

Welcome to E-Kit! Charri

Vermont Conference



December 20, 2017

Dear Beloved Community gathered in the Vermont Conference,

**In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.
Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.**



I have loved this simple yet haunting song for a long time. Yes, I know that in all probability Jesus was not born in midwinter nor was it likely snowing. It's what is conveyed through the ability of words and tune that captures for me the wonder of God's coming into our world in the midst of a human life subject to all the beauty and danger and vulnerability that life contains.

Regardless of the current outside temperature, there are times when our individual lives and/or the world around us feel as dreary and intractable as midwinter. And yet, God enters in to an often cruel and inhospitable world in the most vulnerable of forms as a newborn baby. When I despair about the rich becoming not only richer but increasingly in charge while the fragile safety net shrinks and is threatened with elimination, my faith needs the reminder that God needs neither wealth nor the human concept of power to change our lives and change the world. When I remember this, hope blooms in me.

I pray that hope will bloom in you this Christmas and that hope will bloom in our world. I is not the mighty who will triumph but, as Br. Curtis Almquist so often describes, the "least and the last and the lost." Sometimes that's us.

In peace,
Lynn

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# CONFERENCE NEWS

Time is drawing near.....Please submit your OCWM and Per Capita for 2017 so I can get everything in order for the end of the year! If you need a new Remittance Form, you can find one on the website under the Stewardship Section.

I really would appreciate it!

**ABSOLUTE DEADLINE WILL BE JANUARY 10, 2018!  
ANYTHING RECEIVED AFTER JANUARY 10, 2018 WILL BE  
CONSIDERED A 2018 DONATION.**

Thank you, Charri

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Please Pray....

We send our deepest sympathies to the family of Don Goff who passed away. Don was retired Clergy who did a lot of Stewardship work within the Conference. We will be sending out information for his services as we receive it.

Please keep Alan Baer, Sherry Bear's husband and their family in your prayers as he will be going in for surgery this week.

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BECOME A FRIEND OF THE VERMONT CONFERENCE

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## **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWS**

### **NEWS HEADLINES**

**UCC Southern California congregation vows to 'Be the Church' in wildfire recovery process**

**Maine clergy takes on tax bill, releasing a statement of faith condemning the measure**

**Holy Cow! Philadelphia pastor hangs on as huge cow escapes live nativity scene**

**Commentary: Working for Justice is Intergenerational**

**Commentary: All I want for Christmas is a hot shower**



### **WEEKLY SEEDS**

**Focus Reading:  
Luke 1:26-38**

**Meister Eckhart, 14th century**

**"We are all meant to be mothers of God. What good is it to me if this eternal birth of the divine Son takes place unceasingly but does not take place within myself? And, what good is it to me if Mary is full of grace if I am not also full of grace? What good is it to me for the Creator to give birth to his Son if I do not also give birth to him in my time and my culture?"**

**Anne Lamott, 21st century  
"Joy is the best makeup."**

**Jerry Van Amerongen, 21st century  
"I feel like a tiny bird with a big song!"**

**Taylor Caldwell, 20th century  
"I am not alone at all, I thought. I was never alone at all. And that, of course, is the message of Christmas. We are never alone. Not when the night is darkest, the wind**

coldest, the world seemingly most indifferent. For this is still the time God chooses."

Rumi, 13th century

"When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy."

Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life*, 20th century

"One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar."

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, 20th century

"Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God."



## HAPPENINGS



---> [What is the New England Women's Celebration?](#)

The New England Women's Celebration takes place every 4 years at various locations in New England. It is held over (or near) the weekend of Mothering Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Lent, which is traditionally a time when the strict observances of Lent were relaxed for a day so church folks could return to the Mother Church of their roots.

## THE PEACEMAKERS' PULPIT NEEDS YOU!

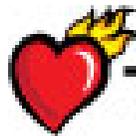
Once a month, an effort is made to have a short piece in E-Kit, in which someone shares their thoughts on peace and justice. I am in the process of lining up the roster for 2018, and am hoping some who read E-Kit, and who have not taken part previously, might be willing to share their thoughts with us all. If there is one thing that's important these days, in my opinion, it is for all of us to speak our truth to each other, always, of course, with tolerance, civility and love. If you would be willing to submit a piece once a year, please be in touch with me, and I'll schedule you in. Once it is complete, I will send the roster to all who are taking part, and I send out a reminder, a couple of weeks before yours is due. These submissions should be no more than 300 words; should include a footnote, if a statistic is included; and reflect the view only of the person who has written it. If you want more information or would like to sign up, please contact me

at [bedson30@gmail.com](mailto:bedson30@gmail.com).

