

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

April 11th, 2024

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EARTH DAY AND EARTH MONTH RESOURCES FOR CONGREGATIONS -Prof. Fred Taylor

With Earth Day coming soon, and Earth Month already underway, there are some great resources available for engaging your congregations in worship, education and advocacy around environmental issues. And some of these organizations are offering programs that combine environmental with racial justice and/or food related issues, demonstrating the kind of Intersectionality that many of us have been exploring.

Here are the links to resources:

The Climate Justice group of the UCC's national office is promoting a variety of events and resources for Earth Month. Here's a link to their page: Planning for Earth Month:

Resources for Congregations - United Church of Christ (ucc.org)

They're also planning a special 2 hour webinar on Earth Day, Sat. April 21, which unfortunately conflicts with our Annual Meeting, but if you're not going to AM, you might want to check this out, with Bill McKibben as the keynote speaker.

Here's a link with more info and

registration: https://www.ucc.org/event/2024-ucc-annual-



earth-summit/.

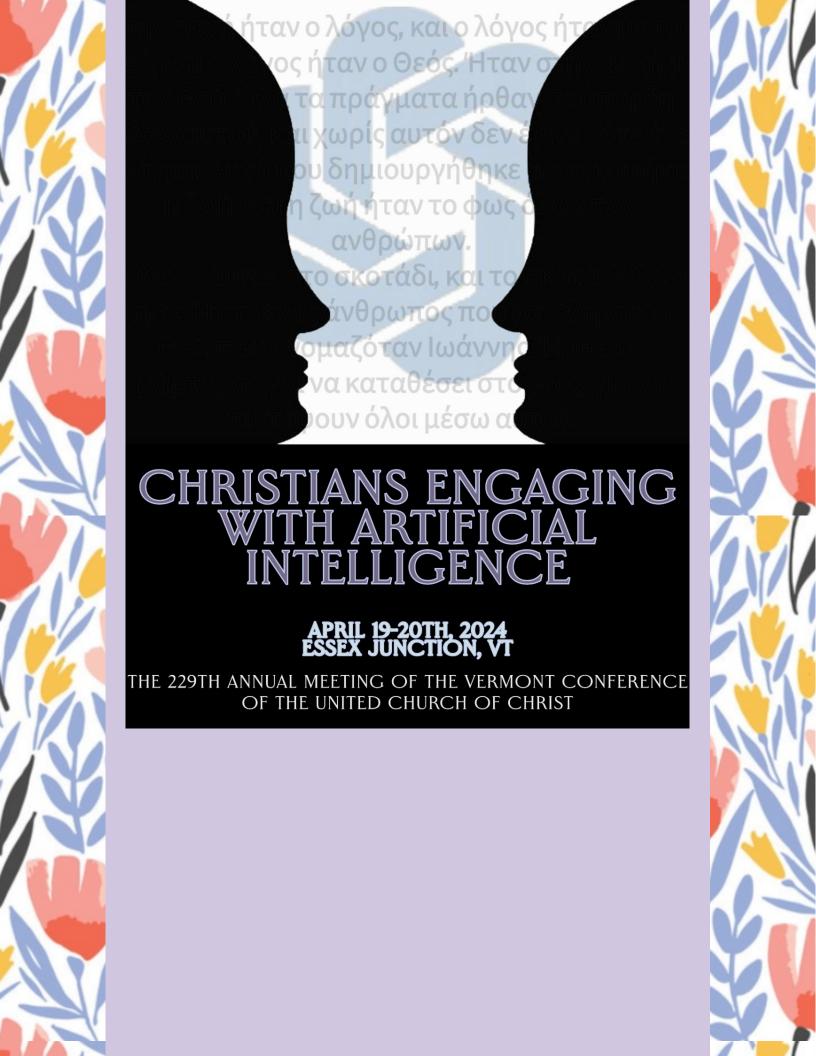
Interfaith Power and Light is offering a series of events and resources around Earth Week, which runs from April 19-28. Faith Climate Action Week — A moral call for climate change action. (interfaithpowerandlight.org). The Web-site includes resources for worship, prayer, and how to get involved (for a great little inspiring video). On this separate Advocacy page, find details about their "pledge to vote" and postcard campaigns. Advocacy (interfaithpowerandlight.org). We hope you can find ways to honor and advocate for the earth in the next few weeks.

