



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

November 18, 2021

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Message from the Conference



Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

We have entered into a season of Thanksgiving. Perhaps this year will be especially challenging as we and our world seem so burdened with grief in multiple ways: loss of loved ones to COVID, loss of comforting rituals, family and friend gatherings, holiday gatherings and festivals. There is so much polarization, hatred, violence and the threat of violence. People are hungry and homeless. Racism in multiple forms seems on the rise.

And yet, gratitude is a precious and essential part of practicing our faith. I have been thinking about the Jewish Passover song, "Dayenu." Dayenu means, "It would have been enough." The song recounts the many ways God has blessed the people, always affirming if God had done just one thing, it would have been enough, but God continues to shower us with blessing upon blessing.

So, in whatever circumstances you find yourself right now, pray for open eyes and ears and hearts to experience the many ways God is present, offering us comfort and hope, laughter in hard times, companions on the journey and love to encircle all.

This year, I am thanking God for each of you, for the churches and pastors of this Conference who have found ways to worship and serve, to support one another in grief and offer holy rest.

What are you thankful for this year?

In gratitude,
Lynn

Latest News



Did you miss the Special Meeting of the Vermont Conference?

You can watch it here!

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- ➔ End the 84 day benefit limit that is dangerous & outdated.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.

Advent and Christmas Resources!!!



Practical Resources for Churches has put out a plethora of resources for Advent and Christmas!

You can find them all [HERE!](#)

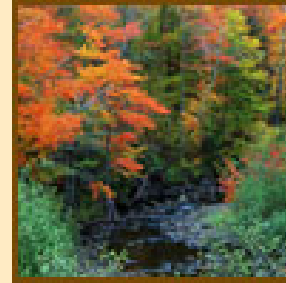
Advent Daily Prayer for Reflection Week 1 Revised Common Lectionary Year C can be found [Here!](#)

Update from Fred Taylor, Environmental Justice Rep.

As we enter the dark times of November, with much news on the climate change front, I wanted to share these two

resources that I think you'll find inspirational.

The first is a very moving speech that renowned naturalist/filmmaker David Attenborough gave at the first week of the COP 26 conference in Glasgow: [Sir David Attenborough address to world leaders at COP26 – speech in full - Bing video.](#)



The second is one of a series from Harvard Divinity School, with Terry Tempest Williams interviewing a series of specialists in the environmental field. *Next Monday, Nov. 15, at 7 PM* she will be interviewing noted environmental writer Elizabeth Kolbert - the conversation between the two should be phenomenal. Note that Pre-registration is required to view this online interview. [Weather Reports | Harvard Divinity School \(HDS\)](#)

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

AUTUMN BRONZE

By Fred Taylor

As I walk out the front door this morning, I'm met by a wall of burnished gold. The trees today breathe out a magnificent, brilliant sadness that floods my vision and my heart. Charlie walks along happily, wagging his tail and sniffing his way among the scents of the morning, oblivious to the sadness I sense in the landscape.

There's something about this autumn that's been especially brilliant *and* poignant. Perhaps it's the October warmth, the brilliant sunshine, courtesy of climate change. Perhaps the colors *are* more brilliant than ever – everyone seems to be saying it's been a spectacular fall. But then it often seems that way. Today under a grey drooping sky, these late fall colors seem especially intense. We're past the bright reds and golds of the maples now, into the oaks and beeches, plunging us into a melancholy sea of darkening bronze.

Last month, when the colors were at their peak, each tree in the cemetery had its own unique glow, so I wandered around taking one photo after another, trying to capture the rich colors and shapes of the trees. I took a photo of the tree that I was so entranced with on Good Friday and Easter. Now it was no longer a burst of miniature fireworks with blossoms heralding the coming of spring. Charlene commented that it was her favorite tree this fall, so I tried to capture it from several angles at different stages of the fall. First the leaves began to change up near the top. Then little by little the colors moved down the tree, orange moving in where green had been, while the highest branches let go their leaves and became bare. I always feel a little sad when the leaves get to this point. I love the rich depth of the bronze color, but I ache to hold on to the warmth of summer and brace myself for the starkness of winter. Somehow, today I feel a more intense sadness, as if the flame of these trees is burning a path into my soul.

Terry Tempest Williams captures my mood perfectly in her recent, "Obituary for the Land." "It is time to grieve and mourn the dead and believe in the power of renewal."

[Read more here!](#)

STEWARDSHIP THEME MATERIALS 2021 "ROOTED IN LOVE"

[click here](#)

Looking for more Stewardship Resources: [click here](#)



Please Remember in Your Prayers

Please keep our *Conference Minister Lynn Bujnak*, her spouse, Peg and their family in prayers as Peg continues to recover from emergency surgery.

Our *Associate Conference Minister Paul Sangree's* mother-in-law has passed away. Please keep him and his family in your prayers at this time.

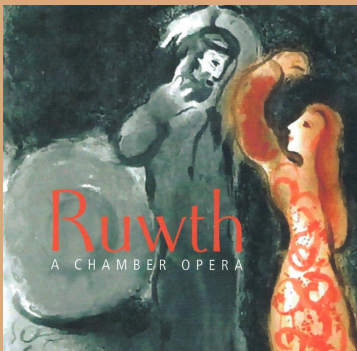
It is with deep condolences that we share with you that our bookkeeper, *Tanya Frazier* lost her Mother early last week. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.

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!)



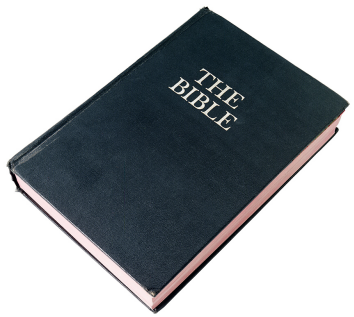
Live Re-Broadcast of *Ruwth: A Chamber Opera* by Lotta Suter and Rob Griffin

Please join us on Sunday afternoon November 14th at 4 pm for a Zoom re-broadcast of the premiere performance of *Ruwth*, a chamber opera with libretto by Lotta Suter and music by Rob Griffin. Premiered at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge MA in October 2014, *Ruwth* tells the biblical story of Ruth, Naomi and Boaz from the perspective of the community that must overcome their mistrust of foreigners and learn to welcome strangers from another land. Lotta and Rob will host the re-broadcast of the video

recording of the premiere performance, directed by Mark Latham with soloists Maria Ferrante, Jayne West and Donald Wilkinson. The 90-minute Zoom event, offered jointly with FCCB, is free and open to all. Please contact Rob and Lotta at griffinsuter@hotmail.com to register and get the Zoom link for the event. For more information on *Ruwth*, see the article by Lotta Suter in this Corner Chronicle.

Don't forget to click below in your email to view the entire newsletter

**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

Farewell, Welcome and Blessings

Pastoral Transitions since the 2021 Vermont Conference Annual Meeting

[For the most up to date information click here](#)



SAVE THE DATE!



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.

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

[Signs, symbols abound at interfaith call for bold U.S. social programs](#)
[Join the Movement 'griot' will collect anti-racist stories from across the UCC](#)
[Report to the church from the United Church of Christ Board, October 2021](#)
[UCC will say goodbye to Church House and Amistad Chapel — online — on Dec. 4](#)

[For more news click here](#)

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

How to Contact Vermont Conference Staff

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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 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/>
