



Vermont Conference, UCC Electronic Keeping in Touch

EQUIPPING CONGREGATIONS FOR CHRIST'S
MINISTRY AND MISSION TODAY AND TOMORROW

E-Kit

Feb 15, 2017

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Vermont Conference News

Lynn Bujnak will be worshipping at the Congregational Church in Barre

Pam Lucas will be worshipping at Hancock's final service

Jim Thomas will be worshipping at the Federated Church of Rochester

General Synod 2017!



Every two years, General Synod brings together thousands of faithful members of the United Church of Christ for formal church witness, inspirational worship, and fellowship with friends (new and old).

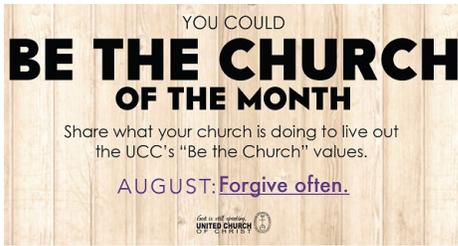
In June 2017, thousands from across the country (and abroad) will gather for General Synod 2017 in Baltimore, Maryland. Together, we will discern resolutions of witness, church structure, and function. We will stand up for issues that demand a faithful witness. And we will join together in worship each day to lift up the Stillspeaking God.

At General Synod 2017, we will "Make Glad!" as we celebrate, debate, worship and witness. The Vermont Conference is sending delegates and our Conference Ministers to participate in Synod this summer. We wanted to make sure you knew about it since it's so close - we usually have a goodly number of pastors and members of our churches attend as visitors when a Synod is within driving distance. Even better - you can take the Vermonter straight to Baltimore for an even easier way to attend!

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



[UCC News and Updates](#)



[Click image to read about Be The Church](#)

Colorado church multi-faith camp promotes peace across religious lines

Vermont congregation named UCC Church of the Month for "Embracing Diversity"

Agenda changes offer more free time to General Synod 2017 visitors

Statement on Draft Executive Order: "Establishing a Government-Wide Initiative to Respect Religious Freedom"

UCC churches cheered by court decision continuing freeze on immigration executive order

Commentary: It's our government. Let's take it back!

UCC welcomes Velda Love to lead racial justice ministry

Chicago church finally welcomes Syrian family

UCC leaders condemn decision to approve Dakota Access Pipeline

[More UCC news](#)



Lots of exciting stuff happens at Synod. This year we will consider a number of resolutions, including:

- A More Just Economy: Living Wages and Job Creation
- Toward Disability Justice: A Call to the Church and Churches
- Calling for Participation with the Boy Scouts of America Through Inclusive Scouting Programs
- On Recognizing and Studying Gun Violence as a Public Health Emergency
- On Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Church

And many more. There will be exciting and profound speakers and preachers, including Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, Glennon Doyle Melton, Aaron Mair, Rev. Dr. Amy Butler, and others.

There are always awesome worship experiences - there's just something about being in worship and full voice with thousands of your brothers and sisters that we don't get on a weekly basis. Moreover, there are workshops, service projects, great dining experiences, and, and, whew. I'm running out of space (and breath!)

Give it some thought, will you? It's a transformational experience, and it may just be the lift your spirit needs this summer.

Visit the General Synod website at:

<http://synod.uccpages.org/> Registration is now open.

If you decide to go, let us know. We're hoping for a significant Vermont contingent in Baltimore this summer!

Be in touch if you have any questions.

Peace,
Jim

Rev. Jim Thomas
Associate Conference Minister

Annual Meeting Registration is Open!

Registration for the 222nd Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, UCC is now open!

Click image for more information.

Care for the poor.

Food for Thought

Focus Scripture Matthew 5:13-20

Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, 19th century

"Angry people are not always wise."

Maya Angelou, 20th century

"Hate, it has caused a lot of problems in the world, but has not solved one yet."

Voltaire, 18th century

"It is forbidden to kill; therefore all murderers are punished unless they kill in large numbers and to the sound of trumpets."

Martin Luther King Jr., A Knock at Midnight: Inspiration from the Great Sermons of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., 20th century

"Let no man pull you so low as to hate him."

Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird, 20th century

"There are just some kind of men who--who're so busy worrying about the next world they've never learned to live in this one, and you can look down the street and see the results."

You can register yourself and up to eight participants.

[Click here for more information and to register](#)



The 222nd Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, UCC will take place April 28-29, 2017 at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee. **You can book your room now by calling Lake Morey Resort at 800-423-1211 and asking for the "Vermont Conference Annual Meeting" group rate.**

Everyone-delegates, authorized ministers, church members-is welcome and invited to the 222nd Annual Meeting!

[Click here for more information and to register](#)

It's UCC Yearbook Time!

The United Church of Christ's annual Yearbook is the central reference point for the UCC for information about churches, ministers and other data the UCC uses to better understand the health of our denomination and identify trends as we all plan for the future.

The UCC Yearbook relies upon all UCC churches, associations and conferences to submit their statistical information at the beginning of each year so the reference data is as accurate as possible. Using the UCC Data Hub, churches may upload their information directly for the Yearbook.

You can access the 2017 Yearbook Instructions and video tutorials

at: www.ucc.org/research_yearbook

The deadline for uploading church information to the UCC Data Hub is March 8, 2017.

If you are the designated Yearbook person and have questions, please contact the Vermont Conference Ministries Coordinator Jesse Davis at davisj@vtcucc.org or 802-728-4999.

Thank you!

**Timothy B. Tyson, Blood
Done Sign My Name: A
True Story, 21st century**

**"If there is to be
reconciliation, first there
must be truth."**

**Agnes Kamara-umunna,
And Still Peace Did Not
Come: A Memoir of
Reconciliation, 21st
century**

**"In life, we make the best
decisions we can with the
information we have on
hand."**

**Craig D. Lounsbrough,
21st century**

**"Contradictions are the
impossible chasms that
create forever separations.
God is the forever bridge
that creates impossible
reunions."**

**Krista Tippett, Speaking
of Faith, 21st century**

**"Truth can be told in an
instant, forgiveness can be
offered spontaneously, but
reconciliation is the work
of lifetimes and
generations."**

Leo Tolstoy, 19th century

**"Everyone thinks of
changing the world, but no
one thinks of changing
himself."**

**William James, 19th
century**

**"Whenever you're in
conflict with someone,
there is one factor that can
make the difference**



TOWARD COMMON GROUND

46th ANNUAL NEAUCE CONFERENCE

Greetings!

It is with great excitement and anticipation that we announce this year's Annual NEAUCE Conference: Toward Common Ground: Living Faithfully in a Diverse World Community.

Permeating the conference will be two important and timely issues: racial justice and interfaith matters. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to hear from leaders in these fields, and to receive guidance in and support for how they might teach and work with young people accordingly.

To that end, three Keynote Speakers will be presenting: Dr. Heidi Hadsell, President of Hartford Seminary, will provide the "interfaith" keynote. The Rev. Da Vita (Day) McCallister, one of the authors of the UCC's White Privilege curriculum and Connecticut Conference staff person, will provide the "racial justice" keynote. Dr. Courtney Goto, Assistant Professor of Religious Education at Boston University School of Theology, will provide the "faith formation" keynote.

[Continue here for more information](#)

**Vermont congregation named UCC
Church of the Month for
"Embracing Diversity"**

February 14, 2017

Written by Connie Larkman

between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude."

Will Smith, 21st century

"Throughout life people will make you mad, disrespect you and treat you bad. Let God deal with the things they do, cause hate in your heart will consume you too."

Steve Bruce, 20th century

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 20th century

"There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love."

Michael Novak, 20th century

"The more common vices today are likely to be spiritual: preoccupation, hyperactivity, a failure even to heed the natural rhythms of the body and the sense, distractedness, an instrumentalizing of people and time and activity."



Sunday School Coordinator

Williston Federated Church seeks a Sunday School Coordinator.

