



## 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 16th, 2023

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#### **Message from the Conference**

Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

Have you read Bill McKibben's book, The Flag, the Cross and the Station wagon? I highly recommend this book as a way of connecting so many intersecting ideas – patriotism, middle class values and assumptions and faith. Does it have to do with environmental justice? Yes. It also has to do with the crossroads of faith and justice on many levels. This will be a great way to prepare for Bill's time with us at our Annual Meeting.

Speaking of Annual Meeting, would you be willing to help out in some way such as: assisting at the registration table, greeting and directing people as they arrive, assist with setup and cleanup for a meal, setting up tables and taking them down, assist with speak outs, offer to help with the Peace Makers' Gathering, offer to be one of the people taking minutes for the meeting, bring snacks to share for break times throughout the meeting, be willing to keep the coffee pot going, or generally just be willing to pitch in as needed. Any of these activities would be greatly appreciated by our host church, Grace Rutland and by your Conference staff. Please let Elise (vermontconference@gmail.com) know of your willingness to help and what task you are willing to help with.

I look forward to seeing you in Rutland! Building community by worshipping and praying together, sharing ideas about the works of peace and justice we do in our home congregations, connecting with friends and colleagues and meeting new friends and colleagues are at the heart of our covenantal relationships as church, Association, Conference and national setting.

See you soon!

In expectation and peace, Lynn

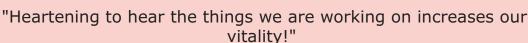


## What are the participants of the Vitality Event that took place in Springfield March 11th saying?

"Fun and informative!"

"Exceptional"

"Great hospitality and food!"



"Love Patty!"

"This speaker Patty was phenomenal. She took a subject that was difficult and made it fun! She modeled vitality!"

"I feel revitalized by these conversations and knowing we are not alone on this journey."



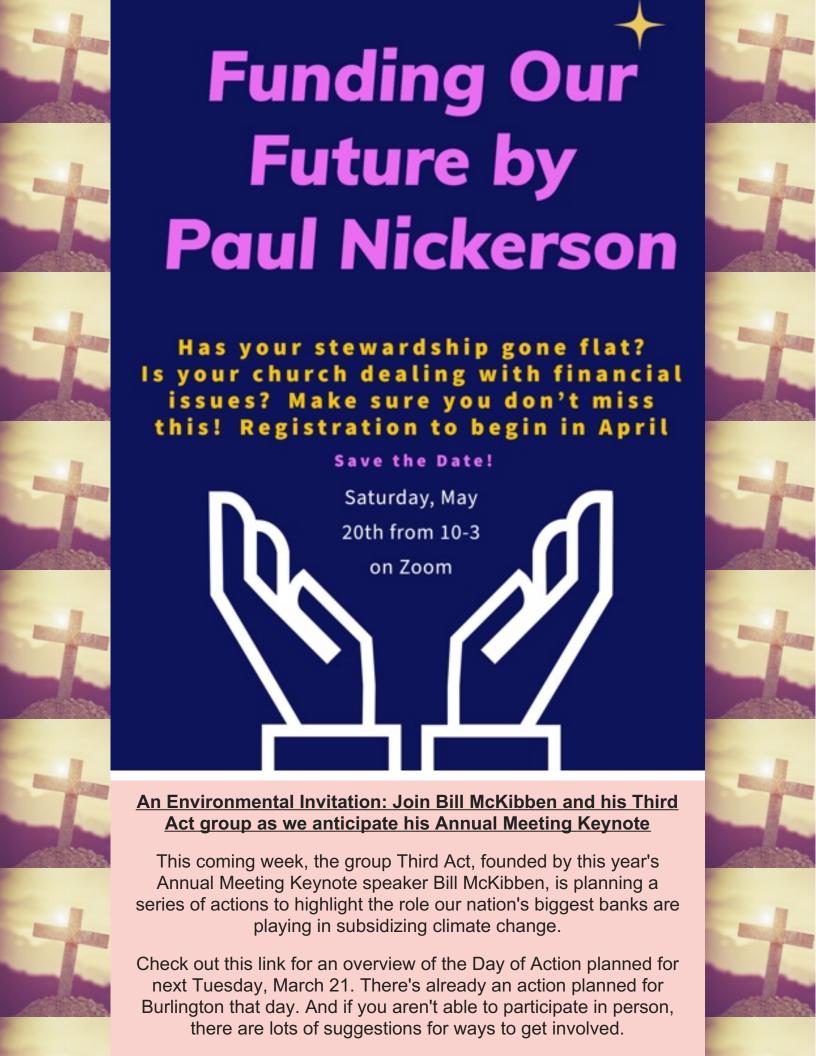




If you missed this opportunity, do not fret! We look forward to seeing everyone again in May!











