



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 Winter "

January 7, 2021

Message from the Conference



HAPPY NEW YEAR! We have all together entered the year of 2021, and said goodbye to 2020! One of my favorite activities is to read, whatever year it is, and one of my favorite authors is Kathleen Norris. The book of hers I am reading now is "Acedia and Me-A Marriage, Monks, and a Writer's Life."

If you are not familiar with her, Norris is a mainline Protestant who has spent much time in Catholic monastic communities. She writes that acedia is a key term in monastic history and medieval literature, and according to one medical dictionary, is "a mental syndrome, the chief features of which are listlessness, carelessness, apathy and melancholia." Acedia was what those in the monastic life had to battles against constantly, and she notes that Acedia is very common is our world today as well. Her words in this 2008 book seem so eerily accurate to what many of us are dealing with in our current Pandemic world.

The great temptation that Acedia dangles before us is this according to Norris: "Whatever the place of our commitment-a monastic cell, a faith community, a job, a marriage-acedia says we are better off walking away." Have you thought at some point during this Pandemic about just walking away from something? I know that you may not have told anyone else your thoughts, but I have a feeling that you have had them, because we all have.

Norris then writes that "the monastic perspective can assist us specifically with regard to understanding the value of community. Imagine for a moment that the people you encounter at home, work, or school are the very people God has given you to pray with, eat with, and play with for the rest of your life. And you are supposed to thank God for this, every day, several times a day. This is what monastic people take on... How radical to think we can best know ourselves by embracing commitment, not rejecting it; by relating to others, not callously relegating them to the devilishly convenient category of 'other'". May you and I be as good and gentle with ourselves as we can be, so that we can keep the commitments we have made to the community, to the glory of God.

Faithfully yours,
Paul

Rev. Paul Sangree, Associate Conference Minister



Rev. Arnold Brown

It is with deep sadness that we share the news that Rev. Arnold Brown of Craftsbury, VT passed away November 23, 2020. Arnold served the Church on the Common for 25 years (1961-1986) making the Parsonage home. Following his retirement, Arnold was honored to be named Pastor Emeritus of the United Church of Craftsbury.

His obituary can be found [here](#).

Allen Myrick

Allen Myrick, formerly of Brattleboro VT., died on Dec. 20, in Middlesex Hosp., at age 90. He led a full life here and in Africa for 20 yrs. as a UCC missionary. May our thoughts and prayers be with his wife Judith as well as the rest of his family and friends at this time.



You can find his full obituary [here](#).



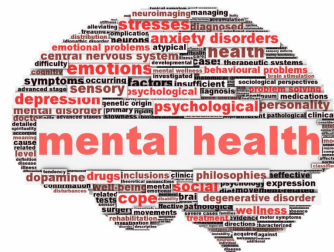
Still Speaking Devotionals

Still Speaking devotional is experiencing some difficulties with their email distribution service, they are still working on a remedy so that the Daily Devotional can be emailed (and posted online) as soon as possible. In the meantime, here is the Facebook link for you to find it [here!](#)



NAMI FaithNet Debut!

The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Vermont (NAMI Vermont) is reaching out to faith communities to offer customized mental health presentations, resources, and information, known as NAMI FaithNet to create more welcoming, caring, and supportive faith communities for persons and families affected by mental illness. Trained NAMI Vermont members are breaking the silence and eliminating stigma surrounding mental illness by sharing education and their lived experience stories virtually by zoom.



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

Open and Affirming Zoom Gathering Jan. 30th!

The ONA Concerns Mission Group of the NH



Conference of the UCC has sponsored a Zoom Gathering on Saturday, January 30, 2021 from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

ALL are invited to join us!

[Click here for more information!](#)

Year-End Planning: Time to Update Your Church Membership Records!

This week is a reminder to update your church membership lists. UCC Yearbook reporting is scheduled to open January 8, 2021, and it is important that your church report current and accurate membership information. For churches that are affiliated with more than one denomination, the membership number should only reflect members who identify themselves as UCC.

