



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 Summer Edition July 7th, 2022

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Message from the Conference

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." -- Preamble to the US Constitution

Too many years ago now to even think about comfortably, I made the decision, as a student at a non-denominational divinity school, to become ordained in the United Church of Christ. The church's commitment to free speech was vital. I had been an undergraduate student for a year abroad at the University of Aberdeen Divinity School in Scotland where lip service was given to the idea of academic freedom and inquiry, but in actuality, that freedom only applied if we operated within the proper theological paradigm.

The founding document of the Waterbury Congregational Church where I have happily served, also, for some considerable time, states that "we the undersigned do covenant together to walk in love." That's it. Over the years, this church has slipped in its understanding of that covenant, as detailed, for example in a letter from 1822, the removal of one Mr. Parker from the church for "dancing at a ball in this town sometime last winter." But we have also always wanted to return to a more fulsome understanding of our covenant. When Jesus argued in response to his disciples' question about how often one ought to forgive a fellow parishioner for misbehavior, he said, not seven times, but seven times seventy times, meaning, of course, that to walk in love means to take love seriously as the comprehensive reality which cannot be exceeded on the 491st misstep. Paul, in his Letter to the Romans, despite all of his other obfuscations, says the same thing: there is nothing on earth or beyond it, that can separate us from the love of God.

It's July 4 tomorrow. By the time you read this, the holiday will be behind

us, and the barbecues and fireworks will have all died down. But our covenant with each other as citizens remains. That covenant, made implicit in the preamble to our Constitution, was made explicit by Lincoln one hundred years later: a "government of the people, by the people, for the people." Lincoln understood the fundamental idea that to walk together as a nation means to walk together in love and that love is simply the dignity afforded one another, no matter who you are or where you have come from, to be partners in a free and full debate about truth, which, as Jefferson so wisely noted, has nothing to fear unless the ability of the people to reason together about the most important things is taken away.

Our institutions, like my congregation in 1822, misstep and overrule with tyrannous force. But because love is a metaphysical principle and because we are sovereign, not the courts or the presidency, we will return to love and will work to uphold once again the basic right to debate freely, with a willingness to be wrong, the basic principles of fairness and justice.

-Rev. Peter Plagge
Waterbury Congregational Church

[Latest News](#)

A Press Release was sent out this week to local media:

"Christians in the Vermont Conference who oppose the Dobbs decision by the Supreme Court to overturn Roe vs. Wade"

[Read the statement here](#)

[if you want to add your name to the letter go here](#)

Rev. Paul Sangree, Associate Conference Minister was interviewed today by WCAX regarding our statement and they will let us know when it airs. Addison Independent also wrote an article (though they incorrectly stated it was put together at our Annual Conference) but you can find it [here](#).



From the MIDDUCC Facebook Page (with permission)-

On Monday June 27, Pastor Elizabeth and Pastor Caryne Eskridge from the Weybridge Congregational Church led a Vigil and Call to Action for Reproductive Rights on the Middlebury Green. In response to the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, Pastor Elizabeth said this: "I am a pastor and a mother- and never has it been more clear to me that God trusts women and people of all genders to choose what is right for their own bodies and for their own families. I believe God trusts women and all genders to make an often very difficult choice. I believe God wants us all thrive... to have life abundant, even if that means terminating a pregnancy." About 100 people showed up the event, and together they sang, prayed, and were in beloved community.



‘We will stand with you in protest’: National officers speak out after SC overturns Roe v. Wade

by **UCC Leadership** | published on Jun 24, 2022

The national officers of the United Church of Christ are speaking out against the U.S. Supreme Court decision **eliminating, after almost 50 years, the constitutional right to an abortion.**

[Read More Here](#)

