



# 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 Autumn  
Edition**

**September 9, 2021**

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# ***Message from the Conference***

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To the beloved community in the Vermont Conference,

Today, I want to talk with you about a subject that has touched many of us but is seldom talked about. September is recognized as Suicide Prevention

Month. The stress, isolation and uncertainty brought on by the Covid pandemic has increased the rate of depression and anxiety and has led to higher incidences of suicide. In fact, suicide is the second leading cause of death for children through the college years. According to the website,

Bridges to Recovery:

“Suicide is a terrible tragedy for individuals and the people who care about them. Since hitting a low in 2000, **suicides have been rising in the U.S**

From 2000 to 2016, suicides went up by 30 percent. Suicide in girls and women increased by 50 percent. It is now the 10th leading cause of death in the country.”

Knowing some of the risk factors and the signs that someone may be contemplating suicide is one thing we can do. You can find this information here: [https://www.bridgestorecovery.com/blog/5-warning-signs-of-](https://www.bridgestorecovery.com/blog/5-warning-signs-of-suicidal-behavior-that-are-easy-to-miss/)

[suicidal-behavior-that-are-easy-to-miss/](https://www.bridgestorecovery.com/blog/5-warning-signs-of-suicidal-behavior-that-are-easy-to-miss/)

Persons struggling with life challenges and those who suffer from anxiety and depression are from all walks of life and all economic situations. Those struggling with thoughts of suicide are in our congregations. Speaking out in your church reduces the stigma of mental health issues. It is important to

offer resources for help and hope.

If you know someone who is feeling suicidal or you feel that way yourself, help is available. You can call the Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255. If you want further resources or want to get involved in creating wider awareness you can contact the Suicide Prevention Center of Vermont at: [vspc.org](http://vspc.org)

Together, we can make a difference. When we say and live, “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey you are welcome here,” we decrease isolation and silence and offer help and hope.

Peace be with you,  
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)**

**Help Welcome Pastor Michael**

## Mario!

Pastor Michael Mario will be officially installed at First Congregational Church within the Windham Association on **Sept 12!!** All members of the association are encouraged to attend and all others are very welcome.



## 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.



First Congregational of Burlington



Rev. Joshua Simon,  
Associate Pastor, First  
Cong., Essex Junction



College Street  
Congregational Church

**Burlington**  
**Pride**  
**2021!!!!**





Naomi aka Bob Driver of Williston Federated Church Rev. Paul Eyer

First Congregational of Essex Junction paused to watch a proposal...



...As did Rev. Sally May of Malletts Bay



Spoiler Alert: He said "Yes!"



Check out a video created by our own Rev. Jackie Lingelbach below!



Rev. Sally May of Malletts Bay Congregational Church



Charlotte Congregational Church



First Congregational Church, Essex Junction



A promotional banner for the Barna CoLab program. The banner features the Barna logo in the top right corner. The main text reads: "BEGINS OCT 19TH" in a red box, followed by "Barna CoLab | Accelerating Generosity" in large white letters. Below that, it says "A 6-Week Program to Grow Your Church's Impact by Inspiring Generosity". At the bottom, a red bar contains the text "EARLY BIRD PRICING ENDS SEPTEMBER 24TH". The background of the banner shows a blurred image of a church interior with people.

Are you tired of seeing money limit your church's impact?  
Do you want to better prepare your church for a healthy financial future?

Talking about church finances isn't always comfortable, but it is important.

That's why we created **Barna CoLab | Accelerating Generosity**, an interactive learning experience where we'll help you change the conversation around giving in your church.

Over the course of six weeks, we'll explore how to:

- Develop a data-driven perspective of your church's giving habits
- Establish and nurture a core team of givers to create stability
- Preach and communicate generosity in an effective way
- Activate non-givers to grow your opportunities for impact
- Instill a passion for generosity in younger generations to better prepare your church for a healthy financial future

Since this is a real-time, interactive experience (beginning October 19th), seating is limited.

