

Vermont Conference, UCC Keeping in Touch

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

E-Kit

September 6, 2017

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**Vermont Conference  
News**

### A Farewell Gathering for Jim Thomas



On Saturday, September 23, 2017, from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, we will be gathering at the Randolph Bethany Church for a farewell gathering for Jim and Lynn Thomas. This is an "open house" style gathering. Come when you can!

At 4:00PM we will share in the Liturgy of Farewell as we send Jim and Lynn Thomas on their

### Greetings!

Dear Beloved Community of the Vermont Conference,

**\*With the imminent arrival of Hurricane Irma on the minds of so many, please consider Rev. Bujnak's reflection from last week for the survivors of Hurricane Harvey.\***

As the pictures of catastrophic flooding in Texas inundate our TVs and Tablets, the sheer volume of destruction is hard to take in. Some commentators have named this a 1000 year storm, but we know as climate change continues to be at work, sadly, that may not be the case.

What can we do to assist our neighbors in Texas and other Gulf Coast cities and towns? First, we need to refrain from sending things that have not been asked for like clothing, stuffed animals and food. While our intentions are good, these things often do not get to the people who need help and in fact can impede those who are working to bring relief and aid to victims. The best way we can help is to make a financial contribution. There are many funds that have been established. Our UCC has launched an emergency appeal, the Emergency USA Fund. Please mark your check for "Hurricane Harvey."

What else can we do? We can support those who have lost homes and loved ones and cherished belongings by surrounding them with our prayers. Further, we can remember that while the need is currently acute, there will be need for assistance for years in recovering from this devastation. We can not abandon the survivors when the news turns all too quickly to

way with our gratitude and good wishes for Jim's new ministry as Pastor of the Atkinson Church, UCC in New Hampshire.

other concerns. Down the road, after the focus of helpers turns from rescue to recovery there will be opportunities to help rebuild.

Psalm 46 reminds us that when catastrophe strikes, we are not abandoned.

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Remembering Rufus Cushman



I write you with a heavy heart to tell you of the passing of Rufus Cushman on Monday. Rufus was a fine example of life well lived, involved in his local church, Conferences and the national setting of the church as well.

Here in Vermont, Rufus was a bedrock member of the Union Church of Proctor (while also maintaining membership at Grace Congregational UCC in Rutland). For the Vermont Conference, Rufus served in more ways than I can list, and not just in ways you'd expect (Finance and Investment Committees) but also on the Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee, guiding and working with Members in Discernment.

On a personal level, Rufus quickly became both a friend and mentor to me after I started with the Vermont Conference. Much of what I know about Stewardship came from his careful and persistent instruction. Nary a month went by without some new tidbit arriving in the mail he thought would be either amusing or instructive - and sometimes both.

I will miss the wonderful mix of the practical steward and the Godly that was Rufus - he was proof that those two can exist without conflict. A Memorial

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth
should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the
sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the
city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be
moved;
God will help it when the morning dawns.
The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms
totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

May our sisters and brothers in harm's way find
refuge.

In peace,
Lynn

Hurricane Harvey Relief



The UCC is working to support everyone affected by Hurricane Harvey. You can support this effort by making a financial donation through the UCC Emergency USA Fund.

[Click here to support Hurricane Harvey Relief](#)

The Vermont Conference, UCC will not be accepting donations for Hurricane Harvey; all

Service will be held at the Union Church of Proctor at 2 pm on Sunday, October 1st. Our prayers, and I invite yours, are with his family.

Peace,
Rev. Jim Thomas

**VERMONT SCHOOL OF
MINISTRY
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN
FOR FALL 2017 COURSES**

The Vermont School of Ministry partners with the New York School of Ministry to provide educational offerings for lay enrichment and continuing education opportunities. It also provides the core foundational education for the preparation of supply preachers and authorization for Licensed Ministry.

**SUPPLY PREACHER
CERTIFICATE PROGRAM - Sept.
2017 - June 2018**

The need for supply preachers has become a pressing concern in a number of Associations. This program, which runs every other week from September to June, is entirely web conferenced. It is designed for lay people who want to learn how to preach and lead worship well, so that they can act as supply preachers (able to fill in when authorized ministers are ill or away) in their congregations or in their Associations. This program does not prepare persons for any form of authorized ministry.

The program consists of sixteen 1½ hour webinars and two 3 ½ hour practicum sessions.

donations should be made directly to the UCC Emergency USA Fund or to efforts on the ground in Texas and Louisiana.

Thank you!

******Registration Is Now Open****
Fall Vitality Event 2017**

Presented by:
Vermont Conference, UCC &
Partners for Sacred Places

Join us on October 14, 2017 for a special Vitality event at which we will explore: Growing a congregation's membership, ministry, financial stewardship, leadership and vision through community engagement and outreach!

