



# 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 7th, 2024

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Dear friends in the Vermont Conference,

As we continue our journey through the season of Lent, I thought I would share with you some thoughts from pastor and author Brian McLaren on the word discipleship:

“The word Christian is more familiar to us today than the word disciple. These days, Christian often seems to apply more to the kinds of people who would push Jesus off a cliff than it does to his true followers. Perhaps the time has come to rediscover the power and challenge of that earlier, more primary word disciple which occurs over 250 times in the New Testament in contrast to the word Christian, which occurs only 3 times. Maybe those statistics are trying to tell us something.”

“To be a disciple of a rabbi meant entering a rigorous program of transformation, learning a new way of life, a new set of values and skills. It meant facing a new set of dangers on the road. One did not say yes to discipleship lightly.”

“To be alive in the adventure of Jesus is to hear that challenging good news of today, and to receive that thrilling invitation to follow him...as a disciple.”

As you and I and our churches walk with Jesus on the road leading to Good Friday and Easter, I pray that each of us will experience the joy and hope and cost of discipleship, through the

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## Latest News

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**ANNUAL MEETING 2024**  
**\*\*\*The last day to book  
your hotel room at our  
special rate is THIS  
SUNDAY (03/10)!!!\*\*\***



CHRISTIANS ENGAGING  
WITH ARTIFICIAL  
INTELLIGENCE

APRIL 19-20TH, 2024  
ESSEX JUNCTION, VT

THE 229TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE VERMONT CONFERENCE  
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**REGISTER NOW!!!**

We have added two new workshops! Read about them below! If you have already registered and would like to change your workshop registration, email Elise [HERE!](#)

We are still looking to fill the positions of Parliamentarian for our Annual Meeting, as well as help with our youth events! If you have any interest in these, or others, or would like to know more, just click the volunteer form below!

**All slides, videos, media, info for the program, etc. are due by APRIL 1ST, 2024 per the Annual Meeting Planning Committee.**

[Exhibitor Form](#)

[Hotel Information](#)

[Itinerary \(DRAFT\)](#)

[Volunteer Form](#)

### **New Workshop!!!**

White Christian Nationalism  
with Rev. Ed Sunday  
Winters

We will talk about what it is. I try to share a brief timeline of historical antecedents to our current situation. Finally, we strategize ways that we can be proactive in sharing our Good News and in nurturing our democracy.

[Read More Here!](#)

### **New Workshop!!!!**

Digital Ministry!!

Accessible Church:  
Harnessing Digital Tools for  
Inclusive Outreach

Description: This workshop will explore responsible stewardship of digital tools for inclusive outreach. This presentation will explore how utilizing digital tools can increase the accessibility of your church space. We will dive into the abundance model of adding digital aspects into a congregational life regarding access to sacred space and information processing.

[Read More Here!](#)

Would you like to present at the \*new\* and \*improved\* Peacemakers Breakfast this year? Email Elise [HERE](#) (and stay tuned for more information)!!!!

**How Rev. Dr. Scott Couper and Centre Church is changing the world... or at least Brattleboro.**



## **Meal sites feel pressure as need from hungry Vermonters doubles**

At Loaves & Fishes, volunteers scramble to keep donations of dollars and ingredients on track for more hot meals  
By **Annie Landenberger**

"At Loaves & Fishes, one of the region's enduring meal services for those in need, volunteer cook David Treadwell says that "the demand has doubled."

The number of meals prepared and distributed every Tuesday and Friday out of the vast kitchen, prep, serving area in the basement of Centre Congregational Church (CCC) has gone from 100 per day a year ago to 250 every Tuesday and 200 on Fridays, says Loaves & Fishes facilitator and volunteer coordinator Ruth Tilghman of St. Michael's Episcopal Church (SME)."

**Read More in The Commons [HERE!!](#)**

## **'A safe place for everybody to do their thing':**

Brattleboro church becomes interfaith center  
By Chris Mays, Brattleboro Reformer  
Feb 21, 2024



BRATTLEBORO — Centre Congregational Church is sharing its space with Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, 12-step program members and chanting practitioners.

An asset mapping event at the church in July involved brainstorming with the community about how to utilize the large Main Street fixture and how the church could best facilitate such uses, the Rev. Scott Couper of Centre Congregational Church said. From there, efforts were made to create an interfaith center in which the Christian church would coexist with many different faith traditions.

**Read More in the Brattleboro Reformer [HERE!!](#)**

# 2024 STAR GATHERING UCC CONFERENCES

The Star Gathering United Church of Christ Conferences are held on Star Island, off the coast of New Hampshire. The Island is home to a retreat center with a faithful community of summer attendees.



This unique place offers so much in the span of a week...

