



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

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.



While there is much to pray for this Thanksgiving season, there is also much to be thankful for as well. All of us at the Vermont Conference give thanks for all of our ministers, churches, members and friends of the Vermont Conference who have been working so hard this year during this pandemic to keep one another and their communities together and cared for during such a time as this.

Your actions and your care of your communities continue to remind so many in a critical time that God is with us and working through us. We are grateful for those who are sending out spiritual care and nurturing by live streaming/posting their services online, or those who are using email and snail mail, those using local tv channels, and those who are using landline phone messages and calls.

We are grateful for those who have patiently waited until it was safe to return to in-person worship and then who have had the courage to step back during this current rise in COVID cases to protect one another again.

We are grateful for the many food donations and meals prepared and delivered during this pandemic. For the abundance of mask makers who helped communities and healthcare workers and first responders in a time of great need.

We are grateful to all our essential workers those on the frontlines and those in our churches! The church is indeed essential in every way and we are very grateful that you all have remained vital and open though many of our church buildings remain closed.

God bless you all and have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving!



Ordination Anniversaries

At Annual meeting each year we take time to honor with deep appreciation those clergy in our midst who are celebrating significant anniversaries. This year Annual Meeting was canceled due to the pandemic, however we still want to recognize with Thanksgiving those clergy who have served us in so many ways. (please note this information is gathered from what we have in the UCC Data hub, if we we have left out or forgotten anyone please email vtconmincoor@gmail.com so we can recognize you and update our files.)

65 Years of Ministry

Richard L. Bingham

60 Years of Ministry

Jordan E. Dickinson
Thomas D. Steffen

55 Years of Ministry

David C. Norling
Paul E. Willard

50 Years of Ministry

John N. Bixby Jr
James Macintyre III

45 Years of Ministry

Dale N. Hindmarsh
Marshall R. Hudson-Knapp
Jay D. Sprout

40 Years of Ministry

Marcia A. Dorey
Edward C. Hults
Karen S. Lipinczyk
Richard E. Ringenwald Sr
Arnold Isidore Thomas

35 Years of Ministry

Janet Langdon
Joan N. O'Gorman
Joan W. Vincent

30 Years of Ministry

Evelyn E. Lavelli
Mark A. Mendes

25 Years of Ministry

Ann Hockridge
Peter O Plagge

20 Years of Ministry

Shawn Edward Bracebridge
Anne M. Hancock
Mary Simpson Thompson
Margaret Wickham Tooker

15 Years of Ministry

Janice Chilek

10 Years of Ministry

Cordelia Burpee

Ken White

Ordained in 2020

Lava Mueller

Casseniette R. Poulos



In the season of Thanksgiving, we would like to thank Lynn Bunjak, our conference minister and Paul Sangree, our Associate Conference minister for all their hard work this year. Many thanks for gathering the clergy together for weekly support through zoom online meetings. And many thanks for all their work and leadership in helping our churches in a time of great transition. We are grateful to God for their ministry.

UPDATED CONFERENCE RECCOMENDATION FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP -ALL/WINTER COVID-19

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 at least through the end of this year.**

[For more info click here](#)

**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 vtconmincoor@gmail.com

Council of Conference Ministers' 2nd Virtual Worship Service!

You and your congregation are invited to the Council of Conference Ministers' second virtual worship service! The service is ready for use in full and in parts, but can be used at any time. It is centered around the Parable of the Talents.

[For more information and all the videos click here](#)

3 GREAT LOVES ADVENT TOOLKIT 2020

UCC CHRISTMAS PAGEANT/WORSHIP RESOURCES 2020



THE SEASON OF ADVENT IS NEARLY UPON US.
AN ADVENT LIKE NO OTHER

Download your free
toolkit today here



Christmas Fund 2020

"For Such a Time as This" Esther 4:14
Suggested offering date December 20, 2020

Over the past nine months, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergency financial needs of many who serve the church have increased dramatically. In such a time as this, the need for the Christmas Fund is more urgent than ever. Click on link for more resources:

[Promotional Resources Here](#)

Peacemaker's Pulpit – NOVEMBER 2020

Tenacity

Hello, Conference folks!

