



# The Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ



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## 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*

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**Weekly E-News Summer  
Edition**

**August 12, 2021**

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## *Message from the Conference*

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Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

This week I read two powerful articles about climate change. The first was the summary report from the U.N. climate panel's comprehensive assessment of climate change entitled "Code Red for Humanity." This is a sobering report that each and every one of us needs to read. The hardest word for me to hear is that in multiple ways the damage to our climate has passed the point of no return. There is nowhere to hide and no room for denial of the drastic changes causing fire, record breaking and dangerous heat, drought, flooding, hurricanes, the loss of lowlands to a rising sea level, and the disproportionate misery of peoples who are poor and forgotten.

This is the world God gave us to be stewards, caretakers, lovers of this planet. Instead, we have allowed greed and denial to move far far away from these sacred tasks. UCC minister and climate change activist Jim Antal writes in his book, **Climate Church, Climate World**,

"Only by fully grieving all that we have lost can we fully enter into the new tomorrow that God is preparing. We have so much to mourn: personal grief over loved ones lost and homes destroyed; ubiquitous grief over the long emergency that has straight-jacketed our lives; and anticipatory grief over the catastrophe that we are handing over to our children....We need to acknowledge our grief over the ongoing ruination of Creation. Only by doing so can we be receptive to a message of hope." (quote taken from Cameron Trimble, CEO of Convergence)

The second article was in the Washington Post. This is a piercingly honest portrait in picture and word regarding climate change. You can find that article here:

<https://apple.news/AgF73VgqaRfm98HM5-mg5tq> . Phillip Kennicott, the author of the article talks about the dangers of despair and what it might take to break through

our denial.

When many of us are already feeling overwhelmed by new variants of COVID and continuing struggles for racial justice and a nation that can seem hopelessly divided, the realities of climate change looms large. When feeling overwhelmed, I hope we remember that while there are certainly things we cannot change there are also things we can. Now is a time for grief and remorse, courage and hope.

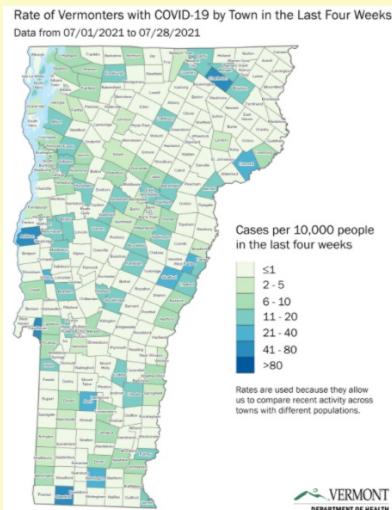
In peace and hope,  
Lynn



## New News!!!



### VTC UCC Covid 19 Update



With respect to everyone the Vermont Conference holds dear, the Conference office will be reopening **Oct. 1, 2021** at the absolute earliest.

We do understand that this may be disappointing to some, however our main goal is to make sure we play our part in maintaining the health and safety of all who look forward to stepping through our doors.

We understand there are quite a few congregations in our conference struggling with what is best for their church. With that, we hope you find the next few articles as helpful as we did.

### **Nine VT Counties Enter CDC Masking Guidance**

### **CDC Guidance for Those Fully Vaccinated**

### **Covid-19 in Vermont Communities**

### **Resources for Online and Hybrid Ministry now on VTCUCC.org!!!**

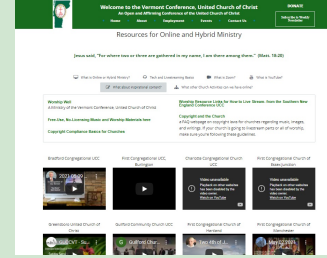
Thank you so much for so many phenomenal responses to our Online Ministry survey!!

We have spent the past few weeks reading and watching everything you have suggested in order to create the most

comprehensive and informational webpage to help you with your online ministry.

As always, if you find something spectacular that you would like to share with the conference, please feel free to send it to us! Any and all feedback is welcome!

**[You can find the webpage here!](#)**



Additionally-

The Conference Office is working on upgrading some of our systems!

Have you upgraded any of your hardware or software specifically to accommodate online or hybrid worship?

The Conference would love to speak with you about what items you totally love or items you did not love as much.

Please email [VermontConference@gmail.com](mailto:VermontConference@gmail.com) with any insight or recommendations!!!



## **Tunbridge Church seeks Church Musician!**

Do you know anyone who plays piano? Organ? Keyboard? The Tunbridge Church seeks one or several people to provide Sunday and religious holiday and contemporary worship music. If you are interested in this paid position, please send a letter of interest to the [tunbridgechurch@gmail.com](mailto:tunbridgechurch@gmail.com).

## **August Peacemakers' Pulpit Christopher Ashley, Norwich Congregational Church, UCC**

Matthew:25, 34-35

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink"



I and others from our church volunteer a couple of hours each week at a Willing Hands garden. We plant, grow, and harvest vegetables to be given away at local VT and NH food shelves, social service organizations, and nonprofits. Driving home, hot and sweaty, I imagine hearing Jesus telling us to feed the hungry. I hope my relatively few hours in that garden is a way to follow in his footsteps.

Willing Hands grows vegetables in 3 gardens and "gleans" fresh food from farms, grocery stores, restaurants and wholesalers to give for free to 80 social service organizations across the Upper Valley of VT and NH. 30,000 individuals are provided

annually with 4 million servings.\*

I googled to see what other “feeding the hungry” opportunities are out there. I vaguely knew that there are other organizations that provide food to people all over Vermont. I found the Vermont Foodbank along with several other groups and directories of where people could get food for those who are hungry. The Vermont Foodbank distributes food at hundreds locations around the state to anyone who needs it. According to its website, over 150 VT farms and food producers are involved. They also deliver food to folks who cannot come to a distribution center. Volunteers are key in these efforts.