- summer camp... but in a hotel!
- amazing views of the natural island-scape
- fun with friends, new and old
- worship in the island chapel, or on the rocks
- swim, row, kayak or rock hop
- let your inner artist out to play
- enjoy a quiet morning while your kids have fun at program



**SG 1 FAMILY WEEK JULY 28 - AUG 4**  
**SG 1 YOUTH WEEK JULY 28 - AUG 4**  
**SG 2 FAMILY WEEK AUG 4 - AUG 11**  
**SG FAMILY WEEKEND AUG 30 - SEPT 2**

Check out the  
YouTube video:



View the  
Programs offered  
on our website:



## Greetings from your sister organization, Star Island UCC!

I'm writing to invite you and your Congregations to explore the possibilities of summer at one of our Star Island UCC Conferences in August! Please share the word by posting the main Star Gathering 2024 Flyer in your Newsletter.

I've also included the individual program flyers in case you'd like a deeper dive into the programs and staff for 2024. There are Discounts offered for newcomers to the island as well as Scholarships available...the deadline for scholarship application is April 15th, so we want to get the word out soon!

For over 50 years, people have traveled to Star Island off the coast of New Hampshire to attend UCC Star Gathering Conferences. The SG1 and SG2

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 worshipping 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 worshipping 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 Ministry21. Susie can be reached by text or phone at 802-579-8356, or via email: [Ministry21.vtconferenceucc@gmail.com](mailto:Ministry21.vtconferenceucc@gmail.com)

NEAUCE Conference

Thu-Sat May 2 - 4, 2024



Keynote  
Rev. Matt Carriker



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 Putney  
NEAUCE Chair

Director of Faith Formation, Youth and Families  
Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC  
Seekonk, MA 02771  
774-991-1555

The Seven Last Words of Christ  
by Franz Joseph Haydn



7 pm Wednesday, March 27th  
1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church  
Berlin

7 pm Friday, March 29th  
Memorial Baptist Church  
Middlebury

Singers: Martha Peck, Linda Radtke  
Brian Clancy, Jose Schmidt

String Quartet: Susan Janes, Patricia Fitzgerald  
Jody Racht, Melissa Perley

*Music of great power, anguish, tenderness, and love*

## Online Boundary Training Classes 2024

### For Retired Clergy Only

Retired Minister Boundary Training with Rev. Tara Barber Thu, Mar 14, 1:30 – 4:30 pm ET

Maintaining healthy boundaries is challenging at any stage in ministry and it is particularly tender and difficult attending to boundaries as we transition out of our last call, and while in retirement. "A Sure Foundation", "The Ministerial Code" and Rev. Dr. Bruce Epperly's new book, "The Jubilee Years" along with case studies, will provide the content of this training. [Learn more & register.](#)

<https://ucc.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUkf-6urzKjGtYbmv55ZNX6UfqWLdsB2PDK#/registration>

### For All Authorized Ministers – Licensed, Ordained & Retired

*Boundary Awareness Training: Through the Lens of Clergy Wellness*

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:

- [February 28, 2024, 9:30am-2:30pm](#)
- [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 attended)

The cost for the training is: SNEUCC Clergy - \$65.00; all other Clergy - \$85.00.

If you have questions regarding the training please contact Deb Holmes at [holmesd@sneucc.org](mailto:holmesd@sneucc.org) or 508-244-4399.

**Enkei Resolutions** – online training Cost: \$60

- February 13 and 14, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. (PT)
- April 10 and 11, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. (PT)
- September 4 and 5, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. (PT)

<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-training-may24>

**Convergence** – self paced online course that can be taken at any time. Cost: \$199.

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 - 1.5 Credits \$350

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

The registration link for this course is:

<https://www.pathwaystheological.org/index.php/programs/ministry-preparation/ministry-preparation-tagclasses/professional-boundaries-and-ministerial-self-care>

Required Texts

- Lebacqz, Karen, and Drickill, Joseph. (2000). Ethics and Spiritual Care: A Guide for Pastors, Chaplains, and Spiritual Directors. Abingdon Press. ISBN: 978-0-678-07156-2
- Gula, Richard M. (2010). Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers. Paulist Press. ISBN: 978-0-80910463104

**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

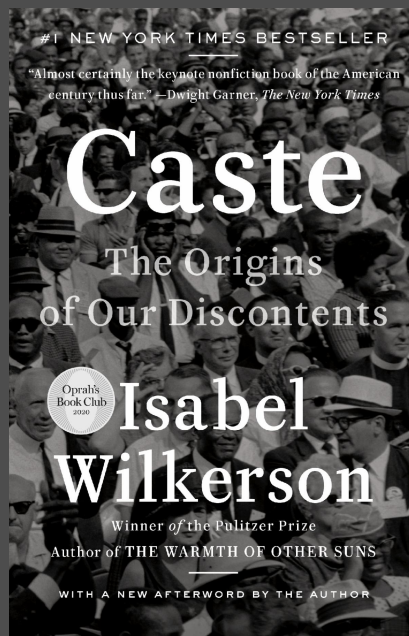
The Burlington Community is honored to welcome Isabel Wilkerson, Pulitzer Prize-winning Author, to give a virtual presentation on her new book, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*.

