



VERMONT CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



E-Kit

October 21st, 2020

Connect with us



<http://vtcucc.org>

DONATE

In this Issue:

- Article
- Grasping for Much Needed Grace
- Fall Leadership Fest - Registration closes Thursday!
- Black Lives Matter
- Racism in America symposiums
- Our Faith, Our Vote resources
- Daily Prayer for the Election Season
- Peacemaker's Pulpit – October 2020
- Employment Opportunity at the Vermont Conference
- The Vermont Conference has an exciting opportunity for you
- Does your church have an investment policy?
- Holding space for difficult conversations
- Webinar - Reaching New People in the "New Normal"
- Vermont Interfaith Power & Light's 2020 *Climate Justice Series*
- COVID 19 Information and Resources
- An invitation from First Congregational Church of Burlington
- Annual Meeting Resolution guidelines
- Kipah, Kufi, and Collar
- Curating services and sermons for pastor vacations
- Spiritual Direction
- Pastoral Transitions
- Prayers and Thanksgivings
- Useful Links and Resources
- Our partners

Article

"Clergy Appreciation Month"

Did you know that October is Clergy Appreciation Month! I hear regularly as I talk to people throughout our Conference how much they appreciate their pastors, and all that they do. In this topsy turvy year of 2020, I hope that you will especially make the effort to express your appreciation of your pastor in a conversation, email or note.



We all know that our pastors have been asked to do much more this year. As the Covid-19 Pandemic began to affect our state, pastors had to quickly adjust on the fly and develop ways of leading worship that did not

involve being in person. As the months have rolled along, they have helped each of our churches to have conversations about what form worship should be in. They have led our churches in conversations around racial justice and the election and found ways to make a difference in the community. They have continued to preach the gospel, lead Bible studies and disciple people, visit the sick and connect with new people. We really do have the best group of pastors in the Vermont Conference!

I was a pastor for 32 years. I appreciated the conversations where someone would say thank you for something I had done, and the emails where they did the same. But I especially drew strength from personal notes that people sent me. I know the time and effort involved in sending a note, and I started making the practice several years into my ministry of keeping those notes. When I was going through a particularly hard time, I would be able to pull those notes out, and they would remind me of the ways that God had worked through me in the past. I know that your pastor will treasure your note in the same way. May we honor these servants of the Church,

Faithfully yours,
Paul

Rev. Paul Sangree
Associate Conference Minister
sangreep@vtcucc.org



Prayer and Contemplation for the Election Season

Grasping for Much-Needed Grace: Twenty Days of Nonpartisan Prayer in a Polarized Political Season

At a time when our nation and society are deeply divided - so much so that democracy itself seems under threat - the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ invites you to a time of fervent prayer. For the 20 days preceding the 2020 presidential election, we urge you to join in this intensive prayer initiative as we daily petition God for wisdom, patience, courage, healing and peace. We will be providing a “prayer prompt” or daily devotion for each day of this twenty day undertaking. Feel free to share these devotionals with others and encourage others to join in this time of prayer. We need it.

[Read more...](#)

Fall Leadership Fest - Registration closes Thursday!

The Vermont Conference will be holding its first annual Fall Leadership Fest for lay leaders and ministers on

October 24th from 8:45 to noon. This will be held virtually on ZOOM. The registration fee is \$25.

Our training sessions will consider:

- Pastoral relations committees
- Youth programming development
- Racial justice in our churches and communities
- Stewardship in the pandemic era



[Click here for more information about our classes and instructors](#)

Black Lives Matter

[Click here](#) for a more thorough, but by no means complete, list of our BIPOC sisters and brothers slain at the hands of police and white supremacists.

Fredrick Douglass' famous speech regarding the celebration of American independence

[Read more](#)

UCC Council of Conference Ministers calls upon local churches to consider the UCC and its predecessors' roles in racial segregation and justice

[Read more...](#)

Racism in America symposiums



[Watch the videos of Racism in America series](#)



Our Faith, Our Vote, Our Voice: A call to the Church to be a place of civil dialogue that builds community

Our Faith, Our Vote resources

Visit the [UCC Our Faith Our Vote website](#) for resources and action ideas on voter registration, issue education and voter empowerment.

[Check your registration](#) and [make a voting plan](#).

Support and encourage a first-time voter. Make sure they know how to register and have a voting plan.

[Pledge to be in regular contact](#) with 3 voters between now and the election making sure they have checked their registration and have a voting plan.

Facilitate virtual conversations in your congregation [on critical election issues](#).

[Volunteer to be a poll worker](#).

Check your state's secretary of state website for details about elections guidelines in your state and create a "voter bill of rights" for your state.