## "And Who Is My Neighbor?" 228th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference



April 28-29, 2023 Grace Church, Rutland

The Vermont Conferences 228th Annual Meeting will be connecting the dots between creation justice, economic justice, environmental justice, and LBGTQ justice.

Our workshops this year are so abundant they will happen TWICE. Stay tuned for more information!

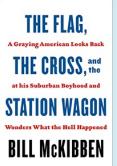


Our keynote speaker is Bill McKibben (pictured here) whos new book "The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon" was just released.

"I'm curious about what went so suddenly sour with American patriotism, American faith, and American prosperity."

"Like so many of us, McKibben grew up believing—knowing—that the United States was the greatest country on earth. As a teenager, he cheerfully led American Revolution tours in Lexington, Massachusetts. He sang "Kumbaya" at church. And





with the remarkable rise of suburbia, he assumed that all Americans would share in the wealth.

But fifty years later, he finds himself in an increasingly doubtful nation strained by bleak racial and economic inequality, on a planet whose future is in peril.

And he is curious: What the hell happened?"

You can find the book from the sellers below!

**Indie Bound** 

**Amazon** 

**Audible** 

#### Would you like to be a vendor at this years Annual Meeting?

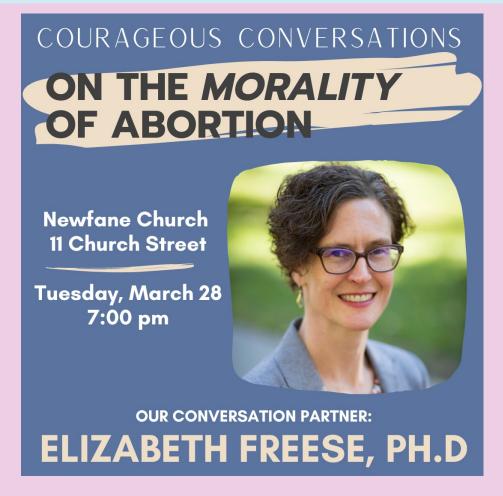
A limited amount of display space is available for this year's meeting. Tables are 8' and may be reserved on a <u>first</u> <u>come</u>, <u>first served basis</u>. Displays may be set up Friday morning between 8-10am. A \$30 fee is being charged per table. All organizations, committees, departments, and vendors must pay the fee. Extension cords can be provided.



Use this QR code to pay for your table if you are using the fillable online form!

**Fillable Exhibitor Form (Online)** 

**Exhibitor Form (Print)** 



There's no question where most Americans stand on the legal right to abortion: According to recent Public Religion Research Institute **findings**, nearly two-thirds

(64%) of Americans say abortion should be legal in most or all circumstances. In November a staggering 77% of Vermonters supported a constitutional amendment affirming "personal reproductive autonomy," adding further protection for abortion rights within our borders. Yet beneath this decisive show of support lurks a less visible moral reticence. While most Americans consistently support making abortion legal in most or all cases, data also show a persistent ambivalence toward the procedure. According to Pew Research findings, 46% of Americans figure abortion to be morally wrong in most or all cases, with only 31% saying it's morally acceptable. Nearly half (48%) of Americans believe there are situations in which it is morally wrong but should still be legal. Herein may lie the cause of our inability to break through the cultural impasse on the issue of abortion. As Dr. Elizabeth Freese observes, "We've been hopelessly muddled in this ambivalent 'morality gap' between legality and cultural acceptability, resulting in a conflicting patchwork of legislation and endless, exhausting, existential anxietyprovoking fights." We agree, and on Tuesday, March 28, we're hosting a conversation focused squarely on the morality of abortion. We are so fortunate to have as our conversation partner for the evening Dr. Freese herself. Dr. Freese is a scholar-activist serving as a Scholar-in-Residence with SACReD (Spiritual Alliance of Communities for Reproductive Dignity) to support its curriculum program. She previously co-developed and managed production of courses for the online Learning Center at the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice and developed abortion access advocacy resources for Christians through Auburn Seminary. She is Adjunct Professor of Religion and Society at Drew University Theological School, where she earned her PhD in Religion and Society. Discussions on abortion often encompass an unwieldy breadth of considerations. Ours will focus on the theological, scriptural, traditional, and other sources of moral guidance. We are not asking, should abortion be legal? We are asking, is it right? You can RSVP for the event or direct any questions to Pastor Matt directly at matt@newfane.church. Attendance is free but space is limited. Masking is strongly encouraged, and masks will be available at the door. An elevator and a chair lift are available. **Board affirms: Karen** Georgia Thompson will be first woman to lead UCC if elected by Synod by Maic D'Agostino | published on Mar 6, 2023 The United Church of Christ is poised to make a historic choice. After a year-long process, the UCC Board voted March 4 to nominate Associate General Minister, the Rev. DOWNTOWN Karen Georgia Thompson, for General Minister and President. If elected by the **General Synod this summer**, Thompson would be the first woman — and the first woman of African descent — to lead the denomination. **Read More Here!** 







