



# 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

May 25th, 2023

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## Message from the Conference

Vermont Conference friends,

Members of our Conference New Ministry Team gathered for an in person retreat recently (Alyssa May, Kevin Goldenbogen, Caryne Eskridge, Elliott Munn, Scott Couper and myself). It was a beautiful day, and we had some laughs together! We also talked about discernment. In light of the Hope Fund, how do we help churches discern what God is calling them to do? How do we help churches think about God sized projects, rather than just focusing on what they are already doing? I thought that we would talk in our retreat about ways that the Conference could support discernment programs in our churches.

As part of our day, I asked those there what they were most excited by in their churches right now. I was struck by how people talked about ideas that were brought to them by new people in the church, or by people on the edges of the church, or by people in the community. These new ideas did not generally flow out of carefully planned out discernment programs, but out of a willingness to listen to where the Spirit is moving.

One such idea was brought to me recently by another pastor in our Conference, Jessica Moore in St. Albans. Jessica wrote to me to encourage Vermont Conference churches to have a booth at the Vermont wide Recovery Summit at the Champlain Valley Expo in Essex Junction on Aug. 11th . Jessica said that "I found that tabling at a local recovery event last year was great outreach for my church. I think faith communities can be supportive and can play an important role in a person's recovery journey. I also think this can be a great opportunity to show people what a progressive, open and affirming church looks like."

This is not to say that planned out visioning or discernment programs in churches are bad, but that they need to be focused on hearing not just what the inner core members of the church are saying. In what ways might you as a lay

leader or pastor in your church listen to new people in your church, people on the edges of your church, or people in your community to discern where God is calling you to minister next?

Joyfully yours,  
Paul

## Latest News

FIRST  
ANNUAL  
JOINT WORSHIP

SUNDAY  
MAY 21, 2023

VERMONT  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

# NORTHEAST ASSOCIATION

THANK YOU EVERYONE





With great joy and excitement, the Washington Association has been newly reconstituted. Over twenty representatives attended a meeting last Sunday at the Barre Congregational Church to worship, elect officers, fellowship together and discuss ways to deepen the connections with the clergy, congregations, and the Vermont Conference of the U.C.C.



We are delighted to share the wonderful news that Rev. Jen Mihok, appointed pastor at the United Church of Underhill, gave birth to a healthy baby on Friday, May 12. Mira (pronounced MEER-ah) Joan Mihok Larson came into the world weighing 8 lbs 15 oz and measuring 20.25 inches. We pray for Jen and the family as they embrace this time of new life.



**Summer Food Grant**



It is that time of year again. Children will be out of school, and families find it hard to stretch their budget. In this time of Supply chain issues, and prices rising through the roof, The VT Conference Department of Justice and Witness Ministries is again offering grants to help your congregation help your neighbors. See the attached application form. Requests must be received by May 21, 2023. Upon receiving the grant, you promise to send a final report by August 30, 2023.

[Find the Application HERE!](#)

### Dan Haugh's UCC Privilege of Call Celebration Service at Stowe Community Church!



### Rev. Devon Thomas: Easter is intimately linked to a radical message of social justice

VT Digger May 16, 2023

This commentary is by Rev. Devon Thomas, who serves the Second Congregational Church in Hyde Park, Second Congregational Church in Jeffersonville and the United Church of Bakersfield and Fairfield.

The season of Easter is when people of faith remember a man who entered a hostile state capital to give voice to people who had no voice within a system of imperial and religious oppression.

In coming to Jerusalem, Jesus Christ was living into a Jewish tradition of advocacy that we see depicted to us in the Book of Proverbs: “Speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable. Speak out in order to judge with righteousness and to defend the needy and the poor” (31: 8-10), and which Jesus revived in his call that the “Last shall be first and the first shall be last. (Matt 20:16).

I think many of us who celebrate the Easter season forget that this time is intimately

linked to a radical message of social justice. I hold on to the hope that Vermont's people of faith, both those who attend church and those who do not, will heed the message of Easter and recognize that, even though many of our politicians represent our values, we each still have an individual responsibility to actively give voice to those who struggle to be heard. And just because many of us are returning to what feels like a post-pandemic normal, for many of our neighbors, things have never been stable or normal and their voices remain unheard.

Vermonters have a powerful voice and we have a responsibility to use it.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

## Some of the Champlain Association clergy and MIDS!!!



### Correction to Annual Meeting 2023 Hope Fund Donations Presentation-

We would also like to recognize the United Church of Dorset & East Rupert and Community UCC of Pawlet for their monetary donations to Hope Fund! Thank you so much for your thoughtful gifts!!!





