



# 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

March 17th, 2022

## Table of Contents

- |                                |                                       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Message from the Conference | 4) Around the Conference              |
| 2) Latest News                 | 5) Save the Date & Cont. Ed Resources |
| 3) Prayer Concerns             | 6) VTCUCC Classifieds                 |

## Message from the Conference



Dear Beloved Community of the Vermont Conference,

My partner Peg has reached an age where she simply does not want or need any “thing.” This makes holiday time a bit of a challenge. For her birthday this year I gave her the gift of four bulb gardens that arrive approximately one per month. Our table by the window is alive with color. Each little garden arrives with just a few small tips of growth. We watch patiently for them to make their journey upward and towards the light. We often are not sure exactly what we have until at last the buds and blooms appear. Each garden is a surprise.

Peg is largely shut in during the winter months where any type of travel is difficult for her. Winter can seem as if it is stretching out forever. So, the addition of beauty, color, curiosity, surprise, fragrance is so welcome in our home.

As I do every year, I make our Christmas cards that we then send out. On the dining room table was a stray metal charm that says “hope.” You might be able to see it in the picture. Peg found it and promptly attached it to her first little garden.

Hope is a beautiful thing. It can be fragile and must be nurtured in order to take root and bloom in us and through us, in our world. Among all the difficult issues and actions happening around us it feels like a time to stake our hope in places where there is barely a sign that something might be growing, taking shape, bursting with color and promise if we are willing to wait for God’s own time.

Where are you finding hope these days? What is surprising you, nourishing you? What is the tenacious bulb in you that refuses to stay below the soil and bursts forth into the radiant sun?

These are Lenten questions. They are questions to carry to God in our times of prayer and meditation.

Even on the dullest of days, may you be surprised by beauty and suffused with hope.

In hope and peace,

## Latest News

# 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.

## REGISTER HERE!!!!

**“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**



Funding the Future of your Church

Saturday, May 21st, 2022, From 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM. Sponsored by the Vermont UCC Conference

Location: TBA

After two years of pandemic, many churches are challenged to fund their ministry and mission. Thi workshop will give you the tools to plan your future finances.

Topics will include:

Latest trends in giving!  
How to develop a year-round process of stewardship!  
How to customize asking for pledges!  
Alternative streams of funding including, capital campaigns, use of buildings, etc.!

Each church should bring a Team of a Pastor and at least three lay people.

Every Church will come away with an Action Plan and will receive 6 months of group coaching.

Cost- \$395/ church

## Support for Asylum Seekers at the Arizona Border



While our focus and giving these days is necessarily centered on the needs of refugees fleeing Ukraine in Europe, support for asylum seekers on both sides of the US/Mexico border is still very much needed. My daughter, Catherine, and I will again visit three missions along the border in southeastern Arizona the first week in April bring needed supplies to each as we were privileged to do in 2019 and 2020 with your support.

If you are able - and after assisting Ukrainian refugees - please consider support of these ministries either online or by sending a contribution to:

Rev. Marjorie MacNeill  
71 Drew Lane  
Shelburne VT 05482

**Here are links to the border missions that we will - once again - be supporting on our trip this year:** [ccs-soaz.org](http://ccs-soaz.org) for their Casa Alitas shelter in Tucson, [fronteras.azdiocese.org](http://fronteras.azdiocese.org)

a cross-border effort/shelter in Nogales, Sonora, for those having to "wait in Mexico" before seeking asylum (supported by the Episcopal Diocese of AZ, the regional ELCA Lutheran church, and the Southwest Conference of the UCC) and the long-established cross-border ministry of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in Douglas AZ and Agua Prieta Mexico, [fronteradecristo.org](http://fronteradecristo.org).

## UCC officers share prayer for Ukraine

by [UCC Leadership](http://UCC Leadership) | published on Feb 24, 2022



“There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.” Proverbs 6:16-19

[Read more here](#)

# Ukraine Emergency Appeal

## Situation Report

On February 24, the Russian military attacked Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands of persons have already sought refuge outside of Ukraine. Others have remained in the country but are displaced from their homes. The humanitarian crisis is accelerating in Ukraine and in neighboring countries as the violence escalates and the number of people on the move multiplies.