**Matter** 

Commissioning

Project

Workshop

-Celebrating

Black

Composers-

The workshop will be presented at two locations from 9:00 am -4:00 pm: April 15, 2023 **Guilford Community Church** 38 Church Dr. Guilford, VT 05301 May 13, 2023 Malletts Bay UCC 1672 W. Lakeshore Dr. Colchester, VT 05446

Do you lead a choral group, choir, or do you simply love to sing? Join us for a workshop celebrating black composers this Spring.

The Racial Justice Task Force of the Vermont UCC is hosting two workshops featuring new choral music by contemporary black composers commissioned by the **BLM Commissioning Project.** 

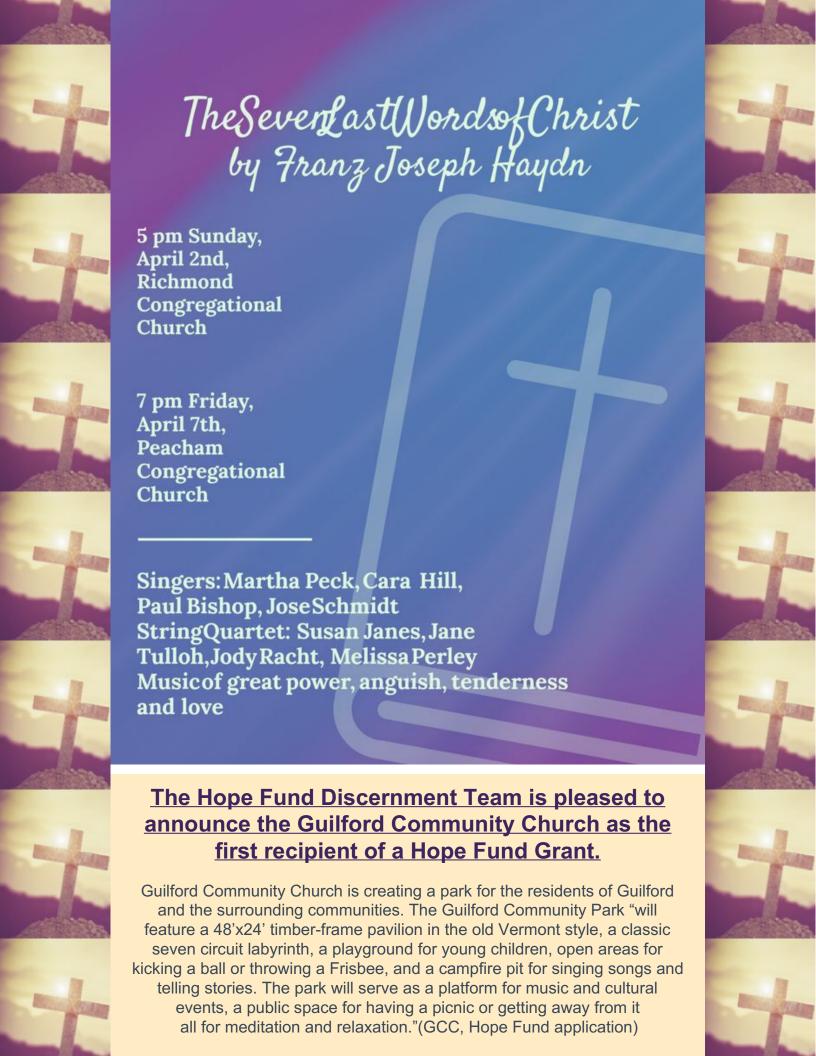


Renowned choral leader Kathy Bullock, Professor Emerita of Music from Berea College will lead the workshops, introducing the eight award-winning songs from black composers and teaching selected songs over the course of the day. In addition, she will host a panel discussion of the issue of