From time to time, when I feel that the world's pain is too much to bear or share, I listen to a You Tube clip of the Kuumba Singers singing 'Hold On' with Bobby McFerrin as soloist. They were performing on an outdoor stage in Leipzig, Germany in 2002. The words are simple:

Hold on just a little while longer.. (3x)
...everything will be all right.
Pray on just a little while longer...
Fight on just a little while longer...
Sing on just a little while longer...

[click here for youtube video](#)

(or google kuumba singers Mcferrin hold on)

Notice it does not say, "Everything will go back to the way it was before," or Everything will turn out exactly as would best suit you." Also notice that holding on is not passive: we layer on the activities of prayer, struggle, and song. Whether you need encouragement in a personal issue, or the strength to keep calling attention to injustice, or the energy to keep feeding the hungry, loving the outcast, caring for the sick or loving your neighbor...hold on just a little while longer.

For almost a week, we had to hold on just a little while longer to hear the outcome of the presidential election, and it seems that 2 senate seats will be in question until January. For 8 months, we have been holding on, distancing and isolating from our friends and loved ones.

The spiritual virtue of tenacity, the reminder that we are held in a loving God's embrace, will get us through.

And if you need another You Tube musical fix, here's another one:

[click here for youtube video](#)

(or google the storm is passing over Detroit)

- Written by Mary Brownlow, retired UCC pastor, living in Norwich, VT

Black Lives Matter

Racism in America Forum on December 1, 2020
The December Forum will meet with African American high school students who will share their experiences of *Growing Up Black in Rural Vermont*.

To register please send an email to: pastorthomas@goodshepherdjericho.org

UCC Women's Table Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey prepared by the Women's Table of the United Church of Christ. It is intended to gather information from women in the UCC about the issues and concerns you most care about, are engaged with, and for which your faithful responses make a difference in the world around us. We are grateful for the staff of the UCC's Center for Analytics, Research & Development, and Data (CARDD) who will conduct the survey. **[Click here for more information.](#)**

It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey. Please have your responses included by Friday, December 11, at 11:59 pm EDT.

[Take Survey](#)

The United Church of Christ General Synod Planning Team is inviting people

SAVE THE DATE

UCC's first virtual General Synod
to take place July 11-18, 2021



across the wider church to bookmark the recently released GS 33 website to learn more about the denomination's first online biennial gathering. **This website** will provide a hub for all the information related to **General Synod 2021**. The event is scheduled July 11-18, from 5 to 9:30 p.m. EDT. Pre-Synod events will occur July 7-10.

**Giving Tuesday, Dec. 1,
to focus assistance on
refugees and asylum
seekers**
[more info here](#)



**DISASTER
MINISTRIES**



UCC launches "Recovering Hope,"

Emotional Care in COVID-19

[click here for more info](#)

Across Our Conference:

Departing Pastors

- Rev. Dr. Wendy Jane Summers - resigned as Pastor at Second Congregational Church of Hyde Park
- Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola - called as Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Transitions, Penn Central Conference, PA
- Rev. Michael Caldwell - resigned as Interim Pastor of First Congregational Church of Newbury and Wells River Congregational Church
- Ms. Sherry Baer - resigned as licensed Pastor of United Church of Northfield
- Rev. Lucia Jackson - retired as Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Hartland
- Rev. Barbara Purinton - completed her ministry as Bridge Pastor at Waitsfield United Church of Christ
- Rev. Daniel Cooperrider - resigned from Weybridge Congregational Church
- Rev. Gordon MacClennan - resigned from Pastor of First Congregational Church of Manchester
- Rev. Lise Sparrow - retired from Guilford Community Church

