



# Vermont Conference, UCC Keeping in Touch

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

E-Kit

July 19, 2017

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## Vermont Conference News

**Rev. Lynn Bujnak will be leading worship at the Second Congregational Church in Bennington.**

**Rev. Pam Lucas will be leading worship and meeting with Congregations at the First Congregational Church in Lyndonville.**

## Greetings!

Beloved of Christ,

I find myself reflecting on transition and change these days. There are many "moving parts" at



this time in the world, in the Church and in the Vermont Conference. I am troubled by changes that seem to bring less civility, less compassion

and less community both within our nation and around the world. These changes are provoking Christian and other faith communities to ponder our role in such times. Is there "a word from the Lord" for us to proclaim and live?

Further, we continue to find ourselves in a time of transition in our congregations. Over 40 of our churches are in some phase of pastoral transition. We know the ominous signs of decline and most of us know we are being called to something new, although we are not at all certain what that looks like. Harder to see, perhaps, are the signs of health, faithfulness and vitality that are also present. God is at work in us and in our congregations if we are willing to look and to listen.

Our Conference is changing as we prepare to wish Jim and Lynn Thomas well in their transition to ministry in the Atkinson Congregational Church in New Hampshire and thank them for their numerous contributions to our churches and pastors. This time of transition will allow us to ask the questions about what our congregations need to equip them for mission and ministry today and tomorrow and then create staff position descriptions for those purposes.

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



[UCC News and Updates](#)

**2017 Digital Stewardship  
Materials...[read more here!](#)**

Church camp in Chicago provides a place for all God's children

Traci Blackmon among clergy arrested in D.C. denouncing 'sinful and immoral' health care reform

Commentary: The Intersection of HIV Stigma and Hope

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Click image for more information.



Food for Thought

Focus Reading:  
Genesis 28:10-19a

Nadia Hashimi, When the Moon is Low, 21st century

"In the darkness, when you cannot see the ground under your feet and when your fingers touch nothing but night, you are not alone. I will stay with you as moonlight stays on water."  
and

"We all cross a hundred peaks to get even this far. And there will be more before we each make it to whatever God has fated for us."

C.G. Jung, 20th century

"Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes."

John Lewis Gaddis, 21st century

"It is worth starting with visions, though,

When talking with Carole Carlson a few days ago, she reminded me that times of transition and change are like a trust walk. I haven't thought of trust walks in a long time, but I remember the feeling of being blindfolded and then being led around by another person. Alright, I admit I may have a few trust issues, but it was difficult to trust that other person to lead me safely through the exercise. So, in these changing times, when we often are not able to see what lies ahead, we trust God to lead us, confident that we will be guided even in the times when we do not see the way ourselves.

Blessings on our common journey!

Lynn

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***Meet Jeffrey Tuper-Giles our Conference ONA Consultant. This week, he is offering reflections following his attendance at the UCC Coalition meeting for LGBTQ persons and allies.***

This is a reflection from **Jeffrey Tuper-Giles**, a member of the Barre Congregational Church, who was a Vermont Conference Delegate to General Synod in Baltimore July 29-July 4. Jeffrey is also the Vermont Conference Opening and Affirming Consultant for our local churches. He can be reached at (email address).

Galatians 3:23-29: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

I chose this text to use in my reflection as I spoke at the National Gathering of the ONA Coalition of the UCC which immediately preceded General Synod. It reminds me that the love of God binds us all together. We are one in the spirit and should really start acting as such. We have a dialog started nationally about

because they establish hopes and fears.  
History then determines which prevail."

Pico Iyer, *Falling Off the Map: Some Lonely  
Places of The World*, 21st century

"Finding a sanctuary, a place apart from time,  
is not so different from finding a faith."

J.D. Stroube, *Epiphany*, 21st century

"As I turned to leave, I looked down. Beside my  
foot, a sprout of greenery was clawing its way  
through the pristine nothingness to begin  
anew. It was later that I realized my haven had  
sent me a message, and it had shown me that  
nothing is ever completely lost, unless you  
cease searching."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th century

"People only see what they are prepared to  
see."

