



# 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 27th, 2022

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## Message from the Conference

Our Hope Fund fundraising team met for the first time this week. As you probably know, we as a Conference are seeking to raise \$200,000 this year to be used for new and creative ministry in the Vermont Conference over the next ten years. In this challenging time, our coming together gave me Hope for our future! The Fundraising Team is made up of our chairperson Andy Nagy-Benson from Middlebury, Elissa Johnk from First Church Burlington, Leigh McCaffrey from Barre, Kevin Goldenbogen from Charlotte, Laurie Krooss from Londonderry, myself, and Elise Foster as Conference staff, and the group is ready to work creatively for the sake of all of us.

One thing we talked about is what the Hope Fund seeks to accomplish. I shared with the group the three objectives that were basically laid out when we voted unanimously as a Conference this fall to establish the Hope Fund. They are:

1. To build relationships with people who don't go to church through new ways of being church.
2. To make a difference in the world for the common good.
3. To be led by the Holy Spirit in sharing the Good News of the gospel.

The Fundraising Team plans to have a strong presence at our Annual Meeting as a Vermont Conference on April 22-23<sup>rd</sup>. We will have printed materials that individuals and churches and Associations can refer to, and we will also have videos and be on social media explaining what the Hope Fund is all about and how you can give! I look forward to what God is going to do among us in the coming months!

Faithfully yours,

Paul

## 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](#)

## Ordination of Mary Hoadley!!!



Hello Everyone,

The time for Ordination has come!  
This Saturday, January 29th at 3pm.  
All are welcome to attend or join us virtually.

Here is our link for Saturday.  
Feel free to pass along.  
While we are so happy to have you join us, PLEASE MUTE YOURSELVES.

(If you want to join in-person no RSVP is needed, masks are mandatory.)  
3pm at The United Church of Newport.

Thank you so much for the part you played in this journey!  
From my professors at NYSOM and the many classmates, to my mentors, liaisons and advisors, to my family and friends, to the many churches that took a chance on an unknown person joining them for pulpit supply, and most importantly to the VT Conference and the MSSC, THANK YOU!  
The support, encouragement and friends I have made along the way have been so transforming.

I am abundantly blessed, grateful and humbled.

I feared when I started this journey, that I might be "shunned," or constantly having to defend myself or my call.

That was not the outcome! (Praise God!)

I have been so overwhelmed by the constant support of so many people, that I am truly and forever grateful.

This hasn't been easy, "life" has certainly happened along the way, but one thing remains just as true, God is good all the time.

Thank you

**Topic: Mary's Ordination**

**Time: Jan 29, 2022 3pm**

Join Zoom Meeting

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 857 0765 0084

Passcode: MaryUCC



## United Black Christians Celebration of Black History Month

FEB 3, 2022 | 3:30PM - 4:30PM

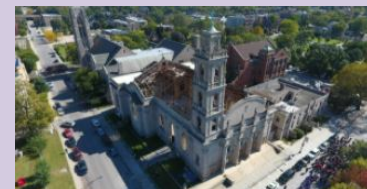
Members of the United Black Christians of the United Church of Christ, invite you to an hour of praise and worship in commemoration for Afro Descendant/Black History Month.



A program of Partners for Sacred Places  
in collaboration with the  
National Trust for Historic Preservation

The National Fund for Sacred Places is a grant-making program that provides capital grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000 as well as wrap-around support services to congregations undertaking once-in-a-generation preservation projects. To learn more or to begin the two-step application process, please visit us at [fundforsacredplaces.org](https://fundforsacredplaces.org).

Join us for an introductory webinar on **January 26th, 2022 at 12 PM EST** to learn more about the program and whether your sacred place (or any of the sacred places in your community or judicatory) may qualify.



**REGISTER HERE!!**

**ATTN: Clergy,  
Faith Formation &  
Youth Leaders!**

**SHARE IT!**

**2022 Online  
Faith Formation  
Conference**

**Friday, February 25, 1 pm - 5 pm**

**Saturday, February 26, 9 am - 12 pm**

Gather for a fun, conversational (but structured!) workshop with the Rev. Rebecca Anderson, co-pastor of Gilead UCC in Chicago, a storytelling church. Together we'll generate ideas and get some tools in the mix to craft faith stories in your own setting that intersect with the larger Faith Story.

**Keynoter:**  
**Rev.**  
**Rebecca**  
**Anderson**



**LEARN IT**

**LIVE IT**

**SHARE IT**

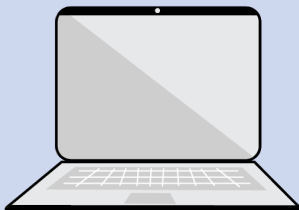
**Faith  
Formation  
Conference**



**Register online today!**

**<https://heartlanducc.org/faith-formation-network/>**

In order to receive your blessing box in time for this online conference, please register by February 15th. Questions? Contact [office@heartlanducc.org](mailto:office@heartlanducc.org). Made possible with support from OCWM and UCC Justice and Local Church Ministries - Faith INFO.



