



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 31st, 2022

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Message from the Conference

As we continue our journey through Lent, approaching Holy Week, let me share with you a poem that was shared by Rev. Mark Blank at the Southwest Association Bible Study. It is by Rev. Sarah Speed at Sanctified Art.

On My Way

You said return to me so here I am
skin and bones held together with memories and a little bit of duct
tape.

I am bringing the worst of me, consider yourself warned-the
furrowed brow, the archy back,
the slew of judgments, a pocket full of assumptions, the track of
negativity that runs laps in my head.

I am bringing it all because you said return to me, edits nor
required, so return I will.

And not all of it will be bad. Some of it will be lovely.
I will bring a wagon full of nostalgia, a melody that won't let me
go,

a million stories that start with the words, "Oh it was beautiful!"

I will bring a mended heart, a glass half-full,
two lungs, out of breath from dancing too long, and dreams that
taste like honey.

I will bring my whole messy human self because I know, I just
know,

deep in my bones, that you are already running to meet me.
There are no cuts on this team. You said you'd take it all, so here
I come.

Me and all my humanity. We are on my way.

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



Preacher, Teacher,
& Activist

Drag Queen Story Hour at Annual Meeting!!!

Please help us welcome the incomparable Emoji Nightmare for Drag Queen Story Hour, Saturday April 23rd!!!

[Read all about it here!!!](#)



Workshop Announcement!

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) with Dr. Edith Guffey

"PFLAG is the first and largest organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people, their parents and families, and allies."



Funding the Future of your Church: Tippers to Tithers Event

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. This 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
But the first 10 churches get a \$100 discount!!!

(Email VermontConference@gmail.com for more details)

REGISTER HERE!!!



Every Child Deserves a Family!

My name is Amanda and I work with Family Equality, an organization advocating to end discrimination against LGBTQ+ parents and youth. We believe that faith leaders like yourself are key to winning the support of policymakers for our children and families.

We are asking you to sign on in support of the Every Child Deserves a Family Act. This Act promotes the best interests of all children in the foster care and adoption system by ending discrimination against LGBTQ+ and religious minority youth, foster parents, and families. By doing so, it increases the access of all children to affirming, loving and stable homes. Currently, LGBTQ+ parents are four times more likely to have our children removed by the state, simply due to discrimination. And, one in three foster children identify as LGBTQ+, but have much worse experience in care, with fewer family placements and higher rates of residential facility placement, homelessness, being trafficked, and aging out of care without a family. John Lewis was the lead sponsor of the Act for eight years and you can see a video of him speaking about it [here](#). You can read more about the bill [here](#).

Please join fellow faith leaders and sign on to our letter (which you can read here <https://fmeq.co/faith>) in support of the Every Child Deserves a Family Act here <<https://forms.gle/mxkhNqk61VvQZUS29>>. We will provide the sign on letter to your Representative and Senators.



Vermont Interfaith Action Social Justice Event

On **Wed, April 6 from 7 to 8:30 pm**, please join Vermont Interfaith Action for a hybrid event based out of College Street Congregational Church in Burlington to launch "**A Vermont Guide to Community Engagement with Local Police Departments.**" This guide is the result of months of research by the Racial Justice/Public Safety organizing ministry. It is designed to be used by ad hoc community groups in every municipality with a police department throughout the state to be able to have a well-informed and comprehensive conversation with their Police Chief about policies and practices relating to racial equity. Members of our Public Safety group have drafted a series of questions in many different categories, like Training, Accountability, Grievance Processes, and many more that community members can ask their law enforcement officials to get a dialogue started. This grassroots, community-based approach to one of society's most challenging issues has real potential to make a major difference in policing in Vermont. **We need you at this launch event to show your support!** Plan now to attend, either in person or by registering **[here for Zoom.](#)**



The **United Church of Ludlow** held a fundraising dinner for the Ukraine!!



Pysanky at Guilford Church!!



"GUILFORD — During the Lenten season, Christians do different things to connect with their faith. Some give up meat on Fridays, some fast, and others create pysanky. Amid the warmth of candles, laughter among group members and colors beaming from the eggs, a small group of people gathered at the Guilford Community Church to learn how to make the Ukrainian Easter egg.