Many people reading this already know about these activities because our UCC Churches are distribution center locations, and many members of our Congregations already give their time. However, there is always a need for more “Willing Hands” as we work together to feed the hungry. If you are interested, please checkout one of these organizations.

\*<https://willinghands.org>



## EXPLORING THE PANDEMIC IMPACT ON CONGREGATIONS



HARTFORD INSTITUTE  
FOR RELIGION RESEARCH



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

## **UCC included in \$5M study of COVID and the church**

by **Hans Holznagel** | published on Aug 2, 2021

"The United Church of Christ and its local churches will play a role in a major study of the impact of COVID-19.

**“Exploring the Pandemic Impact on Congregations”** will last five years. It will research “how congregations are changing, innovating, and establishing new ministry practices” in response to COVID-19.”

**[Continue reading here to discover how your church can become involved!](#)**

## **Resources from the Justice Workshop from Annual Meeting Available Now!!!!**

Would you like some resources to help your congregation explore issues of climate change and climate justice? Fred Taylor from Justice and Witness Ministries, with the help of Pam Piper from Norwich UCC, have put together a set of resources - books, films, organizations to connect with, etc. These have been shared with participants from the Climate Justice workshop of this year's Annual Meeting, and are available now for anyone interested. Fred is also eager to assist any churches in the conference who are looking for guidance in starting or developing their ministry around environmental/climate justice issues.



Contact Fred at [rtaylor@antioch.edu](mailto:rtaylor@antioch.edu).



## **Boundary Training 101!**

**In-person Boundary Training 101**

**Facilitator: Rev. Gordon Rankin**

**Date: Wednesday, September 1st 9:00 - 3:00**

*Participants required to provide their own lunch.*

*There are many lovely local places to purchase lunch  
if you do not bring your own!*

**Location: Bethany Randolph Church**

**Cost: \$25.00**

*This training fulfills the Boundary Training requirement for Authorized Ministers. Please note that there will be a second level in-person Boundary Training offered in late November. If you need a Boundary Training and can not attend an in-person event, there are on-line courses available, please contact the Conference offices for the list of online Boundary Trainings.*

**Register here!!**

## **In Need of Our Prayer**

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.

Please add Susanna and Michael Griefen your prayers. Michael is living with a progressive illness and this is a particularly bad time for them. Susanna is a retired Pastor who served Dummerston Congregational Church for many years.

Please pray for Sherry Baer's grandson, Lev who is undergoing treatment for a neural blastoma cancer. Lev is one year old. Please pray for him and his family. Sherry is the retired pastor of the United Church of Northfield.



## **AROUND THE CONFERENCE**

(Please let us know what your Congregation is up to by sending an email to [VermontConference@gmail.com](mailto:VermontConference@gmail.com) .

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

**Exciting Pastoral Transition!**



Michael Dwyer was called to be the settled pastor of the Pittsford Congregational Church, UCC, this past Sunday. We rejoice with Michael and their congregation!

**Have you removed the pews from your worship space?**

If so, Bethany Church in Montpelier would like to talk with you. Please contact Theresa Lever at [thelevers@comcast.net](mailto:thelevers@comcast.net). Thank you!



**Vermont Interfaith Action**  
*Transforming People and Communities*



**COVID-19 Memorial**

**\*Updated Time!!\***

To honor Vermonters lost to COVID-19 and to process our grief, Vermont Interfaith Action is hosting a memorial service on the Vermont Statehouse Lawn in Montpelier at **3 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 19**. Please save the date now. The heart of the event will be a ceremonial reading of the names so that each individual who has died of COVID-19 is recognized. In addition, various clergy will offer brief interfaith prayers and readings. Governor Phil Scott and Health Commissioner Dr. Mark Levine have also been invited to participate. For more information, contact Debbie at [debbie@viavt.org](mailto:debbie@viavt.org) or 802-651-8889

**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

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

# 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)

**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!](#)**



**[SAVE THE DATE!](#)**

## **[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

*consultants | workshops | webinars | resources*

### 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!](#)

## VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS



### **Christian Education Coordinator Needed**

The United Church of Hinesburg is looking for a Christian Education Coordinator to work 8 hours/week, mid-August 2021 to mid-June 2022 (42 weeks/336 hours). The CE Coordinator would be responsible for coordinating the Christian Education programs, facilitating the recruitment and training of Sunday School leaders, welcoming new families and assisting with Sunday School registration, and assisting with teaching classes when required. Hours include three Sunday mornings per month from 9:45-11:30am. The individual may work from home for the additional hours. \$16-\$18/hr. For a complete job description, go to: <https://www.ucofh.org/employment-opportunities.html>

If interested, send resume to [unitedchurch@gmavt.net](mailto:unitedchurch@gmavt.net)



## **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!](#)



## **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!**

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](mailto:Npomfretcc@gmail.com) or North Pomfret Church, PO Box 308, North Pomfret, VT 05053

## **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](mailto: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 [lbvtc@gmail.com](mailto:lbvtc@gmail.com)  
Associate Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree [sangreepucc@gmail.com](mailto:sangreepucc@gmail.com)  
Office Administrator: Elise Foster [vermontconference@gmail.com](mailto:vermontconference@gmail.com)  
Ministries Coordinator: Rev. Jackie Lingelbach [vtconmincoor@gmail.com](mailto:vtconmincoor@gmail.com)  
Bookkeeper: Tanya Frazier [vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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/>