



# 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

April 21st, 2022

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## Message from the Conference



Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

About three years ago I was in a meeting in the Conference room when I saw someone walk through the front door and start talking to our Office Administrator. After watching the exchange I excused myself from the meeting and went to greet our guest. She identified herself as a transgender woman and asked if she could speak with me. Once in my office, she told me she had stopped at our office when she saw the rainbow sign with “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey you are welcome here.” She said, “Do you mean it?” I said this was a value we did our best to live into even if sometimes imperfectly. She said, “Would I be welcome in one of your churches?” I told her I believed she would and offered to help her find a church that would warmly welcome her. At that point, she started to cry. She hadn’t believed that any church would let her in much less welcome her. She had been rejected by another church and thought that meant God has rejected her as well. So that day, I had the privilege of describing a God of love and of inclusion. Yes, there was and is a place for her at the table.

Becoming Open and Affirming is not only about a process or a statement. Who we say we are and who we proclaim God to be and how we live into those values matters. In some cases, it is a matter of life and death, especially given the high rate of suicide for LGBTQ+ youth and those who identify as trans. When we are open and specific about our welcome, we are offering a place of refuge, welcome and affirmation.

Tomorrow we will gather virtually for our Annual Meeting to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Conference’s decision to become ONA. We will be lifting up and celebrating the many churches of our Conference who have declared themselves ONA. At the same time, it is important for us not to lose sight of the prejudice, hostility and hatred that is openly expressed in many parts of our country and in Vermont. Right here in our beloved state, a trans woman, Fern Feather, was murdered because of who she was. Queer people of color face a complex intersection of discriminations based on their sexual orientation, gender identity and color. Laws that we celebrated so

recently that gave LGBTQ+ persons the right to marry, the right to adopt, the protection not to be fired from a job because of who they are are being overturned in many states. In some states, a doctor can be arrested for offering gender affirming services to trans youth. There is even a move in some states to arrest parents who are supportive of their trans children and charge them with child abuse. Our voices and our advocacy are crucially needed.

So, come to Annual Meeting where we will join in proclaiming there is a Place at the Table for all. Come and learn some new information, discuss important matters, worship, celebrate and pledge ourselves to continuing the fight for justice and welcome for all of God's children.

Hope to see you there,  
Lynn

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## Latest News

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### ANNUAL MEETING STARTS TOMORROW!!!

## 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.

## Annual Meeting Program !!!

### Annual Meeting Agenda !!!

### Proposed Ministerial Compensation Update

### 2021 Annual Meeting Notes

### Financial Document E

**IF YOU DO NOT REGISTER FOR A WORKSHOP, YOU  
WILL NOT BE PROVIDED A LINK! REGISTRATION  
CLOSES TONIGHT!!!**

**Register for Workshops 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."**



**Terminology 101 with V from  
Outright VT!**



V Pearson (they/them), Director of Organizing, at Outright Vermont-- the statewide LGBTQ+ youth serving organization whose mission is to build hope, equity, and power with LGBTQ+ youth across the state. They have a passion for building community, skill, and power with all folks who are seeking to make the world a better place. Their studies in Philosophy and Feminist Liberation Theologies inform that passion. Cornel West's words guide them: "Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public." When not training youth and adults, organizing with youth, or planning school based change processes, they enjoy time with family, acting, and art of all types.

### \*\*\*PEACEMAKERS GATHERING 2022\*\*\*

#### **at Annual Meeting**

Friday, April 22nd, at 4pm

Meeting via Zoom makes attendance possible for EVERYONE who has a story to tell! What kind of story? We want you to share about a project, program, initiative or action your church is involved in that increases peace with justice in our world. Have you recently been working on or learning about: climate change, global ministry, food insecurity, advocating for marginalized groups, housing issues, racial justice, gun violence or the violence of war, human trafficking, migrant or refugee ministries, or just bringing people together to promote peace and love in your community? These are examples – the sky's the limit! Your brief presentation will inspire others to consider how they and their churches might get involved in some form of peacemaking.

We will also pay tribute to the late Betty Edson, advocate and activist for peace with justice who was the Peacemakers Gathering #1 cheerleader.

Please email [Theresa Lever](#) with your idea for a presentation!!!

Thank you!

### 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.

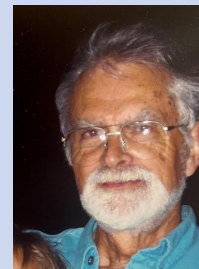
Each church should bring a Team of a Pastor and at least three lay people.

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](mailto:VermontConference@gmail.com) for more details)

**REGISTER HERE!!!**

We write you with gratitude and sadness to tell you of the passing of Rev. Richard Bingham, 92 who died peacefully with family members at his side at the University of Vermont Medical Center on April 15, 2022.



There will be a **memorial service** this **Saturday, April 23rd, at 2:00 PM** at the **College Street Congregational Church in Burlington, VT.**

In lieu of flowers you may give to CIDER (Champlain Islanders Developing Essential Resources) or the UVM Hospice Respite House.

Please keep all of Richard's family, friends, and colleagues in your prayers.

You will find his obituary here:

<https://www.legacy.com/amp/obituaries/batesville/201844232>

**Vermont Interfaith Action**

*Transforming People and Communities*



**VIA is offering two dates for an initial training for our Prop 2 campaign**

**Vermont Interfaith Action voter campaign training**

As a follow-up to our Prop 2 presentations about abolishing slavery in the Vermont constitution, no exceptions, VIA will be holding an initial training on Zoom about joining our campaign to

pass Prop 2. The same training will be offered on two different days: Wed, May 4 from 7 to 8:30 pm, and Sat, May 7 from 10 to 11:30 am. We will go over the timeline of the campaign, explain tools to organize and turn out voters, and offer practical advice on how to talk with your friends, neighbors and family about Prop 2. To join us, please register:

Wednesday, May 4th, 7 pm to 8:30 pm: <https://bit.ly/WedLeaderTraining>, OR Saturday, May 7th, 10 am to 11:30 am: <https://bit.ly/SatLeaderTraining>.