**Basic Boundary Training to be Offered on March  
26th**

(This course is designed for those new to ministry and Boundary Awareness Training)

**The Foundations of Understanding  
Boundaries**

(A Basic Boundary Training Session) will be offered on Saturday  
March 26, 2022, from 9 am to 1 pm, via Zoom.

This session will be facilitated by the Rev. Gordon Rankin and the Rev. Jonna Jensen.

Registration fee - \$25.

## Ethics of Helping - Boundaries and Relationships

Live Virtual Workshops:  
February 24, 9am-4pm CDT  
May 19, 9am-4pm CDT

This workshop is designed to give individuals and organizations an opportunity to review common principles and standards for ethical practice that are relevant for their settings.

Some of the Topics Included:

- Confidentiality and Limits to Confidentiality
  - Helper and Client Boundaries
- An Ethical Decision-Making Process
  - Ethical Technology
- Cultural and Diversity Competence

[Learn More Here!](#)

[VIEW ALL WORKSHOPS HERE!!!](#)



### **A Special Report from the Vermont Digger- Rev. Devon Thomas: When Covid came calling, I yearned for direction**

"This year I led my churches through the holidays in Covid quarantine, it was one of the most terrifying, inconvenient and spiritually challenging periods of my life! Having now come out the other end of my quarantine, I find myself wishing I had received more direction in what to do.

December is a busy month for ministers, and at the start of the month my wife woke me up to inform me our daughter had tested positive for Covid with an at-home test. After we confirmed that she was sick and that her symptoms were mild, we bunkered down to do the responsible thing and locked ourselves in the house for the good of society.

My wife and I had hoped we would only have to wait out our daughter's quarantine to get back to life. Long story short, Covid did not care."

Read the rest of his amazing testimony [here!](#)

(A giant 'Thank You' to Rev. Thomas for letting us share his beautifully articulated piece!)

## The Brown Scholarship

Introduction to the Brown Scholarship webinar, co-hosted by MESA and United Church Funds; **Thursday, January 27, 4:30 – 5:30pm ET**. Join MESA for an opportunity to learn about the Brown Scholarship for Members in Discernment in conversation with the Revs. Charles Buck, United Church Funds, President and CEO, and Gwendolyn Kirkland, Scholarship Administrator. Applications to the Brown Scholarship are accepted until March 1, 2022. This conversation is ideally targeted for Members in Discernment and COM members.

Read more about it [here!](#)

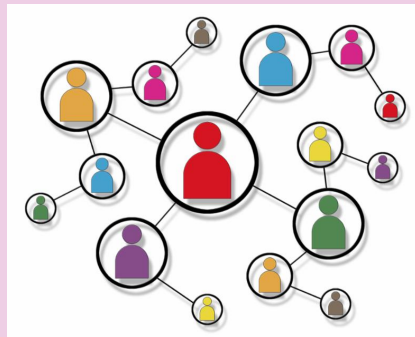
### Upcoming MESA Webinars!!!

**Monday, February 28, 7:30 – 9:00pm ET**

#### **Pastoral Relations Committees**

Pastoral Relations Committees provide essential leadership in the life of a congregation. Come to this workshop to explore what the purpose of a PPR Committee is and is not. We'll be talking through a newly developed PRC covenant to help name the priorities and commitments of a well-functioning PRC.

Revs. Tara Barber and Stephen Boyd will share best practices from around the church and be prepared to answer your questions.



**Monthly Zoom Conversation for Pastors in Churches Considering Closure:** Few church pastors and leaders ever anticipate or hope to engage in the process of ending a congregation's active life. To support pastors in churches considering closure, Rev. David Schoen, Minister for Church Closure and Legacy in the UCC Church Building & Loan Fund, holds a monthly zoom conversation to address the experience and role of ministers in the closure process, difficult conversations, grief and conflict, missional and resurrection theology, and clergy self-care. Pastors are invited to contact David Schoen to participate: [dschoen@ucc.org](mailto:dschoen@ucc.org).



### 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!](#)



**Please Remember in Your Prayers**

Please keep Betty Edson in your prayers at this time.

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**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!)

## Celebrate!!

### Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

Jan. 31st  
\*Donald Harpster\*

### Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

Jan. 28th  
\*Dereen Vanderlinde-Abernathy \*



*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>

### 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.

**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.

## 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 [endhomelessnessvt@gmail.com](mailto:endhomelessnessvt@gmail.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!!!**

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!



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



**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://holmescamp.eventbrite.com).

**[Find the official flyer here!](#)**

## **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](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](mailto: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](#)

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## VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS

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## 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

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)

DEADLINE for E-Kit News must be received by **Tuesday of each week.**  
Please send any and all information to [vermontconference@gmail.com](mailto: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/>