



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 Winter Edition

March 23rd, 2023

Table of Contents

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Message from the Conference | 4) Around the Conference |
| 2) Latest News | 5) Save the Date & Cont. Ed Resources |
| 3) Prayer Concerns | 6) VTCUCC Classifieds |

Message from the Conference

Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

Have you ever attended either the Peacemakers' breakfast or, more recently, the Peace-makers' gathering at Annual Meeting? If you have, you know how valuable this experience can be as a catalyst to dreaming about how a local church can be involved in justice and peace-making activities that make a difference in our communities and in the world.

If you haven't attended one of these gatherings, I urge you to do so. You'll hear lots of inspiring stories from churches just like yours who are going great things to make the world a better place. **AND, if you have a story to tell about a project or activity your church has done, please let Elise in our office know so she can get you on the agenda. What kind of things?** Here's a sampling of ones from previous gatherings: working on environmental justice by installing solar panels or a pellet stove in your church, a ministry of cutting wood and giving it away to those who struggle to stay warm in the winter, a relationship/partnership in another part of the world, making CWS kits, engaging in a work trip to build houses for those who have none, engaging with the new immigrants who have come to live in Vermont, Doing a weekly or monthly silent vigil on the sidewalk for Black Lives Matter, Trans rights, marching in the Pride parade, witnessing for peace in a violent world.

I hope this has helped you to think about your own witness in the world. The Peacemakers' gathering always ends holding hands in a circle and singing *Let There be Peace on Earth*. It is humbling and inspiring to stand and sing with our siblings in the faith and know that despite the separation, violence,

and disdain for some of God's beloveds that are so evident right now, God calls us to witness to another way and always remember, we are not alone.

In peace and hope and courage in the struggle,
Lynn

Latest News



H.165, the PERMANENT Universal School Meals bill is on its way to the House Floor!

Representatives will be voting this week to ensure that Universal School Meals continue forever in Vermont, and that no child will ever again learn what hunger feels like in school.

We need YOU to call your Representatives and urge them to vote yes on H.165. Below are instructions for calling your Representatives:

Calling
the State House - Here's
what to do:

1. Look up your Representatives here: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/people/>
 - a. You may have more than one Representative(s).
 - b. Write down their name(s).
2. Call the Statehouse at 802-828-2228. A person will answer the phone. Say you want to leave a message for your Representative(s).
 - a. Give the person the name of your one or two Representatives.
 - b. Give the person your name and phone number.
 - c. The message is: Please vote in favor of H. 165 to ensure that Universal School Meals is made permanent in Vermont
3. If the line is busy (buzzing sound) - wait a few minutes and call back.

You MIGHT get a call back from your Representative(s). Remember, the best thing you can tell your Representatives is why Universal School Meals are important to you and how important it is to make the program permanent.



WHAT'S POSSIBLE?
**EARTH DAY
STORIES
OF HOPE**

April 22 | 11 AM Eastern

Join the First Ever UCC Earth Day Summit!

This online event will take place on Saturday, April 22nd at 11 am ET. The theme is "What's Possible?: Earth Day Stories of Hope."

This two and a half hour summit will feature a keynote from the **Rev. Jim Antal**, a panel of inspiring speakers, the presentation of the Dollie Burwell Prophetic Action Award, and a video showcasing the uplifting story of Mayflower UCC in Minneapolis. Even if you cannot make the event at its scheduled time, still sign-up, and we will send you a link to a recording of it. **Register now!**



SPENCER LAJOYE

Guilford Community Church
April 23 | 2pm

Suggested Donation:
\$10-20

38 Church Dr.
Guilford, VT 05301

Delivering Broadway-esque melodies accompanied by a weathered dreadnought, award-winning singer/songwriter Spencer LaJoye has a theological obsession with making music that tells the truth...and a profoundly queer habit of creating ritual space for hurt and healing people.

Spencer LaJoye is a folk/pop singer songwriter, violinist, and vocal loop artist in Boston, MA, who believes everyone is made of the good stuff. A 2021 Kerrville New Folk Songwriting Competition winner, LaJoye (luh-JOY) makes music to tell the truth and return to their body as a queer person in recovery from American Christian evangelicalism. Delivering Broadway-esque melodies accompanied

by a weathered dreadnought, their performances are equal parts confident quirk and elegant storytelling.



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

"Fun and informative!"

