



Vermont Conference

United Church of Christ

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Press Release

Date: April 29, 2022
To: All Media
From: Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister
of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ
Re: Christian Leaders Respond to Anti-LGBTQ+ Violence

As Christian leaders in Vermont, we are deeply saddened and troubled by the murder of Fern Feather and the shattering of the door of the Pride Center in Burlington, Vermont.

Diversity, inclusion and justice are core values of our faith. On April 22-23 we held a statewide gathering of our Vermont churches in the United Church of Christ. This year we were celebrating twenty years of declaring ourselves an Open and Affirming Conference. This means a commitment of offering acceptance, welcome and celebration to gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual, queer and questioning persons.

The reality of a trans woman's murder provided a somber reminder that our work is not complete. The queer community, especially our trans siblings, live with the daily trauma of the threat of violence. We mourn with our queer siblings in the loss of Fern Feather and the damage to the Pride Center.

Many of our congregations begin their worship services with these words, "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." The Open and Affirming movement has changed the church. But we must also acknowledge the culpability of the Christian Church in the othering of queer people and their ongoing oppression.

Jesus declared that he comes to "let the oppressed go free" (Luke 4:18) and so we reaffirm our commitment to be active and engaged allies with the queer community in the ongoing work of countering trans and homophobia for the sake of our beloved Vermont and for the sake of the gospel of Christ.

As Easter people, we believe, and we are certain, that ultimately Love wins!

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Vermont Conference, UCC

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Rev. and Mrs. Dave and Louise Ransom

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Rev. Terry Hanley, RN.

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Pastor Andi Lloyd

Rev. Doug Carter

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Rev. Leigh McCaffrey, Barre
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Rev. Rona Kinsley

Rev. Jessica Moore, First
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Rev. Pam Lucas

Rev. Susan Cooke Kittredge

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Rev. Elisa Lucozzi, Guilford
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