



Vermont Conference, UCC Electronic Keeping in Touch

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

E-Kit

June 21, 2017

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Vermont Conference News

Sunday June 25, 2017

Pam Lucas will be leading worship at the Bradford Congregational Church and then will be attending Lynn Wickberg's Ordination at Christ's Church in Saxtons River

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



[UCC News and Updates](#)

Greetings!

Fall 2017 Vitality Event Announced!

Your Vermont Conference takes seriously its mission statement to equip our congregations for mission and ministry. In recent years we have contracted with both the Center for Progressive Renewal and Partners for Sacred Places, seeking to give congregations the tools they need to be the church they are called to be.

In addition to coaching with individual churches and pastors, we have also held at least one Congregational Vitality every year. I still get positive feedback on events such as Recalculating the Way, and Craft Church, and others.

This year, we're going to pull it all together. Partners for Sacred Places recently finished a multi-year program with a group of churches called "Strategic Investment in Sacred Places (SISP)," with foci on things like the Economic Halo Effect our congregations have on local communities, asset mapping, a review of congregational space with an eye to increase usage by the community, and facilitating partnerships and missional opportunities. When we talked about what our fall 2017 Vitality event should be, we quickly reached a consensus around the idea of taking the two year SISP program, and distilling it into its essential elements which could be presented in a single day.

BE THE CHURCH

*Protect the environment. Care for the poor.
Forgive often. Reject racism.
Fight for the powerless.
Share earthly and spiritual resources.
Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.*

UCC church, part of Omaha Tri-Faith Initiative, now under construction

Four honorees to be recognized for justice commitment at General Synod 31

UCC General Synod to honor John Deckenback

In historic vote, three UCC Conferences move toward union

In a warm up to General Synod, Wisconsin Conference becomes 'Immigrant Welcoming' with an overwhelming vote

UCC President condemns violence spawned by political divide

Commentary: Rectifying injustice as we fight injustice

Commentary: Love, reconciliation among enemies

[More UCC news](#)



Click image for more information.



Food for Thought

So.... Woo Hoo!

Save the date! October 14, 2017 @Bethany UCC in Montpelier.

A Vitality gathering to equip our churches to grow through community engagement and outreach. We are partnering again with Partners for [Sacred Spaces](#) for this event, and we're really excited to leverage what a group of churches learned about themselves and their communities to a wider audience. In fact, you will probably hear from some of those churches in something akin to a TED Talk, sharing their real life experiences. There will be successes to celebrate - and seeds to plant for your future success.

I'm pretty excited, can you tell? This is going to be soooo good. Registration will open in August 2017. Please save the date and begin assembling your team now. Space will, unfortunately, be limited. You don't want to miss out on this one!

[Here is a link to a flier you can email, or post, or read from the pulpit, or share in whatever way works best for you.](#) More info will come soon, but we want you to block off that date on your calendar now. Questions? Email or give me a call.

Peace,

Jim

Rev. Jim Thomas
ACM, VT Conference UCC



AT THE INTERSECTION
OF HERITAGE, FAITH,
& COMMUNITY

Partners for Sacred Places

www.sacredplaces.org

Focus Reading:
Matthew 10:24-39

Brennan Manning, The Ragamuffin Gospel: Good News for the Bedraggled, Beat-Up, and Burnt Out, 21st century

"[Jesus] had no romantic notion of the cost of discipleship. He knew that following Him was as unsentimental as duty, as demanding as love."

Donald Miller, Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality, 21st century

"The trouble with deep belief is that it costs something. And there is something inside me, some selfish beast of a subtle thing that doesn't like the truth at all because it carries responsibility, and if I actually believe these things I have to do something about them. It is so, so cumbersome to believe anything. And it isn't cool."

Martin Luther King Jr., 20th century

"Our only hope lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism."

Sue Monk Kidd, The Secret Life of Bees, 21st century

"The hardest thing on earth is to choose what matters."

Parker J. Palmer, Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation, 21st century

"Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you. Before you tell your life what truths and values you have decided to live up to, let your life tell you what truths you embody, what values you represent."

Nancy Pearcey, Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity, 21st century

"In every historical period, the religious

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I'm going to **Star Island** the week of July 29 - Aug. 5 and hoped that I might find someone else from Vermont going that week - I'd like to car pool to Portsmouth. My contact info: lizbethmsr@gmail.com Thanks!

Liz  
Liz Sykas-Ringgenberg  
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2017 Information Reviews for Authorized Ministers Are Due!

The 2017 Information Review for all Authorized Ministers in the Addison, Champlain, Northeast, Grafton-Orange-Sullivan, Washington, Windsor-Orange and Windham-Union Associations **are OVERDUE!**

If you have not yet completed this requirement for good standing; please take the time in the next few days to do so.

[Click Here to Download the 2017 Information Review \(Word document\)](#)

Thank you!

Save the Date for 2018 Annual Meeting!

The 223rd Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, UCC will take place April 27-28, 2018 at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT.

The theme for the next Annual Meeting is "Telling Stories".

How do we tell stories?
How do we tell the stories of our faith?
What stories do you tell?
Why do stories matter?

These questions, as well as the sharing of stories, will all be a focal point of Annual Meeting.

We look forward to seeing you in April 2018!

Who is Jesus for Muslims?

groups that grow most rapidly are those that set believers at odds with the surrounding culture."

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For Sale

Puffer United Methodist Church in Morrisville Vermont is fully engaged in the process of merging with the First Congregational Church in Morrisville. We have decided to use the First Congregational building for our worship and fellowship needs.

