



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

January 4th, 2024

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Dear friends,

We start a new year together this week, and I hope that your 2024 is full of possibilities!

One special Conference vitality event coming up this year is going to be with Paul Nickerson, a UCC minister who has served local churches, worked on Conference staff and for the past 15 years has been a full time consultant and coach to churches across the country, working with all the mainline denominations. Paul has successfully worked with a number of churches in the Vermont Conference, and he will be joining us on Saturday, March 9th from 930-3 at the Federated Church of Williston for the seminar:

“How to Help Your Church Grow!” The topics he will go over include:

1. Clarifying your sense of Purpose and Vision
2. How to understand the Community and your Church
3. How to reach new people in the unchurched and de-churched population
4. How to develop a discipleship program that helps people grow in faith
5. How to fund the future of our churches.
6. How online ministry impacts all the above topics
7. What very small congregations are looking at for future options

Each church will be asked to bring a team of a Pastor and at least 3 lay people. Each of the above topics will be overviewed, and then each church will choose the two areas they wish to address first. Churches will be clustered in cohorts around these topics for a year of training and coaching. In my experience, the year of coaching helps a church to put the principles of a seminar into practice.

The Hope Fund is funding special scholarships for Vermont

Conference churches to participate. We ask for \$100 for your church to come to the seminar (lunch included for all your participants) and \$250 for a year of coaching for your church. The first 10 churches that sign up will be eligible for this price. You can register below!

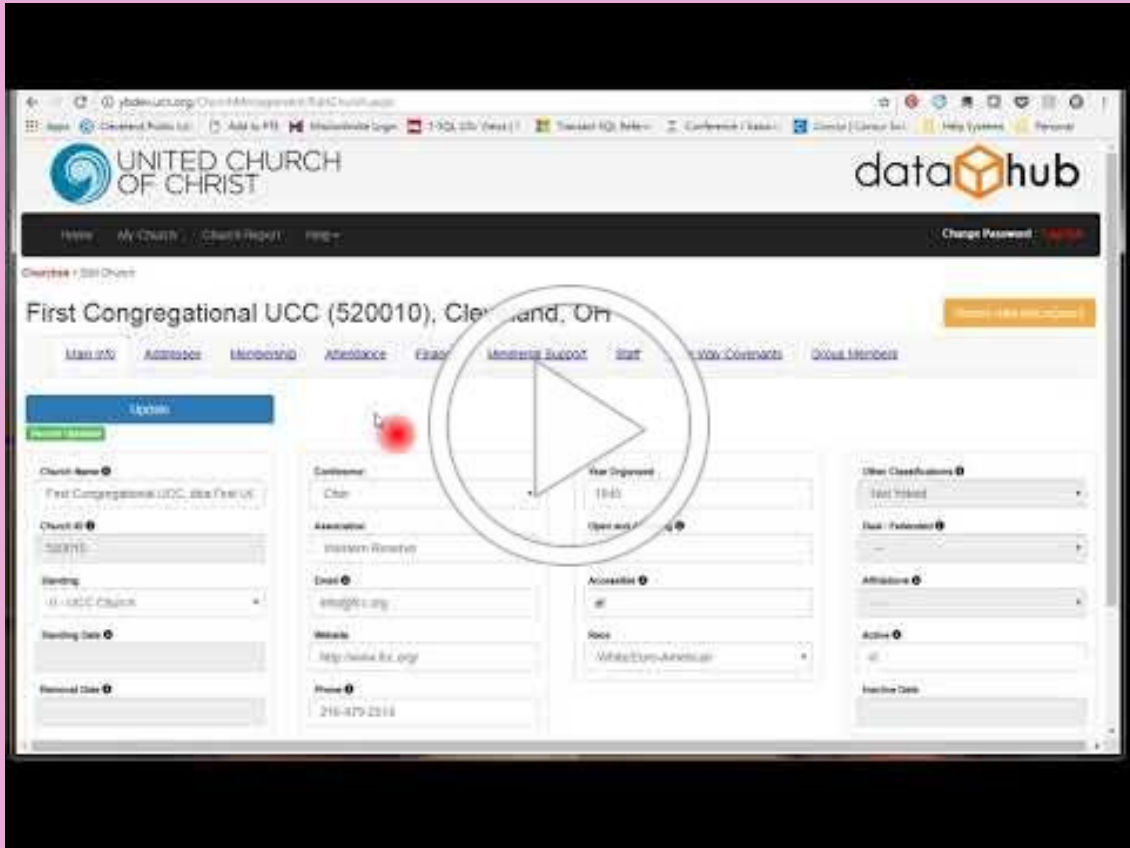
Faithfully
yours,

Paul

REGISTER HERE!

