



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

October 28, 2021

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Message from the Conference

Dear Friends,

Today I want to give a shout out of gratitude to our licensed pastors! So many of our churches in the Vermont Conference are blessed by the presence of a licensed pastor, who gives wholeheartedly of themselves to serve God and their congregation. Many of them serve part time, while balancing other responsibilities as well. Our Conference is so enriched by your ministry!

During the challenging days of this Pandemic, our Conference has made a concerted effort to create different clergy groups for the support and encouragement of our clergy and churches. Some of our licensed pastors participate in these groups, or in groups in their Associations. But at a meeting of the Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee of our Conference recently, it was decided that we should do more, that we should form a clergy group just for the licensed pastors of our Conference. So if you are a licensed pastor, or one of the lay leaders of a church with a licensed pastor, I want you to know that the Conference will be in touch soon about whether your pastor would have interest in being in a group. We care about the licensed pastors of our Conference and want them to be supported!

On a different note, our Tuesday morning Conference clergy group had a visit from Debbie Ingram, director of Vermont Interfaith Action (and a UCC minister!), who shared with us about the homelessness crisis going on in our state right now. You can find a number of the actions that she recommends that we take in this Ekit. She especially encouraged all the clergy of our Conference who are comfortable doing so to sign the letter that will be shared with the Governor. May we stand as a Conference with those who are homeless in our state.

Faithfully yours,
Paul

Latest News

Housing Crisis in Vermont: The Emergency Housing for the Homeless- Deadline (Dec. 31) is looming!!



CALL TO ACTION

Please Call the Governor TODAY

802 828 3333

**Right now
advocates have
taken to the State
House steps to
demand action and
they need your
help!**

- ➔ Fully reinstate and extend the motel program through the winter, and for as long as the federal government will reimburse & until we can transition people to long term safe housing.
- ➔ End the 84 day benefit limit that is dangerous & outdated.
- ➔ Stop asking Vermonters to trade their shelter for money. If we have the resources, we should do both
- ➔ The Governor must create a cohesive and safe longer-term plan. He must provide notice to the public and to those experiencing homelessness that clearly explains their options and their rights.

Thurs. Oct. 28

Sign the GA Motel reinstatement letter to Governor Scott! ([click here](#))

Write letter to the editor or op/ed to your local paper

Call Governor's office & encourage your congregation members to do so

Fri. Oct. 29 1:30 pm to 2:45 pm

VIA's regular Affordable Housing/Homelessness Organizing Committee meeting -- on

Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86987991830>

Or by phone: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 869 8799 1830

Mon. Nov 1

Research meetings with Rep. Rob LeClair and Sen. Joe Benning

Thurs. Nov. 11

VIA's regular Clergy Caucus meeting -- 10:30 am to 12 noon on Zoom:

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUpduqvqTssHNFv6N8XskO-PkkKoAaL6a2c>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Mon. Nov. 15

Press Conference in person at Christ Episcopal Church in Montpelier, time TBA

CALLING ALL CLERGY AND DELEGATES! FINAL CALL TO SIGN UP FOR:

Special Meeting of the Vermont Conference

Saturday, November 13th

at 10:00 a.m.

on Zoom

For more information click [here](#).

Deadline to register is Nov. 5th!

[Register Here](#)

Racial Justice Survey

The Racial Justice Taskforce of the VT Conference, UCC is seeking your voice and opinion on matters of racial justice within the conference. This [anonymous survey](#) will help us to better understand the current experiences of those who participate in our congregations and provide information on how we can best move forward the work of racial justice. We anticipate [this survey](#) taking about 15 minutes to complete.

PLEASE FORWARD THIS SURVEY TO ALL YOUR CHURCH MEMBERS!

In Person Boundary Awareness Training - Level 2.

Save the date for in-person Boundary Awareness Training level 2 on **Friday, November 5th**, 9:00 - 3:00 with Rev. Skye Murray. Cost for the training is: \$45.00. This training is for all authorized ministers who have already done the Level 1 training and need an updated Boundary Awareness Training! We will wear masks for the training and have distanced seating as needed. Location: Bethany UCC, Randolph. If you are in need of a level 1 Boundary Awareness Training, please contact Lucia Jackson (revlucia13@gmail.com) for a list of online options.