If you'd like to participate, you can enroll in this 6-week program as an individual for just \$249 (\$199 early bird).

Or, you can participate with your team and get everyone on the same page for just \$399 (\$329 early bird). With this package, you can bring up to 5 people, plus \$49 for each additional person.



## [New Online Course!!!](#) **Leading Transformational Ministry** **September 20 - 24, 2021**

The Office of Continuing Education at Princeton Theological Seminary would like to invite you to register for a new online course, Leading Transformational Ministry, taught by United Methodist Bishop Peter Weaver. This intensive online course will explore planning and leading transformational ministry, especially in our current times.

This five day intensive course will focus on planning and leading transformational ministry (TM) that is spiritually energized, theologically grounded, contextually relevant, team facilitated and missionally innovative for congregations or ministry organizations.

The course will draw on Biblical/Theological themes of “New Creation,” the organizational theories and practices of “Adaptive Leadership,” the strategic tools of “Design Thinking,” readings, and each participant’s experiences and insights in their ministry context.

### **Important Details About the Course**

You will need to purchase and read *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* by Tod Bolsinger by the first session.

Dates: September 20 — 24, 2021

Live 9:00 a.m. — 12:00 noon ET daily

Participate in all sessions and complete course work to earn 1.5 CEUs

Register by September 15, 2021.

Leading Transformational Ministry will meet Monday through Friday, September 20-24, 2021 from 9 am to noon ET. The course fee is \$150.

For other questions, please email Sushama Austin-Connor, Program Administrator for Continuing Education at [coned@ptsem.edu](mailto:coned@ptsem.edu).



### [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@uscrrvt.org](mailto:vrrp@uscrrvt.org).

Monetary contributions can be made to [refugees.org](http://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

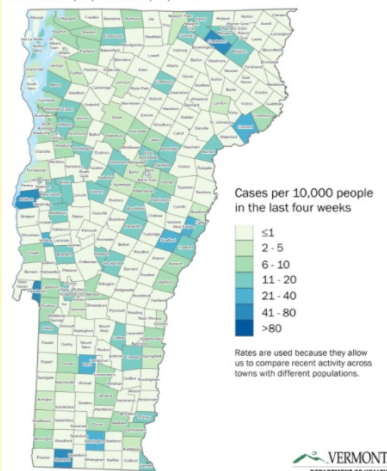
**Sunday, Sept 19th, 3:00 p.m.  
Vermont Statehouse Lawn,  
Montpelier**

*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

### VTC UCC Covid 19 Update

Rate of Vermonters with COVID-19 by Town in the Last Four Weeks  
Data from 07/01/2021 to 07/28/2021



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,

## 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!)

## Be Aware!

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

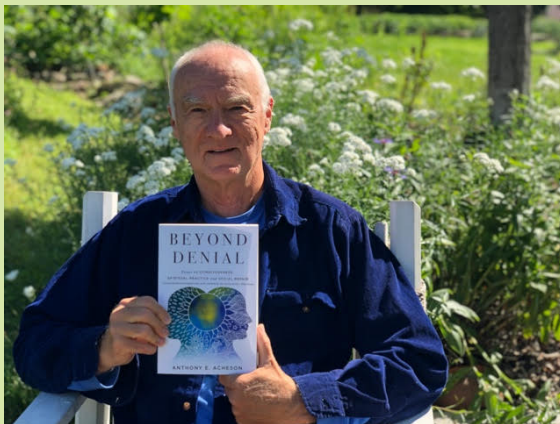
Here are some of the best tricks (courtesy of Yahoo.com) to make sure you are not scammed!

- 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](mailto:rtaylor@antioch.edu).



### [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!](#)

# 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!**

## New York School of Ministry

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

**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!!!](#)**

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## **VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS**

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### **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).



## **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!](#)**



## **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)

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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).

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**Thank You for Your Support!**

**Our Churches Wider Mission Basic Support, Association Dues, and Friends of the Vermont Conference make this communication possible.**

**Donate**

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Connect with us



visit our website at <http://www.vtcucc.org/>

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