



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 Winter Edition

January 13th, 2022

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Message from the Conference ***Special Edition***



"I had many at-home projects on my calendar this week as 2022 began but on Tuesday morning at 10:30 I responded as usual to the Vermont Conference UCC's weekly invitation to connect with other pastors around the state on Zoom as many of us have ever since the spring of 2020. Even though I'm a semi-retired interim pastor here in Shelburne no longer serving a congregation regularly - but often available for pulpit supply/consulting - I've wanted to stay connected, be "in the loop", and

continue to understand what challenges and concerns Vermont pastors are/have been facing throughout these many months of Covid distancing/cautions. Tuesday mornings have been a very rich time of meeting/connecting with one another - sharing resources, ideas, worries, creative solutions - and especially from time to time the frustration, exhaustion, and isolation many experience as you seek to lead/serve God's people at this time. Pastors of our smaller congregations have especially welcomed the opportunity to connect with others in ways that we actually hadn't had - or at least hadn't tried - in the life of the Conference previously. Our newest pastors have found welcome, support, and friendships on Zoom that have been enormously helpful/ life-giving. This week many of us were moved to tears by the testimony of several - well, more than several - pastors in attendance who shared/reflected about how important the connections/mutual support offered by this Tuesday morning pastors' group have been for them. They also expressed much gratitude to Lynn, Paul, and Jackie from the VT UCC Conference office for making it happen/available to all. Hearing such words of deep gratitude, I wondered if there might be others who would find this group/these connections equally nurturing/important. I do realize that mid-morning on Tuesdays isn't possible for some, but I came away from this week's zoom meeting hopeful that there are others who - in this new year - might want to/be able to experience what has become so important to others. So do consider this reflection an expression of my own gratitude for the group's existence and a warm welcome/invitation for even more of our pastors to join us.

Epiphany Blessings, all."

Rev. Marjorie MacNeill. (seekrvt@mac.com)

Latest News



2022 YEARBOOK DATA!!

Time to Update Your Church Membership Records!
This week is a reminder to update your church membership lists. UCC Yearbook reporting is scheduled to open January 5, 2022, and it is important that your church report current and accurate membership information. For churches that are affiliated with more than one denomination, the membership number should *only reflect members who identify themselves as UCC.*

There are also **FABULOUS PRIZES** this year!!

"This year we are offering several incentives for churches that submit both their annual Yearbook report and answer the supplemental research questions. Every church that responds to both will be entered into a random drawing for several prizes. The following prizes will be awarded:

- \$100 UCC Resources Gift Card – 5 gift cards will be awarded
- One year free subscription to Access UCC (online Yearbook and Directory) – 10 subscriptions will be awarded
- 2021 Yearbook and Directory – 10 books will be awarded
- Statistical Profile – 15 will be awarded"

[Why do we do this?](#)

The membership number is used to determine the amount of dues that your church

gives to your association and the Vermont Conference. The numbers you report also help determine how many delegates the Vermont Conference can designate for General Synod, which is one of the essential ways your voice is heard on important issues. Your church number includes the Vermont Conference number which is 82. Therefore, your complete church number (including zeroes) is 82xxxx.

How do I update these records?
Just follow [these directions!](#)

Are there 'How To' videos?
Sure thing! [Find them here!](#)

Do you just want a paper form to fill out or have any other questions?
[Email me here](#)

Vermont Interfaith Action

Transforming People and Communities



Please join VIA clergy and leaders as we participate in the annual Homelessness Awareness Day & Vigil. The virtual gathering will begin at 9AM with legislative training, participating in both House and Senate committees and include a 12noon vigil where our very own VIA board president, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, will be one of the speakers. For more information and the zoom link, please visit the [Facebook event page](#) or <https://fb.me/e/1RjNKsMhI>

SAVE THE DATE

Agenda includes...

- Committee testimony
- Commemorative Vigil
- Call-to-shelter writing campaign
- Legislative advocacy training ...and more!

Tune in live on VAHC's Facebook or Youtube Page

VERMONT VIRTUAL HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS DAY AND VIGIL 2022

Join homeless and formerly homeless Vermonters, service and shelter providers, and housing advocates from across the state to reflect on all we must do in the coming year to end homelessness in Vermont.

For more information, contact Molly Shimko (mdavisshimko@capstonevt.org) or Martin Hahn (mhahn@helpingtohousevt.org).

20 JANUARY 2022 · 9 AM TO 2 PM

sponsored by VT Coalition to End Homelessness, Chittenden County Homeless Alliance and VT Affordable Housing Coalition



Tax time is just around the corner!!!