Daily Prayer for the Election Season

Grasping for Much-Needed Grace: Twenty Days of Nonpartisan Prayer in a Polarized Political Season

Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ, Fall 2020

At a time when our nation and society are deeply divided-so much so that democracy itself seems under threat-the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ invites you to a time of fervent prayer. For the 20 days preceding the 2020 presidential election, we urge you to join in this intensive prayer initiative as we daily petition God for wisdom, patience, courage, healing and peace. We will be providing a "prayer prompt" or daily devotion for each day of this twenty day undertaking. Feel free to share these devotionals with others and encourage others to join in this time of prayer. We need it. Next week in Ekit, we will make available the first week of devotions, which will begin Oct. 15th.

[Click here for Week 1](#)

[Click here for Week 2](#)

[Click here for Week 3](#)

Peacemaker's Pulpit – October 2020



Rev. Kim McKerley
Pastor, Bethany United Church of Christ in
Randolph

The wonderful Willem Lange tells of a group of eight-year-old boys in a Sunday School class playing a game called "I Can Stop the Hurt". The boys stood in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. The game began when one boy punched the shoulder of the boy next to him, who then did the same (a

little harder) to the one next to him, and on it went.

When they'd made it once around the circle, the teacher said to them, "When it is your turn, you can end the game by saying, 'I can stop the hurt. Do that and the game will be over.'"

Round two began and then round three, the blows landing with increasing force. It seemed it would never end.

Finally, one of them blurted out, "I can stop the hurt!" With that, the game was over. And the boy who ended it, instead of being shamed, was celebrated, and became a hero to his peers.

"Kids recognize courage at least as quickly as the rest of us", Lange observed.

Indeed, making peace takes courage.

It takes courage to break the cycle of violence.

It takes courage to refrain from repaying evil for evil.

It takes courage to speak truth to power.

Around our tables, across our nation, throughout our planet...may we summon the courage to stop the hurt.

I pray you courage in the struggle...

The Vermont Conference is hiring!

The Vermont Conference is seeking an Administrative Assistant to manage the business operations of the Conference office, assist with events, be a resource to our local churches and other responsibilities. Click the button below to learn more.

Click Here

[View Administrative Assistant opportunity](#)

The Vermont Conference has an exciting opportunity for you - our ministers and churches.

This resource is made possible through the financial support offered to the Vermont Conference by local church support of Our Church's Wider Mission and private donations to [Friends of the Vermont Conference](#). Thank you!

**A gift of music and photos
from Rev. Kathy Wonson Eddy**

Kathy is offering permission for Vermont Conference UCC Churches to use music from her website in virtual worship.

Her website address is: kathywonsoneddy.com

Kathy asks three things:

1. That churches always include the text (visible to worshippers as they listen), the text author's name, and her name as composer
2. That churches make a donation to the Vermont Conference UCC or Black Lives Matter when a piece of her music is used
3. That churches email her at kathywonsoneddy@gmail.com , naming the piece used each time and which donation was made.



Does your church have an investment policy?

The United Church Fund is one of the financial ministries of the United Church of Christ and offers its expertise to local churches regarding investment strategies, policies and general expertise.

This downloadable guidance offers ideas and information to consider when developing or revising your local church investment policy.

[Click here to download the Investment Policy guidance from the United Church Fund](#)

Holding space for difficult conversations

How do we have difficult conversations - whether about race, finances or anything else - within our congregations and people with differing perspectives? College Street Congregational Church developed "Communication Guidelines to Strengthen Our Community" and have kindly shared it for other churches to consider. The Vermont Conference Annual Meeting also adopts "A Covenant for Dialog" at the beginning of each Annual Meeting. Please feel free to use these documents in your local church.

[Download College Street Congregational Church: "Communications Guidelines to Strengthen Our Church"](#)

[Download Vermont Conference Annual Meeting: "A Covenant for Dialog"](#)

Webinar

Reaching New People in the "New Normal"

A webinar with follow-up coaching sponsored by the Vermont Conference, UCC

Date and Time: Saturday, November 14th from 10:00 to 12 Noon and 1:00 to 3:00 PM

[Read more](#)

Dear friends,
2020 has been a year of huge change for churches as they adapt to the

"new normal" caused by Covid. Pre-Covid, it was a challenge for churches to reach new people; how do churches reach them during and after a pandemic? That is what I will be addressing on the November 14th workshop, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. We will look at all the best practices of what churches around the country are doing to connect with their community. You and your Team will have opportunities to talk with one another and adapt these strategies to your particular setting. And then there will be 6 months of coaching to help you implement your Action Plan.

I hope you will join me on November 14th. All the details are in the attached flyer. I look forward to seeing you.

With grace and peace,
Paul Nickerson

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light's 2020 *Climate Justice Series*

Rooting out Structural Racism in American Agriculture

November 8 - 4:00 p.m.

