



E-Kit September 16, 2020

DONATE

Dear Siblings in Christ,

It was wonderful to have the chance to share Clergy Convocation with so many of you. In last night's communion liturgy I heard a phrase that is sticking with me - "together apart." Somehow for me this contains both comfort and pain. It is a powerful reminder that despite COVID we are finding ways to show up for one another. And, it continues to hurt as we miss seeing, touching, being near loved ones and colleagues. Especially on difficult days or downright agonizing days, these missing pieces of our lives pull at our spirits.



So, at Clergy Convocation here is what I missed. I missed worshipping and eating and listening with you. I missed the small opportunities to have a brief or longer conversation, to inquire how you are and how your ministry is going. I missed music and the fire pit, the snacks and conversations and games after hours. Although some of us did play games!

This is what I experienced and gratefully received. I saw your faces and even got small group time through the wonders of ZOOM rooms. I had the chance to listen to the honesty and wisdom of our presenter, Rev. Barb Lemmel, to help make meaning out of these strange days, to lament, to inquire about our purpose and go deeper as we asked each other "why." Barb shared about the dark nights of the soul that many may be facing during COVID or the combined weight of pandemic, systemic racism, the political climate and climate change in the form of hurricanes, storms and out of control fires. A powerful moment happened for me as Barb asked each of us to name our "go to" scripture when times are difficult. It felt like being surrounded by faith. I wrote down the title of books recommended and viewed powerful poems, images, and a YouTube on Psalm 23 that instantly updated that beloved psalm for today.

Thanks to all who helped make Clergy Convocation happen - the committee (Amanda Swoyer, Kathy Clark, Anthony Acheson, Mark Blank), staff support Jesse Davis and Paul Sangree, our presenter Rev. Barbara Lemmel.

I hope each of us will find ways to be refreshed, to listen and learn, to be together apart.

In peace,
Lynn

Black Lives Matter

Read Fredrick Douglass' famous speech regarding the celebration of American independence

[Click here for the statement from the Vermont Conference staff, Board and ministers living and serving in Vermont](#)

Beginning conversations about race and white privilege

Has your church begun an education or reflection program about white privilege and systemic racism? If so, tell the Conference about what you are doing so we can highlight your program.

Contact the Conference at vermontconference@gmail.com to tell us about the programs you are doing and the journey you have begun.

- Old South Church in Windsor continues to hold weekly vigils on Wednesday evenings 6-6:30 followed by 30 minute discussions about local racial inequality issues.
- Mallets Bay Congregational Church held a summer book study of *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James H. Cone.
- The United Church of Strafford helped launch a town-wide discussion forum about race and being an anti-racist.
- Newfane Congregational Church has been using the UCC curriculum for examining white privilege.

Say their names...

Each week, we will publish names of our sisters and brothers of the Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) communities who have been murdered by police and/or white supremacists.

Shantel Davis - 23, shot by NYPD officer who claimed she was attempting to escape.

Kenneth Johnson - 60, denied medical care in custody of Vermont Dept. of Corrections ([more information here](#))

Rekia Boyd - 22, shot in back of the head by off-duty Chicago police officer

Jacob Blake - 29, tased and shot seven times in the back in Kenosha, WI. He remains hospitalized.

The UCC and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

The American Missionary Association, a predecessor body of the United Church of Christ, was a visionary organization dedicated to education and racial equality. The AMA founded six colleges that continue to relate to the UCC Council for Higher Education. These schools are historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and are racially diverse, welcoming students from a wide range of races and ethnicities.

- Dillard University, New Orleans, LA; www.dillard.edu
- Fisk University, Nashville, TN; www.fisk.edu
- Huston-Tillotson University, Austin, TX; www.htu.edu
- LeMoyne-Owen College, Memphis, TN; www.loc.edu
- Talladega College, Talladega, AL; www.talladega.edu
- Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, MS; www.tougaloo.edu

Do you know of protests and rallies that are taking

educator (www.marciamcfee.com). She will be training churches in five basic ways to improve their worship immediately, no matter the size or style of worship and without a big budget or drastic change. Just as we have an occasional need to reboot our computers, "rebooting" your worship is simply a way to look through fresh eyes and get some fresh skills.