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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:tpare@nhcucc.org)  
603-545-9660  
[www.hortoncenter.org](http://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.

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# 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!)

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## Happy Birthday to our Clergy!

March 1st  
C. Michael Caldwell

March 2nd  
Larrimore C Crockett  
Amy Davin

March 3rd  
Catherine a. Cadieux

March 4th  
Joseph Will

March 5th  
SallyAnn Silfies

March 9th  
Chris Heintz  
Elisa Lucozzi

March 11th  
Linda L. Kulas

March 12th  
Josh Sharp

March 13th  
Kevin E. Goldenbogen

March 22nd  
Susan Cooke Kittredge

March 23rd

## Happy Ordination Anniversary to our Clergy!

March 1st  
Jessica Moore

March 5th  
Steve Longley

March 9th  
Marcia Dorey

March 17th  
Mark Blank

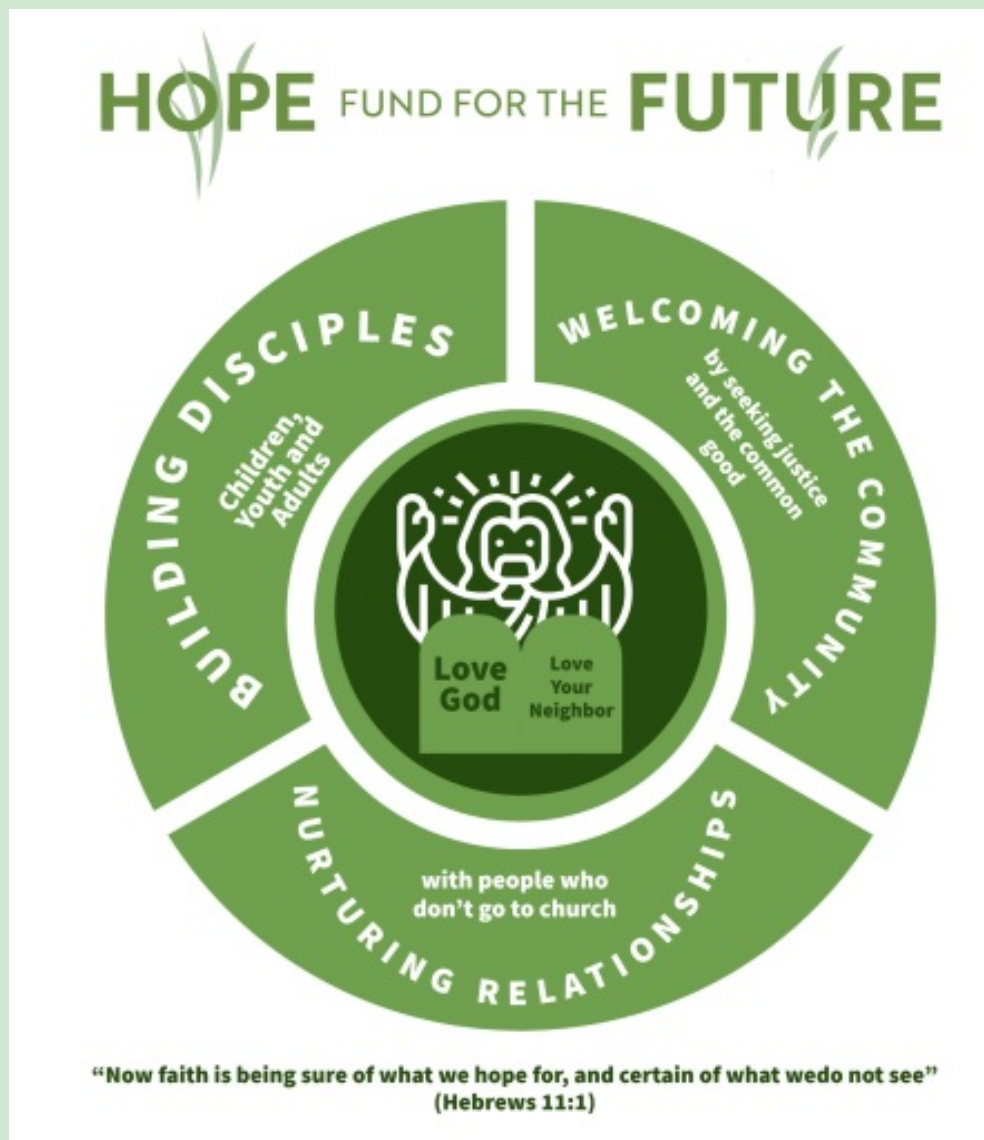


David Andrews  
Caryne Eskridge  
Hal C. Miller III

March 25th  
Jeffrey W. Cornwell  
Kathy W. Eddy  
Katelyn Macrae

**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?**



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) .



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

# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 (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.

## 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](mailto:lbvtc@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).

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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