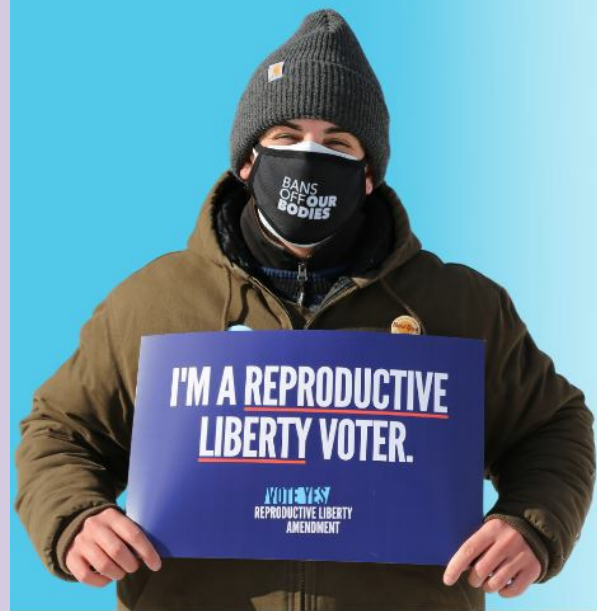
VERMONT'S REPRODUCTIVE LIBERTY AMENDMENT



A ballot measure amending Vermont's constitution to protect every person's right to make their own reproductive decisions.

The Reproductive Liberty Amendment, previously Prop 5, will be a ballot measure in Vermont's 2022 General Election. If passed, it would amend Vermont's constitution to protect every person's right to make their own reproductive decisions, like whether and when to become pregnant, use temporary or permanent birth

control, or seek abortion care.



[Read More HERE](#)



Wonder & Wander: Creatures among Creatures

A day-long nature retreat at Gilsland Farm Audubon Center
with Tyler Mark Nelson, Meredith Barges, and Caity Stuart

When: Saturday, July 16, 2022 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Where: Gilsland Farm Audubon Center ([20 Gilsland Farm Road, Falmouth, ME 04105](#))

Who: Spiritual Leaders* (max. 20 people)

Cost: \$35/person (scholarships available, contact tyler@thebtscenter.org to inquire)

[Learn More!](#)

[Register!](#)

We have a church in the Vermont Conference who is thinking of issuing a mortgage to their pastor.



If your church has had experience with doing this, please be in touch with [Paul Sangree](#). Thanks!



A SIMPLE TUNE SUNG SO SWEET



July 17
Sunday
Service
10 AM

SPECIAL GUEST
MUSICIAN

Kate Campbell



WWW.GUCCVT.ORG
FOR MORE INFO

Love Church



Just now ♥ Just you ♥ Just love

Please help us welcome Love Church to the Vermont Conference!

Love Church was welcomed into the Windsor Orange Association of the Vermont Conference on June 13th, 2022. The founder and pastor of this church is Rev. Lava Mueller. You can find Love Church in Randolph Center, Vermont. They feature services such as yoga church and dinner church!!!

[You can read more about them HERE!](#)

GREENSBORO UCC

READ WITH US 2022!

Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery

by Mark Charles & Soong-Chan Rah

Discussion on Thursdays
July 14- August 4 at 10:30 am
in Fellowship Hall

Learning to Walk in the Dark

by Barbara Brown Taylor

Discussion on
Thursdays

October 6- October 27
at 7 pm in Fellowship
Hall



Sign Up and Join Us! Email greensborochurch@gmail.com

If you are covering the cost of a COVID-19 funeral, FEMA may be able to help. You may qualify for up to \$9,000 per funeral for expenses.



[Read more HERE!](#)

The Church in a Post-Pandemic World

Join us as we envision what a vibrant, healthy church looks like as it emerges from

the pandemic.



UCC SUMMIT

THE CHURCH IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD
Join us as we envision what a vibrant, healthy church looks like as it emerges from the pandemic.

SAVE THE DATE
SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2022
ONLINE - AND IN ST. LOUIS, MO

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
a just world for all

[Learn More and Register Here!!!](#)



Lynn's Sabbatical

Lynn will be on Sabbatical beginning June 9th for three months. During that time, Paul will be serving in the executive role. Lynn will return to the office on September 6th.

We wish Lynn well on her time off and thank Paul for taking on added responsibility during this time.

PRAYER CONCERNS



All those dealing with the trauma of mass shootings
 All those experiencing war and violence
 All those dealing with illness and pain
 All who are grieving

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



Welcome Rev. Andrew Ponder Williams!!

United Community Church UCC, (St Johnsbury) welcome our new settled pastor Rev. Andrew Ponder Williams and his husband Ashton Beebe!!!

Installation of Rev. Elliot Munn!!!