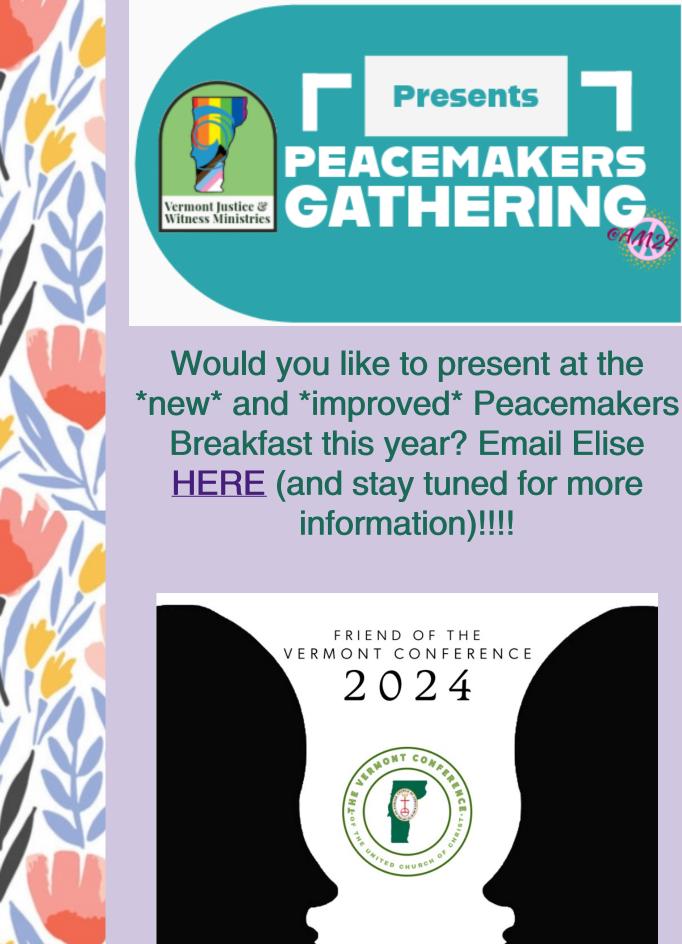
PLANNING FOR EARTH MONTH



Latest News

ANNUAL MEETING 2024







This year when you make a



donation or pledge to donate to Friends of the Conference, you get the free gift of a tote bag, tee shirt, or both (respectively). These have been ordered in very limited quantities, so we have made them available for preorder! We will reserve your gift as soon as you pledge!!!



MAKE YOUR PLEDGE HERE!!!

The "Nun on the Bus" Comes to Randolph as we Honor Betty Edson



Bethany Church UCC in Randolph is bringing Sister Simone Campbell to the Chandler Center for the Arts on April 21, 2024. Chandler is located at 71 N Main Street in Randolph.

Sister Simone (Roman Catholic Sister of Social Service) is a religious leader, attorney, author and recipient of a 2022 Presidential Medal of Freedom (the United States' highest