SAVE  
THE  
DATE

VT UCC  
ANNUAL  
MEETING

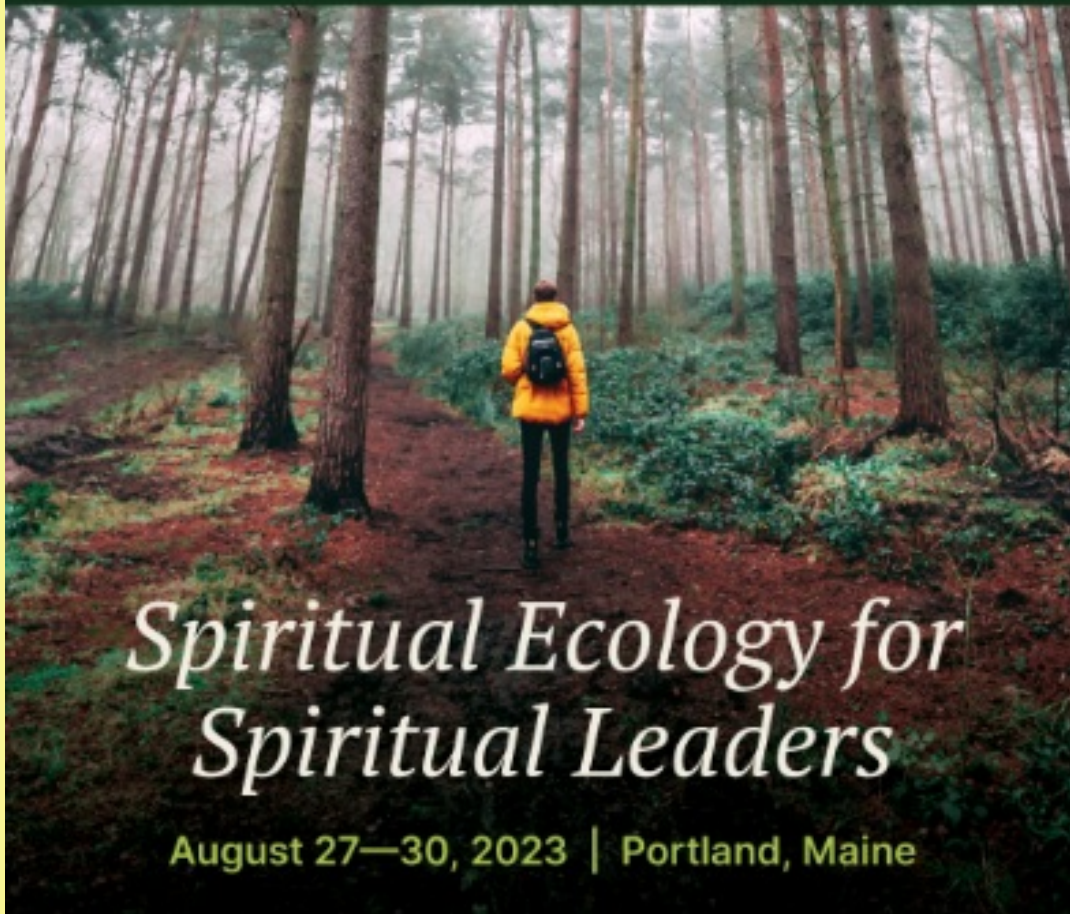
APRIL 19 & 20  
**2024**



Photos from the Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference 2023 have been uploaded to the website! Do you have any that you would like to share? Please email them to [VermontConference@gmail.com](mailto:VermontConference@gmail.com)

[Register for Funding Our Future HERE!](#)

Auburn



## *Spiritual Ecology for Spiritual Leaders*

August 27—30, 2023 | Portland, Maine

**Auburn Theological Seminary and The BTS Center are partnering to offer a four-day gathering in Portland, Maine, for early-career leaders working toward communal justice.**

Spiritual Ecology for Spiritual Leaders aims to provide participants with an immersive experience centered around connection with the Earth, stories of collective spiritual ecology, and each other.

Please share this opportunity with the leaders and communities in your life and **[read our full posting on Auburn Voices](#)**.

Warmly,

Keisha E. McKenzie, Ph.D., *Senior VP Programs*

Matt Deen, *Fellow in Public Theology: Ecological Justice*

[View Interest Form!](#)

# CULTURAL CAMP

PRESENTED BY SHIDAA PROJECTS INC.

