



# 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 Summer  
Edition**

**August 26, 2021**

## Table of Contents

- 1) Message from the Conference
- 2) New News!!!
- 3) Around the Conference

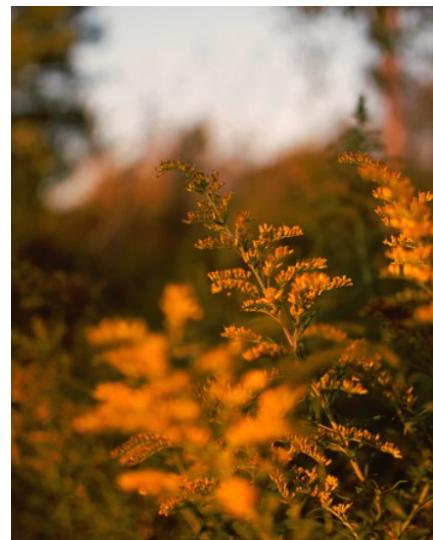
- 4) Save the Date!
- 5) VTCUCC Classifieds
- 6) Resources for Online Ministry

## *Message from the Conference*

Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference:

These last days of August are always bitter sweet for me. The signs of summer's end are all around. The insect cacophony announces the coming change. The soft blues and reds and pinks of summer give way to gold and green and brown. I am surprised when the sun sets just after 7:30 now. The seasons are turning. If there is a touch of melancholy to these days there is also beauty everywhere and the anticipation of autumn.

With all that is going on in the world, in our nation and in our lives, it is important to remember those things that draw us to wonder, love and praise. Beauty in nature is often a thin space for me, a place where I am surprised by God's abundance and Presence. I so often miss these signs as I blunder through my day, my mind on other tasks and responsibilities. Yet, every now and then, I see! This year I see the Goldenrod's rich color, so impossibly beautiful that it lifts my spirit. What is it that causes you to find yourself in the presence of the Spirit, in a thin and holy place, even if only for a moment?



The living of these days is hard and sometimes overwhelming. I keep reading or hearing the phrase, soul weary. Yes, we are weary and worn down by the constant uncertainty of what is the "right thing" to do. Many of us are mourning the loss of a dear one who did not survive COVID, or a job that disappeared or a loved one who is so far across the current political divide that we don't know how to reach them. And yet, there is still beauty. There are still signs of God with us. There are still thin places.

If you haven't looked up recently from putting one foot in front of another, please do. Allow yourself to see the fingerprints of God, the signs of God's love, playfulness and care. That is my prayer for you.

In hope and peace,

Lynn



## **New News!!!**



At the last Board of Director's meeting, they approved the final draft of the proposed new VTC UCC Constitution and Bylaws.

**\*This must be shared with your church clerk!!!\***

### **Vermont Conference Bylaws (revised)**

You can find all supporting documentation on our website [here](#).

Supporting documentation:

[Bylaw Rationale Statement](#)

[Bylaw FAQ](#)

[Proposed Bylaws vs. Current Bylaws](#)

The date of the special meeting has been changed to  
November 13th at 10:00 am.

# **Register Here!**

***(You must be registered to attend.)***



# UCC Officers: We must not turn on our back on Afghanistan

by [UCC Leadership](#) | published on Aug 17, 2021

*“As he came near and saw the city, Jesus wept over it, saying, “If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.” (Luke 19:41-2)*

We write with profound grief at the news of the Taliban takeover of Kabul and fall of the Afghan government. Images like those of people clinging to U.S. planes are haunting, and they point to the desperation and fear of our Afghan siblings. After 20 years of military intervention, it is clear that U.S. and international approaches have not brought about a Just Peace for the people of Afghanistan. Twenty more years of the same approach would not have done more. The cycle of violence and endless war had to end. As we have said for years in the United Church of Christ, peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of justice. We need new approaches to address the root causes of unrest that lead to radicalization, and to break the cycle of violence.

[Continue Reading Here](#)



*To honor Vermonters lost to COVID-19 and to process our grief, join **Vermont Interfaith Action** and faith communities across the state of Vermont.*

## COVID-19 Memorial Service

**Sunday, Sept 19th, 3:00 p.m.  
Vermont Statehouse Lawn,  
Montpelier**

*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.*

For more information, contact Debbie  
[debbie@viavt.org](mailto:debbie@viavt.org) | 802-651-8889