This course is also tailored to approach worship practices during the pandemic and will explore the basics of sensory-rich worship design while emphasizing safety protocols and getting creative for online expressions without burning out.

AND Dr. McFee will be getting you ready for your best Advent season ever all along the way! All you need to do is register (at no charge) to receive the emails. You can invite unlimited members of your worship team (or potential worship team members) to receive these communications as well. We encourage you to take advantage of this free offer (usually \$99 per church) made possible through our area's registration.

Our registration link:
<https://ny163.infusionsoft.com/app/form/vermont-conference-ucc-reboot-2020>

church we attend now, and the church of our childhood in Massachusetts, to use freely for their worship. Both have been delighted to discover something with quality recording and text ready to use without their doing hours of recording or editing themselves in order to have a piece of music in their service. (You will see on my website the "audio" section has anthems and solos with the text printed as a poem to see as you listen. The "video" section has scrolling text as the music plays, with beautiful photographs by my husband Bob.)

I am offering to the VT Conference UCC churches the same permission to use my music in virtual worship. I ask three things:

1. that churches always include the text so it is visible for worshippers to see as they listen, and include the name of the text writer and my name as composer
2. that churches make a donation to the VT Conference or to Black Lives Matter (or designate the VT Conference donation to go toward racial justice) when you use a piece of music
3. that churches let me know kathywonsoneddy@gmail.com what you used each time you include my music, and which donation you made

For those of you who don't know me, I was pastor and composer-in-residence of Bethany Church UCC in Randolph from 1976-2012. Since my retirement I have been composing music full-time. It is my joy to help churches in this way.

I sense weariness, stress, and discouragement in clergy during this difficult time; anything that helps bring beauty and meaning to worship without adding to clergy burden is a wonderful thing!

In Christ,
Kathy Wonson Eddy

Fall Leadership Fest - Save the Date!

The Vermont Conference will be holding its first annual Lay Training Event on October 24th from 8:45 to noon. This will be held virtually on ZOOM.

Our training sessions will consider:

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

Stay tuned for more information about our instructors and registration.

Reminder

Your local church needs your financial support more than ever. If you have been fortunate to still be employed please consider making regular gifts to your church. Your congregation is doing vital ministry through online or written worship opportunities, caring for one another, feeding hungry people and fighting for justice. Summer is always a slow time in terms of giving, but the church expenses stay steady.



Please also remember the Vermont Conference. We need the support of our congregations and friends so we can continue to resource pastors and congregations through these strange and important days.

Thank you so much!

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"

**COVID - 19
Information &
Resources**

Re-opening checklist developed by Centre Congregational Church

Are you holding services according to CDC protocols?

Click the image above to learn more

NY School of Ministry (NYSOM) Fall Courses open Featuring Supply Preaching certificate program

The New York Conference's School of Ministry (NYSOM) fall course listing is available and features the Supply Preacher Certification Program. This program is designed especially for lay members who feel called to preaching at churches when their pastors are away or while they are transitioning between pastors.

Click the buttons below for more information.

[Supply Preacher Certification Program](#)

[NYSOM Fall Course offerings](#)

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!

Lancaster Seminary accepting Doctor of Ministry applicants

As a Seminary, we continue to adapt to the needs and realities of these times, as we prepare faith leaders for ministry in a complex and ever-changing world. [We are still accepting applications for the Doctor of Ministry.](#)

Due to COVID-19, our Doctor of Ministry will look a little different, but will still offer the same high-quality educational experience. For the upcoming semester, the one-week intensive has moved to a completely online format (through Zoom). Also, additional classes are scheduled periodically throughout the semester to maintain the cohort experience and ensure academic accountability. I would be happy to meet with anyone you know that might be interested in starting their Doctor of Ministry

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.
- Lava Mueller was ordained by the Windsor-Orange Association on August 21st.
- 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.

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

Prayers and Thanksgivings

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 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
 - bujnakl@vtcucc.org
- Assoc. Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree
 - sangreep@vtcucc.org
- Search & Call, operations, events: Jesse Davis
 - ytcoordinator2018@gmail.com
- Finance: Tanya Frazier
 - vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com
- E-Kit postings
 - vermontconference@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](#)

Connect with us

