



# The Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ



**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 Spring Edition

April 29, 2021

## *Message from the Conference*

Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

What a wonderful Annual Meeting we had! Our keynote speaker, Traci Blackmon, was warm and challenging and filled with hope. I learned a lot about the history of the construct of race and I loved both the conversation facilitated by Elisa Lucozzi on systemic racism and Vermont had 108 participants and the Peacemaker's gathering drew just over 100 of us who participated by sharing projects and ideas and listening to others. I have heard good things about all of the workshops including the unstructured continuing conversation with Traci.

Having never before planned and executed a virtual Annual Meeting, it took a lot of dedicated people to make that happen. First, a thank you to our own staff, Elise Foster and Jackie Lingelbach for going way above and beyond to insure that our meeting would go as smoothly as possible. Our Annual Meeting Planning Committee also worked incredibly hard. Amanda Swoyer chaired the committee consisting of: Elisa Lucozzi, Daun Smith, Jeremy Kirk, Jeanne Zammataro, and Peter Plagge. I am grateful for our workshop leaders for their role in making our Annual Meeting so engaging. Kudos to our "ZOOM wranglers" Rosemarie Atwood and Jackie Short for sharing their experience with us. Thank you to those who bravely recorded their first ever video reports. Thanks to Rev. James Mills for leading our closing communion service. Thanks to Chris Bakriges for phenomenal music and hymns both familiar and leading us to something new. Thank you to all of you who spurred us on with words of encouragement and thanks. And, if I forgot to name you, please know you are also very much appreciated.

It feels to me like we have taken a few steps further on our journey to becoming allies in combatting systemic, entrenched racism in ourselves, in our beloved state and in our nation. As Rev. Blackmon reminded us: "It hasn't always been this way and it doesn't need to stay this way."

In peace and hope,  
Lynn

Everything 2021 Annual Meeting!!!!

Did you miss Annual Meeting this year?

226th Annual Meeting



That is ok!

We will be uploading the video recordings as they become available to our YouTube channel.

[click here for youtube videos](#)

Also, if you did attend, please feel free to give us as much feedback as you can here:

**[2021 Annual Meeting Survey!](#)**

(Don't be shy with your opinion. The only thing we value more than positive feedback is honest feedback!!)

## GETTING THE COVID-19 VACCINE!!!

The Vermont Forward Plan ties reopening to specific vaccine milestones in the state. All Vermonters are encouraged to get the vaccine when it is their turn. At this time, Education, Health Care, Sports/Organized Sports and Youth Summer Camps will retain individualized guidance and not move to universal guidance.



[You can find more information here!](#)

[You can find an appointment time here!](#)



## Outdoor Ministry Camp

Register online for a week at Horton Center this summer!

[www.hortoncenter.org](http://www.hortoncenter.org)

Watch this! <https://youtu.be/rLZm8fzCV2Y>

Join us for.... **VT Takes a Hike to the Mtn**

**Deans: Laurie Chipman & Diane Tinkham**

*for those going into 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> in the fall*

**July 18-24, 2021**

*VT @ the Lake is taking a hiatus from the lake at Rock Point and hiking to the Mountain! Come join us up at Pine Mountain and unite with middle schoolers from the Green (VT) and White (NH) Mountains. God's spirit will be in all we do at camp this week as we hike, play, pray, sing, rock climb, do some arts and crafts, and discover our own courage through games, challenges, and much more!*

We have 2 awesome counselors lined up so far!  
Pastor Ed Sunday-Winters (Greensboro Congregational) & Jeffrey  
Tuper-Giles (Barre Congregational)!

These are two fun guys who have a big heart and a love for God,  
youth & nature!

Are you 18yrs or older? Love the outdoors and spending time  
helping young youth? Watch this

one! <https://youtu.be/gecZ0v3BGZk> Then reach out to Laurie  
Chipman [lchipman@fcej.org](mailto:lchipman@fcej.org) Counselors get a reduction in cost



for their own child/youth to attend a camp this summer. No cost for counselors. Volunteering will be the most fun you've had in a real long time. You'll be exhausted every night and will sleep deep, breathing in the fresh mountain air, not to mention worship on Chapel Rock! Click on 'volunteer' on their website for more information. *(College youth – this looks great on your resume!)*



## NEWS UPDATE from Horton Center

**NOTE:** *We are ready to go for in-person camp this summer! However, if any camp session must be cancelled, you can get a full refund.*

**Check out the latest Camp COVID19 Info at:** <https://hortoncenter.org/COVID>

### IMPORTANT NOTICE of changes:

1. Our Spring Workdays Weekend will happen one week later than planned on the schedule. It will now be May 21-23. No registration needed but let us know if you're coming so we have enough food! No charge, donations welcome.
2. Open House will NOT be happening in-person after all, due to preparations for in-person camp sessions We will be doing a virtual Live Open House from camp June 19th so be on the lookout for how to attend from home!

