



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 Autumn
Edition**

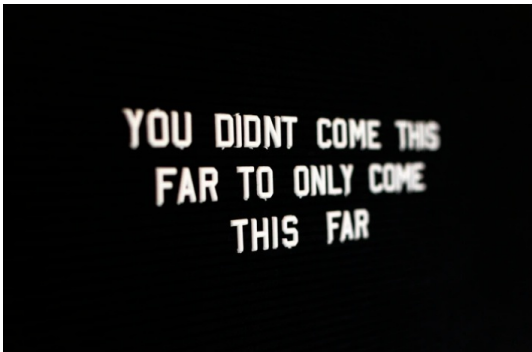
September 2, 2021

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Message from the Conference



September always feels like a new beginning! Kids are going back to school, students are starting new classes at colleges and universities, and churches begin a new church year with new programs and renewed energy. This September feels different and better than last September, as we can at least have some common life together. But we all know that the Delta variant is causing havoc in our communities and state and country and world, and none of us knows what the future will bring. It continues to be a challenging time to be the Church.

That is why it is important for our clergy to be supported in their ministries. Our Conference last fall made a real commitment to provide groups for our clergy to be in during this Pandemic, and about two-thirds of our clergy this year have participated in one group or another at the Conference or Association level. These range from our Tuesday morning Conference clergy calls to new pastor in the Conference groups to Association Bible studies to pastor groups focused on support and excellence. We also have gotten a number of new clergy in our Conference hooked up with a mentor, who can help them find joy in their ministries.

But there are still some of our pastors who are not in a group of one type or another, or maybe you as a clergy person are looking for a different experience this fall. If so, please reach out to me or Lynn! Also, if you are a newer clergy person, and would like a clergy mentor, please let me or Lynn know! (If you are a veteran clergy person and would be open to mentoring another clergy person, please also let us know!) If you are a lay person reading this, please ask your pastor whether they are in a pastor group-it

really does make a world of difference in how they do ministry. I can say without doubt that I would not have been half as effective a pastor as I was without the support of other clergy in groups. May we all follow the leading of the Spirit together,

Faithfully yours,
Paul



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](#)

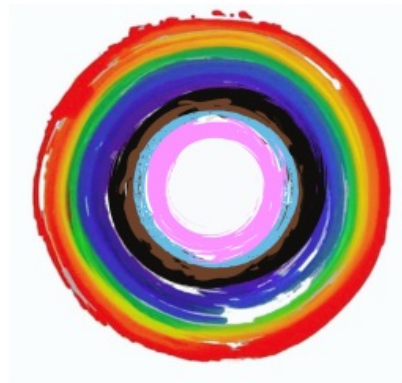
[Proposed Bylaws vs. Current Bylaws](#)

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

Register Here!

(You must be registered to attend.)

A large, solid pink rectangular area at the bottom of the page.



INTERFAITH PRIDE SERVICE

Thursday, September 2, 2021
7:00 pm
- online -

Registration details to come!

Gather online with Vermont's LGBTQ+ and ally communities to remember and celebrate that we are not alone in the midst of life's challenges and uncertainties. We are held by the greater LGBTQ+ community, as well as by our diverse religious and philosophical traditions and practices.

Planning Committee for the service includes clergy and members from the UVM Interfaith Center, Vermont Zen Center, Ruach haMaqom, The Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Green Mountain Druid Order, The Society of St. Edmund, All Souls Interfaith Gathering, Hillel, First Congregational Church in Essex Junction, The Dignity Foundation, and the Lakota Nation.

Questions: Contact laura.engelken@uvm.edu



BURLINGTON PRIDE!!!

The Pride Parade is **Sunday, September 5th**. The parade start time is at 12:30 pm. As in 2019, First Congregational Church of Burlington (38 South Winooski Avenue) has invited us for a pre-parade gathering at 11:30 am on their front yard – their parking lot is available (there is also street parking and a parking garage across the street with an entrance on Cherry Street). At 12 pm, we'll head over to the Hood Plant parking lot on King St to line up. The parade route goes up Church Street, then follows Pearl Street to Battery Park.

Each participating congregation is

encouraged to register for the Pride Parade (as a solidarity group -



LINK: <https://www.pridecentervt.org/pride/church>) and pay the parade fee separately. We are inviting all of you to walk jointly as a United Church of Christ contingent – carrying banners and signs from our individual congregations. If you register now, the fee is \$35.

