



## Vermont Conference United Church of Christ

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As it is written in the Liturgy for Times of Farewell in the *UCC Book of Worship*:

*Our church family is constantly changing.*

*People come and go.*

*Babies are born.*

*Children grow up.*

*People commit themselves to one another.*

*Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives.*

*Individuals move into our community and church life.*

*Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities.*

*It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings.*

By now, most of you have read the news that Rev. Jim Thomas has accepted a call to become the Pastor and Teacher of the Atkinson Congregational Church, UCC in Atkinson, NH. This is an exciting time for Jim and Lynn as they follow God's call to this new place of mission and ministry.

We offer Jim our heartfelt best wishes in his time of transition. We are grateful for the light and leadership, laughter and challenge, expertise and encouragement that he has contributed to the life and ministry of our conference. We know he will make a great senior pastor because he has coached so many of our pastors and churches to be more responsive to God's call.

Please know that your Board of Directors and staff will provide an opportunity to celebrate Jim's ministry and to send him with gratitude and perhaps a bit of fun — at his expense, of course! Watch for details in the next few weeks.

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Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister;  
Rev. Pamela Y. Lucas, Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call and Small Church Ministry;  
Rev. Jim Thomas, Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, Church Vitality and Finance;  
Charri Robinson, Office Administrator and Communications Director; Jesse Davis, Conference Ministries Coordinator

Like a local church facing the departure of a beloved pastor, we may feel a range of emotions at Jim's departure. In addition to abundant happiness for him, some of us may be anxious about his leaving and may wonder how our conference can manage without him. All of these feelings and more are a natural part of times like this.

Although we cannot see what lies ahead, we are confident that our Still Speaking God is doing new things in our midst. The conference staff and Board of Directors will reflect deeply on the needs of our congregations and pastors and will consider the data we received at the Association Listening Sessions and through the online survey. Then we will craft staff position descriptions and seek new staff. In the meantime, steps are being taken to ensure continuity in the essential tasks Jim has overseen.

Blessings to you as we walk together through this time of transition. Let us go forward with confidence in God's abiding presence.



Rev. Lynn L. Bujnak  
Conference Minister



Rev. Andy Nagy-Benson  
Chair, Board of Directors

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