



# 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 17th, 2022

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## Message from the Conference

Dear Beloved Community of the Vermont Conference,

These days I find myself impatient for transitions. I long for the day when it will truly be safe to gather in person, to hug and be hugged, to meet friends at a restaurant. I recognize that some of you have already made this transition. I also know that many others do not yet feel able to let down their guard. There are, of course, other transitions on the horizon. Winter is getting a little long in the tooth and we are far from done with winter.



I long for the joys of warm weather, of green, of riotous bird song and male turkeys displaying their beautiful tail feathers in hopes of attracting a mate. I am watching eagerly to see smoke rising from chimneys in sugar houses signaling the rise of sap in maple trees and the first run of this year's maple syrup. Some of these signs of seasonal transition will come sooner than others, but all of them will eventually arrive.

There is nothing wrong with longing and anticipation. If nothing else they urge us on to make transitions including in our relationship with God. The first verse of Psalm 63 speaks of this longing: *O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for yours as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.* I am thinking about this verse as I anticipate the beginning of Lent in just a couple of weeks. I will carry this verse with me in the journey towards crucifixion and resurrection.

Yet, I also feel the pull towards the present moment. Being still and watchful for the myriad signs of God's presence, most of which I miss. Fr. Richard Rohr recently wrote in his daily reflections about "the sacrament of the present moment." This, too, I will carry with me, praying that I will see more of God in each moment of the day.

I wonder where you are in these last days of Epiphany before the transition into Lent? What are you longing for? What is God calling you to be fully present to in the here and now?

Blessings be with you in these “not yet” days. May you find what you seek, the deepest longing of your heart.

In hope and peace,  
Lynn

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## Latest News

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*Welcome to the Table!*

Celebrating 20 years of being Open and Affirming



April 22nd-23rd, 2022

The 227th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference

## REGISTER HERE!!!!

The 227th Vermont Conference  
Annual Meeting is Virtual this  
year!

It will take place via Zoom April  
22nd and 23rd and features  
Rev. Darrell Goodwin as our  
keynote and preacher.

Rev. Goodwin is the Executive Conference Minister for the  
Southern New England Conference.



Preacher, Teacher,  
& Activist

**“God sees all of you, loves all of you,**

and will withhold no good thing from you. Walk in the TRUTH of how loved and wonderfully created YOU are.”

~ Rev. Darrell Goodwin

## Save the Date!!!

The Racial Justice Task Force is 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



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. [click here for youtube video](#)

## Celebrating African-American Spirituals during Black History Month at First Congregational Church Berlin

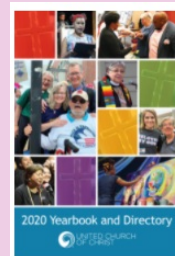
[Click here to read more](#)

## **IS YOUR CHURCH HAVING ANY FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES DURING THIS PANDEMIC TIME?**

Would you like to know how to do Stewardship and talk about money as a church in a more effective way? Then **SAVE THE DATE: On Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, Paul Nickerson** will be offering his popular workshop, “Turning Tippers into Tithers” virtually from 9-2. More information will be coming, but start recruiting a team of 3 lay people and your pastor to be part of it!

## 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](#)

## Remembering Pastor Betty Edson



"Betty" Pierce Edson, 91 of Randolph Center, died peacefully February 1, 2022 at her home.

A life long peace and justice advocate, we have lost a saint of this Conference. We are filled with gratitude for all Betty has been and done and fought for over her 91 years of life.

An informal time of sharing and remembrance will be held between 3:00 & 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 18, 2022 at Bethany United Church of Christ in Randolph. A **Memorial Service** will be held at **10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 19** at Chandler Center for the Arts in Randolph, with Rev. Kimberly McKerley officiating. Reception to follow. (Face coverings will be required and social distancing will be observed.)

[Click here for obituary](#)

The family will receive cards at this address:

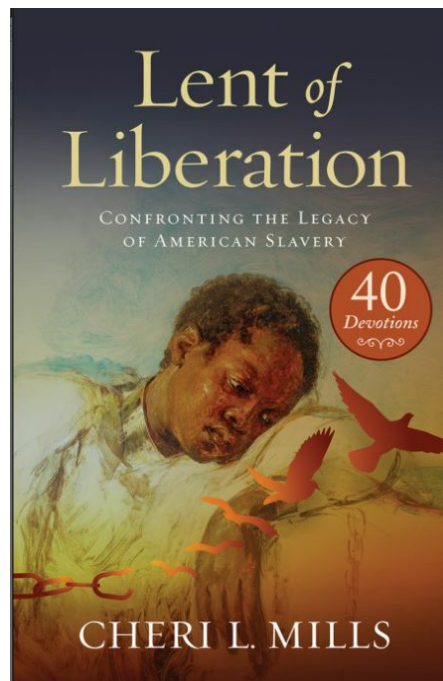
The Edson Family  
89 Tom Wicker Lane #108  
Randolph Ctr, VT 05061

## [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](http://holmescamp.eventbrite.com).

Find Lent and Easter resources [here](#) from Practical Resources for


## SERMON AND WORSHIP RESOURCES FOR HOLY WEEK & EASTER

AN ONLINE BIBLE STUDY SERIES WITH DIANA BUTLER BASS



### 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 bylines 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

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### 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.

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Churches!!!



