



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

February 3rd, 2022

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Message from the Conference

Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

It seems like we are surrounded these days by quick tempers, incivility and lack of understanding that we need each other. I confess that my temper sometimes gets the better of me. I spend a lot of time reminding myself to breathe, to slow down, to listen, to love. I understand we've all been under a lot of stress. We've all been isolated for too long and the constant not knowing what is next wears on our minds and spirits. All of us need care, compassion, laughter, companionship so we can do our work and ministry whole-heartedly. I pray that we can do these things for one another and also not be afraid to let others do these things for us. I think the words to that simple hymn:



Won't you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you. Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

So, here are some suggestions for caring for souls, others and our own.

Caring for Clergy grants are still available. Each church can receive \$250.00 per week of leave granted to their pastor for up to 4 weeks. These grants help cover the cost of pulpit supply of other things that might nurture the congregation as well as their pastor. Receiving the grant is simple: send me an email with the name of your pastor, how many weeks of leave, and approximate dates of the leave. We'll send the funds directly to your church.

Today I had a conversation with **Roger and Sandy Daly** whom many of us know through their hospitality at **Hallelujah Farm**. They have retired and now live in midcoast Maine with wonderful views of the water. They have two bedrooms and a bath available to any who might need a time of rest and renewal. The picture above is the view from their home. If you are interested, you can reach out to them at: sandy.daly13@gmail.com.

One of our associations, the **Southwest Association** is getting together to go snow shoeing. Inviting others from your church or Association to do an outdoor activity is a wonderful way to feel renewed in body and soul.

On February 15th at 10:30 Paul, Greg Briggs and I will have a **ZOOM worship service for clergy**, something we hope to do periodically. I know there are congregations in our Conference that offer Taize style worship, usually in the evenings. When we know a service is planned, we'll list it in EKIT.

Perhaps you have or have considered joining a weekly **prayer or meditation** group either in person or online. A book group is another great option.

It may be that you are feeling led to speak out against injustice, the white-washing of American history and the banning of books. This is **Black History Month** and there are numerous ways to increase our knowledge, celebrate the many contributions of our Black siblings and join in the fight for justice.

So, take care of yourselves and one another. We need each other to survive and thrive in the life God has given to us.

In hope and peace,

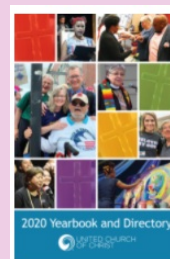
Lynn

Latest News

ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION COMING NEXT WEEK!!!

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](#)



Bill Bartholomew Retired!

Bill Bartholomew retired after serving as the Pastor of the Brandon Congregational Church for the past 8 years. He was much beloved by his congregation and in the community. He also served on the Southwest Association Committee on the Ministry. He will be much missed in the Southwest Association and Vermont Conference

The Ordination of Mary Hoadley!

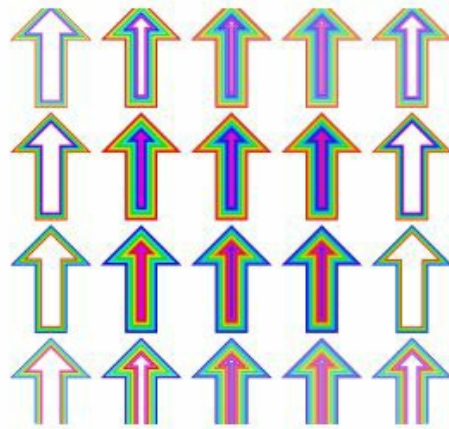


Congratulations, Rev. Hoadley!

We are so proud of you!!!

Moving Forward Together 2022

Promoting Resilience Through Complex Times



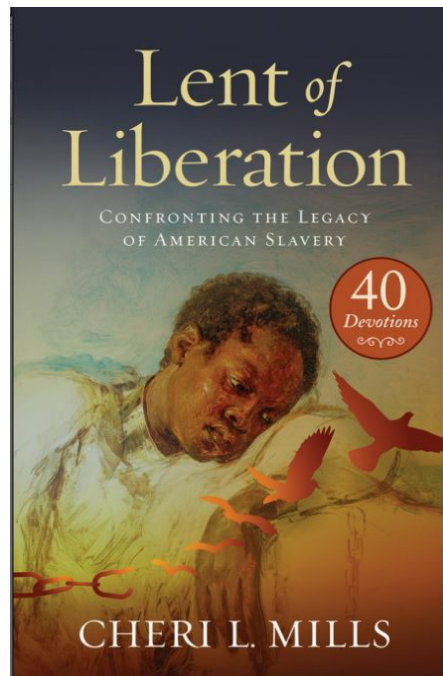
[Register Here!!!!!!](#)

2022 Lenten and Easter Resources

Lent of Liberation

Confronting the Legacy of American Slavery

[Grab a copy here!](#)




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. Cost is \$50. Register at holmescamp.eventbrite.com.