ALSO if you're 18 or older you could:

- Be a Counselor for a week and change the lives of our young people at camp. Check out the [video](#) to find out why "We Need You!"
- Be part of the Summer Staff! Get more info and details [Here!](#)

**Churches:** We have provided two 'Virtual Bulletin Inserts' ([Come to your camp](#) and [Come to your camp2](#)) for you to add to your church e-news letter, your Sunday bulletin, or your Sunday worship videos to help us get more campers to camp!

See you on the mountain.

As always you can contact Tim Hughes with any questions at: [thughes@nhucc.org](mailto:thughes@nhucc.org) or 603-545-9660.

## DISASTER RESPONSE WORK: HELP REBUILD PHILLY NEIGHBORHOOD

In 2018 and again in 2019, quite a few VT UCC volunteer groups went to help rebuild Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. I am hoping to recruit more VT UCC mission teams for rebuilding help again.

I was recently called to re-up as a UCC Partner in Service in order to help with an urgent need in the Philly area, in the Eastwick neighborhood. At the beginning of the pandemic, this lower income area of Philadelphia was hit by Tropical Storm Isaias. Immediate assistance was given, but rebuilding has yet to happen due to Covid. We are now searching for volunteers to come and help rebuild this area (about an 8 hour drive).

We welcome volunteers for 2 or more days (including weekends). We are looking for teams of 2-5 members, 18 years and older, with a skilled team leader. Job assignments can be matched to your skill area. We do not have housing to offer due to Covid and so teams will need to find their own housing. Eastwick is near the Philly airport and therefore also close to many hotels and a direct train service to Eastwick. Eastwick is also an area of great interest with historic sites, a nature reserve and great hiking.

We welcome volunteers and, of course, donations.

Please get in touch for more information:

Judy Moore

## EVENTS 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!)

**NICKERSON  
COACHING**  
Congregations Moving Forward



Rev. Paul Nickerson

[Nickersonp@comcast.net](mailto:Nickersonp@comcast.net)

Nickersoncoaching.com

8 Iverson Road, Beverly, MA.  
01915

508-930-9327

### VITALITY EVENT!!!

As churches re-open, there is a great opportunity to do church differently and to engage many people.

***Sat, May 22nd, from 10am to 3pm!!!***

Come and learn:

- How to do hybrid worship, both in-person and online. This is possible for even the smallest of churches.
- How to identify the “next group” your church is called to reach
- How to have a month of celebrations as you re-open for public worship
- How to adjust staff and structure for the “new normal” of post-Covid
- Each church will develop an Action Plan

***This workshop will be followed by 6 months of coaching!!***

Read more about this [HERE!](#)

**[REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT HERE!](#)**

### New York School of Ministry April & May 2021 Offerings!

Saturday, May 15, 2021, 9:00 AM – 1 PM  
*Speaking of God in the Depths of Suffering*

Saturday, May 22, 2021, 9:00 AM – 12:15 PM



You can learn more about these offerings [here!](#)

You can register for these courses [here!](#)

## **COVID-19 NEWS**

In light of: the growing number of Covid-19 infections in Vermont, increased hospitalizations, the onset of flu season, the potential spreading of the disease during holiday gatherings and the advice of our Governor and experts in infectious disease, we strongly urge that **worship not be held in person until criteria for safe in person gathers have been met.**

[For more info click here](#)



### [Resources for resilience support clergy through COVID-19](#)

It's been almost a year since COVID-19 irrevocably changed United Church of Christ churches.

Members have become ill. Many never recovered. Countless buildings remain closed—some reopening, only to shut down again.

Congregations worship and gather virtually. Clergy have to find ways to cope and carry on. As Americans line up for vaccinations, health experts warn against darker days ahead.

Eleven months of uncertainty. The pandemic is taking an emotional toll on mental health and ministers are not immune.

Continue reading [here.](#)

The Vermont Department of Health has provided new guidance specifically for Communities of Faith including holidays, services, and events. This includes (but is not limited to) precautions and actions for organizational leaders. It can be found [here.](#)

### **Need Extra Support During the Pandemic?**

COVID Support VT is a statewide program offering free and confidential emotional support and connections to resources for anyone needing help. They offer a wide range of supports on

their website.