**Barre Congregational is  
looking for a Faith Formation  
Coordinator!!!**

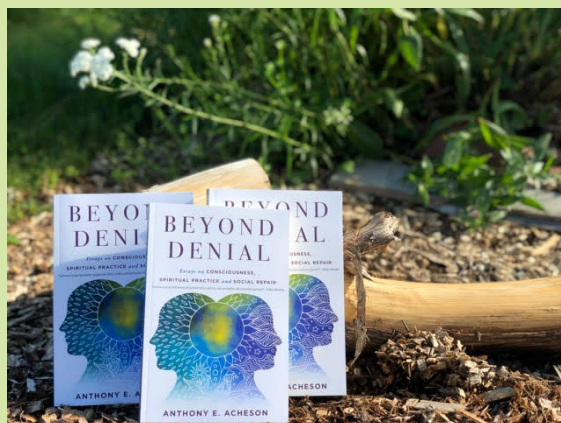
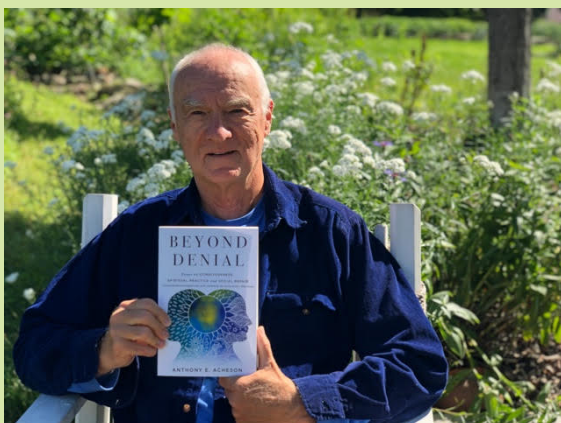
The role of the Faith Formation Coordinator (FFC) will be to build relationships with families with children in Central Vermont, both those who are members of the church, and those without a connection with the church. Out of the insights gained from those relationships, the FFC will resource

program planning to serve families and promote Christian Education within Central Vermont.



[Click here for more information!](#)

## [REV. ANTHONY ACHESON PUBLISHES HIS FIRST BOOK!!!!](#)



One of our retired pastors, the Rev. Anthony Acheson, has recently launched his first book, *Beyond Denial: Essays on Consciousness, Spiritual Practice and Social Repair*. The book, published by Green Writers Press in Brattleboro, presents revised versions of religion page columns he wrote for the Brattleboro Reformer and other New England newspapers.

The Rev. Maren Tirabassi has praised the book as offering “resources of lasting hope and value in a time of dizzying change and social disruption.” You can read excerpts from *Beyond Denial* on his new website:

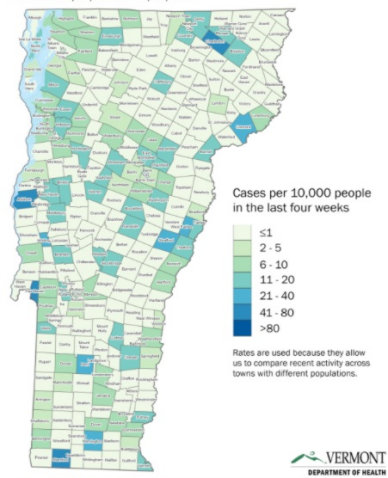
<https://www.anthonyeacheson.com> .

Massive congratulations to Tony on this amazing accomplishment!!!

## [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](#)

### [Be Aware!](#)

There are many different scams currently circulating whether via email, text message, or phone call.

Here are some of the best tricks (courtesy of Yahoo.com) to make sure you are not scammed!

- Hang up immediately if you hear a recording when you answer the phone.
- Avoid picking up calls from unknown numbers, even if they appear to be local. (This can be applied to emails, as well. Make sure you check the return address to make sure matches the contact information you have even if it appears the sender is a pal, family member, coworker, etc.)
- Reporting spam text messages can help cut down on another major technological annoyance.



You can read more [here!](#)



## [2021 Clergy Convocation Registration is OPEN!!!](#)

[\\*\\*\\*PRICE INCREASES](#)

[09/01\\*\\*\\*](#)

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

*Masks will be required indoors!!!*

**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.

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

The room block at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center has sold out. If you hope to stay on campus, please [join the waitlist](#) when you register below.

**YOU MUST BE VACCINATED TO ATTEND IN PERSON!!!**

**Due to this, we now have a hybrid option.**

**REGISTER HERE!!!**

So the World's Open Again, Now What?  
Re-entry Workshop for College Students



**\*NEW WORKSHOP\***  
**Friday, August 27th, 11:00am**

Are you getting ready to go back to school and finding yourself feeling stressed out in a world of uncertainty?

Did you decide not to go to college or to take a gap year because of the pandemic and, now, are feeling worried?

