



E-Kit January 22, 2020

DONATE

Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

In the week carved out to celebrate the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. there has been time to pause for reflection and to renew our commitment to Dr. King's way of nonviolence and our own work of recognizing, understanding and relinquishing white privilege. One way of working on this is to be intentional about learning more about racial inequity and the power of racism still present in our society. Here are a few suggestions:

See the movie "Just Mercy" or read the book it is based on: *Just Mercy: a Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson. Choose a book such as *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo as the subject of a book discussion at your church. Or, here is a partial list of books recommended for the UCC Conference Ministers' study prior to our trip to Birmingham, Alabama:

- Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, (New York: The New Press, 2010).
- Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution* (Updated Edition), (New York: HarperPerennial, 2014).
- Leon A. Higginbotham, Jr., *Shades of Freedom: Racial Politics and Presumptions of the American Legal Process*, (New York, NY: Oxford Press, 1996).
- Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, (New York: Nation Books, 2017).
- Jim Wallis, *Racism: America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege and the Bridge to a New America*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016).
- _____, *Racism, America's Original Sin*, Sojourners July 29, 2013.

Click the button below this article for a recent statement from our General Minister and President the Rev. John Dorhauer.

I hope you have or will now mark your calendar for Annual Meeting on April 24-25th to meet and be inspired by the Rev. Traci Blackmon, one of the officers of the national setting of the UCC. Together with Traci and with a panel of guests from Vermont we will explore the intersection of race with so many of the things we care about: poverty, the environment, prison justice reform to name just a few.

A final word for contemplation: "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." Martin Luther King

In peace,
Lynn

[See UCC General Minister & President Rev. John Dorhauer's video](#)

Boundary Awareness Training for Retired Clergy registration open

Training date: March 4, 2020 (replacing Feb. 21)

Time: 10:00 - 2:30

Place: United Church of Bethel

Recognizing and honoring boundaries can present challenges when you have retired from active ministry. How does a retired minister create, and just as importantly maintain, boundaries?

New Hampshire Conference Minister Rev. Gordon Rankin will lead us in this seminar.

Registration fee is \$20.

Lunch and refreshments are provided

[Click here to Register!](#)

UCC Asylum Accompaniment Webinar - Jan 24th 2020

Please join the United Church of Christ on Friday January 24th at 1PM ET/10AM PT for a webinar on How to Do Asylum Seeker Accompaniment. This is a collaboration between Justice and Local Church and Wider Church Ministries. Over the past year and a half, the number of asylum seekers arriving to the U.S. has increased significantly, and faith and community groups across the country - including numerous United Church of Christ churches - have taken the faith-full step to offer care and welcome to those seeking protection. This webinar will cover the basics of how to do asylum accompaniment, while providing a space to share expertise and experience from congregations already deeply engaged in this work. Additionally, this webinar will be accompanied by the release of the UCC Asylum Accompaniment Toolkit to help walk churches through a new or on-going ministry of accompanying.

Led by:

- Amanda Sheldon, Program Associate, UCC Refugee and Asylum Ministries & UCC Disaster Ministries
- Rev. Noel Andersen from the UCC National Collaborative on Immigration
- Special guest speakers from congregational around the country

[Sign up here](#)

Time to get your church records up to date!

This week is a reminder to update your church membership lists.

UCC Yearbook reporting opened January 8, 2020, and it is important that your church report current and accurate membership information.

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

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

[Click here for instructions](#)

[Click here for more information](#)

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

January 15 was the last day for 2019 remittances to be received by the Conference office.

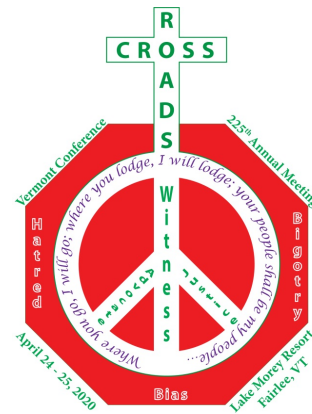
All remittances received hereafter will count towards 2020 only.