Do you have a phenomenal accountant who specializes in filing taxes for clergy? We all know there are so many nuances associated with this. If you have an amazing accountant or would like the names of some, please email our office administrator Elise [here!!](#)



SERMON AND WORSHIP RESOURCES FOR HOLY WEEK & EASTER

AN ONLINE BIBLE STUDY SERIES WITH
DIANA BUTLER BASS

Pastors, preachers, and other faith leaders are invited to join us for an online bible study series in preparation for Holy Week and Easter. Our guest presenter, Diana Butler Bass, will lead two sessions of study, reflection, and discussion of the lectionary texts and Holmes Camp & Retreat Center will facilitate a follow-up session for you and your peers to share ideas, resources, and conversation with each other while building a network of support for you and your ministry. The Online Bible Studies with Diana Butler Bass will take place on March 9th and 16th at 2 PM. The follow-up session will be scheduled in consultation with all attendees during the last two weeks of March. Cost is \$50. Register at [holmescamp.eventbrite.com](https://www.holmescamp.eventbrite.com).

[Find the official flyer here!](#)

Christmas Extravaganza's throughout Vermont!!

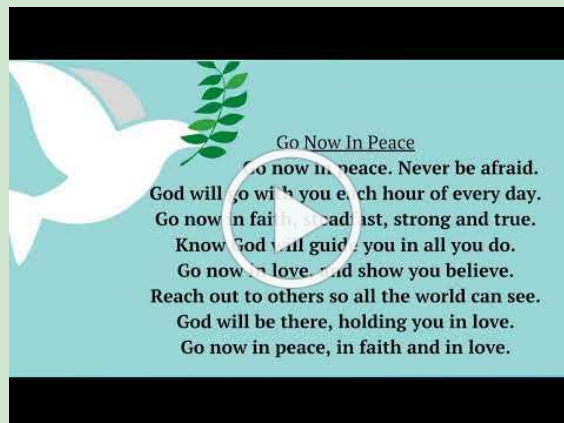
Here is the Annual visit of the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet with Counterpoint Chorale at the Grafton Community Church. It's a free concert for the community that we host each year. This year, despite the snow, 130 people attended. Proof of vaccination was required for entry and masks were required along with contact tracing.



The South Hero Congregational Church Board of Deacons and Pastor Cordelia Burpee chose the theme “The Inn. Welcoming the Holy”. Our sanctuary was transformed into a farm-like manger using items that we found in a congregant’s barn and crates from our local apple orchard Each week new items were added. Lanterns were used instead of an Advent wreath. The door, made by another member, was the key to the welcoming theme.

First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

The Christmas pageant was the majority of our Sunday morning worship on December 19th !!





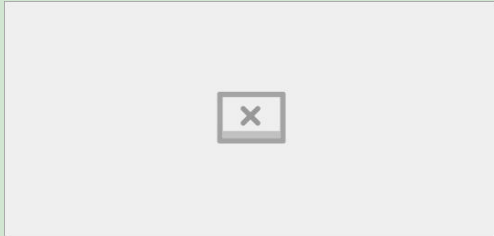
Christmas pageant titled "The King's Birthday" that was held at the **Federated Church of East Arlington!!**



Pageant photo from **Second Congregational Church, Bennington**



First Congregational Church of St. Albans



Guilford Community Church traveled around the church property to hear the Christmas story and ended at our very own manger!



Members of the **Grafton Community Church,** maintained a decades long tradition of sending Christmas Baskets filled with fruits, baked goods and candy to members of the community who have reached the the age of eighty or might be a bit "under the weather" at this season.



Bethany Montpelier's Christmas Eve Pageant!!!



**THURSDAYS
FOR THE SOUL**

3:30 - 4:30 PM Eastern

Schedule is released for first webinars of 2022

by [Hans Holznagel](#) | published on Dec 30, 2021

Worship. Grief. The Bible. Bias. Black History Month. Contemplation. The rural church. Youth and young adults.

Those are among the topics of weekly United Church of Christ webinars now set for the first quarter of 2022.

[Read more here!](#)

[A Warning from the Insurance Board!!](#)



As we move into the heart of the winter season. Many churches are tempted to lower their thermostats to save on heating costs, *please be careful !!*

- Be sure to protect your property from Frozen Pipes!!!
- During these times of below normal temperatures make a habit of inspecting your buildings from attic to cellar on a regular basis.
- One day things may seem to be fine and the very next day you could have a broken pipe!
- Attached is a [bulletin](#) with tips and ideas about keeping your pipes from freezing.



[Amazing Opportunity!](#)

" What I have found in my three years as SC is that it is like totally pastoral care without overt religious overtones. It has been the best job for me since I served that little church in Anchorage AK.

Anyone interested could totally reach out to me: 802 738 8254. (My new phone number.)" – Karen Lipinczyk, Sash Coordinator

[Read the description HERE!](#)

Do You Need Shelter?

If You Are Unhoused, You Likely Qualify For Motel Housing Right
Now Through The March 1st!



Call 211 During After Hours & Weekends OR



Call Economic Services During Business Hours 8am-430pm 800 479 6151 Mon-Fri

**Note: you must check in with Economic Services On Next Business Day If You Enter Hotel Through 211

Do You Qualify?