Arriving Pastors

- Rev. Mark Daniels Wilson - called as Pastor at Waitsfield United Church of Christ
- Rev. Ezra Chapola - called as Pastor and Teacher at Old South Church in Windsor
- Rev. James Mills - called as Pastor and Teacher at First Congregational Church of Fair Haven
- Ms. Theresa Lever - called as licensed Transitional Co-Pastor at First Congregational Church of Berlin
- Ms. Nancy Fowler - called as co-interim at First Congregational Church of Berlin
- Rev. Peter Heinrichs - called as Interim Pastor at Norwich Congregational Church
- Rev. Cass Poulos - called as Pastor at Post Mills Congregational Church
- Rev. Alberta Wallace - called as Interim Minister at Grace Congregational Church in Rutland
- Rev. Elliott Munn - called as Pastor at Congregational Church of Vergennes

Rev. Leigh McCaffrey - called as Pastor at Barre Congregational Church
Ms. Amy Davin - called as licensed Pastor of First Congregational Church in Hartland
Rev. Lava Mueller - called as Hospice Chaplain, Visiting Nurse and Hospice of VT and NH
Rev. Dr. Wendy Jaine Summers - called as Pastor of United Church of Johnson
Rev. Elisa Lucozzi - called as Pastor of Guilford Community Church UCC, Guilford
Rev. Jessica Moore - called as Pastor of First Congregational UCC, Saint Albans
Mr. Michael Mario - called as licensed Pastor of First Congregational Church of Springfield
Mr. J. Chris Heintz - called as licensed Pastor of First Congregational Church of Manchester
Rev. Kurt Herber - called as Interim Minister of United Community Church UCC, St. Johnsbury
Rev. Rebecca Girrell, UMC Minister has been called to United Community Church of Morrisville

In Memorium

Rev. W. Norman Macfarlane died May 5, 2020

Rev. Philip Noe Nelson died May 20, 2020

Rev. John E. Nutting died June 10, 2020

Rev. Dr. Avery D. Post died September 10, 2020

Phishing Scam Going Around Again

Please be vigilant about any email that appears to be from your fellow church members, clergy person and or our conference minister or staff, asking you to take some kind of unusual action (purchasing gift cards and replying with the serial numbers, clicking a link or downloading an attachment you didn't request, wiring money to a specified account, or simply replying quickly).

A number of congregations across our conference and the country have been hit with an email scam. It involves making a fake Gmail (or yahoo, etc.) account in the person's name and then sending a request for gift cards allegedly from that person to the congregation's directory. The emails seem harmless; they have the person's name and an email address that looks legitimate, but upon further inspection, the email address is actually from a provider different than the one the person typically uses.

In some instances, the sender's name may look correct but is missing a single letter. Or otherwise closely resembles the real email address; for example, joe@churchstaff.org becomes joechurchstaff@gmail.com. In some cases, the message asks for Google Play or iTunes gift cards and in other cases, it asks the recipient to contact them immediately.

DOs and DON'Ts:

DO double-check your emails [and text messages] carefully.

DON'T ever respond to an email [or text message] asking you for money [without independently verifying the source of the request and the destination of the money].

DO verify in person or by phone any request involving money or personal information.

DON'T reply.

DON'T click on any links within the message.

DO report the message as spam to your email provider after forwarding it to the Federal Trade Commission at spam@uce.gov - be sure to cc the church being impersonated.

These scams attack the trust and faith you place in certain respected people. Be safe out there in cyberspace.

Keep safe--online and otherwise...

The Vermont Conference is hiring!

The Vermont Conference is seeking an Administrative Assistant to manage the business operations of the Conference office, assist with events, be a resource to our local churches and other responsibilities. Click the button below to learn more.

Click Here to: [View Administrative Assistant Opportunity](#)

Don't Forget!

Order your UCC Stewardship Theme materials.

Thank You for Your Support!

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

[Donate](#)

**COVID - 19
Information &
Resources**

[COVID-19 resources from the UCC Insurance Boards](#)

Connect with us



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