SERMON AND WORSHIP RESOURCES FOR
HOLY WEEK & EASTER

AN ONLINE BIBLE STUDY SERIES WITH
DIANA BUTLER BASS


HOLMES

ABOUT OUR PRESENTER

Diana Butler Bass is a popular speaker, inspiring preacher, and award winning Author.

She holds a doctorate in religious studies from Duke University and is the author of eleven books. Her by-lines include The New York Times, the Washington Post, Sojourners, and more.

Her writing has received a number of awards, including two Wilbur Awards, the Illumination Book Award Silver medal, Books for a Better Life Award, Book of the Year of the Academy of Parish Clergy, the Frank S. and Elizabeth D. Brewer Prize for Church History, and Publishers Weekly's Best Religion Book of the Year.

She and her husband live in Alexandria, Virginia, with their dog and their sometimes-successful backyard garden.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

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.

This program is offered by Holmes Camp & Retreat Center as part of our ongoing mission to provide professional development and continuing education to pastors, preachers, and lay-leaders. Please [sign up for our newsletter](#) to be kept informed of other professional support programs including Bible Study for Advent, Education Skills for Sunday School Teachers, Pastors' Retreats, and more.

ABOUT HOLMES

Holmes Camp & Retreat Center is a 550 acre camp and conference center located a short drive north of New York City. Holmes Camp hosts conferences and retreats year round in our three conference center buildings and three cabins. We host youth summer camp at one of our two seasonal summer camp facilities, while the second plays host to a number of summer camps from throughout the region. Holmes was founded by and continues to serve the local Presbyterian congregations, and is proud to also serve many other organizations who also do good in our world today.

Holmes Camp & Retreat Center is a ministry of the Presbyteries of Hudson River, Long Island, and New York City.





The Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health's e-newsletter, Crossroads, is being sent out free to anyone who signs up on our mailing list. The purpose of this newsletter is to help create a community of those interested in spirituality and health and keep

the community informed. Crossroads comes out on a monthly basis and provides a wealth of information about what is happening in the field of religion, spirituality and health. Included are brief summaries of the latest published research on spirituality and health from around the world, with commentaries on the findings. News and events, conferences, workshops, and a wide variety of activities are provided, including the latest funding opportunities being offered in the field. The newsletter is packed with information for those interested in spirituality and health research or its clinical applications.

Sign up for our e-newsletter.

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.

Save the Date: Registration to open soon!



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!!!](#)

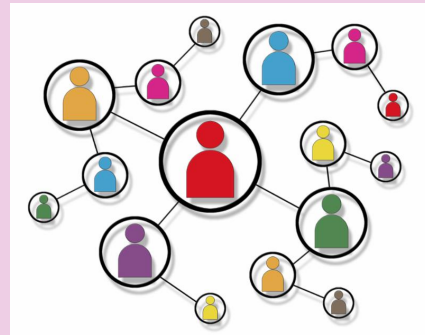
Upcoming MESA Webinars!!!

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.

TAX TIME



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 pray for the friends and family of Betty Edson who died peacefully surrounded by family Tuesday evening. We have lost a saint of this Conference and I am filled with gratitude for all Betty has been and done and fought for Over her 91 years of life.

A more complete In Memoriam will be sent out later today. If you do not receive it by tomorrow, please contact Elise (vermontconference@gmail.com)

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!

Feb. 6th
Darlene Baer
James Macintyre

Feb. 7th
John Weatherhogg

Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

Feb. 3rd
Janet Langdon

Feb. 4th
Richard Ringenwald

Feb. 8th
Cynthia Batten



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
endhomelessnes
svt@gmail.com**

Farewell, Welcome and Blessings

Pastoral Transitions since the 2021 Vermont Conference Annual Meeting

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

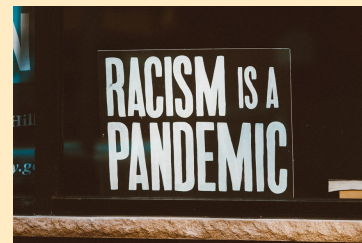


SAVE THE DATE!

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

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.

Keynote:

**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. Made possible with support from OCWM and UCC Justice and Local Church Ministries - Faith INFO.

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](#)

[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/>