



## E-Kit May 20, 2020

**DONATE**

We are now over two months into this Covid-19 Pandemic crisis. Can you believe it? I have never seen anything like it in my entire ministry career, nor has anyone else. It is a time that has taken so much from our clergy, from our lay leaders, from all of us. So first I need you to close your eyes, and breathe, and just say a prayer right now to God with whatever is foremost on your heart.



Recently, I heard this startling statistic - pastors in crisis situations stay on average for only two years after the crisis in their church. They are so worn down from all the special demands that come during the time of crisis that they feel like the only way they can handle it is to leave. None of us, neither pastors or churches, want to see that happen in Vermont in the wake of this Covid-19 crisis. We need to find ways to give our pastors and church leaders time away from the demands of ministry, as Jesus would intentionally take time off from His ministry to go out into the desert to pray.

So speaking for the Vermont Conference, we would ask all of our churches to give their staff **three consecutive days off, including a Sunday**. This should apply to lay leaders as well. If you are a chaplain or in some other specialized ministry, share this request with your employer. This is not vacation time. It is in addition to paid time off. This time is essential to help your pastor or staff person or lay leader to have time to recover, renew, and seek healing in their own lives, so that they can continue their ministry of helping others to recover, renew and seek healing in their own lives.

As for the Sunday off, be creative! Use the Council of Conference Ministers service that can be found on the Vermont Conference website. Bring in your normal pulpit supply. Ask Lynn or I to fill in for a Sunday virtually. Ask another church if they would join you in a digital pulpit swap, where each church does a service that the other church is invited to. There are so many ways of having a Sunday filled, but lay people, I am now speaking to you-please encourage your pastor or staff person or chaplain to do this, for the sake of all of you.

Faithfully yours,  
Paul

**Required VT Occupational Safety & Health training for reopening workplaces**

**See the latest guidance and directives from State of Vermont**

**Answer the call and volunteer in response to COVID-19**

**COVID-19 FAQ's for churches**

**Resources curated by the Southern New England**

## COVID - 19 Information & Resources

Conference

Utilities and COVID-19: Help &  
information from VT Dept. of  
Public Utilities

### CARES Act: Churches Eligible for Payroll Relief ACT NOW!

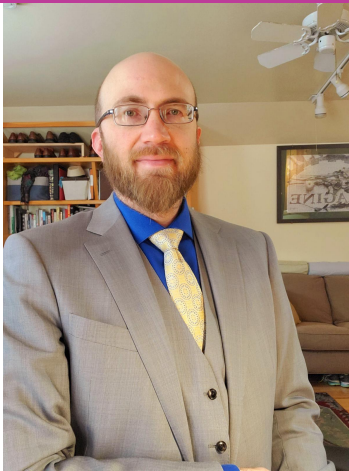
Attached is the loan application and fact sheet from the SBA. If you have churches interested in applying for this loan, they need to apply NOW, as the available funds are expected to be exhausted quickly. The attached application should be submitted directly to a lender identified as a participating lender on the SBA's website ([sba.gov](https://www.sba.gov)), rather than seeking the application from the lender.

Application Form

Borrower factsheet

Unemployment compensation for church workers & the CARES Act

CARES Act information courtesy of the Southern New England Conference



*Your Conference staff  
working for you*

**The Vermont  
Conference office is  
closed, but we're  
still hard at work  
for you!**

You can reach any of the  
staff members by using the  
information below.

Be safe, be well, take  
good care...



*Sable likes the working  
from home concept*

### Vermont Conference COVID-19 office protocol

*The Vermont Conference office is closed  
for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis.*

Staff are able to check their voicemail  
and are available on email. **Please send  
all documents to staff by email only.**

Rev. Lynn Bujnak: 802-728-4999 ext. 4#

Email Conference Minister Lynn  
Bujnak

Email Associate Conference  
Minister Paul Sangree

Email Operations & Ministries  
Coordinator Jesse Davis

## Stewardship in the midst of COVID-19

Many people, ministers and church members, have been asking how to continue to support their local church budgets while everyone is social distancing and unable to gather together in worship. The short answer is - keep stewardship and the offering going!