[Read More Here](#)

[\*\*DONATE HERE\*\*](#)

## Helping Holy Joe's Café in Ukraine

This week, I had the opportunity to speak with Tom Jastermsky, founder of Holy Joe's Café. Holy Joe's was created in 2006 when Jastermsky learned of a chaplain who was paying to provide coffee to soldiers without reimbursement. He has been collecting donations ever since. "It's all about resiliency and helping to keep morale up... They give people coffee to chaplain to them in a real casual way." said Jastermsky. He stated that many of his chaplains could currently be helping people in the Ukraine 24 hours a day for the need is so great. Any help would be greatly appreciated!

[Read More Here!](#)

[Donate Here!](#)



United Church of Christ  
(UCC) Army Chaplain  
Charlene Johnson-Sabedra!



Holy Joe's!



Chapel services in a tent!!

One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries.



This year, national has put together all of the resources, activities, and inserts you can usually find, but this year they are also introducing a pre recorded sermon!!

### Top 100 Giving Churches (Cont.) (based on 2020 per capita)

<p><b>Pacific Northwest</b></p> <p>Shelton UCC, Wash. Ridgely, WA Hogeland UCC Sedro, WA United Church of Christ of Okanogan Homerly Place, WA Northshore UCC Woodville, OR</p> <p><b>Penn Central</b></p> <p>Jewett UCC East Shrewsbury, PA Christ Church UCC Eggenville, PA Kirmansal UCC Hershey, PA UCC Lancaster, PA Saint Paul's UCC New Castle, PA</p> <p><b>Pennsylvania Southeast</b></p> <p>Glenside United Church of Christ Glenside, PA Steady, Christian UCC Ridgely, PA United Church of Christ at Valley Forge Worpa, PA</p> <p><b>Rocky Mountains</b></p> <p>First United Church of Nevada UCC Arvada, CO</p>	<p>Vista Grande Community UCC Colorado Springs, CO First Hill Congregational UCC Cincinnati, OH</p> <p><b>South Central</b></p> <p>Lubbock Congregational Church of Lubbock Lubbock, TX</p> <p><b>Southeast</b></p> <p>Lowland Community Church UCC Birmingham, AL Hickory Congregational Church Darien, SC Hessell Hill Community Church UCC Pawnee, NE, TX</p> <p><b>Southern</b></p> <p>Mount Auburn UCC Riverside, NC</p> <p><b>Southern New England</b></p> <p>Congregational Church Weston, MA The First Church of Newton Newton, MA First Church of Christ Congregational, Stambridge Berkshire, CT Rippon Congregational Church UCC Fletcher, MA Rippon Congregational Church UCC Fletcher, MA Epiphany United Church of Christ New Haven, CT First Congregational UCC Trumbull, MA</p>	<p>First Congregational UCC Bridgewater, MA Shore Memorial UCC Stamford, CT Congregational Church of Harvard UCC Cambridge, MA Multiple Congregational Church United Church Chilmark, MA Wichita, MA</p> <p><b>Southwest</b></p> <p>Church of Christ of Santa Fe UCC Santa Fe, NM Hessell Hill Community Church UCC Pawnee, NE, TX</p> <p><b>Texas</b></p> <p>First Congregational Church of Newlove UCC Newlove, TX</p> <p><b>Wisconsin</b></p> <p>First Congregational UCC Madison, WI First Congregational UCC Madison, WI Plymouth UCC Sun Prairie, WI Oshkosh Ridge UCC Madison, WI United Church of Christ Mt. Pleasant, WI Congregational UCC Madison, WI First Congregational UCC Cross Plains, WI First Congregational UCC Stevens Point, WI Congregational UCC Wilmot, WI</p>	<p><b>Top Giving Churches</b> <small>(based on total dollars)</small></p> <p>First Church of Christ Congregational, Gladstonebury Gladstonebury, CT Southern New England Salem, VA, NM</p> <p><b>First Congregational UCC</b> Elio, Glenside, WI Wisconsin</p> <p><b>First United Church of Annapolis UCC</b> Annapolis, CO Rocky Mountain</p> <p><b>First Congregational UCC</b> Randolph, WI Wisconsin</p> <p><b>United Congregational Church of Lubbock</b> Lubbock, TX South Central</p> <p><b>First Congregational UCC</b> Appleton, WI Wisconsin</p> <p><b>United Church of Santa Fe UCC</b> Santa Fe, NM Southwest</p>
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[Find all of the 2022 One Great Hour of Sharing information here!!](#)

Congratulations to our own

**First Congregational Church of Newfane**

for making the Top 100 OGHS Churches for 2021 (based on per capita)!!