Plan and supervise Sunday School for children aged 3 years through Senior High. Recruit, train, and

One of the oldest churches in Vermont, named the UCC Church of the Month for "embracing diversity," won over the contest judges by proposing that a church in rural Vermont has to work pretty hard to embrace the kinds of diversity others take for granted. But the Guilford Community Church United Church of Christ, the spiritual home of 100-120 congregants of all ages, abilities and ethnic backgrounds has a lot going for it to back up that proposition.

"Diversity has become a source of fascination, joy and awareness in all of us," said the Rev. Lise Sparrow, Guilford Community Church's pastor. "This in turn, has created a context in which we can examine our differences and develop the skills necessary for conflict transformation both among ourselves and, hopefully, as we go forward into the larger world."

[Read the full article here...](#)

How to Have Difficult Conversations

17 Learn to practice what is good;
seek justice,
alleviate oppression,
defend orphans in court,
and plead the widow's case.

18 "Please come,
and let's reason together," implores the Lord.
Isaiah 1:17-18 ISV

Step one in having these conversations involves semantics. Let's start by giving this essay a different title:

How to have meaningful conversations
How to talk with someone on a subject on which you each have deeply felt and differing opinions
Do these titles better convey our meaning?

Step one involves acknowledging that it's not the conversation that is difficult, rather it's the topic. Whether the topic is racism, sexism, or gun violence, opinions are strong and emotions run high.

[Read more here...](#)

support teachers and other volunteers in Sunday School program. The Sunday School Coordinator will serve as a consistent and welcoming presence on Sunday mornings. This individual will coordinate and oversee our Christian Education Program and assist with Sunday School teaching when needed.

For a job description and to apply, Email Office@steeple.org at the Williston Federated Church.

Resources from WorshipWell

Be sure to check out the worship resources available at:



worshipwell.church

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### The Conference Resource Center

The following **VHS tapes** are available at no cost.

[Email me](#) if you are interested in them and I will mail them out to you.

Here is this week's selection:

You and your Aging Parents

Tear Soup - a recipe for healing after loss

Fundamentalism Violence

Cry Freedom

Break Forth Into Joy

Affluenza

Escape from Affluenza

### Stepping Forward Together: Advancing Equity and Cultural Competency to Improve Population Health by Vermont Care Partners

Join us for this timely and essential two day discussion about health care equity and the promotion of population health for Vermonters.

The two days will be filled with national, regional and local experts sharing their knowledge and experiences about health care, diversity, culture and how to best support the health of Vermonters.

[More Information and Registration...](#)

### Two Great Opportunities!

Our conference is in need of a new Open and Affirming Consultant and a Disaster Response Coordinator. Training and support available for each position. If you wish to learn more, please contact me.

Lynn bujnaki@vtcucc.org, 802-728-4999.

### *The BTS Center: "Course Corrections"*

#### *Nine-week, online class*

Starting at the end of February, The BTS Center will run a nine-week, online course called "Course Corrections" that delves into the apostle Paul's Damascus Road experience and its implications for leadership and growth in changing religious and spiritual landscapes.

A discounted early bird registration rate of \$375 (as opposed to \$425) is available through February 13th. [Click Here](#) for more information.

National United Church of Christ Musicians Association (UCCMA)

2017 Summer Conference

July 9 - 12, 2017

[Registration is Open](#)

Japanese American Remembrance Sunday

The Death and Resurrection of  
Jesus

In The Gloaming  
Son/Mother story

Understanding the Bible



These are just a few of the large amount here at the Conference. If you are in the area and want to stop in and look to see what we have on VHS, please do.

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February 19, 2017
Liturgical Resources

Yale University Online Classes Now Open to the Public
Learners may audit these courses Free of Charge

Take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity. Yale is offering three free courses centering on the work of eco-theologian Thomas Berry and the application of his work and writing to understanding the earth, God's gift of creation - the cosmos, and our relationship and responsibility.

This is an excellent opportunity for small groups in churches to participate in the courses, and then gather weekly to discuss with one another... And then launch a green team in their church.

Learn more in the course flyer or by visiting the registration website.



Thank You for Reading
An Open and Affirming Conference
[For the E-Kit Archive](#)

