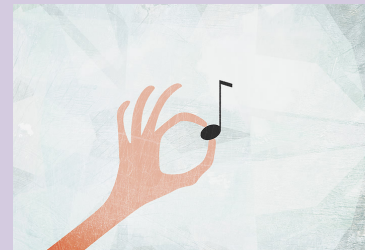
Join us on July 15th at 2:00 p.m. EST.

[Register Here!!](#)

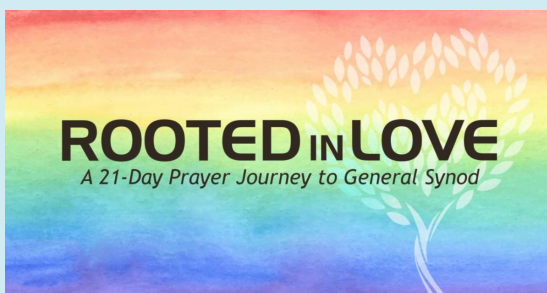
BRIDGE MUSIC DIRECTOR NEEDED IN CHARLOTTE!

This is a "bridge" position until our settled music director is found.

The "bridge" will be needed from the last week of August through approximately Jan. 2022, or until a settled music director has been found.



[Read more and apply here!](#)



UCC officers: 'Join us in prayer for our time together'

"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of

God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4:6-7

Each biennium the United Church of Christ gathers as the General Synod to discern the Spirit's calling to the church in this present day. **General Synod 33** will begin on July 11, 2021, with opening worship and will continue through July 18, 2021. Although General Synod convenes to conduct the business of the Church, we approach this

work in a spirit of worship. In that spirit, beginning June 20 and continuing throughout Synod, we invite the entire church to join us in prayer for our gathered time together.

[Read More Here](#)

Remembering Rev. Hal Harrison



A Celebration of Life will be held at South Church in Concord, New Hampshire later in July. There will be more information released at a later date.

HAL & BETTSY

KNEW THE JOYS & COSTS OF SEMINARY.

THEY MET AT ANDOVER NEWTON; WERE ORDAINED;
AND THEN MENTORED, COUNSELED & ENCOURAGED
GENERATIONS OF CLERGY.



TO HONOR HAL & BETTSY,
WE ARE ESTABLISHING A FUND IN THEIR NAME
THROUGH THE VERMONT CONFERENCE
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

*"A scholarship in my parents' name... would be the height of immodesty.
And the family's great joy." - Jeremy Harrison*

ONCE FUNDED TO SIZE, THESE GIFTS WILL BE TRANSFERRED
TO ANDOVER NEWTON SEMINARY AT YALE
WITH THE INTENT OF FUNDING AN ENDOWED
HARRISON SCHOLARSHIP.

YOU MAY SEND GIFTS TO: HARRISON FUND
c/o VTCUCC, 36 NORTH MAIN STREET, RANDOLPH, VT 05060 OR [WWW.VTCUCC.ORG](http://www.vtcucc.org)

Rev. Thomas D. Steffen

1934 - 2021



"Rev. Thomas Steffen passed on to eternity June 14, 2021. Tom faithfully served Second Congregational Church of Bennington as pastor 1965-94 and pastor emeritus 1995-2021. A memorial service is planned for Fri. July 30, 3pm at Second Congregational Church and will be livestreamed online."

-Rev. Mark Blank

[Read his full obituary here](#)

Jean Daley's Celebration of Life

*****Correction*****

Jean Daley's Celebration of Life will be at Malletts Bay UCC on Saturday, July 10th at ***11 a.m***.

We request that anyone who is not fully vaccinated to wear a mask.

In 1978, Jean was a founding member of the new church start, Malletts Bay Congregational Church United Church of Christ in Colchester, VT and held numerous positions over the years.

You can read her full obituary [here](#).



In Need of Your Prayers

Please continue praying for Marisa Laviola's brother who remains gravely ill.

Robin Hoag's son Matthew, just 22 years old, is being treated for Ewing's Sarcoma. This is a recurrence after a year of chemotherapy and radiation to the tumors in his pelvic/abdominal area, lungs, and bones. Robin is the Office Administrator for Second Congregational Church in Bennington.



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!)



New ONA Page on VTCUCC Webpage!

What better way to celebrate Pride Month than with an updated ONA Page!?!)

Find it HERE!