Any questions? Contact Debbie at [debbie@viavt.org](mailto:debbie@viavt.org) or (802) 310-4625.



## First Congregational Church UCC of Burlington

38 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT –  
the host site for *JUMP* and *Small Potatoes* is offering a:

### **PHONE IN FREE LEGAL CLINICS** on Sundays April 24 & May 15, 2022

Volunteer Vermont attorneys will offer pro-bono  
**FREE** legal counsel by phone – call: 802-862-5010

**Phone in between 12 and 1pm for an afternoon appointment.**  
A Legal Clinic volunteer will check you in by phone.  
*Due to the volume of calls we may not be able to offer all callers appointments.*

**We will be ready for your calls at noon - if you don't get thru –  
leave a message – we will call you back.**

**All are welcome to access this service  
with any legal questions.**

Confidentiality is (of course) guaranteed.  
Questions? Want to learn more? Contact Communications Coordinator,  
Lucy Samara at the First Congregational Church UCC of BTV:  
[Lsamara@firstchurchburlington.org](mailto:Lsamara@firstchurchburlington.org)



### **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.**



*Do you love children and youth? Do you have good communication and organizational skills? Are you someone with a strong affinity for teamwork and collaboration? Are you craving a supportive work environment?*

The Congregational Church of Middlebury is searching for a part-time Director of Children and Youth Ministries (DCYM).

This new staff member will carry on a rich tradition. Our congregation's Church School (est. 1815) was one of the first programs of its kind in New England, and it continues to serve and inspire children of all ages.

The DCYM has five main areas of responsibility:

- Administer Church School
- Engage children, youth, and families in the worship life of the church
- Lead Jr. Youth Group (6th-8th grades)
- Assist with Sr. Youth Group (9th-12th grades)
- Oversee Nursery

We encourage interested applicants to visit our **church website**, <https://www.midducc.org>, to learn more about our children and youth program offerings.

Hours:

30 hours a week on average. Flexible schedule.  
6 weeks off in the summer.

Compensation:  
Negotiable. Commensurate with professional/life experience.

Projected start date:  
The ideal candidate would be available for an initial orientation/training during a few weeks in the month of June, and then transition fully into their role by August 15, 2022.

We will begin reviewing applications on May 1, 2022. Candidates should send a cover letter and resume to Rev. Andy Nagy-Benson: [andy@midducc.org](mailto:andy@midducc.org)



## Youth Minister, Star Island United Church of Christ



The Star Island United Church of Christ (SIUCC) Board of Directors seeks a Youth Minister to lead the Star Gathering Youth Conference during the week of July 31<sup>st</sup>-August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Star Island, off the New Hampshire coast, is home to a retreat center with a faithful community of summer attendees. SIUCC organizes four conferences each year. Star Gathering Youth Conference shares the island with Star Gathering I Family Conference, and others. By way of compensation, SIUCC will provide full room and board, boat transport to and from the island on scheduled days, parking for one car, and a \$1000 stipend.

The Youth Minister will design and implement the program for the Star Gathering Youth Conference. Before the conference, the minister will work with the Youth Committee of the Board in recruiting Youth Program Leaders. In partnership with Family Conference leaders, the Youth Minister creates a program that focuses on **relationship-building, renewal, and spiritual growth** for up to 20 vacationing high school students. On the island, the minister leads worship, works with the Youth Program Leaders to implement the program, and is on-call for pastoral care and youth issues that emerge. They should expect occasional on-call responsibilities during the evenings and night-time hours. The theme of the SIUCC conferences this year is "Nourishment", which the Youth Minister can take in the direction of their choosing (the purpose of the conference is not primarily didactic but rather relationship- and faith-building). The minister is also asked to collaborate with leaders from the family program and island staff to carry forward Star Island traditions as appropriate.

The successful candidate should be:

- Ordained in the United Church of Christ or a related tradition (or MID close to finishing);
- Experienced in youth work, including mission trips and/or other programs *in loco parentis*;
- Able to commit to the entire week;
- Creatively inspired to design or adapt a relationship-building, renewing, and spiritual-growth promoting curriculum for youth.

SIUCC will receive applications immediately, and the search will continue until the appropriate candidate is identified. Applications should include a letter of interest and resume, and can be sent by email to:

Neil Simister, SIUCC Personnel and Nominating Committee

[neil.simister@stargathering.org](mailto:neil.simister@stargathering.org)

Candidates interviewed will be asked to submit references and authorize a background check.



## **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](mailto: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>

## PRAYER CONCERNS



Please keep the family, friends, and colleagues of Rev. Richard Bingham in your prayers.

All those experiencing war and violence  
All those dealing with illness and pain  
All who are grieving

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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!)

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## **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.

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## **Celebrate!!**

## Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

April 15th  
\*Rona Kinsley\*

## Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

April 14th  
\*Laurie Krooss\*



*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

**Visibility matters at Texas church and in UCC push for transgender rights**

**Fair Food advocates target Wendy's in a march through Palm Beach**

**'Praising Plate,' now in Indiana, is first chapel item to find a new home**

**Climate summit speakers urge churches to act now — and act like a jazz band**

[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)

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/>

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