These 3 Factors Qualify You

- ✓ Unhoused and without shelter with no where to go.
- ✓ Below 185% Of The Poverty Line.
- ✓ Have savings below \$2250

If you have any trouble navigating call our hotline 802 490 4931

You Likely Qualify Even If You Were Denied Before:

- Did you accept the \$2500 buy out?
You Still Qualify
- Were you previously exited?
You Still Qualify
- Were you previously denied?
You still Qualify
- Do or do not have any disability?
You Still Qualify
- Don't have children?
You Still Qualify
- Don't have a previously qualifying condition?
You Still Qualify

If You Need
Help Navigating
This OR If You
Are Denied For
Any Reason,
Please Contact
Us At 802 490
4931 or
endhomelessness
svt@gmail.com



Please Remember in Your Prayers

Peg and I want to thank you for your prayers and well wishes after her emergency surgery and long recuperation in both the hospital and then rehab. She is home now. She has a ways to go to get back her independence, but she is progressing a little each day. Again, please know we are very grateful to you! As I said more than once, "I feel the prayers."
Lynn

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!)

Celebrate!!

Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

Jan. 13th
Josh Simon

Jan 18th
Roger Daly

Jan. 19th
Michael Boy

Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

Jan. 13th
Kurt Shaffert



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

The New York School of Ministry Spring 2022 Core Course Schedule



New Class Schedule for the New York School of Ministry is now available [HERE!!!](#)

Register at: <https://arena.nyucc.org/default.aspx?portal=4&page=3347>

Vermont Interfaith Action *Transforming People and Communities*



Through a combination of participating in a Camp-In on the Statehouse steps, a Clergy Sign-On letter signed by 86 clergy across the state, and a Press Conference, we have won victories for our precariously housed neighbors.

We have been trying to get the Scott Administration to extend motel stays for unhoused Vermonters, using Federal funds.

Our Clergy Sign-On letter was delivered last Tuesday, November 9, to the Governor, and the press coverage can be seen [here](#).

The delivery also motivated questions from Stewart Ledbetter (WPTZ) and Peter Hirschfeld (VPR) at the Governor's COVID Press Conference on Tuesday last week.

So far we have won an extension through March 1, 2022 -- cause to celebrate!

However, VIA leaders in our Affordable Housing and Homelessness Organizing Committee will continue to press the Scott Administration until we ensure that:

- 1) all the FEMA money available to shelter the homeless is used by the state, which means extending assistance until April 1,
- 2) the administration develops a comprehensive, long-term plan to move people in need from temporary to permanent housing with supports for mental health and substance use disorder treatment, and
- 3) that the Governor provides leadership in the rapid development and construction of affordable housing so that no one reverts back to homelessness.

Please see this coverage of Monday's Press Conference:

[WCAX](#)

[WPTZ](#)

[Brattleboro Reformer](#)

And keep an eye out for a story by Kevin O'Connor soon to be published in VT Digger.

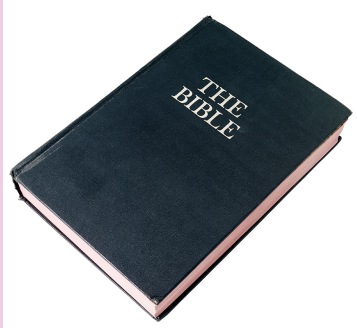
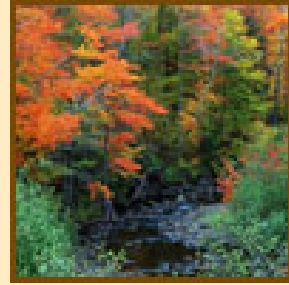
Thank you all so much for answering our Calls to Action to call the Governor, support the Camp-In, and sign the Clergy Letter! Your compassion and sense of justice are leading to important results.

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.](#)



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!](#)

[Save the Date!!!](#)

The Racial Justice Task Force met Dec. 9 and went over the results of the information gathered this fall from the Racial Justice Survey.

We will be meeting this spring every fourth Wednesday of the month from 5 pm -6 pm via zoom. Mark your calendars! If you are interested in joining the meeting and learning what is happening please email us to register. We invite you to join us in these ongoing efforts to combat racism and make the world a more just place!



January 26th
February 23rd
March 23rd
April 27th
May 25th

[Youth Ministry Conference!!!](#)

On February 7-8th, the national setting will offer a virtual conference for 100 youth ministers and leaders to reimagine youth ministry, National Youth Event and other events for the future. Registration can be completed here: <https://cvent.me/Vy8PPK>



Additionally, we are asking anyone who has regular contact with youth in the United Church of Christ to complete a short survey to provide additional insight to the Faith INFO team and national setting. You may access the survey here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Youth_Min2022

Your responses and presence are greatly appreciated. For questions or additional information please reach out to Rev. Trayce Potter at pottert@ucc.org.



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- 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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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 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/>