



# Vermont Conference

## United Church of Christ

36 North Main Street  
Randolph VT 05060  
(802)728-4999



## Press Release

**Date:** April 29, 2022  
**To:** All Media  
**From:** Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister  
of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ  
**Re:** Christian Leaders Respond to Anti-LGBTQ+ Violence

As Christian leaders in Vermont, we are deeply saddened and troubled by the murder of Fern Feather and the shattering of the door of the Pride Center in Burlington, Vermont.

Diversity, inclusion and justice are core values of our faith. On April 22-23 we held a statewide gathering of our Vermont churches in the United Church of Christ. This year we were celebrating twenty years of declaring ourselves an Open and Affirming Conference. This means a commitment of offering acceptance, welcome and celebration to gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual, queer and questioning persons.

The reality of a trans woman's murder provided a somber reminder that our work is not complete. The queer community, especially our trans siblings, live with the daily trauma of the threat of violence. We mourn with our queer siblings in the loss of Fern Feather and the damage to the Pride Center.

Many of our congregations begin their worship services with these words, "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." The Open and Affirming movement has changed the church. But we must also acknowledge the culpability of the Christian Church in the othering of queer people and their ongoing oppression.

Jesus declared that he comes to "let the oppressed go free" (Luke 4:18) and so we reaffirm our commitment to be active and engaged allies with the queer community in the ongoing work of countering trans and homophobia for the sake of our beloved Vermont and for the sake of the gospel of Christ.

As Easter people, we believe, and we are certain, that ultimately Love wins!

Rev. Dr. Lynn L. Bujnak  
Conference Minister  
Vermont Conference, UCC

Rev. Paul Sangree  
Associate Conference Minister  
Vermont Conference, UCC

Rev. Jacquelyn Lingelbach  
Ministries Coordinator, Vermont  
Conference, UCC

Rev. Caryne A. Eskridge, Weybridge  
Congregational Church

Rev. John N. Bixby

Rev. Amanda Swoyer

Rev. Paul Eyer, Williston Federated  
Church

Rev. Kathy Clark

Rev. Lava Mueller

Rev. and Mrs. Dave and Louise Ransom

Pastor Theresa Lever

Rev. Terry Hanley, RN.

Rev. Erin Reardon

Pastor Andi Lloyd

Rev. Doug Carter

Rev. Dr. Gary Lewis

Rev. Leigh McCaffrey, Barre  
Congregational

Rev. Martha Beckwith Peck

Rev. D. Mark Blank, Second  
Congregational Church, Bennington, VT

Rev. Peter Plagge, Waterbury  
Congregational Church

Rev. Rona Kinsley

Rev. Jessica Moore, First  
Congregational Church of St. Albans

Rev. Pam Lucas

Rev. Susan Cooke Kittredge

Rev. Andy Nagy-Benson

Rev. Elisa Lucozzi, Guilford  
Community Church

Pastor SallyAnn Silfies

Rev. Gregory Briggs, Vermont  
Conference, UCC, Disaster Ministries  
Coordinator

Rev. KellyAnn Donahue, East Corinth  
Congregational Church

Rev. Amy Pitton, Bethany United  
Church of Christ

Rev. Tracy Weatherhogg

Rev. Linda L. Kulas

Rev. Cordelia Burpee

Rev. Dr. Shawn Bracebridge

Rev. Susan Church

Rev. Marjorie MacNeill, Shelburne VT

Rev. Carole Carlson

Rev. David Vanderlinde-Abernathy

Rev. Abigail Diehl-Noble

Rev. Dr. Barbara Purinton

Rev. Charles Purinton

Pastor Beverly Anderson

Rev. Laurie Krooss

Rev. Mark D. Wilson, Waitsfield United  
Church of Christ

Rev. Katelyn B. Macrae, Richmond  
Congregational Church, UCC

Rev. Catherine Aiken Cadieux

Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen

Rev. Ann Hockridge

Rev. Ed Sunday-Winters

Rev Christine S. Boardman, Springfield

Rev. Kimberly S. McKerley, Bethany  
Church, United Church of Christ

Rev Rameen Zahed, The Old Meeting  
House

Rev. Daniel Wright

Rev. Margaret Wright

Pastor Michael J. Mario

Rev. Elissa Johnk

Rev. Mark Pitton

Rev. Tom Harty, United Church of  
Bethel

Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno,  
Congregational Church of Westminster  
West, VT, UCC

Rev. Alyssa May

Rev. Kathy Wonson Eddy

Rev. Peter Hammond

Rev. Jonathan Hauze,  
Norwich Congregational Church

Rev Sally May, Mallets Bay  
Congregational Church

Rev. Joan Vincent

Rev. Evelyn Coupe

Rev. Josh Simon, Associate Pastor, First  
Congregational Church of Essex  
Junction

Rev. Joan O’Gorman

Pastor Gary O’Gorman

Rev. Dr. Scott Everett Couper, Centre  
Congregational Church, UCC,  
Brattleboro, Vermont

Rev. Cass Poulos

Rev. Mark Mendes, Senior Pastor, First  
Congregational Church of Essex  
Junction

Rev. Mary S. Hoadley