Therefore, we have several items that are available for sale to churches and individuals. These items need to be removed no later than the last week of June.

35 wooden folding chairs \$5.00 each
10 wooden 8-foot-long folding tables \$10.00 each
50+ Church pews \$10.00 each
Church communion rails best offer
Pulpit best offer
Communion table best offer
70 cereal bowls, 70 cups & saucers, 120 dinner plates, 125 glass ice cream dishes, 50 oval platters, 40 oval serving bowls best offer
12 Restaurant sized pots \$10.00 each

If you would like to purchase any of these items, please contact Dot and Larry Bliss (802-521-7111)

Pictures are available to view. Email calavis@comcast.net to receive a picture via jpg file.

We also have an Allen Church organ, with speakers. It is a 1985 digital organ, ADC model. It will sell in the range of \$3000. For more information on the organ, contact Clark Callender (888-7972)

**The Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola, Pastor and Teacher
First Congregational United Church of Christ and
Puffer United Methodist Church**

"According to Islam, Jesus always speaks the truth. The question is how we understand it."

Amy Frykholm interviews Zeki Saritoprak
May 23, 2017

Zeki Saritoprak's book *Islam's Jesus* examines the role of Jesus in the Qur'an and in Islamic theology. He has written about many Islamic theologians, mystics, and scholars, including the 13th-century poet and Sufi mystic Rumi and the early 20th-century Turkish Muslim scholar Bedi'üzzaman Said Nursi. A professor of Islamic studies at John Carroll University

[Read Article here.....](#)

Employment Opportunities!

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SEEKING DIRECTOR(S) OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION  
- The United Church of Underhill (a vital, diverse, and growing congregation in covenant and connection with the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church) is seeking a part-time Director of Christian Education. She/he will be responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating a comprehensive education plan, in conjunction with our Ministry in Christian Education and our pastor, for children, and youth. Our Sunday School enrollment is approximately 30 students. Candidates should be energetic, possess strong interpersonal, collaborative and communication skills, and have a deep Christian faith. We are also open to the possibility of two people sharing this 8 hour/week position. If interested, please email Janet Grant at: [grantfernald@comcast.net](mailto:grantfernald@comcast.net). The United Church of Underhill is located at 9 Park Street in Underhill, VT (approximately 15 miles east of Burlington along Rt. 15). You can also find more information about us at [unitedchurchofunderhill.com](http://unitedchurchofunderhill.com)

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CHURCH MUSICIAN Job Opening, Thetford Hill, VT
First Congregational Church of Thetford

Progressive, Open and Affirming UCC congregation seeks Choir Director/Accompanist to provide keyboard music (piano and/or Rieger organ) and direct our choir for Sunday services.

Come join with our community and create music in our beautiful, acoustically wonderful sanctuary.

**Morrisville, VT
(802-888-2990)**

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**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES!**

Music Director  
Second Congregational Church,  
Hyde Park, VT

We are an active and friendly congregation of people who love our church and our music. We are looking for an individual with a love of music, and a musical background, to lead our music program. We are blessed with a beautiful pipe organ, baby grand piano and vibrant choir. Our ideal Music Director would be proficient with, and enjoy playing the organ and piano, be able to sight read music and direct and grow our Choir and music program. Part time, paid position.

If this sounds interesting, we would love to talk with you about our program and what we can create together. Please email: Second Congregational Church [2congo@myfairpoint.net](mailto:2congo@myfairpoint.net)

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Organist/Choir Director Needed!

Application

Email:

welcome@fccej.org

Job Description/Offer: First Church of Essex Junction, U.C.C. seeks PT Organist/Choir Director. Church is GLBTQ friendly. Job includes coord. music program, directing adult choirs, and playing organ & piano @ 2 services [beautifully refurbished 1928 Estey organ / Young Chang baby grand].

Email cover letter and resume to FCCEJmusicsearch@gmail.com or mail to FCCEJ Music Search, 1

Begin September 2017 More details at our website thetfordhillchurch.org.
office@thetfordhillchurch.org
or call 802-785-2915

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**Music Director Needed!**  
Job Description/Offer: Charlotte Congregational Church, U.C.C. seeks PT Music Director.

Church is GLBTQ friendly. Job includes: Accompanying congregational singing, leading Thursday night rehearsals, conducting the adult choir for Sunday morning worship services at 10am and for other occasional services. Regular planning meetings with the senior and associate pastors are part of the position.

Email: [scookekitt@mac.com](mailto:scookekitt@mac.com)

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Administrative Assistant Wanted! First Congregational Church of West Brattleboro
8-10 hours/week

Position includes: Composition, compilation, and printing of the weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter. Maintenance and updating of the signs, bulletin boards, church website and Facebook page. Compilation of the Annual Report and the yearly statistical report for the Vermont Conference. Facilitation of communication between members, committees, church leadership, and lay persons. Maintenance of attendance and membership records. Receiving, sorting, and passing along electronic, voice, and paper mail; placing orders as needed; filling out check requests. Co-ordinating rentals of the church space and advertising church events. Preparing materials and personnel for funerals and weddings. Sweet-talking the cantankerous copier.

Applicants should possess reliability, an organized mind, and good language and computer skills. Compensation competitive.

Contact Jeff Brewer:

grmtbrew@comcast.net

Church Street, Essex Junction VT
05452.

or 802-380-8184
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Church office 802-878-5745.  
First Congregational Church of  
Essex Junction  
Website: [www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)

## 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**  
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