For more information on the Black Lives Matter Commissioning Project: https://blmcommissioning.com/

**April Registration** in Guilford

**May Registration Mallets Bay** 



Out of respect for their neighbors' concerns (and as Robert Frost put it, "Good fences make good neighbors") the Hope Fund is helping the Guilford Community Church with the construction of a fence on the park's property line. We are excited to see how this multi-faceted project unfolds. We hope you will make a pilgrimage to the Guilford Community Park, walk the labyrinth and celebrate this amazing project!



The Pavilion was made with local timber by local craftspeople.



Community members pounding pegs into the timber frame beam.



Taking shape, the older folks are watching the younger folks.

#### **Not-Your-Average Boundaries Training**

LeaderWise's online boundaries training workshop is lively and interactive, full of reflection and conversation. Attendees have given us feedback that our boundaries training was a great experience, AND caused them to re-evaluate some of their own practices.



The following Boundaries Training sessions are scheduled for 2023:

- · May 22 & 23 from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm Central
- ·August 22 & 23 from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm Central
- ·October 11 & 12 from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm Central

#### **Read more HERE!**



The Justice & Witness Ministries Team is looking for full sets of Tinker Toys. If you have a set you are not using or would like to donate for us to use at our Annual Meeting Workshop and at presentations offered through your Association, please contact Rev. Sally May at

revsallymbucc@gmail.com or Sally Kruschnek at <a href="mailto:smwkersch@comcast.net">smwkersch@comcast.net</a>.

You can order send them to Justice & Witness Ministries directly from their

Amazon wish list here.



A limited number of scholarships are available for this online retreat. Contact Program

Learn More!



#### **Financial Seminars in West** Dover!

If your church is anything like ours, you probably have a good number of folks over 55 which in some circles qualifies them as

"seniors". After hearing some scary stories of friends who experienced a loss of their spouse and had little or no knowledge about their finances, the **Loose Knit Group (LKG)** of the West Dover Congregational Church came up with an idea to help our members be more prepared for such an event. Thus, Financial Seminars were established. One of our church members was a financial services professional who agreed to help us understand financial planning for the future. He presented his thoughts on how to be "Money Wise", including budgeting, why to plan financially, the first important steps and how to begin. In addition, he discussed how to protect one's income, retirement and other topics. Scott then arranged for a local attorney to share his knowledge about wills and trusts. A second session with the attorney is scheduled for March.

We hope that this information will prove to be helpful to our members.

#### It's time to share!!

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special mission offering of the United Church of Christ involves





you in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs

including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

Click here to visit the OGHS webpage on ucc.org https://www.ucc.org/giving/ways-to-give/our-churchs-wider-mission/one-great-hour-of-sharing/
Suggested offering date: March 19, 2023

## Do you or your church want to apply for a Hope Fund grant?







You can now find the application online **HERE** or by clicking the link above!

Please help us thank the wonderful Discernment Team members who helped make this application happen! Those team members

Rev. Paul Sangree (Associate Minister, Vermont Conference), Rev. Dan Haugh (Stowe Community Church), Rev. Mary Hoadley (Brownington Congregational Church), Rev. Jessica Moore (First Congregational, St. Albans), Rev. Lava Mueller (Love Church, Randolph), Rev. Paul Eyer (Williston Federated Church), Rev. Caryne Eskridge (Weybridge Congregational Church )

> Please send all completed applications to VermontConference@gmail.com.

#### 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

Prayers for the family and friends of Rev. Holsman.

Please keep Evelyn Lavelli in your prayers as she morns the loss of her both

### **AROUND THE CONFERENCE**

(Please let us know what your Congregation is up to by sending an email to <u>VermontConference@gmail.com</u>.