Rev. Andrew Warner, Generosity Outreach Officer for the United Church of Christ offered a webinar and several resources last week. He has kindly shared them with us for members of the Vermont Conference to use.

[Fundraising webinar recording](#)

[Planned giving webinar](#)

[IRA qualified charitable contributions](#)

[Example quarterly letter to church members](#)

[National Study of Congregations Economic Practices \(NSCEP\) study](#)

[NSCEP self-assessment tool](#)

[Making the stimulus ask](#)

## Special Worship Service May 17

The Council of Conference Ministers invites you to worship with them on May 17th or any other Sunday in Eastertide depending on what works for your schedule. The materials - full video, video segments, bulletin, and read-only service - can be found on this calendar event: <https://ucctcm.org/event/worship-with-the-council-of-conference-ministers/>

We offer this service to join together in this time of pandemic. We hope this service will provide pastors with a much needed and deserved time off.

**Blessings to you all!**

## Per Capita rate for 2020

The Vermont Conference per capita rate has been established at \$13.00 per member. Association dues are *in addition* to the Conference per capita rate of \$13.00.

## Spiritual Direction

By popular request, a list of Spiritual Directors is now available. [Download the list here.](#)

### Pastoral Transitions

- Rev. Dr. WendyJaine Summers has been called as Pastor of Second Congregational Church of Hyde Park.

### Prayers and Thanksgivings

Please hold health care workers and first responders in your prayers as they stand on the front



- Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola has been called as Associate Conference Minister on Congregational Transitions and Empowerment for the Penn Central Conference. Her ministry begins June 1, 2020.
- Rev. Elliott Munn has been called as Pastor of the Congregational Church of Vergennes. His ministry begins later this month.

[Click here for full list of transitions](#)

lines responding to COVID-19.

Please hold Lava Mueller in your prayers as she mourns the passing of her mother.

Please hold Rev. Lucia Jackson in your prayers as she cares for her husband Michael Heaney who is healing from a health crisis.

### Useful Links

- [UCC Newsfeeds](#)
- [UCC Weekly Seeds](#)
- [2020 Tax preparation resources](#)
- [Pension Boards rate calculator](#)
- [UCC Yearbook](#)
- [Stewardship blog](#)

### Who should I contact for...?

- Conference Minister: Rev. Lynn Bujnak
  - [bujnakl@vtcucc.org](mailto:bujnakl@vtcucc.org)
- Assoc. Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree
  - [sangreep@vtcucc.org](mailto:sangreep@vtcucc.org)
- Search & Call, operations, events: Jesse Davis
  - [vtcoordinator2018@gmail.com](mailto:vtcoordinator2018@gmail.com)
- Finance: Tanya Frazier
  - [vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com](mailto:vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com)
- E-Kit postings
  - [vermontconference@gmail.com](mailto:vermontconference@gmail.com)

## 2020 Census - Shape your Future - Please Respond Online or by Phone

It starts with each of us doing our part by completing the 2020 Census Questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire allows you to influence the amount of money that comes to Vermont for many of our essential programs that benefit our health and safety, and pay for our roads, local government, schools, hospitals, and so much more.

You can complete the Census by going to [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov) or by calling 844-330-2020. If you have received an invitation to complete the census, simply follow directions. If you have not, or cannot locate it, you can still complete it by calling 844-330-2020 [there is help in English and 14 additional languages] or by going online to [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov), clicking start, then clicking 'If you don't have a Census ID click here,' and following directions.

Languages and phone number link

<https://2020census.gov/en/ways-to-respond/responding-by-phone.html>

59 Language Guides link: <https://2020census.gov/en/languages.html>

Link to Census Response Rate Map to track how Vermont, Windham County and our local communities are doing: <https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html>

## Peacemakers Pulpit

Matthew records Jesus telling us, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

These words are helpful to me during this Covid-19 time.

In some ways we are in similar circumstances to Jesus' first century audience; our world has recently changed to become an unpredictable and a quite scary place, there are clear and growing distinctions between different groups and classes in society making our world more "unfair", and we seemingly have lost control of our path forward.