Read about the other churches who made the top 100 [here!](#)

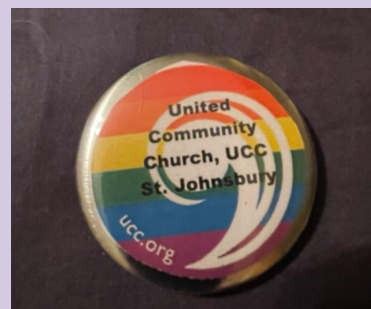
### Fun on Ash Wednesday!

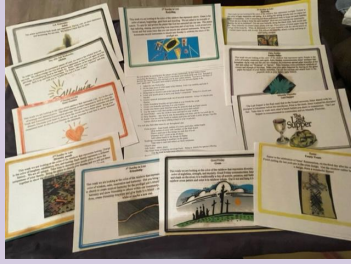


On Ash Wednesday, Rev. Scott Couper from Centre Congregational Church had his ashes ready to go right on the sidewalk!

### Lent in a Bag!

United Community Church, UCC in St. Johnsbury distributed 100 lent bags to members and friends of the church!!



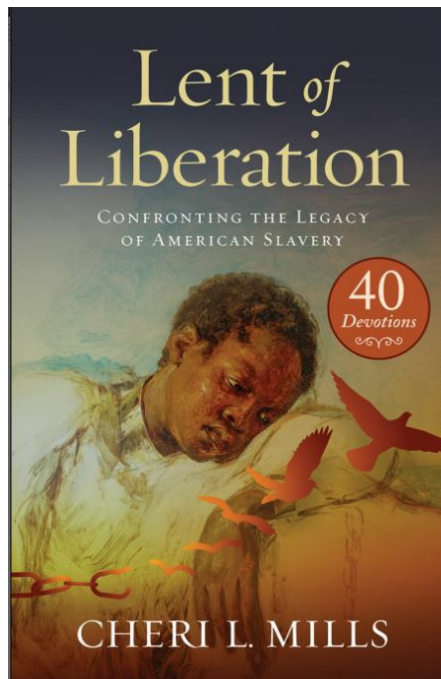


## 2022 Lenten and Easter Resources

### **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](https://holmescamp.eventbrite.com).

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

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 back-yard 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](https://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.





## [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.



### Please Remember in Your Prayers

Please pray for the friends and family of Betty Edson.

Please pray for The Foster-O'Grady family as they deal with Covid illness.

Please pray for Kathy Wonson Eddy, retired pastor of Bethany Church, Randolph and her husband, Bob, on the loss of Kathy's mother, Mary Sue Wonson who was 100 years old.

Please keep Rev. Paul Eyer, Pastor of Williston Federated Church and his wife Rev. Jackie Lingelbach in your prayers. Paul was diagnosed with Lymphoma and will be going through treatment in the next few weeks.

## 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.

## Celebrate!!

[Happy Birthday to our Clergy!](#)

[Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!](#)



March 13th  
\*Kevin Goldenbogen\*



*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>



**SAVE THE DATE!**

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

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

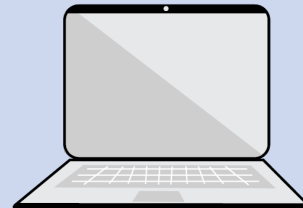
### **The Foundations of Understanding Boundaries**

(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:  
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

[Learn More Here!](#)

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

## 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!

March 23rd  
April 27th  
May 25th



## 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**

[Final worship service helps church grieve and celebrate Cleveland building and chapel](#)  
[General Synod 34 theme and logo affirmed by UCC Board](#)  
[Two UCC churches take 'Cool Congregations' awards in 2022](#)  
[In his 90th-birthday sermon, Andrew Young urges the world to 'fear no evil'](#)  
[General Synod Nominating Committee calling for candidates to serve on UCC Board](#)

[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 [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)  
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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/>