[Register](#)



The HOPE FUND

The Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ at their Conference meeting on Saturday, Nov. 13th will be voting on a resolution to establish and raise money for a HOPE fund to encourage innovation, societal impact and new ministry in our midst. As we continue to deal with the effects of this pandemic and look to the future of a post-pandemic world, our churches need help to imagine new ways to be the church in this new landscape.

[For documentation and more info click here](#)

ATTENTION CLERGY

To: All Authorized Ministers (ordained, licensed, commissioned) with standing in the Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ

The 2021 Information Review is now available for your updates. The information review is a part of the covenantal responsibilities for all authorized clergy in the United Church of Christ and updating it helps the Conference and associations keep in contact with you and your ministerial needs.

[For documentation and more info click here](#)

Deadline Dec. 15th



A Conversation with Pastors, for Pastors

Join us on Wednesday, November 10 at 12:00pm Eastern via Zoom for a conversation with pastors, for pastors about the pressing issues of ministry today. The Center for Continuing Education was launched in October 2019 to enable Yale Divinity School to "reach beyond the walls" and provide educational opportunities and resources for clergy, laity and community organizations to expand and enrich ministry and lay learning - all at little to no cost. The Center is home to some existing cornerstone programs (the YDS

Summer Study, the Yale Youth Ministry Institute, and the Yale Bible Study program) and is charged with creating new opportunities for theological education and enrichment in three primary categories: Faith and Contemporary Issues, Church and Nonprofit Administration, and Leadership Development. If you haven't already, we invite you to explore our websites at: <https://divinity.yale.edu/continuing-education>.

While our programs have existing curriculum, content and programming, we are continually looking to expand our resources. We want to be sure that we are focused on what is truly needed by those working in local ministry. Please join fellow clergy members to talk about what ministry looks like in a world where we are being allowed to gather again, but the pandemic is still very much a concern. During our time together, we'll focus on the following questions:

- How have your various ministries survived this time and what do they look like this fall?
- What do you see as your most immediate challenge?
- What have you learned from the pivots required to minister to your congregation over the past 18 months?
- How can the Center for Continuing Education support you, either in terms of resources, informational/educational opportunities and/or connection to other clergy?

[Register Here!](#)

[for more educational opportunities click here](#)

The 2021 Global Environmental Justice Conference Friday, Friday, October 29 at the Yale School of the Environment

[More more information or to register click here](#)

Yale divinity School ~ CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Theological resources of YDS for churches, clergy, and laity

Upcoming events:

- o [Belonging with Dr. Margaret Clark](#)
11/03/2021 - 12:00pm to 1:30pm
- o [Welcoming the Stranger: Immigration and Faith Communities](#)
11/06/2021 - 9:30am to 12:30pm
- o [A Conversation with Pastors, for Pastors](#)
11/10/2021 - 12:00pm to 1:30pm

Please Remember in Your Prayers



The Rev. Robert B. Boutwell, 88, died Oct. 6, 2021, at Rutland Regional Medical Center. Bob was a member of Grace Congregational Church UCC and Minister of Healing at Grace. [For full obituary click here](#). Please keep his family, church family and friends in your prayers.

Dear Conference Friends,

Especially during this miserable Covid, I have felt more and more out of the loop as to the Conference which has meant so much to me for so long, and your card brought back so many wonderful memories, and it was so inspiring to be surrounded by your love and prayers! Once the pressure was off my brain, I felt like a new woman. Much to decide, moving forward, but so far so good. Courage in the struggle for justice and peace!

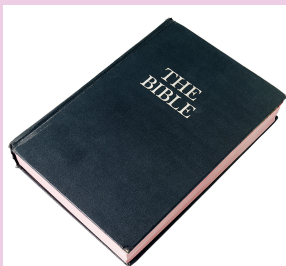
Love, Betty Edson

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!)