Latest News

It's Yearbook Time!!!



Hi Friends!

'Tis the season for the national yearbook! I hope you are as excited as I am!!

[You can sign in here!](#)

[You can find instructions here!](#)
[You can find the paper form here!](#)
[And you can always email Elise here!](#)

Thank You All!!

Dec. 31st, 2023 was the last service for four of our local pastors. They are all now retired. We would like to thank them for their tireless dedication to spreading God's Word and helping anyone who had the luck to cross their paths.

Please help celebrate them!



Rev. Dr. Arnold Isidore Thomas was most recently the pastor of Good Shepard Lutheran Church in Jericho. He was the Conference Minister of the Vermont Conference until 2008.

Rev. Amy Pitton has spent the past 20 years ministering to the members and friends of Bethany Church in Montpelier.





Rev. Leigh McCaffrey has spent the past 3 years as the shepherd of the Barre Congregational Church.

Rev. Dave Pruitt has been serving West Newbury since 2020.



Friends of the Conference!!!

Please enjoy this amazing video of all of the events that the Vermont Conference has been happy to sponsor or participate in this past year!

The Friends of the Vermont Conference was created as a way for individuals and churches to donate directly to the ongoing work of the Conference. 100% of the contributions stay in Vermont to help fund those programs, missions and ministries that touch and change lives throughout our beautiful state.



[Donate to Friends of the Conference HERE!](#)

PRIMARY SEASON

PRIORITIZING CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

JANUARY 10, 2024
1 PM ET

FAITH-ROOTED, PROPHETIC ADVOCACY
FREE WEBINAR

UCC Webinar— Primary Season: Prioritizing Climate Solutions

Recent headlines have highlighted a "waning enthusiasm" among voters who have helped propel environmental justice champions into office in previous elections. A decline in enthusiasm has been noted among Black, Hispanic, and young voters. Among voters concerned about the climate crisis, dissatisfaction and anger have arisen as fossil fuel projects in Alaska and Appalachia move forward. In this webinar, we will focus on what can be done to create the momentum needed for champions of climate justice to be elected into office. We will look at how climate solutions can be prioritized in the primaries, so that policies in accord with environmental justice values can be advanced. Our featured webinar guests include speakers from the League of Conservation Voters, the Black Voters Matter

Fund, and the Green New Deal Network. Even if you cannot make the webinar at its scheduled time on January 10th at 1 pm ET, still sign-up, and we will send you a link to a recording of it. **Register now!**
[Hyperlink: https://UCC.zoom.us/webinar/register/8317012863138/WN_T4pCqp6QQ7GZGPbcVJakqw]

HOPE FUND MAKES THREE MAJOR GIFTS!

The Hope Fund is excited to share that we have made three major financial gifts at the end of 2023! They are:

1. Support for our upcoming Pastoral Preparation Program. Susie Webster-Toleno will start in January as our Dean, and we will begin classes in September. The Pastoral Preparation Program will train lay people in our Conference to be pastors of some of our smaller churches, and we are in talks with the New Hampshire Conference to do this in collaboration with them.
2. Support for a Vitality Initiative for Vermont Conference Churches with Consultant Paul Nickerson. As 2024 begins, you will be hearing much more about this exciting program that will seek to energize our local churches together!
3. Support for a Contemporary Music worship service at First Church in Burlington that will reach out to the University of Vermont community and wider Burlington community during the season of Lent, and hopefully beyond!

Please know that the money you have given or are about to give to the Hope Fund is being well used, and is making a difference in the life of the Vermont Conference!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

May the holiday season bring you and your loved ones peace, hope, love and joy.

CLICK HERE to read some of our returning camp staff's reflections on summer 2023 and what Horton Center means to them. Registration for 2024 goes live on January 1st, don't miss it!