After two years of serving Vergennes Congregational Church, Rev. Elliot Munn was officially installed June 12th, 2022!!! He is pictured here with his wife, Rev. Elizabeth Gleich and their daughter Lydia!!

Congratulations!!!



Installation of Rev. James P. Merriam!



Rev. James P. Merriam was installed at Wells River Congregational Church on Sunday, June 12th!

Congratulations!



Installation of Rev. Dan Haugh!



Rev. Dan Haugh was installed at Stowe Community Church on June 12th, 2022! Our Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Paul Sangree, had the opportunity to join him!!
Congratulations!!!

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

Installation of Mary Hoadley!!!

Rev. Mary Hoadley was installed at the Brownington Village Congregational Church on Sunday, June 12th. Clergy from 8 different UCC congregations were on hand to celebrate!!!

Congratulations!



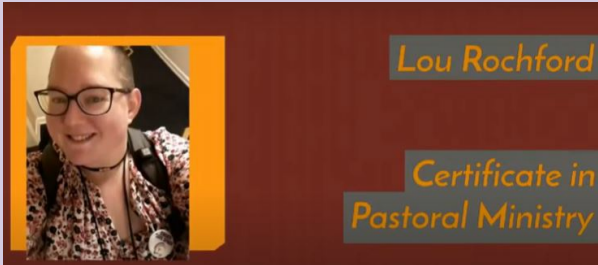


The Rev. Andi Lloyd

was ordained Sunday, June 5th, at The Congregational Church of Middlebury (see video below!), and we are all glowing from the holiness of that service. Congratulations!

"By the grace of God, she is worthy! Let us ordain her. Come, Holy Spirit, come!"

[Ordination Service is available here](#)



Lou Rochford Graduated on May 21st 2022 with a **Certificate in Pastoral Ministry** through their Center of Ministry and Lay Training from Phillips Seminary!

Congratulations from all of us!!!

Celebrate!!

Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

July 2
Robert Noble
Edward Hults

July 7
Robert Ebling
Paul Eyer

July 8
William Nelson

July 11
David Traverse

July 12
Barbara Purinton

July 16
Marshall Hudson-Knapp

July 17
Martha Peck

July 19
John Sanborn

Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

July
Edwin Hilbert Jr.

July 11
Diana Benjamin

July 16
Alden Launer
Peter Plagge

July 22
Laura Cadmus

July 25
Michael Caldwell

July 31
Amanda Swoyer

July 21
James Merriam

July 24
Janice Chilek

July 25
Robert Hundley

July 27
Jacquelyn Lingelbach



STATEMENT FROM GUNSENSE VERMONT ON THE ROBB ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SHOOTING



Today we mourn the deaths of 19 children and 2 teachers in Uvalde, Texas. It was the deadliest school shooting in the state's history, nearly the

worst in U.S. history, and it was the second mass shooting in America this week. Our deepest sympathies go out to the families that lost their children yesterday and to the communities reeling from senseless and unfathomable loss.

A horror like yesterday's massacre brings the reality of gun violence to our hearts and minds in technicolor. But it is not just yesterday or last week. Our hearts break for the 110 people who lost their lives to gun violence each day in 2020- the majority of them Black and Brown young men. We grieve for those families and neighborhoods as well. In our gun-obsessed culture, we have prioritized the right to have unfettered access to firearms over the lives of our own children. We no longer live in a free country - freedom is the expectation that you can send your kids to school, or the store or down the block and know that they'll return home safely each day. Today, no parent in America has that certainty.

This is not normal. It does not have to be this way. No other developed country comes close to this level of gun violence. And no other country comes close to allowing guns to be purchased and carried with as few restrictions as this country does.

What will be the result of 19 more innocent children shot dead in their classrooms? The answer will be not nearly enough unless we finally hold our elected leaders accountable and demand change. Each and every one of us has a part to play in ending gun violence and the only way to honor these victims is through actions, not words.

Robb Elementary School could be any school in Vermont. Tops Friendly Markets in Buffalo could be your local grocery store. The time for passive activism is over. All of us are responsible for taking action and demanding change.

What You Can Do:

- **Volunteer**
- **Contact lawmakers and demand action**
- **Educate yourself on the issues**
- Raise awareness and engage others to speak out
- **Contact us and other gun violence prevention organizations for more ways to get involved**

VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS

VCC Seeking a Church Musician!!!!