Take this opportunity to learn from other congregations about their innovative outreach and community partnerships, large and small including:

- Creating new ministries
- Leading conversations on major local issues;
- Launching a major "community-wide" capital campaign;
- Or just asking your neighbors how you might work together.

Keynote speaker [Tuomi Forrest](#) is the Executive Vice President of [Partners for Sacred Spaces](#). He has offered technical advice and consultation to thousands of congregations of all faiths on the care and active community use of their historic religious buildings since joining Partners in 1997.

These topics and more will be shared and discussed in this interactive day-long educational program.

Registration is \$25 per person (which includes lunch!) and you can sign up by clicking the Registration button below.

**We look forward to seeing you on October
14th in Montpelier!**

[Register here...](#)

There are reading/writing components for each session. Participants will work with and receive feedback from a variety of instructors: Rev. Quinn Caldwell, Rev. Jennifer Hamlin-Navias, Rev. Steve Johnson, Rev. David Kaden, Rev. Jonathan Lawrence, and Rev. Marjorie Purnine. A recommendation from one's home church is required to enroll.

Monday evenings - 7:00-8:30 pm

Click [here](#) for a pdf with the full schedule, the books, and the program fees.

[Click here to register](#)

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Those considering Licensed Ministry should be in conversation with their pastors and their Association

Committee on Ministry or Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee.

Applications for that purpose may be found [here](#). Full information about this program can be found [here](#). The registration system for the New York School of Ministry has been overhauled this summer. Click [here](#) to see our fall Events. Choose the course you want to explore on the left side (not the blue buttons on the right), and you'll see the full course information, with the registration box at the bottom of the page.

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2017 Convocation Registration has opened!!

(There was an error on the form initially posted, which says cost \$15.00, this has been changed and now shows the correct cost of \$50.00, sorry for any inconvenience).

[Click here for Registration form and Information](#)

Registrations are due this Tuesday, September 12!

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## [Click here to view the recent Pastoral Transitions in 2017 in the Vermont Conference](#)

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UCC History, Polity and Theology Class Offered Fall, 2017 for Privilege of Call, Ordination, Commissioning, and Licensing

The Center for Progressive Renewal is offering a fall semester online UCC History, Polity and Theology class beginning on September 6th and ending December 6th. The class has met the polity requirements of most Committees on Ministry in the UCC. It can be taken either for academic credit or simply to fulfill the polity requirement of Committees on Ministry. It has been accepted for credit in eight seminaries, including Union (NYC), Vanderbilt, Candler, Columbia, Eden, and Lancaster. It is included in the catalogs of both Union Theological Seminary and Lancaster Theological Seminary.

[Read entire article here](#)

Human Genetic Engineering: Dreams & Nightmares

Food for Thought Pot-Luck Forums for the Fall 2017

[UCC News and Updates](#)

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

UCC leaders saddened,
angered by DACA elimination

Texas churches reaching out to
support neighbors flooded out
by Harvey

Looking back at 10 significant
moments at General Synod
2017

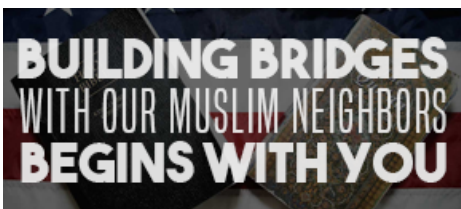
UCC congregations,
organizations heeding call to
help after Harvey

UCC pastor sends love,
prayers and postcards to
Nashville Statement signers

Donations, clean-up kits
among most pressing needs in
Hurricane Harvey aftermath

Commentary: With Hurricane
Harvey, a Compassion Deficit
and Trump's Paris Problem

UCC leaders respond with a
message of love, inclusiveness
to 'Nashville Statement'



Click image for more information.

Mount Mansfield Union High School Library

211 Browns Trace, Jericho, Vermont 05465

Sponsored by Mt. Mansfield Union High School
and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

[Click here for Forum information](#)

**A Day with Diana Butler Bass
Wednesday, October 4th**

Clergy and Laity Invited! Cost - \$10.00 to
register and \$10.00 for lunch Diana Butler Bass
will be in the Plattsburgh Area on October 4th
and there will be a gathering from 10 a.m. thru
3 p.m. for area faith communities. The morning
and afternoon sessions will be at Plattsburgh
UMC - 127 Beekman Street. From 10 a.m. to
Noon - we will have a conversation on her
recent book, "Grounded" - Finding God in the
World - A Spiritual Revolution. Please come
having read the book!