Rachel Naomi Remen, 21st century

"Perhaps the most important thing we bring to  
another person is the silence in us, not the  
sort of silence that is filled with unspoken  
criticism or hard withdrawal. The sort of  
silence that is a place of refuge, of rest, of  
acceptance of someone as they are. We are all  
hungry for this other silence. It is hard to find.  
In its presence we can remember something  
beyond the moment, a strength on which to  
build a life. Silence is a place of great power  
and healing."

Anne Lamott, 21st century

"My parents, and librarians along the way,  
taught me about the space between words;  
about the margins, where so many juicy  
moments of life and spirit and friendship could  
be found. In a library, you could find miracles  
and truth and you might find something that  
would make you laugh so hard that you get  
shushed, in the friendliest way. There was  
sanctuary in a library, there is sanctuary now,  
from the war, from the storms of our family  
and our own anxious minds. Libraries are like

gender identity and expression and what it  
means in relationship to our own spirituality and  
to God.

It's time we start talking about it in our  
churches. In the next few weeks I will be  
reaching out to my own church as well as others  
to think about a few topics related to this and  
how we identify ourselves, and how we identify  
as congregations. I would challenge each person  
reading this to take a moment and write out a  
simple phrase. Here is an example:

My name is Jeffrey Tuper-Giles. My preferred  
pronouns are He, Him, His. I am a married gay  
white man.

It's short and simple. It does however tell you  
something about how I identify myself. Even the  
order of the words I use make a difference. I  
choose to say married before gay and gay before  
white and white before man. I could have said I  
am a white man who is gay and married. Which  
is a very different statement. How do you make  
your statement? Are you willing to share your  
statement with me, the conference, your own  
congregation?

Words are important and Christ chose words in a  
way that teach us that his abundance is  
available to all people no matter how they  
identify. The particular phrase, "there is no  
longer male and female," offers a challenge to  
traditional binary understandings of gender  
roles. Let's take a cliché phrase we have all  
heard before and really try to live into it over  
the coming weeks: Let's think outside the Box.  
When we stop thinking in the binary and allow  
each other the room and understanding to  
express ourselves individually, we are living into  
the love of God. "Let us make man in our image,  
after our likeness..." We are created in the  
image of God.

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Act & Managing a Legal Background  
Screening Program***

the mountain, or the meadows behind the goat ladies house: sacred space."

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## Congratulations to Jim and Lynn !!



Friends, we have some exciting news! On Sunday I accepted the call as Pastor and Teacher of the Atkinson Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Atkinson NH. We'll be starting there in the fall. We will miss Vermont, but are really looking forward to this next chapter in our lives. <https://www.facebook.com/AtkinsonCC/>

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**VERMONT  
PRIDE  
THEATER AT CHANDLER**

Sponsored in part by the Vermont Conference United Church of Christ, Vermont Pride Theater presents on stage the concerns and

Trustworthy insights into current insurance concerns for churches: Background Check Compliance | Informing Congregation on Embezzlement | Armatus Training Updates | Why a Church Needs Insurance

[Read the newsletter here....](#)

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## Free Webinars!!

[Know Your Score! Abuse Prevention Self-Assessment](#)

[Keeping Ministries Safe: 5 Things Churches Can Do](#)

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Richmond Congregational Church is organizing a mission trip to build homes for low income families in Nosara, Costa Rica from February 24-March 5, 2018 (Chittenden East School Break). We are looking for people (high school aged and up through retired folks) to join the team! We will be partnering with Mercy Home Ministries to build the houses.

[Complete Information here.....](#)

[Video of previous trips...](#)

[Medical forms...](#)

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## Employment Opportunities

(If you have a job listed, please try to remember to let me ([Charri](#)) know if it has been filled!)

Music Director

Second Congregational Church, Hyde Park, VT  
We are an active and friendly congregation of people who love our church and our music. We are looking for an individual with a love of music, and a musical background, to lead our music program. We are blessed with a beautiful pipe organ, baby grand piano and vibrant choir.

Our ideal Music Director would be proficient with, and enjoy playing the organ and piano, be able to sight read music and direct and grow our Choir and music program. Part time, paid position.

issues of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, and queer Vermonters. The goal: to build understanding among them and their families and friends, and within the wider community. VPT's 7th Annual Theater Festival, Friday July 21 - Sunday July 30, presents Vermont premieres of two full-length plays and a full evening of LGBTQ shorts.