## Lenten Resources with an Environmental and Indigenous/Racial Justice Focus

By Fred Taylor

I recently received notice of this intriguing looking set of resources for Lent from Janet Parker, a UCC Pastor from Oregon who has been working with Indigenous theologian and writer Randy Woodley and his Eloheh Indigenous Center for Earth Justice in Yamhill, OR. She describes these two resources as follows.

"The focus of this partnership right now is encouraging people to read and discuss his newest book, ***Becoming Rooted: One Hundred Days of Reconnecting with Sacred Earth***. It's a wonderful set of reflections that invite us to adopt a more Indigenous worldview and reconnect with the land and creatures around us. If you are interested in Randy's book, which some faith communities around Oregon are reading in the 100 days leading up to Earth Day, you can learn more about that and the whole EcoFaith/Eloheh project [here](#).

In addition, seven pastor/writers have put together a quite unusual Lenten devotional called, ***A Grounded Faith: Reconnecting with Creator and Creation in the Season of Lent***. It was written to be used as a companion resource to *Becoming Rooted* by Christians during Lent, but it CAN be used as a standalone resource. *It's unusual because it addresses white supremacy, destruction of Native American peoples, and ecological devastation head on, with attention to the classic themes of Lent AND an invitation to world-and-earth-healing practices*. And it's a great way to expose them to Randy's ideas and the beautiful Indigenous values and insights in his book even if they don't read it.

You can download a free preview of this book [here](#), and you can purchase the whole thing in downloadable electronic form for just \$3 from **Barclay Press**. Many churches are ordering the \$3 books to distribute to their congregations. The **print copy** costs \$12 for one but just \$9.00 if you order 10 or more. You can learn more about the devotional on the **[EcoFaith Recovery website](#)**."

I encourage you to check out the links to these two resources, as they look quite rich, for either individual or congregational study.



### New from Practical Resources for Churches!!!

Welcome to Cultivate, a place where we share some of our favorite resources for Christian Education! It is our prayer that this month's list of treasures we've curated helps launch you and your congregation into a meaningful Lenten season. This is another way that we at the PRC are living out our calling-helping you!

**[Find more information here!](#)**

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)

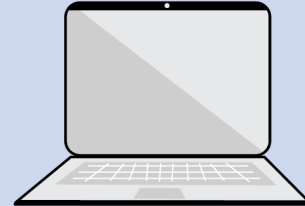
### The Foundations of Understanding Boundaries

(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!



Inspiring Learning. Improving Lives.



**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.

# 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!)

## **Farewell, Welcome and Blessings**

**Pastoral Transitions since the 2021 Vermont Conference Annual Meeting**

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

On January 23, 2022 at an Ecclesiastical Council held by the Addison Association Abigail Diehl-Noble was approved for ordination.

On February 6, 2022 at an Ecclesiastical Council held by the Addison Association Andrea (Andi) Lloyd was approved for ordination pending call.



### **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

## **Celebrate!!**

**Happy Birthday to our Clergy!**

Feb. 17th  
\*Gary O'Gorman\*

**Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!**



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

**The Ordination of Mary Hoadley!**





**Congratulations, Rev. Hoadley!**

**We are so proud of you!!!**

## **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.



**SAVE THE DATE!**

## **Upcoming MESA Webinars!!!**

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

**Pastoral Relations Committees**

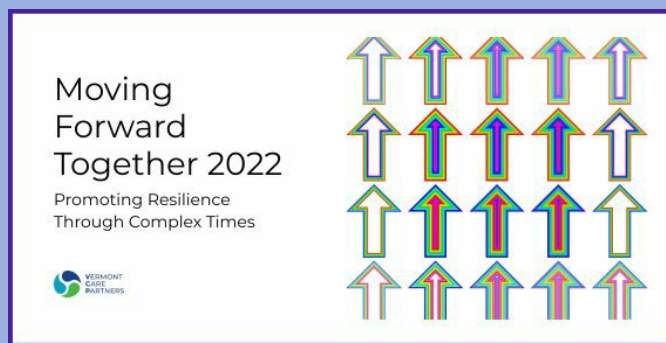
Pastoral Relations Committees provide essential leadership in the life of a congregation. Come to this workshop to explore what the purpose of a PPR Committee is and is not. We'll be talking through a newly developed PRC covenant to help name the priorities and commitments of a well-functioning PRC.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

Vermont Care Partners will be holding its annual conference on *March 10th 2022*. The goal is to promote sharing and training for providers across the spectrum who are supporting individuals with diverse needs, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus will be on the following areas: equity and cultural responsiveness, resilience, racial and societal trauma, reimagining service delivery, and self-determination. Conference attendees will include: health and human services providers, economic service providers, first responders, educators, state officials, faith leaders, community leaders, peers, translators, and more.



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

### [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!!!](#)**

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.

## **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.

## **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

[UCC churches see reproductive justice as key ministry in 2022](#)  
[UCC offers grants, check-ins, other tools to groups immersed in refugee resettlement](#)  
[Greensboro, NC church takes in two refugee families](#)  
[Deadline is Feb. 16 for consultants who want to assist in UCC executive search](#)  
[For more news click here](#)

[The Online Learning Platform of the United Church of Christ](#)

## How to Contact Vermont Conference Staff

Conference Minister: Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak [lbvtc@gmail.com](mailto:lbvtc@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/>