The membership number is used to determine the amount of dues that your church gives to your association and the Vermont Conference.

The numbers you report also help determine how many delegates the Vermont Conference can designate for General Synod, which is one of the essential ways your voice is heard on important issues.

Your church number includes the Vermont Conference number which is 82. Therefore, your complete church number (including zeroes) is 82xxxx

[Click here to find your church number \(listed by town\)](#)

[Click here for detailed Yearbook Instructions!](#)

Per Capita Dues 2020

Vermont Conference	\$ 13.00
Addison	\$ -
Champlain	\$ 1.10
Grafton-Orange	\$ 0.50
Northeast	\$ 1.00
Southwest	\$ 1.00
Washington	\$ -
Windham-Union	\$ 0.25
Windsor-Orange	\$ 1.00

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.

You can find an easy to use calculator [here!](#)

How has the Conference made use of the Basic Support (OCWM) contributed by our Local Churches in 2020?

You can learn all about how your generous donations have been utilized throughout the conference [HERE!](#)



EVENTS AROUND THE CONFERENCE

(Please let us know what your Congregation is up to by sending an email to

VermontConference@gmail.com .

You may just see yourself or someone you love in the eKit or our Facebook page!)



Rev. Hal Harrison is turning 90!

Has was a member of the Conference staff for many years and also served as a mentor and spiritual director to many people over the years. Hal's birthday is on **January 15th**.

Please consider sending him a birthday card.

Here is his address:

Rev. Hal Harrison
33 Christian Ave Apt 172
Concord, NH 03301

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 meet.**

[For more info click 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?

During these difficult times, could you use some emotional support and a listening ear? Are you looking for connections to community resources 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](#).

If you or someone you know could use some support coping with the pandemic, reach out to COVID Support VT. Call 2-1-1- to reach a Support Counselor. You can also access their [self-care tips and resources flyer](#), [daily stress management plan](#) and their online [Weekly Wellness Groups](#).

**DISASTER
MINISTRIES**



UCC launches "[Recovering Hope](#),"

Emotional Care in COVID-19

[click here for more info](#)

SAVE THE DATE!

The UCC Just Peace Committee is inviting you to the next quarterly Just Peace Webinar to take place on January 27 (7 p.m. ET/6 p.m. CT/5 p.m. MT/4 p.m. PT/2 p.m. HT). More information can be found [here!](#)

"We now need to put as much effort into defining a just peace as we have done in the past in defining a just war."
-Dr. Robert V. Moss



University of Vermont MLK CELEBRATION ANNOUNCEMENT

The Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Larner College of Medicine are excited to announce UVM's annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration. This year's keynote speaker is Leon McDougale, MD, MPH, 121st President of the National Medical Association. For more information or how you can participate, click [here!](#)



Our Lady of the Angels Church will be hosting a **warm winter clothing distribution** January 14th and 15th for the White River Valley. Donations are still greatly appreciated! Learn more [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 !

MISC. (But equally important!!!) NEWS!

New Deadline for eKit!

Any information you would like to have in the eKit must be received by the **Tuesday prior to the eKits release by noon** at the latest! Please send any and all information to Elise at vermontconference@gmail.com.

She looks forward to hearing from you!



Beyond Belief: A Marcus Borg Retrospective

50% off for Vermont Conference Churches

Beyond Belief is a six session DVD study. The series contains favorite moments, core teachings and extensive never-before seen material of Marcus Borg from the LtQ archives plus commentary from Rev. Marianne Borg. More information can be found [here!](#)

Don't Forget!

Order your UCC Stewardship Theme materials.

Due to the increasing COVID-19 pandemic, the Vermont Conference Office will be closed beginning Monday, November 23rd, 2020. Staff will continue to work remotely.

Thank You for Your Support!

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

Donate

Connect with us



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