"Exceptional"

"Great hospitality and food!"

"Heartening to hear the things we are working on increases our vitality!"

"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!

Funding Our Future by Paul Nickerson

**Has your stewardship gone flat?
Is your church dealing with financial
issues? Make sure you don't miss
this! Registration to begin in April**

Save the Date!

Saturday, May
20th from 10-3
on Zoom



**Do you want to help out with
Annual Meeting this year? Find
out how you can help [HERE!!](#)**

We would love your help!!!

YOU CAN NOW

REGISTER TO SEE
BILL MCKIBBON'S
KEYNOTE FOR FREE!!!

REGISTRATION IS
NOW OPEN!!!!

REGISTER HERE!!!

*“And Who Is
My Neighbor?”*

228th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference



*April 28-29, 2023
Grace Church, Rutland*

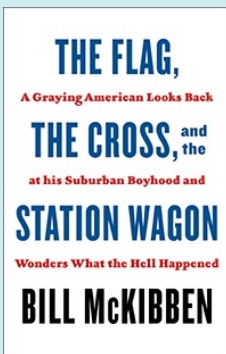
Meeting will be connecting the dots between creation justice, economic justice, environmental justice, and LGBTQ justice.

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



Our keynote speaker is Bill McKibben (pictured here) whose 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!

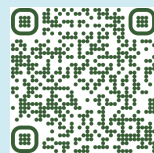
[Indie Bound](#)

[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 **first come, first served basis**. 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 \(Print\)](#)

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

ON THE MORALITY OF ABORTION

Newfane Church
11 Church Street

Tuesday, March 28
7:00 pm



OUR CONVERSATION PARTNER:

ELIZABETH FREESE, PH.D

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 anxiety-provoking 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. 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!](#)



QUESTIONS?
lingelbachj@vtucc.org

**Black
Lives
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 appropriation of black music.

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

**April Registration
in Guilford**

**May Registration
Mallets Bay**

The Seven Last Words of Christ by Franz Joseph Haydn

5 pm Sunday,
April 2nd,
Richmond
Congregational
Church

7 pm Friday,
April 7th,
Peacham
Congregational
Church

Singers: Martha Peck, Cara Hill,
Paul Bishop, Jose Schmidt
String Quartet: Susan Janes, Jane
Tulloh, Jody Racht, Melissa Perley
**Music of great power, anguish, tenderness
and love**

**The Hope Fund Discernment Team is pleased to
announce the Guilford Community Church as the
first recipient of a Hope Fund Grant.**

Guilford Community Church is creating a park for the residents of Guilford and the surrounding communities. The Guilford Community Park “will feature a 48’x24’ timber-frame pavilion in the old Vermont style, a classic seven circuit labyrinth, a playground for young children, open areas for kicking a ball or throwing a Frisbee, and a campfire pit for singing songs and telling stories. The park will serve as a platform for music and cultural events, a public space for having a picnic or getting away from it all for meditation and relaxation.”(GCC, Hope Fund application)

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.



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 smwkersch@comcast.net.

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

[Amazon wish list here.](#)

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

HOPE FUND FOR THE FUTURE



**“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see”
(Hebrews 11:1)**

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 are:

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 mourns the loss of her both

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



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



Just for fun!!!



Click here to update your contact information!!!

Justice Witness Ministries is Back!

Your conference has a robust group of social justice-minded folks working together on several issues. Here's an update on our activities:

Justice "Road Show"

We're putting together a 90-minute workshop to share current activities and brainstorm ideas around racial, reproductive, and environmental justice, global mission, and gun safety. This workshop will involve videos, discussion, and hands-on activities to get folks excited about our UCC witness to justice in the world!

This "Road Show" will be piloted as a Workshop at Annual Meeting (April 28-29) and

“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.

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@vergenesucc.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 (6th-12th 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.

Musical requirements: 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.

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

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



SAVE THE DATE!

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!](#)

NEAUCE 2023

"Beyond Church Walls:
Hearing New Voices"

May 4 - 6 (Th, F, S)

Pilgrim Pines
Swansey, NH

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

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 lbvtc@gmail.com
Associate Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree sangreepucc@gmail.com
Office Administrator: Elise Foster vermontconference@gmail.com
Ministries Coordinator: Rev. Jackie Lingelbach vtconmincoor@gmail.com
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!"