Thank you, and peace to you!

Betty Edson

**Do you ever feel like your church gets "stuck"?**



## Tending the Fire

Do you find the same conversation happening in meeting after meeting, without resolution? Or are there topics so touchy that no one brings them out at all? Do a few people do almost all the work of the church while others seem to do very little? Are you one of those people doing everything, and you're not sure how much longer you can do it? Is there a lot of worry and not much joy in your ministry?

If so, then Tending the Fire will help you understand why people in your church act the way they do, especially when they are anxious. You'll discover how important your role as leader can be, and how to live into that role in ways that are sustainable and life-giving for you and for the church. You'll learn how to assess the best changes for the place you serve, and how to implement those changes so that they last.

Tending the Fire will be offered in Barre Vermont beginning in January 2018; register online at [www.tending-the-fire.com/register](http://www.tending-the-fire.com/register).

For more information, contact Rev. Barbara Lemmel at 802-881-3267 or [barblemmel@mac.com](mailto:barblemmel@mac.com).

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The Center for Progressive Renewal is offering a spring semester online UCC History, Polity and Theology class beginning on January 10, 2018 and ending April 18, 2018. The class has met the polity requirements of most Committees on Ministry in the UCC. Students may register for the class at <http://www.progressiverenewal.org/courses/>. The cost is \$629.

It is a rigorous, engaging class that is offered asynchronously so it is convenient for those who are bi-vocational, have full schedules, or odd sleep habits! It is designed to meet the needs of students with different learning styles and varying levels of formal education. An option of receiving seminary credit is available to students who work with us to make special arrangements.

The facilitators for the class are fully engaged and available throughout the class to the students. The course has evolved and adapted over the years to the changes in the UCC and the changing needs of those seeking authorization for ministry. This spring we have introduced some significant updates, including new lectures and other resources.

Tim Downs, who will be the lead instructor has been teaching this course for almost 20 years, and online for the last seven years. Rev. Heather Bardole, Associate Conference Minister for the SE Conference will be the lead facilitator for the course. Laura Robinson, an MID in the Pacific Northwest and a graduate of Candler School of Theology will be the Co-facilitator for the course. Certificates of Completion are issued for all students who successfully complete the requirements for the class. Letters with a grade and summary assessment of the student's performance in the class for Committees on Ministry are available upon request. Any questions about can be directed to Tim Downs, the lead instructor, at timothy.c.downs@gmail.com.



Original worship resources for local churches...because Sunday's coming.

Vermont Outdoor Ministries

It's not too early to think about Summer Camp Rock Point 2018 - July 29-August 3 We have our volunteer Deans!

Thank you to Rev. Katelyn Macrae and Laura Labrie for saying yes to directing this week of camp for campers 5th-8th graders. If you would like to volunteer this week as a counselor or lifeguard please contact Nancy Fowler at fowler5vt@gmail.com Nancy Fowler and Laurie Chipman had a great time at the Outdoor Ministry Association Consult Gathering at Silver Lake, CT in November. Rev. John Dorhauer was at this event and listened to some of our camping stories. We applied and were awarded a \$1000 Deering Grant to help with the cost of paddle boarding at Rock Point next summer.

Leadership and Anxiety in the Church (LAC)

When: Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Where: Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford, CT

Who: Clergy members and laypersons who seek to understand congregational dynamics better and to learn ways to calm anxiety and heal broken relationships

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## Mediation Skills

Training Institute for Church Leaders (MSTI)

When: May 7-11, 2018

Where: Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford, CT

Who: Clergy and all persons in positions of church leadership who are interested in learning skills that will equip them to deal effectively with interpersonal, congregational, and other forms of church conflict

Attached please find an LAC brochure, a sample bulletin ad, and a group discount coupon for LAC, as well as a current brochure for all five MSTI workshops in 2018. Please share this information with friends or colleagues who you feel might benefit from this training, whether or not you yourself are able to attend.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me or visit our website at [www.LMPeaceCenter.org](http://www.LMPeaceCenter.org).