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



### Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

March 1st
C. Michael Caldwell
James Mills

March 2nd
Larrimore C Crockett
Amy Davin

March 3rd Catherine Cadieux

> March 4th Joseph Will

March 5th SallyAnn Silfies

March 8th
Dale N. Hindmarsh

March 9th Chris Heintz Elisa Lucozzi

March 11th Linda L. Kulas

### Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

March 9th Marcia Dorey

March 17th Mark Blank





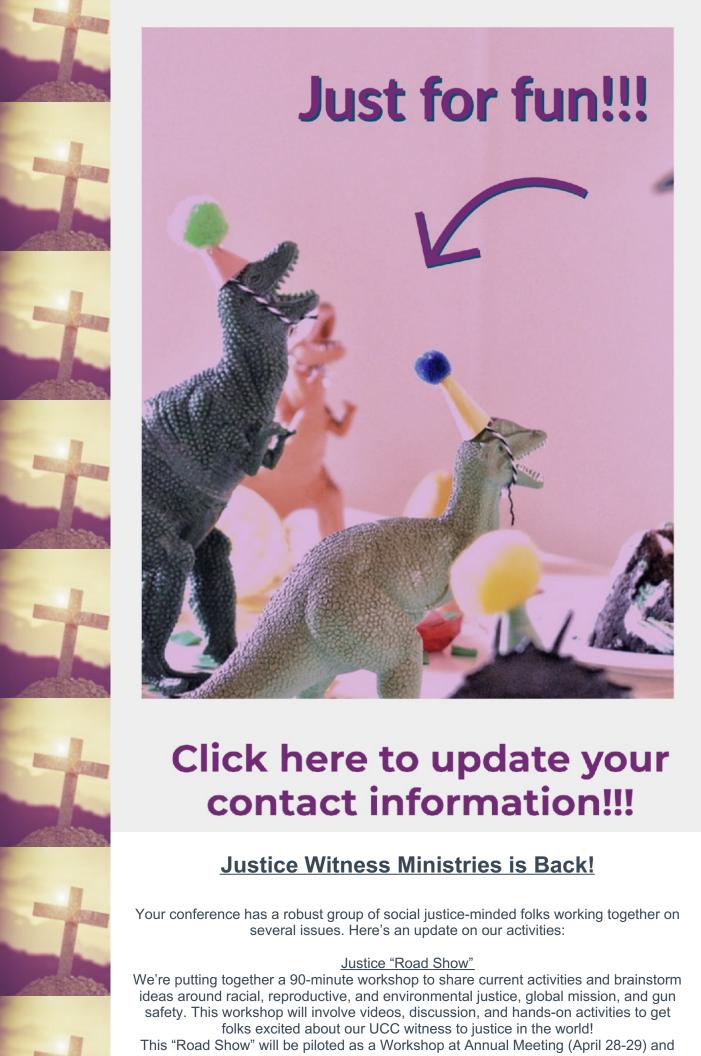
March 12th Josh Sharp

March 13th Kevin E. Goldenbogen

March 22nd Susan Cooke Kittredge

March 23rd
Hal C. Miller III
David Andrews
Caryne Eskridge
March 25th
Kathy W. Eddy
Jeffrey W. Cornwell
Katelyn Macrae







will be available to be presented at Association Meetings. Please contact Debbie Ingram at <a href="mailto:debbie@viavt.org">debbie@viavt.org</a> if you would like to feature it as the program at your next Association gathering.

#### Racial Justice

Our VTCUCC Task Force is sponsoring two workshops in which church choirs and community choruses can learn spiritual music by black composers, to honor them and give them the recognition these composers deserve and have been unfairly denied for decades. The southern workshop is in Guilford on April 15 and the northern one is in Mallett's Bay on May 13. Contact the Conference office for more information. Also, Vermont Interfaith Action is looking for congregations that would like to help in their towns advance racial justice initiatives around the Declaration of Inclusion, a statement your Selectboard can sign onto to make your town more hospitable and welcoming to all, and a

Community Engagement Guide with Local Police, to build a meaningful relationship with your police department around racial equity and true public safety for all. If you would like to know more, please contact Debbie at <a href="mailto:debbie@viavt.org">debbie@viavt.org</a>.

#### Faith Climate Action Day

Wed., March 29, is a day to draw attention to the climate change crisis. There will be a Press Conference in the Statehouse and opportunities to meet with legislators and be present in the Gallery during the session. This event is organized by VT Public Interest Group (VPIRG) and co-sponsored by VT Interfaith Power and Light and VT Interfaith Action. For more information, contact VPIRG.

#### Gun safety

The issue of gun safety is important to the VTCUCC, but we need a point person to help us stay connected with the efforts of other groups. If you would like to be that person, please let us know by contacting Debbie at <a href="mailto:debbie@viavt.org">debbie@viavt.org</a>.