Shalom,
Tivvi Pare (she/her)
tpare@nhcucc.org



SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 2024 AT NOON

S A V E T H E D A T E

**JOIN POOR AND IMPACTED PEOPLE, CLERGY,
AND ADVOCATES IN YOUR STATE!**

**MASS POOR PEOPLE'S & LOW-WAGE WORKERS'
STATE HOUSE ASSEMBLIES
& TO THE POLLS**

**A DAY OF NATIONALLY-COORDINATED, SIMULTANEOUS
DIRECT ACTION ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY.**

**CALLING ALL PEOPLE
WHO BELIEVE IN & DEMAND**

**LIVING WAGES,
HEALTHCARE,
VOTING RIGHTS &
STOPPING VOTER SUPPRESSION,
EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL,
WORKER/LABOR RIGHTS,
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE,
ACCESS TO HOUSING,
FULLY-FUNDED
PUBLIC EDUCATION,
ABOLISHING POVERTY,
AND THE UNITY OF LOVE,
NOT THE DIVISION OF HATE.**

**BRING THE DEMANDS OF 140 MILLION POOR & LOW-WEALTH PEOPLE
DIRECTLY TO LAWMAKERS AT STATE CAPITOLS. EVERYBODY IN, NOBODY OUT!**

**WE MUST CHALLENGE POVERTY BEING
THE 4TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN THIS COUNTRY!**

**WE MUST ACTIVATE 85 MILLION POOR & LOW-WEALTH
ELIGIBLE VOTERS!**

WE WON'T BE SILENT ANYMORE!



The Hope Fund in Action!!!

On Sunday 12/3 at 4PM, **Charlotte Congregational Church** (an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ) hosted our 10th annual Messiah Sing. Together, 12 professional musicians and 170 chorus singers combined to fill our sanctuary with joyful noises and hallelujahs. It all felt like a giant gift, light in the darkness, sonic grace.



Though this was our 10th annual Messiah Sing, it was the first time since 2018 that we held it with a full contingent of musicians as a separate event outside of a Sunday morning worship service. That programmatic change, combined with a robust marketing effort, filled our sanctuary with a majority of attendees who had little or no connection to our church. That change also significantly raised the cost of the event. We are grateful to the Hope Fund of the Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ that provided a grant to make this event possible. These funds supplemented attendee donations and church funds to help us engage our wider community through the arts. Which is not just fun, not just a nice thing to do, but it's part of our core mission: *"Embraced by the healing love of Jesus Christ and inspired by his teachings, we commit ourselves to prayerful, compassionate, and courageous action in the world."*

Thank you to the people of the Vermont Conference for your vision and generosity through the Hope Fund to help your mission partners in Charlotte be the church that God in Christ is calling us to be.

The Vermont Conference UCC Justice and Witness Ministry urges all of us to become familiar with and make use of the content of the many UCC Resolutions that have been created over the past years. These resolutions, dealing with church governance and social justice issues, help us understand who we are as members of the UCC and act as guidance for our work within our Faith. The UCC

has three types of resolutions: Pronouncements, Proposals for Action, and Resolutions and other formal motions that address policy or moral issues. For example, in 2022 when the Vermont Conference supported the passage of VT Article 22, a declaration in the state constitution of the right to personal reproductive autonomy, we were able to refer to the long history of UCC action and statements supporting reproductive liberty: <https://www.ucc.org/the-ucc-fight-for-reproductive-justice/>. This past month, the UCC resolutions have offered solid guidance for the complex and volatile issue of the latest escalation of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The 2021 General Synod, under the leadership of Rev. Elliott Munn of the Vergennes Congregational Church, passed a resolution "decrying the oppression of Palestinian people;" adding this resolution to similar statements crafted by the UCC over the past many years: <https://www.ucc.org/synod-delegates-approve-resolution-decrying-oppression-of-palestinian-people/> As we work together within our UCC congregations, with other secular and faith partners, these resolutions offer guidance and legitimacy to our work and act as a witness to others about our UCC mission.



You're Invited! ♥



A special morning for women in ministry!
Starting with a guided centering practice,
followed with a "potluck" of sharing,
& closing in prayer.

