



# Vermont Conference, UCC Electronic Keeping in Touch

EQUIPPING CONGREGATIONS FOR CHRIST'S  
MINISTRY AND MISSION TODAY AND TOMORROW

E-Kit

Jan. 11, 2017

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## Vermont Conference News

Pam Lucas will be officiating a memorial service

Jim Thomas will be worshipping in Granville and Hancock.

God is still speaking,  
**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



## UCC News and Updates



Click image to read about  
Be The Church

Justice advocates make final push to close Guantanamo

'Holy Experiment' that revolves around shared resources named UCC Church of the Month



THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS HAS BEGUN!

'I am the light of the world!  
You people come and follow me!  
If you follow and love  
You'll learn the mystery

Of what you were meant to do and be.'[1]

This hymn, based on a poem by Howard Thurman, is one of my favorites. After Advent - the quiet waiting and anticipating - after Christmas - the joy of Jesus' birth yet once again in our hearts and lives - and Epiphany - with the promise that this gift is for the whole world - it's time! It's time for us - the church - to get to work and make all that we've waited for and rejoiced over - to actually live into the promise that can light up our world. 'And this light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.'

We are a people created for light. 'Let there be light' were God's first words. Since December 22nd, the length of our days begins to increase. These are the days of Epiphany when we seek God sightings - the signs that God is still God - in spite of so much that we see and hear and feel.

God has work for us to do.

The one who was born grew up and said, 'I am the Light of the World!' This Jesus gets busy calling his disciples. This Jesus gets busy teaching people that they too are called to be the light of the world.

That means you and me. That means the Church of Jesus Christ. That means we who are the body of Christ are called to be the light of the world. Anne Frank said, 'Look at how a single candle can both defy and define the darkness.' That is the work of Christmas.

Let your light shine so that the seeds of goodness and kindness will be sown, will grow - and will nurture others to also shine with goodness and kindness.

Let your light shine so that darkness is dispelled. Know that just the flicker of a match will shine enough light so that we can take the next step toward peace and justice.

Moral Monday rallies people of faith, kicks off month of justice advocacy

UCC leaders call on Talledega College to avoid participation in Presidential Inaugural Parade

Commentary: The UCC Helping Lead the Sanctuary Movement in the Trump Era

General Synod resolution seeks to open doors to ministry to underrepresented groups

[More UCC news](#)



Click image for more information.



**Food for Thought**

**Focus Scripture  
Matthew 3:13-17**

**Matthew Arnold,  
19th century  
"Waiting for the spark from heaven to fall."**

**Karl Jung, 20th century  
"Bidden or unbidden, God is present."**

**Leonard Cohen, 20th century  
"There's a crack in everything--that's where the light gets in."**

**Lao Tzu. 6th century B.C.E.  
"Do you have the patience to wait till your mud settles and water is clear?"**

**Hans Urs von Balthasar, 20th century  
"The Church does not dispense the sacrament of baptism in order to acquire for herself an increase in membership but in order to consecrate a human being to God and to communicate to that person the divine gift of birth from God."**

**Unknown  
The old Irish when immersing a babe at baptism left out the right arm so that it would remain pagan for good fighting.**

**Mahatma Gandhi, 20th century**

Let your light shine so that together we might discover our part in the work of repairing the world.

In the words in another favorite hymn -  
Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,  
messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.  
Be, my friends, a loyal witness, from the dead I arose;  
'Lo, I'll be with you forever, till the end of the world.[2]

January 11, 2017  
Pam Lucas

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[1] I am the Light of the World - New Century Hymnal #584  
[2] You Are The Seed - New Century Hymnal #528

### **It's UCC Yearbook Time!**

The United Church of Christ's annual Yearbook is the central reference point for the UCC for information about churches, ministers and other data the UCC uses to better understand the health of our denomination and identify trends as we all plan for the future.

The UCC Yearbook relies upon all UCC churches, associations and conferences to submit their statistical information at the beginning of each year so the reference data is as accurate as possible. Using the UCC Data Hub, churches may upload their information directly for the Yearbook.

The Vermont Conference asks that every church in our Conference participate in the UCC Yearbook information submission effort. Each church should designate one person to be responsible for this effort and notify Jesse Davis at the Vermont Conference so he can be a resource to them. Jesse will be in contact with these designated people as the Yearbook process moves forward. The UCC Center for Analytics, Research and Data (CARD) has made resources available to take you step by step through the data upload process in the UCC Data Hub.

You can access the 2017 Yearbook Instructions and video tutorials at: [www.ucc.org/research\\_yearbook](http://www.ucc.org/research_yearbook)  
The deadline for uploading church information to the UCC Data Hub is March 8, 2017.