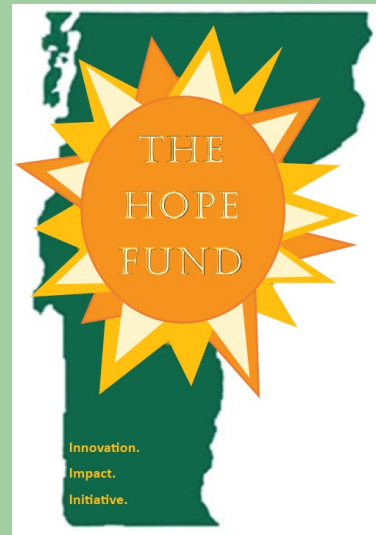
If your church is ONA, please feel free send in a photo or two that you think best captures the spirit of your congregation. The photos can be of your church itself, a super fun function, or anything else you feel would look great on the ONA page!

However, please make sure these are photos that have releases, that you have taken yourself, or a congregant has taken and given you permission to use.

Follow The Hope Fund!

The Hope Fund now has a live page on the Vermont Conference Website! It is a great place to find information about the Fund, as well as see what Churches within the Conference have done to make their communities a better place!

[You can read all about it here!](#)



The Racial Justice Task Force Needs You!!

"I joined this group because I've come to realize that all the issues of justice are interconnected, in the spirit of Traci Blackmon's keynote on Crossroads. My own passion is the

environment, and you can't separate a healthy environment out from racial justice, since unhealthy environments have disproportionate impacts on communities of color, causing immense suffering. In the group, I appreciate the way we've explored many facets of activism around this issue, ranging from self-examination and book study, to political witness, to community collaborations, and as an activist myself, I've gained insight into the ways these different forms of racial justice advocacy all work together." - Fred Taylor

Taylor

You can learn more (including how to join!!!) [here!](#)



[Saving Your Church Money with the Employee Retention Tax Credit](#)

Thursday, July 15

2:00 - 3:00 PM

Leader: [Elaine Sommerville](#)

Does your church have employees for whom you pay Social Security taxes? If so, the church may be eligible for the employee retention credit, a CARES act provision that has been extended through December 31, 2021! The employee retention credit may provide a church with up to \$7,000 per employee for employees that are not ministers. Learn more.

[We Are All Children of God - creating intergenerational church Online, In-Person, and Hybrid](#)

Tuesday, August 17

2:00 - 3:00 PM Eastern

Leader - [Rebecca Stevens-Walter](#)

How do we create church (not just worship) where all ages are truly invited? How do we do this online? in person? hybrid? Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." In this directive, we are called to create church that leaves no one distanced or left out from learning about and experiencing the love of Jesus. This webinar will explore some of the opportunities churches have to engage people of all ages in the life of the community. We'll look at worship models, community standards, and safety measures meant to create space, both online and offline, for congregants to come together and practice faith in the ancient way of intentionally intergenerational community.

Find many more offerings from Practical Resources for Churches [here!](#)



[Outdoor Ministry Camp](#)

Register online for a week at Horton Center this summer!

www.hortoncenter.org

Watch this! <https://youtu.be/rLZm8fzCV2Y>

Join us for.... **VT Takes a Hike to the Mtn**

Deans: Laurie Chipman & Diane Tinkham

for those going into 5th – 8th in the fall

July 18-24, 2021

VT @ the Lake is taking a hiatus from the lake at Rock Point and hiking to the Mountain! Come join us up at Pine Mountain and unite with middle schoolers from the Green (VT) and White (NH) Mountains. God's spirit will be in all we do at camp this week as we hike, play, pray, sing, rock climb, do some arts and crafts, and discover our own courage through games, challenges, and much more!

We have 2 awesome counselors lined up so far!
Pastor Ed Sunday-Winters (Greensboro Congregational) & Jeffrey
Tuper-Giles (Barre Congregational)!

These are two fun guys who have a big heart and a love for God,
youth & nature!

Are you 18yrs or older? Love the outdoors and spending time
helping young youth? Watch this

one! <https://youtu.be/gecZ0v3BGZk> Then reach out to Laurie
Chipman lchipman@fccej.org Counselors get a reduction in cost
for their own child/youth to attend a camp this summer. No cost for
counselors. Volunteering will be the most fun you've had in a real

long time. You'll be exhausted every night and will sleep deep, breathing in the fresh
mountain air, not to mention worship on Chapel Rock! Click on 'volunteer' on their website for
more information. *(College youth – this looks great on your resume!)*



NEWS UPDATE from Horton Center

****COVID Testing Update****

NEW: Anyone who is fully vaccinated does not need to get a COVID test completed before coming to camp. This applies to volunteers and campers. Everyone will still be tested upon arrival on the mountain, but if you're two weeks or more out from your last dose of a COVID vaccine you no longer need to provide proof of a negative test result within 7 days of arriving! This means that we will need a copy of your vaccine card or some other way of proving you are fully vaccinated on hand. Please email me a copy of your proof, and have your counselors do the same. If we do not have proof of your vaccination, you will need to get tested within seven days of your arrival at camp.