Are you concerned about how to manage the social scene during COVID, that you are out of practice, or that you or ones you care about might get sick?

Do you want to learn how to support your mental wellness as well as the mental health of your friends and family?

You are not alone!

Join us for this interactive workshop with other college students to learn more about skills for managing this confusing time.

**Register Here!**



## MESOM FALL 2021 CLASSES

Join the Maine School of Ministry this fall for continuing education classes on Zoom-

Two Courses Are Being Offered This Fall 2021 Semester and Registration is Now Open!

***Biblical Storytelling for Advent and Christmas  
&  
Christian Theology for the Twenty-First Century***

**[Register Here!!!](#)**



### Florence Boutwell

Rev. Robert (Bob) Boutwell's wife, Florence passed away peacefully in their home on July 28th. Celebration of Life was held on August 9th at 11am at Grace Church.

Cards can be sent to:

Rev. Robert Boutwell  
690 Town Line Road,  
Rutland, Vt. 05701

### In Need of Our Prayer

#### Update on Matthew Hoag 08/12/2021

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.

His PET scan showed that the cancer has spread throughout his bones. Doctor's have given him 2 -7 months before he passes on to eternity. Thank you all for the prayers.

Please pray for his comfortable passing.

Robin is the Office Administrator for Second Congregational Church in Bennington.



Please pray for 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.

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. **UPDATE BELOW**

### **A Note from Susanna Griefen (08.22.2021)**

Thanks for all your prayers for us in a scary time. Michael's eyesight failed quickly and dramatically. After extensive testing we were told the problem was not in his eyes but in his brain. He is scheduled for a brain MRI which may tell us more, but his eyesight has gradually improved and is much better. This follows a pattern in other areas of terrifying drops in functioning followed by a slow rise to a new normal. He has both Vascular Dementia and FTD of the Parkinson type, mostly affecting balance but not intellect or character. He is still his lovely self. Life is mostly serene. Many of you may not know that we moved in May to Edmonds WA to be near our son and his family. The move was very hard and I can't imagine how I could have done it without friends at Bethany Church Montpelier. It was a good move and so important to do before Michael's dementia made it much harder. Thank you for my wonderful years in Vermont, where I began and ended my ministry. I had such good friendships and support. I will be grateful all my life. And I'll stay a friend of the Vermont Conference.  
Faithfully, Susanna



## **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!)



### **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.

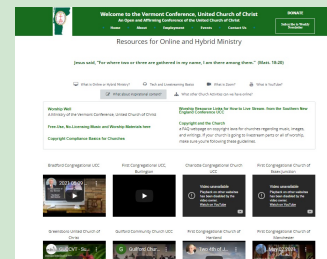
\*<https://willinghands.org>

## 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!!!

## 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).

### 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!



### 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)



## SAVE THE DATE!



### **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!!](#)

# New York School of Ministry

## The New York School of Ministry Fall 2021 Course Schedule

### Fall 20-Hour Courses

#### **Old Testament I**

Rev. David Cleaver-Bartholomew, Ph.D., instructor Monday evenings: Sept. 13, 20, 27; Oct. 4, 18, 25; Nov. 1, and 8, from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

*Registration Deadline: August 30, 2021*

#### **Advanced Topics in Pastoral Care and Counseling**

Rev. Wayne Gustafson, D.Min., LMHC, inst. Wednesday evenings: Sept 22, 29, Oct 6, 13, 20, 27, Nov 10, 17, Dec 1, from 6:30-8:45 pm (the first session will go to 9 pm).

*Registration Deadline: September 8, 2021*

### Fall Short Courses

#### **Religious Fundraising – Past and Present**

Rev. David Cleaver-Bartholomew, Ph.D., instructor Saturday, September 25, 2021: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

*Continuing Education for Ministers, Stewardship Teams, and Everyone*

#### **“What does it mean to be both progressive and Christian?”**

Rev. David Kaden, Ph.D., inst. Tuesday Evenings, Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2021: 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

*Continuing Education for All. Registration Opens August 18.*

[Register 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!](#)

### **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).



### **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



### First Congregational Church seeks a Director of Music!!!

We seek a creative and spirit-filled Music Director to lead a vibrant music program that contributes to the ministry and growth of our church. With a strong foundation in classical sacred music, our congregation now hopes to evolve our music program to include a greater diversity of musical expression. The successful applicant will be skilled at creating sacred space through music, cultivating the musical gifts of our congregation, inviting participation from the wider community, and collaborating as a full member of the ministerial team.



[Learn more or 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](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 [llbvtc@gmail.com](mailto:llbvtc@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/>