civilian honor). She has extensive experience in public policy rooted in the lived experiences of people at the economic margins of society. Now she leads "Understanding US" focused on political healing. For 17 years she was executive director of NETWORK, Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, and leader of Nuns on the Bus, who advocated for economic justice and adequate funding for safety net programs. Her healthcare policy work was seminal in passage of the Affordable Care Act. On Chandler's main stage, Sister Simone will address economic inequities and poverty in rural communities and how we might bridge the deep political divides among us. The Chandler doors will open at 1:00 for TED talks by several Vermont Peace and Justice Groups, including Migrant Justice, the VT ACLU and Vermont Interfaith Action. Vermont Peace and Justice groups will also be tabling in the Chandler Gallery at the event. Sister Simone's lecture will begin at 2:00 pm. Sister Simone's presentation will inaugurate The Betty Edson Peace and Justice Lecture Series. Betty Edson, who passed away in 2022, was a long-time peace and justice advocate and founder of the Bethany Church Peace and Justice Committee. She was a leader in the Vermont Conference and served as the licensed lay minister with Sharon Congregational Church, UCC for 13 years. Betty believed that we could bridge the political divides among us through education, discussion, compassion and listening. She was also passionate about income inequality, having been a long-time supporter of the Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council and helped with their annual Legislative Day. Betty Edson paved the way for advocacy for so many at Bethany – and well beyond! Sister Simone will preach at Bethany Church on that Sunday morning, ahead of the afternoon event. If you would like to join us for worship or receive the zoom link, please email Bethany's pastor, Rev. Kim McKerley at kmbethanyucc@gmail.com. We'd be delighted to have you join us for this special day with Sister Simone.



Join Moms Demand Action!!!



Moms Demand Action is a grassroots movement of Americans fighting for public safety measures that can protect people from gun violence. We pass stronger gun laws and work to close the loopholes that jeopardize the safety of our families. We also work in our own communities and with business leaders to encourage a culture of responsible gun ownership. We know that gun violence is preventable, and we're committed to doing what it takes to keep families safe.

We were founded by Shannon Watts, a mother of five. In 2012, the day after the Sandy Hook tragedy, Shannon started a Facebook group with the message that all Americans can and should do more to reduce gun violence. The online conversation turned into a movement of moms, dads, students, families, concerned citizens, and survivors working together with our partners in the gun violence prevention movement to end this uniquely American crisis.

Moms Demand Action has established a volunteer chapter in every state of the country and Washington, D.C. and is part of Everytown for Gun Safety, the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country with nearly 10 million supporters.

Our Vermont chapter is a wonderful group of people from around the state. We are actively seeking volunteers in a variety of capacities. Truly, no role is too small. If any of this resonates with you, please reach out to membershipVTMoms@gmail.com. We would love to meet you!

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE!

Global Ministries seeks candidates to serve internationally:

Fully Supported Mission Co-Workers

- · Salary and Benefits Provided
- Priority Positions
 - o Physician, East Timor
 - Physician, Zimbabwe
 - o Academic, Philippines
 - o Other Positions TBA, Africa Region

Global Mission Interns (21 - 30 years old) **Short-Term Volunteers** (2 weeks - 6 months) **Long-Term Volunteers** (1+ year)

To apply visit www.globalministries.org or contact Rev. James Semmelroth Darnell, International Recruitment and Training Coordinator at jsdarnell@dom.disciples.org.