[Click here for more information](#)

**Action for Ecological Justice:
Celebrating a Year of Creation
Conference**

Bishop Coyne invites you to this one-day
conference hosted by the Catholic Church
of Vermont as part of the Year of Creation.
Action for Ecological Justice will explore,
reflect upon and respond to the message
of Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical, Laudato
Si': On Care for Our Common Home.

Laudato Si' highlights the urgency of the
global climate crisis, the embeddedness of
creation care within Catholic teaching, the
interconnectedness of all that exists, and
the moral imperative to act for the benefit
of the planet and those who call it home--
human and non-human. With perspectives
from scientists, politicians, activists,
economists, professionals, academics and
people of faith, the day promises dynamic
conversations about the state of creation
and how we can work together for a
sustainable future.



[Click here for further details](#)

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**Food for Thought**  
Focus Reading:  
**Exodus 12:1-14**

**Annie Dillard, *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters*, 20th century**  
"I would like to learn, or remember, how to live."

**Anita Diamant, *The Red Tent*, 20th century**  
"It is terrible how much has been forgotten, which is why, I suppose, remembering seems a holy thing."

**Frederick Buechner, 21st century**  
"You can't be too careful what you tell a child because you never know what he'll take hold of and spend the rest of his life remembering you by."

**and**  
"The time is ripe for looking back over the day, the week, the year, and trying to figure out where we have come from and where we are going to, for sifting through the things we have done and the things we have left undone for a clue to who we are and who, for better or worse, we are becoming."

**Morris Joseph, 20th century**  
"Passover affirms the great truth that liberty is the inalienable right of every human being."

**Hebrew Proverb**  
"These three are the marks of a Jew--a tender heart, self-respect, and charity."

**Elie Wiesel, 20th century**  
"I marvel at the resilience of the Jewish people. Their best characteristic is their desire to remember. No other people has such an obsession with memory."

**The Wells River Congregational Church, UCC,** Main Street, Wells River VT. has 110 like new hymnals "United Church of Christ" Contact Marion Zambon:(802)-584-3857

Ideal for start-up church: over 100 year old Steinway upright piano in very good condition- Pay to move from Groton \$500.00 plus/minus- piano mover out of Barre, VT Contact Marion Zambon in Groton, VT (802) 584-3857

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Employment Opportunities
All these are all still open!
(If you have a job listed, please try to remember to let me ([Charri](#)) know if it has been filled!)

Tyson Congregational church - located on the Ludlow/Plymouth border. Part-time organist needed to job-share with our current organist for some Sunday Morning Worship services. Please contact Ann Rose at gms@tds.net if interested.

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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.  
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!

Kaj Munk, Danish pastor killed by the Gestapo in 1944 (in *The Irresistible Revolution* by Shane Claiborne):

"What is therefore, our task today? Shall I answer: 'Faith, hope and love? That sounds beautiful. But I would say--courage. No--even that is not challenging enough to be the whole truth. Our task today is recklessness. For what we Christians lack is not psychology or literature....we lack a holy rage--the recklessness which comes from the knowledge of God and humanity. The ability to rage when justice lies prostrate on the streets, and when the lie rages across the face of the earth...a holy anger about the things that are wrong in the world. To rage against the ravaging of God's earth, and the destruction of God's world. To rage when little children must die of hunger when the tables of the rich are sagging with food. To rage at the lie that calls the threat of death and the strategy of destruction peace. To rage against complacency. To restlessly seek to change human history until it conforms to the norms of the Kingdom of God."

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**Resources from  
WorshipWell**

Be sure to check out the worship resources available at:



[worshipwell.church](http://worshipwell.church)

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.

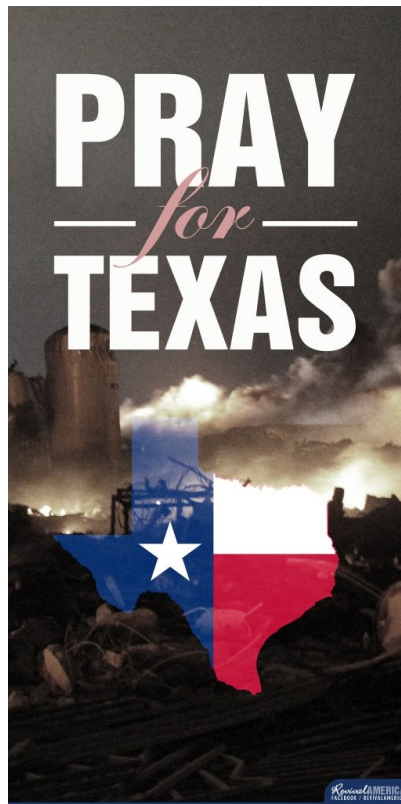
Church office 802-878-5745.  
First Congregational Church of Essex Junction  
Website: [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)

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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

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