Windam Congregational Church offering Hymnals/Bibles to a church/churches:

19 New Century Hymnals + 2 Musician Hymnals

12 Pilgrim Hymnals + 1 Musician Hymnal

31 Chalice Hymnals + 2 Musician Hymnals

21 NRSV Bibles Regular Print

26 NRSV Bibles Small Print, Brand New

Contact Virginia Crittenden at 802-874-4049 or email

at gcrit@hotmail.com

Not-Your-Average Boundaries Training
NOVEMBER 17 & NOVEMBER 18
(10:00 AM TO 12:30 PM CENTRAL BOTH DAYS)



Online via Zoom
\$75

Register

LeaderWise's online boundaries training workshop is lively and interactive, full of reflection and conversation. This live online boundaries training is 5 total hours split over 2 consecutive days (2.5 hours each day). Following the first session, participants are asked to engage in a bit of reflection work in preparation for the second session. This online boundaries training will be conducted via secure Zoom video conferencing. This will cover level 1 and level 2.

Farewell, Welcome and Blessings

Pastoral Transitions since the 2021 Vermont Conference Annual Meeting

Departing Pastors

Rev. Peter Hammond completed his interim ministry with Stowe Community Church

Ms. Theresa Lever and Nancy Fowler completed their interim ministry at Berlin Congregational Church.

Rev. Susan Scott is completing her interim ministry with Norwich Congregational Church.

Rev. Barbara Purinton is completing her transitional/interim ministry with Weybridge Congregational Church.

Arriving Pastors

Rev. Devon Thomas was called as pastor of Second Congregational Church, Hyde Park, VT

Rev. Dan Haugh - called as Pastor at Stowe Community Church

Rev. Julie Lombard- called as Pastor at United Church of Northfield

Rev. Alison Young called as Pastor of Berlin First Congregational Church

Mr. Michael Dwyer was called to be the settled pastor of the Pittsford Congregational Church.

Ms. Caryne Eskridge – was called as Pastor of the Weybridge Congregational Church

Ms. Michelle Fountain called as Pastor of the United Church of Ludlow

Rev. Jonathan Hauze called as Pastor of Norwich Congregational Church

Mr. Matt Deen called as pastor of Marlboro Congregational Church

Installations

Mr. Michael Mario, First Congregational Church, Springfield, VT

Rev. Leigh McCaffrey, Barre Congregational Church

Rev. Dr. Ezra Chapola, Old South Church, Windsor Orange Association

Mark Wilson, Waitsfield UCC , Village Meeting House

In Memorium

Rev. Thomas D. Steffen

Rev. Harold H. Harrison

Rev. Robert B. Boutwell



SAVE THE DATE!

Reminder: Abuse Prevention: Back to Basics, presented by the **Insurance Board** - scheduled for Tommorrow October 29th at 2 pm.

This webcast offers insight to best practices from the nation's leading expert in abuse prevention through the Insurance Board's partnership with Praesidium. As churches open back up, reevaluating safety considerations are critical. Our facilitator, Ross Mitchell, JD., will discuss the need to review child abuse prevention policies for necessary updates, considerations for electronic communications, and appropriate guidelines for staff and volunteers. The Registration link can be found on the website: <https://www.insuranceboard.org/online-learning/>

News from The UCC Economic Justice Movement

We are excited to invite you to two opportunities to have our direct service connect with our advocacy. The first is an invitation to a **Zoom meeting about how Churches Can Support Black and Brown Farmers to be held Wednesday, November 3, 2021, from 10 am EST - 11:30 am EST.** This is an opportunity for churches and conferences to engage in a mission partnership that helps to reduce the wealth gap and transform our food justice system. Rev. Dr. Heber Brown, founder and President of the Black Church Food Security Network, will be our main speaker. **Upon registering for the November 3 event, you will automatically receive the Zoom Meeting Id.** Also, if you want more information about the Black Church Food Security Network you can view **a video overview about the ministry** and **a video interview with Dr. Brown** that gives great information. Hope to see you on **November 3rd**!

