



The Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ



a just
world
for all
ucc.org

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 Fall Edition

September 22nd, 2022

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Message from the Conference

Dear Beloved Community,

One of the things I did while on Sabbatical was to read the research on the effects of Covid on local churches. I am including three links as a sample of the research. The first study listed was conducted by the research arm of the United Church of Christ. The second is a fairly in depth study in several phases conducted by the United Methodist Church. The third is research that is funded by the Lily Foundation and conducted by Hartford International University for Religion and Peace. All three of these research projects have multiple phases beginning in 2020.

I would say the information gathered so far has three main themes. First the impact of the pandemic on churches is inconsistent. Some congregations seem to be thriving, with better or at least similar attendance and giving to pre-Covid levels while others are struggling. It seems the churches most at risk are the churches with less than 50 members but some of the congregations with over 500 members are also struggling.

Second, hybrid worship is here to stay in over 70% of responding churches. This appears to be a blessing in terms of outreach, but also a strain on clergy and lay leaders to learn and use the technology effectively.

Finally, some of the qualities of churches who are surviving the

pandemic include: flexibility, resilience, a renewed focus on outreach and close, positive bonds among congregational members and those members with their pastor. Overall, of these things is a trust and reliance on God to lead them through this time.

When you get a chance, take a look at the studies to date and their conclusions. What do you see?

Where are the ongoing challenges and where are signs of hope? What is sustaining you right now? What is sustaining your congregation?

<https://faithcommunitiestoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/UCC-COVID-19-Survey-Report-December-2020.pdf>

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/study-measures-impact-of-covid-19-on-united-methodist-churches>

<https://www.hartfordinternational.edu/news-events/news/first-study-released-exploring-pandemic-impact-congregations>

In peace,
Lynn

Latest News

Article 22 presentation by Planned Parenthood!!!!



The Reproductive Liberty Task Force is encouraging congregations to promote their support of Article 22 (Prop 5.)

The Task Force has sent the following letter to Seven Days and encourage UCC churches to send letters to their local news outlets.

The Conference has a listing of local news outlets, so for more information, contact VermontConference@gmail.com.

FIND THE LETTER TO PERSONALIZE HERE!

2022 BURLINGTON PRIDE!!!

A special thank you to Lucy Samara, Rev. Sally May, and Rev. Elissa Johnk for additional photos!



Mr. Rick Presson from Mallets Bay Congregational Church

Rev. Josh Simon from First Congregational Church Essex Junction hands out stickers!!!





First Congregational Church, Burlington

First Congregational Church, Essex Junction

Mallets Bay Congregational Church



Charlotte Congregational Church, UCC



Williston Federated Church



Rev. Sally May from Mallets Bay visits with parade attendees.



Did your church participate in a Pride event? Please send your photos to VermontConference@gmail.com !!!

THE TALK, VERMONT

The Talk, Vermont



Thank you so much for your support and participation in what was formerly The Racism in America Forum and, starting this fall, will be known as The Talk, Vermont. While our focus will be on Vermont, one of the whitest states in the nation, and its efforts to confront and overcome the challenges of racism and other forms of bigotry, we shall draw upon resources both within and beyond the state in guiding our path to a better place.

[Read more here](#)

Just for fun!!!



**Click here to update your
contact information!!!**

INSTALLATION OF
Jonathan Hauze



**Norwich Congregational
Church, UCC**

15 CHURCH STREET
NORWICH, VT
05055 - 0236

Sept 25
at 2PM

Rev. Alison Andrea Young
was installed as the Pastor
of First Congregational
Church in Berlin on Sept.
18th, 2022!



Tour De SWA

October 16th, 2022

United Church of Benson



Members of the Southwest Association will be making a 44.9 mile pilgrimage via bicycle to raise money for the Hope Fund! They will stop at six churches. It will end at 4pm with a barbeque at the United Church of Dorset! Please come help us cheer them on!



