

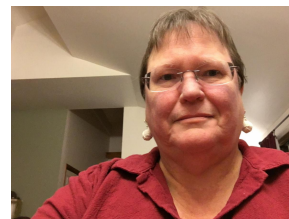


## E-Kit April 29, 2020

**DONATE**

Dear Beloved Community in the Vermont Conference,

In the past weeks we have learned so much. We have learned to navigate ZOOM and live streaming on Facebook and Youtube. We have learned to build and maintain community when we cannot be physically together. We have mourned. We have celebrated Communion as the Body of Christ that transcends distance and location. We have offered one another a listening ear, prayed together, studies together, met together in these strange new ways. We have been changed. When we once again gather together physically, we will not be the people or the church we were.



In the gospel accounts of the Resurrection that describe some encounter with the Risen Christ, one thing noted is that Jesus was so transformed by the Resurrection that even his closest friends did not recognize him. It was not until he spoke a name or broke the bread or appeared on the beach for breakfast that the realization dawned.

Our lives as individuals and communities go through many experiences of dying and rising once more. The awakening world outside our door reveals resurrection with each passing day. I believe out of the pandemic known as COVID 19 with all its loss and pain and separation will also come resurrection - new life, new possibilities, lives and missions and ministries transformed.

Although there are hints of new life, we are not there yet. We need to be patient and careful. The time for coming back together in celebration is not yet. How will we know when it IS time? We will follow the wisdom of the experts. We will make sure we do not endanger the lives of the most vulnerable to rush the timeline. So we will be informed by our state experts, by the CDC and WHO. Even then, each congregation will have to weigh their decision based on size of congregation, size of sanctuary, number of congregants who are in high risk categories, etc.

Within a week, we will release a set of guidelines that can be used by congregations and pastors to discuss and make decisions about when and how to re-open. In the meantime, I recommend reading the guidelines and questions from the Wisconsin Council of Churches here: <https://www.wichurches.org/2020/04/23/returning-to-church>.

In season and out, let us continue to be the resurrection people God created us to be. Be patient. Be safe. Be loving.

In hope and peace,  
Lynn

**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**

# COVID - 19 Information & Resources

Resources curated by the  
Southern New England  
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](#)

## 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.](#)

## Special Webinar for Church Vitality with Paul Nickerson

Dear friends,

Churches are experiencing great change during this crisis time. On Thursday, May 7th at 10:00 AM, there will be a webinar on: "Now What; Navigating Church Vitality in the New Normal". This will be a time to look at the best practices from churches around the country on:

- How to reach new people while we are sheltered
- Stewardship issues, both short-term and long-term
- Key issues moving forward around staffing, organization/structure, continued online efforts, clarity around central purpose, etc.

The future church is going to look different than our pre-coronavirus church. Come and learn how your church can adapt and plan for a fruitful future.

To register: Click on the link below. Once registered you will have the Webinar link for May 7th at 10:00 AM.



When: May 7, 2020 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Vermont Webinar

Register in advance for this webinar:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_7BhWNLBRSkiiz1R8pNqaFQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7BhWNLBRSkiiz1R8pNqaFQ)

If you have any questions, [please contact me](#)

I look forward to our time together.

Blessings,  
Paul  
Nickerson Coaching

*This webinar has been set up, and promoted, by the Vermont Conference.  
Registration fee is required to join the webinar. Please email Paul Nickerson at  
[nickersonp@comcast.net](mailto:nickersonp@comcast.net) to register and pay the fee.*

### Pastoral Transitions

- Rev. Elissa Johnk was installed as Pastor and Teacher at First Congregational Church in Burlington.
- Lava Mueller was granted the status of Ordination Pending Call by the Windsor-Orange Association following an ecclesiastical council.
- Rev. WendyJane Summers has been called as Pastor of Second Congregational Church of Hyde Park.