Thanks so much for your support!

Pamela B. Eiten LMPC Assistant for Communication Lombard Mennonite Peace Center  
101 W. 22nd Street, Suite 206 Lombard, IL 60148 P: 630.627.0507 F: 630.627.0519

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

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CLASSIFIEDS

Starting your holiday shopping online? If you are already shopping on Amazon, you can support Global Ministries at the same time at no additional cost to you. Simply use this link as you shop on Amazon and Global Ministries will receive 4-7% of your purchase.

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**Marble Baptismal font**

**Best offer--you pick up (we may deliver, if needed)**

**United Community Church of Morrisville**

**Please contact Pastor Marisa at 888-2990**

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DINNERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

**Community Supper
Every Friday, 6 pm at the United Church of South Royalton**



**Essex Eats Out Community Dinners Continue... 1st Friday of Every Month
www.essexeatsoout.org**

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## **CHURCH NEWS**

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SAVE THE DATE

**Eastern Regional Youth Event (ERYE)
July 19-22, 2018 at California University of Pennsylvania.**

Worship / play / pray / learn / serve / sing / dream

ERYE is a chance to grow your spirit through workshops, worship, recreation, and service! Registration information will be posted soon. Estimated cost is \$350 per person for event registration, housing, and meals. This does not include transportation. The Southern New England Conferences (RI, MA, and CT) will be collaborating to provide bus transportation.

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## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

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Bethany Church United Church of Christ Randolph, Vermont

<http://www.bethanyuccvt.org> Coordinator for Youth and Family Ministries Bethany Church, a lively congregation of the United Church of Christ, is seeking a half time (20 hours a week) Coordinator for Youth and Family Ministries. The candidate we are seeking is a person of faith who is committed to the church and to nurturing the spiritual needs of children, youth and families. They will have strong organizational and communication skills. They will have training and/or experience in providing educational ministries in a local church setting. They will understand and honor confidentiality and appropriate boundaries. This staff person will work

closely with our pastor, Rev. Kim McKerley, and will have the strong support of the Christian Education Committee and the members of our congregation. Together we will work to continue our excellent youth ministry programs consisting of three fellowship groups (Grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12) which provide fellowship, spiritual formation and outreach programs for our youth. This staff person will work with us all to strengthen our Sunday School ministry to children and youth (ages three through grade 12) and their families. They will also be asked to reach out to our Bethany Church and Randolph Community families. We are a UCC congregation eager to move boldly forward in Educational/Faith Formation ministries. We would love to hear from all interested persons that we might talk together to see if the Spirit has a mutual path forward for us. We ask that references be provided if requested. Compensation will be commensurate with experience.

Contact: Wendy Ross, Chair of the Christian Education Committee Rosspol.w@gmail.com
Bethany Church United Church of Christ 30 North Main Street Randolph, Vermont 05060

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Hooksett, New Hampshire

The Congregational Church of Hooksett, UCC, is seeking an organist/accompanist. The approx.10 hour a week position includes playing for a Sunday morning choir rehearsal and church service, and a Thursday evening choir rehearsal each week. In addition, there are a few special services throughout the year. Previous organ experience is desirable, but not required. Salary is commensurate with experience. To apply, please email resume and 3 current letters of reference to the Music Committee at [Lhart@ccsnh.edu](mailto:Lhart@ccsnh.edu) or snail mail to the Congregational Church of Hooksett, c/o Music Committee, 5 Veterans Dr. Hooksett, NH 03106.  
The church phone number is (603) 485-9009.

We hope you like our ever changing look as we try to make each E-Kit fun to explore! We welcome submissions for the weekly E-Kit. Please submit your submission by Tuesday of each week! We will be running all events and news in this weekly E-Kit. Have you seen our new website? If you have anything you would like to see published on the website, please let me know!

[robinsonc@vtcucc.org](mailto:robinsonc@vtcucc.org)



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