

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

The churches of the Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ are called to gather in faith, hope, prayer, action and celebration for the 215th Annual Meeting of the Conference. Pastors, delegates, and visitors will meet Thursday June 3rd through Saturday June 5 at Lyndon State College in Lyndonville, Vermont.

“Changing Lives: Fearless Discipleship in Action”

Our theme for this year’s Annual Meeting has grown out of the two previous meetings. We have considered what it means to **be the Church in the 21st century** ... we have heard the challenge to **dive in to life in Christ** ... and now we consider through prayer, worship and workshops, fellowship and plenaries how our relationship with God, Jesus Christ, and the church **changes lives** -- ours and those around us.

Our special guests for the weekend will be Rev. Dr. Matthew Boulton, and Rev. Elizabeth Boulton. Matt, a professor at Harvard Divinity School, will be our keynote speaker. In his teaching and research, Matt explores ways in which Christian worship founds and forms Christian life. He is a dynamic speaker whose perspective has helped to open clergy and laypeople to new understanding and fearless discipleship. His scholarly interests range from the history and practices of Christian liturgy to theology and public life to biblical interpretation and proclamation and the performing arts.

Rev. Elizabeth Myer Boulton (Liz) was the founding pastor of Hope Church, a United Church of Christ “new church start” in Roslindale, MA, and currently serves Old South Church (UCC) in Boston as the Minister of Discipleship. She will be our primary worship leader for Annual Meeting 2010. Liz and Matt will bring their band, Butterflyfish, whose music is “a rootsy blend of American folk, gospel, blues, country, and bluegrass, cooked down and spiced up into fresh takes on the spiritual themes so characteristic of old American music.” They will also bring their two young children, who would certainly love to spend some time with other children of the Vermont Conference! (Childcare will be provided for all who need it.)

In addition to the contribution of the Boultons, Annual Meeting 2010 will be enriched by Spirit-filled worship, Conference business, Peacemakers’ Breakfasts, wonderful displays, and many occasions for reflection, renewal, fellowship, and celebration. Dinny Adamson, owner of the Hopkins Bookshop will be with us as she has for so many years now, bringing her deep knowledge and wide array of books on all topics pertaining to the church, theology, and spirituality.

Again this year our special offering from Friday’s evening worship service will be sent to support the Rev. George Henderson Scholarship at Dillard University. After many years of careful stewardship, this scholarship fund is nearly at the level needed to be given to worthy students at Dillard – we hope that our generosity this year will be enough to fulfill that promise that we made.

It may seem bold, but we are confident that some of the **life changing** possibilities that life in Christ offers will actually happen during our time together. I would urge you to register early and encourage members of your church family to come and see what all the fun is about! As Conference Moderator, I look forward to spending an enriching weekend with you all!

**Yours in Christ,
Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno
Vermont Conference Moderator**