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

### Prayers and Thanksgivings

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

### Peacemakers Pulpit

Rev. Sally May  
Pastor, Mallets Bay United Church of Christ

*Note: Sally May's Peacemakers Pulpit submission, which arrived just about the time COVID-19 made its appearance, did not make it into our March E-KIT. Its advice is good for all of us, as we will seek to re-motivate, after the pandemic! Thank you, Sally May, for your words of wisdom. Betty Edson*

Are you tired? I am exhausted. This winter, I asked myself why? Threats of snow and

ice on the roads have always caused me winter stress. This winter I was more exhausted than ever. I realized in early January much of that stress and anxiety was because of my e-mail inbox. Every day I receive one, usually several, requests to be somewhere, to do something to call out injustice. I feel a need and responsibility to show up as a sign of solidarity and resistance to oppression and privilege. I realized I was on overload when I couldn't bring myself to participate in online meetings. It was more than snowy roads. I was simply too tired, too exhausted.

[Read the full article](#)

## 2020 Census has begun

The numbers that are returned in the 2020 Census - which began on March 12 - will determine the amount of federal funding that Vermont receives for programs that help the most vulnerable among us: Medicare and Medicaid, school lunch programs, emergency housing assistance, SNAP, WIC, special education, and more. Every person counts!

The Vermont Conference calls upon our local churches to help spread the word about the Census with the downloadable bulletin insert and flyer. Responding to the Census will help ensure funds for vital services to Vermonters are not threatened by an inaccurate population count.

Thank you!

[Census flyer](#)

## New Podcast Available

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*.

*On this week's episode of 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.*

[Click here for the latest podcast](#)



**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](#)

## Racism in America symposiums



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

**Celebrating Local Heroes**

**Seminar to help eradicate**

## Human Trafficking

While many Brattleboro folks are doing their duty by staying home, many are working hard providing essential services in these new challenging conditions of the Covid-19 Era. "One Community Home Together - a Celebration of Local Heroes" is an appreciation in spoken word, images and music of the hard and sometimes dangerous work of our local heroes, which will be shown on Brattleboro Community Television and Youtube.

The concert/event will feature town leaders, representatives from Groundworks, NAACP, Faith leaders and more. The music will include songs from the November, 2017 "By the People For the People" concert held at the Latchis Theater, Mary Cay Brass's River Singers, a choral composition "Hope Lingers On" by Brattleboro composer and fiddler Lissa Schneckenburger, and other community choral performances.

It will be broadcast Saturday, May 2 at 7:00 pm on BCTV Channel 8 ([you can also watch it on Youtube](#)).

Join us at the Waterbury Congregational Church on May 9 from 10 AM to 3 PM for a free seminar to learn how the faith community can help and become part of the initiative to eradicate human trafficking in Vermont. More than 4 million people across the globe have experienced the horrors of human trafficking, many right here in Vermont. Learn about the intersections with addiction, the use of force, fraud and coercion tactics that traffickers use, as well as the signs and red flags to be aware of in your own community. This will be a broad overview of Human Trafficking the training will be presented by a multi-disciplinary team led by Ms. Kira Krier, the Human Trafficking Victim Services Director for the state and will include representatives from the areas of Law Enforcement, the Department of Children and Families, Disability Rights and Victim Services.

Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to [peter@waterburyucc.com](mailto:peter@waterburyucc.com) if you'd like to attend.

Waterbury Congregational Church  
8 North Main St.  
Waterbury, VT 05676  
(802) 244-6606



**Planning for VT @ the Lake week  
continues!**  
July 26 - July 31  
**Registration is open**

[Learn more about @ the Lake  
Camp](#)

[Register for camp here](#)

We are living in different times and seeking God wherever we can find the divine. The VT Outdoor Ministry Team is moving ahead and holding in prayer our summer camps as we long for the first day of camp and us able to meet in God's great outdoors all together and in person. We've had a change in deans for this year. Come join Laurie Chipman (CE Director at First Cong Essex Junction) and Ed Sunday-Winters (Pastor at Greensboro UCC) at Rock Point Camp for a week of @ the Lake fun for all 5th- 8th graders on Sunday, July 26th - Friday, July 31st. VT Scholarships are available and Horton Center has a refund policy in place. Please help the VTOM Team as we search for two female counselors and a nurse. Interested? Know someone who might be, please contact Laurie Chipman, chair at [lchipman@fccej.org](mailto:lchipman@fccej.org).

[Continue reading the news from Horton Center ...](#)

**Resources from the Vermont Conference**



website (click the buttons below)

Click  
here  
for  
local  
church  
events

Eradicate Human Trafficking seminar - May 9 at Waterbury  
Congregational Church - [Click here to register](#)

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

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Lay Ministry  
Openings

### Visit our partners



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