## **SAVE THE DATE!**

### **UCCMA Conference 2021 - Registration is now open!**

Join the UCCMA online for workshops, worship services, a wonderful concert, vendors and networking. We will be virtually hosted by the First Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC in the historic town of Glastonbury, Connecticut. From Thursday evening through the Saturday 4 pm closing worship service, we provide a plethora of activities that will enhance your music skills and give you resources and ideas for new ways of expressing God's Spirit in these pandemic times. We also provide glimpses of the historic scenery around the church in Glastonbury, which you would have enjoyed if you had come in person as originally planned. Join us instead online for a mental reset and spiritual refreshment with a taste of Connecticut.



[Find out more and register HERE!](#)



### **Online Boundaries Training, May 19 & 20**

LeaderWise's online boundaries training workshop is lively and interactive, full of reflection and conversation. Attendees have given us feedback that our boundaries training was a great experience, AND caused them to re-evaluate some of their own practices.

This live online boundaries training is 5 total hours split over 2 consecutive days (1:30 pm to 4:00 pm Central each day). Following the first session, participants are asked to engage in a bit of reflection work in preparation for the second session. This online boundaries training will be conducted via secure Zoom video conferencing.

[Click here to register \(\\$75\) for the May 19 & 20 Boundaries Training with LeaderWise.](#) LeaderWise can also bring a Boundaries Training session to your judicatory tailored to your specific schedule and needs. Please [contact Mary Kay](#) for more information.

## **Spring Boundary**



# Training Opportunities

## The Foundations of Understanding Boundaries

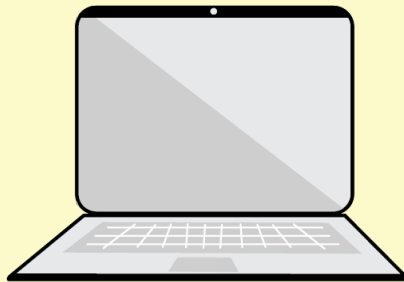
*(This is the basic/initial boundary training and should be taken before engaging in other boundary training opportunities.)*

Saturday, May 1st, 9 am to 1 pm

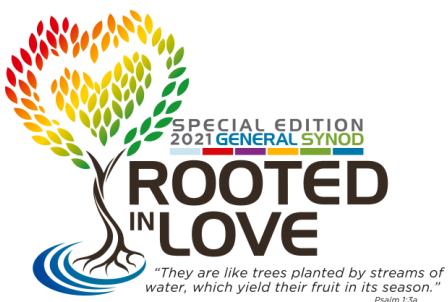
Via Zoom

Facilitated by the Reverend Gordon Rankin

Registration Fee: \$25



To register for either of these Boundary Training opportunities, please send an email to: [events@nhcucc.org](mailto:events@nhcucc.org). Instructions for making the registration payment will be provided.



## GENERAL SYNOD 2021

Since 1957, when the first "uniting" General Synod gathered in 1957 in Cleveland, Ohio, to the meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 2019, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ has faithfully convened a meeting every two years in physical locations throughout the United States.

2021 will be different. We are moving through a pandemic that has taken many lives. This pandemic has disrupted our routines and many of our well-established practices as we adapt to the new demands for safety and social distancing. The meeting of the General Synod is no different, and the 2021 gathering of the General Synod will take place entirely online.

[You can find all the information you need here!!!](#)

## RESOURCES FOR ONLINE MINISTRY!

Do you need help with getting your church services online?  
Find resources and help here:

[Click here for WorshipWell information and resources](#)

[Worship Resource Links for How to Live Stream- from the Southern New England Conference UCC](#)

[Free-Use, No-Licensing Music and Worship Materials here](#)

[Zoom Worship Laboratory Video Tutorial](#)

## How to prevent Zoom Bombing

If you have additional resources to share please email the conference office at [VermontConference@gmail.com](mailto:VermontConference@gmail.com) !

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DEADLINE for E-Kit News must be received by **Tuesday of each week.**  
Please send any and all information to Elise at [vermontconference@gmail.com](mailto:vermontconference@gmail.com).

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**Thank You for Your Support!**

**Our Churches Wider Mission Basic Support, Association Dues, and Friends of the Vermont Conference make this communication possible.**

**Donate**

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Connect with us



visit our website at <http://www.vtcucc.org/>

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