Individual walkers from UCC congregations throughout Vermont are welcome to join in with the larger UCC group of congregations and do not need to register separately. All traveling from a distance are welcome to join any of our Chittenden County UCC congregations for worship on September 5.

If you decide to walk with us as a contingent, please email jsimon@fccej.org .

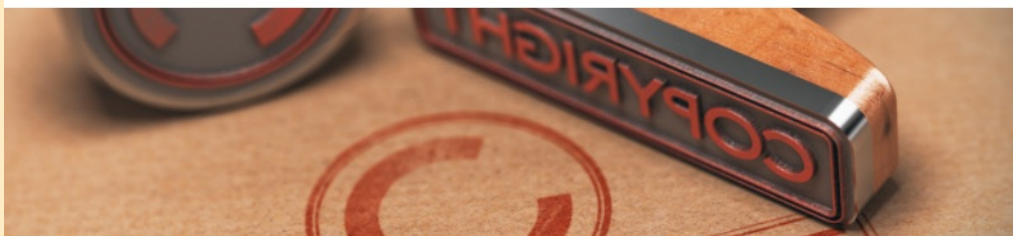
Please feel free to send photos of yourself and/or your Congregation to VermontConference@gmail.com !!!



Help Welcome Rev. Dr. Ezra Chapola!!

The Rev. Dr. Ezra Chapola will be officially installed at Old South Church within the Windsor Orange Association on Sept 19 at 3:00pm. All members of the association are encouraged to attend and all others are very welcome.

Clergy may robe and bring red or a favorite stole.



[Copyright Concerns For Ministries](#)

During these challenging times, ministries rely heavily on the virtual environment and various electronic mediums to share the printed forms of inspiring poetry, quotes from prayer books and daily affirmations, as well as words from songs during worship and through other forms of ministry.

As a result, some ministries have been shocked to discover they are actually in violation of copyright infringement; join us as Heather Kimmell General Counsel, United Church of Christ, offers valuable information on how to help your ministry avoid this situation.

Join us on September 29th at 2:00 p.m. EST

[Click Here to Register!](#)

[Help Afghan Refugees coming to Vermont!](#)



Vermont will likely receive close to 100 Afghan refugees, mostly in the Burlington Area to start but possibly in Middlebury/Barre and Rutland.

The most immediate need now as they prepare is for \$\$ donations and temporary to longterm housing. Second homes are obvious options.

If churches express interest in helping with this effort, folks with housing to offer can contact Vermont Refugee Resettlement directly at vrrp@uscrrt.org.

Monetary contributions can be made to refugees.org and then scroll to Refugees and Immigrants in Vermont.



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 | 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

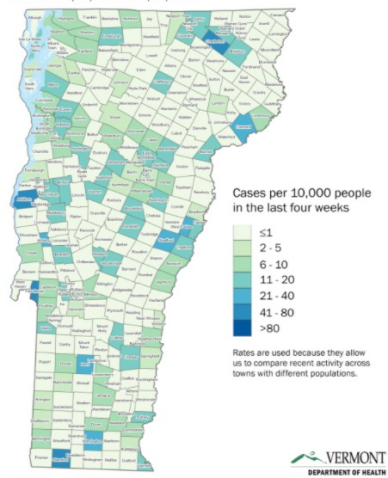
members of the church, and those without a connection with the church. Out of the insights gained from those relationships, the FFC will resource program planning to serve families and promote Christian Education within Central Vermont.



[Click here for more information!](#)

[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](#)



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

***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!!!



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 .

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

Be Aware!

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

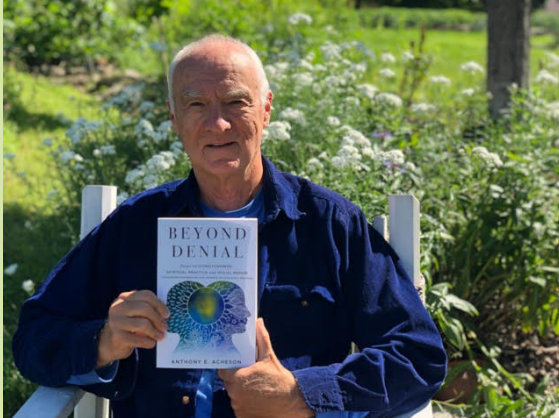
Here are some of the best tricks (courtesy of Yahoo.com) to make sure you are not scammed!

- 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!](#)

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!!!

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.

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. 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



SAVE THE DATE!

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!



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!!!](#)

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



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





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 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 !



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 llybvtc@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/>