November Trip to El Salvador



You are invited! Yes, you! Bethany Church, Montpelier, is planning a weeklong trip to El Salvador to visit its rural sister parish—a 30-year relationship—and explore other areas of the country to learn about culture, history, and current issues affecting the lives of Salvadorans. We've been taking trips for three decades and they are ALWAYS

fabulous, opening minds and hearts in unexpected ways. This is not a work trip; it is about visiting friends and making new ones, being present in solidarity with people in their struggles, and learning about issues that touch on our responsibilities as Christians and as U.S. citizens. Past participants include members of churches in Montpelier, East Montpelier, Barre, Berlin, Waterbury, Randolph, Sherburne, Castleton, Thetford, and Brattleboro, which has its own Salvadoran sister parish. We have no firm dates or costs yet; we're trying for the beginning of November and the cost in the past has been around \$1,200, including flights. You probably have many questions, and we can answer them all!

Please contact Theresa Lever now, even if you only have a glimmer of interest. thelevers@comcast.net, 802-498-5019 call or text



Climate Changed

A Podcast from The BTS Center

hosted by Nicole Diroff and Ben Yosua-Davis
produced by Peterson Toscano

Episode 4 featuring Keyana Pardilla, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Sherri Mitchell is now live! [Click here to listen and subscribe on your favorite podcast platform.](#)

TO CELEBRATE THE
INSTALLATION

OF

REV. JULIE
LOMBARD

SUNDAY
October

16th

TWO THOUSAND
AND TWENTY TWO

3:00 PM

The United
Church of
Northfield

58 S. MAIN ST.,
NORTHFIELD

PLEASE JOIN US

VERMONT'S REPRODUCTIVE LIBERTY AMENDMENT

NO-YES
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](#)

PRAYER CONCERNS



Please Keep Rev. Katherine Buechner Arthud and family in your prayers. Katherine's father Fred Buechner, died two weeks ago and she lost her mother this week.

Please keep Reverends Mark and Amy Pitton in your prayers. Marks father passed away this week. In addition, this is a challenging time for Bethany Church and for Amy.

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](#)

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

Celebrate!!

Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

September 2nd
Alden Launer
Judith Waible

September 6th

Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

September 1st
Karen Lipinczyk

September 17th
Gary Lewis

Amelia Pitton
Margaret Wright

September 8th
Wayne Holsman

September 10th
Robert Moyer

September 11th
Marjorie MacNeill

September 16th
Paul Sangree

September 17th
Kathy Clark

September 18th
Laura Engelken
Andrew Ponder Williams

September 22nd
Susan Webster-Toleno

September 23rd
Jane LoBrutto

September 24th
Daniel Cooperrider
Gail Dimick

September 27th
Benjamin Thurber

September 18th
Sally May

September 22nd
Barbara Purinton

September 23rd
Evelyn Coupe

September 24th
Mary Simpson Thompson

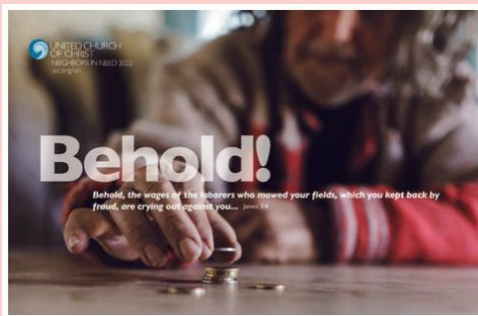
September 26th
Sandra Daly

September 27th
James MacIntyre

September 28th
John Weatherhogg
Tracy Weatherhogg



Neighbors in Need 2022



In 2022, the Neighbors in Need "BEHOLD!" offering focuses on economic justice. With inflation impacting all of our households, we wanted to provide a way to discuss this topic through a faith lens.

Join us by promoting this year's NIN "Behold!" campaign at your church.

Explore the **FREE exciting**

promotional toolkit, which contains a four-week bible study, a coloring book, three posters, social media banners, and a leader's guide. These materials will assist you in planning and carrying out the 2022 NIN campaign. As you may recall, one-third of the offering supports Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Justice and Witness Ministries use two-thirds to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations and support various justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Most churches will collect the offering on October 2nd, 2022, as a part of World Communion Sunday, but contributions can be made at any time.

MAINE WELCOMES A NEW CONFERENCE MINISTER!!!



Please celebrate with **Rev. Marisa Laviola**, one of our former pastors, who has been called as Conference Minister in the Maine Conference of the UCC, beginning October 26. Marisa considers Vermont her "home" conference where she was nurtured and grew and learned as local pastor.