We also ask you to save **Friday, December 3 for a Zoom Meeting on How to Get Your Student Loans Forgiven.** A senior official with the Federal Student Aid Office of the US Department of Education will walk us through exactly how to apply for public service loan forgiveness, consolidation, and any other student loan servicing and debt issues you, your clergy, or members may have. There are a lot of changes happening right now and we want you to know how to take advantage and lessen your student debt burden. More information to come about registration. I have also attached information for those borrowers in default from our partner organization the Student Borrower Protection Center. It details how you can take advantage of this current payment pause period to get your loans back in good standing.



inspirational news | radical encouragement | tools for the work

How Will Ministry Be Funded?

Rev. Cameron Trimble

Twice a year, Convergence hosts 5-Day Online Summits focused on areas of exploration that matter to the church's future. **Next week we will launch the "Courageous Economy Summit,"** exploring how we might fund ministry going forward. We intend these 20 conversations to be provocative, helping you and your church leaders think creatively about why your ministry makes a difference, and what sustainability looks like in your context. **Hosting these interviews is always a joy for me because it grants me the chance to explore the range of creativity in some of our most brilliant leaders throughout mainline Christianity. This summit was no different.**

REGISTER NOW FOR FREE

Next week you will hear from leaders like Scott Thumma, the Director of the Hartford Institute for Religious Research, who helps us understand the big trends facing mainline denominations. You'll also hear from Stephanie Swepson-Twitty, who walks us through the creative process of setting up a Community Equity Fund, allowing churches to invest in entrepreneurs in their community. UCC General Minister and President, John Dorhauer, reminds us why mission alignment is essential to funding the progressive faith movement. PCUSA pastor Mark Elsdon, the author of *We Are Not Broke*, tells us his story of turning around a Presbyterian campus ministry and appeals to the rest of

us to recognize our own ability for transformation.

I could go on, but instead, I'd like to invite you to watch for yourself. **These are free during the week of November 1-5, 2021.** If you'd like **lifetime access**, that's available to you and to your congregation for \$149. We have such deep respect for the work that you all do as faith leaders in such a challenging and exciting time. We hope that these conversations open your imagination for what's possible as you dream about the future of ministry.



TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR ONA AND NOT-YET ONA CHURCHES

This webinar explores how and why congregations can become ONA—in ways that do not divide, but unite the church. Applying the basic ONA principles of “graceful engagement” and “covenant,” ONA 101 has helped hundreds of congregations successfully navigate through an ONA process.

REGISTER

TAKE THE ONA SURVEY! HOW DOES YOUR CHURCH COMPARE?

Complete this survey, and see how your congregation compares with other ONA churches! If you answer “NO” to some of the questions, don’t worry! Your honest answer just means there are exciting opportunities awaiting your church! Use our **Self-Evaluation Tool for ONA Churches** and other resources throughout our website to discover new ways to strengthen your ONA commitment! Our goal: a church that’s 100% Open and Affirming! [click here for survey](#)

FREE ONLINE TRAINING AND INFORMATION FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP.

Church extends beyond any four walls. From human resources concerns to legal questions and property maintenance, Insurance Board offers a variety of resources to protect the church and its ministries. [Click here](#) for interactive webcasts that address a wide variety of topics essential to keeping churches and ministries safe; these trainings are led by industry experts from Insurance Board and its partners, including our denominational partners.

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.

[For pre-recorded video webinar click here](#)
[additional resource click here](#)

VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS

VT CONFERENCE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Christian Education:

[Christian Education Coordinator- United Church of Hinesburg](#)

[Faith Formation Coordinator- Barre Congregational](#)

Administration & Finance:

[Office Coordinator- Greensboro UCC](#)

Music & Other Lay Ministries:

Music Director - Bethany UCC, Montpelier
Music Director- North Pomfret Congregational
Church Musician- Tunbridge Church
Music Director- First Congregational, Burlington
Music Director- Charlotte Congregational Church

UCC | NEWS

[Media justice advocates hear call to fight white nationalism](#)

[Death penalty should be questioned 'even for the factually guilty,' UCC lawyer argues](#)

[UCC chaplain takes the field as a 'hero' in Chicago](#)

[November groundbreaking set for farmworker housing in Immokalee](#)

[For more news click here](#)

<https://frontline-faith.teachable.com/>

How to Contact Vermont Conference Staff

Conference Minister: Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak llbvtc@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 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/>