225th Annual Meeting updates

We are excited to announce youth programming at Annual Meeting this year! It has been a long time since youth had the opportunity to be involved. Youth at Annual Meeting will be during the Saturday sessions including their own dedicated workshop. Stay tuned for more information...

Registration for Annual Meeting will be coming in February. [Click here to learn more about church delegations and who is eligible to vote \(PDF\).](#)

Make sure to reserve your room at Lake Morey Resort early - they go fast! Call to reserve your room at 802-423-1211.



[Click here to learn more about Annual Meeting](#)

New Podcast Available

Rev. Josh Simon (First Congregational Church of Essex Junction) and Rev. Sally May (Malletts Bay UCC, Colchester) have released the first of several interviews for Faith in Vermont: Conversations with LGBTQ Religious and Spiritual Leaders.

[Click here for the podcast](#)

Update on Puerto Rico earthquake

As you know, two volunteer groups from our church went to Puerto Rico and many of you donated money to help with the recovery effort after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico. Now, we have another disaster - the recent earthquake. Please find a report from UCC Disaster Response below on what is happening with our UCC mission groups as they continue to help rebuild after Maria...

Gun Violence Task Force

In 2020 there is a push in the Vermont Legislature to pass bills aimed at reducing Vermont's suicide rates. More than 100 people in Vermont take their own lives in most years. A person's decision to take their own life is a terribly tragic permanent solution to what may be a temporary problem or a solvable situation. It devastates families and communities; we can reduce these unnecessary deaths.

Vitality training February 1st 10:00 - 3:00, at First Congregational Church in Springfield

Exceeding Expectations: First-Time Guest Hospitality

In this one-day workshop the following is covered:

- Building relationships in the community to get people to the front door.
- The importance of on-line presence
- Developing greeters and connectors
- The role of ushers
- Worship dynamics
- After-worship activities

Congregations Moving Forward



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Exceeding Expectations: First-Time Guest Hospitality
In this one-day workshop the following is covered:

- Building relationships in the community to get people to the front door.
 - The importance of on-line presence
 - What happens in the first 8-10 minutes?
 - Developing greeters and connectors
 - The role of ushers
 - Worship dynamics
 - After-worship activities
 - Follow-up with newcomers
 - Connecting new people to the church
- The goal is for each church to develop a comprehensive process that will exceed the expectations of first-time guests. Each church will

Click here to learn more

Pastoral Transitions

- Rev. Peter Heinrichs has been called as Interim Pastor at Norwich Congregational Church.
- Rev. Ezra Chapola has been called as Pastor and Teacher at Old South Church in Windsor. Ezra began his ministry on December 1st.
- Rev. James Mills has been called as Pastor and Teacher at 1st Congregational Church of Fair Haven. James began his ministry on December 1st.
- Rev. Cass Poulos has been called as Pastor of the Post Mills Congregational Church.

Click here for full list of transitions

Prayers and Thanksgivings

Rev. Marisa Laviola gives thanks for the prayers and support she has received as her spouse Carol has recovered from an accident.

Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno gives thanks for the support and prayers she and her husband Tristan have received as Tristan has recovered from a heart attack.

Useful Links

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

Who should I contact for...?

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

Outdoor Ministries news



@ the Lake Camp week at Rock Point
July 26 - July 31

Recruiting for 2 Deans, 4 Counselors, Nurse, 2 Lifeguards & Daytime Volunteers

Looking for our lead team of Deans & Counselors!

Some familiar faces returning. [Please email Laurie Chipman](#) if you are interested in support @ the Lake with your time and energy.

[More Outdoor Ministries news](#)

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

Click here for local church events

Annual UCC Church Yearbook upload period opened January 8th.

Community Supper - January 30 at United Church of Dorset & East Rupert [Click here for more information](#)

Church Vitality with Paul Nickerson - February 1, 10:00 - 3:00 at First Congregational Church of Springfield

Boundary Training for Retired Clergy - March 4, 10:00 - 2:30 at United Church of Bethel [Register here](#)

Search & Call Resources

Lay Ministry Openings

Visit our partners



Church World Service



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for local churches...
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