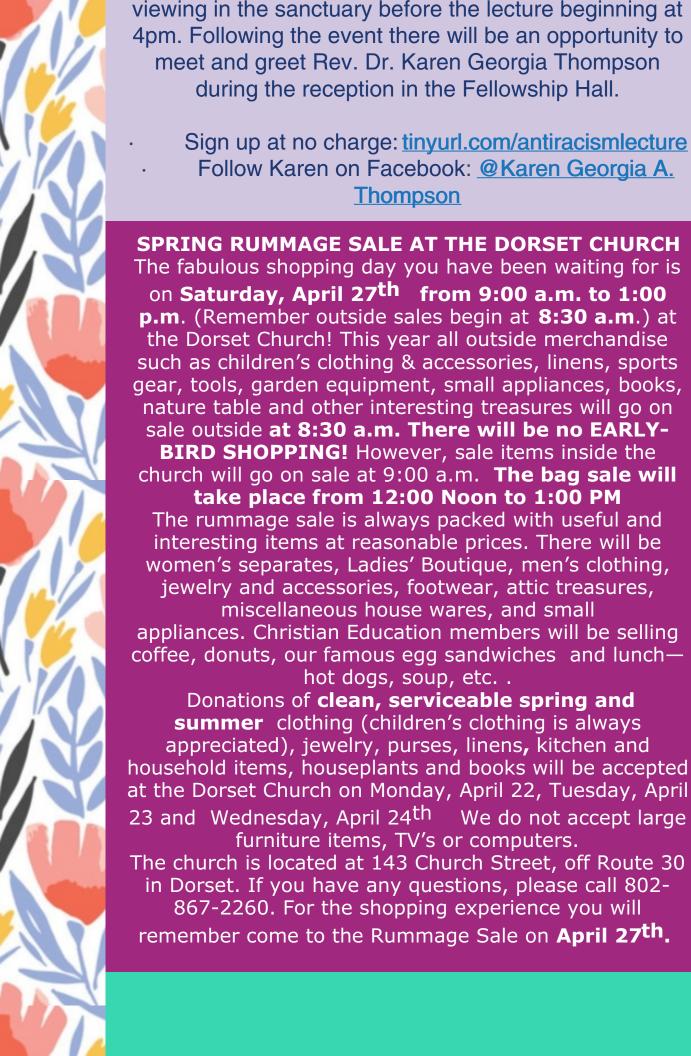


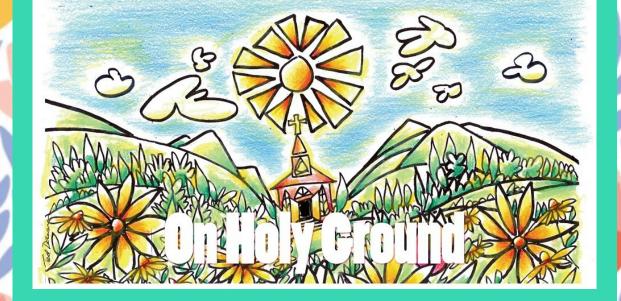
CONGRATULATIONS!



Rev. Kurt Shaffert and Katie would like to announce the birth of their son, John-Louis Schaal Walsh!!!







Dear Friend:

God calls us into community. God desires for us a big, inclusive, expansive, welcoming community. One where "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome." Our General Minister & President Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson calls this a "big tent" community. God wants our congregations and our whole Christian movement to be a "big tent" where all can be genuinely welcomed.

The Strengthen the Church Offering supports congregations and initiatives that help us live into the United Church of Christ's "big tent" vision. Funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and renewal initiatives in existing congregations. Your conference and the national ministries work together to use these funds for projects that matter now and for the future of our movement.

Through this offering, we further our commitment to being a multi-racial/multi-cultural church that is accessible to all.

Please join with people across the UCC in promoting the Strengthen the Church Offering on May 19, 2024. You can find materials to promote this year's Strengthen the Church Offering in your congregation at UCC Resources.

Download Now

Thank you again for your support of this campaign.



Family and the SG Family Weekend conferences are open to all - singles with or without children, couples with or without children - all ages are invited and included! There is programming for everyone. Your time on Star Island can be as busy as you would like it to be or it can be completely unscheduled. The SG1 Youth conference runs separately with its own staff and is open to 9th graders through graduating seniors. SG2 has an integrated youth program.

The Star Gathering Conference 2024 dates are:
STAR GATHERING 1 FAMILY: JULY 28 - AUGUST 4
STAR GATHERING 1 YOUTH: JULY 28 - AUGUST 4
STAR GATHERING 2 FAMILY & YOUTH: AUGUST 4 - 11
STAR GATHERING FAMILY WEEKEND: AUGUST 30 - SEPTEMBER 2

READ MORE HERE!

Ministry21: Equipping 21st Century Leaders for Ministry in a Changing World A partnership of the Vermont and New Hampshire Conferences of the United Church of Christ



If you've attended Conference events lately, you'll have noticed that many of our churches are lively and joyful regardless of the size of the congregation. We have so much spirit, joy, and courage to offer the

communities in which we serve! We are actively engaged in the ministry Jesus did, feeding bodies and souls, working for justice and safety for marginalized peoples, resisting the powers of war and divisive hatreds, and worshiping faithfully.