ALSO if you're 18 or older you could:

- Be a Counselor for a week and change the lives of our young people at camp. Check out the [video](#) to find out why "We Need You!"
- Be part of the Summer Staff! Get more info and details [Here!](#)

Churches: We have provided two 'Virtual Bulletin Inserts' ([Come to your camp](#) and [Come to your camp2](#)) for you to add to your church e-news letter, your Sunday bulletin, or your Sunday worship videos to help us get more campers to camp!

See you on the mountain.

As always you can contact Tim Hughes with any questions at: thughes@nhucc.org or 603-545-9660.

COVID-19 NEWS



FEMA

COVID 19 FUNERAL ASSISTANCE

As part of the federal funds allocated for COVID

relief, there are monies for funeral assistance for the families anyone who dies of COVID. The number of those filing a claim is much less than the number eligible, and because of privacy rules, the state can't just email a list of families. We need help getting word out there to clergy and funeral homes that this assistance is available, (and retroactive). Please share the attached document with anyone that seems appropriate to help raise awareness about this.

Please read more about this [here!](#)



[Resources for resilience support clergy through COVID-19](#)

It's been almost a year since COVID-19 irrevocably changed United Church of Christ churches.

Members have become ill. Many never recovered. Countless buildings remain closed—some reopening, only to shut down again.

Congregations worship and gather virtually. Clergy have to find ways to cope and carry on. As Americans line up for vaccinations, health experts warn against darker days ahead.

Eleven months of uncertainty. The pandemic is taking an emotional toll on mental health and ministers are not immune.

Continue reading [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?

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](#).



SAVE THE DATE!

Boundary Training 101!

SAVE THE DATE: September 1st, 2021

The Vermont Conference will be offering an in-person boundary training on Wednesday, September 1st, during the day - details to follow.

Please note that all clergy - licensed and ordained - need regular Boundary Training, so Save the Date!

UCCMA Conference 2021 - Registration is now open!

Join the UCCMA online for workshops, worship services, a wonderful concert, vendors and networking. We will be virtually hosted by the First Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC in the historic town of Glastonbury, Connecticut. From Thursday evening through the Saturday 4 pm closing worship service, we provide a plethora of activities that will enhance your music skills and give you resources and ideas for new ways of expressing God's Spirit in these pandemic times. We also provide glimpses of the historic scenery around the church in Glastonbury, which you would have enjoyed if you had come in person as originally planned. Join us instead online for a mental reset and spiritual refreshment with a taste of Connecticut.



[Find out more and register HERE!](#)

VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS



Gorgeous FREE Pulpit!

Laurie Krooss (Minister of Second Congregational Church in Londonderry) was recently given a handmade pulpit. It is made of Aspen! Sadly, they do not have room in Londonderry for it, so she would love to pass it on to someone who can use it. She is also happy to assist with transporting it to its new home. If you or your church are interested in this marvelous piece, please contact Laurie [here!](#)

Seeking Church musician/music director for

North Pomfret Congregational Church, United Church of Christ



Music Director/church musician shall be responsible for organizing and directing church choirs and coordinating special music. Musician will also have the responsibility of providing the sources of music used in the worship services, working with the Minister in selecting the weekly music.

Send resumé and inquires to Npomfretcc@gmail.com or North Pomfret Church, PO Box 308, North Pomfret, VT 05053



WANTED: PART-TIME OFFICE COORDINATOR

Greensboro United Church of Christ is seeking a multi-skilled individual to manage the office of a small, progressive, socially engaged church.

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

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 !



How to Contact Conference Staff

We are having some TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES with the email servers, so until further notice the only emails that are working at the conference are:

Conference Minister: Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak llbvtc@gmail.com
Associate Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree sangreepucc@gmail.com
Office Administrator: Elise Foster vermontconference@gmail.com
Ministries Coordinator: Rev. Jackie Lingelbach vtconmincoor@gmail.com
Bookkeeper: Tanya Frazier vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com

DEADLINE for E-Kit News must be received by **Tuesday of each week.**
Please send any and all information to Elise at vermontconference@gmail.com.

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/>