If you are the designated Yearbook person and have questions, please contact the Vermont Conference Ministries Coordinator Jesse Davis at [davisj@vtcccuc.org](mailto:davisj@vtcccuc.org) or 802-728-4999.

Thank you!

**Here are the Per Capita Rates for 2017**

**"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."**

**Kahlil Gibran, 20th century (other source says Rabindranath Tagore)**

**"I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy."**

**Leonardo da Vinci, 15th century**

**"Water is the driving force in nature."**

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## **Vigils for the Earth - the First 100 Hours**

We would like to share with you all an important opportunity to express our faith and our connection to the Earth that's being organized nation-wide by a diverse range of groups: including [Interfaith Power and Light](#), [Green Faith](#) and the national UCC Council for Climate Justice.

During the first 100 hours of the new US administration, it's important for us as people of faith to witness to our love for the Earth, and our commitment to people, planet, and communities.

Around the country, people are organizing vigils - with diverse faith communities and people of good will - to show our care and commitment publicly. The web-site here has a number of resources as well as suggestions for organizing events. I especially recommend the '[Sample Prayers and Statements](#)' and "100 hour vigil resources from IPL."

<http://www.greenfaith.org/programs/environmental-justice/first-100-hours-vigils>

Since the time is short, and you may not be able to organize a [vigil event](#) in your community, here are several suggestions for ways we can join in this important witness:

- Include an acknowledgment of this witness in your worship on Sunday, Jan. 22 - the prayers and litanies should give you lots of ideas to work with.
- Engage in prayerful attention to the needs of the Earth and all its peoples during this first 100 hours of the new presidency - and encourage your congregation to do so.
- Have an informal opportunity for members of your congregation to gather prayerfully some time during the weekend following the inauguration, to witness to our concern for the earth and all its peoples.

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PER CAPITA RATES FOR 2017				
Association #	Association Name	Assoc. Amount	Conference Amount	Total
788	Addison	\$0.00 *	\$12.40	\$12.40
792	Champlain	\$1.10	\$12.40	\$13.50
796	Grafton-Orange	\$0.50	\$12.40	\$12.90
800	Northeast	\$1.00	\$12.40	\$13.40
804	Southwest	\$1.00	\$12.40	\$13.40
808	Washington	\$0.00 *	\$12.40	\$12.40
812	Windham Union	\$0.25	\$12.40	\$12.65
816	Windsor-Orange	\$1.00	\$12.40	\$13.40

\* Addison and Washington Associations collect Per Capita directly from their churches

## **2016 CONTRIBUTION CUT OFF DATE**

All contributions to the Conference must be received at the office **NO LATER THAN January 13th** to count toward 2016. Any contributions received after that date will count toward 2017. Please pass this word to those who do that work in your church. We want to be sure to assign contributions as you meant them.

Thanks! Any questions, please email Jim at [thomasj@vtcucc.org](mailto:thomasj@vtcucc.org)

## **Save the Date for Annual Meeting**

The 222nd Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, UCC will take place on Friday and Saturday, April 28-29, 2017 at the Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT.



All members of the Vermont Conference -- church members, delegates, Members in Discernment and authorized ministers are heartily encouraged to attend!

## **Information for Resolutions**

Information for the submittal of Resolutions is now available-there are three types of resolution pertaining to the April 2017 Annual Meeting:

1. Any resolution to be presented, discussed, and voted on at the Annual Meeting in April 2017 should be submitted to the Board of Directors no later than January 18, 2017.
2. Any emergency resolution should be submitted to the Board of Directors no later than April 21, 2017.
3. Resolutions to be presented at the 2017 Annual Meeting, but to be discussed and voted at the 2018 Annual meeting should be submitted by March 22, 2017.

In addition, there is a document which outlines the format in which the resolutions should be presented. Please contact Jesse Davis for all pertinent documents at [Davisj@vtcucc.org](mailto:Davisj@vtcucc.org)

## **A Vermont Conference Continuing Education**



## Sunday School Coordinator

Williston Federated Church seeks a Sunday School Coordinator.

Plan and supervise Sunday School for children aged 3 years through Senior High. Recruit, train, and support teachers and other volunteers in Sunday School program. The Sunday School Coordinator will serve as a consistent and welcoming presence on Sunday mornings. This individual will coordinate and oversee our Christian Education Program and assist with Sunday School teaching when needed.

For a job description and to apply, Email [Office@steeple.org](mailto:Office@steeple.org) at the Williston Federated Church.

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You are invited to join the Vermont Conference UCC in Chandler Music Hall for Vermont Pride Theater's sixth annual winter benefit on Saturday January 28th: the first New England production of Topher Payne's prize-winning new play Perfect Arrangement. Proceeds from this staged reading will go to the civil rights work of GLBTQ Legal Advocates Defenders ([www.glad.org](http://www.glad.org)).