**All plays deal with mature themes and contain mature language.**

DC Cathro's screwball comedy Family Holiday, in which a young man returns to Montpelier for peaceful re-connection time with family and friends, but finds something else. Friday July 21 & Saturday July 29, 7:30 PM.

Out of the Closet, eight authors' varied takes on making and missing connections, looking for love in the right and wrong places, and struggling to find yourself in this world. Saturday July 22 & Sunday July 30, 7:30 PM. Deborah Salem Smith's medical drama Love Alone, exploring the impact of an unexpected death during surgery on the deceased's family and a young physician involved. Sunday July 23 & Friday July 28, 7:30 PM.

Interaction between audiences and performers is a key component of Vermont Pride Theater's mission, Performances of the two full-length plays will be followed by talkbacks with performers and directors, and all performances will be followed by complimentary receptions to meet and greet them.

Adults: \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door; students, \$15 in advance, \$17 at the door; a 3-admission pass for \$50. Single tickets and the pass available online at [www.chandler-arts.org](http://www.chandler-arts.org), or Chandler's box office (802) 728-6464.

Additional sponsorship support is provided by the Gay & Lesbian Fund of Vermont and the Samara Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation. Media support is provided by Vermont Public Radio, The Point, and The Beat 105.7 FM.

If this sounds interesting, we would love to talk with you about our program and what we can create together. Please email: Second Congregational Church [2congo@myfairpoint.net](mailto:2congo@myfairpoint.net)

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Organist/Choir Director Needed!

Application

Email:

[welcome@fccej.org](mailto:welcome@fccej.org)

Job Description/Offer: First Church of Essex Junction, U.C.C. seeks PT Organist/Choir Director. Church is GLBTQ friendly. Job includes coord. music program, directing adult choirs, and playing organ & piano @ 2 services [beautifully refurbished 1928 Estey organ / Young Chang baby grand].

Email cover letter and resume to [FCCEJmusicsearch@gmail.com](mailto:FCCEJmusicsearch@gmail.com) or mail to FCCEJ Music Search, 1 Church Street, Essex Junction VT 05452.

Church office 802-878-5745.  
First Congregational Church of Essex Junction  
Website: [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)

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Music Director Needed!

Job Description/Offer: Charlotte Congregational Church, U.C.C. seeks PT Music Director.

Church is GLBTQ friendly. Job includes: Accompanying congregational singing, leading Thursday night rehearsals, conducting the adult choir for Sunday morning worship services at 10am and for other occasional services. Regular planning meetings with the senior and associate pastors are part of the position. Email: [scookekitt@mac.com](mailto:scookekitt@mac.com)

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SEEKING DIRECTOR(S) OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION  
- The United Church of Underhill (a vital, diverse, and growing congregation in covenant and connection with the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church) is

## Resources from WorshipWell

Be sure to check out the worship resources available at:  
[worshipwell.church](http://worshipwell.church)



seeking a part-time Director of Christian Education. She/he will be responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating a comprehensive education plan, in conjunction with our Ministry in Christian Education and our pastor, for children, and youth. Our Sunday School enrollment is approximately 30 students. Candidates should be energetic, possess strong interpersonal, collaborative and communication skills, and have a deep Christian faith. We are also open to the possibility of two people sharing this 8 hour/week position. If interested, please email Janet Grant at: [grantfernald@comcast.net](mailto:grantfernald@comcast.net). The United Church of Underhill is located at 9 Park Street in Underhill, VT (approximately 15 miles east of Burlington along Rt. 15). You can also find more information about us at

[unitedchurchofunderhill.com](http://unitedchurchofunderhill.com)

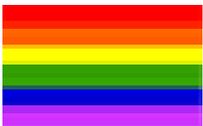
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CHURCH MUSICIAN Job Opening, Thetford Hill,  
VT  
First Congregational Church of Thetford

Progressive, Open and Affirming UCC congregation seeks Choir Director/Accompanist to provide keyboard music (piano and/or Rieger organ) and direct our choir for Sunday services.

Come join with our community and create music in our beautiful, acoustically wonderful sanctuary.

Begin September 2017 More details at our website [thetfordhillchurch.org](http://thetfordhillchurch.org) .  
[office@thetfordhillchurch.org](mailto:office@thetfordhillchurch.org)  
or call 802-785-2915



**Thank You for Reading**  
**An Open and Affirming Conference**  
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