The Vergennes Congregational Church, United Church Christ is an Open and Affirming congregation of 135 members that is seeking a Church Musician. We are a vibrant, Christian community—full of life, music, and laughter. We have a long history of deeply appreciating the gifts of our staff in supporting an inclusive, loving, and compassionate ministry in the heart of our small city. We seek a skilled musician that is comfortable with the classics and new pieces that grow our appreciation of the diverse ways to worship God through music. The successful applicant will be a team player, eager to collaborate with other musicians inside and outside of our community to enrich our music ministry.



[Read More Here!!](#)

We are hiring.

If you have a passion for young people, outdoor recreation and building a community of faith, we should talk!

Stowe Community Church is seeking a Director of Youth Ministry who is ready to build on a solid foundation and bring new life to the growing ministries of SCC. Experience in education or leading a youth-based program is preferred, but a love of Christ and passion for our youth group is a must. Duties include developing an inspiring and engaging ministry for students 6th grades and up; including curriculum, programs, music and maybe a trip to the mountain every once in a while.

Any interested applicants should send a resume or a letter of interest to Marylou Durett at info@stowechurch.org. The position is available for the right person to start immediately.

NURSERY

COORDINATOR NEEDED

Stowe Community Church is seeking a Nursery Coordinator, teen or adult, who will provide a dependable, safe, nurturing environment to infants and toddlers, ages three and under. Duties include being silly, giving big hugs, reading stories, cuddling and a diaper change or two.

Any interested applicants should send a resume or a letter of interest to Marylou Durett at info@stowechurch.org. The position is available for the right person to start immediately.

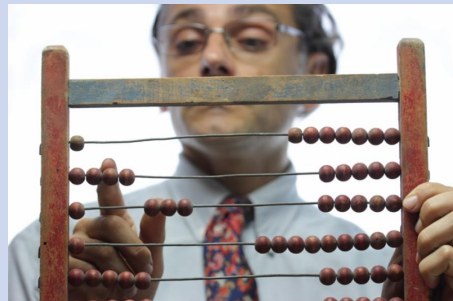
It takes a big heart to help shape little minds and we believe the nursery is the most important room in the Church building. Please help to keep this very important ministry growing!!

Bookkeeper Job Description May 2022 United Church of Hardwick, VT

The bookkeeper position is part-time, approximately 10-15 hours per month.

Candidates must have bookkeeping training and are experienced in Quick Books Online. This person reports to the

Pastor and Financial Officer in maintaining the financial records of the United Church of Hardwick. The compensation will be paid at an hourly rate commensurate with experience.



The job entails the following:

- Record and post all receipts by class provided by the Financial volunteers
- Prepare checks for disbursement of funds by class with appropriate authorizations and post them to the appropriate accounts
 - Reconciliation of all bank and investment accounts
- Manage donor accounts and print biannual statements to donors
 - Print reports for Finance Team/Church Council when needed
- Attend Finance Team meetings when requested (usually a Wednesday evening).

Please send resume to Rev. Evelyn Lavelli: elavelli@comcast.net

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

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



SAVE THE DATE!



PRC's June 2022 Online Events!!!

All webinars are recorded. Click the title to register or read the description.

How to Recognize and Deal with Church Bullies

Tuesday, July 26, 2022
7:00 - 8:00 PM

Leader - David Woolverton

How Broad Based Community Organizing Might Transform the Church

Thursday, Jul 28, 2022
2:00 - 3:00 PM EDT

Leaders: Chris Dela Cruz, Shani McIlwain,
Katrina Pekich-Bundy

[READ MORE HERE!!!](#)

UCC | NEWS

Reproductive justice advocate: Stop ignoring the cries of women

This commentary, the fourth in a series, was written two weeks before the United States...

UCC national offices again make regional list of 'top workplaces'

For a second straight year, the United Church of Christ's national ministries have made a list...

Next Synod, now a year away, will be in person; hybrid aspects being explored

The General Synod of the United Church of Christ will get back to business a year from now....

Memorial service July 13 for Jane Heckles, a leader in Conference and national ministries

A celebration of life will be held July 13 for the Rev. Jane Heckles, an influential...

[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.

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visit our website at <http://www.vtcucc.org/>