To support the needs of these amazing churches for skilled leadership, our Conference is joining with our UCC neighbors in New Hampshire to develop Ministry21 — a partnership designed to help equip lay leaders for service in the Church through a three-year program of courses. Ministry21 will launch in September of 2024, bringing students together one Saturday per month to develop their skills and knowledge in preaching and worship leadership, the practical aspects of leading congregations, and pastoral tasks of caring for parishioners and engaging in ministries in the community. This program is particularly designed for licensed clergy and those potentially seeking licensure, as well as lay leaders who wish go deeper in their support of their local congregation.

One of the very life-giving opportunities for the local church is to take note of the gifts that are evident within the church family and encourage their development. If you are clergy or a lay-leader who has noticed the gifts of someone in your worshiping community, and you suspect they are being called to deeper learning and service within the church, please encourage them to contact Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno, the Vermont Conference Dean of Ministry 21. Susie can be reached by text or phone at 802-579-8356, or via email: Ministry21.vtconferenceucc@gmail.com Thu-Sat May 2 - 4, 2024 NEAUCE Conference Sacred



Findling **Guest Speaker** Debbie Gline Allen



Register Now!



Register HERE!!!

Greetings NEAUCE Community, We want YOU To Find Rest For Your Soul!

Join us in "Keeping Sabbath Sacred" this May at NEAUCE 2024 on the beautiful Pilgrim Pines Campus in Swanzey NH.

Registration is open for the **53rd Annual NEAUCE Conference**. Gather with your colleagues for amazing worship, a variety of specialty workshops, networking, rich discussions, creative play, and relaxing opportunities.

Our Keynote, Rev. Matt Carriker will focus on **Sabbath Practices** that will

guide us into long-term rhythms of rest amidst the busy, demanding schedules of our lives and ministries. In "Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in our Busy Lives," Wayne Muller says, "Without rest, we respond from a survival mode, where everything we meet assumes a terrifying prominence... a period of rest is not simply a human psychological convenience; it is a spiritual and biological necessity." We have largely forgotten the Sabbath as a church. Jesus models a way of Sabbath as a refuge- setting aside a sanctuary in time to "disconnect from the frenzy of consumption and accomplishment and consecrate our day as an offering for healing all beings... the world aches for the generosity of a well-rested people." (Muller) Moving away from the legalistic, dreary Sabbath, Jesus invites us to reclaim the Sabbath not simply for self-care, but for the good of the church and the world. Come, explore together how this practice can offer nourishment, delight, savoring, and blessing. Also joining us is **Guest Speaker Debbie Gline Allen, SNEUCC Minister of Faith Formation.** She will invite us all to explore the implications and implementations for Christian practices of hospitality that can lead to transformational congregational ministry fully grounded in a culture of welcome and acceptance. As faith formation leaders accommodate post-pandemic shifts and changes, this intentional perspective may be just what your church needs to enliven an intergenerational focus. We are so excited to gather in person once again and meet new faces or reconnect with beloved colleagues from years in this ministry. Being a part of this three-day retreat is always magical, memorable, and transforming in so many ways. Come, Rest, and Reclaim Sabbath in ways that are just right for you! Kristin Putnev NEAUCE Chair Director of Faith Formation, Youth and Families Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC Seekonk, MA 02771 774-991-1555 **Online Boundary Training Classes 2024** For All Authorized Ministers - Licensed, Ordained & **Retired** Boundary Awareness Training: Through the Lens of Clergy Wellness from the Southern New England Conference UCC Good professional boundaries allow ministry and those who do it to thrive with health and wholeness. Through the lens of clergy wellness, authorized ministers will renew their understanding of and develop skills for maintaining boundaries in an ever-shifting ministry landscape. Upcoming Trainings are online via Zoom: June 5, 2024, 9:30am-2:30pm

September 16, 2024, 9:30am-2:30pm November 12 & 13, 2024, 6:30PM-8:30pm (both sessions must be \$85.00. at holmesd@sneucc.org or 508-244-4399. September 4 and 5, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. (PT) training-may24 \$199. 1.5 Credits \$350 The registration link for this course is: boundaries-and-ministerial-self-care **Required Texts** Paulist Press, ISBN: 978-0-80910463104 Ethics and a Life of Meaning begins May 1, 2024