I look to all the things folks are doing to raise their spirits: walking outside and connecting with the natural world; taking the time to reconnect with extended family, old friends, and even those in our own households; recognizing, perhaps for the first time, how many people's efforts are required to sustain our own lives. First responders, farmers, grocery and drug store employees, teachers and child care providers, internet providers, mail carriers, ....the list goes on and on and on.

To be clear, these are hard times for many, and they will probably get harder. Still, when we count our blessings, we find many things to be rich in spirit about.

Christopher Ashley  
Norwich Congregational Church

Rev. Josh Simon (First Congregational Church of Essex Junction) and Rev. Sally May (Malletts Bay UCC, Colchester) are proud to present the podcast *Faith in Vermont: Conversations with LGBTQ Religious and Spiritual Leaders*.

Cantor Steve Zeidenberg from Ohavi Zedek joins us for a conversation on being an LGBTQ cantor.

## Racism in America symposiums



## Outdoor Ministries News

### HC@Home is FREE

Our UCC camps in New England, following much discerning, have made a tough and safe decision that all their sites will be closed for the summer camping season of 2020. To keep everyone safe and to help keep outdoor ministries alive Horton Center is offering a free option, HC@Home, with a mission to continue to give campers the experience of building sacred community, encouraging time spent outdoors and continuing our faith journeys alongside one another while keeping everyone safe. Have you been interested in attending an outdoor ministries camp, but were not sure what it was like or the timing just didn't work out? Well, here is your chance! Take a leap and sign up for camp! All the camp titles now begin with HC@Home and are now FREE! They run from Monday to Friday. Registration opened Friday, May 15th and there are only 30 slots for each camp. You must register 2 weeks prior to camp starting so go visit [www.hortoncenter.org](http://www.hortoncenter.org) NOW! After you register, campers will receive and email with information on how to access their camp.

### Our Vermont Camp at Rock Point for those going into 5th - 8th grade Monday - Friday from July 27th-31st

The VT Outdoor Ministries Team of volunteers along with this year's co-deans, Pastor Ed Sunday-Winters & Laurie Chipman, and @ the Lake daytime volunteers a fun week for you! Join us and register for FREE on HC@Home at [www.hortoncenter.org](http://www.hortoncenter.org). There will be daily morning watches at 9am, activity blocks and live evening vespers on Zoom at 7pm. We have a goal to bring as much flavor of @ the Lake to you with HC@Home as we can. We will connect to the water and offer ideas for community service.

Rock Point Camp, <https://www.rockpointvt.org/camp>, Episcopal Conference Center in Burlington will also be closed for the 2020 summer season.

### Hello Horton Center Families!

The moment. you have all been waiting for has arrived - Registration for HC@Home is now live and ready for you to sign up your campers for free! You can register at: [www.HortonCenter.org/Registration](http://www.HortonCenter.org/Registration) . NOTE: we are limiting it to 1 session per camper for the first week to give everyone a chance to sign up since space is limited. We email a reminder when you can sign up for multiple sessions.

Watch the video about HC@home: [What is HC@home?](#)

Here is the Information sheet about HC@home with a sample schedule: [Info Sheet](#)

We hope you and your campers will enjoy this program and that it brings a little bit of the mountain to you!

See you soon!

Peace,  
Tivvi & Tim  
Tivvi Paré, Summer Director  
Tim Hughes, Interim Executive Director  
[thughes@NHCUCC.org](mailto:thughes@NHCUCC.org)  
603-545-9660  
Horton Center  
140 Sheep Davis Road  
Pembroke, NH 03275  
Phone: 603-545-9660

## Resources from the Vermont Conference website (click the buttons below)

Save the date! *Our Clergy Convocation this year will be Sept. 14th-16th at the Bishop Booth Conference Center in Burlington.* We will



**Click  
here  
for  
local  
church  
events**

be talking about "How to stay Centered in a Time of Deep Change" with noted retreat leader and pastor Barbara Lemmel. Hope we can all gather by then, and that we will see you there.

**Search & Call  
Resources**

**Lay Ministry  
Openings**

## Visit our partners



**Worship  
Well**

Original worship resources  
for local churches...  
because Sunday's coming.

[Website](#)



**Church World Service**

[Adam Smedberg](#)

Community &  
Congregational  
Engagement Specialist

[Email Adam](#)

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Phone: 413-279-4039  
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