Robin Davis and Carole Crompton are hosting clinics at the church during the month of March to teach people how to make pysanky. According to Ukrainian folk legend, the fate of the world depends upon the creation of pysanky. If this custom is forsaken, evil (characterized as a horrible serpent, chained for eternity) will overrun the world. The making of Pysanky is said to strengthen the serpent's chains, keeping evil in check for yet another year."



[Read More Here!](#)



Global Ministries Co-Workers Available to Visit Conference Churches

John and Karen Campbell-Nelson have served for more than 30 years in West Timor, Indonesia. They are retiring at the end of this month, and we are fortunate that they are ending their service to **Global Ministries by offering presentations at our Annual Meeting on April 22 and 23, followed by a week of visiting churches throughout the Conference.** We are also fortunate that they have settled in Montpelier for the beginning of their retirement time. This is your chance to welcome your new neighbors and invite them to come to your church!

A variety of options are available. The Campbell-Nelsons are happy to share with your church their Annual Meeting Workshop - a power point program entitled "Surviving a Pandemic/Cyclone Double Whammy: Voices of Faith from West Timor, Indonesia". In the presentation, John and Karen offer a profile of the Evangelical Christian Church of Timor in eastern Indonesia in the voices of and photos chosen by its own members, a presentation that lifts up both challenges and sources of pride among church members. They will share some history of the region and their work there, and you'll learn how partnership is understood and lived out between Global Ministries and our partners.

John and Karen are also open to informal conversation about their time in Indonesia. And they will be available for preaching on Sunday, May 1. (First come, first served on that one!)

They are willing to visit in person or via zoom for day or evening gatherings.

Contact Kim McKerley at Bethany Church in Randolph to inquire about having John and Karen come to your church between April 25 and May 1. You can reach Kim at kmbethanyucc@gmail.com.

John and Karen come to us on behalf of Global Ministries. There is no financial obligation to the churches for their time with you. Of course, if you would like to make a donation to Global Ministries, that is always welcome! Learn more about the work of Global Ministries here: <https://www.globalministries.org>

How the United Church of Newport gave back on Pi Day!

On March 14th (Pi Day) teachers and staff at the Newport Elementary School received pies, muffins, quiches, and cookies in recognition of their extraordinary service in the face of pandemic challenges. Thirty five bakers from The United Church of Newport and St. Mark's Episcopal Church provided batches of goodies for all eighty teachers and staff, with the following message:

"We see your dedication, We applaud your stamina. For two years you have not stopped caring for every student, adapting and pivoting each day, keeping children safe and learning while supporting parents and each other. We are deeply grateful for all you have done."

Thank you for inspiring us, United Church of Newport!!



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 for their Casa Alitas shelter in Tucson, fronteras.azdiocese.org a cross-border effort/shelter in Nogales, Sonora, for those having to "wait

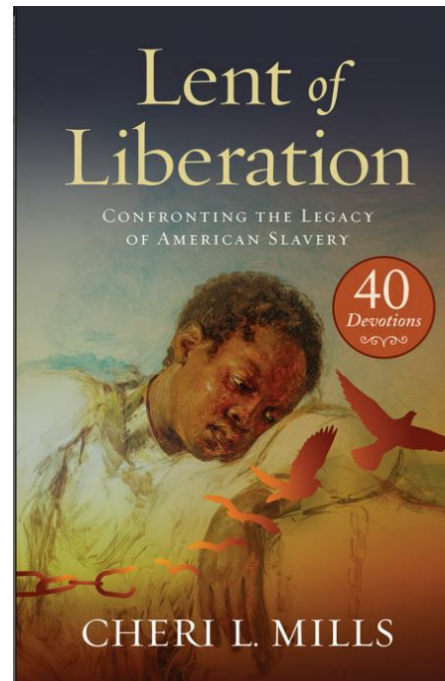
in Mexico" before seeking asylum (supported by the Episcopal Diocese of AZ, the regional ELCA Lutheran church, and the Southwest Conference of the UCC) and the long-established cross-border ministry of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in Douglas AZ and Agua Prieta Mexico, fronteradecristo.org.

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.

[com](http://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



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 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.org/bible. 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.





Please Remember in Your Prayers

Please pray for the friends and family of Betty Edson.

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 .

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!

April 6th
Mark Blank
Robert Hamm

Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!



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



SAVE THE DATE!

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!

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:

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

**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](#)

How to Contact Vermont Conference Staff

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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/>