The cost for the training is: SNEUCC Clergy - \$65.00; all other Clergy -

If you have questions regarding the training please contact Deb Holmes

Enkei Resolutions – online training Cost: \$60

https://enkei-resolutions.com/boundary-training-registration/

Leaderwise - Online via Zoom Cost: \$85 MAY 15 & MAY 16 (3:00 PM TO 6:00 PM CENTRAL)

https://www.leaderwise.org/workshops-programs/boundaries-

Convergence – self paced online course that can be taken at any time. Cost:

Certificate provided on completion – turn into the Conference office. https://www.faithlead.org/p/boundarytraining-clergy

PATHWAYS Theological Education, Inc - PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES AND MINISTERIAL SELF-CARE -Synthesizing Courses (Level 3) - MP30606 -

The website link is: https://www.pathwaystheological.org/

https://www.pathwaystheological.org/index.php/programs/ministr y-preparation/ministry-preparation-tagclasses/professional-

- Lebacqz, Karen, and Drickill, Joseph. (2000). Ethics and Spiritual Care: A Guide for Pastors, Chaplains, and Spiritual Directors. Abingdon Press. ISBN: 978-0-678-
- Gula, Richard M. (2010). Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers.

For **PATHWAYS THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION, Inc.** Late Spring and Summer courses, go to the **schedule** to find out more and to sign up:

- Stories of Christian Saints and Sinners begins May 8, 2024
- Preaching for Special Occasions begins May 8, 2024
- UCC History and Polity begins May 8, 2024
- Congregational Ministry and the Future Church begins May 15,
- What about the Bible begins June 1, 2024
- Variety of Belief within Christianity Today begins June 19, 2024
- Introduction to Spiritual Health (Pastoral Care) begins June 19,
- Practicing Our Faith in the Public Square begins June 26, 2024
- Pluralism and Religion in North America begins July 10, 2024



Isabel Wilkerson Pulitzer Prize-winning author



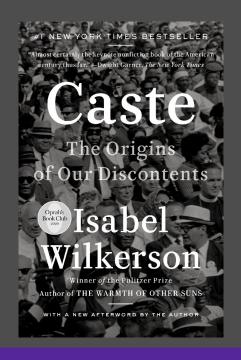
Author of Caste: The Origins of Our
Discontents
Virtual Presentation
April 28, 2024
6:00 pm
Hilton Hotel
60 Battery Street
Burlington, Vermont

The Burlington Community is honored to welcome Isabel Wilkerson, Pulitzer Prize-winning Author, to give a virtual presentation on her new book, Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents.

Please reserve an advance ticket for this event.

There will be a 30-minute presentation followed by a 30-minute Q&A.

\$45.00 Purchase Tickets







SPRING'24 Webinars

7PM-8:30PM EACH NIGHT

- 2/27/24. ONA 101 Starting the Open and Affirming Journey.
- 3/19/24. ONA 201- We're ONA, What's next?
- 4/23/24. ONA and the Bible.
- 5/28/24. Beyond The Binary Panel: The spectrum of gender.
- 6/25/24. Unpacking Attraction with the Bible — A Deep Dive into Bisexuality, Pansexuality, and Asexuality.
- 7/30/24. Navigating Ethical Non-Monogamy & the Bible: Open Relationships, Polyamory and More.

Register Here!

How to Become ONA

Greetings from Horton Center!

My name is Tivvi Pare and I am the Executive Director of Horton Center, the Outdoor Ministries site of the UCC in New Hampshire. Horton Center is an incredibly beautiful place where people of all ages come to rest, rejuvenate, reflect and relax! We have seven weeks of summer camping starting in late June and running through early

August. Campers entering 3rd grade through 2024 high school graduates come for a week at a time to explore their faith, be part of an inclusive



Christian community, try new things (rock climbing, archery, hiking, etc!), and make new friends. There are also opportunities for adults, families, and entire churches to come up to our mountaintop "thin" place!