#### Global mission

Did you know that Rev. Kim McKerley is our Conference's liaison to the national setting's Global Mission? She can help your church connect with visiting Mission Co-Workers to speak at an event, or help your church plan a pilgrimage to another country, and so much more! Contact <a href="mailto:kmbethanyucc@gmail.com">kmbethanyucc@gmail.com</a> to find out more.

Our JWM group meets regularly the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm for an hour. If you are interested in joining us, let Debbie know at <a href="mailto:debbie@viavt.org">debbie@viavt.org</a>. As people of faith, let us "do justice" together!

#### 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

### **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!

#### Vergennes is seeking a Sunday School Coordinator.!!!

The Congregational Church of Vergennes, United Church of Christ, is an Open and Affirming congregation of 135 members seeking a Sunday School Coordinator. 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 little city.

The pay rate is \$25 per hour, and the hours range from 8 to 15 hours per week depending upon applicant interest. We seek a person of faith with experience working with children, who will direct a program of stimulating and nourishing faith formation. If this sounds like the way you want to make a big impact in our community, please contact Rev. Elliott Munn at elliott@vergennesucc.org.

For more information, including the Job Description, please go to the church's website:

https://www.vergennesucc.org/ccfmsearch



Middle School Ministries Coordinator:
First Congregational Church UCC of
Burlington Vermont is looking for a team
player ready to work with youth in a great
location – Burlington, Vermont! The person
hired for this new part-time position will
work with our great team to oversee

programs and service-learning opportunities, facilitating the spiritual development of youth (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade). You'll work with middle school youth on Sunday mornings at FirstChurchBTV and with our collaborative youth program (youth in grades 6 thru 12 from both the College Street Church and FirstChurchBTV) one

evening per week and periodically on weekends. Learn more about this opportunity here: https://bit.ly/middleschoolcoordinator Approx. 6 hours per week - \$20/hour. 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. **ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR POSITION - available Summer 2023 Second Congregational Church United Church of Christ** Londonderry, Vermont (About 45 minutes from Rutland, Bennington and Brattleboro) **We**: are a faithful, music-loving congregation that seeks an enthusiastic, creative organist and choir director. We have a beautiful Essex upright piano and a new (2017) Rodgers Classic and Artist series windless 2-Manual (559) organ. **Our Church:** Our weekly attendance averages 45; official church membership is 83. Our commitment to music is long standing. The choir – while small! - is energetic and enthusiastic. On any given Sunday the choir may be as small as a soloist or up to six people, with a mix of parts and singing experience. You: We are looking for someone who is energetic and flexible. Experience as a church musician would be great but is not required. We will consider a pianist who does not have organ experience, and we will pay for short term organ lessons.



<u>Musical requirements:</u> Play gathering music before worship service and a postlude at end. During the worship service: accompany 3 hymns, play the Doxology, Gloria Patri, Introit, Call to Prayer, and offertory. Accompany anthem (sung by soloist, small ensemble or choir). Also play for two special services during the year (Christmas Eve and a Holy Week service).

**Weekly Schedule:** Warm up and choir rehearsal (if needed) 8:30 AM-9:15 AM; Worship 9:30AM-10:30 AM; (coffee hour/snack 10:30 AM-11:00 AM); Choir rehearsal for the next week and beyond (generally) 11:00 AM-12:00 Noon. Salary: \$9,000-\$9500 (depending on experience), which includes 6 paid Sundays off, where the church finds the substitutes.

Interest and questions can be directed to Rev. Laurie S. Krooss, (802) 824-6453, LKROOSS@yahoo.com or Val Austin, Valenat1933@aol.com.

## 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

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



**SAVE THE DATE!** 



# NEAUCE 2023 SAVE "Beyond Church Walls: Hearing New Voices" THE May 4 - 6 (Th, F, S)

Pilgrim Pines Swanzey, NH

## 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 <a href="mailto:llbvtc@gmail.com">llbvtc@gmail.com</a>
Associate Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree<a href="mailto:sangreepucc@gmail.com">sangreepucc@gmail.com</a>
Office Administrator: Elise Foster <a href="mailto:vermontconference@gmail.com">vermontconference@gmail.com</a>
Ministries Coordinator: Rev. Jackie Lingelbach <a href="mailto:vtconmincoor@gmail.com">vtconmincoor@gmail.com</a>
Bookkeeper: Tanya Frazier <a href="mailto:vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com">vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com</a>

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!"