Sponsored by:

802 Cars



The Montpelier Community Fund

July 25-26-27 8:15 am - 1:30 pm Ages 8 & Up

Drumming  
Dance  
Storytelling



Fabric Printing  
Tie & Dye  
Cooking



First Congregational Church of Berlin, 1808 Scott Hill Road, Berlin, VT

\$150.00 per camper - [shidaaprojects.org/programs](http://shidaaprojects.org/programs)

[Heather@Shidaaprojects.org](mailto:Heather@Shidaaprojects.org) 617-780-2458

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](mailto:VermontConference@gmail.com).

## **PRAYER CONCERNS**

The Rev. David J. Dean, Pastor Emeritus of Grace Congregational Church in Rutland. Rev. Dean died Palm Sunday April 2, 2023 in Pilgrim Manor, Cromwell, CT.

A Memorial Services will be held Saturday June 10, 2023 at 2 pm at Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, Rutland, VT. and on Saturday May 6, 2023 at



1 pm in the Event Center of Cromwell. CT.

Rev. Dean's obituary can be read here:

[Click here for obituary](#)

Memorial contributions may be made to Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, 8 Court St., Rutland Vermont 05701, or the Benevolence Fund of Covenant Living Of Cromwell, 52 Missionary Rd., Cromwell. CT 06416. Tossing Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements.

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Please keep Rev. Greg Briggs and his family in your prayers as they mourn the passing of his father.

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Please keep Sandy Soho, Co-Chair of the Racial Justice Task Force and her family in your prayers as they mourn the passing of her mother.

## **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!)



### **Happy Birthday to our Clergy!**

May 2nd  
Anne M. Hancock  
Gary F Lewis

May 5th  
Kurt F. Shaffert

May 6th  
Morris D. Pike

### **Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!**

May 1st  
Laura Engelken

May 2nd  
Mark Pitton

May 4th  
Jacquelyn Lingelbach

May 6th

May 8th  
Ken White

May 9th  
David C. Norling

May 10th  
Richard E. Ringenwald Sr  
Andrew Nagy-Benson

May 13th  
Duane Richard Brown  
Lucia A. Jackson  
Elliott Munn

May 15th  
Joan N. O'Gorman

May 18th  
David E. L. Brown  
Marcia a. Dorey

May 19th  
Melissa O'Brien

May 21st  
Leigh G. McCaffrey  
Gregory Briggs

May 24th  
Elizabeth Gleich

May 27th  
Jordan E. Dickinson

May 28th  
Amanda Swoyer

May 29th  
Kimberly McKerley  
Mark R. Pitton  
Terry M. Hanley

May 30th  
David N. Vanderlinde-Abernathy

Steven Berry  
Marjorie MacNeill

May 10th  
Rona Kinsley

May 15th  
Janice Chilek

May 16th  
Paul Willard  
Margaret Wright

May 22nd  
Andrew Ponder Williams

May 23rd  
Thomas Kinder  
James Merriam

May 24th  
Donald Ferrell

May 28th  
Junius Peeler

May 31st  
Mary Brownlow  
Roger Daly  
Casseniette Poulos



**Farewell, Welcome and Blessings**  
**Pastoral Transitions since the 2022 Vermont Conference Annual Meeting**  
[For the most up to date information click here](#)

## Justice Witness Ministries

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 will be available to be presented at Association Meetings. Please contact Debbie Ingram at [debbie@viavt.org](mailto:debbie@viavt.org) 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 [debbie@viavt.org](mailto:debbie@viavt.org).

### 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 [debbie@viavt.org](mailto:debbie@viavt.org).

### 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 [kmbethanyucc@gmail.com](mailto:kmbethanyucc@gmail.com) 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 [debbie@viavt.org](mailto:debbie@viavt.org). As people of faith, let us "do justice" together!



## 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.

## VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS



Stowe Community Church  
Director of Youth Ministry Job Description

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**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@vergennessucc.org](mailto:elliott@vergennessucc.org).

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

<https://www.vergennessucc.org/ccfmsearch>

The Waitsfield United Church of Christ in Waitsfield, Vermont, an Open and Affirming church, is seeking a MUSIC DIRECTOR AND ACCOMPANIST to join our church ministry. We are seeking one person to fill both roles or two people to fill the two roles individually. This person should possess strong interpersonal skills, keeping lines of communication open between the choir and the pastor, and build and maintain relationships in the church.

**[READ MORE HERE!!!](#)**

**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.

# 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](mailto: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**



# **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:  
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!](#)

## 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](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).

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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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Connect with us



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

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