I'd love the chance to connect with you and share more about the opportunities Horton Center holds for you, your youth, your churches and more!

Please complete this form and plan to attend an informational Zoom meeting so that I can meet you and provide more information about camp.
All are welcome at Horton Center!

Shalom,
Tivvi Pare (she/her)
Executive Director of Horton Center
tpare@nhcucc.org
603-545-9660
www.hortoncenter.org

LEARN MORE HERE!

PRAYER CONCERNS

We pray for all affected by the ongoing work and recovery from flooding and other natural disasters.

Prayers for all our first responders, volunteers who are working so hard during this difficult time.

For those grieving and harmed by violence and hate, including Hisham Awartani, Kinnan Abdalhamid, and Tahseen Ali Ahmad.

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!)



Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

April 6th
Mark Blank
Robert Hamm



April 9th Christine Boardman

> April 12th Cynthia Batten

April 13th Sandra Daly

April 15th Rona Kinsley

April 15th Lynn Bujnak

April 19th Rameen Zahed

April 21st Ezra Chapola

April 23rd Kim LaRose

April 27th Elizabeth Fisher

April 9th Caryne Eskridge

April 14th Robin Junker-Boyce Laurie S. Krooss

April 29th Judith D. Waible



Farewell, Welcome and BlessingsPastoral Transitions since the 2022 Vermont Conference Annual Meeting

For the most up to date information click here

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 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.





SASH is **free** and available to Medicare-eligible people in our community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SIGN UP, CONTACT:

Sue Balfe 802-989-3134

VTCUCC CLASSIFIEDS

College Street Church and First Congregational Church are seeking a gifted minister to lead a combined Christ-centered peer group of 6-12 graders in Christian discipleship through theology, service, fellowship, and fun.

Purpose: To oversee programs and service-learning opportunities which facilitate the spiritual development of the youth (6th-12th grade) in our two congregations. Supervised by: College Street Congregational Church Pastor, in consultation with the Lead Pastor of First Congregational Church. Works collaboratively with the lay leadership at both churches.



To apply - please send a Resume and Cover Letter to youthministry@firstchurchburlington.org

Learn More Here!

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light Seeks Coordinator

Job Description-Coordinator
Vermont Interfaith Power & Light

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light (VTIPL) is a non-profit organization that provides a religious response to climate change via education, advocacy and working with faith and spiritual communities and their members to reduce their carbon emissions and energy costs.

Read More Here!







WE'RE HIRING!

YOUTH ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

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 10 hours/week, part-time Youth Activities

Coordinator who is ready to build on a solid foundation and bring new life to the growing
ministries of SCC. Duties include developing inspiring and engaging service projects,
social outings, bible studies for students 6th grades and up...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 jobs@stowecommunitychurch.org. The position is available for the right person to start immediately.



Music Director Wanted

The Danville Congregational Church in Danville, Vermont is seeking a part-time Organist/Music Director. Responsibilities include providing organ/piano music for the church's weekly worship service, providing for/or performing anthems and special music at all services, directing the church's choir, coordinating guest musicians, etc..

Salary and hours are negotiable.
For more information please contact Rev. Douglas Carter.
dcarter36@charter.net; 802-684-1151

The Pond Village Church in Brookfield is seeking a church musician willing to play for our 10am service

on Sunday mornings.

Contact: Millie Reynolds, Pastor at (802) 431-3043 or minedgoof@comcast.net

The <u>Bradford Congregational Church</u> of the United Church of Christ is searching for a part time organist/pianist. All interested persons should contact Pastor Jeff Long-Middleton. A job description is available upon request. Phone: 978-273-6399

Email: pastorjeffuccbradford@gmail.com



Vergennes is seeking a Sunday School Coordinator.!!!

Read More Here!

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 Munnat 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 (6th12th 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.

VT CONFERENCE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Christian Education:

Administration & Finance:

Music & Other Lay Ministries:

Music Director- North Pomfret Congregational
Church Musician- Tunbridge Church



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 Sangreesangreepucc@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.

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