[More information here...](#)

## Offering

### PASTORING CHALLENGING PARISHIONERS: A Mental and Relational Health Perspective

As Pastors, we love our parishioners, each and every one. But sometimes, there are those dear ones who challenge us: pastorally, relationally, in committee meetings, in relationships with other parishioners, and with staff. Sometimes the challenges are so great that we wish we had a model of understanding and a method for engaging in pastorally effective ways. This workshop is designed to give some conceptual models for understanding challenging folks from a mental and relational health perspective. Through small group discussion and role play, participants will have opportunities to discuss these models and to practice effective ways to engage.

February 22, 2017

10:00am - 3:00pm

Bethany Church - Randolph, Vermont

\$15.00 - Lunch included

[Click Here to Register](#)

### FACILITATOR

The Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola is the Pastor of the First Congregational/Puffer UM Church in Morrisville. She holds a PhD. in psychology, and before her ordination eight years ago, was a clinical psychologist in hospital and private practice for more than 20 years. Her specialty areas included sequelae of severe childhood abuse in teens and adults, eating disorders, and women's mental health. She has also given papers and workshops on working with challenging clients in the therapy relationship, women and substance abuse; and is published in the areas of the sequelae of incest, and rethinking labels for severe personality disorders.

### The Sanctuary Movement and Legal Risks

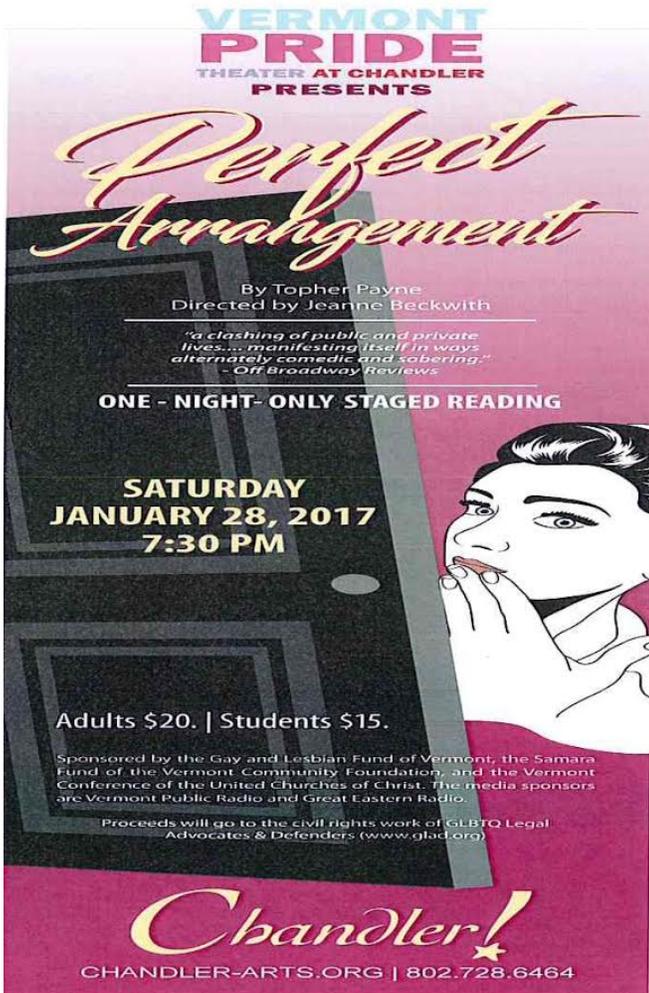
At the request of several Conferences, the Office of General Counsel has prepared a memorandum regarding the legal risks for faith communities who are engaging in the sanctuary movement by providing shelter and other sanctuary services to undocumented immigrants. Please contact the Office of General Counsel if you have questions.

[Read Memorandum here...](#)

### New Hampshire School of Ministry to offer Pastoral Care Course

Beginning in February 2017, the Rev. Dr. David B. Reynolds, Executive Director of Pastoral Counseling Services in Manchester, NH will offer an online course entitled Pastoral Care: Creating Meaning with Individuals and Communities.

Drawing from Dr. Carrie Doehring's book, The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach, the course will



provide students with an understanding of the practice of pastoral care in contemporary ministry settings.

The course will be 12 hours over a six-week period and will include a face-to-face class for 2-3 hours. To register for the course, please contact the Rev. Rebecca Maccini at [revrwm@tds.net](mailto:revrwm@tds.net).

### Resources from WorshipWell

Be sure to check out the worship resources available at: [worshipwell.church](http://worshipwell.church)



**Thank You for Reading**  
**An Open and Affirming Conference**  
[For the E-Kit Archive](#)

