



Vermont Conference, UCC Electronic Keeping in Touch

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

E-Kit

June 7, 2017

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Vermont Conference News

Lynn Bujnak will be leading
worship in Northfield

Jim Thomas will be preaching
at the First Congregational
Church of Newfane

Pam Lucas will be attending the
installation of Shawn
Bracebridge at the Dummerston
Congregational Church and
then attending the memorial
service for Joe Jacobs at the
United Church of Bellows Falls

Asking for continued
prayers for For Allan Baer,

Greetings!

Am I my brother's (sister's) keeper?
(Gen 4:9)

On the way into work this morning I heard an old gospelly/bluegrass song entitled "Me and Jesus Got Our Own Thing Going." As the title implies, this is a song about needing nothing and no one because of the singer's personal relationship with Jesus.

*Me and Jesus got our own thing going
Me and Jesus got it all worked out
Me and Jesus got our own thing going
Don't need anybody to tell us what it's all
about*

But that's not true. Perhaps nothing could be further from the truth. Yes there are certainly encounters and a relationship between each person and God, but the context of this relationship is always one of community. Throughout the pages of our sacred text we encounter a God of the people, a God who covenants with the people. We see a God who cares for all people, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable and repeatedly calls on the People of the Covenant to do the same. In New Testament language - we are the Body of Christ and stuck together whether we like it or not.

It's profoundly disturbing to me to think that someone, a brother or sister be it person or country would need our help and we would refuse. For Christians and in other faith

husband of Sherry Baer of the United Church of Northfield as he recovers from surgery.

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



[UCC News and Updates](#)

**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.*

Embrace the stranger, promote welcome on Refugee Justice Sunday

New UCC logo reflects, complements denomination's Purpose, Vision, Mission Statements

UCC pastor shows love of neighbor by going to Iraq to work with women refugees

A public proclamation, love of neighbor, draws attention in Minneapolis

UCC leadership: An opportunity for which the church was born

This statement from the leadership of the United Church of Christ condemns President Donald Trump's decision to abandon the Paris Climate Accords.

To the moon and back: 'Lunar Bible' gifted to UCC for preservation

traditions as well, it's not about "me first." It's about our relationship with and care for others, creatures and creation alike because we are in fact expected by God to be our brother/sister's keeper. When we consider this wider understanding of being in relationship with God, it makes our orientation to one another a spiritual discipline, a way we practice the presence of God. It is important to let our faith inform our practice not just within the church but in God's good world.

In peace and hope,  
Lynn

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River of Life Pilgrimage on the Connecticut River: May 31-July 9

The River of Life Pilgrimage, which was announced at Annual Meeting, will launch today, May 31, and proceed down the Connecticut River for the next forty days. This exciting venture in watershed awareness, spirituality and stewardship is sponsored by the NH and VT Diocese of the Episcopal Church, and welcomes people of all faiths to participate. Water is central to life, and living, flowing rivers have played an integral role in ecological, social, economic and spiritual practice worldwide since time immemorial. The Connecticut River is a prime example of a river carrying the lifeblood of a region. Here are several ways you and/or your congregation can participate:

1. Join the Pilgrimage for one of the segments of the trip, (register on the web-site) or for one of several one-day shorter sections of the trip (registration not necessary, though suggested.)
2. Participate in some of the activities along the shore, especially each weekend at hub locations in the Upper Valley (June 16-18) and Brattleboro (June 25) - see web-site for details.
3. Incorporate the pilgrimage into your Sunday worship, or your personal devotions, by including prayers or readings from the "River of Life Prayer Book" which can be downloaded from the

UCC Immigration advocate protesting separation of families arrested at the White House

UCC advocates urge 'Stay the course on climate care,' despite U.S. withdrawal from Paris Accords

Lakota YouthStay program brings Native young people to Massachusetts for immersion experience

Commentary: The President's Deeply Flawed Budget Request

Local Church Ministries launches revised church grant process

[More UCC news](#)



Click image for more information.



Food for Thought

Focus Reading:
Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Karl Barth, 20th century

"The miracle is not that there is a God. The miracle is that there is a world."

Annie Dillard, Pilgrim at Tinker Creek

"In nature, improbabilities are the one stock in trade. The whole creation is one lunatic fringe. If creation had been left up to me, I'm sure I wouldn't have had the imagination or courage to do more

web-site or purchased. (See "Join us ... as a Pilgrim in Prayer.")

4. Paddle on your own body of water, and join in the spirit of the pilgrimage with the Prayer Book.

For more information on the Pilgrimage, see <http://kairosearch.org/river/>,

Who is Jesus for Muslims?

"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 in University Heights, Ohio, he has been involved in interfaith dialogues, including the Catholic-Muslim dialogues cosponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Islamic Society of North America. His book *Islamic Spirituality: Theology and Practice for the Modern World* will be published in November.

Who is Jesus in Islam?

In Islam, Jesus, peace and blessings be upon him, is one of the five greatest messengers of God who are collectively known as the 'Ul al-Azm or the Possessors of Steadfastness. Jesus is also a real person who lived in Roman Judea in the first century of the Common Era. Muslims share with Christians most of the basic outlines of Jesus' story, though there are certainly differences. In Islam, as well as in Christianity, Jesus was born to the Virgin Mary and was without a father. But for Muslims, Jesus is neither God nor the Son of God.

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

Employment Opportunities!

than shape a single, reasonably sized atom, smooth as a snowball, and let it go at that."

William Brown, 21st century

"We should be 'lost in wonder,' as the hymn says, not losing wonder."

Stephen Hawking, 21st century

"I think computer viruses should count as life...I think it says something about human nature that the only form of life we have created so far is purely destructive. We've created life in our own image."

George MacDonald, 19th century

"I would rather be what God chose to make me than the most glorious creature that I could think of; for to have been thought about, born in God's thought, and then made by God, is the dearest, grandest and most precious thing in all thinking."

Wendell Berry, The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays, 21st century

"I don't think it is enough appreciated how much an outdoor book the Bible is. It is a 'hypoethral book,' such as Thoreau talked about--a book open to the sky. It is best read and understood outdoors, and the farther outdoors the better. Or that has been my experience of it. Passages that within walls seem improbable or incredible, outdoors seem merely natural. This is because outdoors we are confronted everywhere with wonders; we see that the miraculous is not extraordinary but the common mode of existence. It is our daily bread."

Rachel Carson, 20th century

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.

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;

"If I had the influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children I should ask that her gift to each child in the world would be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength."

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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 times, please

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 JeffBrewer:
grmtbrew@comcast.net
or 802-380-8184

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**Organist/Choir Director Needed!**

Application

Email:

[welcome@fccej.org](mailto: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](mailto:FCCEJmusicsearch@gmail.com) or mail to FCCEJ Music Search, 1 Church Street, Essex Junction VT 05452.

Church office 802-878-5745.

First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

Website:

[www.fccej.org](http://www.fccej.org)

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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

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

Resources from WorshipWell

Be sure to check
out the worship
resources
available at:



worshipwell.church

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

Lake Champlain Action Cruise

The cruise portion of the day is now full, (June
16) but we wanted to make sure that everyone
was aware that the afternoon seminars,
beginning at 12:15 p.m. are open to everyone
for free! Please come join in the conversation,
we would love to see you!

For your convenience, I have attached the day's
[schedule in PDF format](#). Also, we don't want to
clog your inboxes, so this will be the last email.

If you have any questions at all, please don't
hesitate to reach out here, to Richard directly
at butzra042@gmail.com, or give us a call in
the office at 802-862-8866.



Thank You for Reading
An Open and Affirming Conference
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