[Read more](#)



COVID - 19 Information & Resources

[Re-opening checklist developed by Centre Congregational Church](#)

[Are you holding services according to CDC protocols?](#)

[COVID-19 resources from the UCC Insurance Boards](#)

An invitation from First Congregational Church of Burlington



(<https://firstchurchburlington.org/>) extends an open invitation to any congregation in need of a respite Sunday for your pastor.

- Our worship services are recorded and streamed at 10am on Sunday morning on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/FirstChurchBTU> - past services are available on our YouTube channel as well. Simply share the link with your congregation and know that all will be welcomed.
- SILENT VIGILS FOR RACIAL JUSTICE: All are invited to gather on the front lawns of First Congregational Church UCC of Burlington (38 South Winooski Avenue) on Sundays November 1 and December 6 from 1:00 to 1:30 to be in solidarity for racial justice. Bring a mask and a sign (a chair if you want) and join in this ongoing, first Sunday of the month, community advocacy initiative for racial justice.

Annual Meeting Resolution guidelines

The 225th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, UCC is scheduled for April 23 - 24, 2021 at Lake Morey Resort. Resolutions to be offered for consideration by the Annual Meeting must be submitted in accordance to guidelines set forth by the bylaws of the Vermont Conference and the Board of Directors. You may find the guidelines on the Annual Meeting page of the Vermont Conference website by [clicking the logo](#).



Kipah, Kufi, and Collar

As part of an interfaith effort at modeling peace, Rabbi Amy Small of Ohavi Zedek, Imam Islam Hassan of the Islamic Society of Vermont, and Pastor Ken White of College Street Congregational Church in Burlington have released a podcast called "Kipah, Kufi, and Collar". Each 30 minute segment starts with Amy, Islam, and Ken having a conversation about an everyday issue (week 1 is "how to deal with difficult people") and then interviewing a local figure about that same topic (week 1's guest is former Vermont Governor, U.S. Ambassador, professor and author Madeline Kunin). New episodes are available every Monday.

You can access it at kipahkufiandcollar.com or you can look for it on Spotify (<https://open.spotify.com/show/0MpaNQRVMA1claeP2y5Ot0>), iTunes (<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/kipah-kufi-collar/id1523653268>) or wherever you access podcasts.

Curating services and sermons for pastor vacations

Would you be willing to share your sermons or services with others in the Conference, so that they might use them on a Sunday they want to take off? Let Jesse in the Conference office know if you would be willing to do that, and we will list all the churches in the Conference that encourage you to use sermons and services in Ekit. Then you can simply go to their website and use them with their permission. Thanks!

Spiritual Direction

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

Pastoral Transitions

- Rev. Elisa Lucozzi has been called as Pastor of the Guilford Community Church. She will succeed Rev. Lise Sparrow who is retiring.
- Rev. Leigh McCaffrey has been called as Pastor of the Barre Congregational Church.
- Rev. Mark Wilson has been called as Pastor of Waitsfield United Church Christ. His ministry will begin in October.
- Rev. Lava Mueller was ordained by the Windsor-Orange Association on August 21st. She has been called as a Hospice Chaplain with Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Vermont & New Hampshire.
- Amy Davin has been called as the Pastor of First Congregational Church in Hartland. Her ministry begins in October when she succeeds Rev. Lucia Jackson who is retiring.

Prayers and Thanksgivings

Please hold Rev. Roger and Sandy Daly in your prayers as Roger begins his recovery from a stroke. Well wishes may be sent to: 107 Shore Rd., Edgecomb, ME 04556 or roger.daly13@gmail.com or sandy.daly13@gmail.com.

Please hold Rev. Bill Bartholomew and his partner in your prayers as they have just been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Please hold Rev. Kurt Shaffert in your prayers as he mourns the passing of his mother.

Please hold Rev. Margo Marrone in your prayers as she and her family mourn the sudden passing of her husband Tom Marrone.

Please hold our Black, Indigenous and other people of

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

color (BIPOC) sisters and brothers murdered by police and white supremacists in your prayers. Say their names...

Please hold health care workers and first responders in your prayers as they stand on the front lines responding to COVID-19.

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
 - llbvtc@gmail.com
- Assoc. Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree
 - sangreep@vtcucc.org
- Search & Call, ministerial matters: Rev. Jackie Lingelbach
 - vtconmincoor@gmail.com
 - 802-505-5110
- Business operations, events, website
 - vtcoordinator2018@gmail.com
- Finance: Tanya Frazier
 - vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com
- E-Kit postings
 - vermontconference@gmail.com
- Ministerial Standing & Standards Committee chairperson: Rev. Christine Boardman
 - vtcmssc@gmail.com

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

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](#)

PO Box 749
West Springfield, MA 01090
Phone: 413-279-4039
Skype: asmedbergcws
[Website](#)



INSURANCE BOARD
Partners in Protection

Local Agent
James Stewart
[Email James](#)

P.O. Box 9031
Springfield, MA 01102-9031
413-788-4531
[Website](#)