Feel free to send her a word of congratulations!!!

revdrmarisa@gmail.com

[Read more here!!!](#)

VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS



Stowe Community Church
Director of Youth Ministry Job Description

MINISTRY DESCRIPTION: The Director of Youth Ministry is responsible for developing and delivering a comprehensive program of Christian Education for youth (6th-12th grades). It is important that the Director inspires and excites the youth of SCC to learn and study the faith by communicating and demonstrating a

personal passion for Jesus Christ.

[Read more \(including how to apply!\) 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!!

VT CONFERENCE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Christian Education:

Administration & Finance:

Music & Other Lay Ministries:

Music Director- North Pomfret Congregational

Church Musician- Tunbridge Church

Music Director- Charlotte Congregational Church

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



SAVE THE DATE!

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

Justice Leadership Program

Fall application deadline September 23rd

Building on the success of the online spring Jubilee cohort, we're excited to be accepting applications for the fall Jubilee cohort that will run from October 2022 to May 2023. All participants from the spring cohort, hailing from five PNW congregations, agreed that the program was instrumental in their growth as justice leaders. Jubilee is an introductory justice course for adults of any age who want to deepen their understanding of justice and learn practical organizing skills. Program participants meet weekly for skill and knowledge building workshops, spiritual reflection, and group discussion and support.

Jubilee
Justice Leadership Jubilee is an online ecumenical program for adults of any age who want to deepen their understanding of justice and learn practical organizing skills with a community of their peers.

JUSTICE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

- 6-week program (September 2022)
- \$325 (one-time fee)
- 10-15 hours per week
- 100% Zoom & online resources
- Program cost: \$325
- Participants can be listed as leaders

The Jubilee program consists of four complementary components:

- Education:** Workshops introduce you to a world and cover together community organizing, Progressive Christianity, social justice and spirituality, and more. Workshops cover history and theory, as well as practical applications and skills for faith community and congregational engagement.
- Isolation:** Participants will deepen their faith through weekly reflective gatherings with spiritual disciplines, offering vulnerability, grace, and support.
- Community Work:** Based on their interests, each participant will identify a place in the community to take action on issues of social justice. Participants will gain practical skills in social justice systems, and participate in projects, organizing, and more. Participants will meet others engaged in similar efforts.
- Church Engagement:** Participants engage with their own faith community and are invited to share their knowledge and experience with other congregational members and leaders through speaking, writing, and more.

Next cohort starts Fall 2022
Apply online today!
justiceleadership.org

©2022 Justice Leadership Program

Apply now for Fall 2022

www.justiceleadership.org
info@justiceleadership.com

Jubilee is a booster grant recipient of Volunteer Ministries of the National UCC, supported by GLOBAL H.O.P.E.



The PATHWAYS Theological Education Board of Directors invites all questioning, curious people of faith to join us for our 6-week courses beginning Fall I (mid-August) and Fall II (beginning late September) ([see website for details and registration links](#)). The 12-week UCC Polity course runs three times a year beginning September 7, January 11 and May 17.

Enroll now at [PATHWAYS Theological Education, Inc.](#)

It can be very difficult for people to pick up their lives and go to seminary these days, especially if they're just beginning to sense a call. [PATHWAYS Theological Education, Inc.](#), offers people the opportunity to start at the beginning of the education journey for substantially less money and time investment per course than seminary courses.

In six weeks, participants can learn basic theological principles of Progressive Christianity or encounter the lives of important figures in Christian history, from their own computers on their weekly schedule in the comfort of their own homes. They'll work with participants from all over the country and skilled facilitators with expertise and passion for the subject matter.

For \$325 per 6-week course, PATHWAYS is affordable, flexible, and convenient—

and PATHWAYS courses are designed to help participants build confidence and competence each step of the way. The 12-week UCC Polity course is a bargain at \$625.

PATHWAYS Website Addresses:

Website: <https://www.pathwaystheological.org/>

Course Calendar: <https://www.pathwaystheological.org/calendar/>

Our Stories: <https://www.pathwaystheological.org/our-stories/>

UCC | NEWS

For the latest [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

Associate Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree sangreepucc@gmail.com

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Bookkeeper: Tanya Frazier 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.

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/>

Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

Create a great offer by adding words like "free" "personalized" "complimentary" or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take an action, so think about inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining!"