This isn't a meeting, it's self-care!

All Women in Ministry are Welcome!
The First Friday of Each Month!
8:30-9:30 am on Zoom (EST)

Bring a small "dish" (a short poem, scripture, song,
photo, anything you'd like to share) or just come to
be fed.

Zoom Meeting ID: 811 2298 2824

Host Contacts:

CJ King: cjkingvt@gmail.com

Julie Demaree: juliejulie424@gmail.com

Mary S. Hoadley: pastormaryucc@yahoo.com



PATHWAYS
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Affordable, Accessible, Awesome

Are you busy with work, family, caring for others, standing up
for justice but need a moment each day to deepen your faith
and explore ways to hold on in a broken, fearful, too often

violent world? We invite you to check out our online courses where community grows, questions arise, peace comes, and faith deepens. Courses offerings can be found on the website [here](#). Now is a good time to look ahead to the 2024 course schedule and contact **PATHWAYS** with any questions you may have. Whether you would like to take one course or a whole program, PATHWAYS welcomes you. Heidi Hulme writes, “I have never been one to do things “traditionally,” and PATHWAYS allowed me the opportunity to continue to prepare my alternative path to ordination, while allowing me to serve a church, and be a wife and mother. ... I am grateful for this experience and education; it has blossomed my ministry, and changed my life.”

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.

Reverend Doctor Harry R. Flad died peacefully on Tuesday evening, December 30th, 2023 .Please keep all of Rev Dr. Flad's family, friends, and colleagues in your prayers.

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!)



Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

January 1st
Erin Reardon

January 3rd
Debbie Ingram

January 7th
Jeremy Kirk
Peter Plagge

January 9th
Douglas J. Cameron

January 12th
Scott Couper
Nancy G. Devor

January 18th
Roger C.B. Daly

January 22nd
Joan W. Vincent

January 23rd
Tracy Weatherhogg

January 24th
Douglas S. Moore
Mark D. Wilson

January 26th
Thomas C. Kinder

Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

January 7th
Bill Borrer
Debbie Ingram

January 14th
Kurt F. Shaffert

January 17th
Kevin E. Goldenbogen

January 24th
Amelia C. Pitton

January 28th
Dereen C. Vanderlinde-Abernathy

January 29th
Mary Hoadley



Farewell, Welcome and Blessings

Pastoral 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?

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 .

**OUR MISSION: TO HELP YOU STAY IN YOUR HOME —
HAPPY, HEALTHY & CONNECTED!**



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



WE'RE HIRING!

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Stowe Community Church is seeking a Part-Time Administrative Assistant. This staff member attends to many different office and administrative duties of the church, to further the goals of the Pastor and church leaders. Primary responsibility would be book-keeping; recording donations, transfer deposits, preparing budget reports.

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.



JUMP - the Joint Urban Ministry Project - an interfaith and community organization with support from many individuals, businesses, foundations and more than 20 faith communities - manages a direct services Drop-In Center (in donated space) at First Congregational Church UCC of Burlington, VT.

[Read Job Descriptions Here!](#)

Client Services & Outreach/ Development Managers



Based in Burlington, JUMP has been providing direct assistance to people in need in Vermont for 35 years. If you are a team player who cares about people and community, apply to work with JUMP!

MANAGER OF CLIENT SERVICES:

Manage JUMP Drop-In Center; meet with clients; allocate direct assistance; maintain records; supervise volunteers; collaborate with JUMP staff/leader team.

MANAGER OF OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT: Coordinate JUMP communications, outreach, social media; JUMP Drop-In Center involvement, collaborate with JUMP staff/leader team.

Apply with letter and resume: JUMP, P.O. Box 1657, Burlington, VT 05402.

Positions @20 hours/week. Details: jumpvt.org

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 Bradford Congregational Church 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



[Read More 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 Munnat elliott@vergenesucc.org.

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

<https://www.vergenesucc.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.

VT CONFERENCE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Christian Education:

Administration & Finance:

Music & Other Lay Ministries:

Music Director- North Pomfret Congregational
Church Musician- Tunbridge Church

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 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/>

Vermont Conference, UCC | 36 N Main St, Randolph, VT 05060

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